

The History of Communication Studies across the Americas: An Introduction

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Abstract

This special section investigates the history of communication and media studies across national and linguistic contexts in the Americas. It maps transnational entanglements that have shaped communication inquiry in the multiple forms it has taken in South and North America and the Caribbean. At the same time, the section's articles attend to political, institutional, and cultural dynamics that shaped the field in different national and local contexts. In so doing, the special section throws light on topics and regions that have received little attention in English-language literature, and draws attention to historic lines of hegemony, exclusion, resistance, and alternative traditions of research across the hemisphere. In this editors' introduction, we outline the origins of the collective effort, connect it to

parallel projects in two Latin American journals, and introduce the outstanding essays that follow.

Resumen

Esta sección especial investiga la historia de los estudios sobre comunicación y medios en los diferentes contextos nacionales y/o lingüísticos de las Américas. Para ello, mapea los múltiples enlaces transnacionales que han dado forma a la investigación de la comunicación en sus vertientes norte y sudamericanas, así como en el Caribe. A la vez, los artículos de esta sección prestan atención particularmente a distintos contextos nacionales y locales. De esta manera, esta sección especial nos permite iluminar algunos de los temas y algunas de las regiones que han permanecido oscurecidas por la literatura anglofona, prestando especial atención a las líneas históricas de hegemonía, exclusión y resistencia, así como a las tradiciones de investigación alternativas que se han dado en el hemisferio. En esta introducción a cargo de los editores, señalamos los orígenes de este esfuerzo colectivo, lo conectamos con otros proyectos similares que se han dado en dos revistas latinoamericanas y, finalmente, introducimos los maravillosos ensayos que conforman esta sección especial.

Most of the essays in this special section have their genesis in a South-North collaboration begun in late 2021. Earlier that year, the editors of this journal organized a virtual preconference for the meetings of the International Communication Association (ICA), “Exclusions in the History and Historiography of Communication Studies.”¹ The gathering was of a piece with the journal’s mission to decenter the centers that have traditionally structured the historiography of the fields of media and communication studies—especially around geographical region, language, gender, race, and the legacies of colonialism. The preconference turned out to be one of those pandemic-era events in which limitations—we couldn’t meet in person—afforded new possibilities. Latin Americans and other scholars who would have been unlikely to attend ICA participated in the gathering, and Zoom conferencing made simultaneous Spanish-English interpretation easier to pull off. That event led to a special section of this journal, with essays in Spanish and English.² It also raised the question as to whether it might be productive to investigate the complex, politically fraught history of communication and media studies within the geopolitical context of the Americas writ large. That notion led to a second virtual conference in June 2022, “The History of Communication Studies across the Americas.”³ It was a collaborative effort by three open-access journals published in three different countries: *History of Media Studies* from the US, *MATRIZES* from Brazil, and *Comunicación y Sociedad* from Mexico.⁴ Twenty-two scholars from eleven different countries participated, with simultaneous interpretation in Spanish, Portuguese, and English.⁵

One of the main aims of the conference—and by extension this special section—was to promote communities of inquiry across regions and languages that had not often been in dialogue with one another. Professional associations in the Americas have facilitated some kinds of contact but limited others. As Raúl Fuentes Navarro discusses in his contribution to this special issue, the Asociación Latinoamericana de Investigadores de la Comunicación (ALAIC) has provided forums and created networks that span Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking Latin America. The International Communication Association (ICA) has historically done something similar for scholars from North America and Western Europe who publish in English, even as it has often furthered US hegemony.⁶ Neither of those organizations has historically included the Anglophone (or Francophone) Caribbean in its ken. Additionally, national professional associations, particularly in the larger countries, have exercised their own kinds of centripetal force. The organizers of the 2022 conference asked if “the Americas” might provide a shared, if essentially

¹ “Exclusions in the History and Historiography of Communication Studies/Exclusiones en la Historia e Historiografía de los Estudios de Comunicación,” International Communication Association preconference, May 26–27, 2021, virtual.

² Peter Simonson, David W. Park, and Jefferson Pooley, eds., “Exclusions in the History of Media Studies/Exclusiones en la historia de los estudios de medios,” special section, *History of Media Studies* 2 (2022).

³ “Historia de los Estudios de Comunicación en las Américas/História dos Estudos de Comunicação nas Américas/History of Communication Studies across the Americas,” *History of Media Studies* roundtable, July 12, 2022, virtual.

