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Political Economy Section

Abstracts of papers presented at the annual conference of the

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Id: 9219

Title: The Political Economy of Power in Democratic Public Media Access

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Abstract: This work assesses the political economy of media reform unfolding in societies in transition, including Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua. The apparent democratic shift in Latin American governments in recent years has been quite uneven in the actual policies and practices of different nations. The most successful media reform has occurred wherever the political economy of media has been changed. In nations where working classes, indigenous peoples, women, youth, and diverse ethnic groups have mobilized and organized constituent assemblies and other social and political organizations, political economies of radical democratic media have been introduced, communicating other progressive national policies that propose a new cultural hegemony.   This study finds that public access to media production and distribution provides a key indication of democratic citizen participation and social transformation. Moments of rupture in social and political norms have challenged capitalist cultural hegemony across the continent, with deep connections between media communication and social power revealed in every case. Based on the several instances included in this research, those societies that have advanced the farthest towards 21st century socialism and participatory democracy have also established the most extensive publicly run media systems. These public access media reach far beyond community and alternative media forms to become central to the counter-hegemonic discourse advocating social transformation and working class power.
Using a robust reading of political economy and cultural hegemony, this work provides brief historical overviews of Bolivian, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan media to demonstrate how revolutionary movements have used political power to encourage mass working class participation in social transformations, including acquiring and using mass communication for social change and social justice.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9250

Title: Climate Crisis, Media Alternatives: Journalism, Environmental Advocacy, and Climate Politics

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Abstract: In the contest between hegemony and resistance, no issue is more consequential than climate change. In mobilizing political will and social movements against the entrenched interests of the carbon economy, journalism comprises a key field of struggle for public engagement and the construction of culturally effective meanings. Literature on media coverage of climate change is now substantial. This paper addresses a relatively unexplored relationship ' between proposed 'best practices' for climate change journalism, public responses to different journalistic approaches to the issue, and the self-defined practices of communicators attempting to mobilize publics to engage in climate change as a political issue. It is informed by linkages between two fields of scholarship and practice. In environmental communication, attention has turned from the information deficits of hegemonic media, to the question of how publics engage with (or are alienated from) the politics of climate change as the key driver mediating our response to this issue. Scholarship on independent/alternative media has long identified their potential to promote a critical perspective on hegemonic economic and political structures, and to nurture radical, participatory and democratic visions of communication and society. Despite obvious affinities between critical perspectives in environmental communication and journalism studies, and the radical practical potential of alternative media, little academic work has investigated the fertile connections between them. The paper takes a three-pronged approach: 1) primarily, a review of professional journalism reviews, and environmental communication and journalism studies scholarship, on best practices for environmental journalism, with respect to stimulating public engagement with climate change politics.2) a summary of focus group research by Gunster et al, with environmentally concerned but politically uninvolved lay people in Vancouver, regarding their perception of climate change politics and media coverage. 3) detailed interviews with over a dozen environmental activists and communications practitioners, and journalists in independent/alternative media located in British Columbia. Interviews explored their views of media coverage of climate change, their own communications practices, and their broader conceptions

IAMCR2015

of public engagement and social change.(British Columbia is a fruitful site for such research, given the contradictory forces in play: powerful resource extraction industries; substantial corporate media concentration; a thriving alternative media ecology; many environmental NGOs engaged in public advocacy around the politics of climate and energy; and a general public increasingly focused upon the intersection of environment and economy, manifested in vigorous contestation over proposed pipeline projects and government-promoted fossil fuel export.)We explore the extent to which the above three vectors align with each other. Disjunctures between them would suggest the need for further research and examination of assumptions. Our particular interest is in the potential capacity of alternative media to play a greater role in mobilizing political action around climate change. Movements for media democratization (of which alternative media are a key component) and for ecological sustainability may have an agenda more common than has often been acknowledged.

Id: 9270

Title: Toward a political economy of framing: Putting inequality on the public agenda

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Abstract: This paper will attempt to engage the political economists of communication in a theoretical and pragmatic debate about the challenges as well as the importance of attempting to shape public discourse around critical social problems in ways that lead to a sustainable transformation of policy agendas at local, national and international levels.The theoretical challenges to be explored are both varied and substantial. While the notion of information subsidies has been accepted as a framework through which to assess the relative power and effectiveness of participants in the policy process, its application has been limited primarily to media agenda setting. There has been far less success in efforts to establish the links between power and influence at the level of policy frames and legislative, regulatory, judicial and programmatic activities of governments. The same is also true with regard to the relationships between information subsidies and the development of strategic frames in support of the policy goals established by progressive social movements.The recent explosion of interest in the political economy of audiences in the context of a dramatically altered media environment adds a further layer of complexity that must be engaged if political economists are to understand the role that so-called 'active audiences' are playing within the public sphere as well as within their relations with government. This paper will invite consideration of the nature of investments that audience members make in their own development as agents within democratic political systems. Notions of 'socially necessary labor power' that have been explored with regard to the processes of reproduction within households will be extended to include the reproduction of political agency.These theoretical and practical considerations will be focused on the development, assessment and delivery of strategic information subsidies in support of public policy initiatives in relation to rising social, economic and political inequality. The so-called Great Recession has stimulated research, debate, and mass mobilizations designed to address the problem of inequality, but there is little evidence that these efforts have had much success at the level of public policy. By examining examples of efforts to shape the frames through which we understand inequality, its causes, and promising initiatives for addressing it, outlines of a political of framing will be presented.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9280

Title: Revisiting Herbert I. Schiller: Communication and American Empire Today

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Abstract: This paper revisits the work of Herbert I. Schiller, a seminal political-economist of communication and American Empire. Apart from one exceptional book-length examination of Schiller's life, work and relevance (Maxwell 2003) and a few favorable review essays published following his passing (Morley 2006; Murdock 2006), there is a dearth of scholarship that supports Schiller's key positions. Furthermore, numerous liberal cultural studies scholars have hastily written off Schiller as a relic of a bygone age to embrace newer theories of post-imperial globalization; some have even tried to discredit Schiller by labeling him as a reductive "conspiracy theorist." This paper argues that far from being passé or paranoid, Schiller's critical work on communications and American Empire is complex, has current critical value and continues to address salient world problems. To show how, this paper reviews and supports Schiller's key claims. It considers, for example, the 21st century actuality of the American Empire, the oligarchic class structure of U.S. society, the global dominance of U.S. media corporations, the machinations of public diplomacy, the growth of the military-industrial-communications-complex (MICC), the production and circulation of 'imperial' media products, the democratic potentials and limits of new communications technology, and emerging forms of resistance. The paper, then, aims to revisit, support and update Schiller's account of communication and American Empire.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9293

Title: PANEL: Communication, Technology, and Finance

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Abstract: Political economists are at the forefront to critique the relations between communication, technology, and finance because of their interests in understanding how capital circulates and how capitalism metamorphoses. The financialisation of the economy illustrates an inherent contradiction of the system: a 'spatial temporal fix' is used to resolve the tendency for surplus capital to accumulate. Therefore, the financial markets have not only expanded the space to invest, but they have also created a future to invest in. The financialisation of the economy also cultivates the financialisation of the everyday life: modern beings are asked to be financially literate and to deal with their finance wisely.In light of the above, this panel addresses the issues of the financialisation of the economy and the everyday life by looking at how:the City of London regulates how and to what extent traders may communicate with each other. It is hoped that restricted internal communication would reduce financial risks and increase information transparency, Peter Thompson argues that the opposite is likely to happen.Big Data and computing technology in China may enable private investment firms to compete with state-owned banks for clients. However, Jing Wang argues that Internet finance strengthens the state's hegemony because of its submission to financial regulations.the tulipomania accounts rarely mention women, yet gender is codified into the discourse to illustrate men's irrationality and foolishness from the 17th century to modern day. Micky Lee argues that the tulip has become a fixed symbol embedded with both the x and non-x concepts at the same time. The implication is that social relations do not change under capitalism.Kickstarter---an online crowdfunding site---is hailed as a democratic way to fund media projects. Aaron Heresco shows that contributions depend on the funder's disposable income and that media funding may gradually rely on the economic underclass.mobile payment system that uses a Near-field communication standard creates an opportunity to create new revenue sources for both financial and technology companies. Vincent Manzerolle argues that online payment is more than economic transaction, but a means of communication. Communication capacities will soon become those with the capacities to consume.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9294

Title: PANEL: Communication, Technology, and Finance Fearful Asymmetry: the political economy of financial market information flows in the wake of the Libor and FX fixing scandals

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Abstract: In the wake of the 2007-8 global financial crisis, there has been unprecedented academic interest in the relationship between the financial markets and financial media. particular, there has been critical analysis of news media's ostensible failure to adequately investigate the risks stemming from the proliferation of complex mortgage securities.   The media's subsequent criticism of the extravagant salaries and bonuses paid to banking executives, despite shareholder losses and the taxpayer-funded bailouts, might suggest that financial journalism has become less prone to elite source capture and become more willing to challenge market orthodoxy.   In the City of London, the scandals involving the manipulation of the London Interbank Offered Rate (Libor), and, more recently, collusion in foreign exchange (FX) 'fixing' have certainly done little to reduce the news media's newfound appetite for questioning investment banking practices.   Such media criticism may arguably have helped legitimate recent efforts to increase the regulatory oversight of various investment banking practices. Indeed, new regulatory regimes in the City, including the establishment of the Prudential Regulation Authority and Financial Conduct Authority (themselves overseen by the Bank of England's Financial Policy Committee) are intended to render financial activities more transparent and prevent collusion and manipulation.   However, it would be premature to suppose that these regulatory measures, coupled with increased media scrutiny will in fact stabilise the banking sector or the financial markets as a whole. The author's latest research, including interviews in the City of London with both financial wire service reporters and editors and with investment bank traders and executives, found evidence that the banks have indeed modified their practices in response to the increased scrutiny from regulators and reporters.   However, regardless of whether media criticism of bankers' excesses is warranted, the response of several major banks has been to impose tighter restrictions on journalistic access to traders and analysts, the primary sources for City reporters. The mediation of source access has become more complicated as banks increasingly channel journalistic enquiries through media relations/PR departments, control what sources are permitted to comment on, and seek to check quotes and copy.   At the same time, the investigation of the Libor and FX scandals has seen regulators trawling through electronic records of trader conversations and messages for evidence of collusion. In response, many banks have imposed restrictions on the way traders are permitted to communicate with one another, including strict protocols governing interactions with counterparties in other institutions and bans on social media in trading rooms. Although informal networks of financial market contacts are implicated in the recent bank scandals, they also provide an important channel for verifying prices and liquidity and helping sustain the coherence of financial valuations during periods of volatility or crisis. This paper will argue that the new rules on trader interactions, coupled with the tighter controls over news media access in the City of London, may result not in increased transparency

and reduced risk, but increase market opacity and potentially exacerbate the severity of future crisis scenarios.

Id: 9295

Title: PANEL: Communication, Technology, and Finance   Big Data in China's Internet Finance: A Political Economy Approach

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Abstract: The financial market has been a significant section of the booming economy in China, and the emerging Internet finance draws the attention of scholars in finance and communication areas. Unlike the traditional financial practices operated between investors and banks, Internet finance allows ordinary consumers to search online and invest the products offered by non-financial institutions, particularly internet companies.   In this process, big data and computer technology is the stake empowering private corporations to compete with the major banks which are mostly owned by the state. Big data practices by the top Chinese internet companies allow them to reach more potential investors than the banks can do. At the same time, the construction of big database also provides these internet companies an efficient payment and credit system, which makes the investors' online investment feasible. Undoubtedly, big data and new media technology expedite the transformation of Chinese financial section from being government-dominated to market-driven.   However, information and computer technologies integrated in China's internet finance does not necessarily lead to a Good Society defined by Walter Lippman in 1937. The key element of Lippmann's Good Society is liberal civilization as opposed to totalitarianism. As the American Nobel Laureate, economist, and Yale Professor Robert Shiller argues in his 2012 book Finance and the Good Society, financial innovation contribute to the Good Society when it helps people to pursue their individual goals, rather than secure the interests of dominant social groups. Constrained by the larger political and economic structures, Internet finance in China is no better than the traditional financial practices in terms of liberalizing financial market or benefiting small individual investors. Social and economic dilemma that these investors have been facing remain unsolved. Moreover, internet finance reinforces those giant corporations' oligopoly positions in internet industry. Being subordinate to the financial regulations ruled by the government, internet finance ultimately strengthens the state's hegemony in controlling overall financial section in China.   This paper explores the interactions between big data practices and power structures in China's internet finance paradigm. The first section introduces the economic and technological background of internet finance in China. Then it analyzes the access and control of big data in this given context. The next section shows the political structure underpinned the Chinese financial industry, thus explains the political economic nature of big data in internet finance practices. I conclude the paper by connecting the above analyses with the social and economic issues embedded in popular financial practices in China.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9296

Title: PANEL: Communication, Technology, and Finance   A Feminist Political Economic Critique of the Tulipomania Discourse

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Abstract: The 17thcentury Dutch Tulipomania---commonly regarded as the first financial bubble occurred in a capitalist society---has been regularly used to serve as an anecdote of modern day financial crises from the dot-com boom to the housing crisis. This anecdote is convenient, memorable, and timeless: it speaks to men's irrational approach to investment; men's insanity through investing in a bulb; and men's in an unchanging capitalism. Despite the fact that women are missing in the accounts, the discourse codifies gender in a specific way so as to persuade the contemporary readers that there was indeed a widespread mania---one caused by an ultimate feminine symbol.   An array of discourses are examined: historical accounts, academic accounts, visual texts, popular books and films, and educational materials. Contemporary writings on tulipomania rely on one single chapter from Charles Mackay's 1856 Memoirs of extraordinary popular delusions and the madness of crowds. Despite academic accounts disputing the spread and the long-term impact of the tulip craze, contemporary popular texts are based on Mackay's questionable facts. Non-fictional work on the tulipomania illustrates Said's orientalism by describing the Ottoman Empire being an economically backward society. The tulip was described as an exotic woman from the East that would ruin the Dutch economy by destroying men's morality. The oriental flower was said to be tamed by the cultivator, the connoisseur, the commercial artist before being fallen into the hands of the lowest---the trader. Fictional work may have a better chance to view the mania from a woman's point of view. However, the fictional work Tulip fever by Deborah Moggach uses the tulip to symbolise an inherent contradiction: it is at the same time a virgin and a whore, a whole and parts, natural and artificial, domestic and exotic. Because the tulip has become a flower with a fixed meaning, when it is used in children media (Disney's The Black Tulip) and educational media (PBS's The botany of desire), the flower can be nothing other than a seductive temptress who leads to men's downfall. The tulip embodies both the x and the non-x at the same time: the negation of the tulip is the tulip itself! Maintaining the x and non-x concept is imperative to capitalism because this socioeconomic arrangement and the social relations subject to it are seen as the only possibility in the contemporary world. Because the tulip is both xand non-x, social relations do not transform, they stay the same.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9297

Title: PANEL: Communication, Technology, and Finance   An Ambivalent Political Economy of Kickstarter

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Abstract: The ambivalent and contested nature of Kickstarter suggests that, as always, the gravitational pull of capitalism perpetually captures and commodifies democratic alternatives. While one could view the crowdfunding platform as a move toward a more democratic and egalitarian media system, it is at the same time problematic for a number of reasons. First, the ability to donate money toward the creation of media projects is contingent upon the availability disposable income ' which is certainly not distributed in any democratic way. Second, as Kickstarter continues to develop, there is a substantial risk that it will become a means of cultural hostage taking; a disintermediation that threatens the absence of media products if not for sizable donations by fans and community members. There is a tendency to be celebratory about the potential of Kickstarter, specifically as it may up media financing and production to some portion of the economic underclass. It could also offload the responsibility of financing creative work to those who can least afford it while the most profitable ventures becomes fodder for hedge funds. Kickstarter is only a platform, and whatever potential it has to democratize media production is contingent on more radical social and cultural changes.

Id: 9298

Title: PANEL: Communication, Technology, and Finance   'Always Already in the Marketplace': Consumption Capacity in the Era of Ubiquitous Media and Markets

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Abstract: The release of the latest Apple iPhone offered one important, and long anticipated feature: a mobile payment system built on the near-field communication (NFC) standard. To compliment this new technical feature, Apple developed an entire payment service ecosystem that integrated both retailers and credit card companies. Paralleling similar efforts by other new media entities like Google, Facebook, Snapchat, and Twitter, Apple's foray into mobile payment and transaction has popularized this feature and prospectively created an economy of scale, the search for mobile payment standard has a long history. Indeed, mobile payment is widely used in many markets globally, but has been slow to develop in North America. Interest in converting mobile media into payment and transaction platforms is, however, symptomatic of a more profound trend: the converging interests of financial and media industries. In Canada, this is evidenced by Rogers Communications' application to become a bank. As this paper will demonstrate, the purported goal of this convergence is to convert ubiquitous, personalized media into platforms enabling an omnipresent market logic. Mobile payment technologies, through their ubiquitous connectivity, enable the market to exist as a fieldhomologous to the electromagnetic phenomena that its key features depend upon. This paper sketches the fraught convergence of financial and digital media interests using Marx's concept of 'consumption capacity"a significant barrier to the extended circulation and reproduction of capital itself addressed in The Grundrisse. Understood in this context, the search for a mobile payment standard is both seen as an opportunity to create new revenue sources for both financial and technology companies, but also to more fully integrate market relations into the fabric of everyday life by making every possible moment/experience an opportunity for transactions. To reduce the satisfaction of desire to a 'twinkling of an eye.' Our means of communication become our means of payment, and in so doing, our communicative capacities themselves become intertwined with our capacity to consume. Not only to maximize consumption capacity by creating a market field, but also to monetize and capitalize on this very capacity itself.

Id: 9307

Title: Pipeline Politics and Canada's 'Organized Right': The Hegemonic Struggle for Northern Gateway

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Abstract: In Canada, the most significant counterhegemonic response to contemporary neoliberal rule has been the widespread resistance to the various Alberta tar sands pipeline proposals currently championed by corporate capital and the ascendant petrostate. Together, these campaigns illustrate the increasing centrality of both environmental movements and indigenous decolonization struggles in any emergent Canadian counterhegemonic bloc. This paper utilizes a Gramscian approach to analyze the response of the hegemonic 'organized right' to one of these campaigns ' the ongoing resistance to the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline which is meant to connect the tar sands to new East Asian markets by way of Canada's west coast. The paper draws on several theoretical approaches to understand the strategies deployed by the Canadian 'organized right' to defeat this counterhegemonic threat, including Pierre Bourdieu's field theory, the power structure research of Donald Gutstein, the cultural studies work of Stuart Hall, Oscar Gandy's concept of 'information subsidies', and George Lakoff's work on framing. It situates these efforts in the context of preexisting 'New Right' Elite Policy and Information Infrastructures (EPIIs) whose members have spent decades establishing a coherent yet decentralized inter-field political project devoted to promoting neoliberal reform and governance. These networks of corporate-backed advocacy groups, policy institutes, industry associations, and foundations have long promoted discourses of environmental skepticism and climate denial in the public sphere, and have now emerged as the most prominent forces defending the bloc from both the anti-Gateway campaign and the broader environmental and decolonization movements that constitute it. The paper first provides a brief overview of this network, explaining how longstanding members such as the Fraser Institute have been joined by relatively new groups such as Ethical Oil and the MacDonald Laurier Institute in the fight to build Gateway. It will explore how these groups labor to translate the economic capital of their corporate backers into cultural and symbolic capital that can be 'invested' in the journalistic field through the provision of information subsidies to concentrated media conglomerates with increasingly New Right editorial cultures. It then draws on findings from a detailed discourse analysis of news articles and op-eds featured in Canada's major daily newspapers across three month-long sample periods between 2012-2014, as well as press releases, blog posts, and other materials produced by the most prominent 'pro-Gateway' civil society sources identified in these news samples. The analysis will explore how hegemonic discourses of economic growth, nationalism, xenophobia, populism, and First Nations identity are drawn on, re-articulated, and circulated throughout the public sphere in the hopes of reorienting the collective subjectivities of audiences so as to undermine resistance to Gateway while generating the broader political subjectivities conducive to the hegemony of the neoliberal petrostate. In doing so, the paper will argue for the key role of the environmental and decolonization movements in contemporary hegemonic struggle, and identify

IAMCR2015

potential strategic insights in the fight against the neoliberal petrostate and capitalist hegemony more generally.

Id: 9314

Title: Media concentration versus democratic principles' Measuring and comparing exposure diversity in national TV markets

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Abstract: This article assumes that media diversity is associated with quality of democracy. This assumption is widely predicted in the Communication and Political Science literature: the lower the concentration, the greater the democratic degree index. This work intends to investigate this association in the specific context of television from the following research question: how is structured the TV market in Brazil, Argentina and Norway' The focus is on national television broadcast, the most pervasive communication medium in these three countries. The central hypothesis suggests a highly concentrated and oligopolistic market model in Brazil, 44th in the ranking of most democratic countries according to the The Economist Index. The same is verified in Argentina, 52th in the ranking. On the other hand, Norway ' 1st place in the ranking ' has a very different landscape. For the empirical analysis, we used seven market measurement techniques, five of them widely used in industry and enterprise economics: Concentration ratio (CR), Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI), Joly Index (J), Theil Index (T) and Gini Index (G). The other two techniques used are specific for media market analysis: Noam-Index (MOCDI) e Hill Index (HI). The variable adopted for the application of measurement techniques was audience, from the context of the concept of exposure diversity. The results confirmed the central hypothesis: Brazil and Argentina have highly concentrated markets structured in oligopolistic models, what are expected in countries with low degree of democracy. The Norwegian scenario, however, is closest to the perfect competition model that characterizes robust democracies. The analysis offers relevant tools for the Latin American debate and reinforces the association between quality of democracy and market structure in terms of media diversity.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9324

Title: Fearful Asymmetry: the political economy of financial market information flows in the wake of the Libor and FX fixing scandals

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Abstract: In the wake of the 2007-8 global financial crisis, there has been unprecedented academic interest in the relationship between the financial markets and financial media. In particular, there has been critical analysis of the news media's ostensible failure to adequately investigate the risks stemming from the proliferation of complex mortgage securities. The media's subsequent criticism of the extravagant salaries and bonuses paid to banking executives, despite shareholder losses and the taxpayer-funded bailouts, might suggest that financial journalism has become less prone to elite source capture and become more willing to challenge market orthodoxy.In the City of London, the scandals involving the manipulation of the London Interbank Offered Rate (Libor), and, more recently, collusion in foreign exchange (FX) 'fixing' have certainly done little to reduce the news media's newfound appetite for questioning investment banking practices. Such media criticism may arguably have helped legitimate recent efforts to increase the regulatory oversight of various investment banking practices. Indeed, new regulatory regimes in the City, including the establishment of the Prudential Regulation Authority and Financial Conduct Authority (themselves overseen by the Bank of England's Financial Policy Committee) are intended to render financial activities more transparent and prevent collusion and manipulation. However, it would be premature to suppose that these regulatory measures, coupled with increased media scrutiny will in fact stabilise the banking sector or the financial markets as a whole. The author's latest research, including interviews in the City of London with both financial wire service reporters and editors and with investment bank traders and executives, found evidence that the banks have indeed modified their practices in response to the increased scrutiny from regulators and reporters. However, regardless of whether media criticism of bankers' excesses is warranted, the response of several major banks has been to impose tighter restrictions on journalistic access to traders and analysts, the primary sources for City reporters. The mediation of source access has become more complicated as banks increasingly channel journalistic enquiries through media relations/PR departments, control what sources are permitted to comment on, and seek to check quotes and copy. At the same time, the investigation of the Libor and FX scandals has seen regulators trawling through electronic records of trader conversations and messages for evidence of collusion. In response, many banks have imposed restrictions on the way traders are permitted to communicate with one another, including strict protocols governing interactions with counterparties in other institutions and bans on social media in trading rooms. Although informal networks of financial market contacts are implicated in the recent bank scandals, they also provide an important channel for verifying prices and liquidity and helping sustain the coherence of financial valuations during periods of volatility or crisis. This paper will argue that the new rules on trader interactions, coupled with the tighter controls over news media access in the City of London, may result not in increased transparency and reduced risk, but

IAMCR2015

increase market opacity and potentially exacerbate the severity of future crisis scenarios.

