Dear Colleagues,

This “Letter from the Chair” highlights section news and activities on a number of fronts. Regarding our growing digital footprint, we have a new website at citasa.org thanks to our Communications Officer, Apryl Williams. We look forward to adding new items on a regular basis. Any suggestions? Just send us a note at suggestionsforcitasa@gmail.com. In addition, Erin Evans continues to update our CITASA fan page on Facebook and has created an Instagram account. Our thanks go to both of them.

On the publications front, Apryl Williams and I have just finished editing the CITASA annual issue of Information, Communication, & Society. The eight articles going to press now represent much of the exciting work our section presented at the last ASA in San Francisco. The special issue covers a range of themes from breakup distress on social media to big data conundrums. Publication of the special issue is slated for late spring. As we all know, iCS is an important publication venue for our members, so we will be highlighting it in future newsletters.

Also on the publications front, Shelia Cotten, Jeremy Schulz, and I are delighted to announce the first of two volumes in our section-sponsored series Emerald Studies in Media and Communication. Our section began sponsoring the series last year with the support of many CITASA members on our editorial board. Thanks to the support of the CITASA community, the volume Doing and Being Digital: Mediated Childhoods came out at the end of 2014. The volume Politics, Participation, and Production will come out next month. For more information on these volumes or our current call for submissions due March 16th, see emeraldmediastudies.com.
Letter from the Chair (cont’d)

Turning to our section awards, we welcome nominations on behalf of yourself or a colleague for our five section awards recognizing research contributing to the fields of sociology of communication, media, and/or information technology. The awards are: the CITASA William F. Ogburn Career Achievement Award for a sustained body of research, the CITASA Paper Award for an outstanding published paper or book chapter, the CITASA Student Paper Award for a published or unpublished article/paper/book chapter, the CITASA Book Award for an outstanding book, and the CITASA Public Sociology Award for the dissemination of knowledge that advances public understanding or engagement with the sociology of communication, media, and/or information technology. For more information, see the awards tab at citasa.org.

In other section developments, we extend a round of thanks to Erin Evans and the Membership Committee. Erin and Barry Wellman have done a great job adding new members to our roster. Our appreciation also goes to our Nominations Committee (Andrea Tapia, Gina Neff, Rodney Benson, and Christena Nippert-Eng) for putting together a strong slate of candidates for our next election later this year.

Looking ahead a few months to the ASA Annual Meeting in Chicago, don’t miss out on the opportunity to submit your work or attend the Media Sociology Preconference where CITASA is organizing the afternoon plenary panel session. The deadline is March 31st. For more information, see asamediasociology.blogspot.co.uk/.

Also when making your plans to attend ASA in Chicago, mark your calendars for Monday August 24th. This is our section’s day at the 2015 Annual Meeting. CITASA member Patrick Hsieh led our contribution in planning our joint reception with the Children and Youth Section. Thanks to Patrick, Erin, and others on the committee, we have secured an excellent venue for what promises to be an enjoyable evening.

Laura Robinson

CITASA Chair
Assistant Professor, Santa Clara University
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The truth is that right now, we don't have a single smart city. Those cities that are replete with some of the most advanced technologies, notably the Songdo International Business District in South Korea, are not very smart. A basic hypothesis in my work on smart cities has been that as we add intelligence to tools and systems we must enable human intelligence to move as well in order to be part of it (e.g. as in programming). Otherwise we simply fall back onto basic mechanizing, where the machine takes over and our role disappears or is routinized. Mechanizing is fine for a very broad range of activities, but it is to be differentiated from intelligent systems particularly where participation and full use of one's intelligence is a key element, as is the case in smart cities. The key differentiating factor here is interactive digitized domains -- the digitized here matters because of the scale up it enable and the co-presence of diversities this entails.

Why today's smart cities are not smart enough, or plain dumb, is due to many factors. But critical is the fact of too much central control over the digital capacities embedded in buildings and systems; often these central commands remain with the private corporations that sold the technology to the building or city. At its most extreme it has the associated effect of keeping more control in the hands of corporations than ever before.

