Introduction: Researching the transforming environment of media and communications

Leif Kramp, Nico Carpentier and Andreas Hepp

1 About the book

How do societies and cultures change with the media that are used broadly and intensely by their members? How do individuals, collectives and organisations address, meet or cope with challenges that emerge from these transformations? How do politicians and policies regulate, react to or shape media communications? And how do media, their contents, forms and functions change? How do they stay the same? What role does civil society and the apparently increasing opportunities to participate via digital information and communication technologies have in these processes? Communication and media research is at the forefront of the scholarly attempts to explore how a wide variety of social and cultural processes provide an environment that is deeply intertwined with media and communications. Changes to the latter challenge political systems and policies, but also civil society in its many dimensions and actor constellations. And they concern the changing roles of media production and the audiences that are provided with ever more tools and opportunities to shape media communications by participatory processes, even if they often are more minimalist. This book focuses on the many forms that media communications take while interacting with their environments.

The chapters in this edited volume offer a rare, since versatile, view of these questions as they come from a broad variety of academic cultures that together form and shape European media and communication research. This book can be understood as a distillate of a broad commitment to excellence in research on media and communication, generated in affiliation with the annual European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School, and organised, promoted and invigorated by both junior and senior researchers from all over Europe and beyond. Nevertheless, the book is much more than a reflec-

tion of the intellectual outcome of a summer school and certainly cannot be reduced to conference proceedings: most of the chapters reach significantly beyond the work presented at the Summer School. The book picks up on the underlying idea of promoting the pluralism of theoretical and methodological approaches for the study of contemporary (mediated and mediatized) communication and establishing transnational dialogue(s) with these diverse and often still culturally enclosed approaches. As part of the Researching and Teaching Communication Series, this edited volume occupies a liminal position in the field of academic books as it presents both conceptual insights into ongoing research as well as the results of completed research. "Politics, Civil Society and Participation. Media and Communications in a Transforming Environment" is a thoroughly peer-reviewed book, a result of the collective endeavour of its many editors, who paid particular attention to supporting the six chapters provided by the emerging scholars Sahika Erkonan, Jockum Hildén, Herminder Kaur, Christina Sanko, Eirik Vatnoy and Julia Velkova, all of whom were Summer School participants in 2015.

This edited volume also showcases an innovation within the Researching and Teaching Communication Series, as, for the very first time, chapters authored by Summer School alumni (who attended the Summer School in 2014 or earlier) have been included. This expresses our commitment to connect our more senior alumni more closely to the Summer School. In this particular case, three chapters, authored by Summer School alumni, who submitted their original chapters through a Call for Papers, have been included. These chapters by Sigrid Kannengießer, Julia Roll and Joanna Kędra, Anne Laajalahti, Mélodine Sommier and Panu Uotila show how versatile academic careers and research focuses develop after a Summer School experience.

The first part of the book is structured into four main thematic sections – "Policies and politics of communication", "Civil participation in and through media", "Media representations and usages" and "On methods" – however, most of the chapters published in this volume cut across the disciplines, and consequently reveal not only the richness of contemporary perspectives on media and communication, but at the same time also highlight the growing need for a more thorough theoretical understanding of the analyzed phenomena and clear definitions of theoretical frameworks and concepts.

The six chapters of the first section focus on different perspectives of policies and politics of communication. **Nick Couldry** (LSE) explores future directions for audience studies and asks what particular aspects of the media 'sensorium' are most pressing to investigate right now. **Hannu Nieminen** (U Helsinki) scrutinizes recent issues in European media and communication policy against the principles of citizens' information and communication rights. **Risto Kunelius** (U Tampere) assumes that the notion of hybridity has become an increasingly influential part of the way we think about our societies and asks

what the consequences and lessons are of this ascending "social imaginary" for our debates about free speech. **Jockum Hildén** (U Helsinki) analyzes three paradoxes that are associated with legislative attempts to overcome privacy issues that are connected to data processing activities and the traceability of digital communications. **Herminder Kaur** (Loughborough U) reflects on the struggle of a small cohort of young physically disabled teenagers to resist surveillance of their use of the internet in a special needs school. And **Nico Carpentier** (U Uppsala and Vrije U Brussel) explores the trinity of decidedness, undecidedness and undecidability as important concepts for policing media and communications.