Id: 9403

Title: Privatizing Portland's Planning Processes: The Political Economy of Urban Communication Technologies (UCTs)

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Abstract: By 2050, three quarters of the world's population will live in cities. Most cities are developed by the state or federal government; however, some cities are created for the purpose of a company that owns and runs the city. While the concept of companies planning and sometimes even owning cities is not a new development, there seems to be a sudden rise in this trend, with communication corporations such as Disney, IBM, Google, Intel, and Cisco now taking advantage of this growing market.   Google has started to supply cities with their own fiber internet infrastructure; they have already started development in three metro areas and have plans for nine more very soon. IBM's Smarter Cities Challenge asks cities to apply to IBM with community planning projects that tackle a diverse array of issues, including protecting drinking water supplies, tackling food deserts, and reducing traffic congestion. They have already served over 100 cities with this program. On top of that, companies such as Cisco and Disney have helped to design and build cities from the ground up. Cisco designed South Korea's Songdo International Business District, while Disney designed, built, and owned Celebration, Florida.   Some have argued that allowing these companies to invest in the building and operating of our communities is a good thing. We use their products in our everyday lives; why wouldn't we want these companies involved in the planning of our cities' Couldn't that potentially lead to more efficient use of our space and resources'   Others argue, however, that we should steer away from allowing 'company towns' to develop. Company towns are communities completely owned, built, and operated by private business interests. Often times, these are not great places to live because residents are viewed more as commodities than citizens.   While company towns were historically developed for a single business interest, some cities, such as Portland, Oregon, are now being pursued by multiple companies that would like to control different niches of this new market. Google, IBM, and Intel are all playing a role in how the City of Portland is planning to develop for the future. Thus, it is important to explore the positive and negative impacts of allowing communication corporations to take part in community planning processes. Is this strategy really in the best interests of our communities' Or does it simply allow for us all to potentially live in a branded company town one day'   It is also vitally important that we study this trend in terms of the impacts it has on issues concerning privacy and surveillance. The line between public and private space is becoming increasingly blurred. What new issues concerning privacy and surveillance need to be considered in a community designed by companies such as Google, IBM, Intel, and Cisco'

IAMCR2015

Id: 9406

Title: In defense of 'most different' comparisons: The political economy of news media in China and the USA

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Abstract: In comparative media studies, a rule of thumb is that the countries should not be too different. Work such as Hallin & Mancini's Three Systems has taken this to hart, limiting their analysis to North America and Western Europe in order to create more cohesive media system theories. Other projects embrace differences, the Worlds of Journalism instead surveying journalists from dozens of countries with greatly varying media systems. Political-economic approaches, by comparison, are rarely comparative, instead focusing on an extensive critique of individual systems.This paper will argue for a middle ground between these approaches; that smaller-scale comparative studies can be done comparing outwardly different media systems can reveal interesting results. This will be done by a political-economic comparison of Chinese and American Media using Herman & Chomsky's Propaganda Model.The paper finds that the profit motive, advertising influence, information flows, and pro-capitalist ideology of news media in both countries is broadly similar. While ownership structures outwardly appear dramatically different, ownership by a one-party state system compared with nominally diverse private ownership, the impact on content is the same. The main differences lie in the lack of a robust public sphere in China featuring NGOs and other organizations that generate flak to influence news coverage.The study also questions the usefulness of notions such as censorship and propaganda. Both the USA and China feature internal influences on the choice of stories from the editorial section, yet only in the latter is this termed censorship. It also argues that propaganda is not a unique function of either Chinese or American media, but a potentially universal description of the nature of news media to influence public perceptions of the world.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9426

Title: The EU-Canada CETA and the diversity of cultural industries: hegemony or resistance'

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Abstract: The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), between Canada and the European Union (EU), was leaked to the public opinion in August 2014 after five years of negotiations. The consolidated CETA text was not released until the end of last September, raising deeper issues about the secrecy and democratic deficit surrounding the agreement. According to the European Commission, the CETA is a treaty that, once applied, will offer EU firms more and better business opportunities in Canada and support jobs in Europe. It will tackle a whole range of issues to make business with Canada easier: from removing customs duties and ending limitations in access to public contracts, to helping prevent illegal copying of EU innovations and traditional products. The Commission's lawyers are currently reviewing the consolidated text, and once it is translated into all EU official languages it will be discussed in the EU Council and the European Parliament. Providing both approve the agreement in 2015, and a similar process takes place in Canada, it could be applied in 2016. As some have already noted (notably civil society organisations), this treaty is about much more than trade. Even though the preamble states that it aims to strengthen economic relationships, the text includes an explicit reference to the commitments of both Parties to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and underlies their right to preserve, develop and implement their cultural policies, and to support their cultural industries for the purpose of strengthening the diversity of cultural expressions and preserving their cultural identity (including the use of regulatory measures and financial support). Beyond these intentions enunciated in the preamble, there are only five chapters containing articles exempting culture (Subsidies, Investment, Cross- Border Trade in Services, Domestic Regulation and Government Procurement). Therefore, the text lacks a general exception clause protecting culture. The question about the capacity of this free trade agreement to actually protect and promote the diversity of culture is therefore valid because, for example, whereas for the EU the exception applies only to audiovisual services, for Canada it covers all cultural industries (as usually defined in its trade agreements). Is this a missed opportunity for both Canada and the EU to safeguard culture from trade, to reconcile rules of free trade and cultural policies' Can the inclusion of the UNESCO Convention in the CETA text help counterbalance and resist those principles of free trade that undermine necessary and legitimate cultural policies and regulations aiming to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions'This contribution will aim to explore answers to these questions taking the consolidated CETA text as a point of departure. After providing contextual information about the agreement itself and its evolution, key points concerning cultural exemptions will be examined with a political economy perspective to clarify up to what extent there will be room for manoeuvre to actually protect and promote the diversity of cultural industries.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9447

Title: The El Rey Network and the Re-Negotiation of the US Latino Audience

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Abstract: In this paper, I explore how significant developments in industry practice are challenging the boundaries that have long defined the television landscape. For over fifty years the very idea of Hispanic television has been based on the presumption of two mutually exclusive audiences: a mainstream audience that consumes English-language television and a Latino audience that consumes Spanish-language television. In recent years, this assumption has been complicated by a proliferation of new cable networks that are attempting to reach US Latino viewers with programming produced in Spanish, English or some combination of both. As the linguistic boundaries that distinguish Hispanic media from mainstream media become less defined, significant new questions emerge about the nature of competition within the television landscape. As with any industry that faces significant change, some players are poised to benefit while others stand to lose. By laying claim to an audience that has traditionally been defined as 'Spanish-speaking', Spanish-language networks have historically been successful at exploiting the system of differences to their advantage and thereby securing a profit of distinction. As larger, more established mainstream networks enter the Hispanic television space, however, they are re-defining the Latino audience in ways that more closely resemble the dominant population. This reconfiguration of the industry leaves the future of Spanish-language networks uncertain. Using Bourdieu's concept of 'linguistic capital' as an analytical concept, I examine the value of language as both a means of comprehension and a product that has currency in the marketplace. Focusing on the El Rey Network, an upstart cable network designed to engage young Latinos in English, I examine the ways in which television networks employ language as a device in which to create audiences. I argue that the El Rey Network and similar networks are attempting to re-constitute the Latino audience in ways that more closely align with the dominant culture, leading to forms of erasure that challenge the legitimacy of Spanish altogether. This paper fits directly with the conference theme of 'Hegemony or Resistance: The Ambiguous Power of Communication.' On one hand, upstart networks like El Rey are said to create new forms of inclusion such as greater racial, national and linguistic diversity for on-screen talent as well as more opportunities for Latino producers, directors and writers. Or do these changes mean, as Mari Castañeda Paredes (2001) has argued, that the proliferation of media directed toward U.S. Latinos does not necessarily signify that democracy is finally reaching Latino masses. Instead, it merely indicates that dominant players are employing new strategies for exploiting the economic potential of the Hispanic market.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9487

Title: The Planned Obsolescence of TV Journalism

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Abstract: While numerous academic studies have focused on news content, fewhave critically investigated the industry from the perspective ofthe contemporary conditions of producing local TV news and what goeson in the newsroom. Drawing on our backgrounds in the media and theuniversity, we discuss and analyze the trend toward theconsolidation of local news production and the paradox of expandednews hour allotments in times of shrinking staffs and less-trustingaudiences for this informational resource. We use a politicaleconomic frame in studying local news production, specifically the changinglabor conditions of newsroom personnel, examining what local TV newsworkers are facing in various major markets in the United States.For a more community-specific analysis, we spoke with long-timenewsworkers in large-market Portland, Oregon about their past andpresent experiences.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9563

Title: PANEL: The Ambiguous Power of the Commons Under Capitalism

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Abstract: The commons, as a concept and in practice, offers a unique framework for understanding resistant counter-hegemonic practices that resist the increasing enclosure of public goods and spaces. Indeed, the struggle to reclaim or create commons-based resources is occurring in many different fields: environmental, social, political, economic, cultural, communicative, digital, and more. However, all commons-based projects are faced with unique challenges when struggling against the capitalist tendency to privatize or enclose common resources. To that end, the members of this panel will explore the diverse ways that commons-based projects are struggling against enclosure. Further, they will reflect on the threats posed to commons-based projects by investigating the ambiguous power of the commons under capitalism. The panel includes the following papers: Benjamin J. Birkinbine, 'Free software and the corporate commons: Red Hat, Inc. and the ambiguous power of the digital commons'Dorothy Kidd, 'The commons and the contest over social reproduction: The case of the San Francisco BayGraham Murdock, 'Commons, communication, and crisis'Tewodros Workneh, 'State vanguardism and telecommunications as commons: Perspectives from the Global South'

Id: 9564

Title: PANEL: The Ambiguous Power of the Commons Under Capitalism

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Abstract: Paper Title: The Commons and the Contest Over Social Reproduction: The Case of the San Francisco BayThis paper elaborates on contemporary struggles over communications enclosures and media commons as conflicts over social reproduction. Simply put, social reproduction includes processes involved in (re) producing people and their labour power on a daily and intergenerational basis through the provisioning of material goods (food, shelter, clothing, health care); cultural forms and practices, including knowledge and learning, social justice and its apparatus, and the media (Ruckert 819); and various ideational elements, such as the production and dissemination of norms, values, and different types of knowledge, all important factors in the construction of individual and collective identities (Elson, 1998). Rather than being a subsidiary field of capitalist accumulation, social reproduction is key to capitalist development and especially the neoliberal capitalist turn, and integrally related to culture and communications (Huws, 2014). Nation states, corporations, and multilateral institutions are seeking to bring social life under regulation by market imperative, clawing back the gains for the 'social wage' (pensions, unemployment insurance, health and safety, child support, education) made by previous generations through programs of structural adjustment and austerity; and shifting social reproduction from a matter of public concern to one of private and individual responsibility (Lebaron, 2010: 891). In addition, the collective expression of people through cultural forms and practices, and our very 'sociality' has been increasingly privatized and commodified (Huws, 2014). Nevertheless, movements are resisting these capitalist imperatives by setting up social barriers to the further commodification of life and nature and creating 'communities of care,' and a larger politics of the 'common' (Federici, 2010). This paper draws from several different disciplines, including urban geography (Smith and Winders, 2008), autonomist Marxism (Federici, 2010, Jeffries, 2011) and Marxist feminism (Lebaron, 2010) and international political economy (Ruckert, 2010). I begin with an historical overview of the differences in strategy in the historical contests over social reproduction, between capitalist institutions (ranging from the behemoths of Silicon Valley to the World Bank), governments of nation states, and social justice movements of civil society. I then focus on the communications dimensions of current struggles over social reproduction in the San Francisco Bay, analyzing the emergence of cultural and communications commons among immigrant and African American youth. Both groups have been subject to the most brutal practices of the new market regimes of social reproduction ' the exclusion of immigrants from the right to maintain a family, to establish home and citizenship, to participate in schooling, healthcare and labour rights; and the exclusion of young African Americans from education via school closings, and cutbacks to educational support programs, criminalization and imprisonment. Nevertheless, both groups have made attempts to form cooperative arts and culture projects that assert their embodied presence in communal spaces and places, critique neoliberal organization of flexible and mobile labour, develop a politics of mutual aid

IAMCR2015

and care and express a common identity.

Id: 9565

Title: PANEL: The Ambiguous Power of the Commons Under Capitalism

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Abstract: Paper Title: Commons, Communication, and CrisisIt is now starkly clear that we are living with three interlinked crisis: economic, political, and environmental. Analysis within the critical political economy of communications has tended to focus on the first two, interrogating the tensions between democratic and emancipatory ideals and capitalist dynamics . This has produced powerful critiques of the distorting effects of the pursuit of profits and robust defences of public funding and regulation. In contrast, the issues raised by climate crisis have remained relatively under conceptualised and researched within the critical political economy of communications. Drawing on a range of recent writing and inquiry I want to argue here that recent debates around the idea of the commons offer a productive way of addressing this gap by:- restoring struggles over the command of key infrastructural resources to a central place in our accounts - detailing how prevailing system of communications production and consumption act as major contributors to environmental despoliation as well a key sites of labour and consumer exploitation- exploring the potential of commons based systems as the starting point for an alternative moral economy of communication rooted in revised conceptions of justice and sustainability

IAMCR2015

Id: 9566

Title: PANEL: The Ambiguous Power of the Commons Under Capitalism

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Abstract: Paper Title: Free Software and the Corporate Commons: Red Hat, Inc. and the Ambiguous Power of the Digital CommonsThe free (libre) and open source software (FLOSS) movement is generally lauded as the most notable example of the power of commons-based peer production (Benkler, 2006). Emerging in the mid-1980s as a response to overly protective proprietary software, the FLOSS community has been able to produce some of the most robust, adaptable, and scalable software projects in the world. As most of these projects are protected by copyleft licenses, the FLOSS community has reclaimed the digital commons by producing software that is freely available for anyone to study, modify, adapt, or use for their own purposes. However, these commonly held resources are also available to corporations and, in some cases, directly sponsored by corporations.To that end, this paper examines the ambiguous power of the digital commons by focusing on Red Hat, Inc, which is the largest and only publicly traded corporation whose business model relies entirely on free software products and services. Because Red Hat's free software projects are protected by the GNU General Public License (GPL), a copyleft license that requires derivative works to be made freely available, Red Hat cannot rely on traditional copyright protection to prevent others from using or producing copies of its software. As such, the company has had to rely on alternative methods for incorporating commons-based peer production into its corporate structure. To illustrate how Red Hat does this, I discuss the relationship between Red Hat Enterprise Linux, which is Red Hat's core commodity, and the Fedora Project, a free software project sponsored by Red Hat. The findings from this case study have important implications for our understanding of commons-based peer production under capitalism, and the ability of alternative intellectual property licenses to protect commons-based resources. In this sense, Red Hat provides an example of how corporate involvement in free and open source software projects illuminates the ambiguous power of the digital commons.

Id: 9567

Title: PANEL: The Ambiguous Power of the Commons Under Capitalism

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Abstract: Paper Title: State Vanguardism and Telecommunications as Commons: Perspectives from the Global SouthThe horizontal expansion of access has hardly caught up with the vertical upsurge of innovation in information communication technologies, making notions like 'bridging the digital divide' utopian, if not obsolete. On one hand, the global hegemony of neo-liberal capitalism has made access to information communication technologies a practice based on affordability and monetary value. On the other hand, states and their agents view the digital world as the next frontier of surveillance and 'digital imperialism,' a sort of rendition to George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four, thereby making access harmful or even undesirable at times. One of the very last breeds of state monopoly of telecommunications globally, Ethiopia presents a unique opportunity for a litmus test of whether universal access in telecommunications services could be achieved through state intervention. The Ethiopian state maintains (and will likely continue to maintain) its grip on the telecommunications sector of the country amidst persistent pressure from the IMF and the World Bank. The tensions between the interventionist policies of the Ethiopian government and the free market doctrines of the IMF and its associates indicate that the decades-old battle of Keynesian versus Hayekian ideals of economics and development is still relevant. The Ethiopian state rationalizes its refusal to open up the telecommunications sector by arguing that it views telecommunications as a vital driver of not only economic development but also equitable growth. Central to the Ethiopian government's argument is that the notions of universal access and universal service in telecommunications are critical to collective economic growth. Market forces, state officials argue, by the virtue of their profit driven ethos, will only seek the affluent and the privileged, marginalizing and further disenfranchising the poor. This paper, against the background outlined above, therefore, attempts to address the following questions: In an increasingly volatile and fiercely competitive technology market, to what extent is the universal service/access rationale of the Ethiopian state a credible proposition for state monopoly of telecommunications' What are the prospects/challenges of 'state vanguardism' in conceptualizing telecommunications as commons and communication rights, particularly in the context of the Global South and emerging economies'

IAMCR2015

Id: 9628

Title: The New Scarcity: Access Control as Monopolization Practice

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Abstract: The ongoing battle over net neutrality in the United States serves as an example of a new face of media monopolization practices. While commonly framed in terms of public utility versus private investment or as a question of whether all data should be treated equally, there is a another important underlying theme: the control of scarcity in the digital environment. As a concept, scarcity has long been understood to be a necessary condition of capitalism, though most discussion of it has focused on scarcity of physical goods. The rise of digital goods and services, however, represent a fundamental change in need of examination. Rather than simply being a debate about whether internet and telecommunications should be thought of as public utilities which suggest the public needs universal and unfettered access, the debate has also emphasized the possibility of the control of access - of enforced digital scarcity - as a new tactic of monopolization. For content, managing scarcity is nothing new; for distribution in a networked environment, scarcity has received less consideration. As digital content has proliferated, the role of distribution has been complicated. While still wielding considerable power in virtually every media market, distributors have seen their both their own roles and the challenges to them expand as digitalization has proliferated. Digital distribution has also enabled an escalation in piracy and significant changes in consumer behavior. As such, distribution must be thought of not just as an intra-industry service but also as a service between the industry and audiences. Such a shift in function has resulted in those firms controlling distribution to adopt practices designed to both manage and generate additional profit from audience behavior. Manufactured scarcity has become one of the chief tactics. This paper examines examples of manufactured scarcity in digital and networked markets in order to problematize it as an increasingly important tool in media monopolization and in the management of consumer behavior.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9687

Title: How Did They Get Here' The Likeable Engine, Dark Referrals and the Problematic of Social Media News Analytics

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Abstract: When Geert Lovink was writing Dark Fiber: Tracking Critical Internet Culture (2002, MIT Press) at the turn of the 21st century, before social networking platforms had been widely adopted, he envisioned a future Internet enclosed and controlled by corporate hegemony. Since then critical social media studies have taken a keen interest in the structuring analytics of these platforms and their 'double articulation' of communicative acts (Langlois and Elmer, 2013), where free social interaction is promoted in order for companies to aggregate, pattern, commodify and transform those exchanges. This paper investigates how such analytic strategies impact on online news production and publishing, via a case study of the Likeable Engine, a tool for tracking social sharing of news media in Facebook and Twitter. At the same time we problematize totalizing accounts of algorithmic efficiency in social media analytics and analyze challenges for publishers in understanding the origins of social traffic, including so-called 'dark referrals'.Social media sharing of news is now an everyday part of global online media use (Duggan et al, 2014; Newman & Levy, 2014) and its analysis is of great concern for journalists and publishers as news revenues decline. Data on what is shared, when, and how, informs editorial decision-making, resource allocation and corporate collaboration and is now a priority for publishers in a bid to follow audience preferences. Yet the methodologies of analytics services are far from transparent, and their reliability is questionable ' as can be seen in the recent 'dark social' debates over the disappearance or misrecognition of news sources (Edwards, 2014; Ingram, 2014). Analytics tools also hide the complexity of sharing, which is geographically and culturally dispersed (Reddit, Stumbleupon, Weibo, WeChat, WhatsApp, Line, KakaoTalk etc), and socio-technologically distributed via diverse forms of recommendation (share, like, rate, vote), as well as via direct referrals from email, SMS, search and apps. These observations underpin our Australian Research Council funded project: 'Sharing News Online: Analysing the significance of a social media phenomenon'. For the project we are collaborating with industry partners Mi9, trading as Australia's most popular domestic online news service ninemsn, and Share Wars Pty Ltd, a news analytics start-up, to understand the types and forms of news that are most shared. The genesis and focus for that collaboration, the Likeable Engine, tracks the sharing of news from 120 sites worldwide via Facebook and Twitter. Our paper evaluates how the Likeable Engine has been used to complement or direct existing editorial decision-making in commercial newsrooms. It examines the assumptions underpinning the Engine's development and

application, and discusses its implications for the shifts to monetised social sharing and analytics driven news. Finally, it explores the difficulties for this 'news by numbers' project in terms of understanding the cultural specificity, temporality, spatiality and intentionality of news sharing practices.

Id: 9740

Title: 'Whose Watching Is Work': Notes on the Political Economy of Broadcast Audience Measurement in the United States'

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Abstract: Political economists are well acquainted with Dallas Smythe's argument that all commercial media produce and sell one primary product: the audience commodity. In Smythe's view, all media consumers constituted the audience commodity and that commodity was demanded by all companies advertising on the media (Smythe, 1977). For Smythe, commodification of the audience effectively transformed leisure time into work time and the existence and demographics of the audience commodity were documented by 'A. C. Nielsen and a host of competitors' (Smythe, p. 5). Responses to Smythe both trimmed his argument to a more manageable form (Murdock, 1978) and expanded on his claim that the audience's exposure to advertisements engaged them in a form of labor (Jhally and Livant, 1986). Watching might feel a like leisure activity but its economic value made it a form of work, albeit unpaid work. This spurred much discussion on the work of watching in terms of traditional broadcasting. Much of this discussion rests on Smythe's assumption that advertisers' demand the entire population of television viewers and that commercial reports of audience viewing are akin to social science research. However, in the case of broadcasting in the US, neither assumption is tenable. The corporate history of audience measurement in US broadcasting strongly indicates that only those households selected for monitoring are actually generating value. That selection process is structured by continuities and discontinuities in demand for the audience commodity as well as by the corporate goals and economic constraints of the company making the selection. By implication, then, we may all be learning how to consume through our watching but only the people in the corporate sample are actually generating value and thus working. CitationsSmythe, Dallas. 'Communications: Blindspot of Western Marxism.' Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory, 1:3, 1-27, 1977.Murdock, Graham. 'Blindspots about Western Marxism: A Reply to Dallas Smythe.' Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory, 1:3, 109-119, 1978.Jhally, Sut and Bill Livant (1986.) 'Watching as Working: The Valorization of Audience Consciousness.' Journal of Communication, 36:3, 124-143.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9772

Title: Creative Industries: questioning Cultural ans Informational Industries'.

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Abstract: The objective of the communication is to question, beyond the politico--economic stakes, the cleanly scientifico-theoretical meaning of the substitution project of the Cultural and informative Industries by the Creative Industries.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9850

Title: Legitimation Crisis and the Contradictions of Technological Innovation in Mainstream Newsrooms

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Abstract: Mainstream news media are facing a legitimation crisis. Some critics point to the rise of blogging and citizen journalism to suggest that the old hierarchies of so-called legacy media are giving way to a democratized mediascape. They argue a sclerotic, industrialized model of news production is being replaced by a networked model of information production and sharing that fundamentally challenges established norms and professional standards. In the words of one critic: 'here comes everybody.' We concur that widely shared definitions of news value are being questioned, as is the modern separation between the business side of news organizations and editorial. However, in contrast to the more sanguine view, we use a political economy approach to examine how new technologies and newsroom labour strategies are constitutive of capital's need to constantly innovate in order to remain competitive and increase profits. The paper pays particular attention to the contradictions that emerge through this process between journalistic labour and capital. It then utilizes Jurgen Habermas's concept of technology as ideology to examine the discourse about technological innovation found in journalism trade journals and online sites. What becomes visible, we argue, is a contradiction between the drive to inscribe technological efficiency as a new standard of journalistic legitimation and journalism's historical public service role in liberal democracies.

Id: 9851

Title: There is No Snow in Silicon Valley: Materialities of Informational Capitalism in a Canadian Digital Tech Cluster

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Abstract: This paper is based an on-going ethnographic case study of a digital technology cluster in the region of Kitchener-Waterloo (KW), Ontario, Canada and its cultures of production and innovation. In the wake of the demise of RIM/Blackberry as a dominant player in the global mobile media and communication business, a vibrant network or "ecosystem" of tech startups, SMEs, incubators and accelerators has emerged in the troubled company's home of Waterloo.   The KW tech cluster was ranked 16th on a global ranking of startup ecosystems based in part on startup funding, output, performance, talent, and support infrastructure (Epson, 2012).and the New York Times published a front page article in December 2013 about the cluster entitled "A Snowier Silicon Valley in BlackBerry's Backyard" (Austen, 2013) Our argument begins with a critical appraisal of the rhetorics about the KW tech cluster development that are performed in the aforementioned TechCrunch/StartUp Genome and New York Times articles. These rhetorics embody an implicit and hegemonic narrative of digital tech development that locates "Silicon Valley"'with its valorization of venture capital led financing, technological utopianism, neo-liberal market fundamentalism, and ideology of innovation as disruption'as the inevitable telos of informational capital/ism. Such teleologies, we argue, elide the very different ways in which informational capital/ism has taken form in places other than "the Valley". In order to critically understand the specificities of informational capitalism as embodied in regional digital tech innovation clusters, we argue that it is necessary to use a multi-faceted media-materialistic approach (cf. Herman, Hadlaw and Swiss, 2014; Packer and Wiley, 2011; Parrika, 2012a, 2012b) As a coherent analytic, this approach identifies and examines several different registers of materialities that are articulated within a tech sector's "ecosystem." These registers include materialities of the political economy of institutional and organizational power; materialities of space and infrastructure embodied in regional geopgraphy, landscape, the urban built environment and workplace architecture; materialities of media forms and communicative practices enabled by their sociotechnical affordances;

IAMCR2015

and the of "matierialities of materials" (Parikka, 2012b) that can be ephemeral (code, electricity, Wi-Fi radio signals, light) as well as solid (glass, fiber optic cables, glass, silicon). We will argue that different varieties of informational capitalism can be discerned in specific articulations of these registers of materialities. Just as there is no snow in Silicon Valley, there is no such thing as a snowier Silicon Valley..

