

History of Media Studies Newsletter

November 2024

Welcome to the 44th 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 new *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.*

Katharine Gerbner

Wednesday, January 15, 15:00-16:00 UTC (10am-11am EST)

Reading for discussion:

- working paper on George Gerbner

For the Zoom link and the reading download, visit the *Working Group page*. Instructions for joining the group are *here*. 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. *Call: “A Century of Propaganda Studies: From Pen and Sword to Surveillant Smartphone” Forum*

- This *Critical Studies in Media Communication* Forum marks what has been, arguably, a century since the birth of modern Propaganda Studies: the flurry of scholarship that followed as a reaction to the rise of fascist and Stalinist propaganda use in Europe at a time of developing mass media. Propaganda Studies has evolved from a field dominated by white, Anglo-American and male scholars of security producing its dominant perspectives, toward one that is growing increasingly diverse in its scholars, ideas, and focus – and in terms of region, positionality and epistemology. We thus envisioned this CSMC Forum to consider what we have learned from this century of propaganda’s scholarship and practice, and indeed what we still need to learn. This Forum therefore asks ‘whither Propaganda Studies?’ as we hurtle toward its future.
- **Deadline:** 13 December 2024
- [More details](#)

2. *CFP: Society for the History of Recent Social Science (HISRESS)*

- This two-day conference of the Society for the History of Recent Social Science (HISRESS), at the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands, 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, hosted by the Department of European Studies at the University of Amsterdam, aims to build upon the recent emergence of work and conversation on cross-disciplinary themes in the postwar history of the social sciences.
- Conference dates: 6-7 June 2025
- **Deadline:** 3 February 2025

- [More details](#)

3. *Film Education Journal Call for Papers: Special Edition Celebrating 30 Years of Le Cinéma, cent ans de jeunesse*

- During the last forty years, a particularly rich practice of aesthetic film education has developed in France, nourished by the specific tradition of French Film Culture and Cinephilia, but also by the importance of culture in the political agendas and discourses on democratization and education (Desbarats 2002, Montoya 2008, de Baecque 2008). This major concern gave birth to national programs such as École et cinéma, Collège au cinéma, Lycéens et apprentis au cinéma and Passeurs d'Images, as well as specialized courses inside the school system. It is reflected in the work of associations, film museums and cinemas, and it also led to the creation of a Master program at the Sorbonne Nouvelle University, “Didactique de l'Image”, training students to work in the field of film mediation and education. These initiatives have influenced the development of film education worldwide, and nurtured research as well as critical debate, as many of them distinguish from the media education and communication approach prevailing in most other European countries.
- **Deadline:** 16 December 2024
- [More details](#)

4. *History of the Human Sciences Early Career Prize 2024–25*

- *History of the Human Sciences* – the international journal of peer-reviewed research, which provides the leading forum for work in the social sciences, humanities, human psychology and biology that reflexively examines its own historical origins and interdisciplinary influences – is delighted to announce details of its annual prize for early career scholars. The intention of the annual award is to recognise a researcher whose work best represents the journal's aim to critically examine traditional assumptions and preoccupations about human beings, their societies and their histories in light of developments that cut across disciplinary boundaries. In the pursuit of these goals, *History of the Human Sciences* publishes traditional humanistic studies as well work in the social sciences, including the fields of sociology, psychology, political science, the history and philosophy of science, anthropology, classical studies, and literary theory. Scholars working in any of these fields are encouraged to apply.
- **Deadline:** 28 March 2025
- [More details](#)

3. The Journal

History of Media Studies has published a journal article and two book reviews this month:

- Alexis von Mirbach, “**The Field of Western Populism Studies from 2000 to 2022**”
- *When Communication Became a Discipline* by William F. Eadie, **reviewed** by Joshua Gunn
- *Dead Men’s Propaganda: Ideology and Utopia in Comparative Communications Studies*, by Terhi Rantanen, **reviewed** by Sue Curry Jansen

HMS 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: Maxwell McCombs (1938--2024)." *Church, Communication and Culture* 9, no. 2 (2024): 500.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/23753234.2024.2408602>.