The second section presents seven chapters that centre on the forms and potentials of civil participation in and through the media. **Joanna Kędra**, **Anne Laajalahti**, **Mélodine Sommier** and **Panu Uotila** (all U Jyväskylä) propose a palette of competence areas that are relevant for participation in public media and communications, which would include intercultural communication, interpersonal communication and a basic knowledge of ethics, visual literacy, and source criticism abilities. **Andreas Hepp** (U Bremen) and **Ronald Hitzler** (TU Dortmund) approach the problem to understand how collectivities change through media by considering the way in which the concepts of 'mediatization' and 'individualization' relate to shifts in collectivities, relating this to conceptions of post-traditional communitizations and communities. **Eirik Vatnoy** (U Bergen) argues that a rhetorical approach can give way to a better understanding of the nature of political discourse in the arenas of social media. **Leif Kramp** (U Bremen) introduces a socio-geographical concept of metropolitan journalism, taking into account political, economic and cultural factors and discusses empirical examples from journalism practice in Germany to identify certain patterns of structure-building, news production, news mediation and audience engagement. **Julia Velkova** (Södertörn U) explores the ways in which visual media creators negotiate the choices between multiple technological alternatives offered by software, and the ways in which these negotiations relate to the degree of creative autonomy experienced by cultural producers in their media practice. **Sigrid Kannengießer** (U Bremen) offers a conceptualization of the phenomenon 'consumption-critical media practices' by analyzing examples on the levels of media production, appropriation and content, and by discussing consumption-critical media practices as political participation since they are aimed at shaping and changing society. And **Christina Sanko** (U Bremen) examines the complex relations of communication processes, generations and cultural memory in the socio-cultural setting of North Vietnam by reviewing theoretical concepts of generational and cultural memory, and presents an exemplary case study of a family in Hanoi to describe these relations in terms of memory-related communication repertoires.

In the third section, seven chapters investigate how various forms of media representations and usages can be taken into account when discussing the transforming environments of media and communications: **Julia Roll** (U Weimar) shows how an integration of different disciplines enables new insights into changes in everyday media practices, combining guided interviews, media diaries and sketches of everyday life practices of media users. **Ilija Tomanić Trivundža** (U Ljubljana) analyzes the symbolic meaning of a photographic motif that shows citizens on the barricades in order to differentiate the overall established protest paradigm in social movement literature. **Sahika Erkonan** (Ankara U) argues that the constitutive role of photography within family life and for family memory can be apprehended effectively with the help of ethnographic research techniques, using in-depth interviewing, participant observation and informal conversations, during the very act of looking at photographs. **Tobias Olsson** (Lund U) and **Dino Viscovi** (Linnaeus U) focus on contemporary patterns of access to, and use of, digital applications, analyzing different patterns of ICT access and use among Swedish senior citizens in order to show which services are used during everyday life and with what purpose. **Maria Gutièrrez** (Autonomous U Barcelona) examines the methodological tools designed to investigate the issue of declining younger radio audiences. **Irena Reifová** (Charles U Prague) analyzes how the viewers of the communist-governed Czechoslovak television understood the propagandist television serials during the last two decades of the communist party rule after the Prague Spring in order to show the peculiarities of the research of television viewers' capabilities to remember the meanings and details of events which took place in the past, and thus demonstrates their hermeneutic agency. And **Winfried Pauleit** and **Rasmus Greiner** (both U Bremen) are concerned with the discussion of a political aesthetics of the sound track of film and its ability to shape our understanding of history.

Section Four presents reflections and tangible advice on methods. Taking the perspective of audience research, **Kim Christian Schrøder** (Roskilde U) traces the gradual methodological rapprochement of once hostile methodological paradigms: quantitatively oriented uses-and-gratifications research and qualitatively anchored reception research. Focusing on media ethnography, **Simone Tosoni** (U Sacred Heart Milan) and **Fredrik Stiernstedt** (U Jönköping) present and discuss a practical exercise, based on taking pictures of media practices, texts and technologies in public spaces. Following a practical approach, **Bertrand Cabedoche** (U Stendhal-Grenoble 3) discusses overarching questions of academic communication at international conferences, addressing several stages, from submitting a proposal, the actual presentation, coping with questions, networking and eventually, the successful publication of the presented research work.

The second part of the book contains the abstracts of the doctoral projects of all 40 students that participated in the 2015 Summer School. Throughout the book, a series of photographs taken during the programme are also included. Our special thanks goes to François Heinderyckx and Leif Kramp for the photographic material.