Id: 9855

Title: Rupert Murdoch's Humbling Days: Scandal - and Recovery'

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Abstract: In July 2011, one of the fiercest scandals to centre on the media in any English-speaking democracy broke out, when the Guardian reported how Rupert Murdoch's News of the World had hacked into the phone of a murdered teenage girl, Milly Dowler. The scandal rocked the Murdoch empire ' the corporation had to withdraw its bid for BSkyB; the News of the World was closed as a 'toxic brand'; Murdoch had to appear before a parliamentary committee ('the most humble day of my life'); the Leveson inquiry put a searching public spotlight on the unsavoury aspects of the tabloid press. A series of protracted civil and criminal court cases followed, and eventually News Corp had to pay damages to 718 victims of phone hacking; eight people have been found or pleaded guilty in relation to it; while several officials have been found guilty of receiving bribes, and several Murdoch journalists are still facing criminal charges.Nevertheless, according to the Financial Times, Murdoch 'has recovered much of the swagger lost during the phone hacking scandal'. It has been officially confirmed that neither the corporation nor any of its senior executives will face prosecution in the United States. A split in the Corporation, long urged by some financial analysts, has been a success, and the share prices have done well. Murdoch's favourite employee, Rebekah Brooks, was found not guilty after one of the longest trials in British criminal history. He has close connections with the Australian Government, whose election he strongly supported. The Republicans did well in the 2014 US Congressional elections, and his Fox News channel is still strongly profitable. He has placed his sons in strategic positions to succeed him.Although it is sometimes challenging to trace through the long-term and indirect effects of scandals, in the twilight of his career, Murdoch faces several problems to which the scandal has contributed. Most basically the medium term viability of News Corp is still problematic given the continuing sharp decline in the company's newspapers, and the very large losses some of them make. Murdoch's dynastic ambitions for his children are still very problematic. Despite controlling close to a majority of the voting shares, the Murdochs only own around 13 per cent of the total company. While Murdoch relishes being a polarizing political figure, there are some signs in Britain and the United States that his influence is waning, and is more contingent than it has previously been.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9862

Title: The realisation of capital and financialised capitalism : conflicts of time

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Abstract: My focus here is on the problematic relationship between the realization of capital and finance. For capitalism in general to reproduce itself money capital has to be realized through production, productive capital must be realized in commodity form and commodities must be realized as money in market exchange. Money surpluses accruing to capitalists then become the raw material for money capital to be re- invested in production. This general sequence is premised on the extraction of surplus value from labour during the production process. Independently of production ,merchant capitalists may purchase commodities cheaply and sell them at a profit (M-C-M). Alternatively,money lenders and speculators employ money to create monetary profit (M-M) a strategy which may expand to destabilize the capital realization process. In this context I will argue ,in contradistinction to David Harvey (in Limits to Capital) and Noel Castree , that the excesses of financial speculation (at the expense of capital realization) are not merely a symptom of over accumulation and under comsumption. M-M circuits of profit making are also structurally endemic to a system of financialised capitalism. Next I will critique Harvey and Castree`s conceptualisations of time within capitalism. Two lines of criticism are highlighted. First , clock time is assumed ,mistakenly, to be the only form of time reckoning which is central to the realization of capital in relation to credit and finance. This overlooks the proliferation of inter-networked real time alongside, yet distinct from, clock time. Second, Harvey and Castree simplistically conflate temporality with chronological time. A broader conception of temporality which acknowledges the inbuilt relationality of past present and future leads us to a deeper understanding of financialised capitalism- as a system which tends toward presentism, amnesia and myopia. These criticisms of Harvey and Castree will inform the theoretical argument of this paper. Two forms of time conflict pervade financialised capitalism; that between clock time and real time, and between presentism and temporality. In my view these conflicts are central to the causes and consequences of the 2008 financial crisis and to the continuing fragility of financialised capitalism on a global scale.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9949

Title: Communications Convergence and the Interplay of Power in the Current Indonesian Politics

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Abstract: The convergence between the internet, digital media and telecommunication has given rise to new modes of public communication, which Castells (2007) refers to as 'mass self-communication'. This phenomenon has challenged the formerly dominant traditional media companies in the social production of meaning or in shaping individuals' mind. In the case of Indonesia, mass-self communication has become a popular mode of communication especially among its young generations. Indeed, Indonesia has been awarded with the title 'social media capital of the world'. During Indonesia's recent presidential election in 2014, the Internet, especially social media, had played significant role in mediating the communicative power of Indonesian citizens; to get and share any information about both presidential candidates, encourage relatives and friends to vote, scrutinize the election campaigns, monitor the ballot-counting process, and point out any possible manipulations during the process. As it is reported by the ABC Radio National (2014) that 'in the lead-up to presidential elections on July 9, Indonesians are using innovative social media tools and smartphone gaming to sell their candidates, promote their interests, and even tackle corruption'They've been dubbed the 'social media elections'.'The enthusiasts of the current media environment, according to Karppinen (2009), tend to believe that new communications technologies have shifted control over communication from the traditional media institutions, as the powerful intermediaries and gatekeepers of public communication flow, towards individual audiences who are now have greater chance to independently create, filter, and share information (p.152). Compaine and Gomery (2000) are among the scholars who believe that the Internet will inevitably break up the concentrated media power since it lays the foundation for 'diversity, accessibility and affordability' (pp. 575). Corresponding to this optimism, my interviews with prominent figures of the Indonesian Ministry of Communications and Informatics (COMINFO) also reveal the utopian view upon the power of the Internet to end the dominant power of media conglomerates in Indonesian politics. However, this research provides evidence that technological convergence does not fundamentally end the dominant power of media conglomerates in Indonesia. In fact, it has led to industrial convergence; by opening up the possibility for and even forcing traditional media companies to expand their businesses to the telecommunications and Internet sectors. In parallel, telecommunications companies, that usually also provide Internet access, have also expanded their business to the media sector. Through mergers, acquisitions and strategic alliances, fewer conglomerations has managed to survive and currently control not only communications content through their media companies, but also communications infrastructure and networks though their telecommunication and Internet companies. These conglomerations have effectively consolidated to achieve greater economic, political and communicative power.Thus, by using literature review and policy analysis, this paper will examine the impact of communications convergence on the interplay of

IAMCR2015

power between ordinary citizens and media conglomerates in the current Indonesian politics. While technological convergence has provided greater communicative power for citizens, industrial convergence has enabled traditional media companies to maintain and even intensify their economic, political and communicative power. The unequal power relations is proven to persist.

Id: 9965

Title: Panel. Representing Opportunity, Resisting Inequality: Mediating Work in the Cultural Industries. A Class Act: Media, Policy and Questions of Inequality

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Abstract: Panel. Representing Opportunity, Resisting Inequality: Mediating Work in the Cultural IndustriesA Class Act: Media, Policy and Questions of InequalityKate Oakley, Professor of Cultural Policy, School of Media and CommunicationUniversity of Leeds, k.oakle_@_eeds.ac.ukThe last 12 months have witnessed an unprecedented media interest in questions of representation and inequality in cultural production. What has long been apparent to scholars in the field ' that the cultural industries are less ethnically diverse, more male and skewed towards those of a higher socio-economic background that most other parts of the economy - seemed to have become, at least briefly, 'news.' In the UK, where this research is based, the prominence of private school educated actors and singers in particular, caused something of a furore, particularly during the film and TV 'awards season,' in the early part of 2015 (eg.BBC News, 2015; New Statesman, 2015), while the announcement of the Oscars shortlist again raised questions about gender and ethnicity exclusion. David Oyelowo's non-appearance on the best actor shortlist for his performance as Martin Luther King in the film Selma, was seen as one part of a bigger problem, as all 20 acting nominees were white, all fifteen writers nominated in the screen categories were men and as Time magazine rather archly noted, 'seven of the eight Best Picture nominees are about a white man dealing with internal conflict' (D'Addario, 2015).The aim of this paper is to consider how both media coverage and policy responses frame the question of inequality in cultural production. It will consider how policy questions in particular ' access to education, student fees, unpaid work and internships ' are, or are not treated in media coverage of these issues and reflect on the complex role of the media itself ' particularly the broadsheet print media in covering a debate in which it is itself so closely implicated.

Id: 9966

Title: Panel. Representing Opportunity, Resisting Inequality: Mediating Work in the Cultural Industries. Spotting Talent and Making Selections: Inequality and Cultural Education

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Abstract: Abstract: Paper title: Spotting Talent and Making Selections: Inequality and Cultural Education   Mark Banks, Department of Media and Communication, Leicester What is cultural industry talent ' and how is it selected' This paper first suggests that while people may have innate capacities, the gifts of 'talent' and 'natural aptitude' cannot be distinguished from the social contexts in which they are defined and made manifest. Furthermore, in the cultural and creative industries, even if we accept that ordinary people might possess their own particular creative qualities or capacities (whether we believe these to be inborn or socially-ascribed) there is no guarantee that such attributes will be recognised or given opportunities to become cultivated or flourish ' because entrenched patterns of social and workplace inequality tend not to permit it. Yet this paper explores mainly how the discourse and mediation of talent (in various literatures, prospectuses, recruitment drives) serves also to cast a convenient veil over some exclusive and unequal systems of cultural industry education ' ones based on selections that favour the favoured and so pervasively undermine the very equalitarian structures they claim to support. As will be shown, institutions such as art schools, conservatoires and elite academies are revealed to be much less guilty of elevating and rewarding the naturally 'gifted and talented', than reproducing established prejudices and patterns of social advantage. Focussing especially on music and arts education in the UK, this paper explores the basis of making selections for art school entry, and by implication future creative careers.

IAMCR2015

Id: 9967

Title: Panel: Panel: Representing Opportunity, Resisting Inequality: Mediating Work in the Cultural Industries

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Abstract: Of Brogrammers, Arrivistes, and Women in Games: Inequality and Action in Digital Games ProductionThe hegemony of play (Fron, et al., 2007), an interrelated network of industrial norms, commercial trends, and technological inventions that serve to marginalize a range of players and producers, including women, is one that has seen sustained focus over the past few years, particularly in terms of women's work in the digital games industry. While the recent visibility of the Gamergate movement in the mainstream media would seem to indicate a particularly exclusionary and sexist moment in digital games culture, gender-based action for change in this creative industry has been the mission of a range of organizations for nearly a decade. In the last few years, established 'women-in-games' industry groups have been joined by community initiatives and organizations oriented towards attracting and supporting first-time female game designers.In this talk, we discuss Pixelles, a grassroots women-in-games community group in Montreal, as a case study to explore some of the issues implied in action addressing inequalities in the cultural industries. Specifically we probe the many ways in which this success story ' the development and growth of a robust, women-led forum for supporting and encouraging women interesting in getting into game design ' is complicated by broader questions about practicing cultural politics within creative work. How is this work and diversity measures therein subtended by political economic factors such as policy instruments and gendered divisions of labour'We address this question by contextualizing the development and expansion of Pixelles within Montreal's vibrant international game design scene comprised of an ecosystem of major developers (Ubisoft, Electronic Arts), venture incubators (Execution Labs), and a range of independent and grassroots development spheres, many of which are co-produced in partnership with universities. But for workers within digital games this vibrancy belies the fact that their labour is characterized by high degrees of precarity, including extended crunch time, intermittent employment, and high turnover rates. Women working in this environment face the additional risks posed by the lack of diversity and masculinist culture of game design (Consalvo, 2008).

IAMCR2015

Id: 9970

Title: Representing Opportunity, Resisting Inequality: Mediating Work in the Cultural Industries

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Abstract: This panel is concerned with how work inequality is both mediated and experienced in the cultural and creative industries. Despite claims that these rapidly expanding industries now offer the chance for 'talent' to rise, irrespective of social background or inheritance, the profile of the cultural workforce, and the beneficiaries of the cultural education necessary for industry participation, continue to demonstrate a marked social bias. More specifically, the absolute growth of creative participation and employment has not been matched any relative improvement in the opportunities and life chances for working-class, women or ethnic minority workers. The best and most prestigious jobs remain ring-fenced for the elite, while other kinds of people remain under-employed and under-rewarded. Indeed, this panel suggests that some recent political shifts, recessional economic pressures, and industry and media discourses that exaggerate the existence of 'opportunity', in an imagined 'meritocracy', and that give overt primacy to individualized (but socially-advantaged) 'talent', have tended to worsen, rather than alleviate, the career and wider life chances of socially-marginal or minority groups. The panel addresses some different ways in which this increasing inequality is understood and framed by the media, and then experienced and challenged by cultural workers. It focuses firstly on the ways in which class advantage - and a class critique - has come recently to the fore in public debates about UK creative industry employment; where news media demonstrate both complicity (and some resistance) to the growing monopoly enjoyed by social elites in the most prestigious kinds of creative employment. It then focuses on how discourses and mediations of talent, and processes of cultural labelling, are embedded in the selection processes and criteria of arts and cultural industry higher education, in the UK and beyond. The proliferation of individualised notions of talent (in educational literature, popular media, prospectuses and mission statements) is reflected in the processes of choosing and anointing the talented ' which, it is argued, often misrecognise social advantage as innate ability and potential. Here, the consequences for working class and ethnic minority education and employment are discussed, particularly in relation to music and other performing arts. Finally, the role of women in the games industry is discussed, and the consequences of the 'hegemony of play', as a kind of unfettered, but institutionalised informality, are considered. Yet, under conditions where women are often regarded as non-serious, subordinate participants, framed and mediated by a culture of sexism and misogyny, opportunities for political expression and resistance can present themselves. Using a Montreal-based case study, the possibilities and ambivalences of gender-based action in cultural work are explored, and the role of the resistant worker thereby foregrounded. ParticipantsKate Oakley, A Class Act: Media, Policy and Questions of InequalityMark Banks, Spotting Talent and Making Selections: Inequality and Cultural Education Alison Harvey and Tamara Shepherd, Of Brogrammers, Arrivistes, and Women in Games: Inequality and Action in Digital Games ProductionDiscussant: Nicole CohenChair: Mark Banks

IAMCR2015

Id: 10031

Title: Global Media Giants: The Walt Disney Corporation

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Abstract: The Walt Disney Company began as an independent company in the late 1920s producing cartoons distributed by other companies. More recently, it has developed into one of the largest entertainment conglomerates in the world. In 2014, Hoover's dubbed Disney the world's largest media conglomerate. But the Walt Disney Company is not only valuable in terms of revenues; it also rates highly in other areas. For instance, it was the highest ranked entertainment company on the Fortune 500 in 2014 (#61) and the only media corporation listed on the Most Admired Companies list (#7). The Disney brand is regularly ranked in the top ten of numerous lists, including the Global RepTrak 100 (first in 2014) and the Top 150 Global Licensors. In 2013, the Disney Company was ranked first in the 100 Most Loved Companies rankings and second in Moms' Most Loved Brands. How has the Walt Disney Company been able to achieve and maintain this kind of success and popularity' What are the goals and policies that contribute to this success' To answer these questions, it is necessary to understand the company's organization and strategies. Disney describes itself as 'a diversified worldwide entertainment company,' so it is important to understand their wide-ranging products and services. This chapter will begin with a brief history of the Disney Company, followed by a more recent overview of the company's economic, political and cultural activities.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10044

Title: Welcome to Comcast Country: A Political Economic Tour

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Abstract: As one of the largest communications firms in the United States, Comcast commands a dominant position in multiple markets, both locally and nationally. It is a massive corporate media conglomerate, an internet service monopoly, and a shrewd political player. How did this enormous corporation evolve from its humble beginnings with the purchase in 1963 of a 1,200-subscriber cable system in Tupelo, MS to become the global giant that it is today' Comcast's rise to power over the last 50 years is astonishing. Just within the last decade, its profits have increased sevenfold, up to $6.8 billion in 2013. Although today it is famously poor in customer service standards, Comcast has managed to dominate several communication industries. It is the largest internet service provider, holding a 20.5 percent share of the US market. With more than 22 million video customers, Comcast is the largest multichannel television distributor. Only Netflix serves more video subscribers'and it pays to deliver its service through Comcast's transmission lines. In our home city of Philadelphia, Comcast holds tremendous influence on a wide range of business and civic operations, and by all definitions is a monopolistic internet service provider. Its national reach is equally impressive. At the end of 2013, its infrastructure passed almost 54 million homes and businesses. If successful in its bid to purchase Time Warner Cable, the company would be the only option in high-speed internet provision for nearly two-thirds of the households in its coverage area'which includes operations in 39 States and the District of Columbia. How has Comcast been able to achieve this success' What political tools does it have at its disposal' How does Comcast exert its considerable economic power' To address these questions, we draw attention to the company's organization, business strategies, and political influence. We try to make sense of Comcast's sometimes-bewildering array of acquisitions and holdings, ranging from regional stations to sports teams to theme parks. We look closely at the company's local operations as a major employer and property owner in a fiscally-strapped city struggling to support public services as basic as education. We also assess Comcast's political contributions to specific campaigns, politicians, and ballot initiatives at the State and Federal levels. Just from 2010 on, Comcast, which also operates its own political action committee, has spent more than $78 million to exert leverage on legislative processes. This paper offers a brief history of Comcast, followed by a more recent overview of the company's economic, political, and cultural operations. Paying close attention to publicly available data and other documentation, this paper provides a political economic analysis of Comcast and the enabling structures'policies, discourses, and lobbying'that paved the way toward its dominance.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10065

Title: The Left-wing governments and digital televison in Uruguay

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Abstract: Los gobiernos de izquierda y la televisión digital en UruguayUruguay acaba de completar diez años de gobiernos 'de izquierda' y se encamina hacia otros cinco. Las políticas de comunicación en general y la televisión digital terrestre (TDT) en particular ocuparon un lugar relativamente marginal en la agenda del primer gobierno (2005-2010) y más importante en la del segundo (2010-2015). Una evaluación de lo avanzado en este terreno en estos diez años es un insumo imprescindible para imaginar las posibilidades y los desafíos para el tercer gobierno que está comenzando y para la discusión académica y política más general. El trabajo que presentaremos es fruto de un seguimiento sistemático del tema a lo largo de diez años, a través de documentación, diálogos y entrevistas con los principales actores, análisis comparativos con otras experiencias nacionales y la participación en varios espacios de consulta y asesoría técnica para la elaboración e implementación de algunas de las políticas y regulaciones del sistema mediático y de la televisión digital en Uruguay. Dos proyectos de investigación que estamos coordinado, uno concluyendo y otro comenzado, enriquecen también la evaluación: la aplicación de los Indicadores de Desarrollo Mediático de Unesco en Uruguay y un proyecto sobre TDT interactiva.Analizaremos en primer lugar el marco regulatorio general de las comunicaciones en Uruguay y los cambios producidos en la última década, deteniéndonos en algunos hitos relevantes: la Ley de Radiodifusión Comunitaria en 2007, los cambios en el sistema regulatorio del sector comercial de medios en 2008 y la Ley de Servicios de Comunicación Audiovisual (LSCA) en 2014. También alguna políticas relevantes del período, especialmente las referidas al sector de medios públicos. Confrontaremos estos avances con el programa del Frente Amplio, la coalición de izquierda gobernante, cuyo eje central es la democratización de las comunicaciones con participación social.Abordaremos luego el caso específico de la televisión digital. Por un lado lo hecho por el primer gobierno, que tomó decisiones sobre la norma técnica a utilizar, optando por la europea, pero al no establecer el marco regulatorio para la adjudicación de frecuencias no produjo avances sustantivos. El segundo gobierno revisó la norma técnica por razones geopolítica, optando por la nipo-brasileña, diseñó el marco regulatorio y, tras marchas y contramarchas por presiones políticas y empresariales, realizó las adjudicaciones de licencias en 2013. Posteriormente el avance ha sido extremadamente lento y hay quienes temen un relativo fracaso en el despliegue de la TDT, por no haber considerado adecuadamente las variables técnicas, económicas y políticas en juego. La tardía aprobación de la LSCA tuvo un impacto importante en esta dificultades.Finalmente analizaremos los escenarios posibles para 2015-2020, para las políticas de comunicación en general y la TDT en particular. Nos detendremos en la implementación de la LSCA, que seguramente enfrentará diversas dificultades, y en las condiciones para un efectivo despliegue de la TDT con potencial democratizador, como sigue proponiéndose la izquierda en el programa para su tercer gobierno.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10081

Title: Stealth Marketing: You can't resist what you cannot see

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Abstract: On October 14, 2012, Felix Baumgartner attempted to do the impossible'dive from outer space going faster than the speed of sound. But this risky endeavor wasn't a NASA mission or a physics experiment out of Carnegie-Mellon. It was an extreme event developed and paid for by Red Bull, a producer of energy drinks popular with teens, young adults, and college students cramming for finals. Spectacular events like this with stunning or surprising visuals are part of a growing phenomenon known as content marketing, a subset of a larger overall trend toward undetectable commercial messages known as stealth marketing. Stealth marketing is defined as 'the use of surreptitious marketing practices that fail to disclose or reveal the true relationship with the company that produces or sponsors the marketing message' (Martin and Smith, 2008). The goal of this content is clear: find ways to get products in front of people without them realizing they are being persuaded to purchase and, particularly in social media, get them to push the products to their friends.The problem with this is two-fold and relates directly to the focus of the conference: 1) hegemonic corporate messages have overtaken what has traditionally been the purview of editorial boards as the wall between church and state (editorial content and advertising) have all but disappeared, and 2) consumers have few ways to resist these messages because in most cases they are unaware that they are interacting with biased corporate communication. Thus, these stealth marketing tactics eliminate personal agency. In this paper, I will present the changing expenditures and structures within the advertising industry that have grown up to accommodate this increasingly prevalent marketing strategy, taking a particular focus on content marketing companies. This analysis is based on two years of research attending numerous conferences as well as personal interviews with marketing executives. I will argue that the changed political economy of the industry that relies on surreptitious corporate messages has serious consequences on consumers' ability to resist these messages. While concerns and consequences are many, for this paper I will focus on the traditional line between church and state collapsing and with it the symbolic cues that enable us to know when we are engaging with sponsored content. Case studies of BuzzFeed and The New York Times/Orange is the New Black will be presented as emblematic of current trends.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10085

Title: Panel: Labour Communication: Networked Solidarity, Autonomous Media, and Collective Organization

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Abstract: Chair: Errol Salamon (McGill University)Discussant: John Downing (Southern Illinois University, Carbondale)Panel Abstract: This panel addresses the communicative dimension of labour conflict and collective organization in an increasingly flexible, digital, and global economy. In recent years the forms and practices of alternative media developed from below by social movements (Downing 2011, Lievrouw 2011, Kozolanka, Mazepa and Skinner 2012) and the expansion of communicative, informational, and knowledge-based labour in the media and communication industries (Mosco and McKercher 2008, Huws 2014, Qiu 2012) have been the subject of sustained research by critical scholars. Relatively little attention however has been given to what this panel refers to as labour communication, or the media technologies and communicative strategies developed by workers, their organizations, and their allies. Seeking to address this gap through critical engagement with workers, this panel addresses the history, contemporary articulations, and theoretical aspects of labour communication. The first paper proposes the concept of autonomous communication to examine the communicative dynamics of precarious labour activism in creative industries (Brophy, Cohen and de Peuter). Investigating the case of the Stories of Solidarity project, the second paper (G. Drew) discusses the process of working with undergraduate students, community leaders, labour organizers and workers to brainstorm and prototype a new labour-based social media platform. Fashioning a labour history of democratic media, the third paper (J. Drew) argues that although much attention is focused on the social media practices of students, youth, entrepreneurs, and venture capitalists, many currently innovative ideas actually originate from efforts to organize a labour response to global capitalism. The fourth paper (Renzi) broadens the scope of our inquiries from organizing 'cognitive labourers' in the creative industries to the creative labour of organizing, understood here as the affective, communicative, and collaborative dimension of a variety of practices of resistance to communicative capitalism (Dean, 2012) that are facilitated by social and networked media. References Dean, Jodi (2012) The Communist Horizon. London: Verso.Downing, John D. H., ed. (2011) Encyclopedia of Social Movement Media. Thousand Oaks: Sage.Huws, Ursula (2014) Labor in the Global Digital Economy: The Cybertariat Comes of Age. New York: Monthly Review Press.Kozolanka, Kirsten, Patricia Mazepa, and David Skinner, eds. (2012) Alternative Media in Canada. Vancouver: UBC Press.Lievrouw, Leah (2011) Alternative and Activist New Media. Cambridge, UK: Polity.Mosco, Vincent and Catherine McKercher. (2008) The Laboring of Communication: Will Knowledge Workers of the World Unite' Lexington Books, Lanham, M.D.Qiu, Jack Linchuan. 2012. 'Network Labor: Beyond the Shadow of Foxconn.' In Studying Mobile Media: Cultural Technologies, Mobile Communication and the iPhone, edited by Larissa Hjorth, Jean Burgess, and Ingrid Richardson, 173-189. London: Routledge.Panel PapersLabour Messaging: Practices of

Autonomous Communication - Enda Brophy (Simon Fraser University), Nicole Cohen (University of Toronto Mississauga), Greig de Peuter (Wilfrid Laurier University)Designing Labor's Response to Precarity Through Social Media - Glenda Drew (University of California, Davis)Labor Communications: The Long View - Jesse Drew (University of California, Davis)From Organizing Labour to the Labour of Organizing in Communicative Capitalism - Alessandra Renzi (Northeastern University)

Id: 10086

Title: Labour Messaging: Practices of Autonomous Communication

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Abstract: This paper examines communicative dynamics of precarious labour activism in creative industries. It is often noted that it is hard to organize workers in the arts, media, and cultural sectors due to the prevalence of self-employment, the project-based organization of work, the informality of labour markets, and the spatial dispersion of the workforce. Despite these challenges, however, we argue that the flexible labour forces integral to the creative economy can and do exercise counter-power around livelihood issues, especially, we contend, through their communication practices. Cultural workers are trained in and have at their disposal media tools and communicative capacities that can be turned to alternate ends, including contributing to the construction of 'infrastructures of dissent' (Sears 2007) against precarity. Drawing on interviews from a multi-city study of precarious labour politics in creative industries, this paper examines three threads of communicative activism among flexworkers in creative industries. One, collective identity concerns flexworkers' involvement in struggles over the meaning of their employment status and the labour they perform. Resisting individualizing conceptions of creative work and proposing collective identifications are foundational to the building of relations of solidarity among workers in precarious employment within and beyond core creative industries. Collective labels such as 'precariat,' 'independent worker,' and 'art worker' are part of a struggle over meaning within and against neoliberal narratives that swing between denying labour-based identities and celebrating cultural workers as contemporary capitalism's role model. Two, counter-publicity encompasses the creation and online circulation of media that raise awareness about precarity, examples of which include the platform politics of intern activists' name-and-shame social-media tactics, the leveraging of celebrity in campaigns to improve labour standards, and the staging of creative direct actions and cultural productions. And three, networked solidarity designates the role of the internet and other ICTs in aggregating and supporting mutual aid among dispersed workforces. The paper assesses some theoretical and political implications of these communication practices for the argument that 'communicative capitalism' neutralizes dissent, dissipates activism, distracts energies

IAMCR2015

from institution building, and substitutes interpassivity for collective action (Dean 2012). While mindful of the limitations of communicative practices for disrupting prevailing ideologies and structures of power, we highlight the ambivalence of the competences and infrastructures undergirding contemporary communicative capital: workers who principally labour with language and other symbolic forms, inhabit a network milieu, perform, and develop media, have at their disposal resources that potentially amplify their voices and gather their powers on issues that a multitude of workers, not just media labour, confront today. We conclude by recasting collective identity, counter-publicity, and networked solidarity as practices of autonomous communication, which contribute to the building of infrastructures of dissent in the face of spreading precarity. References: Dean, Jodi. 2012. The Communist Horizon. London: Verso.Sears, Alan. 2007. 'The End of 20th Century Socialism" New Socialist 61: 5-9.

