

History of Media Studies Newsletter

December 2025

Welcome to the 55th edition of the **History of Media Studies Newsletter**. The monthly email, assembled by Dave Park, Jeff Pooley, and Pete Simonson, maintains a loose affiliation with the **History of Media Studies journal** and the **Working Group on the History of Media Studies**. Please **contact us** with any questions, suggestions, or items.

1. Working Group on the History of Media Studies

Join us for the next remote session devoted to discussing working papers with authors. Hosted by the **Consortium for History of Science, Technology and Medicine** (CHSTM). Open to anyone interested in the history of the media studies fields. **Instructions to join** are [here](#). The next session will be announced soon. Questions? **Contact us**.

2. Conferences, Calls & Announcements

If you have a call or announcement relevant to the history of media studies, please **contact us**.

1. CFP: International Conference on French Theory and Contemporary Screen Studies

- In the context of contemporary Screen Studies – a field characterised by a multiplicity of disparate methods, theories, practices and research objects – it would appear that ‘French theory’ occupies a paradoxical place: on the one hand, ample cognizance of French film theory and French (post)structuralism is still viewed as a pre-requisite to the formation of film and media scholars, who may be expected to demonstrate their familiarity with, for example, the semiological writings of Christian Metz, the

psychoanalytic theories of Jean-Louis Baudry, or the post-structuralist rhetoric of Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes. On the other hand, French film theory is liable to be viewed as passé, a hangover from the 'high theory' battles of the 1970s and 1980s. This conference invites attendees to reflect upon any aspect of French film theory (be that its pre-war iterations, its post-war auteurist, semiotic and structuralist paradigms, or its various 'high theoretical' incarnations) as it pertains to 21st century Screen Studies, interrogating the contemporary tensions, uses and developments that characterise its failure to disappear.

- Conference dates: 11 & 12 June 2026
- **Deadline:** 12 January 2026
- **More details**

2. Call for Papers: Tenth Annual Conference on the History of Recent Social Science (HISRESS)

- This two-day conference of the Society for the History of Recent Social Science (HISRESS), at the Geneva Graduate Institute in Switzerland, will bring together researchers working on the history of post-World War II social science. It will provide a forum for the latest research on the cross-disciplinary history of the post-war social sciences, including but not limited to anthropology, economics, psychology, political science, and sociology as well as related fields like area studies, communication studies, design, history, international relations, law, linguistics, and urban studies. The conference will be organized as a series of one-hour, single-paper sessions attended by all participants. Ample time will be set aside for intellectual exchange between presenters and attendees, as all participants are expected to prepare unpublished papers (not longer than 10,000 words, excluding footnotes and references) for circulation to other participants and read all pre-circulated papers in advance.
- Conference dates: 11 & 12 June 2026
- **Deadline:** 2 February 2026
- **More details**

3. 2026 Cheiron Book Prize Competition

- Cheiron (The international society for the history of behavioral & social sciences) welcomes – and encourages – authors and publishers to submit

entries for Cheiron's upcoming Book Prize Competition. Eligible works include original book-length historical studies, written in English, and published after October 15, 2024. Subject matter should focus on either specific or more general aspects of the social and behavioral sciences including, but not limited to, histories of psychology, psychiatry, anthropology, sociology, and social statistics, as well as historical biographies of scholars in these areas. The author of the winning book will receive \$500 and be expected to discuss their work in a session solely devoted to the Book Prize at Cheiron's next annual meeting, which will be held as a virtual (Zoom) meeting June 25 through June 27, 2026.

