CARGC@5: Taking Stock, Forging Ahead

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CARGC@5: Taking Stock, Forging Ahead

Description
A report celebrating the fifth anniversary of the center for Advanced Research in Global Communication at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania.

Disciplines
Communication

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TAKING STOCK, FORGING AHEAD

2013-2018

JUNE 2018

PHILADELPHIA, USA
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MISSION

THE CENTER FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH IN GLOBAL COMMUNICATION AT THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRODUCES AND PROMOTES SCHOLARLY RESEARCH ON GLOBAL COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC LIFE. AS AN INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY DEDICATED TO GLOBAL MEDIA STUDIES, WE REVISIT ENDURING QUESTIONS AND ENGAGE PRESSING MATTERS IN GEOPOLITICS AND COMMUNICATION. OUR VISION OF “INCLUSIVE GLOBALIZATION” RECOGNIZES PLURALITY AND INEQUALITY IN GLOBAL MEDIA, POLITICS, AND CULTURE. OUR TRANSLOCAL APPROACH FUSES MULTIDISCIPLINARY REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE WITH THEORY AND METHODOLOGY IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES.

THIS SYNTHESIS OF DEEP EXPERTISE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY INQUIRY STIMULATES CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ENTRENCHED AND EMERGING COMMUNICATIVE STRUCTURES, PRACTICES, FLOWS, AND STRUGGLES. WE EXPLORE NEW WAYS OF UNDERSTANDING AND EXPLAINING THE WORLD, INCLUDING PUBLIC AND MULTI-MODAL SCHOLARSHIP, ALGORITHMIC CULTURE, THE ARTS, AND DIGITAL ARCHIVES. WITH A CORE COMMITMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY CAREER SCHOLARS WORLDWIDE, CARGC HOSTS POSTDOCTORAL, DOCTORAL, UNDERGRADUATE, AND FACULTY FELLOWS WHO COLLABORATE IN RESEARCH GROUPS, AUTHOR CARGC PRESS PUBLICATIONS, AND ORGANIZE TALKS, LECTURES, SYMPOSIA, CONFERENCES, AND SUMMER INSTITUTES.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication, the center of gravity of the Annenberg School for Communication's global work, is turning five! Our Fellowship Program has focused on the development of early career scholars worldwide. In the past five years, CARGC Postdoctoral, Doctoral, Undergraduate, and Faculty Fellows from around the world have formed research groups, collaborated on CARGC Press publications, and organized talks, lectures, symposia, conferences, and workshops. We nurture emerging scholars who integrate primary sources and regional expertise in interdisciplinary, historically informed, and comparative research on geopolitics, media, technology, and culture. As an institute for advanced study focused on early career researchers, CARGC continues to be an inclusive community of scholars driven by intellectual generosity, curiosity, and exchange.

CARGC’s four research themes spring from our mission to be “an institute for advanced study dedicated to global media studies” where scholars “revisit enduring questions and engage pressing matters in geopolitics and communication.” The first theme, “Geopolitics of Media and Culture,” reflects CARGC’s core focus on geopolitics and communication and encompasses two research groups, “Geopolitics and the Popular” and “Digital Sovereignties.” It has hosted distinguished lectures on China’s global media ambitions (Michael Curtin, 2013), connected migrants in the Mediterranean (Mimi Sheller, 2016), and our first symposium in 2014, “The Revolutionary Public Sphere,” in addition to colloquia and talks.

Our work on “Theory and History in Global Media Studies” reflects our vision of global communication as an inclusive field that combines multidisciplinary regional knowledge with approaches from the humanities and social sciences. Our second CARGC Biennial Symposium, “Convergence and Disjuncture in Global Digital Culture,” held in 2016, spoke to this theme, as did our distinguished lectures on global data disparities (Arjun Appadurai, 2015) and global digital formations (Saskia Sassen, 2017).

CARGC’s third research theme emerged from our commitment to tackle enduring questions and emergent global media issues. “Communicating Radicalism, Radicalizing Communication,” explores radical communication in its activist, revolutionary, and extremist guises. Focusing on “Islamic State,” our “Jihadi Networks of Culture and Communications” (JINCS) group has published a dozen articles, briefs and chapters, and held events including our third Symposium in 2018, “Mediating Islamic State.”

Our keen interest in emerging ways of understanding and explaining the world, including public and multi-modal scholarship, algorithmic culture, the arts, and digital archives animates our fourth theme. CARGC Press, which has since 2013 published CARGC Papers, CARGC Briefs, and special issues of scholarly journals, is the umbrella for these activities. Under its auspices, resident and visiting scholars disseminate their work and investigate technologically and economically driven changes to knowledge production, dissemination, and access worldwide.

In our first five years, we have hosted dozens of fellows, more than 100 scholars, and numerous events. In the 2017-2018 academic year alone, we organized 16 events with 37 speakers and co-sponsored five events across campus. Our fellows have fanned out across the globe doing field research, presenting at conferences, and collaborating with partners, gaining experience and exposure. In the next five years, we plan to expand our Fellowship Program, establish externally funded research and mentoring clusters, and continue to foster new generations of scholars that reflects the stunning diversity and complexity of our world.
It is undeniable that 21st Century communication is inherently global, requiring study from an international and comparative perspective. It follows that if the Annenberg School for Communication is to remain one of the world’s leading Communication programs, we need to continually broaden and deepen our commitment to studying the field with a global eye.

Throughout my 15 years as Dean we have pursued this global vision by recruiting faculty and students from around the globe; integrating global topics into our teaching and research; collaborating with and learning from scholars, practitioners, and institutions from other parts of the world; and establishing academic centers at the school that can serve as the hubs around which all of the above can be implemented and sustained.

No part of our school is more important to this educational and research mission than the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication (CARGC), and no person is more suited to leading it than Professor Marwan Kraidy. CARGC, which Marwan established five years ago as the Project for Advanced Research in Global Communication, also represents an evolution from the former Center for Global Communication Studies, founded at the Annenberg School by Professor Monroe Price in 2006.

CARGC continues to serve as our center of gravity for better understanding and engaging with, as stipulated in its mission statement, “plurality and inequality in global media, politics, and culture” through a “grounded vision of ‘inclusive globalization,’” with a core focus on media and geopolitics. CARGC fulfills its ambitious mission through a variety of initiatives, including hosting post-doctoral fellows and visiting scholars; organizing conferences and workshops; sponsoring guest lectures; connecting graduate students interested in global communication issues to each other and to the larger field; and facilitating, conducting, and disseminating cutting edge theory and research.

Whether through its annual distinguished lectures, the seven CARGC Papers and various CARGC Briefs already published through CARGC Press, or its biennial symposia on topics such as “Convergence and Disjuncture in Global Digital Culture” and “Mediating Islamic State,” CARGC has made substantial contributions to the Annenberg School, the University of Pennsylvania, and the field of communication at large. I could not be more pleased with what it has accomplished to date, heartily congratulate Dr. Kraidy for his leadership and vision, and look forward with great anticipation to all that he and CARGC will contribute to global media and communication scholarship in the years to come.
Dear friends,

Were you to wander onto the 6th floor of 3901 Walnut Street at the University of Pennsylvania campus, you would feel the energy in the space we affectionately call “CARGC World Headquarters.” Between the entrance and the four lemon trees overlooking Philadelphia through glass walls, our fellows are busy at work on a range of important topics: trauma and digital resistance in diaspora, Arab rap and politics, the technopolitics of information infrastructure in India, melodrama and terrorism in the Middle East, the geopolitics of Turkish television in Russia, the comparative decoding of media entertainment in Argentina and the United States, and the history of Kurdish nationalism.

As our new cohort of fellows settles in over the summer, they will bring fresh energy and new topics: Facebook groups as spaces of mediation of Chinese and US influence in Vietnam, digital nationalism in Russia and the Baltic Republics, digital youth culture in Guinea and other West African countries, music production as radical politics in Egypt, the geopolitics of data and rare earth metals, comparative research on official representation and self-representation of terrorist groups in the news media, and global social media events. Our distinguished visitors further broaden the range of research at CARGC.

Fellows are the core of CARGC. In the last five years, we have recruited outstanding Postdoctoral Fellows from all over the world, matched them with gifted Doctoral and Undergraduate Fellows from the Annenberg School and the University of Pennsylvania, and watched the magic of discovery blossom. Establishing CARGC has been the most meaningful milestone of my professional life, but I did not do it alone. I am grateful to my colleagues—faculty, postdocs, students and staff, particularly professor Monroe Price—who have contributed to the growth of global communication scholarship at Annenberg. But it is Dean Michael X. Delli Carpini’s commitment to global communication research and his steadfast material and mental support that have been vital to CARGC’s development. Michael’s consummate mentorship and collaborative leadership style have inspired me to forge a shared vision with CARGC staff and fellows. Every day, I feel the joy of working with the most capable and inspiring group of people anywhere, including founding Project Coordinator Marina Krikorian.

As CARGC turns five, it is a hive of activity buzzing with energy and creativity. In the past academic year alone (#CARGC1718), we hosted 16 events with 37 speakers and co-sponsored five events across the Penn campus. These include our Distinguished Lecture with eminent sociologist of globalization Saskia Sassen and our latest Biennial Symposium, “Mediating Islamic State.” We also laid the groundwork for the exciting research group, “Digital Sovereignties,” to launch officially this summer, and initiated our CARGC Books video series. CARGC Press published two CARGC Papers (and has three more in the pipeline), two special issues of scholarly journals, nine CARGC Briefs, and a book version of the “Media and Communication” chapter of the International Panel on Social Progress. As they fanned the globe conducting and presenting research, our Postdoctoral and Doctoral Fellows envisioned and planned the first Biennial CARGC Fellows’ Conference “South by Southeast,” which we will host in March 2019. Our fellows also launched an informal writing group that has had a profound impact on their intellectual growth. Finally, we have recruited four outstanding Postdoctoral Fellows, several Doctoral Fellows, and one Undergraduate Fellow for #CARGC1819!

As we forge ahead, we strive to expand our reach and deepen our impact by attracting ever more outstanding, diverse, and truly global cohorts of Fellows. I invite you to spread the word about CARGC, particularly in places where resources may not match the talent and ambition of local scholars. Follow and engage us on social media, check out our growing list of publications, tell us how we can do better, and help us build the next generation of global communication scholars.

