Preface

WHY THE NEED?

During the past two decades, two major events have revolutionized our cultures and our communication: Globalization and New Media. Both events call for a deeper global view and an exhaustive and revolutionary analyses of the transformation we have been gestating and developing, as a culture, as individuals, and as citizens.

First, globalization, culture, and communication intermingle and are interconnected, altering each other (Chen & Dai, 2014). Globalization has impacted communication in significant and complex ways through the opening of ever-changing channels of information that expand and reinvent without limits through new media. At the same time, communication has driven and facilitated globalization while transforming cultural identities, establishing governmental structures through mass media, and individual identities (Chen, 2012; Başaran Ince, 2014; Bouvier, 2012; Giddens, 1990, 1991, 2000; Haslett, 2014). These changes brought about by the on-going transformative way of communicating through new media call for a compromise with a deeper understanding of the shapes of fresh reality that affects the development and maintenance of culture and identity. A profound analysis of the dynamics of how these changes influence the way we act is necessary (Foti & Ring. 2000). There is a need to rewire and revolutionize our views to think and act as global citizens.

Second, new media shapes the vital dynamics of everyday interactions within the political, interpersonal, and cultural contexts (Thumim, 2012; Zhang & Prosser, 2012), in positive and negative ways. The new features have helped to mingle the private and the public within co-existing spaces through a combination of mass media with tools of personal social media, and consequently modify the processes of socializing and display of identity (Gunn & Thumim, 2012; Ksiazek et al, 2010). The impact of new media continuously brings questions of credibility and balance on the power of information, evolutionary structures of culture and cultural identity, emergence of new paradigms and challenges in communication, and the ability and

capacity to enhance and advance intercultural communication (Chen, 2012; Başaran Ince, 2014; Giddens, 2000; Pflug, 2011; Shuter, 2012).

This book is a production of the discipline of intercultural communication which aims to bridge intercultural communication research with emerging new media studies. The intent is to address an existing gap in knowledge. Even though new media has significantly and continuously impacted our lives in general, and specifically in the way we communicate, relate to others, and build our individual and cultural identities, there are scattered studies on the connection between new media and the implications for intercultural communication (Cheong, Martin, & MacFadyen, 2012; Pflug, 2011; Shuter, 2012). Researchers have called attention to the need for an emphasis on "intercultural new media research that takes a socio-cultural perspective" (Shuter, 2010, p. 231).

The design of each chapter comprises current research on challenges of new media supported by top-notch scholarly studies and theories related to each covered context, by exploring the real causes and effects of new media and how it impinges on culture and intercultural communication. The topics address the need to reconceptualize perspectives to expand and advance thought towards the creation of intercultural environments that inclusively support and advance interactions within new media paradigms. In addition, recommendations and solutions will be offered.

Finally, this book is significant because it will facilitate deep root analysis, providing the necessary power to research the relationships between culture and new media through a positive, effective, and transformational analysis that brings both fields together. While this book touches upon various areas of new media and intercultural communication, our book has a unique focus, which highlights identity and conflict while providing a comprehensive examination of intercultural interactions and conflict in different contexts.

Herein we address a national and global need for furthering a scientific understanding of complex connections among culture, identity, and new media.

NEW MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Communication focuses on social interactions and how people use messages to generate and share meaning across contexts, cultures, media, and channels (Samovar et al., 2010). Due to the diverse cultural backgrounds and challenges represented by the new media environments, globalization adds to the debate about how current research informs our experiences to provide more inclusive and integrative approaches that address the needs of the present constantly-transforming context. In new media, globalization conveys culture as a main source of diversity, bringing to the communication process contrasting worldviews that can be compared,

contrasted, and aligned. This dialectic interaction involves negotiation meaning and dissonance as strong skills to advance our experiences through by processing other cultural perspectives, immersing them in deeper critical thinking. This then leads to the advancement of knowledge and cognitive flexibility (Chan & Chan, 2011; Knutson, 2003; Kreijns, 2003; Scardamalia, 2003).

First, new media has changed the dynamics, the structure, and the goals of how we communicate and interact, from how we have changed our face-to-face behavior in everyday interactions to how political debates are conceived. Addressing the changes and challenges that new media imposes has become a primary need and alleviates the boundaries imposed by the medium. For example, the private and public communicative contexts intermingle through new media, transforming the communication process and its functioning. The medium is crucial in the functioning of the communication process (Başaran Ince, 2014). Its structure, components, and effects define and redirect the construction of meaning and perceptions built from the interactions and experiences arising from the interchangeability of contextual cues, cultural backgrounds, and social expectations.

