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OF COMMUNICATION

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THE CONCISE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
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John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

Editorial Offices

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9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK

The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

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Contents

<i>Contributors</i>	vi
<i>Introduction</i>	xvii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xxi
<i>Lexicon</i>	xxiii
Communication A–Z	1
<i>Index</i>	660

Contributors

Walid A. Afifi, University of Iowa

Iftekhar Ahmed, University of North Texas

Sameer Ahmed, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale
and Dorr LLP

Alan B. Albarran, University of North Texas

Stuart Allan, Cardiff University, UK

Tim Ambler, London Business School

Kay Amert, University of Iowa

Soontae An, Ewha Womans University

Robin Andersen, Fordham University

C. W. Anderson, College of Staten Island
(CUNY)

James A. Anderson, University of Utah

Marc Andrejevic, University of Iowa

Charles Antaki, Loughborough University

Cristiano Antonelli, University of Turin

Osei Appiah, Ohio State University

Paul Arblaster, Zuyd University, Maastricht

Ronald C. Arnett, Duquesne University

Chris Atton, Edinburgh Napier University

Robert K. Avery, University of Utah

Ana Azurmendi, University of Navarra

Beth Babin-Gallagher, Arizona State
University

Christine Bachen, Santa Clara University

Philip M. Backlund, Central Washington
University

Jeremy N. Bailenson, Stanford University

Michael Bailey, University of Essex

Susan C. Baker, Cape Breton University

Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach, University of Southern
California

Albert Bandura, Stanford University

Jo Bardoel, University of Amsterdam and
Radboud University Nijmegen

Brooke Barnett, Elon University

Kevin G. Barnhurst, University of Leeds

Naomi S. Baron, American University

Benjamin J. Bates, University of Tennessee

Leslie A. Baxter, University of Iowa

Geoffrey Baym, University of North Carolina at
Greensboro

Wayne A. Beach, San Diego State University

Bart Beaty, University of Calgary

Martin Becerra, National University of Quilmes

- Lee B. Becker**, University of Georgia
- Johannes W. J. Beentjes**, University of Amsterdam
- Jon Bekken**, Albright College
- George E. Belch**, San Diego State University
- Michael A. Belch**, San Diego State University
- William L. Benoit**, Ohio University
- Gary Bente**, University of Cologne
- Günter Bentele**, University of Leipzig
- Bethan Benwell**, University of Stirling
- Evangelia Berdou**, Institute of Development Studies
- Charles R. Berger**, University of California, Davis
- John Beynon**, University of Glamorgan
- Helena Bilandzic**, University of Augsburg
- Daniel Biltreyst**, Ghent University
- S. Elizabeth Bird**, University of South Florida
- Thomas Birkner**, University of Münster
- Jay David Bolter**, Georgia Institute of Technology
- Heinz Bonfadelli**, University of Zurich
- Melanie Booth-Butterfield**, West Virginia University
- Jérôme Bourdon**, Tel Aviv University
- Nicholas David Bowman**, West Virginia University
- Andy Boyan**, Michigan State University
- Oliver Boyd-Barrett**, Bowling Green State University
- Dale Brashers**,
University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
- Peggy Simcic Brønn**, Norwegian School of Management
- Fred Bronner**, University of Amsterdam
- Hans-Bernd Brosius**, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich
- Jennings Bryant**, University of Alabama
- Richard Buchanan**, Case Western Reserve University
- Warren Buckland**, Oxford Brookes University
- Moniek Buijzen**, Radboud University Nijmegen
- Roland Burkart**, University of Vienna
- Robert Burnett**, Karlstad University
- Brad Bushman**, Ohio State University
- Richard Buttny**, Syracuse University
- Carolyn M. Byerly**, Howard University
- Andrew Calabrese**, University of Colorado at Boulder
- John T. Caldwell**, University of California, Los Angeles
- Daniel J. Canary**, Arizona State University
- Joseph N. Cappella**, University of Pennsylvania
- Donal Carbaugh**, University of Massachusetts-Amherst
- Nico Carpentier**, Free University of Brussels and Charles University in Prague
- Craig E. Carroll**, New York University
- Cynthia Carter**, Cardiff University
- Lisa Cartwright**, University of California, San Diego
- Fred H. Cate**, Indiana University
- Young-Gil Chae**, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies
- Anita Chi-Kwan Lee**, University of Hong Kong
- Jay P. Childers**, University of Kansas
- Lars Thøger Christensen**, Copenhagen Business School
- Clifford G. Christians**, University of Illinois Urbana–Champaign
- Steven E. Clayman**, University of California, Los Angeles
- Richard Clément**, University of Ottawa
- Paul Cobley**, Middlesex University
- David L. Collinson**, Lancaster University Management School

Martin Conboy, University of Sheffield

Caryn A. Conley, New York University

Mike Conway, Indiana University

W. Timothy Coombs, University of Central
Florida

Ann Cooper-Chen, Ohio University

François Cooren, University of Montreal

Joep P. Cornelissen, VU University Amsterdam
and University of Leeds

Robert L. Craig, University of St. Thomas

Robert T. Craig, University of Colorado at Boulder

Diana Crane-Hevre, University of Pennsylvania

Sean Cubitt, Goldsmiths, University of London

William R. Cupach, Illinois State University

Michael Curtin, University of California, Santa
Barbara

John Daly, University of Texas at Austin

Gregor Daschmann, Johannes Gutenberg
University of Mainz

Sandra Davidson,
University of Missouri–Columbia

John Davies, Brigham Young University

James W. Dearing, Michigan State University

Marjan de Bruin, University of the West Indies,
Jamaica

Patrick de Pelsmacker, University of Antwerp
and Ghent University

Emmanuel Derieux, University of Paris II

Mark Deuze, Indiana University Bloomington

Sherry Devereaux Ferguson, University of
Ottawa

Hazel Dicken-Garcia, University of Minnesota

James Price Dillard, Pennsylvania State
University

Gail Dines, Wheelock College, Boston

Marya L. Doerfel, Rutgers University

David Domingo, Université Libre de Bruxelles

Wolfgang Donsbach, Dresden University of
Technology

Johanna Dorer, University of Vienna

John D. H. Downing, Southern Illinois
University

Rob Drew, Saginaw Valley State University

Sharon Dunwoody,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Timothy Edgar, Emerson College

Renee Edwards, Louisiana State University

Mara Einstein, Queens College, City University
of New York

Martin Eisend, European University Viadrina in
Frankfurt (Oder)