We need to smart-up the city and its citizens. A key step is to develop distributed systems that function across or are embedded in all the diverse neighborhoods and settings of a city. Some of these should be accessible to residents, others will most likely be under the management of city government and private sub-contractors. A well-working city is a complex but incomplete system, and it is this mix that has enabled cities to outlive many other far more powerful systems --from banks to kingdoms. Such a long life is enabled when the buildings in the city are part of an open system that can be adapted to multiple uses.

One key issue coming out of this is that closing up a city with centralized technical systems, is not the way to make our cities smarter. Here then some of those thoughts.

OPEN-SOURCING THE CITY, NEIGHBORHOOD, AND MORE

I am particularly interested in how digital communication and information technologies can be part of the answer: how a city's people become actors through digitized tools and settings, rather than merely clients of big mass-production technology firms.

Here let me emphasize a feature of electronic interactive domains that remains insufficiently examined: it is that the technical properties of these domains deliver their utility to users through complex ecologies. And these ecologies include a) non-technological variables -- the social, the subjective, the political, variables that characterize users, and b) the particular cultures of use of different actors. When we look at electronic interactive domains as part of these larger ecologies, rather than as a purely technical condition, we make conceptual and empirical room for the broad range of social logics driving users and the diverse cultures of use through which the digital interactive space acquires meaning. Each of these logics and cultures activates an ecology.

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2 I have developed this issue in INTERACTIONS OF THE TECHNICAL AND THE SOCIAL, Information, Communication & Society, DOI:10.1080/1369118X.2012.667912
Senior Scholar Article (cont’d)

These activating features tend to be absent in much of today’s technical deployment in smart city development. In this case technology inputs are akin to infrastructure and are mostly run centrally; this is good for handling specific needs, mostly standardized, that concern both the buildings as such and peoples’ needs.

But it is not enough. We need to find mechanisms for incorporating the multiple types of situated knowledges represented by the many diverse places and people in a city. The simplest and best known example is the pot-hole app developed by Boston’s city government: the driver who hits a pothole presses the app on her phone. Collectively, all pot-hole hitting drivers bring a level of detailed knowledge about the matter no government functionary can easily attain in a matter of a few minutes --say during rush hour traffic. Again, this is just the best known and simplest illustration of what is a broad range of innovations set up for using the participatory intelligence of urban residents.

In short, one key dimension of having a genuinely smart city is open-sourcing a whole range of systems. I am particularly interested in open-sourcing neighborhoods to bring into the larger task of smarting up the city the specific knowledges about a city that are rooted in knowing one’s neighborhood (see Open-Sourcing the Neighborhood).

Children know their neighborhood in a different way from adults, and not just because they are shorter and closer to the ground. Grandmothers know about local pasts. The homeless know the animal nightlife of a city’s streets. And the average neighborhood resident is full of ideas about simple solutions to local problems. Imagine connecting all these diverse actors with their specific forms of knowledge to open-access networks, or wikis, that circulate these bits of information. This would be but one step in a potentially much longer trajectory, one that might activate city residents along all kinds of diverse causes, from greening the city to making inter-neighborhood economies.

I think of this as open-sourcing the neighborhood.

GROWING ASYMMETRIES BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND BUILDINGS.

A second key domain in urgent need of open-sourcing concerns the increasingly asymmetric rate of obsolescence between technology and buildings. The more automated systems (often centrally controlled by the corporate sellers) are squeezed into buildings, the faster that building will become obsolete, whereas a good building can last for 300, 900 years...and more. To some extent this technical obsolescence cannot be avoided. But intelligent deployment of such automated systems, such that it recognizes what users actually need, and that it can be flexibly deployed, could, if well done, reduce "excess-obsolescence" (e.g. eliminate technical components never used that become an unnecessary drag on a building).

This means that the pertinent actors in governments and the corporate world producing these automated systems need to learn from users--it means communicating, being open to useful suggestions. Again, it comes down to considering the residents --of a building, a neighborhood, a city, as knowledge carrying actors. Given digital inTeractive tech, part of the effort should go into developing the appropriate channels, platforms, apps.