Second, new media revolutionizes communication by opening channels to immediately connect to other cultures. Consequently, participants are automatically incorporated into new cultural paradigms, expectations, and norms. This reshapes the fundamental and distinct characteristics of the modern communication process into a postmodern process characterized by interactivity, connectiveness, instantaneity, mobility, recurrence, and flexibility. The use of global communications enables the ability to build a new layer in how we communicate and engage in interactions (Basaran Ince, 2014; Castells, 2004). New media self-expands the communication process by adding complexity and constantly recombines adjourned and recurrent styles with new and constantly changing possibilities, options, views (Castells, 2004).

Third, according to researchers, new media combines transmission links and artificial memories with the capability of empowering users as active content producers instead of passive recipients of information, transforming communication by the absence of time and space limitations (Bruns, 2005; Başaran Ince, 2014; Castells, 2010; Dijk, 2012; Jenkins, 2007; Lister, 2006, Manovich 2001; Aitchison & Lewis 2006; Logan, 2010). Researchers refer to new media as rootless due to the absence of time and space. This enables social media to function at its fullest in a way which allows users to constantly reinvent and mediate communication between traditional and new media horizons (Başaran Ince, 2014; Candau, 1998; Castells, 2016). This also generates new questions about how identity is formed and maintained by and within culture and the effects of openness, flexibility, and the mutating nature of new media.

Fourth, researchers point out the need to consider accessibility limitations. New media has not reached all societies at the same level of access, and therefore, it is

essential to question how the imbalance of global access to information (Başaran Ince, 2014; Wunnava & Leiter, 2009) affects communication. Questioning, analyzing, and interpreting new media among different cultures is essential to understanding how information is distributed for control and power effects over the communication process.

Fifth, researchers focus on how twenty-first century changes in technology have impacted all aspects of our culture and societies (Devran, 2010). Overall, the constant nature of evolving, changing, and redefining of new media helps to develop a discussion of intercultural communication as the basis for socializing and building identity from the debate of being versus existence (Başaran Ince, 2014; Castells, 2016).

Finally, intercultural communication is a well-established discipline exploring the delicate relationship between culture and communication. Culture is a learned process of perceptions, values, and behavior. Communication is key to the process of culture, since the way we communicate and how we understand communication exists hand-in-hand with contextual and cultural factors (Hall, 1973, 1977, 1990; Jaldemark, 2008; Yang et al., 2010). In other words, our culture teaches us how to communicate with others, what to pay attention to, and how to interpret messages when we communicate. Consequently, cultural differences have an impact on the way people participate in society in various contexts, contemporarily in new media spheres. These differences could create unique opportunities and challenges, becoming even more important given the impact of new media in today's increasingly globalized society.

Given the complexity of the challenges brought about by the alliance between new media and intercultural communication, there is a challenge to embrace new structures of engagement, involvement, and responsibility. Each topic is equipped with the most updated research to enhance understanding of today's communicative challenges imposed by the transformative aspects of new media, and by providing the necessary information as guidance to engage, participate in, and interact in ways that are more meaningful to each cultural profile while helping them develop success in new media environments (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1993, 1996, 2003).

In sum, new media, as the transformative actor of intercultural communication, imposes critical questions that aim to analyze the connection between intercultural communication and new media. The intent is to adequately determine and explain intercultural communication patterns and variations, challenges, and limitations in cultural identity formation and conflict resolution.

NEW MEDIA AND CULTURE

In 2012, Robert Shuter proposed "a new field of inquiry called Intercultural New Media Studies (INMS)" (Shuter, 2012, p. 220), through which the author expressed a need for intercultural communication research to explore new media. This field represents not only an additional aspect of contemporary communication, but an organic and dynamic component of culture and communication, which presents the symbiotic influence of both. According to Shuter (2012, p. 230) "culture and new media are conjoined. Not only does culture affect the social uses of new media, but new media appears to change culture."

In his proposal, Shuter (2012) points out that intercultural communication, as a field, needs to examine the way culture impacts social media, and concurrently questions the way social media affects culture. Moreover, the author identifies five key intercultural communication concepts as areas of interest for Intercultural New Media Studies. These concepts, or areas of study, are: cultural identity, intercultural dialogue, third culture, acculturation, and intercultural competence (Shuter, 2012, p. 212). Many scholars followed Shuter's initiative and research exploring the mutual influence and affect between culture and new media has grown extensively since.