Id: 10088

Title: Designing Labor's Response to Precarity Through Social Media

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Abstract: Rapid technological change, globalization of production and markets, and volatile competitive conditions have contributed to growing insecurity in the conditions of labor. The contemporary workplace is less frequently a site of long-term stability and thus collective experiences of work have been eroded as a basis for solidarity. In recent years, however, we have seen growth in innovative communication strategies that are connecting people around broad labor issues that impact workers across multiple industries and in geographically dispersed locations. Workers centers, immigrant rights networks, and broad sector organizing of entire industries, such as goods distribution (from ports, to warehouses, to Walmart) and food chain industries, have all emerged in recent years as new models of organizing for economic justice in the workplace. This research paper illuminates the use of new communications technologies used by organizers of precarious labor sectors to build new solidarities among workers. In particular, the paper looks at social media platforms that encourage workers to share stories and build solidarity with each other, contributing their stories to a public database as part of a wider labor movement. The paper begins with the question of how a new approach to social media and other participatory projects can address the needs of low-income workers and support building solidarity. Using the project Stories of Solidarity as an example, the paper discusses the process of working with undergraduate students, community leaders, labor organizers and workers in order to brainstorm and prototype a new labor-based social media platform. Outlining the process of interviewing labor and community organizers to build a project from the ground up presents an example of one model useful for future collaborative, interactive communications projects that can be adapted to other movements for social change. In particular, the paper addresses the rising importance of digital storytelling in conveying the lived experiences and material conditions of workers in precarious employment.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10089

Title: Labor Communications: The Long View

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Abstract: This paper makes the case that communications innovation by the labor movement is an important, yet often overlooked, contribution to the evolution of new forms of local, regional and global social networking. It points out the many contributions labor communications activists have made in building the foundation for new democratic communications that are having a profound impact on movements for social change. Although much attention is focused on the social media practices of students, youth, entrepreneurs, and venture capitalists, the paper argues that many current innovative ideas originate from efforts to organize a labor response to global capitalism. Labor activists were one of the earliest users of the internet, using labor-oriented BBSs, for example, developing horizontal communications to build cooperation in bargaining against multinational corporations seeking a complacent and cheap international workforce. Contemporary capitalism depends to a great extent upon communications technologies to maintain contact and control of enterprise over great distances, relying upon an aggressive strategy of an international division of labor and comparative cost advantage. Labor organizations, in turn, have tried to develop their own modes of communication to parallel the manufacturing and supply chain along these same communications paths. To a large extent, it was the movement of industrial production to Mexico and to less developed countries (LDCs) offshore that spurred US labor to seek communication channels with workers in other nations. In the early 1990s, for example, North American unions such as the United Electrical Workers (UE), the Teamsters (IBT), the Communications Workers of America (CWA), the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), and the United Auto Workers (UAW) began to maintain strategic communications with counterparts in Mexico such as the Frente Auténtico del Trabajo (FAT), the Sindicato de Telefonistas, and the Ford Workers Democratic Movement, hoping to build communications channels to coordinate activities, share resources, and establish common bonds in order to bargain more effectively with the multinational corporations. As new forms of participatory media emerge, workers continue to develop networking that is truly worthy of the name 'social.' Labor activists have been on the leading edge of innovative networking, and this paper gives their work closer investigation.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10090

Title: From Organizing Labour to the Labour of Organizing in Communicative Capitalism

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Abstract: Recent studies on precarious labour conditions and on the role of communication in contemporary capitalism have shed light on the modes of work, subjectivities and forms of resistance yet to receive attention in traditional labour studies. At the same time they also enable us to broaden the scope of our inquiries from organizing 'cognitive labourers' in the creative industries to the creative labour of organizing'the affective, communicative and collaborative dimension of a variety of practices of resistance to communicative capitalism (Dean 2012) that are facilitated by social and networked media. This paper discusses this communicative and affective dimension within recomposing activist formations that emerge specifically around crowd-mapping platforms for social justice. As a form of crowdsourcing, crowd-mapping uses platforms that solicit services or content for the production of maps from a large group of people, especially from an online community. The unpaid and voluntary labour that characterises social media in general and crowdsourcing in particular fulfills a key function in communicative capitalism, which thrives on the capture and monetization of free labour of users/workers, who are willingly exploited (Terranova 2000). In the context of activism, however, the habits of communication and the subjectivities facilitated by commercial crowdsourcing platforms make it easier for groups to come together and interact, raising awareness about deportations (e.g. Map Mos Maiorum), reporting on violence (e.g. Ushaidi), or coordinating relief efforts (e.g. Petajakarta). To expand on research about precarious labour organizing and autonomous communication, this paper draws attention to the beginning of a recomposition of a field of antagonist practices (Palano), which binds together to an unprecedented degree new communication infrastructure on one hand, and the production of social relationships that rely on it, on the other. It uses the examples of the crowd-mapping platforms Ushahidi, Petakajarta and Map Mos Maiorum to examine new mutations in practices of solidarity, cooperation and mutual aid as they are mediated and shaped by technical forces like algorithms and platform design. Indeed, as some crowd-mapping platforms automate the process of collaboration by harvesting data that circulates on social networks without the intentional participation of groups of users, how do we define solidarity and collaboration' The paper contends that the structure and forces of communicative capitalism that tap into networked collective intelligence also foster novel processes of subjectivation where the assembling of bodies, technology and data have started sustaining forms of mediated relationality that trouble established anthropocentric notions of agency and resistance to capitalism. References: Dean, Jodi. 2012. The Communist Horizon. London: Verso.Terranova, Tiziana. 2000. "Free Labor: Producing Culture for the Digital Economy " Social Text no. 18:33-58.Palano, Damiano. 2007. Il bandolo della matassa. Forza lavoro, composizione di classe e capitale sociale: note sul metodo dell'inchiesta. Intermarx. Rivista virtuale di analisi e critica materialista. Accessed May 12, 2014 http://www.intermarx.com/temi/bandolo.html.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10168

Title: Public Policy and TDT consumption: a study of digital TV penetration in Argentina

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Abstract: Since 2009, the process of deployment of digital terrestrial television (DTT) in Argentina has involved a major activity by the State. Particularly, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner's administrations (2007-2011 and 2011-2015) adopted the Japanese-brazilian technical standard for DTT, supported the installation of distribution antennas, facilitated the purchase of decoders, and stimulated the production of TV shows for the new digital format. In a country where pay TV penetration (cable & satellite) reaches 85% of households, it is worth inquiring about the effect of those policies, as well as if is it possible to verify that users are shifting from pay TV systems to digital broadcast.This paper shows the results of the analysis on the impact of communication policies developed in the last five years of the implementation of DTT, with particular interest in the effects on the uses and consumption of TV. The research is based on evidence obtained from a fieldwork in the suburbs of Buenos Aires, using quantitative and qualitative techniques.The aim of the research is to assess the results of the implementation process of DTT policy, as well as identifying how the people access to the TV system and how they appreciate their own consumption of information and culture, in order to help policymakers to design specific public policies in the sector.These are some of the main findings of the research:'   High penetration of analogue TV and an emerging trend to replace them for digital TV sets (LED, LCD, etc).'   Plans for promoting social access to the new technology.' High awareness of DTT by the provision of guidelines.' The main way of accessing to DTT is through the decoders provided by de national government for free.'   Although considering the whole universe of the survey the penetration of DTT was low (5%) in absolute terms, analyzing those who receive analog

broadcast television (but are not pay TV subscribers), the penetration of DTT rises reaching almost 20% of households.This presentation will be focused on how the population access to digital television and the consumption appreciation of its users.

Id: 10199

Title: Digital television revolution or re-concentration of the market: case of Russia

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Abstract: In this paper we will show how the digital terrestrial broadcasting reform imposed in Russia and promoted at the highest level during last 7 years leads to the major changes within the configuration of the television ownership. Analysis of the ownership of two main multiplexes launched in Russia according to our own classification of capital (Kiriya, Degtereva, 2010) shows that state-owned as well as controlled by persons linked with a power by personal influence and rent networks, will progressively increase their coverage. On the contrary private owned foreign television channels as well as regional television channels will progressively disappear from the most popular broadcasting platforms and will be facing the shortages in audiences. In other words, government promoted reform "of modernisation of national TV" is finally oriented towards increase of hegemony of state-controlled television channels in order to reproduce current political relations and fracture within the public sphere (Kiriya, 2014). Kiriya I., Degtereva E. (2010). Russian TV market: Between state supervision, commercial logic and simulacrum of public service, Central European Journal of Communication. 2010, Vol. 3. No. 1(4). P. 37-51.Kiriya I. (2014). Social media as a tool of political isolation in the Russian public sphere, Journal of Print and Media Technology Research. Vol. III. No. 2. P. 131-138.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10203

Title: Uncovering the Nature of Media Bias: The Role of Media Structures

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Abstract: Media systems have undergone dramatic changes in recent decades. Both the economic downturn and the rise of the Internet challenge legacy media fundamentally. In search of viable business models, some media companies have started to make use of media bias in order to differentiate their products from the ones of their competitors (Hallin, 2006; Mullainathan and Shleifer, 2005). Biasing media coverage has become profitable to the extent that it responds to audience tastes and positions media outlets in a certain brand location (Hamilton, 2004). Given these developments, studies of media bias mainly focused on the relationship between media and politics and addressed the extent to which news coverage grants more visibility and favors certain political trends, parties, or actors, and frames certain political issues. Scholars also argued that media bias takes place where there are e.g. common political views between media outlets and politicians, organizational ties between parties and newspapers, journalists' political stances affecting their news decisions, or one-to-one correspondences between media and parties in a given country (Hallin and Mancini, 2004; Patterson and Donsbach, 1996; Seymour-Ure, 1974). Accordingly, previous research investigated the media in its political context in order to clarify the rationale and direction of media bias.However, media structures and the profit maximizing nature of mass media have often been neglected in the debates on balance in media coverage. Yet in order to understand media bias it seems necessary to couple the debates in journalism and political communication with insights provided by research about media policy, cultural industries and critical political economy. The way media organizations, media industries, and media markets shape media content, and the consequences of the commercial institutionalization of most media outlets need to be incorporated into the study of media bias in order to better understand how owners and advertisers might try to exert power over content and thus decrease the autonomy and independence of journalism.As Hesmondhalgh (2013) puts it, media companies seek to promote their own interests, the interests of their industry, and the interests of business and the social class that owns them by shaping the content they provide to the public. In this context the proposed presentation identifies three main trends in current media environments: Media organizations are i) tailoring media content to the preferences of most profitable audiences and avoiding media products preferred by minorities who are neglected by advertisers, ii) ignoring and silencing those media policy issues that challenge the structure, functioning, and legitimacy of current media industries (e.g. Freedman, 2010), and iii) producing content that does not call into question the status quo and that avoids making

IAMCR2015

economic and political elites accountable (e.g. McChesney, 2008). The presentation thus aims at introducing a broader understanding of media bias that stems from the need to look at the role of media's economic motivations and accounts for the impact of increasingly non-contestable markets on news media content.

Id: 10253

Title: Mediaset: The secret dream of every media mogul. Panel Global Media Giants

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Abstract: With Net revenues amounting to 3.414.7 billions of Euros, Mediaset, the brainchild of Italy former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, is positioned 39th place in the annual ranking of the 50 world's biggest media corporations (Media Database, IFM 2014).But Mediaset is more than a successful media company. What makes the company the secret dream of every media mogul is its unrivalled concentration of symbolic, political and economic power that has been influencing the fate of the Italian society for more than 3 decades. This paper traces the growth of Mediaset's unravelled power, by looking at specific case studies that unveils the significance of its influence within the political, economic and cultural domains. In 30 years after the launch of the local private TV station TeleMilan, Mediaset turned into fully vertically integrated corporation that controls each phase of the television business in a networked structure mainly based in Italy and Spain (through Telecinco group) : it spans from content production (e.g., Videotime and Fascino-Produzione Gestione Teatro) to advertising (publitalia 80) and licensing of rights for films and sports events, from packaging (RTI and Gestevision Telecinco), from transmission and distribution networks (Elettronica Industriale)
While many large media conglomerates exert political influence via financial contributions and through the editorial content of specific media platforms, Mediaset' unmatched power was due to the arrival of its owner Silvio Berlusconi onto the political scene .Berlusconi was prime minister in 1994, between 2001 and 2006, and from 2008-2011. During this time Mediaset has steadily expanded and dictated not only media policy, but also the cultural, political and public ethos of the country.

Id: 10265

Title: A 'frustrated politician': Rupert Murdoch and the contest of ideas

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Abstract: Rupert Murdoch is the world's most famous media proprietor, with his companies, News Corp and 21st Century Fox, typifying the entwined processes of globalization and conglomeration. Yet Murdoch is more than merely a shrewd businessman interested in the expansion and profitability of his corporations, as some researchers have concluded. Indeed, Murdoch has demonstrated a clear interest in politics and the contest of ideas, and he has a history of using his media to influence political discourse in Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. This paper explores Murdoch's media power. It begins by exploring his close relationship with Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, including Murdoch's recent activities on Twitter, where he provided frank advice to the Prime Minister and called on his Chief of Staff to resign. It then considers Murdoch's previous relationships with former prime ministers in Australia and Britain, as well as his relationships with presidents and presidential candidates in the United States. These historical examples expose a consistent pattern of political interventions and lobbying activities that go beyond a 'media mogul seeking market expansion' and show that Murdoch is a 'frustrated politician who can't leave politics alone'. The paper then considers the role played by Murdoch in creating a newsroom culture that promotes self-censorship by acquiescent employees, and which influences the focus and tone of parts of his news media. Several bodies of literature inform this paper. The first is the scholarship concerning the nature of media power, with this study utilising theories of discursive power, resource power, access power and network power to consider Murdoch's political influence. The article also reviews the findings of several academic cases studies on Murdoch's political activities and ideological enthusiasms in order to provide a meta-study overview of his involvement in the creation of discursive formations. Ultimately, this article demonstrates that researchers need to consider how the contest of ideas in the political public sphere is increasingly a communication battle fought by well-resourced institutional hierarchies, such as Murdoch's News Corp, versus expanding networks of citizens using social media for political communication and agenda setting.

Id: 10306

Title: Theorize New Media and Cultural Regionalization in Asia

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Abstract: This paper explores the potential theoretical framework to study new media and cultural regionalization in Asia. The paper argues for a hybrid regionalization framework to examine the increasingly complicate media flows that circulate in the digital space of Asia. Literature in Asian popular culture has emphasized the theoretical aspect of global-local connection when discussing the theoretical influence of cultural imperialism theory and globalization theory in media and culture studies in Asia. As some literature focuses on the context of the 'West', scholars problematize Asia as non-west with cases that study the hegemonic cultural order from the US and Japan. In additions, some other literature examines the mystification process of a homogenizing Asia. This discussion notes the nature of hybridization as Asian popular culture forms its discursive cultural layers in the current form of regionalism.This purpose of this paper is to extend existing theoretical discussion on Asian regionalism to further problematize the un-identified politics existing in the inter-regional Asian media flows. The paper uses political economic analysis to argue for a heterogeneous view to Asian popular culture. The paper will examine the meaning of regionalization by opening up power politics taking place at the sub-regional levels within 'Asia'. This paper will also further problematize the indication of 'hybridization' by discussing the unspoken hegemonic process that takes place at the many liminal locals within Asia. The paper proposes a de-centered regionalization concept to study the unstable dimension of Asian popular culture. It will conclude with new discussion to reframe the ideological relationship between corporation, nation-state and labor in the field of political economy of international communication.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10309

Title: Laboring in Turkish Soap Opera Industry: Rating Wars, Time Pressure, and Precarity

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Abstract: Western media has recently highlighted the role of Turkish soap operas within the Balkans and Middle East in relation to their cultural and social impact on gender identity. Turkish soap operas have also been foregrounded by cultural observers and critics as part of the nation's emerging 'soft power' in the 'New Middle East.' However, academic scholarship has neglected the working conditions and organization attempts of soap opera workers. Drawing on ethnographic research in Istanbul, this paper investigates the experience of soap opera workers (above and below the line) in Turkey to expose the 'blindspot' of cultural production of 'soft power'. Deploying the scholarship on creative and immaterial labor and their critiques (Mayer, 2011; de Peuter, 2011; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011; Hearn, 2010), I argue that there is a strict class division across soap opera workers. As in other media industries, social networks and cultural capital strictly drive entrance to the market. The interest of the state in regulating the ratings system further complicates the labor process by creating a situation where many shows cannot see more than 10 episodes, leading to normalization of intermittent employment and precarity. However, the organizational attempts of both above and below the line workers underline the fact that insecure employment is not a destiny. Finally, this paper critically addresses the discourse of 'digital labor' by way of underlining the materiality of labor, whether it is on computers or on glamorous TV screens.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10349

Title: The Political Economy of the Internet and Social Media's Development in China

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Abstract: This presentation conducts a political economy analysis of the Internet and social media's development in China. Dallas Smythe (1994) asked in the early 1970s in his article 'After Bicycles, What' what direction the adoption of television would take in China and if it would imitate the Western capitalist version of television or not. Today the same question needs to be asked about online and social media.First, the presentation outlines a theory framework for understanding the political economy of corporate online and social media. It is based on an analysis of various forms of, digital labour, online commodification, targeted advertising, and ideology.Second, the presentation analyses government discourses about the 'digital revolution' in China. It analyses the discourses about the 'digital revolution' in crucial government documents. These documents include the Chinese President's reports to the Party Congress, records of conferences specifically about ICTs and policies on ICTs, etc. It also analyses the main party newspaper RenMinRiBao (The People's Daily) from the beginning of the development around 1990 until today. The sampling focuses on direct quotes of government officials and comments about the 'digital revolution'. The comments column on RenMinRiBao is authorised by the Chinese Communist Party that uses the column for representing its opinion. The method used for this empirical study is critical discourse analysis. This analysis expects to unveil the government's endeavour to promote the ideology that the development of the Internet in a capitalist way is in the interest of the public. Third, the presentation concludes that the development of the Internet and social media in China is not a 'revolution' in the interest of the public, but a development that reflects the role of capitalism in China and primarily benefits political and economic elites. The censorship of the Internet on the one hand and the commercialised and capitalist Chinese Internet on the other hand play a role in this context and can be situated in the context of an authoritarian model of capitalism in China.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10352

Title: Cruel Power and Smart Capital in the Korean entertainment business : The Changing Organization of Audition Programs

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Abstract: The success of the Korean Wave in driving exports of popular drama and popular music, and the associated synergy effects on tourism and national branding, has cemented perceptions of the entertainment business as a high value added business and major economic growth engine .Using the case of audition contests to 'discover' new singers and performers, this paper explores the changing power relationship between broadcasting, companies and entertainment conglomerates This format was not entirely new in Korea. In the 1980s~1990s, the terrestrial broadcasting stations had run audition programs featuring campus youth or ordinary people , sponsored by the station itself. But these programs were discontinued . When the format was re-launched it was re- modelled on the major western exemplars , American Idol, Voice of Holland, The X Factor, Britain's Got Talent , that had been so successful in global markets. All three major terrestrial broadcasters launched audition format programs, KBS's Top Bands, My Last Audition, MBC's Come Into The Great World, SBS's K-pop star, and were matched by the biggest cable broadcasting network, CJ E&M owned TVN , which ran two variants, Super Star K and Voice of Korea.These new formats were built around new relations with both advertisers and the major entertainment conglomerates. Major companies, including Coca-Cola, KB bank, and CJ beverages struck exclusive sponsorship deals. Contestants were increasing managed by the big three domestic entertainment conglomerates, SM, YG and CJ E&M, who selected hopefuls and put them through systematic training regimes This institutional formation was anchored in turn in a neo-liberal ideology in which the 'Winner takes all' and there is no mercy for a loser. Smart capital, based on calculation of economic returns , is matched by the cruel symbolic power that demeans the losers and blames their lack of success on their personal failings and inability to meet conventional expectations.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10399

Title: The Extension of Governmental Hegemony: Mainstreaming and Systematization of New Media in China

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Abstract: This paper tries to analyze the mainstreaming and systematization of new media in China and demonstrate the extension of governmental hegemony in the new media.The emergence of new media, especially micro-blog, is of great political significance in China. Due to the lagging consciousness and management of government, new media have picked up some chances to break the blockade line established by the government and its mainstream legacy media in communications. They are one of the first choices for the lower classes to pursue democracy and maintain their rights. Recent years, some public events that caused extensive discussion in the new media have pushed certain political reforms from the bottom up. New media now are placed on a great hope of democracy. However, as they have brought about some uncontrollable factors to the management, and even have challenged the authority of the government, the latter wants to limit new media into its jurisdiction. As a result, since August 2014, the government has been giving great impetus to Media Convergence. It gives huge financial aid to the mainstream legacy media to help them set up their subordinate new media, in order to seize voice from commercial new media and the public on the one hand, and bring all of the new media into the same management system of legacy media on the other. This measure is followed by a series of relevant actions: suppressing opinion leaders on micro-blog, banning foreign TV series and so forth. Meanwhile, in administration, the government is maintaining its dominant right in politics and ideology through positive institutional improvement, thus deconstructing political agendas in the new media. Take anti-corruption as an example, the government strongly suggests the public to report corruption phenomena on the website of The CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI). So with the popularity of that website, anti-corruption on micro-blog has decreased rapidly in 2014, resulting in the political agendas limited within the control range of the government. In a word, new media which once brought great hope to the democracy in China are facing the crisis of mainstreaming and systematization. They may probably become the next tool of governmental hegemony.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10439

Title: Entrepreneurial Strategies from Spain to the United States in the context of cultural industries: hegemonic dislocations to debate

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Abstract: As part of their strategies of internationalization during this last decade, a significant number of Spanish cultural industries have considered the United States as a land of opportunity amid the Latino 'boom'. Before these last attempts, for several years only some public groups such as CRTVE (Corporación de Radio Televisión Española) or private corporations such as Atresmedia (former Grupo Antena 3) had a residual presence in certain US Spanish-language cultural markets. After the economic crisis of 2008, a growing number of companies from Spain have developed new strategies looking for a better commercialization of their products in US publishing industry (such as Santillana or Planeta) or media business (such as Prisa or Mediaset). These conglomerates have received support in three different aspects: a) from public administration policies dedicated to encourage processes of internationalization of Spanish companies in America b) from collective strategies developed to consolidate Spanish companies incursion in North American markets, or c) joint-ventures with local partners in the United States.The main objective of this proposal is to examine these public and commercial strategies, confronting them with the criteria of hegemony and sociolinguistic resistance. We seek to understand how the growth of Spanish language audiences has impacted media production and distribution or media and cultural consumption processes. From the political economy of the media we analyze the ambiguity of the 'Latino Power' by confronting how US-born and immigrant Latinos have became a large group of consumers but still have a long way to increase their political impact. We argue that transnational perspective helps us better understand the large and complex groups and communities whose members were born in Latin America but also those who are growing and developing abroad, conforming outgrowing transnational Hispanic audiences in North America and Europe. This proposal based its analysis in the Latin American political economy of the media approach, focusing the investigation in understanding the role of cultural industries in our contemporary society. This contribution links the analysis of Spanish cultural industries in Latin America and their liaisons with Spanish-language and Latino-oriented media in the United States. Special emphasis is given to current trends in industrial patterns and conglomerates. Methodologically, this research combines review of secondary sources such as data analysis and statistical projections with qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews with key actors in the industry.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10447

Title: Streaming and the Struggle over Music Space

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Abstract: 15 years after Napster and a decade since iTunes Store was launched, the download - as a recent Billboard article puts it - appears to have hit middle age. Digital music purchases have been on the decline since 2013, replaced largely by the rapid adoption of music streaming services such as Spotify, Pandora, SoundCloud, and Rdio.   In this paper, I examine the political economy of the emergent music streaming sector by illuminating the mutually constitutive processes and struggles involved in constructing online music streaming spaces. I argue that music streaming services can be understood as the latest stage in the ongoing struggle to transform what Henri Lefebvre (1991) would refer to as the 'social spaces' of peer-to-peer filesharing services into measurable, quantifiable 'abstract space' ' the space of capitalism.   As music fans increasingly stream music from 'the cloud', all listening-time has become data-generating time. Music streaming services use this detailed knowledge about their listeners to not only offer song recommendations but also to precisely segment their listeners by 'lifestyle category' and perceived 'worth', allowing advertisers to target their messages to distinct listener profiles. This algorithmic sorting of listeners is part of a larger trend as companies and campaigns utilize 'big data' to segment and 'socially profile' individuals (Gandy 1993; Turow 2007, 2012).   Music streaming space, however, much like urban space, is an always-conflicted nexus where abstract space collides with social space. For example, the popular streaming service 'Soundcloud' has been celebrated for its ability to foster grassroots connections and collaborations amongst musicians and fans. However, recent re-designs of the service, changes to its privacy policy, and the announcement that advertising will be introduced, have angered many early adopters. They claim that Soundcloud is experiencing a loss of community as it attempts to placate its investors and become profitable. Some critical users have even called for a mass exodus and a transfer of support to alternative, more 'grassroots' services.   Music streaming services represent the fastest-growing source of revenues for the music industry and are seen by many as the future of music distribution and consumption. To-date however, little attention has been paid to the wider social implications and tensions that accompany the shift to streaming. By explaining the data-driven economics of these services, and looming conflicts between 'abstract' and 'social' space, this paper is an attempt to begin such a conversation. ReferencesGandy Jr, O. H. (1993). The Panoptic Sort: A Political Economy of Personal Information. Critical Studies in Communication and in the Cultural Industries. Westview Press, Inc.Lefebvre, H. (1991) The Production of Space. Blackwell: Oxford.Turow, J. (2007) Breaking up America: Advertisers and the new media world. University of Chicago Press.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10501

Title: Taxing Justice: U.S. ICT firms, Global Finance and De-funding the Public

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Abstract: Over several years, elected representatives in the US have been conducting inquiries into how US corporations avoid taxation. The anxiety about lost revenues has become increasingly urgent due to the impact on public policy. A variety of committees have pursued the practices of major American firms which avoid contributing to the nation through taxation. ICT firms are noteworthy, including Microsoft, Apple and Google, all mainstays of US corporate life, with high market valuations, a massively embedded global user base and a deep impact on cultural and social life. These firms have been noteworthy for their reluctance to participate in the processes of national Government and the public interest through taxation. For example, in 2012 the US Senate announced that it would be 'examining how multinational corporations (MNCs) headquartered in the United States transfer intellectual property and the profits they generate, to offshore jurisdictions and avoid U.S. taxes.' The steady stream of concern about the way ICT firms have avoided fiscal citizenship has not been restricted to the US. The European Commission, the British Government and the Australian Government among others ' in both social democratic and liberal conservative traditions - have launched inquiries and made strong statement about the way ICT firms operate to avoid national finance obligations. Furthermore, the case of the Irish Government's industry policy, which offers ICT firms maximum tax advantages to base their operations in the country with minimal benefits for the nation when viewed in monetary terms, is an extension of the concerns expressed by the US, the EC and the UK. Promoted within financial market opening and privatization, the policies that have been refined by U.S. ICT firms to leverage neo-liberalism as the de facto world economic system. As the above quote from the US Senate indicates, the processes involve a complex of homeland obligation minimizations that include Intellectual Property ownership. The revenues derived from ownership of digital knowledge circulates globally, while the property rights holders reside in the United States. Many Free Trade Agreements promoted by the US Government in alliance with US corporations have highlighted the protection of Intellectual Property as priorities in the communication sector. These and other strategies ' such as compliant Irish Government policies - are used to avoid U.S. firms' obligations at home. They are constructed and publicly presented as responsible management techniques by for-profit enterprises, whose obligations are directed by the idea of assisting themselves, not the nations in which they are based. This paper seeks to provide a critical political economy framework to describe the complicated way ICT firms have contributed to the ideological repositioning of private interests as superior to national interests and to public policy. The paper will identify the way tax obligation avoidance has been portrayed as an ethical concern across the political spectrum, speculating on the cause, namely, an emerging anxiety by governments and bureaucrats about the impact of lost resources from ICT firms and a commensurate loss of the rationale for government itself.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10509