LETTER FROM MARWAN M. KRAIDY
Anthony Shadid Chair in Global Media, Politics and Culture, and CARGC Director
MARWAN M. KRAIDY is Professor of Communication and the Anthony Shadid Chair in Global Media, Politics and Culture at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, where he is also affiliated with the Middle East Center. A scholar of global communication and an authority on Arab media, politics, and culture, he studies the relationship between culture and geopolitics, theories of identity and modernity, and global media systems, platforms, and industries. Kraidy is currently an Andrew Carnegie Fellow. He founded the Project for Advanced Research in Global Communication in 2013, expanding it into the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication (CARGC) in 2016.

Kraidy has published 13 books and edited volumes, penned 130 essays and chapters, won more than 50 awards for teaching and scholarship, delivered keynote addresses and named lectures worldwide, and advised universities, civil society organizations, museums, foundations, and governments. Notable books include *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization* (Temple University Press, 2005), and *Reality Television and Arab Politics: Contention in Public Life* (Cambridge University Press, 2010). The latter was supported by a Fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and a grant from the United States Institute of Peace, and is winner of three major prizes: the Diamond Anniversary Best Book Award and the Roderick P. Hart Outstanding Book Award in Political Communication, National Communication Association; and Best Book Award in Global Communication and Social Change, International Communication Association.

Kraidy's account of the Arab Spring, *The Naked Blogger of Cairo: Creative Insurgency in the Arab World* (Harvard University Press, 2016) is an innovative reappraisal of the body politic in the digital age. It considers the uprisings through the human body as a physical, symbolic, and aesthetic locus of power and rebellion, and features an engaging cast of characters—self-immolators, puppets, superheroes, poets, street artists, digital videographers, satirists, and of course, the naked blogger—who confronted scorned dictators. He crafted the book in Wassenaar, as a Fellow of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences and Humanities (NIAS) and of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), and revised it in Philadelphia as a Fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The book won the International Communication Association's Outstanding Book Award, the ICA’s Division of Global Communication and Social Change Best Book Award, the Roderick P. Hart Outstanding Book Award in Political Communication, National Communication Association, and was a 2016 Times Higher Education Book of the Year.

In 2016 he also published *Global Media Studies* (with Toby Miller, Polity), and *American Studies Encounters the Middle East* (with Alex Lubin, University of North Carolina Press).

In 2011, Kraidy was awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship for his work in media and cultural studies.

In 2016, Kraidy was named an Andrew Carnegie Fellow for his work on war machines in the age of global communication. He is the first communication scholar to be awarded this prestigious fellowship.

In 2017, Kraidy became the only scholar to have twice won the Best Book Award from the International Communication Association’s Division of Global Communication and Social Change, first in 2011 for *Reality Television and Arab Politics*, and again in 2017 for *The Naked Blogger of Cairo*.

Also in 2017, Kraidy became the first author to win the Roderick P. Hart Outstanding Book Award in Political Communication two times, in 2011 and 2017, for the same two books.
Currently serving on the Board of Directors of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) in New York, and on the International Advisory Board of the Center for American Studies and Research (CASAR) at the American University of Beirut, Kraidy previously served on the Advisory Board of the Center for Democracy and Election Management at American University, Washington DC, and on the International Advisory Board of the National Museum of Qatar.

Kraidy has been the Edward W. Said Chair of American Studies at the American University of Beirut, the Albert Bonnier Jr. Professor of Media Studies at Stockholm University, the Chaire Dupront at Sorbonne-Universités in Paris, and visiting professor at universities in China, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Turkey, and the USA. Previously he held appointments in International Relations at American University, Washington, DC, and in Critical-Cultural Studies at the University of North Dakota. A graduate of Notre Dame University, Lebanon, Kraidy’s MA and PhD are from The Ohio University.

Fluent in Arabic and French, and conversant in Spanish, Kraidy is a regular media contributor worldwide and tweets @MKraidy.

MARINA KRIKORIAN is Project Coordinator at the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication (CARGC) at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. She manages CARGC’s public events, serves as Managing Editor of CARGC Press, provides support to fellows and guests, and coordinates the Center’s administration, finances, and external communications. Prior to joining the Annenberg School in 2013, Marina was the Public Affairs Coordinator at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University. She has a BA in Political Science from UC Berkeley and an MA in Arab and Middle Eastern Studies from the American University of Beirut, where her research focused on the relationship between the Armenian diaspora in Lebanon and the Armenian homeland. She is co-editor, with CARGC Director Marwan M. Kraidy, of “The Arab Revolutionary Public Sphere,” a special issue of Communication and the Public. She tweets at @mruthkrik.
THE CENTER FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH IN GLOBAL COMMUNICATION has identified four key research themes for its first decade. These are grounded in our vision of “inclusive globalization which recognizes plurality and inequality,” and spring from our mission to be “an institute for advanced study dedicated to global media studies” where scholars “revisit enduring questions and engage pressing matters in geopolitics and communication.” Our 2013-2023 research themes are: “The Geopolitics of Media and Culture,” “Theory and History in Global Media Studies,” “Communicating Radicalism, Radicalizing Communication,” and “CARGC Press/Knowledge Production and Dissemination.”
The first theme, “The Geopolitics of Media & Culture,” reflects CARGC’s core focus on geopolitics and communication, and has been active since 2013 under the rubric of our research group “Geopolitics and the Popular.” In 2018, CARGC launched the “Digital Sovereignties” research group to explore geopolitical shifts in the digital age.

Understanding plurality and inequality in global communication is a linchpin of CARGC’s vision of inclusive globalization. To do so we advocate a translocal approach combining multidisciplinary regional knowledge with theory and methodology in the humanities and social sciences. “Theory and History in Global Media Studies,” the second research theme, is inspired by our mission statement’s call for a “synthesis of deep expertise and interdisciplinary inquiry” which “stimulates critical conversations about entrenched and emerging communicative structures, practices, flows, and struggles.” Our second CARGC Biennial Symposium, “Convergence and Disjuncture in Global Digital Culture,” held in 2016, fell under the auspices of this theme.

Our commitment to grapple with enduring questions and pressing contemporary issues spurred our third research theme, “Communicating Radicalism, Radicalizing Communication,” which explores radical communication in various activist, revolutionary, and extremist guises. Focusing on the group that calls itself “Islamic State,” our “Jihadi Networks of Culture and Communications” (JINCS) research group has been active for several years, culminating in our third CARGC Biennial Symposium, “Mediating Islamic State,” and multiple publications.

Our fourth major theme focuses on emerging ways of understanding and explaining the world. This includes public and multi-modal scholarship, algorithmic culture, the arts, and digital archives. These areas are integrated under CARGC Press, which since 2013 has been publishing CARGC Papers, CARGC Briefs, and scholarly journal special issues. Our fellows and visitors explore technologically, economically and geopolitically driven changes to knowledge production, dissemination, and access worldwide, in global communication and related areas of inquiry.
THEME I
THE GEOPOLITICS OF MEDIA AND CULTURE

RESEARCH GROUP 1: Geopolitics & the Popular (2013-2023)

This research group explores global geopolitics through the prism of popular culture, exploring the ways geopolitical values, tensions, and strategies infuse popular communication. How does the popular enter geopolitics, and how do geopolitics shape the popular? CARGC research in this area includes the politicization of popular culture, the changing relationship between news and entertainment, the emergence of populism as a transnational phenomenon, the endurance of “the people” as a political category, the recasting of popular traditions by digital communication, and shifting notions of popular sovereignty and body politics and their links to authoritarianism, nationalism, and cultural identity. Topics include television drama series, the fine and performing arts, street art and graffiti, music, political humor, music videos, reality television, puppetry, memes, food, and sports. We seek to understand how, under what conditions, and with what consequences, realms of the popular articulate geopolitical struggles and enter domains such as propaganda, nation-branding, diplomacy, and warfare.

RESEARCH GROUP 2: Digital Sovereignties (2018-2023)

National sovereignty has been an abiding concern in global communication since at least the 1960s. As globalization theories emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, many discerned the decline of state sovereignty. Since then, battles between India and Blackberry, China and Google, and Russia and Telegram complicated claims that states were ceding power to tech corporations. Recently, the return of populism, chauvinism, and protectionism have reasserted a pugnacious nationalism vitally concerned with territorial control and cultural purity, as satellites, drones, cyberwarfare, and digital networks further erode sovereignty. How have social media platforms altered our comprehension of sovereignty? How are notions of political, cultural, and sexual sovereignty shifting in the digital era? How have non-state actors affected and exploited these changes? Should we rethink our theories of geopolitics in light of algorithmic communication and digital disinformation? Do the combined geopolitics of infrastructure, data, artificial intelligence, and cyberwarfare portend a new global order?
RESEARCH GROUP 1: Theory and History in Global Media Studies (2013-2023)