2 The background of the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School

The Summer School was established in the early 1990s by a consortium of ten (Western) European universities, initiated by the Universities of Stendhal-Grenoble 3 (Grenoble, France) and Westminster (UK). From then on, these participating universities have organised annual summer schools for PhD students in the field of media and communication studies, lasting for one or two weeks, and taking place in a wide range of locations, including Grenoble, Lund, Barcelona, London Helsinki, Tartu and Ljubljana. In 2013, the Summer School moved for the first time to the ZeMKI, Centre for Media, Communication and Information Research at the University of Bremen, Germany. In 2015, it took place from 2 to 15 August.

Including the University of Bremen, 22 universities participate in the consortium: Autonomous University of Barcelona (ES), Charles University in Prague (CZ), Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) (HU), Jönköping University (SE), London School of Economics & Political Science (UK), Lund University (SE), University of Ankara (TR), University of Bergen (NO), University of Ljubljana (SI), University of Erfurt (DE), University of Roskilde (DK), University of Sacred Heart Milan (IT), University of Stirling (UK), University of Tampere (FI), University of Tartu (EE), University of Westminster (UK), University on Helsinki (FI), University Stendhal-Grenoble 3 (FR), Vrije Universiteit Brussel (BE), Vytautas Magnus University (VMU) (LT), and Loughborough University (UK). In 2015, the affiliated partner of the programme was again the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA). The Summer School received financial support from the Graduate Center of the University of Bremen and the "Communicative Figurations" research network.

The central goals of the Summer School are:
a. to provide innovative mutual support for doctoral studies in the field of media and communication, with additional support of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA),
b. to stimulate bilateral and multilateral cooperation between consortium partner universities in the areas of doctoral studies, teaching and research,

c.   to provide a forum for critical dialogue between academics on the cultural and technological challenges posed by media globalization and convergence, focusing on socio-political as well as the cultural implications of these challenges,

d.   to promote a respectful but critical dialogue between academic researchers and representatives of civilian society, the media industry and government institutions.

The Summer School follows a number of principles, of which student-orientation is the most important one. The PhD projects of the participating students are at the centre of the Summer School, and its main aim is to enhance the academic quality of each individual project. In contrast to many other summer schools, the main task of the instructional staff is not to lecture, but to provide support to the participants in their PhD trajectories.

The Summer School provides this support through structured, high-quality and multi-voiced feedback on the work of each individual PhD student, combined with numerous opportunities for informal dialogues. The feedback consists of a series of extensively elaborated analyses of the strengths and weaknesses of the PhD projects, which allow PhD students to structurally improve the quality of their academic work. Although the feedback is provided by experts in the field of media and communication studies, these authoritative voices never become authoritarian, and the autonomy of the participants is never ignored. Moreover, feedback is always multi-voiced: different lecturers and participants contribute to the analysis of each individual PhD project, enhancing the richness of the feedback and allowing a diversity of perspectives to become articulated.

The Summer School combines a constructive-supportive nature with a critical perspective. During the feedback sessions, the evaluation consists of a balanced overview of the qualities and problems of a doctoral research and publication project, in combination with the options that can be used to overcome these problems. Moreover, the workshops and the lectures are aimed to support the future academic careers of the participants by allowing them to acquire very necessary academic and self-management skills. The atmosphere of the Summer School is fundamentally non-competitive, as the talents of all participants will be acknowledged, and participants and lecturers act as peers, cherishing academic collegiality and collaborative work.

The Summer School also expresses the utmost respect for academic diversity. We recognize the existence of a plurality of schools, approaches, theories, paradigms, methods, and cultures in academia, which makes the Summer School predestined for conversation and dialogue, and not for conversion and conflict. Its commitment to diversity in approaches can only be made possible through an equally strong commitment to academic rigour, thoroughness, responsibility, honesty and quality.

Finally, the Summer School aims to stimulate connectedness. First of all, the Summer School is aimed at the building of long-term academic networks, enabling future collaborations at the international/European level. We recognize the necessary nature of intellectual exchange for academia and the importance of transcending frontiers. But the Summer School also wants to remain respectful towards the localized context in which it operates, at the urban and national level of the hosting city, avoiding disconnections with civilian society, business and the State.

In order to achieve these principles, the fourteen-day 2015 Summer School was based on a combination of lectures, training workshops, student-workshops and working visits. The core format of the Summer School is based on the so-called feedback-workshops, which are oriented towards providing the doctoral students with the structured, high-quality and multi-voiced feedback mentioned above. For this purpose, the following specific procedure was used: After their application is approved, the participating doctoral students upload their 10-page papers onto the intranet of the Summer School website. On the basis of the papers, the doctoral students are then divided into three groups ('flows'), and each student is attributed a lecturer-respondent and a fellow participant-respondent. Moreover, a so-called 'flow-manager' (a member of the academic Summer School staff) is also attributed to each of the flows. These flow-managers coordinate the activities of the feedback-workshop flows for the entire duration of the Summer School.