Title: The Universe of Underclass in the Flat World of Information, Communication and Technology

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Abstract: This paper is about the life and working conditions of the tech sector underclass: the janitors, security guards, fast food delivery service professionals and car pool drivers who work in and around global technology parks. These are the outsourced service workers who work in the global information, communication and technology (ICT) corporations (often the foundation of other media industries), be it in Silicon Valley, Waterloo, Bangalore, Shanghai, or in Dublin. The common experiences uniting these employees are long hours with minimal benefits and work conditions that often violate basic labor laws. The paper draws on my ethnography which looked at the laboring experiences of support service workers in the $118 billion Indian information technology (IT) industry, one of the global centers of IT.Thomas Friedman says the world is flat, and in this flat world created by digital capitalism, a new digital labor force now supposedly enjoys greater freedom, more bargaining power and flexible work schedules. My research fieldwork in five Indian cities where global and local IT companies are concentrated challenges the meaning of this flat world in terms of the daily life experience of the workers. How do the demographics and employment data stand up to the promises of the digital world ' a world without barriers and hierarchy' And how are these laborers, who usually arrived from the rural and semi-rural areas negotiate the homogenization effect of globalization in an alien urban life space'I used a stratified purposive sampling method to select participants (110 interviews) in five Indian cities, where the IT companies are concentrated. The data collection was conducted through a structured questionnaire based on past and present living conditions (demographic and employment), and it was followed by in-depth interviews regarding their life experiences.My fieldwork suggests that though the workers, men and women, suffer under precarious working conditions earning between $150-200 per month, working 6 days a week, 10 to 13 hours every day, no work no pay, most of them feel that they have a better living standard compared to their life in the villages. But the flight from the debt and misery of village life to working in a Microsoft development center as a security guard does not ensure the celebratory state of a new life. The meaning of a globalized world mediated by high technology capitalism does not always end with extolling the virtues of network society, but it often come up with the demand for less hours of work, secured benefits and habitable living conditions. Going beyond the hegemonic triad of freedom, flexibility and innovation of the digital society, the ethnography of the workers in the tech. sector suggests how each of these optimistic adjectives have a Janus faced existence, in particular, when it comes to these workers everyday struggle against contractors, corporations and various other hegemonic relations in an increasingly privatized urban space.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10514

Title: The political economy of over-the-top video distribution in Canada: Towards a consumer sovereignty regime'

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Abstract: Canadian critical political economists and economists alike have long argued that the country's media regulator, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission has been under regulatory capture by the private sector, and that its role as guarantor of Canadian national cultural expression is subordinate to its role as facilitator of capital accumulation in the Canadian media sector. The regulator's recent treatment of OTT services, however, suggests that a shift may be taking place with respect to state protection of national capital accumulation in the Canadian media industry. The CRTC has permitted Netflix, and a growing list of other foreign over-the-top (OTT) video services, to provide Canadians alternative access points to professionally produced audiovisual content outside of the regulated national system, which currently consists of programming delivered through cable, satellite, over-the-air, and IPTV. Although some evidence has emerged that the activities of Netflix have negatively affected the Canadian incumbents' financial performance, the regulator has thus far denied the incumbents' requests to force Netflix to contribute financially to the public-good dimensions of broadcasting in Canada, notably through requirements to distribute original Canadian content. Instead, the Commission has on several occasions reminded incumbents that the online space is theirs to conquer, and that they must innovate and be more responsive to the new 'me-viewer' who demands more control over the content she watches than ever before. Although Canadian broadcasters Bell, Rogers and Shaw have recently launched their own video streaming services, none have been made available to Canadians without proof of subscription to the companies' traditional television services, or high-end Internet packages. Thus, even though the Commission has high hopes that a move away from the cultural protectionist model will foster innovation, resistance from Canada's powerful vertically and horizontally integrated media players, who control traditional TV distribution, broadband, and mobile, threatens this envisioned ideal. This paper examines the political economy of over-the-top video distribution in Canada, and the Commission's objective of transitioning the country's media policy

IAMCR2015

away from a regime of cultural protectionism, to one of consumer sovereignty. Using the critical political economy approach as its orienting lens, this paper probes the power dynamics that undergird an industry in transition, and interprets the ideological and practical tug-of-war that exists between the Commission, foreign-based streaming services that are active in Canada, and the country's conglomerated media players. Through an examination of publicly available documents, including filings to the CRTC, letters to shareholders, public marketing materials and other relevant resources, we aim to describe, analyze and interpret the diverse and conflicting interests that exist in the streaming video realm. If consumer sovereignty is becoming a foundational principle of media policy, how does it reconcile with the traditional objectives of media policy enshrined in the Broadcasting Act regarding national, regional, and cultural representation'

Id: 10539

Title: Social media in times of neoliberalism: Connective action or polarization of the public debate'

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Abstract: The election victory of Syriza in Greece has illustrated that there exists a deep conflict between neoliberal forces that strive towards austerity policies as a way to overcome the consequences of the global crisis of capitalism and the (protesting) population that is no longer accepting that they have to suffer from these policies. This debate is strongly mediatized and both opposing parties aim to influence the mainstream media and the ensuing public discourse through the use of social media.Social movements and protest have received academic attention since a long time. A lot of research scrutinized the impact of social media on public debate and democracy, especially around large-scale events and movements such as Arab Spring, OccupyWallStreet and Indignados. Particularly, the organizational dynamics of collective action have been studied (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012), as well as how social media are used for facilitating protest in crisis capitalism (Fuchs, 2014). This paper especially focuses on the polarization of public debate and how both positions towards austerity (neoliberals versus societal movements and unions) make use of social media to get support for their perspective. This contribution centers on a case study in Belgium. In the last months of 2014 labor unions organized different strikes, culminating into a national strike on December 15, to raise their disagreement with policy measures proposed by both the national and regional government. Since the elections of May 2014, neoliberal powers are in charge at both government levels. In order to convince public opinion, proponents and opponents were heavily relying on social media to influence public debate. This resulted in broad discussions about the austerity policies but also about the role of unions and the legitimacy of organizing strikes.The aim of this paper to investigate social movements and protest by combining two logics: the logic of connective action (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012) and the social media logic (Van Dijck & Poell, 2013). While the first concept can help to understand whether and how digital media change the dynamics of action, the latter allows investigating how mainstream media are increasingly influenced by the dynamics of social media. On the empirical level, this paper draws on the analysis of both social media and mainstream media. By combining network and content

IAMCR2015

analyses of Twitter data we want to detect how the opposing parties in the austerity debate use social media, to identify who are the dominant voices and how they are connected to other stakeholders like politicians and media representatives. Simultaneously, by reconstructing the representation of the austerity debate in the mainstream media, we want to analyze the dynamics between social media and mass media as well as explore the contradictions of social media power.

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Id: 10543

Title: Hegemony in resistance' Moments of the U.S. network neutrality debate in neoliberal times

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Abstract: In February 2015, the United States Federal Communications Commission appeared poised to do what longtime activists in broadband policy thought impossible even as recently as a year ago: to 'reclassify' broadband provision as a service governed under Title II of the U.S. Telecommunications Act. In so doing, the FCC was turning a decade's-worth of its own policy moves on their head. In contrast to 2010's halfhearted effort by Obama's first FCC Chairman, Julius Genachowski, the Thomas Wheeler FCC's new rules (outlined at time of writing via a fact sheet issued by the agency) would outright disallow internet providers from blocking, throttling, and offering paid prioritization aboard both wired and wireless networks equally. Alongside setting an (as yet unspecified) new standard for future practices disallowing providers from harming users or edge providers, the Commission claims its authority to examine peering arrangements between network providers themselves. This represents a grand shift in the Chairman's own stance, who just under a year ago would have allowed explicit paid prioritization to occur; the shift is particularly remarkable given the terms of debate have changed little in the last decade-plus. This presents an important opportunity to take stock of what really has been gained. Drawing from archival materials, comments from FCC proceedings, interviews with key actors, popular press and trade press accounts, my paper presents a comparison of three moments in this debate's history: the open access debates which gave rise to network neutrality debates in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the disappointing 2010 Open Internet proceeding, and the present conjuncture. In so doing, I elucidate new quandaries with which activists will need to contend: how we consider activism takes on a new shape in the present neoliberal environment. Too often the issue is posed strictly in terms of a battle between 'open' versus 'closed' architectures; posited in Wu's The Master Switch as 'The Cycle,' the emergence of nascent new open technologies and their eventual closure is taken to be the dominant trope of communications history in the U.S. writ large. The questions that emerge gravitate toward the effectiveness of activist strategy and who or what may have 'captured' the FCC. While important, I argue that these effectively erase some of the most important questions we should be asking. Recent efforts, amongst others, as Dan Schiller's Digital Depression, Vincent Mosco's To The Cloud, and the overarching narratives of David Harvey provide valuable insight into the broader moves afoot. However, I believe an additional perspective is crucial for us to consider as we reassess what media policy activism 'means' in our time. Philip Mirowski's efforts to discern the roots of neoliberalism explicitly as a thought collective are terrifically revealing when applied to the network neutrality debate and its antecedents: the underlying justifications matter, and matter materially, particularly as U.S. policy continues to foment a ripple-effect across the globe.

IAMCR2015

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Title: GMG: Televisa. Addressing Media Power from Latin America.

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Abstract: As the most important producer of audiovisual contents in Spanish Language, Televisa has been considered over the years as the most influential television company in the Spanish geo-linguistic region (Sinclair, 1999), especially in Latin America. It has to be said that Televisa began its emporium since the beginning of the broadcasting in Latin America- since the 20's-.First, with radio and later with TV. During the second part of the twenty-century, the company built a strategic alliance with the Mexican government commanded during 70 years by the same party 'Institutional Revolutionary Party, better known as PRI-. The outputs of this alliance were, for the Mexican Media Company was to operate a private TV monopoly and developed a global powerhouse of audiovisual contents, especially Telenovelas. In the case of the Mexican governments, they received back a TV system were the possibility of the critical information was constrained to the government interests. In one word, the Mexican regime had a domesticated television press (Sosa & Gómez, 2014). This is important to underscore, because since the 60's the Mexican citizens has as its main source of information the TV. These historic conditions (Mosco, 2009) gave to Televisa Group three important levels of Power: economic power, symbolic power and political power. This paper will analyses these different levels of media power (Freedman, 2014) to give sense of the role that Televisa has in Mexico as a factual power, but at the same time, as part of the top 50 global media companies. In the last decade, Televisa is growing and expanding its business to other media sectors as telecommunications and has important media investments in US and Spain 'just to remark the most important markets-. This case of study will give some inputs to discuss the different roles that are playing -and played- the hegemonic media giants around the world in a context of marketization (Murdock & Wasko, 2007), convergence (Murdock, 2002) and concentration (Winsek, 2011). References.Mosco, V. (2009). Political Economy of Communication. 2nd Edition, London, UK: Sage.Murdock, G & Wasko, J (2007) Media in the age of Marketization. Hampton Press: NewJersey.Murdock, G (2002) Back to work: cultural labor in altered times in Andrew Beck (Ed) Cultural Work. Understanding the cultural industries (pp. 15-36). London and New York: Routledge.Sinclair, J. (1999). Latin American Television: A Global View: A Global View. NY: Oxford University Press.Sosa, G y Gómez, R (2014) En el país Televisa en Rincón, O (ed.) Zapping TV. Elpaisaje de la tele latina. Bogota: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Winseck, D., & Jin, D.Y. (eds.) (2011). The Political Economies of Media: TheTransformation of the Global Media Industries. London: Bloomsbury

Id: 10586

Title: PANEL: China's Internet Giants: A Rising Force' The Political Economy of Internet through Four Case Studies

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Abstract: [Framing Text]This panel strives to unpack the multidimensional political economic dynamics that have shaped and responded to the Internet development. Specifically it situates the Internet development and expansion in post-Mao China. By examining the enabling and constraining forces and the political economic power around the building of Chinese Internet industry, the panel aims to provide analytical insight into the political economy of Internet industry. We are at a time when the Informational Communication Technologies (ICTs) and China constitute two poles of growth in the current global structural reconfiguration of the capitalist communication system. Historically perceived as a repressive authoritarian regime, China is now aggressively integrating and expanding into the global capital cyberspace. In particular, it has an Internet market with an unrivaled scope. In order to make sense of the simple question of how it gets here, the panel gives primary attention to the two types of shaping pressures and constraints that bore on the growth of technology: the role of state agencies and the role of different units of capital in and outside China. The four research projects land on four specific case studies in the Internet development, through which the specifics of how technological infrastructure have been designed and produced, how capital and state power have been distributed, how labor has been organized, and how China and the wider world relation have been shifted, are unveiled. The four cases presented in this panel are Huawei, Tencent, Alibaba and BeiDou, each representing a different aspect of the trend in Internet industry- ICT equipment and service, social media based entertainment network, e-commerce, and indigenous satellite system. By detailing the

IAMCR2015

ownership and control, the state-capital relation, the inter-capital and inter-state rivalry in the Internet industry, the panel calls for a further examination of the institutional roles, structures and impacts on the Internet and therefore casts new light on the way technology being institutionalized under the political economic forces.   [Panelists]Yun Wen, School of Communication, Simon Fraser UniversityMin Tang, Department of Communication, University of Illinois at Urbana-ChampaignHong Shen, Institute of Communication Research, University of Illinois at Urbana-ChampaignOi Yan Ng, School of Communication, Simon Fraser University[Panel Chair]Yu Hong, Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California[Discussant]Yu Hong, Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California

Id: 10587

Title: PANEL: Capitalism and Freedom: Populist Keywords and Tropes

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Abstract: In his Preface to Economic Democracy (1985) Robert Dahl defines 'economic liberty' as subordinating the right of self-government to the right to private property, whereas 'political liberty' subordinates the right of property to the right to self-government. For Dahl, political inequality results when primacy is given to economic liberty, although the hegemonic view is that unchecked economic liberty leads to political equality. Perhaps the most influential statement in defense of economic liberalism is Milton Friedman's (1962) Capitalism and Freedom, which argues that capitalism is the necessary precondition for political freedom. Friedman's view has been a major ideological export of the United States, for example, via the US-trained Chilean economists appointed by military dictator Augusto Pinochet, known as the 'Chicago Boys.' Without denying that economic and political liberalism are inextricably related, C.B. MacPherson's (1973) critique of Friedman ' titled 'Elegant Tombstones: A Note on Friedman's Freedom' ' makes a strong case that economic freedom follows, rather than precedes, political freedom, and that political freedom is the foundation upon which the liberty of capital accumulation is derived. MacPherson effectively explains how liberalism has delivered to the rich the benefits of a political ideology that legitimates the upward redistribution of wealth. Consistent with MacPherson's perspective, the members of the proposed panel take as their starting point the need to call into question the merits and validity of the claim that economic freedom begets political freedom. In doing so, they embrace the heuristic spirit of Raymond Williams's Keywords (1976) by exploring specific case studies about education, food politics and media reform, each of which illustrates how the language and theology of liberalism is used to provide 'freedom' for the few at the expense of the many. The questions that each panelist will explore with the cases presented will be: What role does populism play, either to contest or to embrace, the language and underlying logic of economic liberalism' And in what ways can we imagine populist movements resisting and successfully opposing the hijacking of the language of liberty by theologians of economic liberalism'

IAMCR2015

Id: 10592

Title: PANEL: Capitalism and Freedom: Populist Keywords and Tropes

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Abstract: 'Accountability' in Public Universities: 'elegant tombstones' of liberal values There is no better exemplar of C.B Macpherson's argument that liberal political institutions are the foundations upon which capitalist development and profiteering flourish than the public university in Canada and the United States; it is truly a 'tombstone' of liberal values. To be sure, the public university has always worked to support national productivity and industry while promulgating values of democratization, open access, and moral uplift. But, over the last several decades, its mission has moved well beyond training individuals for capitalist markets under the guise of liberal enlightenment. In 1996, Bill Readings argued that the public university had become a 'bureaucratically organized and relatively autonomous consumer-oriented corporation' (Readings, 11) in and of itself. Since that time, processes of capital investment and the laundering of public money into private gains have only intensified. Now a mall, bank, entertainment complex, branded lifestyle, construction site, tourist destination, and retail enterprise that peddles 'innovation,' 'creativity' and 'information' alongside its branded hats and hoodies, the public university has become, in Brian Whitener's and Dan Nemser's (2012) terms, the 'new university of circulation': an institution primarily dedicated to facilitating the flows of over-accumulated capital, trading students, construction contracts, endowments and debt like a Wall Street brokerage firm. The infiltration of public universities by private capital over the past decades has been enabled in large part by internal performance management and budgetary measures imposed in the name of transparency and public/popular 'accountability'. This paper will examine one salient example of these measures - Responsibility Centered Management (RCM)- in order to illuminate the deep contradictions inherent in the liberal keyword 'accountability'. Introduced in the 1970s, RCM strives to 're-align' faculty autonomy and collegial governance by 'giving schools and other revenue-generating units the responsibility to cover the total costs of their programs' from the revenues generated by their teaching, research, or business service activities' (Strauss and Curry, 3). As scholarly departments, food services, parking, residences, and other university sectors are reduced to comparable and competitive units for the generation of revenue, under RCM, 'efficiency', 'expediency', and 'productivity' emerge as the public university's new core values, and the university's 'accountability to society (becomes) solely a matter of services rendered for a fee' (Readings 32). Smuggled in under the sign of public accountability, then, is a wholesale dismantling of the public university's stated mission of democratization and public access.

Id: 10597

Title: PANEL: Capitalism and Freedom: Populist Keywords and Tropes

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Abstract: Capitalizing on the Civil Rights Movement's Legacy: Media, Corporate Education Reform, and the Ideological Management of Populist AspirationsIn January 2002, shortly after signing into law the No Child Left Behind Act, US President George W. Bush declared education 'the great civil rights issue of our time.' A decade later, President Barack Obama, whose Race to the Top initiative extended the principles and practices of his predecessor's education policies, echoed that assertion: 'education inequality is the civil rights issue of our time.' Both Bush and Obama have identified themselves as education reform presidents and their signature presidential interventions'No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top'have played a powerful role in the rise over the past three decades of what is called the 'education reform movement' in the US. Directed primarily at low-performing urban school districts with majority low-income African American and Latino students, driven by education entrepreneurs, billionaire foundations and hedge fund managers, and buoyed by bipartisan political endorsement, the education reform movement is premised on market-based values'accountability, choice, competition and entrepreneurialism'and market-driven strategies, including deregulation, privatization, data-based decision making, high-stakes test-based evaluation for students, teachers and schools, and weakening of teacher tenure and seniority rights (Ravitch 2010; Saltman 2007). In light of the primary student population targeted by education reformers, the prevalence of civil rights references is not surprising. By invoking the legacy of the black civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, when African Americans fought to end racial segregation and discrimination and win a measure of political and economic equality with whites, education reformers seek to imbue their ends with an egalitarian patina that belies the anti-democratic character of their means. As key resources and sites for the selection, orchestration and distribution of social knowledge, media are central to the process through which the education reform movement has come to be identified as a champion of disadvantaged children. This paper explores the process through which the language and aspirations of the black civil rights movement have been appropriated by the predominately white, elite forces of education reform to 'radically reshape the purpose, structure and governance of public education' (Scott 2012, 5). Focusing specifically on the New York Times'as the preeminent elite US news organization deeply connected to centers of political and economic power'this paper examines the uses of keywords and concepts associated with the black civil rights movement within Times' editorials and commentary pieces from 1983 (when the seeds of the corporate education reform were planted) to the present, employing a combination of content analysis across the entire set of editorials/columns and critical, interpretive analysis of a selected subset of same. It also asks whether these tropes and keywords might yet be retrieved and reinvigorated with a collective and egalitarian spirit and goals.

Id: 10600

Title: PANEL: Capitalism and Freedom: Populist Keywords and Tropes

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Abstract: Against Corporate Libertarianism: Positive Freedoms as Foundations for Media ReformThe US media system is fairly unique among democracies. It is primarily a commercial system that is dominated by a small number of corporations, lightly regulated in terms of public interest protections, and offset by weak public alternatives. This was not inevitable or natural; it resulted from the outcomes of specific policy battles, and from specific logics and values triumphing over others. One way of understanding this logic (associated with what I refer to elsewhere as 'corporate libertarianism') is to focus on the emphasis on negative freedoms (freedom from) as opposed to positive ones (freedom for). Historically, much freedom of speech discourse has been framed in negative terms, exemplified by the US First Amendment ('Congress shall make no law' abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press"). However, this emphasis on negative rights has impoverished legal and policy assumptions regarding individual and collective speech rights. This paper considers the implications of key distinguishing features of positive rights. What are historical US case studies' What are international exemplars' What would positive freedoms look like in a digital age' Exploring these normative questions, the paper will address both prospects and perils of various approaches, while considering rationales for establishing new normative foundations for future media policy based on positive freedoms, and applicable to international and digital contexts. This brings into focus a specific policy framework, one that emphasizes media's public service mission instead of treating it as only a business commodity. Privileging social benefits over property rights, this perspective assesses a media system's value by how it benefits all of society rather than how it serves individual freedoms, private property rights, and profits for a relative few.In contrast, a social democratic vision of the press elevates positive liberties in which universal and collective rights are at least as important as the individual freedoms most cherished within libertarianism and classical liberalism. This ideology legitimates an activist state that allocates resources in an egalitarian fashion. Skeptical of unregulated capitalism and wary of 'market failure,' social democracy values a mixed economy and sees crucial services like education as public goods that warrant special protections and subsidies. Instead of leaving public services entirely dependent on the market's mercy, it seeks to reinforce civil society's foundations by promoting public investments in critical infrastructures and institutions like strong labor unions, universal health care, public media, libraries, and schools. This paper will consider what a reform project looks like that is based on positive liberties and guided by a social democratic vision of media.

IAMCR2015

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Title: PANEL: Capitalism and Freedom: Populist Keywords and Tropes

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Abstract: Caveat Emptor! The Rhetoric of 'Choice' in American Food PoliticsIn the face of growing awareness and unrest about the extreme state of inequality in the United States, elite explanations of the inability of most citizens to thrive let alone survive in the current socio-economic condition typically rest on a combination of victim-blaming and appeals to the individualistic rhetoric that we all enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom of choice. In the United States, a failure to thrive is explained by elites as a character flaw, while skill and opportunity at gaming the system are bound together and treated as a virtue. Politicians who complain about or attempt to challenge structural impediments to the fulfillment of the formal promises of the system are silenced and risk their political careers by being charged with instigating class warfare. The markings of this struggle are profoundly imprinted in the politics of food, for example, where an 'obesity epidemic' is treated in moralistic terms, reducing issues such as the rise in Type 2 (also known as 'adult onset') diabetes to an oversimplified problem of poor personal judgment and bad individual choices. That line of reasoning has been used to fight off initiatives to tax and otherwise limit the availability of foods that are known to be associated with chronic illnesses. Consumers should not be deprived of choice. Likewise, a major battleground in food politics is over the question of the public's right to know if the food they are purchasing contains genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and major agribusiness firms that sell GMOs have invested heavily in defeating ballot issues in states in which voters have been asked to decide whether to require labeling. A principal argument that GMO producers have made is that labeling will be costly and counterproductive, because it will result in depriving consumers of the opportunity to choose to eat foods that the producers claim are safe. This paper will examine the rhetoric of choice within the food industry, and how it is formulated within the political context of the United States. It is, however, a subject of broader relevance beyond US borders, since the same corporations that attempt to control public knowledge about the domestic food industry also market their seeds, chemicals, techniques, machinery, and finished food products in many other countries. Moreover, those companies pressure governments in many countries in similar and even more forceful ways as they do in the United States, sometimes even more successfully. Although much of the control over publicly available information about the food industry is exercised behind closed doors, companies and the governments that comply with their wishes must make those wishes palatable to the public. The rhetoric of the freedom to choose is one of the most effective weapons used to control public knowledge in that struggle.

IAMCR2015

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Title: Encoding Commercial Interests: HTML5, Digital Rights Management (DRM) and the Future of the Web

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Abstract: In October 2014, the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) recommended HTML5, the latest version of Hypertext Mark-Up Language (HTML), as an official standard. In the months prior to this, one proposed new element of HTML5 was hotly debated: the inclusion of digital rights management (DRM). DRM, a technological enforcement of copyright protection, prevents certain uses of content or technologies (Electronic Frontier Foundation, 2013a). As a response to critics who claimed the inclusion of DRM would signal the end of the open Web, Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the Web and HTML 1.0, argued that DRM in HTM5 would eliminate the need for proprietary media plugins such as Adobe's Flash Player or Microsoft's Silverlight and thus 'increase overall interoperability' while balancing the rights of content creators, providers and users (qtd. in Meyer, 2013).Despite objections from institutions such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) (2013b), DRM components were included in the HTML5 specification. More precisely, HTML5 includes an application programming interface (API) called Encrypted Media Extensions (EME), which interacts with a Content Decryption Module (CDM)'a piece of client-side software or hardware that requests a 'key' from a remote license. This key enables the decoding of encrypted media. Software and hardware developers must enable this form of DRM in order to allow their users to access encrypted streaming media services such as Netflix.This paper combines software studies with a political economic framework to examine the implications of the inclusion of EME in HTML5 for the future development of the Web, including mobile platforms. It argues that the inclusion of DRM creates a media environment which can actually limit, rather than expand, the range of institutions involved in the development of software (e.g., a Web browser) and hardware (e.g., a mobile device or streaming media peripheral) systems used for the dissemination of media content. Indeed, HTML5's version of DRM does seemingly improve upon the interoperability of media content on the Web (by allowing any form of content to play on any platform or device) while eliminating the need for proprietary media 'plug-ins' such as Adobe Flash Player.The purpose of DRM, however, is not to allow corporate institutions control over content, but rather to allow them to exert influence over hardware and software systems (and, by proxy, the actions of users). The shift to a DRM/EME system would enable license providers to charge a fee to CDM developers wishing to access their (potentially patented) decoding systems'protocols which essentially act as proprietary plug-ins. Such a system would privilege capital rich media giants such as Google and Microsoft (both of which actively backed the inclusion of DRM in HTML5) to the detriment of smaller institutions such as Mozilla'even though it enabled HTML5 DRM in its Firefox Web browser (Bright, 2013). In short, HTML5's inclusion of DRM would essentially legitimize U.S.-centric copyright protections on a global scale and allow the future development of the Web, and the technologies used to access it, to be dominated by a select group of media institutions.