ABSTRACT: [first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] Dr. Maxwell McCombs, a member of the Advisory Board of *Church, Communication and Culture* since its founding, passed away on 8 September 2024 at the age of 85. He was a pioneering figure in journalism and political communication, and leaves behind a transformative

legacy in media studies. Known for co-developing the Agenda Setting Theory with Donald Shaw, McCombs's work fundamentally changed the understanding of the media's role in shaping public opinion. His research, including the groundbreaking Chapel Hill study of 1968, introduced the concept of media influencing what issues the public perceives as important, a discovery that would revolutionize mass communication theory for decades to come.

2. Asuman, Manfred Antwi Kofi, and Brian Ekdale. "Where Is and Isn't Digital Journalism Studies: A Meta-Analysis of an Emerging Field." In *The Routledge Companion to Digital Journalism Studies*, edited by Bob Franklin and Scott A. Eldridge II, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2024.

ABSTRACT: *Although Digital Journalism Studies is relatively young, several studies have employed meta-analysis to understand the scope of the field, its research trends, and its potential biases. This work has consistently found geographic disparities between the Global North and Global South when it comes to authorship, citations, and geographic study focus. Our chapter contributes to this body of work through an original meta-analysis that compares research published in ostensibly geographically neutral journalism journals with those in geographically specific journalism journals focused on the Global South. Our findings demonstrate significant geographic disparities in scholarly knowledge production within Digital Journalism Studies. Specifically, while research relevant to Digital Journalism Studies is being published in regional journals like African Journalism Studies and Brazilian Journalism Research at the same rate as "mainstream" journals like Journalism and Journalism Studies, regional journals are more likely to feature Global South authors and more likely to be overlooked by the field. In closing, we consider the consequences of marginalizing the Global South in Digital Journalism Studies, with a particular focus on digital journalism in Africa.*

3. Averbeck-Lietz, Stefanie. "Discovering Open Diplomacy: The League of Nations' Information Section 1920-1932 and Its External and Internal Communication." In *Communicating the League of Nations: Contributions to a Transnational Communication History of the League of Nations in the Inter-War Period (1920-1938)*, edited by Erik Koenen, 59--132. Geneva: United Nations, 2024.
<https://doi.org/10.18356/9789213589274c003>.

ABSTRACT: *[first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] The aim of this chapter is to describe the information and communication work across the League focusing on its Information Section, a kind of in-house public relations-office, and its role of organising and managing the League's internal and external communication. For both types of communication, external and internal, there were no pre-established role models or pre-formulated concepts, but only a "vague"* mandate. In the first part of this chapter the Leagues communication practices are mainly traced from*

historical literature, in the second part this perspective is enriched by the analysis of archival documents from a hundred years ago as provided by the United Nations Library and Archives at Geneva. From both perspectives a) sources which had been published and b) archival sources which had not been published the concept of "Open Diplomacy" will be discovered as a prominent self-narrative of the League and as a conflicting object in the internal debate of League actors. "Open Diplomacy" became the contrast term to secret diplomacy and to propaganda. In many ways the concept of Open Diplomacy prefigured the modern days understanding of transnational, mediatized diplomacy.

4. Britton-Purdy, Jedediah. "Raymond Williams's Resources for Hope." *Dissent*, January 2024. <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/raymond-williamss-resources-for-hope/>.

ABSTRACT: [first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] All sorts of people had come to the Welsh countryside to spend the day talking about the history of labor radicalism: miners, organizers, researchers, politicians. But the star attraction was missing. Raymond Williams, the Cambridge scholar and socialist beacon, had agreed by letter to speak; rumor was that he would be arriving in a big car. Then, as a runner returned from the parking area to report the distressing news that no big car had arrived, a tall, craggy-featured man rose from the audience and made his way to the stage. He had been there all day, listening, watching, content among his people, not making a point of himself. There was no need to make a point; everyone in that world knew his name. It was not a merely local fame. Zadie Smith recalls that when she was an undergraduate at Cambridge in the 1990s, Williams sat beside Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes in the pantheon of social and literary theorists. He was Stuart Hall's friend and collaborator, E.P. Thompson's ally and sparring partner, Terry Eagleton's teacher, and often worked side by side with Perry Anderson. When he died in 1988, Robin Blackburn wrote in the *New Left Review* that Williams was the "most authoritative, consistent, and radical voice" of the British left.

5. Bruno, Chelsea M. "An Enduring Divide: Revisiting the Mass and Family Communication Dichotomy and Exploring Paths of Integration." *Annals of the International Communication Association* 48, no. 4 (2024): 358--69. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.2024.2373726>.