Global media studies encompass comparative media systems research, development communication and social change, the political economy of international and culture, media and cultural globalization, global media industries, and postcolonial and de-colonial approaches to global communication and culture. This CARGC group explores the truly global history of the field by incorporating undervalued theories and literature from sources worldwide. We revisit global media research when both “global” and “media” are elusive and contested categories, and operationalize notions of translocalism, transculturalism, and transnationalism as methodologies. We bring global media studies into livelier dialogue with humanistic approaches including affect theory, disability studies, performance studies, infrastructure studies, feminist and queer media studies, critical race and ethnicity studies, techno-politics, media archeology, and critical data studies. Finally, we support scholars in precarious conditions worldwide, which deepens the internationalization of the field by integrating truly global and diverse ideas, experiences, languages, and methodologies.
Guided by an interdisciplinary theoretical framework developed by CARGC Director Marwan M. Kraidy for a book project funded by a 2016 Andrew Carnegie Fellowship, JINCS has incubated original scholarly contributions that grasp the communicative activities of Islamic State and other radical groups from a broad, multi-disciplinary perspective. Fundamental to our approach has been a rejection of the simplistic focus on specific media platforms or gadgets, and to consider Islamic State’s communications as mediations that entail political, ideological, military, social, and cultural dimensions. We have sought to discern how these various aspects overlap and intertwine against a broad geopolitical backdrop that transcends the Middle East to include the global commercial media system, electoral politics, security policies, and spectacular images of violence. JINCS has hosted several colloquia and workshops with graduate students from Annenberg and elsewhere in the world, including our third Symposium in 2018, “Mediating Islamic State,” and has produced a dozen articles, briefs and chapters.
Our fourth major theme focuses on emerging ways of understanding and explaining the world, including public and multi-modal scholarship, algorithmic culture, the arts, and digital archives. Since 2013, the CARGC Press imprint has published CARGC Papers, CARGC Briefs, and special issues of scholarly journals with partners like *International Journal of Communication* and *Communication and the Public*, and other collaborators who share our vision, like the *International Panel on Social Progress*, a co-publisher of our first booklet. We envision our growth to include publishing original and translated books for teaching, research, and practice. In addition to publishing and promoting CARGC research, we seek to understand technologically and economically driven changes to knowledge production, dissemination, and access worldwide.
THE CARGC FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM SUPPORTS EARLY CAREER SCHOLARS WORLDWIDE. CARGC HOSTS POSTDOCTORAL, DOCTORAL, UNDERGRADUATE, AND FACULTY FELLOWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD WHO COLLABORATE IN RESEARCH GROUPS, AUTHOR CARGC PRESS PUBLICATIONS, AND ORGANIZE TALKS, LECTURES, SYMPOSIA, CONFERENCES, AND SUMMER INSTITUTES. WE AT CARGC ARE KEEN TO NURTURE EMERGING SCHOLARS WHO INTEGRATE PRIMARY SOURCES AND REGIONAL EXPERTISE IN THEORETICALLY INFLECTED, HISTORICALLY INFORMED, TRANSLOCAL ANALYSES OF MEDIA, GEOPOLITICS, TECHNOLOGY, AND CULTURE. CARGC FELLOWS TYPICALLY DRAW ON A BROAD INTERDISCIPLINARY CORPUS OF SCHOLARSHIP, PUSH BEYOND NORMATIVE PARADIGMS AND INCORPORATE TRULY GLOBAL IDEAS, SOURCES AND CONTEXTS. TO FOSTER COLLABORATION AT ALL LEVELS, CARGC FELLOWS ARE FULLY ENGAGED IN THE DAILY LIFE OF THE CENTER, AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS DRIVEN BY INTELLECTUAL GENEROSITY, CURIOSITY, AND EXCHANGE.
DONATELLA DELLA RATTA
(2013-2014)

Donatella Della Ratta is an Assistant Professor of Communications and Media Studies at John Cabot University. She has a background in Media Studies with a specialization in Arabic-speaking media. From 2007 until 2011, she lived in Damascus and conducted an extensive media ethnography of Syrian TV series, which became the topic of her PhD research, obtained from the University of Copenhagen in 2013. Donatella also held a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Copenhagen and served as an affiliate of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University. She has authored three monographs on Arab media, as well as chapters on Syrian media and politics in several collective books. 

Shooting a Revolution: Visual Media and Warfare in Syria is forthcoming from Pluto Press in 2018. She is a contributor to Italian and international media outlets such as Al Jazeera English, Hyperallergic, Internazionale, and Il Manifesto. She has professional experience as a journalist, TV writer, and producer, and managed the Arabic-speaking community of the international NGO Creative Commons for five years (2008-2013). She has curated several art exhibitions and film programs on Syria and she is a co-founder and board member of the web aggregator on creative resistance, Syria Untold.
MARIA REPNIKOVA
[2014-2016]

Maria Repnikova is an Assistant Professor in Global Communication and Acting Director of the Center for Global Information Studies at Georgia State University. Her research focuses on Chinese political communication, including critical journalism, crisis communication, political persuasion, and most recently China’s nation branding and soft power. She also engages in comparative research in Russia and the United States. Maria’s book, *Media Politics in China*, was recently published by Cambridge University Press. Her scholarship has appeared in *Journalism, China Quarterly, Journal of Contemporary China*, and *New Media & Society*, amongst other venues. She teaches global communication, Chinese media, culture and society, and global authoritarianism. Maria holds a PhD (DPhil) in Politics from Oxford University, where she was a Rhodes Scholar.

Marla Repnikova is an Assistant Professor in Global Communication and Acting Director of the Center for Global Information Studies at Georgia State University. Her research focuses on Chinese political communication, including critical journalism, crisis communication, political persuasion, and most recently China’s nation branding and soft power. She also engages in comparative research in Russia and the United States. Maria’s book, *Media Politics in China*, was recently published by Cambridge University Press. Her scholarship has appeared in *Journalism, China Quarterly, Journal of Contemporary China*, and *New Media & Society*, amongst other venues. She teaches global communication, Chinese media, culture and society, and global authoritarianism. Maria holds a PhD (DPhil) in Politics from Oxford University, where she was a Rhodes Scholar.

"THE LARGEST ACADEMIC OUTPUT FROM THE CARGC FELLOWSHIP FOR ME WAS MY BOOK MANUSCRIPT, WHICH WAS ENTIRELY REVISED DURING THE DURATION OF THE POST-DOC. I RECEIVED THE CONTRACT THE SUMMER OF MY SECOND YEAR OF THE FELLOWSHIP. IN ADDITION TO THE BOOK, I HAVE SUCCESSFULLY SUBMITTED TWO PUBLICATIONS INTO TOP JOURNALS IN THE CHINESE STUDIES FIELD, COMPLETED A NEW RESEARCH PROJECT WITH KECHENG FANG, A PHD CANDIDATE AT ANNENBERG, WHICH IS NOW TRANSFORMING INTO PUBLICATIONS, AND ATTENDED A NUMBER OF CONFERENCES. CARGC WAS ALSO TRANSFORMATIVE FOR ME AS THE FIRST REAL EXPOSURE TO THE COMMUNICATION DISCIPLINE. THE FELLOWSHIP FACILITATED A FORMATION OF A NEW NETWORK OF SCHOLARS AND A JOB IN GLOBAL COMMUNICATION, WHICH I REALLY ENJOY. ON A MORE PERSONAL LEVEL, CARGC GAVE ME INCREDIBLE (AND ONGOING) MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITY WITH MARWAN KRAIDY AND GUOBIN YANG, NEW CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS WITH MARINA KRIKORIAN, OMAR AL-GHAZZI, AND SARA MOURAD, AND MANY WONDERFUL INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGES."
RAYYA EL ZEIN
[2017-2019]

Rayya El Zein holds a PhD in Theatre from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Her research concerns aesthetics, politics, and mediation of cultural production in urban Arab contexts and diasporas. As a CARGC postdoctoral fellow, she is working on a book manuscript that examines affective politics in and the political economy of rap concerts in the Levant. Theoretically and ethnographically, the book works against the tendency to look for and celebrate “resistance” as a salient political framework for the activities of contemporary Arab youth and instead explores other formulations of activity, agency, and belonging in the context of millennial gentrification in three Arab cities. Writing related to this research has appeared in Lateral, The Journal of Palestine Studies, Global Performance Studies, and in several edited volumes.

“AS A POSTDOC AT CARGC, THE INVITATION TO DEVELOP SYLLABI, UNINTERRUPTED TIME TO COMPLETE AND SUBMIT WRITING, AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE FEEDBACK VIA PUBLIC TALKS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS HAVE STRENGTHENED MY PROFESSIONAL PROFILE. THESE OPPORTUNITIES HAVE ALSO OPENED THE SPACE FOR A CRITICAL REASSESSMENT OF MY SCHOLARSHIP. ABOVE AND BEYOND THE STRUCTURAL SUPPORT, WORKING AT CARGC HAS EMBOLDED CREATIVITY IN MY RESEARCH AND WRITING THAT I HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO FULLY EXPLORE ELSEWHERE. THE INTERDISCIPLINARY NATURE OF INTELLECTUAL WORK THAT CARGC HOSTS ENCOURAGED ME TO PURSUE UNORTHODOX APPROACHES TO ENDURING QUESTIONS, RESULTING IN NEW WRITING, RESEARCH, AND COLLABORATION.”
SAMIRA RAJABI
[2017-2019]

Samira Rajabi completed her PhD in Media Research and Practice at the University of Colorado at Boulder, where her research focused on digital media’s affordances in meaning making processes, particularly related to trauma. Rajabi also has a degree in Business Management and Entrepreneurship, a minor in French from the University of Colorado at Boulder, and a Masters in International and Intercultural Communication from the University of Denver’s Josef Korbel School of International Studies and the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. Rajabi is a scholar of development, international relations, feminist theory, and communication. Her research interests include international communication, trans-national boundaries, and the way culture, particularly popular culture in digital media, have consequences for social systems and movements. Samira’s work attempts to bridge public scholarship, academia, and social justice advocacy with leadership in her community.

"AS A CARGC FELLOW, I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SHARE MY SCHOLARSHIP WITH AN AUDIENCE ATTUNED TO BOTH RIGOROUS AND CRITICAL MEDIA STUDIES AS WELL AS ATTENTIVE TO GLOBAL ISSUES. CARGC HAS AFFORDED ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO WRITE, PRESENT, AND PUBLISH WORK THAT FOCUSES ON IMPORTANT GEO-POLITICAL ISSUES WITH REAL CONSEQUENCES FOR PEOPLE IN MANY PLACES. MORE IMPORTANTLY, IN THE LAST YEAR CARGC HAS BECOME AN INTELLECTUAL HOME TO ME, FROM GETTING TO READ AND EDIT THE WORK OF MY PEERS TO RIGOROUS PEER CRITIQUES OF MY WORK THAT MAKE IT STRONGER, TO SOCIAL OUTINGS THAT VALUE DIVERSE CULTURES AND LOCATIONS AND AN ARRAY OF RELEVANT AND POWERFUL BOOK TALKS, I HAVE BEEN PART OF A CONVERSATION THAT IS RARE BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE ACADEMY. CARGC HAS GIVEN ME AN ENVIRONMENT TO EXPERIMENT WITH MY IDEAS, PUSH MY WORK’S BOUNDARIES, AND ENABLE OTHERS TO DO THE SAME."
YAKEIN ABDELMAGID
[2018-2019]

Yakein Abdelmagid will receive his PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University in July 2018. His research focuses on affective labor, digital creative industries, and radical media under authoritarianism in the Arab world. At the heart of his research agenda lies the issue of the state's crisis in maintaining its hegemony over transnational cultural production in the digital age. In his work, he examines the cultural production of emerging youth networks and media industries that are uncontainable by the authoritarian state in urban Egypt. Yakein’s research as a Postdoctoral Fellow at CARGC at the Annenberg School for Communication will investigate the historical/ethnographic relationship between state-sponsored neoliberal entrepreneurship in the Arab world and the digital socialities that undergird publics conjured beyond the ambit of the state.