Paul Ekblom, University of the Arts London

Lyombe Eko, University of Iowa

C. Michael Elavsky, Pennsylvania State University

Donald G. Ellis, University of Hartford

Richard Leo Enos, Texas Christian University

Franz-Rudolf Esch, EBS University of Business
and Law

Frank Esser, University of Zurich

William P. Eveland, Jr., Ohio State University

David R. Ewoldsen, Ohio State University

Andreas Fahr, University of Fribourg

Anthony L. Fargo, Indiana University

Bob M. Fennis, University of Groningen

Shalom M. Fisch, MediaKidz Research &
Consulting

Martin Fishbein, University of Pennsylvania

Carla L. Fisher, George Mason University

Wes Fondren, Coastal Carolina University

Kirsten Foot, University of Washington

John A. Fortunato, Fordham Graduate School
of Business

Karen A. Foss, University of New Mexico

Jesse Fox, Stanford University

Lawrence R. Frey, University of Colorado
Boulder

Ann Bainbridge Frymier, Miami University

Robert N. Gaines, University of Maryland

Cindy Gallois, University of Queensland

Shiv Ganesh, Massey University

Seeta Peña Gangadharan, Open Technology
Institute

Cecilie Gaziano, Research Solutions, Inc.,
Minneapolis, MN, USA

Katja Gelbrich, Catholic University of
Eichstaett-Ingolstadt

Cherian George, Hong Kong Baptist University

Eytan Gilboa, Bar-Ilan University

Howard Giles, University of California, Santa
Barbara

Rosalind Gill, City University, London

Carroll J. Glynn, Ohio State University

Daena J. Goldsmith, Lewis & Clark College

Dennis S. Gouran, Pennsylvania State
University

Karla K. Gower, University of Alabama

Doris A. Graber, University of Illinois at Chicago

John O. Greene, Purdue University

Kimberly Gregson, Ithaca College

Michael Griffin, Macalester College

Robert J. Griffin, Marquette University

Kristen Grimmer, University of Kansas

Bruce E. Gronbeck, University of Iowa

Jacob Groshek, Boston University

Lawrence Grossberg, University of North
Carolina at Chapel Hill

Laura K. Guerrero, Arizona State University

Barrie Gunter, University of Leicester

Robert A. Hackett, Simon Fraser University

Nina Haferkamp, Independent Scholar

Michael L. Haley, International Communication
Association

Jon Hall, University of Otago

Kirk Hallahan, Colorado State University

Martin Halstuk, Penn State University

Cees Hamelink, University of Amsterdam

Dale Hample, University of Maryland

Thomas Hanitzsch, Ludwig Maximilian
University of Munich

Hans V. Hansen, University of Windsor

Joy L. Hart, University of Louisville

Maren Hartmann, Berlin University of the Arts

Tilo Hartmann, VU University Amsterdam

Jake Harwood, University of Arizona

Uwe Hasebrink, Hans Bredow Institute for
Media Research at the University of
Hamburg

Robert Hassan, University of Melbourne

Richard Hawkins, University of Calgary

Robert Hawkins,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Andrew F. Hayes, Ohio State University

Robert L. Heath, University of Houston

Lorna Heaton, University of Montreal

Radha S. Hegde, New York University

Don Heider, Loyola University Chicago

Heikki Heikkila, University of Tampere

Amanda R. Hemmesch, St. Cloud State University

Alfred Hermida, University of British
Columbia

Susan C. Herring, Indiana University

Douglas Blanks Hindman, Washington State
University

Lindsay H. Hoffman, University of Delaware

Christina Holtz-Bacha, University of
Erlangen-Nuremberg

- Derina Holtzhausen**, Oklahoma State University
- Gregory G. Holyk**, Langer Research Associates
- James M. Honeycutt**, Louisiana State University
- Jan-Christopher Horak**, University of California, Los Angeles
- Edward Horowitz**, Cleveland State University
- Brant Houston**,
University of Illinois Urbana–Champaign
- Chia-Fang (Sandy) Hsu**, University of Wyoming
- Heather E. Hudson**, University of Alaska Anchorage
- Robert Huesca**, Trinity University
- L. Rowell Huesmann**, University of Michigan
- Michael E. Huges**, Ohio State University
- Wendy Hui Kyong Chun**, Brown University
- Craig R. Hullett**,
University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Mary Lee Hummert**, University of Kansas
- Myiah J. Hutchens**, University of Arizona
- Holly R. Hutchins**, University of Houston (retired)
- Cornelia Ilie**, Zayed University, Abu Dhabi
- Yasuhiro Inoue**, Hiroshima City University
- Youichi Ito**, Akita International University
- Shanto Iyengar**, Stanford University
- Matt Jackson**, Pennsylvania State University
- Thomas Jacobson**, Temple University
- Adam Jacobsson**, Stockholm University
- Eva-Maria Jacobsson**, KTH Royal Institute of Technology
- Sue Curry Jansen**, Muhlenberg College
- Sharon E. Jarvis**, University of Texas at Austin
- Per Jauert**, Aarhus University
- Leo W. Jeffres**, Cleveland State University
- Klaus Bruhn Jensen**, University of Copenhagen
- Robert Jensen**, University of Texas at Austin
- Kathryn Jenson White**, University of Oklahoma
- Suneel Jethani**, University of Melbourne
- Carey Jewitt**, University of London
- John Jirik**, Lehigh University
- Susanne M. Jones**, University of Minnesota
- Garth Jowett**, University of Houston
- Joo-Young Jung**, International Christian University
- Richard Kahn**, University of North Dakota
- Lynda Lee Kaid**, University of Florida
- Anja Kalch**, University of Augsburg
- Ali M. Kanson**, University of Texas at San Antonio
- Stuart Jay Kaplan**, Lewis and Clark College
- Tamar Katriel**, University of Haifa
- Patricia Kearney**, California State University, Long Beach
- Patrick Keating**, Trinity University
- William Keith**,
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee
- Kathy Kellermann**, ComCon Kathy Kellermann Communication Consulting
- Douglas Kellner**, University of California, Los Angeles
- Susan Kemper**, University of Kansas
- Hans Mathias Kepplinger**, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz
- Robert L. Kerr**, University of Oklahoma
- Joann Keyton**, North Carolina State University
- Do Kyun Kim**, University of Louisiana Lafayette
- Joohan Kim**, Yonsei University
- Young Yun Kim**, University of Oklahoma
- Paul E. King**, Texas Christian University
- Spiro Kiouisis**, University of Florida