⁴ The initial incubator for the project was a Spanish-language working group formed at *History of Media Studies* with three advisory board members (Raúl Fuentes Navarro and Claudia Magallanes Blanco of Mexico and Mariano Zarowsky of Argentina) and one of the journal’s editors (Pete Simonson from the US). Fuentes, doyen of the historiography of communication studies in Latin America, proposed and facilitated the collaboration with the other two journals and their editors: Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes, editor of *MATRIZES*, and Gabriela Gómez Rodríguez, editor of *Comunicación y Sociedad*.

⁵ Participants were from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and the US, with simultaneous interpretation by Bárbara Barisch and her Argentinian colleagues.

⁶ Thomas Wiedemann and Michael Meyen, “Internationalization through Americanization: The Expansion of the International Communication Association’s Leadership to the World,” *International Journal of Communication* 10 (2016): 1489–1509.

contested, intellectual space for scholars from national contexts that have typically not been in conversation with one another. Was there interest in trying to develop a multi-layered map of the history of the field that traversed the region, South to North?

This “Americas” project is one of several recent collaborations dedicated to advancing North-South dialogue without erasing intellectual and geopolitical specificity. Several years ago, US and German historians of the field edited volumes with global aspirations.⁷ More recently, an international group of critical scholars, many with ties to the Global South, have turned to history as a way of decolonizing the field and drawing out previously marginalized histories from around the world.⁸ Meanwhile, as the European Union has officially encouraged research collaborations with Latin America and the Caribbean, scholars have built bridges between the regions through collaborations among professional associations. One result was a joint editorial effort by ALAIC and the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA), which published a volume on intellectual traditions of Latin American and European communication studies.⁹ Owing to significant sociocultural and linguistic similarities, there have also been multiple initiatives within Iberoamerican intellectual networks investigating shared histories of communication studies among Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries. Several of these networks have focused on the historical and contemporary gendering of communication research, including FEMICOMI (Análisis de los Roles Femeninos en la Investigación de la Comunicación en Iberoamérica [Analysis of Females’ Roles in Communication Research in Iberoamerica], begun in 2022) and IBERFEMCOM (Red Iberoamericana de Investigación en Comunicación y Feminismo [Iberoamerican Network for Social Justice Research in Communication and Feminism], begun in 2017). Other initiatives have opened complementary spaces for dialogue on the history and present state of communication studies across North-South lines in Iberoamerica.¹⁰

These recent collaborations are set within a contemporary moment of belated reckoning with the structural exclusions, inequalities, and injustices that have helped constitute communication studies. Among the many fronts for the reckoning are the historiographies and collective memories of the field. We have yet to fully acknowledge, much less historically unearth, all the ways that gender, race, language, colonialism, geopolitical location, and institutionally sanctioned privilege have shaped formal and informal accounts of our field’s pasts. Reversing these processes and recovering lost pasts requires multiple methodologies and theoretical frameworks—from feminism and transnational studies to the historical sociology of knowledge, critical race theory, decolonial/postcolonial thought, and other geopoliti-

⁷ Peter Simonson and David W. Park, eds., *The International History of Communication Study* (New York: Routledge, 2016); and Stefanie Averbek-Lietz, ed., *Kommunikationswissenschaft im internationalen Vergleich: Transnationale Perspektiven* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, 2017).

⁸ See, for example, a pair of linked preferences: “Media and Communication Studies in a Global Context: A Critical History,” International Communication Association preconference, Toronto, May 25, 2023; and “Repressed Histories in Communication and Media Studies,” International Communication Association preconference, Gold Coast, Australia, June 20, 2024.

⁹ Fernando Oliveira Paulino et al., eds., *Research Traditions in Dialogue: Communication Studies in Latin America and Europe* (Porto, Portugal: Porto Editora, 2020). For other studies cutting across European and Latin American communication studies, see Sarah Anne Ganter and Félix Ortega, “The Invisibility of Latin American Scholarship in European Media and Communication Studies: Challenges and Opportunities of De-Westernization and Academic Cosmopolitanism,” *International Journal of Communication* 13 (2019); Ana Rayen Dall’Orso, “Investigación de la Comunicación en Iberoamérica: Una Paleta Diversa,” *Cuadernos.info*, no. 53 (2022); and María Elena Rodríguez Benito, María Esther Pérez-Peláez, and Teresa Martín García, “Investigación en Comunicación: Diferencias entre Península Ibérica y América Latina,” *Cuadernos.info*, no. 54 (2023).