His first book focuses on the independent music scene in urban Cairo, asking, How is Hope Mediated under Authoritarianism? Yakein’s scholarship aims to bring together bottom-up grounded media theory and ethnographic attention to non-western media phenomena. He also holds a bachelor’s degree in Computer Engineering from the University of Cairo, and studied Social Anthropology at the American University in Cairo. He is co-founder of both a music venue in Cairo and a graffiti group and is occasionally a software programmer.
CLOVIS BERGÈRE
[2018-2019]

Clovis Bergère is a visual ethnographer whose research examines the politics of youth as they are realized in relation to digital media in Guinea, West Africa. He recently completed his PhD in Childhood Studies at Rutgers University-Camden, with a specialization in global youth media. His dissertation, “Digital Society and the Politics of Youth in Guinea,” explores social networking as a locus for the mediation and re-imagination of political subjectivities in Guinea. Using digital ethnography and participatory visual research, he examined the ways in which social media, youth, and politics intersect in the Guinean public sphere. His research has been supported by the African Studies Association, Rutgers Digital Studies Center, and a David K. Sengstack Fellowship for excellence in Childhood Studies. In addition to digital media, he has written and published on street corners as spaces of youth socialization in Guinea. Prior to moving to the United States in 2011, he worked for seven years as a project manager in Children’s Services in London, UK, where he was responsible for building thirty innovative playgrounds and youth centers, focused on natural play and collaborative design.
STANISLAV BUDNITSKY  
[2018 -2020]

Stanislav Budnitsky is completing his doctoral program at the School of Journalism and Communication at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. Stanislav’s research investigates the relationship between nationalism, global communication, and digital technologies, focusing on global internet governance. Stanislav holds master’s degrees in Nationalism Studies from the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, and in Journalism from the Higher School of Economics in Moscow, Russia. Stanislav has presented his research at a number of conferences, including International Communication Association, International Association for Media and Communication Research, and International Studies Association. His academic writings have appeared in the *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *International Journal of Communication*, and an edited collection, *The Net and the Nation-State* from Cambridge University Press. During doctoral studies, Stanislav spent time as a fellow with the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, the School of Communication and Information at Rutgers University, and an Ottawa-based think tank the SecDev Foundation. Prior to graduate studies, Stanislav was a freelance media producer and writer in Russia, working on projects ranging from a comedy documentary illuminating the challenges of intercultural communication in adapting “Everybody Loves Raymond” to the Russian screen, to a BBC Newsnight documentary on Vladimir Putin’s first decade in power.
GIANG NGUYEN-THU
[2018-2020]

Giang Nguyen-Thu finished her doctoral study at the University of Queensland in 2016. She has published works on the relationship between Vietnamese television and national belonging. Her forthcoming monograph *Television in Post-Reform Vietnam: Nation, Media, Market* (Routledge) provides a historical review of popular television in Vietnam and reveals how popular television alters the ways ordinary Vietnamese people organize and make sense of their post-Reform living. Giang is now interested in the emotional politics of social media in Vietnam. Her current research investigates how Vietnamese mothers use Facebook to navigate an emerging economy of precarity, caused by the widespread panic related to food, environment, and education. This research aims at revealing the gendered nature of precarity, and its geopolitical complexity in Vietnam, a non-Western but highly globalized context.
Rowan Howard-Williams received his PhD from the Annenberg School for Communication in 2016. His research focuses on the discursive construction of risk in late modernity, with a particular emphasis on climate change and environmental risk. He has published widely on the communication strategies of international non-governmental organizations focused on the environment and on media representations of climate change, in addition to theoretical work on environmental communication. He collaborated with CARGC director Marwan Kraidy on a working paper using insights from environmental communication to apply risk theory to extremist political violence, within the JINCS research group.
JOHN VILANOVA
[2017]

John Vilanova’s research focuses on the cultural and political economic dimensions of music and cultural industries, with a specific focus on Afro-diasporic musics and subjects. His current research examines the racialized history of the Grammy Awards, with secondary research interests in the contemporary Jamaican music industry and the coloniality of media systems. John holds a master’s degree in American Studies from the University of Kansas and an undergraduate degree in English from the University of Pennsylvania. He is also an accomplished journalist who has written for *The Los Angeles Times*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Entertainment Weekly*. He is a producer at Annenberg’s 3620 Podcast, the principal researcher for legendary record producer Clive Davis’s autobiography, *The Soundtrack of My Life*, and the managing editor of MusiQology, the blog of esteemed music scholar Dr. Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr.
KATERINA GIRGINOVA

(2017)

Katerina Girginova studies global media events and audiences. For her dissertation, she explores how different audiences engage with the Olympic Games, the world’s biggest media event, via social and digital media. Her research applies mixed methods approaches to analyze various organizational and policy strategies toward Olympic media audiences, as well as to study cross-cultural audience groups, themselves. Girginova received her Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies and Jazz music from The George Washington University and obtained a Master of Arts in Communication, Culture and Technology from Georgetown University.
YASEMIN Y. CELIKKOL
[2017-2019]

Yasemin Y. Celikkol studies global communication with an emphasis on transnational media, geopolitics, and culture, spanning the Balkans, Turkey, Russia, and Central Asia. Her current research deals with the popularity of Turkish dramas in the Balkans and Russia in light of historical tensions and geopolitics.

Celikkol pursued her education in Bulgaria, the US, and Japan. She holds a BA in Politics from New York University; an MA in Sociolinguistics from International Christian University in Tokyo; and an MS in Intercultural Communication from University of Pennsylvania. In Turkey, Celikkol authored books and articles on baby sign language and positive discipline that were well-received by readers and the media. Her baby sign language book was the first book on sign language to be available widely, a development appreciated by the Hearing Impaired Federation of Turkey with whom she collaborated to further disseminate sign language.

“BEING A CARGC FELLOW PUSHES ME TO NAVIGATE MY SCHOLARSHIP IN TERMS OF GLOBAL COMMUNICATION. FOR EXAMPLE, THINKING IN TERMS OF FOOD AS GLOBAL COMMUNICATION HELPED ME TO ACCOUNT FOR HOW DEVELOPMENTS AND CONTROVERSIES AROUND FOOD CAN SERVE TO ILLUMINATE HISTORY, GEOPOLITICS, AND GLOBALIZATION. TO ME, CARGC IS A SAFE SPACE IN ANNENBERG TO EXPLORE NEW IDEAS WITH LIKE-MINDED SCHOLARS. THROUGHOUT MY ACADEMIC CAREER MANY WELL-INTENTIONED PEERS AND PROFESSORS DISCOUNTED MY IDEAS; IDEAS WHICH FLOURISHED IN CARGC. IDEAS WERE FURTHER DEVELOPED AND REFINED IN OUR CARGC WRITING GROUP. WE BENEFIT FROM DISCUSSING EVERYONE’S WORK TO FURTHER SCHOLARSHIP AND IMPROVE WRITING.”
Heather Jaber holds an MA in Media Studies from the American University of Beirut, where she studied the emerging visibility of characters coded as homosexual in Lebanese musalsalat, or Arabic-language television dramas. Before joining Annenberg, she worked as a journalist and researcher in the US, Lebanon, and Austria. More recently, she served as communications coordinator for the KIP Project in Lebanon, where she helped launch a seminal multidisciplinary conference on discrimination and sexual harassment. As a doctoral student at Annenberg, Heather is interested in the intersections between gender, sexuality, popular culture, and geopolitics in the Arab world and beyond, and particularly in interrogating the symbolic function of deviance in the construction of the nation. She is increasingly interested in turning to popular culture as a method for complicating dominant structures of thinking while also mining them for their affective potential.

"The CARGC writing group has been one of the most productive and generative spaces to think through my own work. Each week, we meet in a low-stakes setting, ask questions, make suggestions, and think about ways to take our work to the next level, which is so essential for critical scholarship. It’s also been a great way to learn about the work of my colleagues, which has opened the door for collaborative conversations and projects. CARGC has become a space where I can test my ideas and think about them from different angles, which I think is important for academics at all stages."
Revati Prasad is a doctoral student at the Annenberg School for Communication and a CARGC Doctoral Fellow. She studies the technopolitics of information infrastructure, examining institutional narratives, political contention and individual meaning making around technology. Her work also includes a focus on digital journalism practices in India and the US. She has also contributed to the Ranking Digital Rights project at the New America Foundation that examines the privacy and freedom of expression disclosures of key tech and telecommunications companies. Prior to Annenberg, she worked for several years at an international non-profit that supported independent journalism, primarily working on sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Revati holds an MPA from Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs in Economic and Political Development, and a BA in Political Science and a BS in Journalism from Ohio University.

“CARGC is what we’re building together. It was not some pre-existing thing that did X and offered Y, but it is a space a small group of globally-minded scholars are actively creating together on an ongoing basis. We are trying to define and establish the norms and practices that allow us to challenge and champion each other’s work, and I am excited to be a part of that. I learn a lot from my colleagues, and feel encouraged and inspired to push my work further.”
MOHAMMED SALIH
(2017-2018)

Mohammed A. Salih is primarily interested in extremist movements in the Middle East, and the intersection of media, politics, and culture in that region. Prior to joining Annenberg, Salih worked for a number of years as a freelance journalist covering the Islamic State conflict as well as reporting on Kurdish and Iraqi affairs for international news outlets. His journalistic reports have appeared in Inter Press Service (IPS), Al Jazeera English, Al-Monitor, Foreign Policy, Christian Science Monitor, FRANCE24, Newsweek Middle East, The Washington Post, and The New York Times. He has also published analytical pieces with Middle East Institute and The Washington Institute for Near East Policy on local politics of Kurdistan.

“I have found my fellowship at CARGC to be a very enriching experience. Working with CARGC’s director, Professor Marwan Kraidy and learning from him has been extremely valuable in terms of my research and the direction of my work. Moreover, CARGC’s numerous activities such as the Symposium on Mediating Islamic State and the JINCS Workshop on Islamic State and Jihadi Communication have been tremendous opportunities for presenting my research, learning from others, and improving. In short, CARGC has provided a fantastic environment for working and learning.”
Celeste M. Wagner is broadly interested in political communication and entertainment, and particularly in the role of the media in the shaping of attitudes around social issues. She received her bachelor’s degree in Communication from Universidad de San Andrés in Argentina, her home country. Prior to attending Annenberg, she was Research Coordinator at MESCO Argentina (Center for the Study of Media and Society in Argentina), co-directed by Pablo J. Boczkowski (Northwestern University) and Eugenia Mitchelstein (Universidad de San Andrés), for whom she was a research assistant during the elaboration of their book *The News Gap* (MIT Press, 2013). Celeste has published her work in *Latin American Perspectives, Media, Culture & Society*, and *Palabra Clave*. Celeste is also passionate about teaching. In 2015, she received the “Teaching Award,” given to the best Teaching Assistant at Universidad de San Andrés.

