

Editors' Introduction

The idea for the CEJC Fall 2020 issue arose before the pandemic of Covid-19 had hit the world and changed our lives. The editors met in Milan at the Annual Conference of the Italian Association of Political Communication in December 2019, just before the serious global health threat began to spread throughout the world and have managed to work with authors of this issue in times of lockdown and uncertainty. Even the interview with the distinguished author and Professor of Sociology and Political Communication, Gianpietro Mazzoleni from the University of Milan was conducted remotely, during the lockdown, reflecting relevant and interesting aspects of changes in contemporary political communication. Despite the special circumstances that impacted our personal lives and professional work, in which this CEJC issue was created, the Journal remains a solid platform for scholarly debate on political communication in contemporary society.

This CEJC 2020 Fall issue has a huge variety of topics and reflects many interesting aspects and angles of how the academic community responds to changes in media outlets, technology, media markets, academic writing, religious advertising and political communication. Moreover, there is a great diversity in terms of countries where the authors of this issue live and work, e.g. Poland, Pakistan, Slovakia, Lithuania, Germany, and Ukraine. Although the spectrum of topics is very broad, there is a common ground they all relate to in the notions of connectivity, interactivity and relationships, which are particularly significant in the times we live in. Therefore, the seven original articles address important scholarly issues and phenomena related to political communication and media from a broad range of perspectives and angles, at the same time reflecting the important aspect and the timely need of being connected to, belonging to, interacting with and relating to specific groups of people, types of media, groups within academia, regional and local markets, platforms in technology and a variety of communication activities.

Anna Jupowicz-Ginalska, Małgorzata Kisilowska, Tomasz Baran, Aleksander Wysocki, and Justyna Jasiewicz from the University of Warsaw examine the phenomenon of the “Fear of Missing Out” (FOMO) or the constant compulsory checking of social media feeds among internet users in Poland. The authors suggest a change in the method of calculation of the FOMO scale results by exchanging figures for percentage data. The change enables the authors to develop the FOMO scale index and conclude that the need for “online” belongingness and relationships with peers is critical for people’s social media life, especially for the youngest.

Waqas Ejaz from Pakistan investigates the relationship between people's preference of either analogue or online media for news consumption, credibility evaluation of media and their sense of European identity. The study reveals interesting levels of strength and interactions between media selection and European identity, revealing how and in which cases they have been affected by people's perceptions of media credibility.

Mariya Kozolup, Mariya Kokor, and Ruslan Savchynskyi from Ukraine connect us with Polish and Ukrainian students in their research of the students' views about established academic writing practices in the two countries. This article gives a voice to students and highlights the need to address students as relevant stakeholders in developing academic writing skills and pedagogies.

Céline Fabienne Kampes from the University of Applied Sciences in Düsseldorf, Germany examines the applicability of the Long Tail theory on the online, political and entertainment-oriented, information offerings in Germany between 2014 and 2016. The article provides in-depth insight and explanation of the connection between the Long Tail theory and conditions for the free market competition amongst thematic genres and their providers.

Aleksandra Galus from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland, connects Belarus and Ukraine with Poland, examining Polish media assistance in these two countries. The article reveals how media assistance has been offered and managed within authoritarian and democratizing political regimes, and how Polish foreign aid has been affected by deficits of media freedom.

Krzysztof Stępnik from the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland examines religious advertising as a kind of sacred persuasive communication in Poland. The article is based on variety of studies on religious advertising and its reception in selected social groups, e.g. among experts, nonbelievers, the clergy and believers.

Ignas Kalpokas from the Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania demonstrates the need to move beyond traditional understandings of agency in communication research, developing a framework that prioritizes interaction between elements instead of the elements themselves and highlighting that humans cannot be seen only as autonomous actors, because they are deeply interwoven with other elements, such as code, data, devices, communications infrastructure, data etc.

With this issue we introduce a new section of the Journal – the *Review Study*, where we will present papers discussing particular research or concepts. This format is complementary to other sections, such as *Methods & Concepts* section and *Book Reviews*. By developing sections focused more on methodology and theory as well as on scientific debate over perspectives in the media and communication studies we would like to balance the empirical and conceptual approach of the Journal.

This Fall we are also proud to announce that we just have employed the *Open Journal System* in the CEJC. It will provide us new opportunities and will improve our communication with the members of an international academic community around the world.

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