Culture is a socially constructed process, which consists of a set of values, beliefs, and practices that are shared by its members (Applegate & Sypher, 1988). Culture "emerges in social interaction" (Hecht, Collier & Ribeau, 2003, p. 29) and through this interaction presents a unique identity (Orbe & Harris, 2001). As members of cultural groups, we all communicate through a cultural lens and perform our cultural identities accordingly. Hence, our communicative practices reflect our cultural groups. Furthermore, as our culture alters through time and interaction with different cultural groups, so do our communicative practices. As Shuter, Cheong, & Chen (2016, p. 172) explain "cultural values are foundational to communicative behavior," which consequently impacts communication and behavior, including that in the new media platform.

Furthermore, the mutual influence of culture and new media, as scholars articulate, indicates a reverse effect in the connection between culture and communication. As our communicative practices alter, they also help shape the culture in new ways. As Chen (2012) explains:

New media not only influences the form and content of information/messages, but it also affects how people understand each other in the process of human communication, especially for those from different cultural or ethnic groups. (p. 2)

Thus, media is a cultural product. But it also helps shape culture and our communication. Wu and Li (2016) state that, as new media progresses and becomes a more integral part of our cultural configuration, it alters our core communication practices. We increasingly live in a networked society, which impacts "the overall dimension of human relations including the production relations, consumption, reproduction and power" (Basaran Ince, 2014, p. 13), influencing the very nature of our cultural structure. As a result, people rely on new media for more than an information exchange; they also utilize it for forming and performing their identities. Therefore, new media establishes new communicative practices, such as texting, social media use, and virtual communication. Yet, more importantly, new media also shapes "unheralded methods of identity, community, and culture formation" (Loehwing & Motter, 2012, p. 36). As Wu and Li (2016) argue:

People rely heavily on new media to share information and feelings, to construct and present identities, to build and maintain social relationships and form speech communities, which all point to the need and significance of further exploration and advancement in new media communication across cultures. (p. 25)

Research regarding media and culture has been prominent for decades. But early research focused on technology as a medium for communication and progressed in time to include the relationship between culture and media. Shuter (2012) presented a new and focused direction to scholarship regarding new media and culture. Scholars, such as Chen (2012), Croucher (2011), Ingraham and Reeves (2016), and Loehwing and Motter (2012) enhanced our understanding of new media and culture through their work.

New media empowers people by empowering reachability and inclusivity (Chen, 2012). Through new media, more people take part in creating and disseminating messages, which used to be "a privilege possessed only by church, state, and government" (Chen, 2012, p. 1). Power is a central concept for communication scholarship (Loehwing & Motter, 2012). Through new media, there is more empowerment and equalization of power, which influences not only power dynamics but also how power is perceived within the society (Loehwing & Motter, 2012). Marginalized groups, immigrants and/or refugees, minorities, and social outliers have an opportunity to participate in message construction and dissemination; therefore, these groups have an opportunity to change the discourse and shape cultural perceptions. New media was utilized for political discourse for various polarizing issues, such as the Arab Spring, which resulted in political change in various North African and Middle Eastern countries. Other areas where social media played a prominent role included the Black Lives Matter movement, which aimed to reduce the imbalance of power and racism against African Americans,

and the Me Too campaign, which focused on raising awareness regarding sexual assault and harassment.

Concurrently, we need to consider new social dynamics that result in a shift in power and social practices. Ingraham and Reeves (2016, p. 456) explored the effects of public panic and public shaming in the new media age. Shaming individuals or groups, according to the authors, is easier than ever as a result of new media, more specifically social media. On the one hand, the ease of information dissemination and access to this information helps empower victims, raise awareness, and evoke change. Instead of state officials and corporate mass media being the authorities "once needed to produce and prosecute moral panics, citizens today have acquired an unprecedented capacity to independently investigate, judge, and punish their peers for moral infractions." On the other hand, ease of information dissemination is accompanied by ease of misinformation and bias. Therefore, in terms of power, who disseminates information and to what extent, are still relevant questions that need further exploration.