“CARGC has become an institutional home to me. Knowing that you’ll go to an office full of brilliant and kind people that are there to listen to you, appreciate what you know and what you do, and help you when you need it is an enormous privilege that not everyone has during their PhD life. At CARGC there is a true commitment to valuing context as a crucial element in the understanding of social processes, which is not the norm in all academic settings. As a consequence, being a CARGC fellow has made me feel more confident about what I know and has helped me embrace my background and culture in my own research.”
Zane Griffin Talley Cooper
[2018-2019]

Zane Griffin Talley Cooper’s research lies primarily in the history, maintenance, and sustainability of digital communication infrastructures. He is particularly interested in the geopolitical, international, and intercultural relationships required to sustain global access to the raw materials necessary for digital devices and services. He currently looks at the mining and processing of rare earth metals and the history of their use in hard disk drives and other information technologies since the 1980s. Cooper holds a BFA in Film Studies from the University of Colorado at Boulder and an MA in History from California State University San Marcos.
MARIELA MORALES-SUÁREZ  
[2017-2018]

Mariela was born in Cuba in 1989, just when the Berlin Wall was falling. Her childhood elapsed in a Cuba that was increasingly isolated from the rest of the world yet was experiencing many social and economic changes. She, unlike her parents, grew up in a Cuba where US dollars, foreign magazines, and American music were no longer persecuted and prosecuted by the Cuban government. She was also one of the four students in her province chosen to attend the School of Communication at the University of Havana. In 2009, at the beginning of her third year of Journalism School, she immigrated to Miami with her family. Mariela attended Miami Dade College and transferred to The University of Pennsylvania in 2014, where she recently completed a Bachelor’s Degree in Global Communication.

JULIA BECKER  
[2017-2018]

(See spotlight on adjacent page.)
JULIA BECKER,
2017-2018 CARGC UNDERGRADUATE FELLOW,

completed her Honors Capstone Thesis in Communication entitled “Street Art at the US-Mexico Border: An Analysis of Anti-Trump and Pro-Immigrant Street Art Across Five States.”

In her work, advised by CARGC director Dr. Marwan M. Kraidy and Annenberg Lecturer Kim Wolfe, Julia focuses on fieldwork that she carried out at border sites in Texas, California, and Mexico. Julia performs a textual, semiotic analysis of street art as a form of communication that has impacts on citizenship and protest. Julia’s dual focus on street art and its broader digital life allows for a buoyant analysis of how immigration policy effects become a part of culture.

Julia Becker recently completed her senior year at the University of Pennsylvania with a major in Communication. Her research focused on street art in communities along the US-Mexico border, exploring how it is shaped by news, entertainment media, and President Trump’s rhetoric regarding immigrants, immigration policies, DACA, and border security. At Penn, she was an undergraduate grant recipient with the Andrea Mitchell Center for the Study of Democracy and an Undergraduate Fellow at the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication. Next fall, Julia plans to attend graduate school at the University of Edinburgh.

TOP OF PAGE: From Julia Becker’s field research: Pig Trump. Trump painted in a revolting way, inviting mockery as if he’s been caught with his pants down.

LEFT: Two fingers. References the separation experienced by family members who are only able to link fingers when they meet at the wall.

HERE ABOVE: Monarch butterfly. A dignified symbol of migration.
ZUBAIDA SALMAN
[2018-2019]

Zubaida Salman will be a junior at the University of Pennsylvania in the 2018-2019 academic year, majoring in Religious Studies and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Her research project at CARGC will look at public memory, trauma, and nostalgia for Iraqi youth online through a study of the effect of an era of cartoons from the channel Spacetoon. Having moved from Iraq to Syria and finally to the United States five years ago, Zubaida’s interests stem from observations of her and others’ experiences of navigating space and identity as shaped by larger events in the political sphere. She is the recipient of a summer 2018 grant from the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships, with which support she will begin research towards her CARGC project for the 2018-2019 school year.
MY TIME AT CARGC WAS DEFINED BY TWO MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS. FIRST, I LAUNCHED MY FIRST BOOK AT CARGC, MEDIA LOCALISM, A WONDERFUL MOMENT SURROUNDED BY COLLEAGUES AND PEERS. SECOND, I BEGAN RESEARCH ON MY SECOND BOOK PROJECT, FARM FRESH SPECTRUM. THE RESEARCH I DID AT CARGC CONTRIBUTED DIRECTLY TO MY CARGC WORKING PAPER PUBLISHED IN JANUARY 2018 ON A THEORY OF RURAL COMMUNICATION. SINCE LEAVING CARGC, I HAVE MADE CONSIDERABLE ADVANCEMENT IN MY PRIMARY RESEARCH AND WRITING, NEITHER OF WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT MY FELLOWSHIP. ANOTHER FOND MEMORY WAS THE “POLICY AND PIZZA” DISCUSSION GROUP I ORGANIZED. THIS GROUP OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND, ON SOME OCCASIONS, ANNENBERG FACULTY, MET AT CARGC EVERY FRIDAY TO DISCUSS MAJOR EVENTS IN MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY. IT WAS A GREAT WAY TO MEET A VARIETY OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND FORM A COMMUNITY OF LIKE-MINDED INDIVIDUALS WANTING TO DISCUSS THESE PRESSING ISSUES. POLICY AND PIZZA WAS THE MODEL FOR AN EVENT I NOW ORGANIZE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA CALLED POLICY AND PANCAKES.

CHRISTOPHER ALI
[Spring 2017]

Christopher Ali is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Media Studies at the University of Virginia. He joined the Department in 2013, after completing his PhD at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. His research focuses on communication policy and regulation, localism, local news/local journalism, and critical theory. His new book, Media Localism: The Policies of Place (University of Illinois Press, 2017) addresses the difficulties of defining and regulating local media in the 21st century in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada and the implications these difficulties have for the long-term viability of local news. Christopher is currently working on a new book project titled Farm Fresh Spectrum: Rural Interventions in Communication Policy. The book examines the roles that American farming communities play in broadband policy and deployment and the current policy mechanisms governing rural broadband in America. Research for this project began while Christopher was a faculty fellow at the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communications at the University of Pennsylvania in 2017.
METTE MORTENSEN
[Fall 2018]

Mette Mortensen, PhD, is Associate Professor in Media Studies at the University of Copenhagen. She is the Principal Investigator of the large, collective research project “Images of Conflict, Conflicting Images” (2017-2021). She is the author or editor of seven books, including the monograph *Eyewitness Images and Journalism: Digital Media, Participation, and Conflict* (Routledge 2015). She has published articles in international journals such as *Journalism Practice, Information, Communication & Society, Media, Culture & Society*, and *International Journal of Cultural Studies*. She is a member of the editorial collective *Northern Lights: Yearbook of Film and Media Studies* and on several editorial boards of book series. While at CARGC, Mette will be working on her project examining the ways in which terrorists are rendered visible in the news media.
N. BÜLAY DOĞAN
[2017-2018]

N. Bülay Doğan is a doctoral candidate at the Department of Media and Visual Arts in Koç University, a research fellow at CARGC at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, and a Fulbright visiting scholar. She is a member of IAMCR and of the Union for Democratic Communications. Doğan is interested in digital activism, particularly in hacktivism. A graduate of Galatasaray University with a bachelor's degree in Political Science, she received her MA in Modern Turkish History from Bogazici University. In her doctoral studies, she is primarily studying the criminalization processes of hacktivist groups in a conversation with critical criminology studies and framing theory. She presented her work in national and international conferences. She also contributed to academic and activist publishing in Turkey. Last, she is one of the founders of Ozgen Berkol Doğan Science Fiction Library, a unique association specialized in science-fiction literature in Turkey.
EVENTS
IN THE SHADOW OF OFFICIAL AMBITION: NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY CONFRONTS GLOBAL MEDIA CAPITAL

Michael Curtin, the Duncan and Suzanne Mellichamp Professor of Global Studies in the Department of Film and Media Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, delivered PARGC’s Inaugural Distinguished Lecture titled, “In the Shadow of Official Ambition: National Cultural Policy Confronts Global Media Capital.” His presentation explored the implications of Chinese cultural policy within the broader context of media globalization, providing a framework for understanding the logics of media capital and the challenges confronting national governments. He also made comparisons to Arab, African, and Indian media, reflecting more generally on the future prospects for creativity and cultural diversity in popular film and television.

Michael Curtin also presented a master class titled, “Gateways to Global Media Studies: Institutions & Industries.” In this class, Curtin, along with Annenberg faculty and students, explored some of the theoretical and methodological challenges of global media studies, focusing especially on the advantages of institutional research that explores quotidian practices that contribute significantly—and often unexpectedly—to the complex processes of globalization.

THE ACADEMIC DIGITAL DIVIDE AND UNEVEN GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Arjun Appadurai, the Goddard Professor in Media, Culture and Communication and Senior Fellow at the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University, delivered a lecture entitled, “The Academic Digital Divide and Uneven Global Development.” This talk explored the role of the academic disciplines of communication and media studies in the growth of the
digital divide as a matter of technology, justice, and global inequality. This gap has the potential for re-creating older forms of knowledge-based imperialism and scholarly apartheid, which should be especially abhorrent to scholars working on communication and media from a global perspective. This lecture described these dangers and possible ways to avoid them.

Appadurai also presented a master class under the title, “Failure and Mediation.” It asked, *Who defines failure? By what measures and norms? And how do norms about failure get communicated, mediated and naturalized?* Under this framework, Appadurai and Annenberg faculty and students worked to frame failure as a product of cultural and historical debates about the limits of success.

Mim Sheller, Professor of Sociology and founding Director of the Center for Mobilities Research and Policy at Drexel University, presented an ongoing project with the Artistic Lab organized by the Mobile Lives Forum in Paris and based on an art commission and collaboration with the Chinese artist Ai Weiwei and French curator Guillaume Logé. Using Ai Weiwei’s vivid images of people using, charging, and assembling around phones while they cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe’s borders, Sheller explored urgent issues of humanitarianism and connection in the midst of the global refugee crisis. Her talk addressed the interdependence of mobility with communication capacities and explored how the mobile phone emerged as a locational device that maintained refugees’ connection to the world.