ABSTRACT: This essay explores the dichotomy between mass and family communication and provides a status update to the mass and interpersonal communication dichotomy discussed by Reardon and Rodgers in 1988. This piece begins with an introduction to the history of and hindrance caused by this dichotomy from translational and scholarly perspectives. Next, an overview is provided of each discipline -- their histories, popular paradigmatic and methodological approaches, and theoretical developments. An argument is then

presented for why the integration of these two areas is so crucial in order to best serve families and conduct communication research with greater meaning. Three significant research areas wherein media and family intersect are discussed along with three long-term integration goals for the field of communication.

6. Chiapello, Laureline. "Experience, Rationality, Situation and Fallibilism: Establishing a Feminist Pragmatist Epistemology in Game Studies." *Games and Culture* 19, no. 7 (2024): 897--915.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/15554120231186265>.

ABSTRACT: *Since the seventies, the definition of scientific knowledge has undergone major shifts. However, game researchers do not sufficiently reflect upon those epistemological changes. This paper suggests that to make game studies more inclusive--for women especially and diverse voices in general--game researchers need to shift from traditional, objective epistemologies toward pragmatist ones instead. To support such an argument, this paper first focuses on the central concepts of pragmatist feminist epistemology: experience, rationality, situation and fallibilism. Those concepts are then used for a rereading of game studies epistemological stances. I argue that game studies initially adhered to traditional epistemologies, which formed hostile attitudes toward women and minorities in the field. On the contrary, several authors now develop their scholarship congruently with a feminist pragmatist epistemology. Their works are analyzed to observe how pragmatist feminist concepts concretely manifest in research.*

7. Ferguson, Donna. "The Discovery of Stuart Hall's A Cure for Marriage." *The New Statesman*, February 9, 2024.

<https://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/2024/02/stuart-hall-anniversary-cure-for-marriage>.

ABSTRACT: *[first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] He is famous for being the "godfather of multiculturalism", a trailblazing left-wing cultural theorist and sociology professor who coined the term "Thatcherism" and revolutionised the academic study of popular culture, race, identity and politics in Britain. Now, ten years after Stuart Hall died at the age of 82, an unpublished manuscript he co-wrote in 1968 has been discovered in his archive. The manuscript, which scholars previously thought had been "lost", is 80,000-100,000 words long and offers extraordinary insights into how Hall developed his groundbreaking ideas about popular culture, as he pioneered the first cultural studies programme in Britain.*

8. Koenen, Erik, Stefanie Auerbeck-Lietz, and Arne L. Gellrich. "Communicating the League of Nations--An Introduction." In *Communicating the League of Nations: Contributions to a Transnational Communication History of the League of Nations*

in the Inter-War Period (1920--1938), edited by Erik Koenen, 5--20. Geneva: United Nations, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.18356/9789213589274c001>.

ABSTRACT: [first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] This book documents the results of a research project on "Transnational Communication History of the League of Nations in the Inter-War Period (1920-1938). The institutional, professional and public spheres of journalism in the League of Nations in international comparison", funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) 2017-2022. The project aimed at identifying and reconstructing the communication and media work of the League from the perspective of a transnational communication history of the League of Nations in the inter-war period 1920-1938 in three dimensions:

9. Ling, Rich, and Leopoldina Fortunati. "The Origins of Mobile Communication Research." *Mobile Media & Communication* 12, no. 3 (2024): 465--74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20501579231220847>.

ABSTRACT: [first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] In this piece we will trace the early development of mobile communication research and its institutionalization. We will also sketch out future issues. As one might expect, early research examining the social consequences of mobile communication was a reaction to the diffusion of the technology. According to Bento (2012), mobile communication first appeared in the late 1970s. It began to gain a foothold in Scandinavia in the 1980s and was also adopted in the Global North (e.g., Europe and Japan but not the United States¹) in the 1990s. After the millennium shift, diffusion extended to other parts of the world including Asia (particularly China and India) and Africa (International Telecommunications Union [ITU], 2018).

10. McRobbie, Angela. "No Such Thing as Peacetime: Notes on Gaza, Hannah Arendt and Cultural Studies." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 27, no. 6 (2024): 1304--13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13675494241252942>.