Id: 10679

Title: New Act of Telecommunications and Broadcasting in Mexico. The Empire Strikes Back.

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Abstract: This paper analyses the political process and discussions of the New Mexican Act of Telecommunications and Broadcasting issued on July of 2014. It will address the specificities of the new Act and tracks the social relations of power of the different social agents (Mosco, 2007) that were involved in the process, especially the lobby of Media barons, civil society organizations and legislators. It is important to underscore, on one hand, that this reform has to be read in the context of the democratic transition of the Latin American country, and on the other, in a wider debate at regional level, because in Latin American in the last decade it has been issued many reforms regardless with media and telecommunications from two different perspectives. 'Market logic vs. communication and social rights (Becerra, 2014). In Mexico, as in the rest of region, the media reform was expected as a major vector in terms of freedom of expression, cultural diversity and economic competition (Gómez, 2013). However these high expectations, this research characterized this new Act as a second generation of the commodification of communication policies, because this Act was conceived from the centrality of the economic imperatives and with clear winners: The dominant convergent media owners in detriment of community media and public service. In that respect Televisa, as the paper establish, is the main winner of this new regulatory framework. Nevertheless, these preliminary conclusions the paper underscore the positive aspects of the Act, principally in the sector of Telecommunications and the governance of the new regulatory body. Becerra, M (2014) 'Medios de comunicación en América Latina: a contramano'. Nueva Sociedad, 249, 61-74. Gómez, R. (2013). Media Reform in Latin America: Experiences and Debates of Communication Public Policies. The Political Economy of Communication,1(1): 122-128.Mosco, V. (2009) Political Economy of Communication. Sage: London.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10737

Title: Conceptual shift in poverty discourse

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Abstract: This paper responds to the call for analysis of operation of moral panics in new neo-liberal regime. By examining the poverty discourse of Hong Kong newspapers from 1994-2013, this study argues that governmental strategies emerged in the moral panic negotiated poverty discourse and defined the attitudes towards the poor people. A quantitative content analysis was conducted after a total of 610 randomly selected articles were qualitatively coded using the Nvivo software. It was done to systematically map the historical trends of the poverty discourse. The findings showed that the poor were portrayed as miserable people who deserve mercy and public donation between 1994 and 1997. Individualization as a governmental strategy appears most often in newspaper. The poverty discourse change after Hong Kong government mobilized a moral panic in late 1997. The process of neo-liberalization sped up. Poor people were portrayed as folk devils. Stigmatization, fragmentation of society, and promotion of social mobility are three frequently used strategies. Poor people are presented as an economic burden of the society. It sets the new criteria and definition of good, autonomous and responsible citizens in neo-liberal regimes. Starting from 2005, the resistance arises and public discourse change to support the leaders of poor. The poor were portrayed as victims of economic structure. The findings suggested that the moral panic made negotiation about the citizenship in the society in Hong Kong. In this, the old relationship between the government and individuals were replaced with other type of relationship. The condition of inclusion altered from a focus on family and social role to individual workforce participation and working ability. The condition of inclusion altered from a focus on family roles to individual working ability. The resistance arises and the citizenship becomes political. More voices asked for solutions of income disparity and claims for welfare right. It requires the government to look for structural problem of economic systems. The citizenship no longer defined by the participation of workforce, but the human and political rights.The role of media is discussed. The findings suggest that reporters take a role in defining the poverty discourse via realization, selection and valuation. The findings suggest that reporters seldom challenge the social norms. As such, the ethnic minority and male poor were being ignored by media, and the project of self-reliance is being promoted in news.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10764

Title: Media Regulators in Europe: Facing Media Implosion and Normative Disorientation

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Abstract: This paper is about state media regulators (independent and administrative) in the European Union and their tangible conditions to contribute to the qualification of the symbolic environment. It aims to examine the structure, functions and normative values of the main statutory media regulators in the 28 countries of the EU. Based on previous empirical research developed by the author (Sousa et al, 2013; Sousa et al, 2012), the underlying assumptions of this paper are the following: 1) media regulators are not keeping up with the pace of change; 2) media regulators are still operating within the traditional frame of sectorial and compartmentalized legislation; 3) The advent of the internet and related societal challenges are not fully comprehended and addressed by state regulatory structures.If this is so, should they be maintained and supported by the states that have created them in the first place' Should citizens support these agencies' Should they be replaced by lighter and more flexible mechanisms of co-regulation and self-regulation' Should they be restructured to take a more holistic approach'Media regulators were set up and developed mostly over the last two decades, theoretically at least, to defend the public interest in streamlined states. Thus, in different ways state media regulatory bodies are expected to raise media standards and to contribute to the expansion of public and private media social responsibilities. If these regulatory entities correspond to a new mode of protecting citizens and fostering 'good societies', they must be developed, monitored and made accountable to society. But are they actually doing their job' Do they matter'Apparently, for the EU, they do matter. The EU has been steadily arguing for independent regulation and states are financing these agencies. Still, media regulators (converged or not) are facing themselves major challenges and are struggling to justify their very existence in the midst of paradoxical phenomena such as media implosion, normative disorientation and regulatory chaos.Media implosion means that the very definition of the regulatory object is problematic. What is 'the media' today' Are the top websites such as Google, YouTube and Facebook included in this definition' Where are children, young people and adults accessing 'the common world' from' Normative disorientation and societal disruption, on the other hand, can chill out the stamina to protect the most fundamental human right values regulators are supposed to uphold such as freedom of expression and pluralism. And, last but certainly not least, state regulators find themselves in a highly diffused and opaque regulatory environment making it increasingly difficult to develop a public interest normative view point. Interests are difficult to read and consequences of decisions and non-decisions are difficult to predict.This paper attempts to map and to problematize the fundamental challenges media regulators are facing today in Europe form a Political Economy perspective.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10779

Title: Riot porn: mediations of the right to protest in South Africa

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Abstract: Media headlines about protests in South Africa often convey messages of anarchy and chaos. Hardly a day goes by without media reports of yet another protest in yet another township, where tyres have been burnt, roads have been barricaded, and municipal buildings have been vandalised. In some cases, councillors have been attacked and their houses burnt, and some have had to resort to personal bodyguards to protect them from attack. The huge media focus on violent service delivery protests risks creating the impression that protests are inherently violent and police action against them is warranted to protect property and public safety. The 'violent service delivery protest' has become a chime that feeds into a moral panic about the protests spiraling out of control.Although the South African Police Services (Saps) are under pressure for growing growing violence against protestors, these media discourses serve the police well. In September 2014, they argued for a doubling of public order policing capacity and the need for more militarised responses to the protests, which includes the acquisition of more military hardware. The most extreme example of this shift took place in the mining town of Marikana, where, in August 2012, scores of miners were gunned down by highly armed paramilitary units, similar to the US SWAT teams. However, in indulging in 'riot porn', the media are missing the broader picture of peaceful protests. In fact, police and municipal statistics point to the vast majority of protests being peaceful and uneventful. Using data gathered from municipal records, as well as depth interviews and focus groups with protestors, I will explore a picture of protests that is hardly ever seen in the media. I will also explore how persistent media misrepresentation has become a driver of increasingly disruptive protests, and the love-hate relationship that has developed between the media and protestors. What is usually missed in the media coverage is that more and more people have taken to the streets to protest because they complain that these very structures of democratic representation have failed them. Increasingly the media is one of these. While the vast majority of gatherings and protests that municipalities are informed of, in terms of the Regulation of Gatherings Act, take place peacefully and without incident, municipalities impose a myriad conditions on protests, or even ban protests, often in violation of the Act. In other words, the state has become increasingly lawless in responding to dissent. Much of the media coverage display signs of the 'protest paradigm', theorised by Todd Gitlin and others, where media coverage follows certain predictable patterns that delegitimitise protests as a form of democratic expression and criminalise protestors as being inherently unruly. By doing so, they reproduce and reinforce system-maintaining ideologies, and in South Africa's case, a neoliberalised social order with an increasingly authoritarian character. This paper will look at the coverage of protests in four protest sites in South Africa, and the extent to which the protest paradigm is apparent in the coverage.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10798

Title: Thinking Rich, Feeling Hurt: Affective Pedagogy of Wealth-Tech in South Korea

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Abstract: My research examines wealth-tech education in South Korea to explore its affective making of financial subjects. The neologism wealth-tech [jae-te-k'] was created in the late 1980s by combining the Korean word jaemu [financial affairs] with the English word 'technology' [te-k']. Comparable to the technology of finance, wealth-tech refers to knowledge and techniques related to money management, financial planning, and investment. The Asian financial crisis of 1997 sparked a wealth-tech boom by undoing secure employment and deregulating financial markets. I situate the wealth-tech boom within democratic and neoliberal reconfigurations of the developmental state. With archival research and multi-site ethnography, I aim to illuminate 1) how wealth-tech has produced de-politicized citizen-subjects under the historical conjuncture, and 2) how the citizen-subjects are increasingly made affective subjects as well as rational and calculative beings. Focusing on the production of affects in private pedagogy of wealth-tech and how they play a central role in financial subjectification, I tackle the conventional wisdom that neoliberal financialization produced the homo economicus who brings economic calculation and market rationality into every aspect of life. The primary research site, T Academy, is rooted in the biggest wealth-tech online community (more than 770,000 members). Under the catchphrase 'Making $1 million USD in ten years,' the program consists of five weekly lectures followed by after-parties. Lectures focus on how to become rich and why wealth-tech is necessary, as well as financial literacy and 'investment 101.' I collected rich ethnographic data by conducting participant observations in the academy and its cohort groups, and by conducting in-depth interviews with its educators and participants. Wealth-tech is taught in a highly emotional manner and its pedagogy is filled with emotional support and catharsis, as well as financial literacy education. Also, wealth-tech pedagogies resonate with participants by resorting to democratic and egalitarian discourses. I will show that wealth-tech is rationalized not solely on risk calculations per se, but by feelings of hurt. Whereas capitalism is accused of exploiting and hurting the weak, wealth-tech is framed as the only way for them to legitimately acquire their share of the national economy'in other words, wealth-tech is framed as the only way for ordinary people to achieve economic freedom. By mobilizing memories of suffering to moralize wealth-tech, the concept is presented as resistance against exploitative capitalism and an autonomous and conscientious practice. In this way, becoming rich through wealth-tech is identified with becoming an awakened citizen. Participants are invited to summon their hurt selves, and at the same time to think from the perspective of the rich. This research, by empirically describing how financial subjectification is affectively charged, provides an important case study in the increasing relevance of moral economy to shifting government and subject formations. The issue here is how moral discourses are incorporated into financial pedagogy, not that economic discourses cut the link with moral philosophy. I will show how the moral grounding adopted by political economists has been overtaken by the practice of financial capitalism.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10807

Title: Portuguese media under Angolan capital rule ' the political economy of a troubled relationship

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Abstract: The propitious combination between the severe short-term financial difficulties of Portugal's major media groups after 2008 and the notable investment interests of the Angolan political and economic elite paved the way to a very singular change in the Portuguese media landscape. An intricate web of relations between the interests of those closest to the economic and political elites on both countries favoured a substantial power transferral, which resulted in the presence of direct Angolan investment in two (out of three) major media groups and in the presence of indirect (via telecoms or banks) investment in others.This substantive series of acquisitions ' which might configure a curious reverse dependency case in the European context ' has no doubt played a role in both the increased prominence of overtly positive narratives about Angola and its entrepreneurship but also in the disappearance (or marginalization to autonomous websites) from the media agenda of dissenting Angolan voices. By the same token, selective changes in managerial boards and even editorial leaderships ensured the maintenance of a less than hostile stance towards the current Portuguese government. The ensuing 'sphere of consensus' in mainstream media was thus less anchored on loyalty to audience than on an adherence to political and economic elites' interests.A post-colonial reframing of the relationship between the two countries did significantly not accompany these changes. Indeed, a careful reading of Jornal de Angola's (the country's official and only daily newspaper) editorials and opinion pages would suggest that a 'narrative of resentment' is still very much present forcing us to reflect on the equivocal nature of a political and economic relation which does not yet appear to relinquish the heightened expectations/unfounded disillusions binomial framework and on its implications in terms of media discourse diversity.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10817

Title: Emancipation or new enclosure movement' The impacts of social media on alternative journalism in Taiwan and China

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Abstract: The rapid development of new digital technologies since the first decade of the 21st century has dramatically transformed the media industry. While the influences of social media on mainstream media and journalists have been analyzed by many related researches, the impacts of new generation of ICTs on alternative journalism required more studies. This paper focuses on how alternative journalism in Taiwan and China affected by the development of social media. Through in-depth interviews with twenty-two activists and journalists of 'independent media' in Taiwan and six 'investigative reporters' in China, the opportunities and the limitations that social media have provided for alternative journalism will be examined comparatively. Following the directions Rodríguez et al (2014) pointed out, this paper, first, will illustrate the development and characteristics of Taiwanese and Chinese alternative journalism since the late 1990s in order to take into account historical and societal context in both countries. Alternative journalism in Taiwan mainly fought with the hegemony of commercial news media which produced trivializing and low-cost tabloid reports, while its counterparts in China primarily resisted the information controls from authorities. Second, the strategies of using social media by activists and practitioners of alternative journalism will be analyzed. In Taiwan, social media, especially the Facebook, has become very popular among Internet users and reshaped the journalistic field. Many advocates of alternative journalism rely on Facebook to access and interact with their supporters because their non-profit-driven reports were unable to be shown on mainstream media. In China, the use of Weibo and WeChat (the former is the China-based microblogging services and the latter is a mobile messaging communication service) had been an effective way for investigative journalists to publicize their reports about political corruptions which were forbidden by the government. However, alternative journalists in Taiwan and China have encountered with tightening control on social media by economic and political powers respectively. As the Facebook asked organization users to pay more for accessing their followers since the early 2014, the rate of interactions between Taiwanese alternative media and their supporters on social media has declined significantly. In China, investigative journalists have faced more and more constraints by new Internet policies and surveillance of the government, most of which were directed against 'independent political commentaries' on Weibo or WeChat. From the perspective of political economy of communication, this research will demonstrate those different political and economic obstacles in these two countries for activists to make alternative voices heard through social media, as well as the struggles of alternative journalists in Taiwan and China.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10874

Title: In the shadow of China: Relations between emerging media capitals and Taiwanese government

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Abstract: Because of the capital flow in the Greater China Region, patron-client relationship has formed between Taiwanese media tycoons and the PRC government. That is, after 2008, the richest Taiwanese family entered Taiwan's media market and influence domestic public opinion; they also enjoyed protection and privileges in Chinese market granted by the PRC government. However, the groups differed in their relationships with Taiwanese government, particularly in media merger cases. Some adopted an aloof attitude toward the Taiwanese regulator and legal frameworks, while others were more compliant with the local regulator. This paper examines the relations between emerging media capitals and Taiwanese government in the shadow of China.   Media researchers adopted the concept of 'patron-client relationship' to describe the relationship between the government and the media within one nation-state (Roudakova, 2008; Lee, He & Huang,2006). However, in the cross-boarder capital flow, business groups have been involved in rent-seeking activities in different countries and have to deal with different, and even rival governments. In the China-Taiwan relations, China has provided economic favors to Taiwanese businessmen to gain their support (Wu, 2012). It can be hypothesized that the group with more interests in a given society tend to maintain relations with that government.   This paper has reviewed two major merger cases, in which Fubon and Want represent two types of media capitals.   Fubon had more interests in Taiwan and had good relations with Taiwanese government. Fubon became a conglomerate in Taiwan's liberalization in the 1990s. With political networks, Fubon knew how to dance with the Taiwanese regulator and was given a green light. It was after 2009 that Fubon began to invest in China but has not openly supported the PRC government.   On the contrary, Want Want group had more interests in China and strong ties with Beijing government. Want Want entered into the Chinese market in the 1980s, and became a conglomerate in China's liberalization in the 1990s. It was until 2008 that Want Want returned to Taiwan to buy media. With great interests in China, Want Want openly supported the official ideology of the Chinese Communist Party. Claiming itself as 'Salmon's returning to the birthplace (Taiwan),' Wang Wang ignored the legal frameworks and domestic values of the Taiwanese society. In the merger case, when the regulator gave some conditional clauses, the group condemned the regulators and opponents.   Based on the study, future researchers can continue to investigate: with more interests in China, whether the Taiwanese business groups (like Fubon) will be following the steps of Want Want and form strong ties with Beijing government and deliver the official ideology of CCP in the Greater China region.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10899

Title: The construction of hegemonies in the industries of symbolic goods and industrial paradigms of convergence. Elements of a political economy of culture and communication

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Abstract: For about twenty years, the links between cultural industries, communication industries (electronic equipment, computers and web, telecommunications) and creative activities (fashion, design, crafts, etc.) have been growing in terms of industrial strategies, public policy and ideological representations. A symbolic goods industries is being built.This communication proposal will focus on the ideological dimension of this process. This communication is based on the critical Political Economy of Communication because it highlights the links between industrial, political and ideological movements.From various research conducted for the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, I studied: the industrial strategies and discourses of the largest players of cultural, creative and communication industries in North America, Europe and Japan; public policies towards these industries in France and in the European Union; and major academic work conducted since the late 1990s on these issues. With this method I have been able to identify three "industrial paradigms" of culture and communication that I will present at the conference: the industrial paradigm of convergence, the industrial paradigm of collaboration and the industrial paradigm creation.This research shows that social actors (industrial players, public authorities, international organisations, experts, etc.) attempt to influence the "convergence" or, more precisely, the links between these various industries that are in a growing relationship. Indeed, these joints do not occur "naturally". They operate under severe struggles. In this perspective, social actors produce normative representations of industrial, cultural and political movements, including representations of the contribution of the industries of symbolic goods to broader changes in society, economy and politics. This is what I have called "industrial paradigms." These paradigms concern, first, the transformation of relations between the industrial players within sectors, eg between the web and contents actors. Second, it is to contribute to social change to improve the profitability of the industry players and advance the "dynamic" of capitalism. In this perspective anthropological transformations are necessary, such changes in the socially accepted definition of the concept of culture. Third, these activities need in order to improve their profitability to obtain diverse adjustments of public policies. These three aspects are completely intertwined. For example, changes in government policies towards the symbolic goods industries occur depending on the changing in the definition of culture and on industrial power relations.Because, the interests are divergent and the balance of power is in constant evolution, these normative representations are necessarily plural. They are three industrial paradigms. They each correspond to three main ideal-typical ways of organizing symbolic goods industries in which the various dimensions of these activities "make system", that is to say, they are connected by logical connections. In sum, the paradigms are theoretical constructions that reflect the logical correspondences between discourses and actions of experts, economic policy makers, government officials, industrial strategies and public policy and regulatory measures.This

communication could find a place in the reflections on the evolution of hegemonies in the industries of culture and communication and especially on the ideological terms of building these hegemonies.

Id: 10906

Title: Boko Haram and Hegemonic resistance in Nigerian Political system

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Abstract: "We are in an Islamic caliphate. We have nothing to do with Nigeria. We don't believe in this name" (Chothia, 2015).The political conflicts facing today's world are like well synchronised pyrotechnic displays responding to the sound-effect of the film Jaws. It produces complex narratives (fireworks) which are underscored by looming deep sea shark attacks (political instability). The danger is heightened by the fact that nobody knows where the shark will surface from, or who will be the next victim of its attack. According to Fiske (1987, p. 41), hegemony is a constant struggle against a multitude of resistances to ideological domination...any society will evidence numerous points where subordinate groups have resisted the total domination that is hegemony's aim, and have withheld their consent to the system. This paper uses Gramsci's hegemony and Althusser's repressive and ideological state apparatuses (RSA and ISA) (Wolff, 2005), to interrogate the resistance and terror activities of the Islamic fundamentalist group, Boko Haram. According to Gramsci, for the working class to become the hegemonic class, it would need to mobilise majority of its like-minded population against the ruling class (Jones, 2006, p. 45). It could be argued that Boko Haram has defied several state military interventions since 2002, and have instead mobilised more supporters beyond the Nigerian border. The need for territorial and economic domination leads to the emergence of regional alliances and controls (Inotai, Hettne, and Sunkel (1999). Boko Haram has joined forces with al-Qaeda (Anatomy of African terrorism, 2012), and gets support from Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the self-declared caliph (ruler) of Muslims worldwide. The question the research asks is whether the group uses religion (Weimann, 2007) as a subterfuge for political resistance against Nigerian hegemonic powers (Elden, 2014, p. 418), or whether it is trying to re-assert a pre-colonial Islamist dominant ideology of the Sokoto caliphate in Northern Nigeria, which was superimposed with western education by British colonial rulers or, whether this is simply part of a more complex global resistance movement which uses porous political states like Nigeria as nodes of infiltration (Solomon, 2012).In seeking answers to these questions the paper will investigate what roles two of Althusser's ideological state apparatuses: religion and communication, play as either catalysts in such hegemonic resistance or as alternative voice of resistance. This will be done through critical analysis of select media coverage of Boko Haram as part of global Islamic conflicts. According to Saffar-Harandi, Advisor of the Islamic Revolution Guards in Iran, "we believe that World War III will not be like the previous two wars, it will be soft in nature and it has been long time since it started" (BBC, 2010). Other Islamic scholars are also cautioning against a growing trend in media representation or what has come to be known as Islamaphobia: Shaw (2012); Uitermark and Gielen (2010); Maiangwa (2013), Asante, Miike, and Yin (2007, p. 283). It is hoped the outcome will throw more light into the role media plays in the construction of alterbative voice.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10909

Title: Revising Hollywood's dominance: Towards a comparative historical approach

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Abstract: Research on the reception, success and dominance of Hollywood movies abroad constitutes one of the oldest and recurring fields within film and media studies (e.g. Gans, 1962). The issue has been dealt with from political economy perspectives on production, distribution or flow, as well as it has been tackled from a more cultural studies inspired angle on aesthetics, textual characteristics, taste or consumption. Recently more research started to revisit the issue, much of this work being inspired by the 'new cinema history'. This work mainly dealt with in-depth localized case studies on film exhibition practices, programming strategies, distribution flows of movies, as well as on cinema-going experiences and audience reception of movies. This growing field, which brought forward many detailed case studies on specific national and regional film markets, as well as on various periods, helps to revisit Hollywood's dominance. It underlines Hollywood's varying strategies in conquering and establishing, as well as in defending and maintaining its dominance over time and space. After giving an overview of the literature on Hollywood's dominance, this paper first aims at interpreting the results coming from this new cinema historiography. One of the outcomes of this survey is that there is a need for comparative research as well as for studies having a longitudinal perspective. The core part of this paper consists of presenting results from such a comparative, longitudinal research project on film culture in Belgium and Mexico, more in particular bringing forward findings in relation to Hollywood's hegemony in these markets. More concretely, the paper will be based on historical research on the exhibition and programming of motion pictures from the 1920s to the 1960s in Monterrey, Mexico, as well as work done on the cities of Antwerp and Ghent, Belgium. In order to be able to operationalize comparative, longitudinal research, the three case studies used a similar research design, thereby mainly relying upon detailed archival research on the location of film theatres and their programming schedules (e.g. found in daily newspapers). The research also comprised a political economy oriented analysis of the strategies and power structures behind local film exhibition and distribution (e.g. ownership of cinemas). One of the outcomes of this comparative approach relates to the continuing

presence of Hollywood in those markets, although its dominance very much varied in time and place. There were not only major differences between the three cities, but even within each of them different strategies in film programming according to origin could be observed. These differences are interpreted by using factors like national and local exhibition hierarchies, Hollywood majors' distribution strategies, as well as by bringing in class-related factors (on a city-level). Another factor relates to the presence of a strong domestic film production (cf. the boom and decline in the exhibition of Mexican films during the 1940s and 1950s).

Id: 10936

Title: Panel COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS AND CLIMATE CHANGE : AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

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Abstract: The mounting evidence that we are now at a critical juncture in decisions over how to address the intensifying impacts of climate change coincides with two other major dynamics of change ' the digitalization of communication systems and the intensification and globalisation of consumer culture. It is the intersection of these changes that provides the starting point for this cross-disciplinary workshop that aims to investigate connections between communication, politics, economics and science in order to enhance our understanding of the relationship between communication systems and climate change. By bringing together scholars in fields such as Political Economy of Communication, Environmental Communication, Risk Communication, Journalism Studies, Communication Science, the panel will attempt to develop a more integrated approach to the relations between communications and climate change. Studies of representations of climate change in news and current affairs have tended not to inquire into the ways communication systems are currently organised 'as infrastructures and arrays of machines- may themselves be contributing to the problem.The panel will therefore have three aims:Firstly, to pull together the existing research that has been done in the four areas listed below and explore the feasibility of developing a more integrated approach to the relations between communications and climate change.Secondly, to develop a network of scholars in conversation around these shared interests.The four key dimensions that the panel will explore are:(1) COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURES AND MACHINES. (2) INTENSIFYING CONSUMERISM. (3) THE CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC DEBATE (4) REPRESENTING CLIMATE CHANGE.. CONFIRMED PANELIST:Professor Graham Murdock, Loughborough University, UK Professor Richard Maxwell, Queens College, NYDr Benedetta Brevini, University of Sydney

IAMCR2015

Id: 10967

Title: 'Futures, Futurity, Failures: Constructing the Financial Crises of Old Age'

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Abstract: The finance of caring for aging populations in the developed world is represented as a crisis, both economic and demographic. Amidst the financial crises of the past decade, governments have enacted an austerity politics that frame social safety nets such as old age social security and health coverage as unsustainable investments. Corporations have used their pension pledges to retired workers as justifications for restructuring, bankruptcy, and cuts to current employees' benefits. Society's elderly are portrayed as a threat to economic futurity, and a challenge to government and corporations' temporal displacement of capital as solutions to crises of accumulation through investment in infrastructure, labor, and financial instruments that will payout in the future (Harvey). Yet, at the same time, this crisis is being mobilized to create a new 'fix' for capitalism slowed by the 'aging,' 'bloated' and 'inflexible' governments and corporations of the Keynesian/Fordist 'old economy' to further marketize the economics and care of aging populations. The population that is currently 'coming of old age' is seen as a remarkable economic opportunity by the financial industry, which hails it as socially and culturally exceptional from those aging populations that came before through visions of empowered (and even countercultural) individual retirees who can do better than collective pension or state-run models of retirement financing. In the US and Canada, texts like Dennis Hopper's Ameriprise Financial television commercials were characteristic of the financial industry's marketing of retirement to the sixties generation as a new stage of liberation and freedom, producing a sense of empowered individual choice to pair with the shift from pensions to elective 401Ks (and the looming threat of the privatization of social security). Investment management firms, investment instrument companies, and the stock market on the whole have profited from a growing increase of people investing in order to finance their old age. As this privatizes the costs and risks of funding the care of societies' aging populations, an even far larger proportion of the elderly have no such stores of capital to imagine a retirement.This paper will read news coverage of debates over pension and social security reform to examine the political and popular discourses around the 'costs' of aging populations in Europe and North America. It will further analyze the financial industry's representations of aging investors in company reports and financial reporting to discuss the characterization of aging populations and the economic future of aging societies.