Announcements of the award will be widely circulated to relevant journals and organizations. To submit a nomination, please email Ian Davidson: ian.davidson@concordia.ab.ca

- **Deadline:** 31 December 2025

4. CFP: 58th Annual Meeting of Cheiron – The International Society for the History of Behavioral and Social Sciences

- The 58th Annual Meeting of Cheiron – The International Society for the History of Behavioral and Social Sciences – will be held virtually from Thursday, June 25th through Saturday, June 27th, 2026. The theme of the meeting will be "Cheiron without Borders." Cheiron invites submissions of papers, thematic symposia, panels, roundtables, workshops and posters that deal with an aspect of the history of the human, behavioral or social sciences or related historiographical and methodological issues. Proposals for oral presentations should contain a 500- to 600-word abstract in English plus a short bibliography. If the presentation itself will be given in a language other than English, please indicate this in your proposal.
- Conference dates: 25 June, 2026, to 27 June, 2027
- **Deadline:** 13 February 2025
- **More details**

5. CFP: The Making of the Humanities XII (Torun 2026)

- In 2026, the twelfth Making of the Humanities conference will be hosted by Nicolaus Copernicus University, in Torun, Poland, October 7-9, 2026. Under the title "The Structure of Humanistic Revolutions," this conference will seek to critically explore the transformations that have shaped the history of the

humanities. Drawing inspiration from Thomas Kuhn's seminal work "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions," we will engage in a reflective analysis of how "revolutions" within humanistic disciplines have been conceptualized, contested, and institutionalized over time. Please note that although we invite submissions that explore this theme, we remain open to abstracts addressing other subjects as well.

- Conference dates: 7–9 October 2026
- **Deadline:** 19 April 2026
- [More details](#)

3. The Journal

History of Media Studies encourages **submissions (en español)** on the history of research, education, and reflective knowledge about media and communication—as expressed through academic institutions; through commercial, governmental, and non-governmental organizations; and through "alter-traditions" of thought and practice often excluded from the academic mainstream.

4. New Publications

Works listed here are newly published, or new to the **bibliography**.

The **History of Communication Research Bibliography** is a project of the **Annenberg School for Communication Library Archives (ASCLA)** at the University of Pennsylvania.

1. "In Memoriam: Esteban López-Escobar (1941–2025)." *Church, Communication and Culture* 10, no. 1 (2025): 187–88.

ABSTRACT: [first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] Esteban López-Escobar, a founding member of the Advisory Board of *Church, Communication & Culture*, passed away on March 11 at the age of 83. Professor López-Escobar was born in Valencia, Spain, in 1941, but soon after his family moved to Asturias, where he grew up. In 1972, he joined the faculty of the School of Communication at the University of Navarra as a professor of Communication Theory. He served as the first director of the Department of

- Public Communication at the School and was a pioneer in integrating various fields, including Deontology, Political Institutions, International Relations, Political Communication, International Communication, and Information Law.*
2. Beer, David. "N. Katherine Hayles, The Cosmic Web and the Problem of Articulation." *Media Theory* 9, no. 2 (2025): 165--90.
- ABSTRACT:** *Operating at the intersections of literature, science and technology, N. Katherine Hayles is a preeminent thinker whose interdisciplinary work has come to be highly influential across a range of fields. This article focuses upon Hayles' first book, *The Cosmic Web*, published in 1984. Exploring the conditions of its production and reception, it shows how this relatively neglected book, in terms of citations and attention, established a series of influential ideas that have since become core within the critical study of data, algorithms and artificial intelligence. This particular article seeks to understand that original text along with the ideas and approaches that it established. The article suggests that, drawing on Hayles' own conceptual framing, *The Cosmic Web* is part of the 'cultural matrix' through which critical studies of data, algorithms and AI continue to emerge. The article focuses directly on the methods deployed by Hayles, and reflects on how literary sources were used to provoke the analytical imagination. Within this, it examines Hayles' use of literary sources to explore broader social and cultural forces. The article asks how Hayles used that method to develop the metaphor of *The Cosmic Web* and its connotations of interconnection and stickiness. It focuses on the problem of articulation identified by Hayles and the methodological and conceptual possibilities *The Cosmic Web* still offers for seeking to address it today.*
3. Brock, André. "The Illumination of Black Twitter: Charles Mills, Race, and Digital Media Theory." *Media Theory* 9, no. 2 (2025): 241--56.