Shifting power dynamics and cultural identification impacts intercultural communication for both in-group and cross-cultural interactions. In terms of in-group communication, new media presents ways of reinforcing cultural identities and establishing strong ties between cultural group members, which also influences individuals' communication cross-culturally. Croucher (2011) explored this phenomenon further by examining cultural adaptation and new media. The author explained the significant impact social networking has on cultural adaptation of immigrants. According to Croucher, social network utilization directly influences immigrants' perception of the host culture, and consequently, it also influences communication by newcomers with members of the host culture. Furthermore, the author explains that, as immigrants adapt to their new cultural surroundings, social media becomes a way to reconnect with their original culture, reinforce their identity, and "retro-acculturate" (p. 262). As a result, Croucher offers two propositions:

P1: During cultural adaptation, the use of social networking sites affects immigrants' interactions with the dominant culture (Croucher, 2011, p. 261)

P2: During cultural adaptation, the use of social networking sites will affect immigrants' in-group communication (Croucher, 2011, p. 262)

The propositions put forth by Croucher (2011) and the focus areas offered by Shuter (2012) all demonstrate the significance of furthering scholarship on the mutual influence of culture and new media. Communication is not only a tool, but represents the process through which both culture and new media are established, shaped, and renegotiated. Hence all three concepts, communication, culture, and new media, are intertwined and interconnected. As Shuter (2012) explains, there

is an immense need to explore these concepts and their connections to one another from a socio-cultural perspective. More specifically, the author identifies the need to:

Develop, refine or extend cultural theories of new media communication including, but not limited to, cultural values and the social uses of new media, co-cultural theory and new media behavior, and socio-cultural factors and cultural preferences of new media platforms (Shuter, 2012, p. 231)

This book is aimed at building upon the work of the aforementioned scholars and their call for a cultural perspective to study new media and communication. Our approach to communication, culture, and new media aims to explore the connection between these concepts in four distinct, yet related, areas: community, identity, conflict, and politics.

RECONCEPTUALIZING NEW MEDIA AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN A NETWORKED SOCIETY

This book offers a collection of contributions, which explored the connection between culture and new media from an intercultural communication perspective. A common thread is interwoven through these chapters, thanks to our authors from different countries with varied expertise. The authors provide a variety of contexts and frameworks which allowed us to present a rich and thorough compilation of perspectives.

As explained above, the book is divided into four sections. The first section – New Media, Culture, and Community – presents chapters exploring the connection between culture and community using new media, specifically focusing on establishing communities, maintaining communities and communal identities in the new media platform. Nurhayat Bilge examines the influence of social media on ethnic identity preservation, focusing on displaced communities. Kevin Wang explores online media consumption among Asian Americans, focusing on acculturation and enculturation. Sean Sadri offers insight into the millennial culture by examining the group's media habits and questioning the concept of media credibility.

The second section – New Media, Culture, and Identity – deals with the connection between culture and identity using new media, specifically focusing on identity negotiation, construction/reconstruction of identity, and communicating identities in the new media platform. Beth Haslett offers an extensive, in-depth exploration of the connection between identity, culture, and new media through the very foundation of theories upon which intercultural new media scholarship is built. Binod Sundararajan

and Elizabeth Tetzlaff examine dynamic social impact theory in connection with heterophily and homophily within the new media platform. Sachiyo Shearman and Mariko Eguchi explore the connection between culture and new media through the use of new media in intercultural communication classes. Additionally, Anna Klyueva examines the concept of "saving face" within the contemporary communication practices of new media.

The third section – New Media, Culture, and Conflict – presents chapters exploring the connection between culture and conflict using new media, specifically focusing on conflict formation, conflict management, and conflict resolution. Amy Janan Johnson, Sun Kyong Lee, Iona A. Cionia, and Zachary B. Massey initiate the section with their thought-provoking work examining the benefits and challenges of new media on intercultural conflict. Godfrey Steele's solo-authored chapter explores culture and conflict in new media by focusing on Facebook communication. Additionally his chapter, co-authored with Niekitta Zephyrine, offers further insight into culture and conflict through the concept of groupthink in Twitter.

The fourth and final section – New Media, Culture, and Politics and Policies – presents chapters exploring the connection between culture and politics using new media, specifically focusing on political identities, political conflict, and communication of politics in the new media platform. The section starts with Anastacia Kurylo's work examining culture and political identity, where the author collates concepts of culture, community, and identity in connection with political perspectives. Ping Yang follows with her work exploring civic engagement of youth in China through social networks. Wei Sun examines political campaigns on social media, focusing on the group "Minority Women for Trump." The final chapter of the section, and the book, by Maria Elena Villar and Elizabeth Marsh, demonstrate unique challenges and benefits of new media, focusing on perceptions and policies regarding infectious diseases.

Our contributors offer diverse perceptions and approaches to exploring new media and culture from an intercultural communication perspective. We rely on research pioneered by scholars, who shaped this area of study. New media and culture are intertwined concepts. Our aim is to explore their mutual influence and help further scholarly understanding, upon which future studies can build.

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