¹⁰ See, for example, “Comunicar [en] la Historia: Panorama científico de la Historia de la Comunicación Social en Iberoamérica; Intersecciones y marcos comparados,” AE-IC & AsHis-Com conference, June 17–18, 2021, virtual; and “IV Doctoral AE-IC: Taller iberoamericano de investigación en comunicación,” AE-IC predoctoral conference, Pontevedra, Spain, June 15–16, 2023.

cally informed critique, all of which are represented in this special section's contributions.¹¹

Three Journals in Dialogue

This *History of Media Studies* special section is a companion to rich collections published by *MATRIZES* and *Comunicación y Sociedad* last year.¹² All three special sections have their roots in the 2022 conference on "The History of Communication Studies across the Americas." Like the conference itself, the three-journal collaboration is an enactment in practice of a commitment to multi-lingual, cross-hemispheric cooperation in charting the field's intersecting histories. Widely respected and well-established journals, *MATRIZES* (Brazil) and *Comunicación y Sociedad* (Mexico) are communication studies exemplars of the pioneering Latin American tradition of fee-free open access publishing.¹³ The two journals are models for our own commitments to diamond open access and multi-lingualism—and, crucially, to our mission to ventilate the US provincialism of much English-language historiography. Here we identify shared themes in the two other collections, with the aim to relate those themes to the six papers published here.

The three collections are bound, first, by the participation of Raúl Fuentes Navarro, a leading historian of the field who sits on all three journals' editorial boards. Fuentes Navarro's introductory essay leads off the *Comunicación y Sociedad* special section, which includes three additional contributions, each published in both Spanish and English.¹⁴ The *MATRIZES* issue, introduced by Maria Immacolata Vassallo De Lopes and Fuentes Navarro, contains fourteen essays from a globe-spanning range of contributors.¹⁵ The *MATRIZES* collection has the widest scope: the journal commissioned essays from a number of scholars who had not participated in the 2022 conference, and cast the issue under the broader rubric of "Histórias da internacionalização do campo de estudos da comunicação/Histories of the Internationalization of the Field of Communication Studies." Despite the distinctive scopes, the two special sections touch on a handful of shared themes.

The first is the most complicated to draw out, related as it is to the foundational "Americas" framing of the 2022 conference. The premise, a tentative one by design, was to cast the hemisphere as a space that is both shared and contested. A small number of papers in the *MATRIZES* and *Comunicación y Sociedad* collections set their papers in full hemispheric relief.¹⁶ Only four of the seventeen papers mention the "Americas" at all, however, and one of these, by Mexican press historian Celia del Palacio Montiel, takes up the frame in order

¹¹ This case is made more extensively in Peter Simonson, David W. Park, and Jefferson Pooley, "Exclusions/Exclusiones: The Role for History in the Field's Reckoning," *History of Media Studies* 2 (2022).

¹² Raúl Fuentes Navarro, ed., "Historias de los Estudios de Comunicación en las Américas," special section, *Comunicación y Sociedad* 20 (2023), with essays in Spanish and English; and Maria Immacolata Vassallo de Lopes and Raúl Fuentes Navarro, eds., "Histórias da internacionalização do campo de estudos da comunicação," special issue, *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023), with contributions in Portuguese, Spanish, and English.

¹³ See, for example, Dominique Babini, "Toward a Global Open-Access Scholarly Communications System: A Developing Region Perspective," in *Reassembling Scholarly Communications*, ed. Martin Paul Eve and Jonathan Gray (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2020).