ABSTRACT: *Social networks are simultaneously information and media platforms, but Blackness becomes understood differently depending upon which frame is deployed. While Black media creators have been lauded for their inventive enlivening of digital and social media technologies, Black information users are often considered as lacking technical, written, or mainstream cultural literacies. Mills' works -- from 'Alternative Epistemologies' to *The Racial Contract* to one of his last, 'The Illumination of Blackness' -- go beyond philosophy to inform media theory and science and technology studies. For example, Black Twitter shattered deficit models of Black digital expertise through discourse, affordances, and networked culture. I contend that Black Twitter illuminates the "racialized optics of modernity" (Mills, 2021: 18) and of computation through Black standpoint*

- epistemologies mediated by digital practices and discourses. I find that Mills anticipated that Black aesthetics and philosophy are well-suited for alternative visions of digital practice, design, and use.
4. Brum, Rodrigo, and Ana G. Coutinho. "Fragments of Encounters: The Filmic Chronicles of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Dina Dreyfus in Indigenous Villages in Brazil." *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 29--30 (2025): 70--91.
- ABSTRACT:*** Published Version.
5. Cardoso, Catarina, Cátia Miriam Costa, Bruno Damásio, and Sandro Mendonça. "The 'Network Society' Moves in Mysterious Ways: 25 Years in the Reception of a Core Concept." *Quantitative Science Studies* 6 (2025): 686--715.
- ABSTRACT:*** The "Network Society" is an analytical concept developed by Manuel Castells to describe a new form of societal organization underpinned by microelectronics and based on information flows. Since it was introduced in the 1990s, this key contribution to social theory has framed much of academic research and policy-relevant worldviews when it comes to understanding contemporary digital ways. By quantitatively exploring the impact of his contributions, this study inquires into how Castells' concept was received by scientific communities publishing in peer-reviewed academic journals. Through a comprehensive and integrative bibliometric analysis, the findings reveal a three-phase build-up process of appropriation and highlight how the concept was predominantly exploited in the domains of Communication and Sociology, with an emphasis on connectivity and its implications for governance and policymaking, particularly in Western countries. There is evidence of its adaptability in capturing the evolving opportunities and challenges of the digital era.
6. Daniel, James Rushing, Catherine Chaput, James J. Brown, Nina Maria Lozano, Kelly E. Happe, Matthew W. Bost, and Jacob Spenser Wilson. "Complicating Marx's Role in Rhetorical Studies." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 55, no. 5 (2025): 454--97.

ABSTRACT: [first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] In rhetorical studies, interest in the work of Karl Marx has never amounted to much. Some important exceptions defy convention (Biesecker and Lucaites; Bost; Bost and May; Chaput, "The Body"; Cloud; Cloud and Gunn; Greene; McDonald), but remarkably few rhetoricians have seen Marx as worthy of more than a passing glance. The case is much the same in composition studies, where attention to faculty labor, anticapitalist critique, and (on occasion) Marx's work represents only a modest corner of the field (Berlin; Bollig; Bousquet;

*Daniel; Giamo and Lawson; Mutnick; Trimbur; Welsh; Zebroski). Marx's effective absence from our discipline's conference panels, graduate reading lists, and bibliographies, even in scholarship addressing matters of political economy, has become unremarkable. For many in rhetoric, he is a thinker for whom persuasion was never a significant concern and, hence, someone with little to offer a discipline with defining investments in language and argumentation. Richard W. Wilkie, writing in *Philosophy & Rhetoric* in 1976, sought to challenge this perception, contending that while "it would be too much to call Karl Marx a rhetorical theorist," he did attend to rhetoric, particularly in his consideration of meaning and motive (232). Subsequent rhetorical theorists, however, have been largely unconvinced of this reading. James Arnt Aune's *Rhetoric and Marxism*, the field's most extensive engagement with Marx, presents what amounts to a dismissal of his rhetorical project. As Aune alleges, Marxism struggles to explain "why audiences should accept its prescriptions" (13) and offers few answers regarding "what sorts of communicative processes enable historical actors to see liberatory possibilities" (13). Aune's pronouncement indexes a disciplinary trend in which rhetoricians have either avoided direct engagement with Marx's thought or simply dismissed it.*