ABSTRACT: This comment piece, prompted by the ongoing conflict in Gaza and the terrible toll of lives of Gazan people following the Hamas attack on Israel on 7 October 2023, argues that the field of cultural studies has its origins in a notion of post-war peacetime and that this has created a vocabulary deficit in regard to war, genocide and state violence. Paul Gilroy and Stuart Hall have confronted patterns of violence in regard to the urban environment and the policing of Black youth as well as the escalation in day-to-day authoritarianism and the rise of the right. There is a strong case to be made however for the field of cultural studies to more fully draw on political philosophy including Middle East scholarship to engage more directly with the politics of occupation, settler colonialism, neo-nationalism and the far right.

11. Nordenstreng, Kaarle, and Tarja Seppä. "Collaboration of the Press in the Organisation of Peace': The League of Nations as a Catalyst for Important Intellectual Trends." In *Communicating the League of Nations: Contributions to a Transnational Communication History of the League of Nations in the Inter-War Period (1920--1938)*, edited by Erik Koenen, 21--58. Geneva: United Nations, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.18356/9789213589274c002>.

ABSTRACT: [first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] The first draft of this chapter was presented as a conference paper already nearly 40 years ago.' It was the United Nations International Year of Peace 1986, and the conference was entitled "Communication and Peace: The Role of Media in International Relations". A broader context was the rise of the "Third World" or "Global South", with the United Nations calling for a New International Economic Order (NIEO). The forgotten story of the League of Nations and the mass media turned out to be surprisingly topical for ongoing debates on international communication, which throughout the 1980s were concerned with global media policies, including calls for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO).? The reason making Nordenstreng look at media-related activities of the League of Nations was his book on the history of the International Organization of Journalists (IOJ, under preparation in the mid-1980s.³ The book was intended to be a normal celebratory volume for the 40th anniversary of the IOJ, but the prehistory of the Organization since the first-ever journalists' conference in Antwerp in 1894 proved so fascinating that it occupied the whole book, making it Part I of a three-volume series entitled *Useful Recollections*. A separate book was published 30 years later, presenting a full history of the international associations of journalists.* Seppä, for her part, focused on international organizations in her studies in the 1980s and also served as a secretary for social sciences at the Finnish National Committee for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This naturally led to topics of moral disarmament and the League of Nations and also to her later interest in the United Nations".

12. Potter, Robert F., Yuqian Ni, and Ramon Q. Marlet. "Four Decades of Biological Measurement Advancing Mediated Communication Theory: A Review of Literature from 1980--2020." *Annals of the International Communication Association* 48, no. 4 (2024): 415--35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.2024.2391308>.

ABSTRACT: A corpus of 135 peer-reviewed articles from 1980--2020 in, *Communication Research*, *Human Communication Research*, *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *Journal of Communication*, *Media Psychology*, and *Journal of Media Psychology* were identified that present data from biological measures (EEG, fMRI, eye-tracking, ECG, EDA, fEMG). Qualitative analysis

uncovered seven key theories in the field that have been advanced using data from these measures: (1) desensitization, (2) selective exposure, (3) general aggression model (GAM), (4) excitation transfer, (5) theories about absorption (presence, flow, and narrative engagement), (6) theories of limited cognitive capacity (LC3MP and LC4MP), and (7) virality and message effectiveness.

13. Seidenfaden, Emil Eiby. "Locating the League of Nations Communication World-- A Response." In *Communicating the League of Nations: Contributions to a Transnational Communication History of the League of Nations in the Inter-War Period (1920--1938)*, edited by Erik Koenen, 213--23. Geneva: United Nations, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.18356/9789213589274c006>.

ABSTRACT: [first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] "Here is the League of Nations at work", said the voiceover of a well-known infomercial produced by Realist Film on commission of the League's Information Section in 1937, "judge it for yourselves". And indeed, the League was judged, in its own time and in the postwar era. Within academia, however, as Stefanie Averbek-Lietz points out in her chapter of this volume, League scholarship has been "dominated by the fields of political science and history, not by communication studies". In fact, due to a widespread analysis stating that it was "a failure" , for a long time the League of Nations had not been very popular in history and political science either since the immediate postwar period. This started to change about a decade and a half ago, when Susan Pedersen celebrated (and pushed for) a new generation of scholarship and new approaches to the United Nations' dishonored parent. She observed that the cultural and institutional legacies of the League started to attract the attention of historians and social scientists after the end of the Cold War and in particular in the new millennium. Today, a wide range of works by scholars such as Carolyn Biltoft, Karen Gram-Skjoldager, Haakon A Ikonomou and Torsten Kahlert', Glenda Sluga', Patricia Clavin', Susan Pedersen?, Daniel Gorman', Daniel Laqua' and many others bear witness to this revival. Most recently, the League of Nations Archives in the United Nations Office at Geneva is being completely digitized and recently boasts of a new, exciting digital research tool for coming generations of researchers to enjoy the archives in their full magnificence from the comfort of their homes, although Geneva and the archives in the Palais des Nations are definitely worth visiting.