- Jenny Kitzinger**, Cardiff University
- Ullamaija Kivikuru**, University of Helsinki
- Jan Kleinnijenhuis**, Free University Amsterdam
- Wolfgang Kleinwächter**, Aarhus University
- Christoph Klimmt**, Hanover University of Music, Drama, and Media
- Thomas Knieper**, University of Passau
- Leanne K. Knobloch**, University of Illinois
- Silvia Knobloch-Westerwick**, Ohio State University
- Karlynn Kohrs Campbell**, University of Minnesota
- Elly A. Konijn**, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- Emily Zobel Kontos**, Harvard School of Public Health
- Irene Koshick**,
University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
- Marwan M. Kraidy**, University of Pennsylvania
- Klaus Krippendorff**, University of Pennsylvania
- Michael Kunczik**, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz (Emeritus)
- William M. Kunz**, University of Washington Tacoma
- Jacqueline Lambiase**, Texas Christian University
- Claudia Lampert**, Hans-Bredow-Institut, Hamburg
- Richard Leo Lanigan, Jr.**, Southern Illinois University
- Thomas B. Lawrence**, Simon Fraser University
- Anahí Lazarte-Morales**, Our Lady of Grace School
- Eun-Ju Lee**, Seoul National University
- Kwan Min Lee**, University of Southern California
- Tien-Tsung Lee**, University of Kansas
- Dafna Lemish**, Southern Illinois University Carbondale
- Timothy R. Levine**, Korea University
- Han Z. Li**, University of Northern British Columbia
- Xiaoping Li**, China Central Television
- S. Robert Lichter**, George Mason University
- Tae-Seop Lim**,
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee
- Rebecca Ann Lind**, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Rich Ling**, IT University of Copenhagen
- Isaac M. Lipkus**, Duke University School of Nursing
- Sonia Livingstone**, London School of Economics and Political Science
- Wilson Lowrey**, University of Alabama
- Robert J. Lunn**, FocalPoint Analytics, Oxnard, CA
- Philippe J. Maarek**, University of East Paris
- Peter Mack**, Warburg Institute, University of London
- Winston Mano**, University of Westminster
- Robin Mansell**, London School of Economics and Political Science
- Frank Marcinkowski**, University of Münster
- Marie-Louise Mares**,
University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Helen Margetts**, University of Oxford
- Drew Margolin**, Cornell University
- José Marques de Melo**, Methodist University of São Paulo
- Guillermo Mastrini**, University of Buenos Aires
- Dana Mastro**, University of Arizona
- Donald Matheson**, University of Canterbury
- Marcus Maurer**, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz
- Sharon R. Mazzarella**, James Madison University
- Gianpietro Mazzoleni**, University of Milan

Matthew P. McAllister, Pennsylvania State University

Samuel McCormick, San Francisco State University

Liz McFall, Open University

Douglas M. McLeod,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Mark Lawrence McPhail, University of Wisconsin–Whitewater

Denis McQuail, University of Amsterdam

Mary M. Meares, University of Alabama

Jamie Medhurst, Aberystwyth University

Kaitlynn Mendes, De Montfort University

Debra Merskin, University of Oregon

Paul Messaris, University of Pennsylvania

Joshua Meyrowitz, University of New Hampshire

Frank E. Millar, University of Wyoming

Katherine I. Miller, Arizona State University

Peter V. Miller, Northwestern University

Toby Miller, University of Cardiff/Murdoch

Young Min, Korea University

Vijay Mishra, Murdoch University, Perth

Bella Mody, University of Colorado at Boulder

Wiebke Möhring, Hanover University of Applied Sciences and Arts

Peter Monge, University of Southern California

Michael Morgan, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Sherwyn P. Morreale, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Nancy Morris, Temple University

Vincent Mosco, Queen's University, Ontario

Patricia Moy, University of Washington

Marion G. Müller, Jacobs University Bremen

Megan Mullen,
University of Wisconsin–Parkside

Dennis K. Mumby, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Graham Murdock, Loughborough University

Andrew D. Murray, London School of Economics and Political Science

Scott A. Myers, West Virginia University

Graham Mytton, Freelance Consultant and Trainer in Market and Audience Research and Media Governance

Orayb Aref Najjar, Northern Illinois University

Philip M. Napoli, Fordham University

Amy I. Nathanson, Ohio State University

Ian Neath, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Richard Alan Nelson, Louisiana State University

Josef Nerb, Freiburg University of Education

John Nerone,
University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign

W. Russell Neuman, University of Michigan

Julianne H. Newton, University of Oregon

Sik Hung Ng, City University of Hong Kong

Jörg-Uwe Nieland, German Sport University Cologne /University of Duisburg

Matthew C. Nisbet, American University

Seth M. Noar, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Hillel Nossek, College of Management, Academic Studies

Jon F. Nussbaum, Pennsylvania State University

Daniel O'Keefe, Northwestern University

Mary Beth Oliver, Pennsylvania State University

James Owens, University of Illinois at Chicago

Claudia Padovani, University of Padua

Zhongdang Pan,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Stylianos Papathanassopoulos, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