7. Dawes, Simon, and Anamik Saha. "Charles W. Mills and Media Theory." *Media Theory* 9, no. 2 (2025): 201--8.

ABSTRACT: *This short article introduces the special section, 'Charles W. Mills and Media Theory'. It considers the contribution that Mills' thought -- on the relations between race and class, on the significance of race, whiteness and ignorance for understanding liberalism, and on the potential of liberalism to be made more radical, redistributive and egalitarian -- for work on media and communication.*

8. Depeli-Sevinç, Gülsüm, and Özlem Atar. "Nationalism and Intercultural Communication in Türkiye: The Myth of 'One Nation One Culture' and Its Impacts on the Field." *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 54, no. 6 (2025): 393--415.

ABSTRACT: *This article examines how nationalism shapes Intercultural Communication (ICC) research in Türkiye. We retrieved records from the CoHE Thesis Center, YÖK Academic Search, and DergiPark and conducted a systematic review of 574 studies by adapting the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. We identified 42 studies that acknowledge multiculturality in Türkiye and communication between diverse ethno-religious groups for further thematic analysis. Findings show that nationalist ideology limits critical engagement with cultural diversity and discourages research that calls into question the*

- mythical oneness of the nation. We argue that ICC must address nationalism as a structural and methodological constraint to support inclusive knowledge production.*
9. Dorzweiler, Nick. "'Human Nature in Action': Harold Lasswell, NBC Radio, and the Psychotherapy Program for the American Masses." *Perspectives on Politics* 23, no. 4 (2025): 1--17.
- ABSTRACT: In 1939 and 1940, the renowned political scientist Harold Lasswell wrote and hosted over 40 episodes of a radio show, Human Nature in Action, for the National Broadcasting Corporation. The program was meant to adjust listeners to the experience of psychological insecurities generated by American life--insecurities Lasswell believed would engender political unrest if not properly managed. In uncovering the archives of the show, which have gone almost entirely unexamined to date, this article not only explains why one of the most famous political scientists of the mid-twentieth century believed the American public needed to be subjected to such a program of mass psychotherapy and why the nation's largest broadcaster agreed to support it. It also invites reconsideration of the ways in which popular political commentary today--even when it represents otherwise diverse ideological perspectives--remains attached to Lasswellian narratives of anxiety as dangerous to a "healthy" democratic polity.*
10. Gaudreault, Alain. "Communis, Communicatio, Communicare: On the Meaning of Communication." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 50, no. 4 (2025): 639--67.
- ABSTRACT: Background: Today's society is perceived and interpreted through the global phenomenon of communication, which calls into question the foundations of meaning on which the semantics associated with the word communication are based. Analysis: An etymology of the word reveals, from its distant Indo-European origins to the construction of the neologism and its definitive spelling, the main semantic elements that are associated with the idea of communication. Conclusion and Implications: Although today it is increasingly associated with the function of transmission, the word through its journey shows that the idea of communication is a processual dynamic that has always been closely associated with a relational state of reciprocity, a state directly caused by the action of connection. The idea of communication is thus intrinsic to the character of what is social.*
11. Giglitto, Danilo, and Rinella Cere. "'My Natives to Myself': A Critical Perspective on Ethnographic Films." *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 29--30 (2025): 246--62.
- ABSTRACT: Published Version.*

12. Hayles, N. Katherine. "My First Book and Where It Led." *Media Theory* 9, no. 2 (2025): 191--200.

ABSTRACT: This essay traces my research trajectory from my first book, *The Cosmic Web* (1984) to my latest book, *Bacteria to AI* (2025a). It begins with what David Beer calls the "articulation problem," that is, the limitations that arise when one speaks from within the field (physical, social, mathematical, theoretical) in which one is located. These include paradoxes of self-reference and the impossibility of constructing a logical system that is both true and complete (Gödel's Theorem). In *How We Became Posthuman* (1999), the articulation problem surfaced within cybernetics in the form of second-order cybernetics, which recognized that the observer himself/herself is located within a system that can be observed in turn. With Science and Technology Studies (STS) well-established by the late 1990s, the articulation problem took a wider significance when STS researchers argued that humans themselves always speak from the human *umwelt* (world-construction), so that the "laws of nature" science identifies are never about nature as such but about our experience of nature. Thus the articulation problem morphed into the species-construction problem, which I explored in my last three books, *How We Think* (2012), *Unthought* (2017), and *Bacteria to AI* (2025a).