One key dimension of having a genuinely smart city is open-sourcing a whole range of systems: to bring into the larger task of smarting up the city the specific knowledges about a city that are rooted in knowing much more about is diverse systems than we are currently enabled to do.
BY WAY OF CONCLUSION,

The way I see it, a genuinely “smart” city will use the most advanced technologies especially—though not exclusively—to make the city function as an open-source system. As a technological innovation, open source has not been about cities, but about collaboratively building tools. But it lends itself to take in the diverse knowledge bits of neighborhoods and bring these into what are now often closed systems of knowledge coming from the center or the top. One aspect of such a city, and it is only one, is that knowledge is crowdsourced and all the information, all the feedback, can be interpreted and used at some point—by other machines, by citizens, by urban governments. It won’t necessarily all be used, but the possibility, at least, is there.

Saskia Sassen is the Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology and Chair, The Committee on Global Thought, Columbia University (www.saskiasassen.com). Her new book is Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy (Harvard University Press 2014). Recent books are Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages (Princeton University Press 2008), A Sociology of Globalization (W.W.Norton 2007), and the 4th fully updated edition of Cities in a World Economy (Sage 2012). Among older books is The Global City (Princeton University Press 1991/2001). Her books are translated into over 20 languages. She has received diverse awards, from multiple doctor honoris causa to being chosen as one of the Top 100 Global Thinkers in multiple lists. She was awarded the 2013 Principe de Asturias Prize for the Social Sciences and elected to the Netherlands Royal Academy of the Sciences.


Recent Publications


Recent Publications (cont’d)


Dissertation Profiles

**Meryl Alper**, Ph.D. Candidate | Year of graduation: 2015
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**Home Screen Home: How Parents of Children with Disabilities Navigate Family Media Use**

My dissertation is a qualitative study of how privilege shapes the role of communication technologies in the everyday lives of young people with significant communication impairments. Many non-speaking individuals (most famously, physicist Stephen Hawking) express themselves through digital or synthetic speech using what are known as augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. Over the past five years, tablet computers—particularly the Apple iPad—have made AAC devices dramatically more accessible, affordable, and socially acceptable. The popular press tends to frame these tools as miraculous; however, little is known empirically about how the iPad—at once an assistive technology, learning aid, and fun toy—is incorporated into families’ routines and beliefs. I addressed this gap by conducting 16 months of participant observation and in-depth interviews with Los Angeles-area parents of 20 children ages 3-13 with developmental disabilities such as autism and cerebral palsy. Drawing on Bourdieu’s notion of cultural capital, I found that parents’ class and cultural background shapes how they understand the value and purpose of the iPad, as well as their relationships with the professional entities (e.g. school districts, therapy providers, insurance companies) regulating deployment of the technology at home. This work has practical applications for policymakers, practitioners, and technologists, and makes a unique contribution to the sociology of education, critical disability studies, and digital media and learning. Future research should further examine structural barriers to societal participation for non-middle class, non-white youth with disabilities and the social construction of normativity in their mobile media practices.

**Matthew H. Rafalow**, Ph.D. Candidate | Year of graduation: 2015
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mrafalow@uci.edu | Twitter: @mrafalow | http://mattrafalow.org

**Augmented Schooling: Education and Youth Culture in the 21st Century**

My dissertation explores how digital technologies are taken up and evaluated in different educational contexts. Popularly termed “digital youth,” young people are among the fastest adopters of new digital platforms and are hoped to become the next generation of programmers, tinkerers, and creative producers. Yet, tech researchers do not often explore how institutions, like schools, shape whether and how youth use the technology available to them. For this project, I compare how three technology-rich middle schools perceive the value of innovative new technologies and teach so-called 21st century skills. Using interview- and observation-based data collected in schools over the course of an academic year, I find that teachers draw on organization-level understandings of student race and class to construct students as either risky hackers or Steve Jobs potentials. I then explore how the playful experiences young people pursue online among their peers are differently welcomed by schools in ways that inform their affinity as creative producers within institutions. This dissertation builds on theories from the sociology of education, organizations, and work on digital youth by illustrating how schools differently cultivate the next generation of ‘creative class’ digital citizens.
Vinyl Revival: Evaluation, Collaboration and Change in Intermediate Markets

