

## Editorial N° 41

We are living in exceptional times. During recent years, Chilean society has experienced an increase in social, political, and cultural demands: the population has rebelled against the profound economic inequality, increasing social vulnerability, as well as persistent gender inequality and human rights abuses. In the midst of this scenario, *Comunicación y Medios* doubled down on its academic mission to participate in the debate and resolution of ongoing conflict.

This new volume carries on this purpose. The first article of our miscellaneous section addresses the case of the *No+AFP!* movement. Salomé Sola-Morales analyzes the intersections between traditional political activism, the uses of digital resources and the circulation of counter-hegemonic media content regarding Chile's private pension system. In a context of worldwide social unrest, in which millions of citizens from Hong Kong to the United States, from Mexico to the Amazon fight against racism, authoritarianism, sex discrimination, cuts to social spending and the impact of extractive industries, Sola-Morales analyzes material that until now has been ignored by field research and helps us to contextually understand contemporary digital activism.

The second article addresses Lenin Moreno's political and discursive campaign. From Perón to Cristina Fernández, including Allende and Castro, political leadership is key to theoretical and applied communication. The article by Byron Andino broadens the range of leaders under scrutiny by analyzing the changes in discourse strategy of the Ecuadorian president, a scarcely-studied leader in contemporary South American politics compared to other leading figures like Chávez, Lula, Kirchner and Bachelet. Andino's work adds local particularities to this analytical corpus on political discourses, practices and imaginaries and allows us to better understand the dynamics between left and right political stances in recent political projects in the region.

The third article is titled "Film as a Producer of Meaning: Cine-Structuralism and Critique". Here, David Oubiña performs a theoretical and historical review of British cine-structuralism and discusses the Peter Wollen hypotheses put forward in his book *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, which was funda-

mental in the constitution of a new perspective of critical analysis in modern cinema.

The fourth article focuses on analyzing the contemporary experience of motherhood and the multiple discourses created on this topic in the contemporary public digital sphere. The work of Ana Luiza de Figueiredo delves into the personal narratives that a group of Brazilian women post on social media. Here there is discussion as to the online practices and discourse regarding varying types of motherhood experiences.

The last article of this miscellaneous section focuses on Spain and how, in such a brief period, it has become an exporter of streaming content, with international hits like "Money Heist" and "Cable Girls". However, said phenomena is not spontaneous: it forms part of a long-term process of audiovisual fiction production for the domestic Spanish market. Based on a gender analysis of the main characters from five historical dramas broadcast on Spanish television in the 2010s, Sandra Lozano discusses the archetypes and stereotypes of said representations.

The monographic of Volume 41 "Latin American Televised Fiction: dimensions and challenges of the 21st century", finely edited by Simone Rocha and Gabriela Borges, offers a regional overview in relation to the global phenomenon of Latin American television series. On behalf of the editorial team at *Comunicación y Medios*, we extend our special thanks to the guest editors and the reviewers for their work participating in the process. As a team we take great pleasure in establishing academic ties and collaborating in research with Brazil, a hub for studies on communication and culture.

Finally, we would like to say a few words on the worldwide health emergency. The Covid-19 pandemic has placed millions of people in quarantine or practicing social distancing, in a climate of uncertainty in all vital areas and with little information as to how to return to a certain "normalcy". The emergency has also uncovered various problems in communication, the media, technology and culture.

There is an increase in demand of all types of digital services. For example, the video game industry has been the most profitable worldwide, surpassing

film and television. The pandemic has triggered a large increase in this sector during 2020, above that forecasted, even in Chile and other emerging markets. Streaming services have also grown, especially those linked to video games, like Twitch and Discord, as well as those that offer series, documentaries, and films. In the latter, Netflix gained almost sixteen million new subscriptions during the pandemic and other regional platforms also grew. The discussion on the scope and nature of this transformation in terms of its domestic/international impact is key to the field of audiovisual research, the political economy of communication and media representations.

However, alongside the glamorous and techno-optimistic stories on the transformation of modes of production and the circulation of audiovisual content, the pandemic has revealed a significant digital gap. In fact, only a small percentage of Latin Americans have access to these digital services today, worsening “real” social economic and cultural inequalities. For example, two-thirds of Chilean citizens do not have credit cards and almost fifteen hundred locations lack any type of access to telecom services. Almost four hundred thousand students cannot access education online. Therefore, neither streaming, nor delivery nor online government services nor televised education programs can serve the population as a whole.

In the midst of the aforementioned material precarities, media that seemed outdated or of incidental interest for certain lines of research in communication have flourished. For example, to monitor those infected with Covid-19 and their close contacts, human beings must be tracked by telephone; the radio and telephones have been used for remote learning in rural communities or those with scarce digital connectivity, and there has been much discussion worldwide on the use of public television to broadcast educational programming.

We have just begun to study some of the phenomena in communication, media, and culture revealed or adversely affected by the pandemic. The difficulty of controlling infection is fertile ground for technological intervention in both social and physical privacy in exchange for better public health. For example, at the publication date of this edition, the Chilean government is currently evaluating how to transfer disaggregated data more accurately than ever be-

fore and the negative effects on the labor market caused by *uberization* has been exposed as an open and infected wound for the economy.

According to international metrics, Chilean media are the least trusted by citizens compared to other media systems around the world. Problems caused by phenomena like infodemic, misinformation or fake news have also increased exponentially despite domestic and international efforts to fact-checking or continuing recommendations on responsible journalistic coverage.

The agenda recently opened in this field is vast and exceeds the space that we have to discuss it in detail. The academic, intellectual, activist, and practitioner community in these research and professional areas face enormous challenges in order to better understand what human beings and communities are experiencing, as well as the changes to come. As a member of such community, *Comunicación y Medios* will contribute to the critical reflection, intellectual rigor, and protection of human rights and freedom of speech.

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