13. Heflin, Kristen. "Toward an Historical Organic Ideology: Thatcherism, Trumpism, and Stuart Hall's Engagement with Organic Ideology." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 42, no. 3--4 (2025): 177--89.

ABSTRACT: In the 1970s and 1980s, Stuart Hall struggled to make sense of Thatcherism, an ideology that was incoherent, brought together seemingly opposed viewpoints, and embraced contradiction. Ultimately, Hall drew from Gramsci's concepts of organic ideology and organic intellectuals to help make sense of this ideology full of contradictions. This paper examines the theoretical roots of the concepts of organic ideology and organic intellectuals using examples from Thatcherism and Trumpism to illustrate the terms. This paper ends with a discussion of the utility of these concepts and the possibilities of an historical organic ideology, an ideology rooted in historical context.

14. Litherland, Benjamin. "Smarter, Better, Faster, Kinder? The Problems with Claiming That Media and Popular Culture Has Positive Effects." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 28, no. 6 (2025): 1120--40.

ABSTRACT: For much of its history, popular culture has been seen as a threat to audiences. This paper identifies a parallel but powerful discourse that runs counter to these narratives: that popular culture is beneficial and

- makes us 'smarter', 'better', 'faster' or 'kinder'. While media and cultural studies have robustly criticized 'negative' media effects, they've been slower to address 'positive' effects. This paper corrects that oversight by examining the politics of these discourses in the online press. Through a thematic analysis of 111 articles, the paper suggests positive effects can be critiqued using the criteria of simplicity, morality and ideology. 'Positive' claims about popular cultural consumption may seem appealing, but they oversimplify complex scientific research and social phenomena, moralize cultural consumption, and uphold ideological norms. Such discourses perpetuate troubling common senses about 'good' and 'bad' audiences that align with existing systems of power.*
15. Löblich, Maria, and Elisa Pollack. "Unequal Media Worlds: East Berlin Media Criticism after 1990." *Javnost - The Public* 32, no. 4 (2025): 417--34.
- ABSTRACT:** *This article examines East Berlin media criticism post-1990, focusing on the unequal distribution of symbolic resources between East and West Germans. Utilising Giddens's structuration and identity theories, we link the discursive side of inequality with media and define media criticism as one response of marginalised groups' to hegemonic discourses. We conducted 37 biographical interviews with East Berliners to examine their media criticism and experiences of exclusion in media discourse. We found that hegemonic media narratives about East Germany have influenced East Berlin media criticism. This criticism is directed at systemic media biases, particularly in public service broadcasting. The study identified a latent consciousness of structural factors shaping media realities among East Berliners, often linked to their experiences of social declassing and the socioeconomic challenges after reunification. A range of East Berliners criticised the portrayal of German Democratic Republic (GDR) life in the media, particularly the focus on the Stasi and negative stereotypes, which they feel misrepresent their lived experiences. The persistence of these stereotypes has, for some, reinforced an East German identity and fostered media criticism as a form of identity work.*
16. Marinov, Robert. "Critical Disinformation Studies in Canadian Context." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 50, no. 4 (2025): 596--609.