- Shawn J. Parry-Giles**, University of Maryland
- Chris Paterson**, University of Leeds
- Pier Paolo Patrucco**, University of Turin
- Miles L. Patterson**, University of Missouri–St Louis
- Wolfram Peiser**, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich
- Richard M. Perloff**, Cleveland State University
- Laurent Pernot**, University of Strasbourg
- Elizabeth M. Perse**, University of Delaware
- Christina Peter**, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich
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- Thomas Petersen**, Allensbach Institute
- Gary Pettey**, Cleveland State University
- Barbara Pfetsch**, Free University of Berlin
- Dana Polan**, New York University
- John C. Pollock**, College of New Jersey
- Marshall Scott Poole**, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
- Jonathan Potter**, Loughborough University
- Catherine Preston**, University of Kansas
- Frank Priess**, Konrad Adenauer Foundation
- Chris Priestman**, Staffordshire University
- Linda L. Putnam**, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Peter Putnis**, University of Canberra
- Thorsten Quandt**, Westfälische Wilhelms-University Münster
- Francesco Quatraro**, University of Nice
- Marc Raboy**, McGill University
- Lana F. Rakow**, University of North Dakota
- Shoba Ramanadhan**, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
- Arthur A. Raney**, Florida State University
- Juliana Raupp**, Free University of Berlin
- Stephen D. Reese**, University of Texas at Austin
- Leonard Reinecke**, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz
- Carsten Reinemann**, Ludwig Maximilian-University of Munich
- Amy Reynolds**, Louisiana State University
- Nancy Rhodes**, Ohio State University
- Diana Rieger**, University of Cologne
- Andreea Deciu Ritivoi**, Carnegie Mellon University
- Patrick Rössler**, University of Erfurt
- Ulrike Röttger**, University of Münster
- Hernando Rojas**, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Michael E. Roloff**, Northwestern University
- Holger Roschk**, Catholic University of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt
- David R. Roskos-Ewoldsen**, Ohio State University
- Karen Ross**, Northumbria University
- David Rowe**, University of Western Sydney
- Alan M. Rubin**, Kent State University
- Rebecca B. Rubin**, Kent State University
- Georg Ruhrmann**, University of Jena
- Betteke van Ruler**, University of Amsterdam
- Janet B. Ruscher**, Tulane University
- Joseph Russomanno**, Arizona State University
- Marie-Laure Ryan**, Independent scholar
- Roger L. Sadler**, Western Illinois University
- Alyssa A. Samek**, Drake University
- Jakub Samochowiec**, University of Basel
- Wendy Samter**, Bryant University
- Stephanie Lee Sargent Weaver**, Northrop Grumman/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- Amit M. Schejter**, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and Pennsylvania State University
- Helmut Scherer**, Hanover University of Music, Drama, and Media
- Bertram Scheufele**, University of Hohenheim
- Dietram A. Scheufele**, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Daniela Schlütz**, Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media
- Beate Schneider**, Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media
- Steve Schneider**, State University of New York Institute of Technology
- Armin Scholl**, University of Münster
- Barbara Schouten**, University of Amsterdam
- Holger Schramm**, University of Würzburg
- Winfried Schulz**, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg
- Wolfgang Schweiger**, University of Hohenheim
- Glenn Scott**, Elon University
- Chris Segrin**, University of Arizona
- David R. Seibold**, University of California, Santa Barbara
- Holli A. Semetko**, Emory University
- Gianluca Sergi**, University of Nottingham
- Jan Servaes**, City University of Hong Kong
- Masoud Shadnam**, NEOMA Business School
- Dhavan V. Shah**,
University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Hemant Shah**,
University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Donald L. Shaw**, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Kim Bartel Sheehan**, University of Oregon
- John L. Sherry**, Michigan State University
- Mark Shevy**, Northern Michigan University
- Dong Hee Shin**, Sungkyunkwan University
- K. M. Shrivastava**, Indian Institute of Mass Communication
- L. J. Shrum**, HEC Paris
- Nancy Signorielli**, University of Delaware
- Peter Simonson**, University of Colorado at Boulder
- John Sinclair**, University of Melbourne
- Jane B. Singer**, City University London
- Edith Smit**, University of Amsterdam
- Peter B. Smith**, University of Sussex
- Sandi W. Smith**, Michigan State University
- Matthew Soar**, Concordia University
- Braxton Soderman**, University of California, Irvine
- Lawrence Soley**, Marquette University
- Denise Haunani Solomon**, Pennsylvania State University
- Prasun Sonwalkar**, University of the West of England
- Glenn G. Sparks**, Purdue University
- Brian H. Spitzberg**, San Diego State University
- Lee Sproull**, New York University
- Annabelle Sreberny**, University of London
- Don W. Stacks**, University of Miami
- Linda Steiner**, University of Maryland
- Clay Steinman**, Macalester College
- Robert L. Stevenson**, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Charles J. Stewart**, Purdue University
- Rudolf Stöber**, University of Bamberg
- Cynthia Stohl**, University of California, Santa Barbara
- J. Douglas Storey**, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Joseph Straubhaar**, University of Texas at Austin
- Kristina Strödter**, Justus Liebig University
- Jenny Sundén**, Södertörn University
- Richard F. Taflinger**, Washington State University

Damian Tambini, London School of Economics and Political Science

Philip M. Taylor, University of Leeds

Hedwig te Molder, Wageningen University/
University of Twente

Gerard J. Tellis, University of Southern California

Daya Kishan Thussu, University of Westminster

Linda Tickle-Degnen, Tufts University

Stella Ting-Toomey, California State University, Fullerton

Karen Tracy, University of Colorado at Boulder

Sarah J. Tracy, Arizona State University

Michael W. Traugott, University of Michigan

Yariv Tsfati, University of Haifa

Kathleen J. Turner, Davidson College

Kyle James Tusing, University of Arizona

Dagmar C. Unz, University of Applied Sciences Würzburg-Schweinfurt

Patti M. Valkenburg, University of Amsterdam

Elizabeth Van Couvering, London School of Economics and Political Science

Bas van den Putte, University of Amsterdam

Margot van der Goot, University of Amsterdam

Shenja van der Graaf, iMinds-SMIT, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Frans H. van Eemeren, University of Amsterdam & Leiden University

Theo van Leeuwen, University of Technology Sydney

Lyn Van Swol,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Elena Vartanova, Lomonosov Moscow State University

Dejan Verčič, University of Ljubljana

Paul Hendriks Vettheen, Radboud University Nijmegen

K. Viswanath, Harvard University

Susana N. Vittadini Andrés, University of Buenos Aires

Ingrid Volkmer, University of Melbourne

Peter Vorderer, University of Mannheim

Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, Cardiff University

Jennifer H. Waldeck, Chapman University

Kandi L. Walker, University of Louisville

Devin Wallace-Williams, Washington Hospitality Public Charter High School

Joseph B. Walther, Michigan State University

Michaela Wänke, University of Basel

Janet Wasko, University of Oregon

Bernadette Watson, University of Queensland

Ann Weatherall, Victoria University of Wellington

David H. Weaver, Indiana University

James B. Weaver, III, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta

René Weber, University of California, Santa Barbara

Frank Webster, City University London

James G. Webster, Northwestern University

Stefan Wehmeier, University of Greifswald

Gabriel Weimann, University of Haifa

Siegfried Weischenberg, University of Hamburg

Doreen Weisenhaus, University of Hong Kong

Hartmut Wessler, University of Mannheim

Jürgen Wilke, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz

Holley A. Wilkin, Georgia State University

Karin Gwinn Wilkins, University of Texas at Austin

Kenton T. Wilkinson, Texas Tech University

Lars Willnat, Indiana University

Steven R. Wilson, Purdue University
Brian Winston, University of Lincoln
Werner Wirth, University of Zurich
Russ Witcher, Tennessee Tech University
Kim Witte, Michigan State University
Holger Wormer, Dortmund University of
Technology
Dominic Wring, Loughborough University

Jina H. Yoo, University of Missouri–St. Louis
Shuhua Zhou, University of Alabama
Dolf Zillmann, University of Alabama
Astrid Zipfel, Heinrich Heine University of
Düsseldorf
Thomas Zittel, Goethe-University Frankfurt
Theodore E. Zorn, Massey University
Marvin Zuckermann, University of Delaware

Introduction

This *Concise Encyclopedia of Communication* presents an authoritative and up-to-date account of the evidence in the dynamic and interdisciplinary field of communication, written by the best scholars in the field and developed from the highly praised twelve-volume *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, first published in 2008.