IAMCR2015

Id: 10979

Title: Scientific consensus or 'techno-finance fix" A critical analysis of international climate policy reports and the role of corporate media

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Abstract: This paper explores how recent reports on climate change pose urgent new (and not so new) questions for the political economy of the media and cultural industries. With scientific consensus unequivocally pointing to human influence on the ecosystem, climate change is arguably now a pressing political issue requiring robust public policy initiatives. In the contemporary period, such issues are, of course, brought to public attention, enacted and discussed through the media. However, despite the warnings of scientists that economic 'business as usual' is no longer an option (IPCC 2013, 2014a, b, c), this analysis of international and regional policy suggests that in the main, solutions are proffered that merely shift forms of capital accumulation and maintain or enforce 'business as usual', rather than offering radical, transformative, or even transitional trajectories in political economy. This paper overviews the findings of an analysis of selected international policy documents on the unfolding economic and ecological crisis, including those produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN, OECD and World Bank along with EU policy documents. This paper assesses the policy conflicts existing between the need to transform economic practices, or to pursue a 'business as usual' accumulation strategy. In the context of this macro-level analysis which reveals policy tensions from the top down, this paper then moves to examine the role of the media industries paying particular attention to their relative positioning in the political economy of climate change discourse. Acting as consensus generators and instruments of public discourse (Garnham 2000), the media industries have the potential to act as counter-hegemonic sites, capable of discussing alternate economic policies that promote sustainability, whilst also encouraging positive behaviour towards more ecologically sustainable practices amongst citizens. However, this idealistic remit is challenged by the broader political economic landscape which, at a policy level from the top down, is freighted by conflicting messages around the extent to which the economic status quo can be challenged or transformed. Drawing on empirical analysis of audiovisual news and current affairs broadcasting, this paper suggests that the media industries, increasingly constrained themselves by systemic factors such as accumulation through advertising and commercialism, are thus actors not just in creating hegemonic norms through production, but need also be considered in terms of norms created through consumption. This paper thus suggests the urgent need to incorporate a critical political economy of the media in terms of radical or transformative economic practices in the light of ecological crisis.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11047

Title: PANEL: China's Internet Giants: A Rising Force' The Political Economy of Internet through Four Case Studies

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Abstract: Building a transnational TencentMin Tang, Department of Communication, University of Illinois at Urbana-ChampaignIn linking the world's transforming 'open center of capitalist dynamism' (Havrey, 2005) and global capitalism's most dynamic industry, this study investigates the political economy of Internet industry in post-1978 China, through a case study of a leading Chinese Internet company: Tencent. Specifically, drawing upon document analysis and archival research on the company practices and government policies, it focuses on the transnationalization of Tencent. With a focus on the inter-capital relations and rivalries, the study bears three aspects of inquiries. First, the study examines the relationships of different units of capital in and outside China in Tencent's product and business development. Second, it tries to reveal possible interactions between Tencent and other sovereign states and their related regulatory entities, which would shed light on state's abilities in setting policy boundaries for a foreign Internet company. Moreover, with China's opening-up and rapid economic growth, the study looks at to what extent the transntaionlization of its Internet capital would help the country's political economic power to elbow its way into transnational domain. While it is still an ongoing process, the third inquiry herein aims to provide some documentation of what currently is happening and changing in terms of the status of China's transnationalization and its position in the global capitalism political economy.

Id: 11076

Title: PANEL: China's Internet Giants: A Rising Force' The Political Economy of Internet through Four Case Studies

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Abstract: Paper title: The 'Going out' of China's Internet industry: The case of AlibabaHong Shen, Institute of Communication Research, University of Illinois at Urbana-ChampaignThe recent massively successful IPO of Alibaba, a native Chinese e-commerce company, on the New York Stock Exchange, marks a watershed in the international expansion of Internet enterprises from the traditional periphery of the global digital economy. It also raises a series of open theoretical and historical questions: Does the 'going out' of Chinese Internet firms shift the geographies of capital highlighted by the 'core-periphery model' of the world-system theory' What is the relationship between capital and the state does the new trend suggest' How does the domestic and international political economic power structure impinge on this evolution' And finally, how does the extension of Chinese Internet industry into global markets work with or against the case of China's rise' To address these questions, this paper uses Alibaba as a case study. Drawing on a systematic review of documentary sources, including IPO prospectus, financial statements, annual reports, press releases, state policies, national statistical compendia and media coverage, this paper presents a historical analysis of the global expansion of Alibaba in the past decades. It argues that, although the Chinese state has been an indispensable force in Alibaba's path of 'going out,' there also exist various conflicting points in the interlock between the Chinese state and the Internet company in different specific historical moments. By examining the conflicting and complementary relationship between capital and the state, this paper also tries to shed new light on the ongoing debate on the rise of China in global capitalism.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11162

Title: SITE to Digital India: The dynamics of Political Economy-Is it a case of triumph of Hegemony or tactical positioning as a New Economic leader'

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Abstract: This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) in India. SITE was a culmination of a set of factors rooted in the dominant paradigm of mass media and national development and modernization discourse. When SITE ended, the development discourse upheld its continuation and what followed is a massive and phenomenal expansion of television in India. The reforms and consequent expansion of telecom has currently allowed for a full circle development and deployment of a complete range of media-old and new. Was SITE a harbinger of a belief in modern communication technology for development and has it worked' What are the societal and related dividends since that historic phase' These questions will form the backdrop for the full paper.This paper will address the traditions of research that guided the experiment and the reformulated paradigms that had a bearing on the formation of a policy that transcended erstwhile conceptions of communication technology. This would include the dynamics of decolonisation and the dormant images of modernity including fragile but dominant networks, the resource crunch and demonstration of technology and institutional factors that facilitated the transfer. The interventions shifted towards recognising the inevitability of new technologies for incorporating itself as an IT hub and gain comparative advantage. While this seemed to have happened including a shift towards the services sector that impinges on rapid absorption and development of new information and communication technologies (ICTs). The overall applications of ICTs are comparable but the traditional and overlapping concerns with respect to education and empowerment are constant and recurrent. Many initiatives at various levels particularly tertiary sector of education have been undertaken. What are the guiding features of this initiative and how do they relate to decades old conception of media and education will form a major component of the paper.The Digital India   initiative that aims to empower and facilitate a broadband grid in India is a reflection of current liberalised telecom regime and the state wanting to capitalise on spectrum resources through high prices and reciprocal concessions. Global companies are being asked to respond. The universal service obligation is likely to be invoked for spurring the digital India initiative. How will this translate to advantages for the weaker sections and what are the new coalitions that are being forged with respect to promoters of technology, ownership patterns and regulatory options will form the operative part of the paper. Adopting an institutional analysis approach within the subset of political economy approaches, the paper will provide a critical and continuous assessment of relations that define the contours of new media environment in India. The process of transition in India beginning with SITE through its present dispensation is complex that dwells on balancing relations, quest for non-alignment, media and technology centricity and quest for a leading place among the frontier nations that are projected to be the new economic centres.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11213

Title: Lights, camera, concentration: Rede Globo's 50th year and its hegemony over Brazilian Television Market

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Abstract: For three weeks this year, Rede Globo de Televisão aired the special program Lights, Camera, 50 years, a partnership between the company's Entertainment and Programming departments, that reedited twelve classic miniseries and broadcasted them in telefilm format.The special was the first initiative of Rede Globo in honor of its 50th anniversary. However, more than opening the celebration of the company's 50th anniversary, which is in April, Lights, Camera, 50 years contributed so Globo could record good viewing ratings, increase billing and reaffirm its importance in the national community imaginary, blending old and new productions (the most ancient miniseries broadcasted again was Lampião e Maria Bonita, produced in 1982, and the newest one was O Canto da Sereia, 2013).Then it is interesting to observe how Lights, Camera, 50 years is part of actions taken by the Marinho's family broadcasting company to solidify its hegemony in the Brazilian television market. This hegemony was built by the series being aired again and by other shows through these 50 years, but also by other stories that Rede Globo has not told TV viewers. Some of these stories played important roles during Globo's solidification process as a broadcasting company presenting the country's highest ratings and billing, and these stories are objects of discussion in the present article. Therefore, facts since the company's creation back in 1965 will be presented, as its television market entrance journey, passing through the company's role during the military regime, the acceptance of 'Globo standard', barriers against competitors and recent strategies to market challenges and rearrangements.In this article, the historical facts analysis is laying on theoretical-methodological marks of Communication Policy Economy, considering that issues regarding communication reach areas such as economy, politics, market and power relations.Keywords: Rede Globo; Brazilian Television Market; Communications Politicy Economy

IAMCR2015

Id: 11222

Title: "Bring back our (and their) imperialism!" Representation of China and the US in Africa in global online news

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Abstract: This paper examines the mediation of contemporary imperialism in Africa. Using content research, it explores the global representation of the primary imperialisms reshaping contemporary Africa: the parallel expansionist exercises of China (centring on aggressive commercial expansion) and, more 'under-the-radar', of the United States (combining shadowing military and fundamentalist Christian expansions). China has become Africa's top business partner (Economist, 2013), altering economic, social and political landscapes of many African countries. Sino-African relations have spurred polarized discussions (Franks & Ribet, 2009); with some presenting China as a partner that, unlike the West, treats African countries as equals, and others suggesting economic re-colonization and exploitation with dire human rights consequences. The secretive US military expansion across Africa, with US military elements active in nearly every African country (and engaged in combat in several), has only recently been exposed by investigative journalists. Media exposure of these trends has been negligible, but US officials variously cite humanitarianism, counterterrorism, competition with other powers, and 'winning hearts and minds' as goals. A parallel expansion of wealthy US religious organisations, overt and covert, has had significant cultural impacts, including the promotion of a lethal anti-gay agenda. These recent phenomena exist alongside longstanding US commercial and cultural imperialisms, but shift the thrust toward secrecy and hard power. Set against a critical background that sees both phenomena as forms of imperialism with detrimental impacts on human rights and sovereignty, the authors investigate the coverage of US military and Chinese economic expansion in Sub-Saharan Africa on BBC, Al-Jazeera and CNN online news, contributing in several ways to contemporary understanding of Africa, media and globalization. The paper relocates contemporary dominant discourses on China and the US in Africa in their historical and colonial precedents, and then assesses the global media's role in shaping these discourses. The authors provide an interpretive analysis of dominant media frames used in presenting the role of China and the US as either empowering or disempowering to African states and populations, and critique the concealed US imperialism in Africa, as well as the role of the global media, in rendering this imperialism invisible not only by silencing much of the US military presence and presenting it as good or necessary but also, simultaneously, by discursively constructing China as the sole new imperial power on the continent. The authors therefore illustrate globalization as covert expansionism through an assessment of the

IAMCR2015

media representation of parallel imperialisms which exemplify a new 'scramble for Africa', externally constructing the continent as an exploitable object.   Citations: Economist 2013. More than minerals. Available from: http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21574012-chinese-trade-africa-keeps-growing-fears-neocolonialism-are-overdone-more; Franks, S. and Ribet, K. 2009. China'Africa media relations. Global Media and Communication. 5(1),pp.129'136.

Id: 11227

Title: Never let a good crisis go to waste: The 1929 and 2008 financial crises and the narrative of austerity

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Abstract: The world economy has continued to take shape since the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and the narrative of austerity has taken popular and political form in various parts of the world. As the crisis has developed and the narrative of austerity has come to frame election campaigns in the US and Europe, the economic and political parallels between the GFC and the Great Depression of 1929 have become clearer. For instance, both crises are characterised by the following: public speculation on financial markets, consumer debt, unreasonable bonuses for bankers, the risks associated with the combination of commercial and investment banking, and a decline in public trust in the financial industry. The criticisms media received during both of these crises are also comparable, including: its lack of scepticism and boosterism prior to the crisis; for the time it took to grasp the wider dimensions of the crisis; and for the closed corporate culture and elite sources it uses, which narrowly framed the debate and critique.Little attention has been paid to this early critical juncture in the development of the financial media. Also, while there are now a number of studies on the reporting of the GFC and the austerity debate that has framed election campaigns (Schifferes and Knowles 2014) ' which we draw from ' there are no studies that compare it with the reporting of the Great Depression. This provides a unique opportunity: to compare the way two important financial crises were framed; the journalistic standards that characterised the reporting; and to see how this genre of reporting has developed over the past century. To fill this research gap, we conduct a qualitative and quantitative content analysis of the New York Times from 1928-1932. This allowed for analysis of several important elements of the crisis: coverage before the stock market crash; the deepening and global depression that ensued; and the political and economic debate on the increasing deficit and austerity that came to frame the 1932 election campaign.To create a data set we gathered 430 articles from the New York Times' digital archive from the categories: economy, stocks and bonds, and business. We focused on the last Tuesday and Thursday of every month, as these days represent the worst falls during the stock market crash of October 1929. This paper presents the findings from this analysis and compares the results with academic study of the reporting of the GFC. It finds many of the criticisms of over-optimistic reporting to be true, and a closed network of official and business voices dominate the debate. There are important lessons for financial journalists and media industries to be learned from this crisis and the close parallels that can be drawn with events that are still playing out

IAMCR2015

today.Schifferes, Steve and Sophie Knowles. 2014. 'The British Media and the 'First Crisis of Globalisation'.' In Soothsayers of Doom: The Media and Financial Crises, edited by Steve Schifferes and Richard Roberts. London: Routledge.

Id: 11240

Title: The Gravity of the Lowest Common Denominator: Political Economy of the Post-1989 Czech Journalism

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Abstract: The paper will explore political economy of the contemporary media system in the Czech Republic, main shifts on its trajectory during two and half decades after the collapse of Communist regime in 1989, and contradictions faced by journalists working for mainstream media. The central argument of the paper will be that current economic and political trends combine in undermining the basis for the Czech post-communist journalism's legitimacy, its economic sustainability and its ability to perform basic democratic functions (e.g. public sphere, political and economic watchdogs, marketplaces of ideas etc.). As a result, the whole system gravitates towards the "lowest common denominator" of abandoning the increasingly delegitimized and economically unsustainable concept of journalistic professionalism, replacing it with a more direct (and less hidden) subordination to particular economic and political interests that are capable and willing to subsidize the media in exchange for a favorable coverage and/or more or less direct control. The paper will also argue that although the decline of traditional mainstream media might suggest that the alternative media now have relatively greater chance to become competitive and push for a change in the politico-economic status quo, the precarious balance of their very limited resources actually does not allow them to seize this opportunity.The paper will first provide an overview of major changes in the media ownership, patterns of media control, trends in media consumption and economic revenues in the context of political developments in Czechoslovakia and, after the country's 1993 split, in Czech Republic. It will pay special attention to important cases of struggle over media control, such as post-1989 privatizations of several state-run media by their journalists, contest over control of the first private television station TV NOVA between its foreign investor and its Czech management, or struggle over control of public service television between employees and their newly appointed and politically-backed boss that resulted in street protests and political crisis. It will also discuss "berlusconization" of the Czech media, analyzing the major case of current Czech finance minister, populist political leader, agro-business billionaire and media tycoon Andrej Babis.The paper will also focus on the role of the journalists. During the 1989, they were among the first social actors to join the protests that led to the collapse of Communist regime and its replacement with market economy and electoral democracy. Although they retained their generally right-wing outlook, most of the current Czech journalists became proletarians manufacturing information commodities instead of being able to follow the ethos of journalistic professionalism.Finally, the paper will also discuss prospects of alternative media that survive on a combination of self-exploitation of their writers and editors, occasional donations and precarious subsidies, which does not allow them to significantly challenge the status quo in the society and on the media market.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11265

Title: La Convención de la UNESCO sobre diversidad cultural: ¿un nuevo instrumento de la gobernanza internacional de las industrias culturales'

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Abstract: En octubre de 2015 la Convención sobre la Protección y Promoción de la Diversidad de las Expresiones Culturales cumple diez años. En menos de una década este tratado internacional ha sido ratificado por 134 países y la Unión Europea, lo cual demuestra una clara aceptación por parte de la Comunidad internacional. Para algunos analistas (Prieto 2005, Graber 2006, Craufurd-Smith 2007, Bernier 2008, Grant 2011, Vlassis 2014), la Convención está llamada a constituirse en un nuevo instrumento de gobernanza internacional de la cultura y la comunicación. Sin embargo, hasta ahora, no abundan ejemplos palpables de su implementación ni valoraciones fundamentadas de su impacto.Esta comunicación -fruto del trabajo desarrollado en el marco del proyecto 'Diversidad cultural y audiovisual: buenas prácticas e indicadores' (ref. CSO2011-26241, Plan Nacional de I+D+i, España)- pretende mejorar el entendimiento de las implicaciones de la Convención en la gobernanza internacional de las industrias culturales. Con este objetivo se exponen, a través del análisis de documentos oficiales y material bibliográfico, dos casos de conflicto de interés y un acuerdo comercial en los cuales la Convención fue invocada. El primer caso fue protagonizado por la Unión de Televisiones Comerciales Asociadas (UTECA), que demandó al Estado español por considerar ilegal la normativa que obliga a los operadores de televisión destinar parte de sus ingresos de explotación a financiar obras de cine y televisión europeas, incluidas películas europeas cuya lengua original sea una de las lenguas oficiales de España. La sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia de las Comunidades Europeas (05.03.2009), amparándose en la Convención, reafirmó la normativa en vigor exponiendo que la diversidad lingüística constituye un importante clave de la diversidad cultural (Barreiro 2011).El segundo caso guarda relación con la reclamación presentada por EEUU contra China ante la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC) debido a las limitaciones del país asiático a la importación y distribución de publicaciones y productos audiovisuales. En su defensa, las autoridades chinas argumentaron que los productos culturales tienen una repercusión importante en la moral individual y social, y se remitieron a la Convención. Sin embargo, el informe del Grupo Especial de la OMC (12.08.2009), que condenó las restricciones a productos estadounidenses, expone que si bien las autoridades chinas justificas sus medidas invocando la Convención, se abstienen de indicar que ésta sostiene que ninguna disposición de la misma 'podrá interpretarse como una modificación de los derechos y obligaciones de las Partes que emanen de otros tratados internacionales en los que sean parte". Y agrega que el texto del Acuerdo sobre la OMC no prevé excepciones respecto a los "bienes culturales".Finalmente se considera el Acuerdo Económico y Comercial Global entre Canadá y la Unión Europea (2014), cuyo Preámbulo contiene una referencia explícita a la Convención. Se trata de la primera mención a la Convención en un acuerdo comercial, lo cual sienta un precedente al explicitar los principios claves de este tratado. Como señala la canadiense Coalición para la Diversidad Cultural

(2014), pese a no ser vinculante, el Preámbulo plantea un marco interpretativo para cualquier futuro litigio comercial.

Id: 11275

Title: Fact or fiction: truth never lies' A case study of the filmic representations of the Dalit (the lower caste) women's movement in North India (Political Economy and Feminism)

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Abstract: Documentary film hailed as 'creative treatment of actuality' has historically been seen as a form that privileges the representation of the oppressed minorities. Though there has been much debate about the aesthetics of realism and the credibility of image in documentary itself, noted documentary scholar Michael Renov has highlighted the indexicality of the documentary image. Such perspectives on documentary indicate to the genre's approach and willingness to represent a world view that is not obliged to be mired in the dominant discourses driven by a flourishing political economy of the mainstream media in a liberalized state.Traditionally, occupying a space outside of institutional media, independent documentary film, in absence of any structured state funding and corporate sponsorship in India, has managed to not just resist but also at times break the dominant moulds of representation and ideological dialogue. Media studies has traditionally offered a critique of the prevailing 'culture industry' and its role in 'manufacturing consent'. Analyzing the media of dissent and highlighting creative engagement with reality through an alternate representational space and form, still remains a rather unexposed area of scholarship. This remains especially the case when it comes to exploring the subversive potential of alternate media beside the Internet. My essay is an attempt to excavate such alternate representational spaces through the tradition of independent documentary film in India. Using case study methods, the essay will explore the filmic narratives around the Dalit (lower caste) women's movement in North India marked by the formation of 'Gulabi (Pink) Gang'. This feminist vigilante group led by Ms. Sampat Pal, a self-made, lower caste woman leader has been the subject of several screen excursions over last four years. Notable ones among these are two documentary films: 'Pink Saris' by UK based feminist filmmaker Ms. Kim Longinotto(2010), 'Gulabi(Pink) Gang' by Indian documentary filmmaker Ms Nishtha Jain(2012/14) and a super-star studded commercial Bollywood film, 'Gulab Gang' by Mr. Saumik Sen(2014). While 'Pink Saris' offers a rather intimate portrait of Ms Sampat Pal who founded the 'Gulabi Gang' in the badlands of India, yet the outsider's gaze and the exteriority of Longinotto's narrative fails to evoke the larger complexities of India's feudal hinterland. Jain's insider's perspective attempts to situate the Gang's struggle in the larger milieu of social inequalities and political perversion that thrives on such inequalities and oppression. While examining Gang's promotional campaigns and involvement in local politics, Jain's film also reveals a woman who is aware of her power as a leader and 'messiah' of the women. On the other hand, the 'real' Sampat Pal's persona and the larger narrative of the struggles of Dalit (low caste) women is threateningly overwhelmed by the hyper-performative spectacle of a cutlass-wielding Rajjo (loosely based on Sampat Pal, played by Bollywood superstar Ms. Madhuri Dixit) in Saumik Sen's controversial 'Gulab Gang'. Powered by the marketing machinery of the Mumbai Film industry, the virtual persistence of

IAMCR2015

Rajjo's larger than life persona reduces the image of a radical woman rebel to the stereotype of a violent dissenter.The documentary film's nuanced and textured representation of the struggle of the oppressed and victimized women offers a tremendously powerful narrative and a discerning foil to the excesses of the mainstream cinematic spectacle.

Id: 11361

Title: Before there was no alternative: Austerity and press coverage in 1977

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Abstract: Traditionally, the 'there is no alternative (TINA)'-principle has been associated with Margaret Thatcher and neoliberal hegemony. To defend government policies in 1980, Thatcher stated: 'There's no easy popularity in what we are proposing, but it is fundamentally sound. Yet I believe people accept there is no real alternative'. She made use of the slogan many times afterwards to present free market capitalism as the only valid ideological project. In political philosophy, a debate ensued over whether the West had entered either a post-ideological or a post-political era since the 1980s, and especially since the fall of the Berlin Wall. While the former claims that fundamental ideological left-right conflicts have been overcome in favor of a universal rational consensus (e.g. Fukuyama, 1992), the latter argues that public discourse has become depoliticized, which implies that ideological conflict has not disappeared, but the struggle between 'left and right' has been displaced to a struggle between 'right and wrong' (e.g. Mouffe, 2005). Recent analyses have indeed shown media discourses on political formations and climate change to be largely depoliticized (e.g. Raeijmaekers & Maeseele, 2014; Pepermans, 2015). However, it is unclear whether a politicized, ideologically-pluralist media discourse really existed before the neoliberal consensus, and consequently, whether the 1980s really endorsed a shift towards depoliticization in public discourse.To provide an answer to this question, we select a case in 1977 about Belgian governmental austerity measures (the so-called 'Egmont Plan') and subsequent union strikes. From a political perspective, this socio-economic case is fascinating as it concerns Belgium's last austerity measures following a Keynesian logic. From a media perspective, the 1970s are also an interesting time as the Flemish media scape is not yet fully marketized, but still largely pillarized (partisan). Does this indeed imply a greater diversity of political-ideological viewpoints' We collect 2,5 months of coverage by the major Flemish socialist, liberal and Christian-democratic newspapers. Conducting a critical discourse analysis, with an explicit focus on discursive strategies and ideological preferences (Carvalho, 2008), we find the socialist newspaper to politicize the events, by framing these as involving competing ideological standpoints, and from there on it heavily contests the governmental austerity measures. The liberal newspaper also rejects the governmental actions, but in a de-politicized manner: it both moralizes (e.g. victimization) and rationalizes (e.g. international comparison, numeric arguments) the debate to naturalize more market-based decision-making as the only valid option. Lastly, the Christian-democratic newspaper adopts a façade of detached and pure descriptive journalism. Accordingly, it mainly uses a discursive strategy of rationalization (e.g. economic analysis, disapproving party-political strategies) to defend the government actions as inevitable; there is no alternative. We conclude by reflecting on the implications of these results from the perspective of political philosophy (the post-ideological versus post-political debate), media history (from partisan to professionalized-commercial media) and current events in Europe, focusing on the role of mainstream media with respect to the financial-economic crisis,

IAMCR2015

austerity policies, protest movements and political upheavals.