ABSTRACT: *[first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] Widespread fears over "disinformation" burst onto the political scene, in Canada and globally, around 2016 (Freelon & Wells, 2020). At the time, then-presidential candidate, Donald Trump, played a key role in mainstreaming discriminatory and misleading rhetoric, while allegations of digital influence campaigns meant to impact elections and referendums by Cambridge Analytica, Vancouver's AggregateIQ, and other technology firms (McKelvey, 2018) set*

- the stage for a growing "techlash" against the power and influence of Big Tech's platforms (Smith, 2018). Moral panic quickly ensued, with researchers, governments, civil society organizations, and citizens alike scrambling to understand this "new" media environment now populated by alt-rights, data-harvesting algorithms, and a growing fragmentation of media platforms and claims on social reality. It was the dawn, as William Davies (2016) opined in the New York Times, of "The Age of Post-Truth Politics." . . . Or was it?*
17. Marques, Francisco Paulo Jamil, Andressa Buttore Kniess, Manuel Goyanes, and Thaiane Oliveira. "De-Westernizing Communication Studies through Domesticating the Global South: A Critical Examination of the Mechanisms Shaping Scholarly Participation in the Field." *International Journal of Communication* 19 (2025): 27--27.
- ABSTRACT:** *In light of scholarly critiques of the Western canon, this study aims to (1) identify the communication and media journals that most frequently publish work on "de-Westernization" and "Global South" topics, and (2) explore the academic paths of scholars who have written about inequities in the field. Based on a literature review and descriptive data, we assess the educational background and institutional affiliation of 437 scholars who authored 246 articles published between 1999 and 2023 in JCR-indexed communication journals. The findings reveal that most scholars engaging with these topics were educated in or affiliated with institutions in the Global North. In addition, while efforts to diversify perspectives in the field are commendable, they may unintentionally lead to tokenism, whereby few scholars are positioned to symbolically represent entire regions. We extend a provocative invitation to the field to critically examine whether--and how--academic knowledge production on de-Westernization and the Global South has been domesticated to conform to mainstream academic practices and frameworks.*
18. Mejia, Robert. "The Liberation Theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 111, no. 4 (2025): 707--13.

ABSTRACT: *The philosopher and Catholic theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez offers rhetoricians a sophisticated transnational theory of liberation rooted in a hermeneutic of hope. Grounded in his experience with racism, classism, ableism, and positionality within the historical and geopolitical realities of South America, Gutiérrez's writings articulate a novel theoretical and methodological orientation centered in humility, hope, solidarity, and social action and offers a corrective to the tendency to mistake theoretical fluency for consciousness, provincialism for expertise, and criticism for liberation.*

- Gutiérrez offers rhetorical scholars a more ethical method and model for moving away from rhetoric's end as professional criticism to rhetoric as a technology of radical hope.*
19. Muckelbauer, John, and Nathan DeProspo. "Marx's Last Words: A Politics of Impurity." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 55, no. 5 (2025): 498--508.

ABSTRACT: *Our inheritance of Marxism necessarily takes the form of a ghost story. We contend that Marx's inability to extract his own thought from the dogmatic essentialism he otherwise relentlessly critiques is not simply a contradiction to overcome but also, in a sense, the enabling condition of all rhetorical practice. In other words, what haunts Marx--the impossible necessity of resistance, the relentless impurity of critique--is what continues to haunt all social, pedagogical, and scholarly engagement today. For us, the question is no longer how to distance our thinking from such impurity, but how to learn to involve oneself differently: to inhabit spectrality as a strategy for inheritance. Our essay attempts to show what this might look like.*

20. Pardo, Alejandro. "The 'Diakonia' of Truth and Good: Saint John Paul II and the Media." *Church, Communication and Culture* 10, no. 1 (2025): 60--82.

ABSTRACT: *The Catholic Church has always paid special attention to the media. John Paul II's pontificate has been especially prolific and broad in this regard. This article seeks to offer a new synthesis of his teachings on the media, taking into consideration some recent bibliographical references. I will focus on the following points. Firstly, the consideration of the media as a positive reality is placed at the service of the person and society (gifts of God). Secondly, its character is a shaper of thought and culture. Then, the understanding of communication as a service (*diakonia*) to truth and the common good. A fourth point would be the shared responsibility that flows from such a mission (and power). Finally, the use of the media in the task of evangelization to which the Church is committed.*

21. Petersen, Thomas. "Classic Book Review: The Spiral of Silence: Public Opinion -- Our Social Skin." *Church, Communication and Culture* 10, no. 1 (2025): 167--72.