Sheller also presented a master class, “Imaging Mobility Justice,” which elaborated a concept of mobility justice across various interconnected scales and global contexts. She worked to highlight the relation between
uneven transportation infrastructures, border regimes, and global communication technologies. In so doing, Annenberg faculty and students explored struggles over racialized, gendered, and national space.

Saskia Sassen, the Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology and Member of The Committee on Global Thought at Columbia University, focused her CARGC Distinguished Lecture and Master Class on “Digital Formations of the Powerful and the Powerless.” In her lecture, she highlighted that the rapid proliferation of global computer-based networks and the growing digitization of knowledge has unsettled standard meanings of knowledge. This has problematized the effectiveness of current framings for understanding what knowledge is. In this context, Sassen argued that network technologies have the potential to open up established categories of formalized knowledge and unsettle their dominance, enabling the rise of novel types of knowledge practices.

Sassen also presented a master class that similarly highlighted how established bodies of knowledge can exit their frames or go beyond hierarchical, institutionalized controls. Alongside Annenberg faculty and staff, she explored how what were once unitary bodies of knowledge ensconced in specific categories and systems of power can get redeployed in bits and pieces, remixed to serve the needs of a far broader spectrum of users.
THE REVOLUTIONARY PUBLIC SPHERE

PARGC’s inaugural symposium, “The Revolutionary Public Sphere: Contention, Communication, and Culture in the Arab Uprisings,” explored the active field of revolutionary cultural production that emerged out of the popular rebellions that swept the Arab world from 2010-2013. Scholars from around the world, and from a variety of disciplines, put primary sources in dialogue with theory in order to understand aesthetic experimentation and stylistic innovation in this revolutionary public sphere. Presenters shed light on the ways in which various revolutionary and counter-revolutionary activists and regimes have attracted, upheld, and directed popular attention to themselves and to their opponents, yielding conceptual tools to understand revolutionary public spheres at large.

In conjunction with the symposium, PARGC hosted an exhibition of Beirut graffiti, entitled “Before This Was Just a Wall.” The photos, taken by Marwan M. Kraidy, include graffiti inspired by the Arab uprisings, as well as other social and political causes – all sharing a common concern with the human body.

CONVERGENCE AND DISJUNCTURE IN GLOBAL DIGITAL CULTURE

Is There a Global Digital Culture? The 2016 PARGC Symposium considered this question as an intellectual provocation to revisit how the universal relates to the particular, the global to the local, the digital to the material, the human to the post-human. Symposium participants explored the problematic notion of “global digital culture,” exploring dynamics of convergence and disjuncture in the digital era. What is the twin impact of digitization and globalization on philosophies like humanism and universalism? How do networks transmute individual autonomy and the sovereignty of the body? How is digital culture fomenting disjuncture across the globe, in dissident, marginal, or rogue formations? How is the digital affecting the ways people work and play, how they experience and judge beauty, and how they express themselves? Most fundamentally, does digitization herald a new chapter in how we understand ourselves to be citizens of the world?
How does the group that calls itself “Islamic State” communicate? How has Islamic State been understood and contested? The Third Biennial CARGC Symposium sought to explore and understand the players, patterns, and practices that have mediated Islamic State: the communicative ways in which the group has been studied, reported on, visualized, narrated, mocked, spoofed, and resisted. The symposium was grounded on notions of “mediation” rather than “media” to shift public discourse on Islamic State beyond the focus on technology that has characterized research on media and socio-political change generally, and Islamic State communication in particular. Rather, invited and resident scholars sought to understand the historical, ideological, technological, and cultural complexity of Islamic State, meshing translocal struggles with global geopolitics. Mediation thus connoted a broad approach to media, including discourse, images, bodies, platforms, and the expressive capacities and meaning making. Grounded in CARGC’s mission to advance a global media studies that fuses multidisciplinary regional knowledge with theory and methodology in the humanities and social sciences, the symposium spurred a critical conversation that promises a new understanding of the transnational nexus of communication, identity, and violence.
BOOK TALKS AT CARGC

MOHAMMED ZAYANI
Networked Publics and Digital Contention: The Politics of Everyday Life in Tunisia
Oxford University Press, 2015

BILGE YESIL
Media in New Turkey: The Origins of an Authoritarian Neoliberal State
University of Illinois Press, 2016

MATT SIENKIEWICZ
The Other Air Force: U.S. Efforts to Reshape Middle Eastern Media Since 9/11
Rutgers University Press, 2016

NICK SOUSANIS
Unflattening
Harvard University Press, 2015

CHRISTOPHER ALI
Media Localism: The Policies of Place
University of Illinois Press, 2017

PATRICK MURPHY
The Media Commons: Globalization and Environmental Discourses
University of Illinois Press, 2017

WILLIAM YOUMANS
An Unlikely Audience: Al Jazeera’s Struggle in America
Oxford University Press, 2017

GAYE THERESA JOHNSON & ALEX LUBIN, EDS.
Futures of Black Radicalism
Verso, 2017

GIANG NGUYEN-THU
Television in Post-Reform Vietnam: Nation, Media, Market
Routledge, 2018

AYNNE KOKAS
Hollywood Made in China
University of California Press, 2017
CARGC FELLOW COLLOQUIA

DONATELLA DELLA RATTA
Making Real-Time Drama: The Political Economy of Cultural Production in Syria’s Uprising
February 27, 2014

MARTA REPNIKOVA
Jazz Band Authoritarianism: Critical Journalists and the State in China
October 23, 2014

SAHAR KHAMIS
Political Blogging and Socio-Political Transformation: The Case of Egypt
January 22, 2015

CHRISTOPHER ALI
From Kale to Broadband: Localism in the Digital Age
April 24, 2017

RAYYA EL ZEIN
Revamping Gender: Nostalgia and Affect in Beirut’s Musical Cabarets
November 2, 2017

SAMIRA RAJABI
Mediating Possibility after Suffering: Meaning Making of the Micro-political through Digital Media
February 1, 2018

N. BÜLAY DOĞAN
Contextualizing Hacktivism: The Criminalization of RedHack
March 1, 2018
TEACHING & LEARNING GLOBAL MEDIA STUDIES
MARCH 2, 2017

On the occasion of the launch of *Global Media Studies* (Toby Miller & Marwan M. Kraidy, Polity, 2016), a distinguished panel of global media studies scholar-teachers discussed connections between their research and pedagogical practices. What is global media studies? What theories and methods does the field encompass? What are recent and emerging patterns in global media studies? What types of courses, undergraduate and graduate, are typically taught under that rubric? What are best pedagogical practices in the field?

The panel featured:

**CHRISTOPHER ALI**, University of Virginia’s Department of Media Studies; CARGC Fellow

**FABIENNE DARLING-WOLF**, Temple University’s School of Media and Communication

**MARWAN M. KRAIDY**, University of Pennsylvania’s Annenberg School for Communication

**TOBY MILLER**, University of California Riverside’s Department of Media and Cultural Studies (Emeritus)

**NANCY MORRIS**, Temple University’s School of Media and Communication

**PATRICK MURPHY**, Temple University’s School of Media and Communication

GEOPOLITICS & MEDIA IN THE GULF
JANUARY 18, 2018

The Gulf region had a tense year in 2017. Long-simmering tensions between Saudi Arabia and Qatar exploded in a blockade of Qatar by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Bahrain. Intensifying rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia drove military conflicts in Syria and Yemen and political turbulence in Lebanon and Tunisia. All the while, Iran and Turkey assisted Qatar to withstand the blockade. A short time later, the Saudi Crown Prince initiated a purge of the Saudi elite under the official rubric of an anti-corruption campaign. Media have played a central role in this geopolitical turbulence. Hackers allegedly planted contrived stories on Qatari news websites that started the Saudi-Qatari scuffle. The war of the airwaves between Qatar’s *Al-Jazeera* and Saudi Arabia’s *Al-Arabiya* intensified. An animated video of a Saudi invasion of Iran made the rounds of social media. In the meantime, critics and comics took to social media to spoof, criticize, and celebrate their leaders, countries, and causes. Panelists discussed these developments and took questions from the audience.

The panel featured:

**HEBAH BUKHARI**, San Diego State University

**LINA KHATIB**, Chatham House

**MARC LYNCH**, George Washington University
At once deeply private and unequivocally public, the human body is central to how we experience the world. Over the last century, many critics and philosophers have devoted themselves to studying and theorizing how our body interacts with the world. Throughout the twentieth century, the body as medium, symbol, and battleground was central to feminist, anti-colonial, and other political struggles. More recently, the notion of embodiment has emerged as a central preoccupation in interdisciplinary research on art, culture, politics, and media, intensified by the rise of the digital in neoliberal times.

This NIAS-PARGC workshop, “Corporeality in Arab Public Culture: The State of the Field,” took stock of research on the cultural, social, and political dimensions of the body by focusing on corporeality in Arab public culture, and by doing so, identified key theoretical and methodological insights. Workshop participants, encompassing a wide gamut of disciplinary affiliations and career stages, explored the body as theme, medium, symbol, sensorium, metaphor, and battleground in various sites including novels, social media, and public space. They examined key articulations between area studies and theory, materiality and representation, gender and social class, structure and event, elucidating tensions between various approaches to studying the body, like transgression, phenomenology, semiotics, biopolitics, and queer theory.

Participants:

INES BRAUNE, Marburg University
PAUL EMMELKAMP, NIAS
ZIAD FAHMY, Cornell University
FARHA GHANNAM, Swarthmore University
MARWAN M. KRAIDY, University of Pennsylvania
MARINA KRIKORIAN, University of Pennsylvania
MICHEL LEEZENBERG, University of Amsterdam
VIVIENNE MATTHIES-BOON, University of Amsterdam
JARED MCCORMICK, Harvard University
ANELIES MOORS, University of Amsterdam
SARA MOURAD, University of Pennsylvania
JUDITH NAEFF, Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis
CHARLOTTE PARDEY, Marburg University
THOMAS POELL, University of Amsterdam
PETRA SJJPESTEIJN, Leiden University
MARK R. WESTMORELAND, Leiden University
With the ascent of the Justice and Development Party to power in 2002, Turkey emerged as a new kind of player in the Middle East and beyond. A robust but “friendly” foreign policy, massive media exports, and effective public diplomacy contributed to the rise of new perceptions of Turkey in the Middle East and Balkans, until the Arab uprisings, the Syrian civil war, and the rise of Islamic State demonstrated the limitations of Turkish policies in the Middle East. This was concomitant with dramatic domestic developments within Turkey, including growing state control and media censorship, the Gezi protests and their aftermath, corruption scandals, controversial elections, the collapse of negotiations with Kurdish parties, and a media sector under the twin pressure of authoritarian drift and neoliberal imperatives. Participants in this PARGC Workshop discussed and shed light on media, politics, and culture in Turkey’s long decade.