Wikipedia or Communipedia? The Value of Authority

Even in academic circles one can often hear the argument that the time of encyclopedias is over. Wikipedia and the search results of Google or Yahoo have it all anyway – and they draw from different sources, thus operating in a more pluralistic way. Indeed, Wikipedia and search engines are exciting steps forward in the documentation and sometimes even the creation of our knowledge about the world. One can look up almost everything on the Internet, and many scholars, including myself, use these tools many times a day, e.g. for learning the meaning of a foreign term, the lifecourse of an important figure, or even the basic content of an unfamiliar theory.

But when it comes to topics that are more important, for one's life or one's work, topics that are crucial or even risky, we must address the question of which source we can rely on – be it with news about important issues or any other kind of knowledge. On the web things look pretty

much alike, often fancy, and presumably 'authoritative'. There is no visual and haptic authority against which they can be judged as there was in the pre-digital world. The print version of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, now itself history, did convey such an aura of the ultimate and best knowledge about everything. But with websites it is often difficult to distinguish the pros from the amateurs, the experts from the activists, or the neutral sources from PR.

This often difficult distinction of sources according to their credibility is of particular relevance when it comes to scientific work. Students who write a thesis on a subject, scholars who want to explore the evidence in a field that is not their own specialty, or the general public looking for practical advice: they all need ascertained evidence, evidence that is the best possible in the respective field, evidence that is not biased by a lack of competence, ideology, or economic interests. In short, they need the evidence that the most knowledgeable people in this area can come up with.

From a systemic point of view it is the core function of science to supply to society this best possible, 'approved' knowledge about an area; in the words of the late German sociologist Niklas Luhmann to apply the code "true/false" to assertions about reality. These assessments enable other subsystems of society to make rational decisions. Looked at from the individual's point of view, scientific knowledge feeds our psychological

control motivation: we want to understand things, explain what has happened and – even more important in practical life – know what *will* happen when we do certain things, make decisions, be it investments or allowing our children to use certain media. Scientific evidence can supply this knowledge, and this is why social systems have always supported professions who supply this knowledge – in earlier times based on narratives that shamans and priests provided, since the Enlightenment predominantly based on systematic evidence as proposed by great scholars like Francis Bacon in the sixteenth and seventeenth century and Auguste Comte in the nineteenth.

Of course, it may happen that what is “true” today can be “wrong” tomorrow. And on many topics there is no such approved, unanimously agreed-upon, evidence but only a provisional consensus, and sometimes not even that, but only a body of hotly debated evidence. But even the documentation of doubts and controversies represents scientific evidence. When scholars agree to disagree, be it on the role of man in climate change or on the effects of violent computer games – as they do in both cases – then at least we can say what we can about the phenomena to the best of our knowledge as of today. Knowledge needs the authority of the best experts in order to give orientation. And this is why an encyclopedia in an academic field like communication still makes sense. We sometimes call the different publications in this overall ICA/Wiley Blackwell project our “Communipedia” – rich and searchable like Wikipedia but with the authority of the scientific community in communication.

The Interplay of People and Organizations

To live up to this standard requires people and organizations. Let me start with the organizations: this encyclopedia is an ICA product. The International Communication Association, with its now almost 4,500 members from some 80 countries, constitutes the backbone of our scientific community. At its conferences and in its publications (many of the flagship journals in the field are ICA journals) it assembles the most up-to-date and relevant communication research worldwide. When we were working towards the

completion of the twelve-volume IEC I started with the ICA divisions, used the expertise and the overview of the division heads to decide about the selection of headwords and of authors. Thus, the authority of ICA as our major scientific organization is transferred to and validates all our different encyclopedias – 2015 will see the start of our new series of about 15 multi-volume sub-disciplinary encyclopedias of communication – and, we hope, these publications will contribute to the authority of ICA.

As some people believe that we don’t need reference works any more (see above) there are also some who think the business of academic publishing has had its day. Having worked now for more than ten years closely with Blackwell (since 2007 part of Wiley Blackwell) I have a clear view on the central functions that publishing companies fulfill even in a digitalized world. Only the professionals at a commercial but academically committed company such as Wiley Blackwell have an expert view of the market and thus of what is needed in a particular field, supply and control the necessary procedures for bringing a publication from idea to print (online and offline), and have the know-how and the resources for marketing, especially when it comes to international markets. This business competence is, though, worthless without a commitment to research and to the processes and standards of good academic work. Academic publishing companies would never be accepted by research community without this commitment. And here, Wiley Blackwell is certainly a special and extremely successful case. Wiley Blackwell publishes 1,400 peer-reviewed journals (and of course thousands of books) in cooperation with no less than 700 academic and professional societies – a clear indication of trust and an acknowledgement of the publisher’s expertise *and* commitment.

If ICA and Wiley Blackwell are the organizational skeleton of this work, the authors and area editors are its flesh, its substance. An encyclopedia can only live up to the standards outlined above if the people who act as gatekeepers, judges of what is relevant to be covered, and who act as reporters on the state-of-the-art of a theory, concept, or problem have the best knowledge of this respective field and the highest academic standards. Indeed, many of those who have played the role of area editor have been presidents of ICA or

regional and national associations, division heads, ICA Fellows, or carried out other functions for which having a bird's-eye view of the field is essential. And those who have contributed as authors are the people whose name the reader will find wherever he or she researches the current literature on the subject; the key people in their area, the scholars who have done major research in their field and often the authors of milestone publications.

It is this interplay of these organizational and individual actors that in the end produces the academic authority of the ICA/Wiley Blackwell encyclopedias, in this case the *Concise Encyclopedia of Communication*. Of course, it also needs a researcher/manager at the helm who knits this all together so that in the end a student anywhere in the world can open the volume or log in to the website through his or her library and be sure of finding the best possible approximation to "truth", i.e. an authoritative and up-to-date account of the evidence on the subject he or she is looking for.