14. Snelson, Tim, William Macauley, and David Allen Kirby. *Demons of the Mind: Psychiatry and Cinema in the Long 1960s*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2024.

ABSTRACT: In the 1960s, psychiatrists and other mental health professionals intervened in and influenced cinema culture in unprecedented ways, changing how films were conceived, produced, censored, exhibited and received by audiences. Drawing upon extensive archival research, *Demons of the Mind*

provides the first interdisciplinary account of the complex contestations and cross-pollinations of the "psy" sciences (psychiatry, psychoanalysis, psychology) and cinema in Britain and America during the defining "long 1960s" period of the late-1950s to early-1970s. This interdisciplinary book incorporates expertise from film studies, history of science and medicine, and science communication. The originality of this book is not solely its interdisciplinarity and exploration beyond the narrow study of representational practices - typically the primary focus of other books on cinema and the psy professions. In large part, this book's originality rests on its investigation of situated practices and interplay between ideas, expertise and professionals that constitute the fields of mental health and media.

15. Thompson, Teresa L. "Has It Really Been 37 Years? The Journey of Health Communication." *Health Communication* 39, no. 14 (2024): 3511--13.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2024.2424175>.

ABSTRACT: *[first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] I recently wrote an article for a book on mental health mass communication (Yzer & Seigel, Citation2025) in which I described this journal, Health Communication, as "my third child" (Thompson, Citation2025). I started accepting submissions for it in the autumn of 1987, when I was pregnant with my first child. That child is now almost 37 and is herself the mother of three. Time has moved on. I am writing this essay in the autumn of 2024. You are reading it in the 14th issue of Volume 39; there were two years when we published two volumes per year. I don't think that any of us, especially not me, envisioned the growth of research on the study of communicative processes as they relate to health, healthcare delivery, and healthcare organizations that has occurred during the last 37 years. We as a journal have gone from publishing 4 issues a year (some of which included only 4 or 5 articles) to 14 issues, the most recent of which include as many as 20 articles. Other journals have joined us, handbooks and encyclopedias have been published, and numerous text and scholarly books have been written. Our understanding of health communication processes has increased immeasurably. More important than a scholarly understanding of health communication, however, is the impact of research and theoretical development leading to that understanding of health and healthcare delivery across the globe. It is the goal of this forum/special issue of Health Communication to briefly summarize a bit of what we know about this impact on several aspects of health as it interrelates with communicative processes.*

16. Wilke, Jürgen. "Cinematography as a Medium of Communication: The Promotion of Research by the League of Nations and Rudolf Arnheim's Role in This Context." In *Communicating the League of Nations: Contributions to a*

Transnational Communication History of the League of Nations in the Inter-War Period (1920--1938), edited by Erik Koenen, 187--212. Geneva: United Nations, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.18356/9789213589274c005>.

ABSTRACT: *[first paragraph, in lieu of abstract] The following article is a reprint of a study that was first published in the European Communication Journal in 1991.' At the time, it was written in connection with the first study on the media policy of the League of Nations to be conducted in Germany, which the author had initiated and supervised in the context of the journalism course at the Katholische Universität Eichstätt.? As it had turned out, the medium of film, which was still young in the 1920s, had also become the focus of the League of Nations' interest. And if, after many years, research on this institution, which was so important for the peace initiatives of the 20th century, is now being revived at the Zentrum für Medien-, Kommunikationsund Informationsforschung (ZeMKI) in Bremen, it is also worth taking another look at the early study reprinted here. It is updated by a look at the research literature that has been published in the meantime. And at the end, the commentary is added by which Rudolf Arnheim, who is at the heart of the study, responded to it at the time. The study pursued a primarily scientific-historical intention and was designed to show which (empirical) research approaches of modern communication and media research resulted ultimately from initiatives by the League of Nations.*

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.

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