¹⁴ Raúl Fuentes Navarro, "Historias de los estudios de comunicación en las Américas/Histories of Communication Studies in the Americas," *Comunicación y Sociedad* 20 (2023); Jesús Arroyave, "Develando las razones del diálogo asimétrico. Explorando la exclusión en el campo de la comunicación/Unveiling the Reasons for Asymmetrical Dialogue: Exploring Exclusion in the Field of Communication," *Comunicación y Sociedad* 20 (2023); Celia Del Palacio Montiel, "Historia de los estudios de comunicación desde las regiones de América Latina. Las historias conectadas como recurso para el análisis/The History of Communication Studies from Regions of Latin America: Connected Histories as a Resource for the Analysis," *Comunicación y Sociedad* 20 (2023); and Eliseo R. Colón Zayas, "Estudios de comunicación desde el pensamiento caribeño: Contribuciones de Luis Ramiro Beltrán, Frantz Fanon y Stuart Hall sobre desarrollo e identidad cultural/Communication Studies from Caribbean Thought: Contributions of Luis Ramiro Beltrán, Frantz Fanon and Stuart Hall on Development and Cultural Identity," *Comunicación y Sociedad* 20 (2023).

to criticize its application.¹⁷ “Is it possible, even pertinent, to carry out a history of communication studies throughout the Americas?” Palacio Montiel doesn’t rule out the possibility in the future, but worries that a “generalizing project” centered on the hemisphere could render the distinctive characteristics and histories of Latin American communication research invisible.¹⁸ Most of the other articles endorse, if only implicitly, Palacio Montiel’s warning, through their framing choices. They place the Latin American tradition at their center, with other regions—including Europe, the US, and the Global North at large—set in complicated relief. The geographic footprint of the collections centers on Latin America, with a dotted line north to the US, and across the Atlantic to the Iberian peninsula and on to France.¹⁹ Anglophone Canada, Quebec, and the French and Anglophone Caribbean rarely appear.²⁰

There are a number of very good reasons for the two collections’ centering of Latin America. The region is the principal remit of *MATRIZES* and *Comunicación y Sociedad*, and the journals publish in its dominant languages.²¹ Most of the seventeen contributors are based in Latin America, moreover, and all but two of the papers were authored in Spanish or Portuguese.²² Consider, too, that the *MATRIZES* special issue was cast in broad, “internationalization” terms, without foregrounding the “Americas” frame.²³ That was, of course, an editorial decision, and we note, too, the muted uptake of the “Americas” formulation among the papers originating in the 2022 conference.

Thus we want to gesture at a complementary reason, in the spirit of self-reflexivity and with the positionalities of the US editors of this journal foregrounded.²⁴ One theme that animates most of the seventeen articles, in different ways, is the structural inequality that has marked the development and reception of Latin American communication research.²⁵ As noted above, the US does indeed appear in a number of the collections’ essays, including our own. The context of that treatment reflects, in various ways, the US role as colonialist, hemispheric hegemon, and intellectual imperialist. A handful of papers linger on the imposition, in the early postwar decades, of a US model of communication research—quantitative, putatively universalistic, but rooted (often covertly) in the US Cold War project.²⁶ Latin American resistance, in the 1970s and 1980s, to the mainstream US field, including its “modernization” paradigm, is also widely registered across the essays.²⁷ Many papers highlight, too, the growth of homegrown intellectual coordinates, rooted in the region’s specific histories and the field’s creative incorporation of critical European thought.²⁸ This “rich, hybrid tradition” (“rica tradición híbrida”), to borrow Silvio Waisbord’s phrase, flourished alongside the establishment of regional associations and other forms

¹⁵ Maria Immacolata Vassallo De Lopes and Raúl Fuentes Navarro, “Histórias da internacionalização do campo de estudos da comunicação/Histories of the Internationalization of the Field of Communication Studies,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Muniz Sodré, “A ruptura paradigmática da comunicação/A Paradigmatic Rupture in Communication,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Paulo Serra, “O espaço ibero-americano de ciências da comunicação e as epistemologias do Sul/The Ibero-American Space of Communication Sciences and the Epistemologies of the South,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Erick Rolando Torrico Villanueva, “Colonialidade do saber na internacionalização dos estudos sobre comunicação: Abordagem do caso da América Latina,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Francisco Rüdiger, “Adeus à crítica?: passado e presente da teoria e método na pesquisa em comunicação de massa/Farewell to Critique? Past and Present of Theory and Method in Mass Communication Research,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Carlos Sandoval García, “Textos, audiencias y medios de comunicación: La persistencia de las preguntas,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Gustavo Adolfo León-Duarte, “Cruces y límites en la investigación sobre comunicación: El sentido práctico interdisciplinar,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Miquel de Moragas Spà, “Investigar la comunicación: Entre el pasado y la prospectiva,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Delia Crovi Druetta, “Travesía de la comunicación latinoamericana hacia su internacionalización,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Fernando Oliveira Paulino, “América Latina, internacionalização e reciprocidade acadêmica/Latin America, Internationalization, and Academic Reciprocity,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Peter Simonson, Jefferson Pooley, and David Park, “The History of Communication Studies across the Americas: A View from the United States,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Gabriela Rosa Cicalese, “Internacionalización y raíces identitarias de la comunicación en Argentina,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Stefanie Averbek-Lietz, “On (Missing) Links between German, Latin American, and French Mediatization Research: Reflections on Diverse Research Milieus and Their Traditions,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); Eva Da Porta, “La internacionalización de la investigación en comunicación:

of patterned exchange.²⁹ Many contributions, finally, take up the structural perversions—silences and warpings—of the neoliberal “world academic system” with gathering momentum over the last three decades.³⁰ Here again the US is implicated—as a pillar of the Global North formation masquerading as “international,” and as the spear’s tip of English-language hegemony. All the while, from the early postwar decades through to the present, the overwhelming majority of US scholars have remained blissfully oblivious to the work of their Latin American counterparts.

We centered our own *MATRIZES* contribution around this theme, the colonialist mix of US imperialism and indifference in its scholarly relations with Latin America. Our approach was to highlight the unmarked universalism of US historiography, in general and vis-à-vis Latin America. “The urgent task for historians of US communication studies,” we wrote, “is to provincialize and particularize the field as it has developed in that country and situate it within international movements of ideas, institutions, and peoples that have constituted the field globally.”³¹ The *History of Media Studies* journal was founded with similar aims in mind. Thus we organized the 2022 “Across the Americas” conference with the hope that a pan-American frame might underwrite an overdue reckoning with South-North entanglements within the hemisphere. At the same time we registered some worries that such a project could lead to a “new master narrative,” as inadvertently influenced by our position as white, male US scholars.³²

One lesson we take from the *MATRIZES* and *Comunicación y Sociedad* collections is to listen to these worries—to approach any such pan-American historiographical project with humility and in light of the hemisphere’s histories of structural power dynamics and erasures. This means, among other things, foregrounding the distinctive histories of Latin American communication research, with respect, in particular, for a historiography written for and by the region’s scholars. It also means attending to our own positions, and those of the authors in all three collections, in a “global” academic system that remains thoroughly Western, in the face of (largely symbolic) calls for the field’s “de-Westernization.” Another way of saying this is that any history of communication studies in the Americas must also be a historical sociology of academic knowledge, one sensitive, in particular, to epistemological erasures past and ongoing. This is a theme that, fittingly, animates a large number of the *MATRIZES* and *Comunicación y Sociedad* contributions.³³

Algunas notas críticas y una propuesta,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023); and Silvio Waisbord, “¿Cómo enfrentar las desigualdades de la academia global en los estudios de comunicación?: colaboración, crítica y curiosidad,” *MATRIZES* 17, no. 3 (2023). Articles with English-language translation have their English titles included above.

¹⁶ See, for example, Colón Zayas, “Estudios de comunicación desde el pensamiento caribeño”; and Simonson, Pooley, and Park, “The History of Communication Studies across the Americas.”

¹⁷ See Arroyave, “Develando las razones del diálogo asimétrico”; Colón Zayas, “Estudios de comunicación desde el pensamiento caribeño”; Palacio Montiel, “Historia de los estudios de comunicación desde las regiones de América Latina”; and Simonson, Pooley, and Park, “The History of Communication Studies across the Americas.”

¹⁸ Palacio Montiel, “Historia de los estudios de comunicación desde las regiones de América Latina,” 2. The quotations are from the English-language version of the article.

¹⁹ On Spain, Portugal, and France in particular, see Serra, “O espaço iberoamericano de ciências”; Averbeck-Lietz, “On (Missing) Links between German, Latin American, and French Mediatization Research”; Moragas Spà, “Investigar la comunicación”; and Colón Zayas, “Estudios de comunicación desde el pensamiento caribeño.”

²⁰ In the Caribbean context, two important exceptions are Colón Zayas, “Estudios de comunicación desde el pensamiento caribeño”; and Da Porta, “La internacionalización de la investigación en comunicación.”