During the feedback-workshops, each doctoral student presents his or her project, which is then commented upon by the fellow participant-respondent, the lecturer-respondent and the flow-manager, and finally discussed by all participants. At the end of the series of feedback-workshops, a joint workshop is organised, in which the diversity of paradigmatic, theoretical and methodological approaches is discussed, combined with the intellectual lessons learned at the Summer School.

In addition, the training workshops are a crucial pedagogical tool for the Summer School. These workshops provide the doctoral students with practical training on issues related to making posters, publishing, abstract-writing, comparative research, literature review, oral presentation skills, communication of scientific topics to lay audiences, interactive teaching to larger groups, interrogating sources, and creative online writing. They are combined with a number of lectures which aim to deal with specific content, focussing on specific theories or concepts. Finally, the field excursions give the participants more insights into Germany's media structures, politics, cultures and histories.

3　The scholars involved in the Summer School

In 2015, 40 doctoral students participated in the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School, originating from 22 countries: Australia (1), Belgium (2), Croatia (1), Czech Republic (1), Denmark (1), Estonia (1), Finland (2), France (2), Germany (3), Italy (2), Ireland (1), the Netherlands (1), Cyprus (1), Norway (2), Portugal (2), Singapore (1), Slovakia (1), Slovenia (1), Spain (1), Sweden (6), Turkey (1), and the United Kingdom (6). All of their abstracts, and a selection of six chapters based on their work, are included in this book.

The blue flow consisted of Mostafa Abdel Salam, Tania Lucia Cobos, Sanchari De, Karel Deneckere, Jockum Hildén, Marju Himma-Kadakas, Eirik Nymark Esperås, Magdalena Ploch, Patrick Readshaw, Eirik Vatnøy, Milica Vuckovic, Dawn Wheatley and Abdulsamad Zangana.

The yellow flow was joined by Johanna Arnesson, Stefan Baack, Raul Ferrer Conill, Barbara Dupont, Martin Durko, Sahika Erkonan, Ashwini Falnikar, Guylaine Gueraud-Pinet, Susanna de Guio, Herminder Kaur, Fatma Nazlı Köksal, Tereza Krobova, Gusav Persson and Simona Venditti.

The green flow grouped Shuhan Chen, Susana de Salazar Casanova, Milda Cellesiute, Juliet Fox, Eline Huiberts, Nur Ishak, Yi Liu, Rita Mourão, Banafsheh Ranji, Christina Sanko, Julia Velkova, Dina Vozab and Shijin Zhao.

The Summer School hosted 20 permanent lecturers from the partner universities from all over Europe: Bertrand Cabedoche, Nick Couldry, Nico Carpentier, Maria Gutièrrez, François Heinderyckx, Maria Heller, Andreas Hepp, Richard Kilborn, Risto Kunelius, Anthony McNicholas, Ole Mjös, Hannu Nieminen, Irena Reifová, Tobias Olsson, Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Kim Christian Schrøder, Fredrik Stiernstedt, Burcu Sümer, Ilija Tomanić Trivundža, and Simone Tosoni. Furthermore, Winfried Pauleit and Rasmus Greiner from the University of Bremen contributed an additional lecture.

In addition to the activities of the Summer School lecturers, the programme included a study field trip to the headquarter of ARD Aktuell, the news organisation behind the leading German TV newscasts "Tagesschau" and "Tagesthemen" and several other public news programmes in Hamburg. The focus of the visit was on the current challenges for mass media institutions that need to adapt to the transforming media environment, and are thus confronted with increased media criticism by audiences. The conceptual idea of this initiative was also to build a bridge between doctoral research and media practice.

Once again this year, Andreas Hepp was the local director of the Summer School, and Leif Kramp the local organiser. Both were supported by the international director Nico Carpentier. In addition, François Heinderyckx acted

as the ECREA liaison. Hannu Nieminen, Nico Carpentier, Richard Kilborn, Risto Kunelius, Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, and Tobias Olsson acted as the Summer School's flow-managers.

4   Assessment and perspectives

The evaluation was conducted in the form of a workshop including a half-standardized, anonymous survey. All participants completed an evaluation form to rate, and comment on, the lectures and workshops held during the two weeks of the Summer School. Additionally, the participants formed four evaluation groups and discussed feedback on: lectures, workshops and student-workshops; individual discussions with lecturers, discussions and networking opportunities with other students; the scheduling of the programme, composition of the programme; accommodation, food and coffee (during breaks); visits in Bremen, social activities; website, pre-summer school communication, the Summer School book; and the flow-managers / Summer School staff.