Participants:

ALTÜG AKIN, Izmir University of Economics
ECE ALGAN, California State University, San Bernardino
OMAR AL-GHAZZI, The University of Sheffield
MIYASE CHRISTIANSEN, Stockholm University
MARWAN M. KRAIDY, University of Pennsylvania
LEA NOCERA, University of Naples
YESIM KAPTAN, Izmir University of Economics/PARGC Faculty Fellow
BILGE YESIL, City University of New York
FALL 2018
FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 20, 2018
CARGC DISTINGUISHED LECTURE IN GLOBAL COMMUNICATION
FEATURING HECTOR AMAYA, PROFESSOR OF MEDIA STUDIES AND CHAIR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

The 2018 CARGC Distinguished Lecture in Global Communication will be delivered by Hector Amaya. Amaya is Professor of Media Studies at the University of Virginia and a Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) at Princeton University. His research engages with the philosophy of communication from a subaltern perspective and his areas of specialization include Latin American film and media, comparative media studies, and Latinx media studies. His current project, *Publicity’s Other: Violence, Ethnicity, and the Undoing of US America*, examines new forms of violence, harm, and aggression afforded by digitation and Internet technologies and evaluates them against normative ideas about publicity and intersubjectivity. *Publicity’s Other* will be his fourth single-authored book. His other books are *Screening Cuba: Film Criticism as Political Performance During the Cold War* (University of Illinois Press, 2010), *Citizenship Excess: Latinas/os, Media and the Nation* (New York University Press, 2013) and, forthcoming with Duke University Press, *Trafficking: The Violent Restructuring of Mexico and USA Publicity*.

Inspired by a US Joint Forces Command Report from 2008 that labeled Mexico a state in risk of “rapid and sudden collapse,” Amaya’s lecture, “Almost Failing: Mexico’s Violence, Space, and Discourse,” will use discourse analysis of the concept of “failed state” to illuminate the connections between this concept, violence, and order. These connections are highly troubling. They reveal that contemporary ideas about orderly states and state failure cannot be understood without reference to the genealogy of order and its political economy. Order is not simply a normative value, but the outcome of particular ways of organizing political power and the economy. In the histories this talk engages, these particular ways of organizing political power and the economy are intertwined with the histories of colonialism and the racial and ethnic ideologies on which this colonialism depended.

OCTOBER 1, 2018
CARGC BOOK TALK FEATURING MELANI MCCALISTER,
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

*The Kingdom of God Has No Borders: A Global History of American Evangelicals*

NOVEMBER 1, 2018
CARGC BOOK TALK FEATURING TAREK EL-ARISS,
DARTMOUTH UNIVERSITY

*Leaks, Hacks, and Scandals: Arab Culture in the Digital Age*
CARGC PRESS HAS PUBLISHED NUMEROUS CARGC PAPERS, CARGC BRIEFS, AND SPECIAL ISSUES OF JOURNALS WITH PARTNERS LIKE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNICATION AND THE PUBLIC. IN ADDITION TO PUBLISHING CARGC RESEARCH, WE SEEK TO UNDERSTAND TECHNOLOGICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DRIVEN CHANGES TO KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION WORLDWIDE. WE ALSO STRIVE TO BE ACTIVE WITH VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS. CARGC PRESS IS PUBLISHING THE “MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION” CHAPTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL PANEL ON SOCIAL PROGRESS AS A STANDALONE BOOK.
Dr. Michael Curtin, Duncan and Suzanne Mellichamp Professor and Vice Chair, Film and Media Studies at the University of Wisconsin gave PARGC’s Inaugural Distinguished Lecture in Global Communication on September 18, 2013—less than three months after PARGC’s founding on July 1, 2013. The publication of the lecture as PARGC Paper 1 inaugurated a new venture, PARGC Press (now CARGC Press), dedicated to publishing CARGC papers, special issues, books, and research briefs.

**CARGC PAPER 1, SPRING 2014**


MICHAEL CURTIN

CARGC Paper 1 drew on Curtin’s then book project, Media Capital, which compares and contrasts cities that have become centers of the global film and television industries, such as Bombay, Lagos, and Miami. In the paper, Curtin explored the implications of Chinese cultural policy within the broader context of media globalization, providing a framework for understanding the logics of media capital and the challenges confronting national governments, making comparisons to Arab, African, and Indian media, and reflecting on the prospects for creativity and diversity in film and television.

**CARGC PAPER 2, FALL 2014**

“Making Real-Time Drama: The Political Economy of Cultural Production in Syria’s Uprising”

DONATELLA DELLA RATTA

In CARGC Paper 2, Della Ratta explored how one 2013 Syrian television serial, Wilada min al-Khasira [Birth from the Waist] responded in real time to unfolding events of the Syrian revolution. She argued that the serial offers a living site for scholarly reflection on how cultural production and the power relations that shape it might shift, recombine, and adapt in the context of the three-year-old uprising turned into an armed conflict. Della Ratta mobilized the television serial to explore how the geopolitical relationships between Syrian and Gulf political elites had been dramatically reconfigured.
CARGC PAPER 3, SPRING 2015
“Media Oversight in Non-Democratic Regimes: The Perspectives of Officials and Journalists in China”

MARIA REPNIKOVA

CARGC Paper 3 grew out of Repnikova’s 2014 Postdoctoral Fellow Colloquium. In it, Repnikova rebuked a popular projection in comparing media landscapes based on a binary vision of free versus not free and objectivity versus propaganda. The frequent focus of Western media on censorship in authoritarian regimes, Repnikova argued, highlights the gap between media practices in democratic and non-democratic contexts. Challenging these conceptions, CARGC Paper 3 examined a journalism practice generally associated with democratic contexts—investigative reporting—in a regime most renowned for censorship and pervasive propaganda—contemporary China.

CARGC PAPER 4, SPRING 2016
“The Academic Digital Divide and Uneven Global Development”

ARJUN APPADURAI

CARGC Paper 4 reprinted Appadurai’s October 2015 Distinguished Lecture at PARGC. In it, he warned against the dangers of “knowledge-based imperialism and scholarly apartheid” and offered possible ways to avoid them. Appadurai identified a growing rift between media studies and communication studies, with scholars concerned with institutions, power, resources, and large-scale data on one side, and scholars concerned with interpretation, texts, languages, and images on the other. Yet, despite the history of this divide, in CARGC Paper 4, Appadurai outlined what we can do to close the growing distance between media and communication studies.
CARGC PAPER 5, FALL 2016
“On the Maintenance of Humanity: Learning from Refugee Mobile Practices”
MIMI SHELLER

This CARGC Paper drew on Sheller’s Distinguished Lecture and presented a project in collaboration with Chinese artist Ai Weiwei and French curator Guillaume Logé. For many refugees, smartphones have become their most valuable asset. While theories of migration have long spoken of the “double absence” of migrants (both from their country of origin and from their host country), Sheller identified that certain researchers now allude to the “double presence” made possible by ICT. This paper explored the increasingly intrinsic overlap between physical and virtual mobility.

CARGC PAPER 6, SPRING 2017
“Emergent Voices and Evolving Agendas: Writing Realities in Cuba’s New Media Landscape”
MARIELA MORALES-SUÁREZ

Drawn from Morales-Suárez’s Penn Honors Thesis about the evolution of the Cuban media landscape, and developed during her CARGC Undergraduate Fellowship, CARGC Paper 6 presented findings from an empirical study of Cuban journalists, their decision-making practices, the motivations that drive them, the challenges they face, and the opportunities they crave. Morales-Suárez conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a group of independent Cuban journalists recruited from twenty non-governmental publications during the spring of 2017.
CARGC Paper 7, Winter 2018
“Thoughts on a Critical Theory of Rural Communication”
CHRISTOPHER ALI

CARGC Paper 7 begins with the provocative question, “What Does It Mean to Be Rural?” In answering this question and taking up the difficult task to “theorize the rural,” former CARGC fellow Christopher Ali drew on critical scholarship in media and communication studies, political economy, critical geography, phenomenology, and mobility studies to point the way forward for a critical theory of rural communication. He argues that understanding the rural is essential to understanding the dynamics of our globalized and networked world.

FORTHCOMING CARGC PAPERS

CARGC Paper 8, Spring 2018
“Vamping the Archive: Approaching Aesthetics in Global Media”
RAYYA EL ZEIN

CARGC Paper 9, Summer 2018
“Mediating Possibility after Suffering: Meaning Making of the Micro-political through Digital Media”
SAMIRA RAJABI

CARGC Paper 10, Summer 2018
“Contextualizing Hacktivism: The Criminalization of RedHack”
N. BÜLAY DOĞAN

CARGC Paper 11, Fall 2018
“Street Art at the US-Mexico Border: An Analysis of Anti-Trump and Pro-Immigrant Street Art Across Five Sites”
JULIA BECKER
The Revolutionary Public Sphere: The Case of the Arab Uprisings

Communication and the Public
Volume 2, Issue 2, June 2017
Co-Editors: Marwan M. Kraidy & Marina R. Krikorian

A comprehensive picture of dissent in the Arab uprisings requires an understanding of how revolutionaries have represented themselves and how various media, digital and otherwise, were incorporated in these communicative processes. Together, the articles in this Special Issue focus on the myths, ideologies, and histories that inspired slogans, murals, and poems of pointed social relevance and politically potency. Originally presented at the inaugural biennial symposium of what was then the Project for Advanced Research in Global Communication in 2014, these papers explore the creative permutations of symbols, words, images, colors, shapes, and sounds that revolutionaries deployed to contest despots, to outwit each other, to attract attention, and to conjure up new social and political imaginaries. The issue exemplifies one of the fundamental principles undergirding the institutional mission of the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication: a robust dialogue between theoretical advances on one hand, and deep linguistic, cultural, historical knowledge of the world region under study, on the other.