²¹ That many papers in both journals are translated into English is a reflection of the language’s growing global hegemony in the “internationalized” neoliberal academy—a theme addressed in a number of the collections’ articles.

²² The authors based outside Latin America are Stefanie Averbeck-Lietz (Germany), Miquel de Moragas Spà (Spain), Paul Serra (Portugal), Silvio Waisbord (US), and the authors of this introduction, all based in the US. The two papers authored in English are Averbeck-Lietz, “On (Missing) Links between German, Latin American, and French Mediatization Research”; and Simonson, Pooley, and Park, “The History of Communication Studies across the Americas.”

The Special Section: Entangled Histories across the Americas

Given the multifarious entanglements that inform the history of media and communication studies across the Americas, the articles in this special section chart numerous means by which to describe and consider their topics.

The section begins with Nova Gordon-Bell's history of communication and media studies in the Anglophone Caribbean, a contribution that models how to chart some of the shared and contested spaces and ideas one finds in the North-South conversation, with particular attention to the effects of colonial rule. In her essay, Gordon-Bell takes institutions to be ideological tools for domination and control, a position that seems quite fitting for a region where, as she relates, British colonial rule took knowledge to be something that could only come from the mother country. This approach to knowledge informed the functioning of the University College of the West Indies, which became the University of the West Indies in 1962, concurrent with Jamaican independence. The legacies of this colonial system remain in many ways, but the story that Gordon-Bell shares is one where communication study in the Anglophone Caribbean took inspiration from the Non-Aligned Movement and UNESCO's New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) proposal. Jamaica's Prime Minister Michael Manley took up the Non-Aligned cause, and university education in communication assumed a focus on providing professional training for journalists and other media workers. CARIMAC, the Caribbean Institute of Mass Communication, was set up at the University of the West Indies on the updrafts provided by the political mood of the Non-Aligned movement and of democratic socialism. W. Aggrey Brown, director of CARIMAC from 1979–2002 and media polymath with numerous connections to local media, developed a first-year course for students at CARIMAC. Gordon-Bell compares this course to a Trojan Horse, with its seemingly innocuous title (Communication, Culture, and Caribbean Society) belying its critical bite, with a focus on questions of power, media ownership, and Caribbean identity and politics. Readings included Paolo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Jeremy Tunstall's *The Media Are American*, and the MacBride Report.³⁴ Since the 1970s, global political configurations, local concerns, and the pressures placed on academe have pushed Jamaican communication study away from more critical impulses to accommodate more job-relevant training and North American certification requirements. Gordon-Bell closes by musing on the importance of knowledge generation from the Anglophone Caribbean to center on change.

²³ Vassallo de Lopes and Fuentes Navarro, in their *MATRIZES* introduction, do mention the "Americas" in the context of the 2022 conference. "Histórias da internacionalização do campo de estudos da comunicação," 9.

²⁴ In the prose that follows, "we" refers to the three US editors of *History of Media Studies*—Park, Pooley, and Simonson.

²⁵ See especially Arroyave, "Develando las razones del diálogo asimétrico"; Serra, Paulo. "O espaço ibero-americano de ciências da comunicação e as epistemologias do Sul"; Torrico Villanueva, "Colonialidade do saber na internacionalização dos estudos sobre comunicação"; and Waisbord, "¿Cómo enfrentar las desigualdades de la academia global en los estudios de comunicación?"

²⁶ See Colón Zayas, "Estudios de comunicación desde el pensamiento caribeño," 2–5; Cровi Druetta, "Travesía de la comunicación latinoamericana hacia su internacionalización," 159–62; Torrico Villanueva, "Colonialidade do saber na internacionalização dos estudos sobre comunicação," 65–68; and Simonson, Pooley, and Park, "The History of Communication Studies across the Americas," 196–99.

²⁷ See for example, Arroyave, "Develando las razones del diálogo asimétrico," 10–11; Colón Zayas, "Estudios de comunicación desde el pensamiento caribeño"; Cровi Druetta, "Travesía de la comunicación latinoamericana hacia su internacionalización," 163–64; and Rüdiger, "Adeus à crítica?"

²⁸ See Averbeck-Lietz, "On (Missing) Links between German, Latin American, and French Mediatization Research," 259–62; Rüdiger, "Adeus à crítica?"; and Waisbord, "¿Cómo enfrentar las desigualdades de la academia global en los estudios de comunicación?" 296–99.