My dissertation explores the actions of intermediary firms in periods of rapid technological change. Through a longitudinal multimethod content analysis of media and industry documents, I offer the independent record store as a case of such an intermediary. Thus unlike scholars who have prioritized the internet and mobile innovations in the analysis of the music industry, I offer an explanation of social and technological change from the perspective of the niche revival in vinyl record sales. I argue that surviving independent record stores have strategically reinforced their niche position in the market by successfully reframing what vinyl records mean as a consumer product. This new framework is a result of collective symbolic work, active coalitions among invested actors, and changes in organizational form. I do this by first isolating how technological developments in listening to and owning music have influenced the understandings of record store actors. I follow this analysis with a detailed account of conditions leading up to a field configuring event that has significantly impacted perceptions over time. Finally, I utilize an innovative application of name entity recognition software that connects stores and their associated practices and artifacts, illustrating how the market has developed over time. Tracing the renewed success of an aged technology through various social processes uncovers mechanisms by which intermediaries negotiate rapid technological changes in order to survive. By highlighting the meso-level politics of markets, my work extends

Divine Design: Configuring Amish Communication in a High-tech World

Grounded in and contributing to the information communication technology for development domain of inquiry, this dissertation complicates assumptions that information communication technologies (ICTs) like cell phones, computers and the internet are inherently advantageous for improving economic conditions and general well-being among members of marginalized communities. Ethnographic research conducted among the Amish—a conservative religious group known for its members living pre-modern lifestyles—yields new insights about how ICT non-use also empowers marginal groups of people. Today, the Amish population in North America is increasing exponentially and unemployment in their communities is virtually unheard of. Interviews were conducted from 2011-2014 with Amish business and church leaders in two settlements in Indiana, home to the 3rd largest population of Amish on the continent. These opinion leaders felt the ability to limit technology adoption, yet use it occasionally for specific reasons in accordance with Amish values, helped preserve Amish culture and social structures over the long term. According to participants, this empowered them to abide by their religious beliefs. These beliefs inspired individuals to live simply in close knit, small-scale communities where strong tie social networks were sustained. Over these networks social and economic support were freely exchanged and individuals were encouraged to preserve and depend on their natural local environment. Future research on this topic will investigate the ethical and political values that become embedded into ICT (non-)use and design when ICT is seen as a tool for the (dis)empowerment of marginalized religious, political health and economic groups of people.
Announcements

1) A. Aneesh, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, was featured in a November 4 interview about his work on software professionals and bodyshopping in an NBC Bay Area investigative TV report. Watch it here at http://www.nbcbayarea.com/investigations/Silicon-Valleys-Body-Shop-Secret-280567322.html.

2) Volume 8: Emerald Studies in Media and Communication

Communication and Information Technologies Annual
Doing and Being Digital: Mediated Childhoods
Published 2014 (See Online Version)

Introduction
Doing and Being Digital: Mediated Childhoods
Laura Robinson, Shelia R. Cotten, & Jeremy Schulz

Section: Digital Differentiation
Stress 2.0: Social Media Overload among Swiss Teenagers
Christoph Lutz, Giulia Ranzini, & Miriam Meckel
Gradations of Disappearing Digital Divides Among Racially Diverse Middle School Students
Shelia R. Cotten, Elizabeth L. Davison, Daniel B. Shank, & Brian W. Ward
Play to Pay?: Adolescent Video Game Play and STEM Choice
Amanda J. Turner

Section: Media Use
Should I Text or Should I Call?: How College Students Navigate Mediated Connections with Family
Carrie Anne Platt, Renee Bourdeaux, & Nancy DiTunnariello
Media Choice and Identity Work: A Case Study of Information Communication Technology Use in a Peer Community
Airi Lampinen, Vilma Lehtinen, & Coye Cheshire

Section: Social Problems and Solutions
Promoting Online Safety Among Adolescents: Enhancing Coping Self-Efficacy and Protective Behaviors through Enactive Mastery
Julia Crouse Waddell, Caitlin McLaughlin, Robert Larose, & Nora Rifon
Hey Kids, This Is Advertising: Metaphors and Promotional Appeals in Online Advertisements for Children
Debashis ‘Deb’ Aikat

Section: Cyberbullies and Upstanders
Cyberbullying: The Social Construction of a Moral Panic
Linda M. Waldron
Tweens, Cyberbullying, and Moral Reasoning: Separating the Upstanders from the Bystanders
Erhardt Graeff
Announcements (cont’d)