The Difficult Field of Communication

Robert Craig starts the entry "Communication as a Field and Discipline" in this Encyclopedia with the sentence: "The modern field of communication is highly diverse in methods, theories, and objects of study." Several intellectual traditions from the humanities and social sciences inform our field, and as a consequence, communication is anything but clearly defined – within countries and even more so between countries. What one encounters when starting as a student in a bachelor's or master's program in "communication", or when investigating the research fields of a department with this name depends very much on the tradition and location of the department and on the people running it. Different objects, different epistemologies, different theories, and different methods – the field is still struggling with its identity and many from outside question that it ever had one in the first place. The fact that this problematic field has grown in the last half century like almost no other discipline is the best argument against its critics. Obviously, there is a strong demand for the evidence that it can supply.

We have sought to represent the diversity of the field in this encyclopedia. As there are, for some matters, contending camps challenging each other's methods and/or evidence, not every colleague will be happy about the selection of headwords and authors or the way a subject is covered. But this reference work does not exist to make scholars happy: rather it aims to give students and other interested readers the best possible, neutral account of research. The fact that reference works and handbooks have become popular in the field of communication shows that it has, despite its problematic identity and existing disputes, reached a certain maturity, something that was not there a few decades ago.

How We Have Proceeded

This single-volume *Concise Encyclopedia of Communication* (CEC) builds on the twelve-volume *International Encyclopedia of Communication* (IEC), published in 2008. The original printed version of the IEC had 1,339 entries ranging from less than 1,000 to more than 6,000 words. Converting the IEC into the CEC meant primarily three tasks: (1) selecting headwords, (2) abridging the corresponding entries, and (3) updating their content.

As a first step the editor went back to the area editors of the IEC and asked them to name the 50 percent of headwords they deemed the most important in their area and which, therefore, they would like to see printed in a concise reference work. Most area editors made this decision. In cases where they did not respond the editor stepped in. In addition, some fine-tuning was necessary in order to avoid overlap and give sufficient coherence to the headword system. This resulted in 577 subjects covered by more than 500 authors, about 43 percent of the subjects covered in the IEC.

As the publisher imposed a word limit for the overall volume, the next step required assigning a maximum word count to each entry. We have used three length categories for the CEC entries: 400, 800, and 1,300 words, adding up to close to 400,000 words of text for the entries for the whole volume. Again, these decisions had to be made against criteria of relevance and coherence.

We contacted all authors of the entries that we kept for the CEC and asked them to abridge their original text to the assigned length and to update. As it could be anticipated that not every author would have the time or motivation to do so, the editor also offered to do this for him or her. This

happened in one out of four cases. Thus, what the reader finds here is another product of a major part of the international scientific community in the field of communication.

Wolfgang Donsbach, Editor

Acknowledgments

The editor of an academic reference work certainly needs a profound overview, more a generalist than a specialist perspective on the field, and I can only hope that my talents sufficed for this. But, at least as much, the editor needs managerial skills, because such a work is anything but a one-man show. As I have indicated in the Introduction, this book is the joint product of the whole scientific community of communication – and in this definition I explicitly include people whose job is not to do research themselves but who have, in very different functions, contributed to the content.

My first thanks go to the more than 500 *authors* who have already contributed to the *International Encyclopedia of Communication* (IEC), the great majority of whom volunteered to abridge and update their entries for this concise edition (CEC). We all know that contributing to reference works is not the prime publishing task of academics today, but the majority of our authors already had such a high reputation that they could afford to let the next peer-reviewed journal article wait a while...

Almost all of the authors and the headwords of the entries they contributed were picked by the 30 *area editors* who already were the editorial backbone of the IEC. And I should not forget to thank the two Advisory Editors of the IEC, *Jennings Bryant* and *Robert T. Craig*, for their continuous stewardship in this whole project of ICA–Wiley Blackwell encyclopedias.

Over the ten years that we have cooperated, *Elizabeth P. Swayze*, Senior Editor for Communication and Media Studies at Wiley, and I have developed not only a fruitful and effective working relationship but a deep personal friendship, both built on trust, reliability, and mutual appreciation of our competencies. For this project, two other people at the Wiley office in Malden, Massachusetts, kept us on track and always gave excellent advice: *Julia Kirk*, Senior Project Editor for our field, and *Tiffany Mok*, in charge of all major reference works. On a side-note: when we started the IEC many years ago, Tiffany was an intern – she has built a remarkable career since then.

My closest ally at the Dresden office has been *Anne Hennig*, a graduate student in communication, who has probably been the only person who has always had a complete overview of where we were in the editorial process, of which authors were lagging behind, or where the editor himself had dropped the ball. Six weeks after we had sent all entries to the publisher, Anne gave birth to twins, another pressure on the whole project that forced us to keep to the timeline. *Anja Obermüller*, a junior lecturer at our department, as well as *Isabelle Freiling*, *Johanna Haupt* and *Sonia Robak*, research assistants, helped with proof-reading.

What we had to proof-read had gone through the hands of *Felicity Marsh* in the UK who organized copy-editing and *Alec McAulay* who did most of this job – in an amazingly fast and thorough manner. Thus, the CEC is not only

‘international’ in terms of its authors but also its whole production team.

Last but not least I would like to express my gratitude to a handful of people who did not directly contribute but made my contribution possible. My secretary *Katrin Presberger* competently organized my professional life in critical periods, and all the other *colleagues at the Institute of Media and Communication* at Technische Universität Dresden had to make up for contributions that, at times, I could not give. My closest friend and

estimable colleague *Thomas E. Patterson*, professor at Harvard University’s Shorenstein Center has, as always, given a major intellectual input into everything I do, academically and in life in general.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my wife Eva and our now teenage son Tom who both had, once again after the ‘IEC times’, to live with a diminished family life...