²⁹ Waisbord, "¿Cómo enfrentar las desigualdades de la academia global en los estudios de comunicación?" On the history of new associations and patterned exchanges in the 1970s and 1980s, see, for example, Cровi Druetta, "Travesía de la comunicación latinoamericana hacia su internacionalización," 166–67; Moragas Spà, "Investigar la comunicación," 146; and Paulino, "América Latina, internacionalização e reciprocidade acadêmica."

Much as Gordon-Bell positions the Anglophone Caribbean as a focal point for understanding hemispheric and global dynamics of domination and resistance, Yamila Hiram and Santiago Gándara take an individual—the US-born Elizabeth Fox, a pioneering critical political economist of the media—as their subject. They show how Fox’s peregrinations across eleven countries make her an exemplary “transnational figure,” and one who was likely to collaborate with other transnational intellectuals. Hiram and Gándara link all of this to Fox’s intellectual and institution-building legacy. Working from a meta-analysis of Fox’s work, and from semi-structured interviews with Fox herself, the authors provide a revealing portrait of Fox’s emergent focus on topics in media studies that seem to have been prompted by her own border-crossing proclivities. These are apparent in the three moments the authors explore in Fox’s career: from (1) her early studies (when she lived in Bogotá) on media economics and her interventions on behalf of National Communication Policies (NCPs) and the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) to (2) her more reflective and reconceptualizing work in the 1980s (when she lived in Buenos Aires and then Paris), to (3) her most recent work (much of it conducted in Washington, D.C.) on the implementation of health programs. Hiram and Gándara point out that, like many transnational figures and like many women in academe, Fox has suffered from a distinct lack of visibility in both North and South American academic contexts, an injustice that this article may help to redress.

The goal of identifying meaningful strands of intra-hemispheric influence can also be served by interrogating borders themselves, and by holding up borders as generative moments in constructing meaning. Michael Darroch makes borders and bordering behavior central to his article’s consideration of the Canadian and Québécois histories of communication studies, where he asserts that border-crossings (literal and figurative) took on a centrality all their own at moments of the communication field’s development. It is the “frontier imagination” that Darroch identifies at work in the North American media studies context, an imagination within which borders supply us with some of the imaginary substrate that shaped how communication came to be studied. Darroch calls on the ideas and example of noted border-crosser Vilém Flusser—whose own diasporic story found him born in Prague, fleeing to London, moving to Brazil, then back to Europe—for terminology to center the acts of translation, of nomadic thinking, and of dialogue that set this article in motion. Borders and their crossing occupied an important place in the work of Marshall McLuhan and of Harold Innis, and also play an important role in the parallax one finds in the two scholars’ differential uptake in Quebec

³⁰ Arroyave, “Develando las razones del diálogo asimétrico”; Porta, “La internacionalización de la investigación en comunicación,” 277–79; Waisbord, “¿Cómo enfrentar las desigualdades de la academia global en los estudios de comunicación?”

³¹ Simonson, Pooley, and Park, “The History of Communication Studies across the Americas,” 190–91.

³² Simonson, Pooley, and Park, 191.

³³ See, especially, Serra, “O espaço ibero-americano de ciências da comunicação e as epistemologias do Sul,” and also Arroyave, “Develando las razones del diálogo asimétrico,” 13–15; León-Duarte, “Cruces y límites en la investigación sobre comunicación”; and Torrico Villanueva, “Colonialidade do saber na internacionalização dos estudos sobre comunicação,” 59–61.

³⁴ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1972); Jeremy Tunstall, *The Media Are American* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); and International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, *Many Voices, One World: Towards a New, More Just, and More Efficient World Information and Communication Order* (New York: UNESCO, 1980).

and in Anglophone Canada. Darroch then turns to discursive and disciplinary border-crossing at work in the journal *Media Probe*, which would later become the *Canadian Journal of Communication (CJC)*, and at the University of Laval–based journal *Communication Information (CI)*, later titled *Communication, Information, Médias, Théories*. The same productivity of borders can be identified at work in the founding of the Canadian Communication Association. Darroch leaves us with a vivid impression of the possibilities associated with what he calls “multifocal habits of vision,” where the duality often associated with borders is replaced with an appreciation of the humbling layers of multivocality we can retrieve from properly contextualized histories of media studies.