3) Volume 9: Emerald Studies in Media and Communication
Communication and Information Technologies Annual
Politics, Participation, and Production
Forthcoming Winter 2015

Introduction
Politics, Participation, and Production
Laura Robinson, Shelia R. Cotten, & Jeremy Schulz

Section I: Politics
Political Efficacy on the Internet: A Media System Dependency Approach
Katherine Ognyanova & Sandra Ball-Rokeach
Engaging Young Voters in the Political Process: U.S. Presidential Debates and YouTube
Pamela Brubaker, Michael Horning, & Christopher Toula
Generating Political Interest with Online News
Shelley Boulianne

Section II: Participation Networks
Do Social Network Sites Increase, Decrease, or Supplement the Maintenance of Social Ties?
Randy Lynn & James C. Witte
How Far Can Scholarly Networks Go? Examining the Relationships between Distance, Disciplines, Motivations, and Clusters
Guang Ying Mo, Zack Hayat, & Barry Wellman
Family Social Networks, Reciprocal Socialization, and the Adoption of Social Media Media by Baby Boomer and Silent Generation Women
Nancy Horak Randall, Sue Carroll Pauley, & Aaron B. Culley
To Know that You Are Not Alone: The Effect of Internet Usage on LGBT Youth’s Social Capital
Robert T. Cserni & Ilan Talmud

Section III: Production
The Gendered Digital Production Gap: Inequalities of Affluence
Jen Schradie
Event vs. Issue: Twitter Reflections of Major News, a Case Study
Chris J. Vargo, Ekaterina Basilaia, & Donald Lewis Shaw
Announcements (con’t)

4) Call for Submissions 2015: Emerald Studies in Media and Communication (Sponsored by CITASA)

Initial Submissions Due: Monday, March 16, 2015 midnight GMT
By email to editorial@emeraldmediastudies.com

The 2015 Editorial Team of Emerald Studies in Media and Communication sponsored by CITASA is inviting submissions of original, unpublished papers for two volumes to be published in late 2015 and early 2016. The deadline for submissions is Monday, March 16, 2015.

Volume 10: Digital Distinctions & Inequalities
We welcome submissions on any facet of digital inclusion, digital inequality, digital differentiation, and/or digital divides writ large. We are interested in these topics as they relate to any communication platform, populations, and kinds of production/consumption of digital media, information technologies, social inequalities, etc.

Volume 11: New Media Cultures
We welcome submissions on any facet of culture and [new] media. Submissions may explore any aspect of culture, communication, and [new] media broadly defined. Themes that come to mind are the interplay between [new] media and any of the following: culture, communication, technology, convergence, the arts, cultural production, cultural change in the digital age—and of course anything else [new] media or communication or culture scholars find intriguing.

Please see emeraldmediastudies.com for more information about the calls, series, editors, guidelines, etc. The series welcomes work from a variety of perspectives from media scholars working in the social sciences, humanities, and related fields such as media studies, information studies, STS, and communication. Submissions may be empirical, theoretical, methodological, or synthetic statements of significant developments in the field. Empirical submissions may make use of any method or approach. Contributions on a wide variety of topics on new media, ICTs, communication, and related themes are welcome from a variety of disciplinary perspectives.

Submission Overview
Submissions should be 6,000-12,000 words in length inclusive of abstract, references, and notes. British or American spelling may be used. While no special formatting is requested at the outset, upon acceptance authors must format their manuscripts in accordance with the series' guidelines. Contributions will be peer-reviewed through editorial screening and anonymous refereeing by external reviewers. See submission guidelines for details.

For more information, please email: editorial@emeraldmediastudies.com.

We look forward to hearing from you—

2015 Editorial Team
Laura Robinson, Shelia Cotten, Jeremy Schulz, Tim Hale, Joy Hightower, & Apryl Williams

Credits

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Recent Publications: Guang Ying Mo, University of Toronto
Dissertation Profiles: Elizabeth Schwarz, University of California, Riverside
Announcements: Robyn Keith, University of Texas at Austin
Layout: Penn Pantumsinchai, University of Hawai’i at Manoa

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Barry Wellman, University of Toronto 2016
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Communication and Information Technologies Section of the ASA February 2015