Seismo

Editorial

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Dear SComS readers,

We are pleased to present you the second issue of *Studies in Communication Sciences* in 2022. Readers might wonder why the second issue of SComS is already published in September and not at the end of the year as usual. Actually, due to the high number of submissions and the very positive development of SComS as a platinum open access journal, we have decided to test increasing the publication rhythm from two issues to three issues per year. The first issue of this year was a special issue entirely dedicated to DACH 21, the first three-country conference on communication science held in April 2021 at the University of Zurich. In the present issue, emphasis is instead put on the General Section. The issue is comprised of six research articles addressing various aspects of media and communication research including reflections on the identity of the discipline itself as well as empirical and theoretical papers on the topics of argumentation, public service media, social norms and communication, quality of media systems, immigration, and issue fatigue. Additionally, we present you one book review. The authors hail from several countries across Europe as well as the US and, typical for SComS, we present you with articles in various languages.

We also have news about the changes to our Editorial Team. We are very pleased to announce the appointment of Thilo von Pape as a new editor. We are looking forward to working together with him. Thilo von Pape is a full professor of communication and media sciences at the Department of Communication and Media Research (DCM) at the University of Fribourg. His work focuses on the uses of digital communication technologies and mobile media as well as on media innovations. He is co-founder of the journal *Mobile Media & Communication* and associate editor of the *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication.* As we welcome a new member, we must say goodbye to Sébastien Salerno who served the Editorial Team since 2015. We thank him for his long-standing commitment to SComS. His engagement has contributed to SComS being a multilingual open access journal within communication and media research.

With the first article of this issue, entitled "'Denn grau ist alle Theorie…' Ein empirisch fundierter Diskussionsbeitrag zur Selbstverständnisdebatte der Schweizer Kommunikationswissenschaft", Franziska Oehmer-Pedrazzi and Tobias Rohrbach make an important contribution to the perennial, lively, and controversial debate about the identity of communication and media research. What distinguishes this study is, on the one hand, that it focuses on Swiss universities and universities of applied sciences and thus on communication science in a "Helvetian Manner" (p. 289), with its cultural and linguistic peculiarities. In addition, focus is put on the "lived practice" at Swiss communication science institutes. For this purpose, the authors examined students'

theses with respect to their subject matter, theories, and methods. The study aimed at a complete inventory and a diachronic as well as synchronic content analysis of all theses written at Swiss communication science programs between 1966 and 2017. While not all theses were accessible to research, the authors were able to analyze more than 3300 theses written at universities and universities of applied sciences from all three linguistic parts of Switzerland, showcasing the heterogeneity of teaching and research practice in Switzerland but also identifying core topics and approaches. The text is accompanied by supplementary material provided online.

We are bombarded with arguments every day by political campaigns, social marketing campaigns, advertising, and every day conversations, among others. What makes some arguments more persuasive than others? In their article "An exploratory test of an intuitive evaluation method of perceived argument strength" Jos Hornikx, Annemarie Weerman, and Hans Hoeken address the issue of persuasion in their comparison of a new intuitive evaluation method with the conventional explicit argument strength evaluation method. The authors turned to the intuitive evaluation method because of its promise to capture how most people respond to arguments in daily life. However, the results show that the intuitive evaluation method was not able to predict claim acceptance although it was sensitive to the manipulation of argument strength. The results further questioned the validity of the intuitive measure.

Eva Spittka, Vivien Benert, Matthias Wagner, and Stephanie Fiechtner ask: "How Swiss is Swiss television?" The authors present a secondary analysis of the 2017 data set of the Swiss content analysis study in which they investigate informational genres as well as fictional contents of the televised programs of the SRG SSR, the Swiss public broadcaster, regarding the "Swissness" of both contents as well as origin of media productions. The findings point to a discrepancy between the informational genres, in which Swissness is represented to a larger extent, and fictional genres in which Switzerland plays a marginal role, both regarding contents and production setting. The authors provide an important empirical contribution to the discussion on public value and the role of public broadcasting. The discussion of public value is a very complex one. This is especially true for a small media market, which is characterized by a diversity of languages and is politically characterized by a direct-democratic orientation. In Switzerland, public service thus has a special democratic political role and an important function for cultural and linguistic integration.

The subsequent article, titled "Communication as the crucial link: Toward a multilevel approach to normative social influence," by Sarah Geber and Erica Sedlander aims at providing a theoretical approach that allows future research on norms and communication to move beyond the prevailing focus on individual-level norms. Instead, it stimulates studies that acknowledge and capture the complexity of norms and the links between individual and collective norms. Based on previous empirical and theoretical research, the authors propose a multilevel approach to normative social influence (MANSI). Importantly, in this approach, communication is conceptualized as functional link between the different levels of social norms, which opens many opportunities for future media and communication research.

Immigration is one of the key issues of our times that is only going to grow in importance as migratory movements will intensify in response to economic inequality, war, and climate change. The attitudes toward immigrants will thus also continue to be a critical issue, shaped in a significant degree by media representations. Maija Ozola-Schade addresses this issue in her article "Intergroup relations and media: The effects of media system quality in explaining immigration attitudes." She investigates if the quality of media systems influences formation of a well-informed public. The author combined European Social Survey data with media quality indicators from the Varieties of Democracy project and conducted a cross national

comparison. The results show that a higher quality media system fosters pro-immigration attitudes, particularly toward non-European migrants who are more often targets of anti-immigration attitudes.

Tiredness of various issues, be it COVID-19, war, climate change, or general instability, is frequently mentioned in daily conversations. Gwendolin Gurr, Christina Schumann, and Julia Metag shine the academic light on it by investigating the public fatigue with issues continually covered in the media in their piece "Negative effects of long-lasting media attention to public issues on recipients: Conceptualizing issue fatigue." While the topic of issue fatigue has received much research attention, several aspects remain undertheorized. The authors review findings of prior studies and advance several theoretical propositions defining issue fatigue and its dimensions as well as its consequences, causes, and dynamics. The authors also offer practical suggestions such as that journalists should be sensitive to issue fatigue but still driven to fulfil their democratic information function and thus tailor presented news to reduce repetition.

In our Review Section Sophie Mützel reviews "Research exposed. How empirical social science gets done in the digital age" edited by Eszter Hargittai. The volume focuses on the challenges of conducting research on digital communication with various methods and from different paradigmatic approaches. Mützel praises the volume for providing insightful information on the behind the scenes trial-and-error work of researchers that most of the time remains hidden as there is no space for such discussions in journal articles. The book thus offers useful information for researchers designing projects.

We hope you will enjoy reading this issue!

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