Wolfgang Donsbach
Dresden, October 2014

Lexicon

A

Accountability of the Media
Accounting Research
Acculturation Processes and Communication
Action Assembly Theory
Advertisement Campaign Management
Advertising
Advertising, Cross-Cultural
Advertising, Economics of
Advertising Effectiveness
Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of
Advertising: Global Industry
Advertising, History of
Advertising Law and Regulations
Advertising as Persuasion
Advertising: Responses across the Life-Span
Advertising Strategies
Advocacy Journalism
Affective Disposition Theories
Affects and Media Exposure
Africa: Media Systems
Age Identity and Communication
Agenda Building
Agenda-Setting Effects
Aging and Message Production and Processing
Alternative Journalism
Anime
Applied Communication Research
Appraisal Theory
Arab Satellite TV News
Archiving of Internet Content

Art as Communication
Asia: Media Systems
Attending to the Mass Media
Attitude–Behavior Consistency
Attitudes
Audience Research
Audience Segmentation
Audiences, Female
Australia: Media System

B

Bad News in Medicine, Communicating
BBC
BBC World Service
Behavioral Norms: Perception through the Media
Bi- and Multilingualism
Bias in the News
Bollywood
Book
Branding
Brands
Broadcast Journalism
Broadcast Talk

C

Cable Television
Canada: Media System
Caricature
Censorship
Censorship, History of

- Change Management and Communication
 China Central Television, Foreign Language Program of
 China: Media System
 Cinema
 Cinematography
 Citizen Journalism
 Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction
 Climate of Opinion
 CNN
 Code
 Code as Law
 Cognitive Dissonance Theory
 Cognitive Science
 Commercialization: Impact on Media Content
 Commodification of the Media
 Communication Accommodation Theory
 Communication Apprehension
 Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques
 Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety
 Communication: Definitions and Concepts
 Communication as a Field and Discipline
 Communication: History of the Idea
 Communication Inequalities
 Communication and Law
 Communication Law and Policy: Africa
 Communication Law and Policy: Asia
 Communication Law and Policy: Europe
 Communication Law and Policy: Middle East
 Communication Law and Policy: North America
 Communication Law and Policy: South America
 Communication Management
 Communication and Media Studies, History of
 Communication Networks
 Communication Skill Acquisition
 Communication Skills across the Life-Span
 Communication and Social Change: Research Methods
 Communication Technology and Democracy
 Communication Technology and Development
 Communication Technology Standards
 Communicology
 Community Media
 Compliance Gaining
 Computer Games and Child Development
 Computer–User Interaction
 Concentration in Media Systems
 Consensus-Oriented Public Relations
 Construction of Reality through the News
 Consumer Culture
 Consumers in Media Markets
 Content Analysis, Qualitative
 Content Analysis, Quantitative
 Conversation Analysis
 Co-Orientation Model of Public Relations
 Copyright
 Corporate Communication
 Corporate and Organizational Identity
 Corporate Reputation
 Correlation Analysis
 Crime and Communication Technology
 Crisis Communication
 Critical Theory
 Cross-Media Marketing
 Cross-Media Production
 Cultivation Effects
 Cultural Imperialism Theories
 Cultural Patterns and Communication
 Cultural Products as Tradable Services
 Cultural Studies
 Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on
 Culture: Definitions and Concepts
 Culture Industries
 Cyberfeminism
 Cybernetics
- D**
- Deception Detection Accuracy
 Decision-Making Processes in Organizations
 Deliberativeness in Political Communication
 Delphi Studies
 Design
 Determination Theory in Public Relations
 Development Communication
 Development Communication Campaigns
 Development Discourse
 Development Institutions
 Development Journalism
 Developmental Communication
 Diffusion of Information and Innovation
 Digital Divide
 Digital Imagery
 Digital Media, History of
 Discourse
 Discourse Analysis
 Discourse Comprehension
 Discursive Psychology
 Disney

Diversification of Media Markets
Domestication of Technology

E

E-Democracy
Educational Communication
Educational Media
Educational Media Content
Educational Television, Children's Responses to
E-Government
Elaboration Likelihood Model
Election Campaign Communication
Election Surveys
Electronic Mail
Emotion and Communication in Organizations
Emotional Arousal Theory
Encoding–Decoding
Entertainment Content and Reality Perception
Environment and Social Interaction
Environmental Communication
Escapism
Ethics in Journalism
Ethnic Journalism
Ethnic Media and their Influence
Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication
Ethnography of Communication
European Union: Communication Law
Excitation and Arousal
Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of
Expectancy Violation
Experiment, Field
Experiment, Laboratory
Exposure to Communication Content
Exposure to Print Media
Exposure to Radio
Exposure to Television
Exposure to the Internet
Extended Parallel Process Model
Extra-Media Data

F

Facebook
Fear Induction through Media Content
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
Feminist and Gender Studies
Feminist Media
Feminist Media Studies, Transnational
Feminization of Media Content
Fiction
Field Research

Film Genres
Film Production
Film Theory
Financial Communication
Flow Theory
Framing Effects
Framing of the News
France: Media System
Freedom of Communication
Freedom of Information
Freedom of the Press, Concept of

G

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies
Gender and Discourse
Gender and Journalism
Gender: Representation in the Media
Genre
Germany: Media System
Girl Culture
Globalization of the Media
Globalization of Organizations
Globalization Theories
Goals, Cognitive Aspects of
Goals, Social Aspects of
Graphic Design
Grounded Theory
Group Communication
Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of

H

Health Campaigns, Communication in
Health Communication
Health Communication and the Internet
Health Literacy
Hermeneutics
Historic Key Events and the Media
Hollywood

I

Iconography
Identities and Discourse
Image Restoration Theory
Imagined Interactions
India: Media System
Information
Information and Communication Technology, Economics of

Information Literacy
Information Processing
Information Processing: Self-Concept
Information Seeking
Information Society
Informational Utility
Infotainment
Ingratiation and Affinity Seeking
Institutional Theory
Instructional Television
Integrated Marketing Communications
Intellectual Property Law
Interaction
Interactivity, Concept of
Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework
Intercultural and Intergroup Communication
Intergenerational Communication
Intergroup Accommodative Processes
Intergroup Communication and Discursive Psychology
Intergroup Contact and Communication
Intergroup Reconciliation, Processes of
Intermediality
International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)
International Communication
International Communication Agencies
International Communication Association (ICA)
International News Reporting
International Radio
International Television
Internet: International Regulation
Internet Law and Regulation
Internet News
Internet and Popular Culture
Interorganizational Communication
Interpersonal Attraction
Interpersonal Communication
Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills
Interpersonal Communication, Sex and Gender Differences in
Interpersonal Conflict
Interpretive Journalism
Interview, Qualitative
Interview, Standardized
Involvement with Media Content
Issue Management
Issue Management in Politics

J

Japan: Media System
Journalism
Journalism Education
Journalism, History of
Journalism: Legal Situation
Journalists, Credibility of
Journalists' Role Perception

K

Knowledge Gap Effects
Knowledge Management

L

Language and the Internet
Language and Social Interaction
Latin America: Media Systems
Latitude of Acceptance
Leadership in Organizations
Learning and Communication
Linguistic Pragmatics
Linguistics
Listening
Longitudinal Analysis

M

Marital Communication
Marketing
Marketing: Communication Tools
Markets of the Media
Masculinity and Media
Meaning
Measurement Theory
Media
Media Conglomerates
Media Content and Social Networks
Media Diplomacy
Media Ecology
Media Economics
Media Effects
Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects
Media Effects, History of
Media Effects, Strength of
Media Equation Theory
Media Events and Pseudo-Events
Media and Group Representations
Media History