Convergence and Disjuncture in Global Digital Culture

International Journal of Communication
Volume 11, 2017
Editor: Marwan M. Kraidy

In the 1980s and 1990s, the question “Is there a global culture?” fueled heated debates as intellectual opponents debated the social, political, economic, and cultural consequences of globalization. Guest-edited by Marwan M. Kraidy, this Special Section of the International Journal of Communication by global communication scholars revisits the discussion on global culture in light of the digital revolution. Originally presented at CARGC’s second Biennial Symposium in April 2016, these articles do not pretend to provide a comprehensive answer to the existence or lack thereof of a global digital culture. Rather, they consider this question as an intellectual provocation to revisit how the universal relates to the particular, the global to the local, the digital to the material. Questions guiding
these articles include: How do networks transmute individual autonomy and the sovereignty of the body? How is digital culture fomenting disjuncture across the globe in dissident, marginal, or rogue formations? How is the digital affecting the ways people work and play, how they experience and judge beauty, and how they protest? Most fundamentally, does digitization herald a new chapter in how we understand ourselves?

Mediating Islamic State
International Journal of Communication
Forthcoming, Summer 2019
Editor: Marwan M. Kraidy

ISIS Media
Summer/Fall 2017
In collaboration with Global-E Journal, this series was launched by the CARGC research group on Jihadi Networks of Communication and Cultures (JINCS).

“A Lone Wolf in the Hypertext: Radicalization Online”
BRIAN HUGHES

“Hijacking Heads & Hashtags”
KATERINA GIRGINOVA

“The Islamic State’s Passport Paradox”
WILLIAM LAFI YOUMANS

“Daesh’s Image-Weaponry in the Battle for Mosul”
KAREEM EL DAMANHOURY

“Fatal Attraction: The Islamic State’s Politics of Sentimentality”
YARA DAMAJ

“Mongol Hordes, the Khmer Rouge, and the Islamic State: Non-Modern Conceptions of Space and Time”
JOHN VILANOVA

“Where Media Meets Statecraft: Daesh’s? Promotion of Governmental Competence through its Media”
MICHAEL DEGERALD

“Terrorism and World Risk Society: Resilience, Resentment, and Spectacle”
ROWAN HOWARD-WILLIAMS

“Obsessive Regulation and ‘Biological Minimum’ in ISIS Biopolitics”
MOHAMMED A. SALIH
The Naked Blogger of Cairo: Creative Insurgency in the Arab World
MARWAN M. KRAIDY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2016

Uprisings spread like wildfire across the Arab world from 2010 to 2012, fueled by a desire for popular sovereignty. In Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria, protestors flooded the streets and the media, voicing dissent through slogans, graffiti, puppetry, videos, and satire that called for the overthrow of dictatorial regimes. Investigating what drives people to risk everything to express themselves in rebellious art, The Naked Blogger of Cairo uncovers the creative insurgency at the heart of the Arab uprisings. While commentators have stressed the role of social media, Marwan M. Kraidy shows that the essential medium of expression was not texting or Twitter but the human body. Brutal governments that coerced citizens through torture and rape found themselves confronted with the bodies of protestors. Activists challenged authority in brazen acts of self-immolation, nude activism, and hunger strikes. The bodies of dictators became a focus of ridicule. Syria’s Bashar al-Assad was rendered as a pathetic finger puppet, while Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak became a regurgitating cow. As Kraidy argues, technology publicizes defiance, but the body remains the vital nexus of physical struggle and digital communication, destabilizing distinctions between “the real world” and virtual reality, spurring revolutionary debates about the role of art, and anchoring Islamic State’s attempted hijacking of creative insurgency.

Media Politics in China: Improvising Power under Authoritarianism

MARIA REPNIKOVA, CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2017

Who watches over the party-state? In this engaging analysis, Maria Repnikova reveals the webs of an uneasy partnership between critical journalists and the state in China. More than merely a passive mouthpiece or a dissident voice, the media in China also plays a critical oversight role, one more frequently associated with liberal democracies than with authoritarian systems. Chinese central officials cautiously endorse media supervision as a feedback mechanism, as journalists carve out space for critical reporting by positioning themselves as aiding the agenda of the central state. Drawing on rare access in the field, Media Politics in China examines the process of guarded improvisation that has defined this volatile partnership over the past decade on a routine basis and in the aftermath of major crisis events. Combined with a comparative analysis of media politics in the Soviet Union and contemporary Russia, the book highlights the distinctiveness of Chinese journalist-state relations, as well as the renewed pressures facing them in the Xi era.

Shooting a Revolution: Visual Media and Warfare in Syria

DONATELLA DELLA RATTA, PLUTO PRESS, 2018

From ISIS propaganda videos to popular regime-backed soap operas and digital activism, the Syrian conflict has been profoundly affected by visual media. But what are the aesthetic, political, and material implications of this disturbing collusion between war and digital culture? Drawing on a decade of ethnographic research conducted in Syria and neighboring countries, Donatella Della Ratta examines here how the networked age shapes contemporary warfare, from conflict on the ground to the performance of violence on the screen. Her findings present a stark parallel to the digital democracy offered by techno-utopians, delving into the dark side of web 2.0 practices, where visual regimes of representation and media production are put in service of modes of destruction. A vivid account of the politics of Syria’s visual media, from commercial television to citizen journalism and Daesh propaganda, Shooting a Revolution offers fascinating insight into the media’s role in transforming conflict zones in the digital age.
We have been fortunate to have outstanding partners during our first five years. With the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS), we organized a workshop on the body in Arab public culture. CARGC has also received two Global Engagement Fund Grants from Penn Global for projects related to global communication. The first, launched in 2014 under the leadership of PARGC and CGCS, was titled “Global Engagement and Mobile Media: Penn Initiatives in International Context.” Specific areas of study included deconstructing the meaning and understanding of “mobile,” studying mobile devices as political media, studying mobile devices as instruments for health, and studying mobile devices as instruments for commerce.

The second project, managed by CARGC in 2017-2018, focuses on helping to fund and organize programs related to Cuban arts, media, and culture at Penn. Events have included an artist talk with Cuban Filmmaker Damián Sainz, presented in cooperation with Americas Media Initiative and CAMRA at Penn, and a screening of Rumba Clave Blen Blen Blen with Aristides Falcón-Paradí, presented with CAMRA, Latin American and Latino Studies, Penn Music, and Africana Studies.

CARGC has been proud to collaborate with departments and institutions at the University of Pennsylvania, the city of Philadelphia, and worldwide. Together with numerous partners, we have sponsored and organized lectures, workshops, film screenings, cultural events, and major conferences. Institutional partners and collaborators include Al Bustan Seeds of Culture, The Social Science Research Council, Temple University, The Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, The Danish Egyptian Dialogue Institute, The Sorbonne, and the Pulitzer Center. We have supported several major conferences at the University of Pennsylvania, including Queer Method (2013), Biocode (2015), and Contested Bodies (2018) and have worked closely with several Penn departments and centers, including Perry World House, the Middle East Center, Africana Studies, Russian and East European Studies, The Andrea Mitchell Center for the Study of Democracy, and the Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law.
CARGC is located on the sixth floor of 3901 Walnut Street on the University of Pennsylvania Campus. The space features large windows displaying views of Penn, West Philadelphia, and Center City; a state-of-the-art conference room for CARGC book talks, colloquia, writing group sessions, meetings, and interviews; and a combination of open workspaces and spacious offices ideally suited for research, writing, and collaboration.
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CHRISTOPHER ALI
“The Digital Life of Small Market Newspapers: Results from a Multi-Method Study”
“The Reluctant Regulator: The Rural Utilities Service and American Rural Broadband Policy” [Poster]
“Thoughts of a Critical Theory of Rural Communication”

YASEMIN Y. CELIKKOL
“The Market of Loyalties in Bulgarian Politics: Political Parties as Distributors of Transnational Ideologies via Freedom of Expression and Hate Speech Discourse”
“Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Post-Ataturk National Identity Reconstruction” [Poster]

YASEMIN Y. CELIKKOL & MARWAN M. KRAIDY
“Neo-Ottoman Cool West: The Drama of Turkish Drama in the Bulgarian Public Sphere”

ZANE COOPER
“Of Dog Kennels, Hard Drives, and Global Contaminations: Toward a Constitutional Logic of Big Data” [Top Paper Award, Philosophy, Theory and Critique Division]

RAYYA EL ZEIN
“This is Lebanon: Narrating Migrant Labor to Resistive Public”

HEATHER JABER
“(De)Constructing the Global: The Ephemeral Queer Arab and the Globalization of Mashrou Leila”

MARWAN M. KRAIDY
“Popular Sovereignty and the Body of the Leader” [Budapest Pre-Conference, Global Perspectives on Populism and the Media]
Closing Keynote Panel [Budapest Pre-Conference, Global Perspectives on Populism and the Media]
“Boycotting Neo-Ottoman Cool: Geopolitics and Popular Media Industries in the Egypt-Turkish Row Over Television Drama”
“Towards a Theory of Projectilic Media: Notes on Islamic State’s Deployment of Fire”
“Corporeal Activism: The Human Body and Communication for Socio-Political Change”
“Islamic State’s Digital Warfare and the Global Media System”

REVATI PRESAD
“Digital Disruption? Journalism Start-Ups in India” [Top Four Paper Award and Top Student Paper Award, Global Communication and Social Change Division]
“An Organized Workforce is Part of Growing Up: Gawker and the Case for Unionizing Digital Newsrooms” [Second Top Student Paper Award, Media Industry Studies Division]
“Legacy as Capital: Examining Digital Journalism Startups in India”

SAMIRA RAJABI
“Instagramming Persian Identity: Ritual Identity Negotiations of Iranians and Persians in/out of Iran”

MARIA REPNIKOVA
“Unpacking Authoritarianism: Challenging National Media Biases through Telling the Stories of Chinese Media Activists”
“State-led Intrapreneurship as a Model for Media Entrepreneurship: The Cases of Pengpai and Other News Apps in China”
PRAGUE

24-28 MAY 2018
The Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania produces and promotes scholarly research on global communication and public life. As an institute for advanced study dedicated to global media studies, we revisit enduring questions and engage pressing matters in geopolitics and communication. Our vision of “inclusive globalization” recognizes plurality and inequality in global media, politics, and culture. Our translocal approach fuses multidisciplinary regional knowledge with theory and methodology in the humanities and social sciences. This synthesis of deep expertise and interdisciplinary inquiry stimulates critical conversations about entrenched and emerging communicative structures, practices, flows, and struggles. We explore new ways of understanding and explaining the world, including public and multi-modal scholarship, algorithmic culture, the arts, and digital archives. With a core commitment to the development of early career scholars worldwide, CARGC hosts postdoctoral, doctoral, undergraduate, and faculty fellows who collaborate in research groups, author CARGC Press publications, and organize talks, lectures, symposia, conferences, and summer institutes.

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