Id: 11377

Title: PANEL: China's Internet Giants: A Rising Force' The Political Economy of Internet through Four Case Studies

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Abstract: Paper title: Corporate ownership and governance in the Chinese ICT enterprises: a case study of HuaweiChina's market reform has not only liberalized the ownership structure of the whole ICT sector, but also largely transformed the governance of domestic ICT enterprises toward equity-based capital structure and capitalist management at the corporate level. At the same time, Western management practice has been introduced and promoted in the Chinese ICT corporations to establish modern governance mechanism, which significantly contrasts with the socialist enterprises' managerial experience in the past. On the other hand, the incentive of capital accumulation drives the ICT enterprises to seek for diversified means of capitalization across territorial boundaries, such as merging and acquisition, pursuit of venture capital, and public listing in global stock markets. The transnationalization of capital in turn re-shapes corporate shareholding system, board structure, and labor control mechanism. However, the liberalization of corporate ownership and governance does not lead to a weakening role of the state in the organization. Rather, the state retains its control over corporate operation through multiple ways, such as regulations of the capital and labor relations, the intervention in financial markets, and the party organization setting in the corporate structure. This paper provides a structural analysis of the intertwining relationship between the state and the transformation of the Chinese ICT enterprises' ownership and governance by incorporating both macro and organizational analyses. A case study of Huawei, especially in terms of its employee share ownership structure, corporate culture, capitalizing mechanism, and the labor control, will be applied to illustrate the corporate governance 'with Chinese characteristics' in the ICT enterprises.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11382

Title: Blurred Borders - Merger of the regulatory institutions in China as a reaction to a convergence of media content

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Abstract: With the onset of the digital age the borders between content published in the form of printed matter (books) or in audio-visual form (radio, film, TV programs) have been dramatically blurred or disappear completely. In the mainland Chinese context this process is also happening. Since media content in China is produced in a highly politicized environment where state control, supervision and intervention still have a prerogative over what content is allowed to be published or deemed 'harmful' to the 'socialist society', the authorities reacted to this process with a major institutional reshuffling. In mid-2013 China's two main censorship bodies for the content industries, the General Administration for Press and Publications (GAPP) and the State Administration for Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) merged to form a new institution: the General Administration for Press and Publications, Radio, Film and Television (GAPPRFT). This new entity, nicknamed by some as "Super Ministry of Culture", was created in order to streamline bureaucracy, strengthen the efficiency of content control and reduce the overlap of responsibilities. With the borders of content increasingly blurred, especially on the Internet, it became ever more difficult to define which entity, SARFT or GAPP, actually was in charge of regulating. A lack of coordination between these competing government institutions led to cases where certain contents where allowed by GAPP to be printed, but banned by SARFT to be published in the form of TV program, film or audio-visual content on the Internet, or vice versa. This competition was especially evident in the case of new media, where both entities tried to bring down their foot.The media industry in China is governed through an opaque and complicated process of licensing the production and distribution of content. In the case of TV programs this involves joint review boards on the local, provincial and central level at the juncture of party and state institutions. This paper compares this process and the regulatory bodies involved from the conditions of the pre-merger time with the post-merger situation. This is done by analyzing relevant regulations in order to answer the following questions: Is the formation of GAPPRFT simply a merger on the level of the organizational structure which reduces the number of regulators' Is this convergence of technologies, operations and management only a streamlining of the regulatory process in the media sector or did it lead to any forms of liberalization or deregulation of the industry' Did the merger even result in a bolstering of official content control'

IAMCR2015

Id: 11511

Title: Brazilian prestige press and the popularity queue, or how printed quality media is becoming a niche market in competitive contemporary contexts

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Abstract: This paper gives sequence to once developed analytical model for political-economic positioning of printed media in Brazil, in which we tried to set different series of variables like circulation, cover and advertising prices, among others, in a web chart (CHAGAS, 2014). This chart was intended to provide a proper tool for comparison on different vehicles performances in direct retail, advertising, and discursive and political trading marketplaces (cf. also LATTMAN-WELTMAN & CHAGAS, 2014). As we have shown in previous presentation in this same workgroup, Brazilian market has been populated last years for a peculiar kind of joint-ventures, binomials formed by a quality paper and a tabloid from the same media conglomerate, that tries to perform a cooperating/mutual role in at least two of these marketplaces, rising the political and economical capital of the group by acting as complimentary vehicles. Now, in order to understand properly what this changing scenario means to Brazil, we need to investigate how social and economic transformations can impact printed media, therefore turning the former traditional newspapers in niche vehicles, reduced to a small amount of the public that keeps following their editorial line. This statement lead us to question what does popularity mean in a political economical sense. After all, we are being introduced to a paradoxical situation in where popularity can stand for either a consumption (known) rate or a prestige (recognized) one. Hence, so-called popular newspapers, tabloids, operates in the order of known while quality papers in the order of recognized. This last one is the focus of the present working paper. Our main goal here is to develop an analysis on the impact of competition among Brazilian newspapers and its effects for prestige press. With data extracted from Brazilian Media Research, conducted by the Social Communication Secretary, and private sources like the Brazilian Bureau of Circulation (IVC) and a PR agency index (the Brand Prestige Index, IPM in Portuguese acronym), we want to scale the quality press for apprehending how it's quickly evolving in being limited to a thin slice of the elite audience. If we juxtapose the Brand Prestige Index and the subscription rates, for instance, we will find a curious coincidence, where newspapers with the highest subscription rates are the ones that present the most elevated prestige admeasurement (among investors and entrepreneurs). Far from pointing that these papers are the most popular (or most consumed) printed vehicles in the country, this comparison brings to light a chain of observations which leads us to the conclusion that prestige press is exceedingly investing in its discursive and political trading potential, whilst it also has greatly depositing trust in an eventual complimentary role of popular media as capable of indulge themselves at their direct retail and advertising marketplaces performances. As a long-term effect, quality papers may expect to keep speaking for the same old reader and thus become even more a niche media, confined not only to an elite but to a faithful audience, for whom it can speak without reservations over its political positionings.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11550

Title: In the Shadows of the Upload: Filipino Commercial Content Moderators and the Globalized Digital Media Production Chain

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Abstract: Commercial content moderation is a globalized, around the clock set of practices in which workers view and adjudicate massive amount of user-generated content (UGC) destined for the world's social media platforms and interactive web sites. While the workers' status and remuneration vary widely depending on site and circumstance, CCM is typically unglamorous, repetitive and often exposes them to content that is disturbing, violent and psychologically damaging, all as a part of their work. This work builds upon extant CCM research conducted with North American workers (Roberts, 2014), offering a comparative extension of that work into the Philippines, a high-tech mecca in a previously colonized country where, much like call center tasks, content flows in and flows out, destined for American markets (Mirchandani, 2012; Poster, 2007).This paper represents preliminary results from the first empirical academic study of CCM workers living and working in the Philippines, now the call center capital of the world (Lee, 2015). Based on in-depth qualitative interviews conducted with CCM workers from the business parks of Manila, this research unveils a complex and often paradoxical role occupied by CCM workers. While CCM work can offer, on the one hand, a much more elevated socioeconomic status than would be possible in other sectors, it comes with risks to workers whose long-term effects remain unknown. CCM workers render content visible while simultaneously remaining invisible; in the world of CCM, the sign of a good job is to leave no sign at all. And yet the mediation work done by CCM workers goes directly to shaping the landscape of the social media, UGC-dominated internet, where platforms exist as empty vessels for users to fill up with whatever they will, and for CCM workers to act as a gatekeeper between users and platforms, providing the brand protection that platform owners demand.Despite being largely disproven by a vast literature of political economy of digital media (Andrejevic, 2007; Fuchs & Sandoval, 2014; Schiller, 1999), internet positivists still persist in claims that the internet exists as a democratizing agent for the public, some going so far as to describe it as still having the potential to act as a 'fifth estate' (Dutton, 2012). Yet this view is at odds with the protocols and practices of surveillance and control, corporate capitulation and governmental manipulation embedded within the internet's global information transfer in recent years, rendering, as the conference theme puts it, the power of this communication medium an ambiguous one at best. While significantly less nefarious than government sponsored surveillance, CCM mediation and manipulation nevertheless exists in the liminal stage of the social media

IAMCR2015

production chain, disrupting comfortable and prevalent myths about the user-to-platform to world relationship in the service of brand protection and corporate profit-seeking. This paper seeks to make linkages among the worklives of CCM workers their choices and mandates, and the greater tensions of control and freedom online today.

Id: 11600

Title: Inequality, Power and Democracy : New Challenges to Liberal Models and the Practice & Study of Mediated Communication

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Abstract: ABSTRACT: : In many areas of liberal political discourse over the past quarter century, the politics of recognition and respect have been accorded much greater attention than the politics of distribution (Butler, et al). Indeed much the same applies to most areas of recent work the media and communication studies fields. Is the cycle of discursive trends in western discourse now turning so that the politics of distribution may be poised to take on a new prominence'In more recent times, however, there is growing evidence that the issues of economic inequalities and their relation to the theories and practices of liberal democracy are taking on a new prominence in public political debate 'at least in the north Atlantic core of the capitalist system. The sources, nature and implications of the trends towards greater economic inequalities since the late 1970s have long been highlighted by leftist researchers but largely ignored in journalist or political discourses. Yet over the past 12-18 months, certain forms of economic 'inequality' have become the subject of best-selling books (e.g. T. Piketty, 2014 'Capital') and films (e.g. 'Inequality for All' featuring R Reich). Indeed 'inequality' matters have been rather suddenly elevated to legitimate-issue status on the agenda of the western establishment ' for example, they featured prominently in the deliberations of the annual gathering of the global political, economic and cultural elite in Davos in January 2014 and 2015.This paper will critically interrogate competing political-economic models in terms of their conceptualisations of inequality, its meanings, sources and consequences [typology]. Section three will examine recent trends highlighting certain aspects of inequality in the light of the financial and economic crisis that unfolded in 2008 and the ensuing period of austerity and slow growth now dubbed the 'Great Recession'. This analysis will draw on (engage with) recent work and debates in neighbouring academic fields (political economy, economic and political studies) concerning the sources, meaning and implications of growing economic inequalities. Sections four and five of the paper will move on explore what these issues imply for the salience of prior and currently prevailing theoretical models framing the study and understanding of news, journalism and related areas of mediated communication. The paper will identify how the growth of economic inequalities pose key challenges [unanswered, thus far] for both .a) prevailing theories of power, democracy and political communication and .b) related key concepts underpinning the operations and practices of journalism and news media.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11607

Title: PANEL: China's Internet Giants: A Rising Force' The Political Economy of Internet through Four Case Studies

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Abstract: Paper title: A look at Chinese development model through indigenous innovations in information technology developments (ICT): an ongoing study of BeiDou satellite system Oi Yan Ng, School of Communication, Simon Fraser UniversityThe explosion of ' digital revolution', rapid informatization and modernization by the acquisition and indigenization of Western technologies in Post- Mao China ,as well as integration with the global market system has caused the rise of transnational technocratic bloc and severity of class inequality both nationally and globally (Zhao and Schiller, 2001). Taking Chinese initiative in developing its indigenous technology and mastery of core technologies, as driven by key state projects like BeiDou satellite system, I propose to look at the possibilities of China to establish an alternative development path other than western- led capitalist modernity (Smythe, 1994), going beyond the question of " catching up with the west" or technologically 'leapfrog' the west as both suggest the subjugation under western capitalistic standards. This normative development model encourages local determination and public control over essential resources, including the utilities for national sovereignty, facilitating a socialized and transitional economy that run towards Economic democracy (Lin, 2013).

IAMCR2015

Id: 11629

Title: Resisting Copyright Agreements: Freelance Media Workers and Alternative Digital Communication

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Abstract: Since the mid-1990s, the commodification of freelance media labour has increasingly been facilitated through the valorization of tightened copyright ownership and control across multiplatform digital communication technologies (Cohen, 2012; D'Agostino, 2010). It has been sustained in employment agreements of media conglomerates. These agreements have contributed to precarity: labour conditions that are flexible and insecure, leaving workers with limited control over the labour process (McKercher, 2014). Despite this continuing commodification, the 2013 labour dispute over the freelancers' employment agreement of TC Media demonstrates a key tension within the political economy of media labour under contemporary conditions of neoliberal capitalism. TC Media, a major conglomerate in Canada, is the publisher of mainstream periodicals, including Elle Canada, Elle Québec, Canadian Living, Style at Home, Les Affaires, and Coup de pouce. Through a political economy approach to digital resistance of intellectual property (Bettig, 1996), and the concept of alternative communication practices (Raboy, 1984), this paper examines the collective action of freelance media workers: the successful social media campaign against the TC Media agreement. It builds a conception of alternative 'digital' communication. It also builds on the few studies of labour groups' social media campaigns within the media industries. Studies of labour groups' use of social media in Canada for political action have largely been centred on the ways in which workers outside of the media industries have adopted digital tactics to organize (Fowler & Hagar, 2013).To fight the TC Media agreement, a coalition of freelance media workers created the hashtag campaign #nesignezpas (#dontsign) on Twitter, the public Facebook group 'Back off, Elle Canada and Canadian Living publisher,' a private Facebook mobilization group, and an email listserv. It is through the use of digital communication that these workers resisted and recomposed the law of copyright, as TC Media announced in September 2013 that it would amend the agreement. Despite the campaign's limited sense of online interactivity, as articulated in the tweets and Facebook posts, social media still had a key role to play in order to network, inform workers and community members of labour disputes, critique labour issues, and encourage people to actively intervene in, and publically support, the campaign offline. This campaign is a concrete example of solidarity that extends beyond the traditional trade union model of direct action. From this campaign, other workers outside of Canada and across the media industries could learn how to build autonomous networks with a wider range of groups who share interests beyond their fields and local communities in order to retain control over the labour process. The high percentage of women working as freelance writers, and who were involved in the freelancers' campaign, also highlight the potential to build solidarity among the media reform, labour, and feminist movements.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11633

Title: Freedom of the press, free speech and the political economy of communication

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Abstract: Four significant events at the start of 2015 have put freedom of expression, freedom of speech and freedom of the press firmly back on the global agenda for political economy research in the field of communication. The first was the carry over from the December 2014 break-in to the Sony Corporation's file serves by anonymous hackers, whom some commentators believed were linked to the North Korean regime. The second was the horrible attack on journalists, editors and cartoonists at the French satirical magazine, Charlie Hebdo on 7 January. The third was the election of leftwing anti-austerity party Syrzia in Greece on 25 January. The fourth was the release of the Australian Al Jazeera journalist, Peter Greste, from an Egyptian jail on 2 February, while his colleagues, Canadian-Egyptian Mohamed Fahmy and Egyptian national Baher Mohamed remained behind bars. While each event is different in scope and size, they are all important to scholars of the political economy of communication because they all speak to ongoing debates about freedom of expression, freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Despite some popular confusion, these ideas are not the same and should be dealt with as related, but essentially different, concepts. Freedom of expression is the right to individual self-expression through any means; it is an inalienable human right. Freedom of speech refers to the right (and the physical ability) to utter political speech; to say what others wish to repress and to demand a voice with which to express a range of other social and political thoughts. Freedom of the press is a very particular version of freedom of expression that is intimately bound with the political economy of speech and of the printing press. Freedom of the press is impossible without the press and, despite its theoretical availability to all of us (confusing it with freedom of speech), freedom of the press is also impossible without the material means (usually money) to actually deploy a printing press (or electronic means of broadcasting and publishing). Additionally, within capitalist relations of production, these freedoms are constrained by the market and by the State. Expression, speech and publication are all subject to market forces'competition, supply and demand, unequal power distribution, etc'and also to State regulation through laws on censorship, press ownership, blasphemy, sedition and the licensing of artistic freedoms.This paper uses the four examples outlined above to discuss contemporary constraints of freedom of the press in the context of the political economy of communication. The paper argues that economic and political context are important in understanding some of the ongoing confusions'both empirical and theoretical'that conflate expression, speech and press. Further, the paper argues that both global and local contexts are relevant to extending our understanding of the political economy of press freedom. The paper concludes by outlining a political economy framework for further analysis of these key issues in communication and media studies.

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Id: 11648

Title: Creative industries, critical mirror image

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Abstract: Creative industries, critical mirror imageAbstractThe aim of this article is to develop a critical expression around the notion of creative industries indicating the evolution of such a concept and its practical consequences. In order to do so, we will resume the idea's characteristics, approaches, as well as its theoretical limits in order to render account of the new realities in the cultural industries. The purpose is to distinguish in the notion, the contradictions between the academic aspects and the purely ideological elements. The latter is important because it has generated worldwide politics settled in documents, conventions, and projects of the international institutions like UNESCO, UN, EU. In many cases the solely mention orientates the researches on the subject, leading the creative part to acquire centrality and to call the phenomenon as a whole under the term creative industries.We will distinguish the cultural industries meaning from the concept of creative industries. We are certain that such differences upon notions exist and are hidden by some authors and politicians. Neoliberal conception of culture is embedded in the notion of creative industries. Profit and business are no longer separated from way of life, patrimony and social traditions, as it is not from art. So to speak creative industries render what was devoted to personal pleasure into a commodity. Technological development and specially digitalization has enormous influence in the shift to consider media consumption equal to media reception. Modern devices are furnished not only with the possibility of supplying telecommunication services but also with content produced to be consumed in a merchandising way. From series to games or music, the mobile provides culture linked to paid entertainment. Much of these content comes from traditional culture simplified and despoil of its substance.In social and political terms, the shift from the welfare state to a neoliberal one has produced a large range of arguments concerning cultural usufruct. What once used to be protected by the state and its institutions is, more and more, relocated in the private sphere. Foundations, museums, galleries mange artistic creations, sites, traditions. Industrial reproduction of these assets becomes in new forms of obtaining profit. Cultural industries are renamed as creative industries.The commercialization of culture and art is not local, each country has its peculiar realization of the aim to merchandize patrimony, art, creation. Globalization is the background of the growing process consisting in erasing the frontiers between art and commerce.KeywordsCreative industries, cultural industries, public and private sphere, commoditization of art and culture.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11679

Title: CONCENTRATION AND CONTESTED POWER IN THE MEXICAN TELEVISION SYSTEM

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Abstract: THROUGH A HISTORICO-STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS, THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT AND CONCENTRATION OF THE MEXICAN TV INDUSTRY IS ACCOUNTED FOR. THE HEGEMONIC GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS ARE SHOWN TO HAVE BECOME POWERFUL POLITICAL ACTORS, IN TIGHT ALLIANCE WITH THE MAIN POLITICAL FORCES, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN POWER TODAY. HOWEVER, THE POWER OF THE MEDIA ENTERPRISES AND ENTREPENEURS IS NON MONOLITHIC AND HAS BEEN CONTESTED BY ALTERNATIVE POLITICAL FORCES, SUCH AS OPPOSITION PARTIES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS.AS THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA DO NOT CONCEDE MUCH VISIBILITY TO THOSE WHO OPPOSE THEM, THE CONTESTING GROUPS HAVE MAINLY MADE USE OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA.THE HEGEMONIC TV COMPANY IN MEXICO, TELEVISA, EXERTED THEIR POWER TO AID THE CURRENT PRESIDENT WIN THE 2012 ELECTION, WITH AN INFORMAL 'PRECAMPAIGN' THAT STARTED SINCE 2005. HOWEVER, AS THE REFORMS HE MANAGED TO PASS IN THE LEGISLATIVE POWER HAVE NOT WORKED VERY WELL, AND EPISODES OF VIOLENCE AND CORRUPTION HAVE DARKENED THE PRESIDENT'S ADMINISTRATION, OPPOSITION HAS GROWN AND DELEGITIMATION OF THE PRESIDENT AND HIS ALLIES, SUCH AS TELEVISA, HAS ENSUED.IN THIS PAPER WE DESCRIBE THE CURRENT STATE OF CONCENTRATION IN THE MEXICAN AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA, THE POLITICAL POWER IT HAS BESTOWED UPON THE MAIN PLAYERS, AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR CHANCE THAT ARISE OUT OF NEW POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ACTORS ENTERING THE FIELD.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11685

Title: Challenging Corporate Media power: Lessons from South American Media Reform

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Abstract: This paper is interested in furthering debates and discussions concerning corporate media power and the role of the state (Freedman, 2014; Freedman, Obar and Martens, forthcoming) by examining South American case studies and specific lessons, which have come out of the past 10 years of media reform and substantive changes to development, across the continent. Focusing on the cases of Ecuador and Argentina, this paper argues that it is important to consider the interrelations between media power and struggles over development. More specifically it considers the potential of community and alternative media, despite the challenges they currently face in relation to state and corporate power.References:(2014) Freedman, Des. The contradictions of Media power. London: Bloomsbury Press.(Forthcoming). Des Freedman, Jonathan Obar, Robert McChesney, & Cheryl Martens, (Eds.) Strategies for Media Reform: International Perspectives, Fordham University Press.

Id: 11708

Title: Reconstructing and Renewing Heterodox and Critical Approaches to the Critical Political Economy of Communication and Media

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Abstract: Some believe that political economy serves as code for a single marxian view of the field. Unfortunately, outsiders peering into the field of communication studies could easily conclude that this is true with leading representatives of political economy of communication embracing the idea while their critics discredit them by pointing to their unrepentant embrace of Marx, with the all of the negative associations that invoking his name evinces in many circles following in train.Expressing the view of the former, Fuchs (2012) states that 'the Political Economy of the Media [i]s Marxist Political Economy'. Meehan and Wasko (2013) similarly state, 'scholars who identify as political economists of the media are generally assumed . . . to work within Marxist traditions' (p. 40). Critics, in contrast, argue that 'Political economy . . . approaches have been reproduced by generations of academics who maintain an unreconstructed Marxist theoretical framework (Haven, Lotz & Tinic, 2009, p. 238). Holt and Perren (2009) claim 'the North American strand of critical political economy forwarded by scholars such as Herbert Schiller, Ben Bagdikian, Robert McChesney, and Edward Herman . . . is reductive, simplistic, and too economistic . . .' (pp. 8-9). Such antagonistic views have been entrenched over the course of four generations of communication and media scholars who have had major rows over where the political economy of communication fits within the field: the Administrative/Critical encounter between Paul Lazarsfeld, on the one side, and Theodore Adorno and C. Wright Mills, on the other, in the 1940s; the Critical/Administrative Redux forty years later, as expressed in the special 1983 issue of the Journal of Communication; a decade later the debate pitted Cultural Studies scholars against Critical Political Economists. Today, such antagonisms pit Creative Industries and Media Industries Studies scholars against Critical Political Economists while so-called materialist approaches to media studies avoid mentioning political economy altogether (Gillespie, Boczkowski & Foot, 2014, p. 7). This paper responds to these criticisms as well as the typical defense mounted by advocates of Marxist Political Economy of Communication in four ways. First, I argue that there is no need to shy away from Marxist political economy so long as we separate out Marx the critical analyst of capitalism from Marx the Prophet (Mills, 1962; Schumpter, (1943/1996). Second, I dig deeper into the under-explored history of political economy in the United States represented by the work of Thorstein Veblen and Charles Horton Cooley, as Simonson (2013) has done. Doing so opens up a trans-Atlantic vista on the origins of political economy because of the intellectual traffic that existed in the late-19th century between the US and Europe among political economists, economic historians, and sociologists (Schaffle, Knies, Bucher) (Hardt, 2001; Young, 2009). Third, I want to draw a line between this reconstructed intellectual history of the political economy of communication to a number of schools of thought that have been obscured by debates in the field: institutional political economy, institutional economics, economic sociology, innovation economics, liberal political economy and the Cultural

Industries School. Fourth, I will suggest concrete ways in which these ideas can be used to further the analysis of telecommunications, media and the internet, and their place within the capitalist order of things, in the 21st century.

Id: 11770

Title: PANEL: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE MEDIA - Paper 1 Questions of Materiality and Justice

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Abstract: Communications scholarship has a long, and honourable, track record of inquiry into the ways issues around climate change are represented, and misrepresented, in the major media, the forces shaping these productions, and their consequences for public understanding and engagement. These remain key areas of research, but recent work has also seen growing interest in two other aspects of the relations between communication systems and climate change, both of which intersect with emerging currents within critical political economy. The first directs attention to the materiality of communication systems as both infrastructural networks and modes of production, promotion, use, and disposal, and poses urgent questions about the implications of dominant forms of organisation for resource depletion, energy generation and consumption, and pollution and waste. The second argues that the gathering ecological crisis is integral to the general crisis of contemporary capitalism and can only be addressed in the context of the general question of justice raised by widening inequalities in the distribution of wealth, risks and impacts, and contested understandings of growth and sustainability. This paper reviews recent research and debate in these areas and outlines an agenda for future inquiry and action.

IAMCR2015

Id: 11771

Title: PANEL: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE MEDIA - Paper 2 Media ownership and climate change : an issue for media reform'

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Abstract: Media ownership and climate change : an issue for media reform'The media system 'in all its modes- remains the principal arena in which competing accounts of climate change struggle for visibility, credibility, and legitimacy. It is centred on a five-way contest between governments, corporations, scientists, campaigning groups, and the general public. While recent years have witnessed increasing interest among communication scholars from a range of subfields in investigating how the media are reporting anthropogenic climate change, a political economy approach hat aim to investigate how power and power relations are (re)produced through the media in relation to the climate problem has yet to be developed.In fact, since the 90's we have seen the growth of journal articles across a range of science, environment and communication journals, including the launch for journals specifically centred on environmental communication .(Anderson,2009).At the same time, studies from a journalism studies perspective concerning the environment and risk communication analysis have produced a significant body of work (Boyce and Lewis,2009; Corbett, 2006; Cottle, 2009; Cox, 2010; Hannigan, 2006; Hansen, 2010; Lester,2010).Following the holistic approach offered by a critical economy perspective, the paper aims to demonstrate how issues around climate change intersect with the core concerns that have traditionally dominated critical political economy. It thus focuses on media ownership as a structural factor shaping the relationship between the climate problem and the media .

Id: 11772

Title: PANEL: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE MEDIA. Media and the Ecological Crisis.

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Abstract: We don't usually think of media as an ecological problem, but over the past forty years research and response to environmental risks associated with media technology has grown from activist roots to a topic of concern in academia, policy circles, and industry. The field of media and communication studies has largely focused on media content, and now a growing number of scholars are examining the hardware's environmental impact, from the sourcing of raw materials to the disposal of dead and outdated media technology.This paper will address the problem of media as infrastructures and arrays of machines- that may themselves be contributing to the ecological problem. It will conclude by reviewing the recent research and debate in these areas and outlines an agenda for future inquiry

Id: 11773

Title: PANEL: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE MEDIA - Paper 4 REPORTING CLIMATE
CHANGE: CHALLENGES FOR RESEARCH

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Abstract: Climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time, and the media have been
demonstrated to play a key role in shaping public perceptions and policy agendas. Journalists are faced
with multiple challenges in covering this complex field. This paper provides an overview of existing
research on the media framing of climate change, highlighting major research themes and assessing
future potential research developments. It argues that analysis of the reporting of climate science must
be placed in the wider context of the growing concentration and globalization of news media
ownership, and an increasingly 'promotional culture', highlighted by the rapid rise of the public
relations industry in recent years and claims-makers who employ increasingly sophisticated media
strategies.Future research will need to examine in-depth the targeting of media by a range of actors, as
well as unravel complex information flows across countries as media increasingly converge.

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