ABSTRACT: *[first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] The Spiral of Silence is one of the classic works in the field of communication science, widely recognized and often cited by the scientific community. In 1995, it was the only non-English language book included by the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) in its list of the most important works in the social sciences published in the past 50 years (Davison et al. Citation1995). Nevertheless, the book is often misunderstood, one of the*

- reasons being that it is also a very personal book that does not present a logically complete, systematically crafted theory, but rather reports on the author's personal journey of scientific discovery.*
22. Ratzan, Scott C., Rebecca K. Ivic, Sara Rubinelli, Kenneth H. Rabin, Hye Kyung Kim, and Ruth M. Parker. "Advancing Health Communication, a Call for the Future: 30 Years of the Journal of Health Communication: International Perspectives." *Journal of Health Communication* 30, no. 7--9 (2025): 232-37.
- ABSTRACT: The 30th anniversary of the Journal of Health Communication: International Perspectives occurs at a pivotal moment. In our inaugural issue in 1996, founding editor Scott Ratzan described his vision "to promote global health with effective communication strategies to improve health outcomes and well-being." Since then, JOHC has consistently championed rigorous and forward-thinking research and perspectives that have helped shape today's multi-disciplinary practice. As we mark this milestone and honor the Journal's legacy, we must also confront the pressing challenges that define the current landscape of health communication. We live in an era where scientific reasoning is increasingly questioned by policymakers, patients, and the public alike. The institutions that have traditionally upheld evidence-based practice have lost trust, respect and authority. In this evolving context, health communication cannot remain a static field. In the decades ahead, the Journal must take an active and unapologetic stance--maintaining the highest ethics while driving innovation in digital health communication, scientific methodology, data interpretation and translation for better uptake. Its mission must be to accelerate measurable global health gains by advancing communication strategies that not only inform, but inspire trust, foster agency, and empower individuals and populations to make evidence-based choices they willingly and confidently adopt.*
23. Sirui, Ma. "The Recursive Equation of the Post-Medium: Rosalind Krauss's Critical Trajectory and Its Internal Tensions." *Media Theory* 9, no. 2 (2025): 29--54.
- ABSTRACT: This article systematically reconstructs Rosalind Krauss's theory of the post-medium by redefining the concept of medium through a logic of double negation and reordering her discourse around the triadic structure of "medium--support--convention." First, the medium is refigured as hypokeimenon (support): it is neither reducible to material properties (a negation of modernism), nor is it a purely signifying form devoid of reference (a negation of post-structuralism). Rather, the medium is dynamically constituted through conventions and recursive structures. Second, drawing from Stanley Cavell's notion of "automatism," Krauss conceptualizes*

- convention as "semi-automatic": the artist simultaneously inhabits and exceeds conventional procedures, and this internal tension propels the renewal of the medium. Finally, the post-medium operates through recursion -- self-examination and redefinition -- continually reconstructing its specificity. In doing so, it rejects the linear teleology of modernism while avoiding poststructuralism's erasure of direction and standards.
24. Tate, Shirley Anne. "We Need Charles Mills More than Ever." *Media Theory* 9, no. 2 (2025): 209--26.

ABSTRACT: This article uses a no reply racist email I received in 2023 as its point of departure for thinking through the importance of *The Racial Contract* in theorizing about contemporary 'post-race' racism's cultural life because of the prevalent discourse that Black people can be racist too. It looks at the continuing presence of willful white ignorance on anti-Black racism and the tenacity of global white supremacy's impact on lines of sight societally and in the academy using understandings from Charles Mills' (1997) *The Racial Contract* and his 2007 chapter 'White ignorance' on white supremacy, whiteness, racialization, bodies, and epistemologies of ignorance. The discussion of the email reflects some of the impact of Mills' ideas on my own work within Racism Studies and Cultural Studies. As someone from Stuart Hall's Black British Cultural Studies tradition who draws on Mills' work in my meditations on anti-Black racism and white supremacy, I illustrate the generative nature of his work within these (sub)disciplines by also including my own work on institutional anti-Black racism's affects as part and parcel of the workings of the Racial Contract. This locates racial affective economies within the Contract itself as the glue that binds white ignorance and white supremacy on issues of race and racism even in the face of its refutation.