Raúl Fuentes Navarro, as noted above, helped set in motion this special section, as well as its companion collections in *MATRIZes* and *Comunicación y Sociedad*. His article here features a characteristically full-throttled—if also nuanced—institutional perspective on the history of inter-American media and communication studies. He begins with careful stage-setting, noting the historicity of the terminology we use to refer to the Americas, and then links this discursive instability to what he calls “disintegrated internationalism”—a dynamic at work, he writes, in the institutional housings for communication studies across the hemisphere. Fuentes Navarro concentrates our attention on three major Latin America–focused institutions: Centro Internacional de Estudios Superiores de Comunicación para América Latina (CIESPAL), ALAIC, and Federación Latinoamericana de Facultades de Comunicación (FELAFACS). The three institutions acted as agents of the disintegrated internationalism that Fuentes Navarro points to, serving in some ways as conduits for transnational influence while also preserving autochthonous Latin American intellectual tendencies, as well as essential national differences in scholarship across the region. Rejecting a zero-sum model for US–Latin American relations in the context of the history of communication and media studies, Fuentes Navarro avers that we should (following the model and words of Luis Ramiro Beltrán) appreciate the complexity at work in how academic labor comes to be organized, with an avoidance of both dogmatism and of the self-deluding quest for a science “free of values.”

The inter-American connections that Fuentes Navarro brings to life in an institutional framework can also be seen at work on the discursive level. In a translation of a previously-published article, Erick Torrico Villanueva shows how inter-America communication studies has developed discursively, centered on a positivist scientific inquiry that emerged from Western—and in particular US—scholarly traditions.³⁵ This narrow focus on one way of knowing led to “abysmal

³⁵ Erick Rolando Torrico Villanueva, “La comunicación ‘occidental,’” *Oficios Terrestres*, no. 32 (2015).

thinking,” where any other epistemology is positioned as something other than real knowledge. Torrico Villanueva explores how this understanding of knowledge traditions around the world finds expression in communication study in the US, Europe, and in Iberoamerica through a critical review of major textbooks. He finds relatively little in the way of reflexivity concerning intellectual standpoint, and an overwhelming reliance upon the ideas of figures from the US and from Western Europe. Torrico Villanueva concludes that the work before us will require seeing communication and its study through lenses less completely tinged by US and Western European ideas and practices.

The focus on dominant understandings of inter-American relations in the history of media studies cues Afonso de Albuquerque’s carefully calibrated contribution, which applies the idea of *intellectual imperialism* to these transnational relations. Albuquerque begins the special section’s sixth and final entry with an observation that academic interest in cultural imperialism has waned in recent decades—perhaps because cultural imperialism itself has been so thoroughly assimilated across global academic culture. Albuquerque sets cultural imperialism alongside related concepts, notably *media imperialism*—in which media outlets become tools that imperial powers use to assert power over others—and *intellectual imperialism*—where powerful countries impose their own ways of knowing on other countries. Albuquerque describes how academic institutions (including universities, philanthropic organizations, and journals) exert a collective influence on the contours of work (academic and para-academic) that holds up communication scholarship from the US as the model for Latin America. Albuquerque illustrates this mode of intellectual imperialism with a case study of the (University of Texas–based) Knight Center for Journalism in the Americas, especially as the center has operated through the Brazilian organization ABRAJI (Associação Brasileira de Jornalismo Investigativo [Brazilian Investigative Journalism Association]). US models for journalism study, practice, and training, put to work in the political culture of Brazil, contributed powerfully to the destabilization of the country’s politics. Albuquerque’s broader point is the continuing relevance of intellectual imperialism in making sense of the field’s transnational history.

Taken together, these articles make a strong, if qualified, case for “the Americas” as a frame of reference. Without smoothing over patterns of dominance, without sealing off the region from other sources of influence, and without positioning “the Americas” as a stable referent, this special section of *History of Media Studies* gives voice to linguistic, discursive, methodological, and institutional modes of transnational and intra-national influence and stability. The section

does not inaugurate this reflection, but it does pick up strands of scholarly attention and intellectual influence in order to braid them together under the hemispheric rubric. “The Americas,” in essays collected here, stands as a provocation to explore something other than national or global tendencies in the field’s historiography—to consider how these received histories might be re-charted, as it were, from the Southern Cone to points north.

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