Media Literacy
 Media Messages and Family Communication
 Media and Perceptions of Reality
 Media Performance
 Media Planning
 Media Production and Content
 Media System Dependency Theory
 Media Use and Child Development
 Media Use, International Comparison of
 Media Use across the Life-Span
 Media Use by Social Variable
 Mediated Populism
 Mediated Social Interaction
 Mediated Terrorism
 Mediatization of Politics
 Medium Theory
 Memory
 Message Discrimination
 Message Production
 Meta-Analysis
 Metadiscourse
 Metaphor
 Mexico: Media System
 Minority Journalism
 Mobility, Technology for
 Models of Communication
 Modernity
 Mood Management
 Music Industry

N

Narrative News Story
 Negotiation and Bargaining
 Network Organizations through Communication
 Technology
 Neutrality
 New World Information and Communication
 Order (NWICO)
 News
 News Agencies, History of
 News Corporation
 News Cycles
 News Factors
 News Ideologies
 News Processing across the Life-Span
 News Routines
 News Sources
 News Story
 News Values

Newspaper, History of
 Newspaper, Visual Design of
 Nonverbal Communication and Culture

O

Objectivity in Reporting
 Observation
 Online Journalism
 Online Media
 Online Research
 Open Source
 Operationalization
 Opinion Leader
 Organization–Public Relationships
 Organizational Change Processes
 Organizational Communication
 Organizational Communication: Critical
 Approaches
 Organizational Communication: Postmodern
 Approaches
 Organizational Conflict
 Organizational Culture
 Organizational Image
 Organizations, Cultural Diversity in

P

Parasocial Interactions and Relationships
 Parental Mediation Strategies
 Participatory Action Research
 Participatory Communication
 Pedagogy, Communication in
 Perceived Reality as a Social Process
 Perception
 Personal Communication by CMC
 Personality and Exposure to Communication
 Persuasion
 Phenomenology
 Photography
 Photojournalism
 Physiological Measurement
 Planned Behavior, Theory of
 Planned Social Change through Communication
 Pluralistic Ignorance
 Pluralistic Ignorance and Ideological Biases
 Politainment
 Politeness Theory
 Political Advertising
 Political Cognitions
 Political Communication

Political Communication Systems
 Political Economy of the Media
 Political Efficacy
 Political Journalists
 Political Knowledge
 Political Language
 Political Marketing
 Political Media Use
 Political Persuasion
 Political Socialization through the Media
 Popular Communication
 Popular Communication and Social Class
 Popular Music
 Pornography, Feminist Debates on
 Pornography Use across the Life-Span
 Postfeminism
 Postmodernism and Communication
 Power in Intergroup Settings
 Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication
 Presence
 Prevention and Communication
 Priming Theory
 Printing, History of
 Privacy
 Privatization of the Media
 Professionalization of Journalism
 Propaganda
 Propaganda, Visual Communication of
 Propaganda in World War II
 Public Affairs
 Public Broadcasting, History of
 Public Broadcasting Systems
 Public Opinion
 Public Opinion Polling
 Public Relations
 Public Relations Evaluation
 Public Relations: Media Influence
 Public Relations Planning
 Public Sphere

Q

Qualitative Methodology
 Quality of the News
 Quantitative Methodology
 Questions and Questioning

R

Radio for Development
 Radio: Social History

Rapport
 Realism in Film and Photography
 Reality and Media Reality
 Reality TV
 Reasoned Action, Theory of
 Reciprocal Effects
 Regression Analysis
 Relational Control
 Relational Dialectics
 Relational Uncertainty
 Reliability
 Remediation
 Response Rates
 Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion
 Rhetoric and Dialectic
 Rhetoric and Ethics
 Rhetoric and Gender
 Rhetoric, Greek
 Rhetoric and History
 Rhetoric and Language
 Rhetoric and Logic
 Rhetoric and Media Studies
 Rhetoric and Politics
 Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic
 Rhetoric and Race
 Rhetoric, Roman
 Rhetoric and Social Protest
 Rhetorical Criticism
 Rhetorical Studies
 Rhetorics: New Rhetorics
 Risk Communication
 Risk Perceptions
 Russia: Media System

S

Sampling, Random
 Satellite Communication, Global
 Satellite Communication, Regulation of
 Satellite Television
 Schemas
 Science Journalism
 Scripts
 Search Engines
 Segmentation of the Advertising Audience
 Selective Exposure
 Selective Perception and Selective Retention
 Self-Presentation
 Self-Regulation of the Media
 Semiotics
 Sensation Seeking

Sensationalism
 Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media
 Sexism in the Media
 Sexual Violence in the Media
 Sign
 Situation Comedies
 Social Cognitive Theory
 Social Comparison Theory
 Social Conflict and Communication
 Social Exchange
 Social Marketing
 Social Media
 Social Perception
 Social Stereotyping and Communication
 Social Support in Interpersonal Communication
 Sony Corporation
 Source Protection
 Special Effects
 Speech Anxiety
 Speech Communication, History of
 Speech Fluency and Speech Errors
 Spiral of Silence
 Sports and the Media, History of
 Standards of News
 Stimulus–Response Model
 Storytelling and Narration
 Strategic Communication
 Strategic Framing
 Structuralism
 Student Communication Competence
 Survey

T

Tabloidization
 Taste Culture
 Teacher Communication Style
 Teacher Influence and Persuasion
 Technology and Communication
 Televised Debates
 Television Broadcasting, Regulation of
 Television for Development
 Television as Popular Culture
 Television, Social History of

Television, Visual Characteristics of
 Terrorism and Communication Technologies
 Text and Intertextuality
 Third-Person Effects
 Time Warner Inc.
 Transnational Civil Society
 Trust of Publics
 Truth and Media Content
 Twitter
 Two-Step Flow of Communication

U

Uncertainty and Communication
 Uncertainty Management
 Uncertainty Reduction Theory
 UNESCO
 United Kingdom: Media System
 United Nations, Communication Policies of
 United States of America: Media System
 Uses and Gratifications

V

Validity
 Video Games
 Violence against Journalists
 Violence as Media Content
 Violence as Media Content, Effects of
 Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of
 Visual Communication
 Visual Culture
 Visual Representation

W

War Propaganda
 Watergate Scandal
 Web 2.0 and the News
 Women in the Media, Images of
 Women's Communication and Language

Y

Youth Culture