The evaluation generated – as in the years before – very positive feedback and constructive suggestions for further improving some of the conceptual and scheduling aspects for future summer schools: The reputation, experience and teaching qualities of the lecturers present at the Summer School 2015 as well as their approachability was graded by the participants on nearly the same levels as in the two previous years. The average ratings for the lectures and workshops (1 = poor to 5 = very good) were very similar to the year before, with an improvement for the workshops (3.59 points for lectures, compared to 3.6 in 2013 and 3.77 in 2014; 4.12 points for workshops, compared to 3.8 in 2013 and 4.03 in 2014). Also, the Summer School management was given high marks. It was further highly appreciated that the lectures were prepared especially for the Summer School. In the view of the participants, the mixture of workshops and lectures in the Summer School programme was very well-balanced. The interactivity and extended length of workshops (2 hours instead of 1 hour in earlier Summer Schools) was appreciated. In addition, the scholarship programme was also much appreciated. The Summer School will try to continue offering scholarships to cover the travel costs of some participants, thus enabling young researchers to participate in the Summer School who otherwise would not be able to afford it.

The overall positive and encouraging feedback was complemented by numerous comments on the social network platforms that were used together with the Summer School website as complementary discussion and networking instruments. After the Summer School, many participants left positive comments on the website of the Summer School Facebook group, e.g.:

"We all won!" (18.08.2015)

"First of all: Greetings to all!!! I believe we´ve all enjoyed our community in Bremen. But the PhD is a very lonely project... How many of you would like to form something like a PhD working .. motivation group?" (23.08.2015)

"Dear all, I really like it that we have the means to stay in touch with each other like this." (23.08.2015)

"coming back home and spending two hours on SuSo page on facebook... nostalgia of youuuu!" (23.08.2015)

Comments also included information on local follow-up meetings, invitations for research stays at some of the partner universities as well as many plans for joint gatherings at various conferences throughout Europe and beyond.

5   Final acknowledgments

The Summer School is supported by a wide range of individuals and institutions. The consortium partners and the ECREA all provided invaluable support to this long-standing initiative. Over the past years, lecturers and flow managers have invested a lot of energy in lecturing and providing support. The doctoral students themselves have shown a tremendous eagerness, which can only be admired and applauded. The organisers also wish to thank Heide Pawlik from the secretariat of the ZeMKI, Centre for Media, Communication and Information Research, Dr. Diana Ebersberger from the Graduate Centre and Barbara Hasenmüller from the International Office of the University of Bremen, for their strategic and operational support. Additional thanks goes to the "Communicative Figurations" research network. We are also grateful for the smooth cooperation with ARD Aktuell/NDR, especially to Kai Gniffke, editor-in-chief, and Christian Radler, Team Strategy and Innovation.

With its diverse sections and chapters this edited volume shows that politics, civil society and participation offer exiting and promising perspectives for communication and media research: With a – in many aspects – profoundly changing social and cultural environment, media and communications are confronted with unforeseen challenges and demands by the public. We will have to continue to combine efforts to analyze these transformations and gain a deeper understanding of what is ahead of us in its variety and entirety. This is what the Summer School proves year after year: strong European media and communication research is about diversity and creativeness, and about cooperation and networking, especially among young scholars who contribute fresh inquiries to the research discourse. This is what makes the Summer School a unique learning and networking experience, bringing together the less experienced

and the more experienced from all over Europe to promote a constructive dialogue by which new research horizons emerge. To all participants (in many of the Summer School languages): Best wishes! Najbolje želje! Beste wensen! Všechno nejlepší! Parimate soovidega! Toivottaen! Meilleurs voeux! Alles Gute! Auguri! En iyi dileklerimle! Tahniah! Všetko najlepšie! Vse najboljše! ¡Los mejores deseos! Med vänliga hälsningar!

Websites

The European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School
http://www.comsummerschool.org/

The Researching and Teaching Communication Book Series
http://www.researchingcommunication.eu/

The European Communication Research and Education Association
 http://www.ecrea.eu/

The ECREA Young Scholars Network
http://yecrea.eu/

The ZeMKI, Centre for Media, Communication and Information Research
http://www.zemki.uni-bremen.de

The 'Communicative Figurations' research network
http://www.communicative-figurations.org