25. Vitullo, Alessandra, Heidi A. Campbell, Fabrizio Mastrofini, and Federico Palmieri Di Pietro. "From Radio to AI: Old and New Trends in the Catholic Church's Approach to Technological Innovation." *Church, Communication and Culture* 10, no. 1 (2025): 45--59.

ABSTRACT: Through a historical and theological overview of the Catholic Church's response to information communication technologies (ICTs), this article provides the groundwork for understanding current Church discussions about artificial intelligence (AI). Drawing on primary sources, namely papal speeches and Vatican documents, as well as other secondary historical and critical sources, the article details how the Catholic Church has managed over the decades to strike a balance between its evaluation and policies toward technological innovation, and the potential ethical and spiritual risks to which technology exposes society. Special attention is also

- given to shifts within the pontificate of Pope Francis towards promoting a much more pragmatic approach to ICTs, which has impacted current debates in the Church and approaches towards AI and what this might mean for future responses to emerging technology.*
26. Weaver, David H. "The Evolution of Agenda-Setting Research and Theory from 1972 to 2025: From Newspapers and TV to Social Media and Artificial Intelligence." *Communication and Change* 1, no. 1 (November 10, 2025): 17.
- ABSTRACT:** *[first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] My sincere thanks to Professors Lei Guo and Christopher Vargo for arranging this special issue of Communication and Change, "Revisiting Agenda-Setting Theory in the Age of Artificial Intelligence," and to all those who have contributed to it. As someone who has been associated with agenda-setting research--and has worked with the two founders of it, Professors Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw--for more than 50 years, I'm pleased to contribute my thoughts and experiences about its origins and development during this past half-century. I arrived at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the fall of 1971, where McCombs and Shaw were young associate professors of journalism, after the first 1968 agenda-setting study and before the second one in 1972 and the publication of the original agenda-setting article in Public Opinion Quarterly (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). I was lucky as a first-year doctoral student to be involved in the planning of the 1972 three-wave Charlotte, NC, panel study and the analysis of the data from that study thanks to an invitation from Max McCombs. That resulted in our 1973 ICA paper on need for orientation, presented in Montreal, Canada (McCombs & Weaver, 1973); a 1975 article in American Politics Quarterly on Watergate and agenda setting (Weaver et al., 1975); and a book chapter on need for orientation in the 1977 book, The Emergence of American Political Issues, edited by Shaw and McCombs (Shaw and McCombs, 1977; Weaver, 1977).*
27. Young, Mary Lynn, and Alfred Hermida. "Why Infrastructure Studies for Journalism?" *Digital Journalism* 13, no. 9 (2025): 1535--51.

ABSTRACT: *This article makes a case for the value of infrastructure studies in analyzing journalism's evolving landscape. It argues that infrastructural thinking is valuable to understand the changing neighbourhood of journalism, encompassing not just newsrooms but also the broader sociotechnical systems and resources, values and practices shaping news production, distribution, and consumption. Through a careful reading of the literature on infrastructure thinking and its application to journalism studies, it highlights how infrastructural thinking has been used for new and conventional research objects from micro, meso and macro levels of the field. We identify four themes that journalism scholars have focused on:*

journalism institutions, platforms and platform power, adjacent institutions and applications, and sociotechnical apparatus. We argue that infrastructure studies provides a timely two-way lens to deconstruct the "always there" nature of prior journalism systems and how they shape both the scope of scholarly inquiry and journalism.

Thanks for reading! The History of Media Studies Newsletter, a monthly email assembled by Dave Park, Jeff Pooley, and Pete Simonson, maintains a loose affiliation with the *History of Media Studies* journal and the **Working Group on the History of Media Studies**. Please [contact us](#) with any questions, suggestions, or items.

This is the December 2025 issue of *History of Media Studies Newsletter*. You can [subscribe](#) or [unsubscribe](#).