

NETWORKS, HACKING,
AND MEDIA – CITAMS@30

STUDIES IN MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

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STUDIES IN MEDIA AND
COMMUNICATIONS VOLUME 17

**NETWORKS, HACKING, AND
MEDIA – CITAMS@30:
NOW AND THEN AND
TOMORROW**

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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FOREWORD TO CITAMS@30

The reception, sessions, and roundtables at American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting in Philadelphia in August 2018 aside, these double volumes are perhaps the most enduring fruit of our celebration of CITAMS@30 – the 30th anniversary of the Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association. The two volumes are the results of the numerous conversations – in personal and various mode of digital communication – between and among the co-editors and contributors, many of whom have been an integral part of the CITAMS community.

With its roots in ASA's Microcomputing User Group meetings, the Microcomputing Section established in 1988 (Anderson, 2006) has developed into a strategic venue that connects sociologists, communication scholars, and media researchers. The section changed its name to Communication and Information Technologies in 2002, proposed by Keith Hampton, Eszter Hargittai, and Anabel Quan-Haase representing a new generation of sociologists of the Internet and digital technologies (Elesh & Dowdall, 2006). In 2016, responding to the growing members' interests in digital, social, mobile, and popular media sociology, the section officially added Media to its name (Robinson, 2018).

As a section member since I was a graduate student, my intellectual and professional development has greatly benefited from many talented, generous CITAMS members. It is my tremendous privilege serving as the section chair in the year of its 30th anniversary. It has been a great pleasure working with three CITAMS past chairs Barry Wellman, Shelia R. Cotten, Laura Robinson as well as Casey Brienza, the founder of the Media Sociology Preconference on the two volumes. The response to our call for papers has been so great that we have two volumes rather than one volume as originally planned. In particular, Laura Robinson, as the editor of the *Emerald Studies in Media and Communications* (ESMC), has played a pivotal role in shepherding the reviewing process.

Together, contributors, including past and future chairs as well as section members and friends, revisit the section history, examine important themes relevant to the 30-year section history, and imagine the section future. Gathering some of the finest scholars in the sociology of communication, information technologies, and media, the two volumes look back, celebrating what the members and friends of this section have achieved. More importantly, the two volumes set agenda for the future of our shared intellectual commons.

ESMC Volume 17: *Networks, Hacking, and Media – CITAMS@30: Now and Then and Tomorrow* is co-edited by Barry Wellman, Laura Robinson, Casey Brienza, Wenhong Chen, Shelia R. Cotten, and Aneka Khilnani (Associate Editor). The volume starts with the field analysis on the history, present, and future of Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology, authored by past and incoming chairs including Jennifer Earl, and Deana

Rohlinger, James C. Witte, a past chair, and his co-authors (Roberta Spalter-Roth and Yukiko Furuya) examine section members' participation in the publication process of the *American Sociological Review* while Edward Brent reviews earlier section history and investigates the method implications of information technology. The second part of Volume 17 centers on the contours of interpersonal relationships, as well as the shifting structures, compositions, and purposes of networks in the digital age by Mary Chayko, Anabel Quan-Haase, Andrew D. Nevin, Veronika Lukacs, Yotam Shmargad, Hazel Kwon, Marc Esteve Del Valle, Alicia Wanless-Berk, Anatoliy Gruzd, and Philip Mai.

ESMC Volume 18 highlights the M in CITAMS, namely Media Sociology, is co-edited by Casey Brienza, Laura Robinson, Barry Wellman, Shelia R. Cotten, Wenhong Chen, and Aneka Khilnani (Associate Editor). Contributors include both practitioners and scholars, discussing a range of issues related to digital media inequalities that call for government intervention in the United States (Lloyd Levine) and media intervention in China (Mingli Mei, Ru Zhao, and Miaochen Zhu). Jeremiah Morelock focuses on the tangled interrelationship between digital, racial and health inequalities, Saran Ghatak and Niall Moran examine nineteenth century news media coverage of immigrants in New York. The volume also sheds lights on culture production and consumption, a rapid growing area of media sociology, including the paradox of closure and openness in cultural journalism by Philippa K. Chong, the story-world of the hit HBO drama *Game of Thrones* by Carmen Spanó, the discourse of family, gender, and class in Bollywood cinema by Tanni Chaudhuri, and the intriguing relations of affection, mediation, and communication by Ana Ramos.

The two volumes, together, demonstrate the range, sophistication, and compassion of our section. CITAMS is definitely one of the most intellectually diverse ASA section with many of its members nurturing and thriving at the intersections of multiple disciplines, switching between academia and practices. The sociological insight and imagination advanced by the work of section members, often transcending disciplinary boundaries, have important theoretical and practical implications in our digital world. As a networked transfield (Chen, 2018), CITAMS is uniquely positioned to contribute to scholarly and public discourse and practice on big challenges of our time such as digital inclusion, privacy, and the future of work and organization. If an Internet year is a dog year, what are the next 30 years in store for our globalized, mediated, and networked societies and communities? How would the boundaries and scope of sociology change and how would CITAMS evolve? CITAMS, Happy Anniversary and many Happy Returns!

Wenhong Chen

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All of the ESMC editorial staff extend our appreciation to the many individuals who have contributed to this volume. We would like to call attention to the often unseen work of the many individuals whose support has been indispensable in publishing all volumes in the series and this volume in particular. Regarding the Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology Section in the American Sociological Association (CITAMS), we thank the Council for the section's sponsorship of the series. We also thank to our Editorial Board members for their service disseminating our outreach and publicity. In particular, at Emerald Publishing, we deeply appreciate Jennifer McCall's support of the series and the Emerald editorial staff's contributions bringing the volumes to press. Finally, we recognize Associate Editor, Aneka Khilnani, for her excellent work, as well as Guest Editors Barry Wellman, Wenhong Chen, and Casey Brienza without whom these volumes celebrating the 30-year anniversary of CITAMS would have been impossible.

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EDITOR BIOGRAPHIES

EDITORS

Casey Brienza is the Founder of the Media Sociology Preconference. Previously she was a Lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Centre for Culture and the Creative Industries at City, University of London. She holds a PhD in Sociology from the University of Cambridge. To date, she has written over 15 articles and chapters about transnational cultural production and consumption and the political economy of the global culture industries, specifically as these relate to publishing and emerging digital technologies. Casey is the author of *Manga in America: Transnational Book Publishing and the Domestication of Japanese Comics* (Bloomsbury, 2016), editor of *Global Manga: “Japanese” Comics without Japan?* (Routledge, 2015), and co-editor with Paddy Johnston of *Cultures of Comics Work* (Palgrave, 2016).

Wenhong Chen (PhD) is an Associate Professor of Media Studies and Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research has focused on digital media technologies in entrepreneurial and civic settings. Dr Chen has more than 60 publications, including articles in top-ranked journals in the fields of communication and media studies, sociology, and management. Dr Chen’s research has received awards from American Sociological Association, the Academy of Management, International Communication Association, and International Association of Chinese Management Research. She is serving as the Chair of the Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology Section of American Sociological Association in 2017–2018. Dr Chen is the lead Editor of the book *Networked China: Global Dynamics of Digital Media and Civic Engagement* (with Stephen Reese, Routledge, 2015).

Shelia R. Cotten is a Professor in the Department of Media and Information at Michigan State University. She has served as the Chair of Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology Section in the American Sociological Association (CITAMS) and has previously held appointments at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. After earning her PhD from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, she was a postgraduate fellow at the Boston University School of Public Health. Her work has been funded by The National Science Foundation and the National Institute on Aging. Cotten’s work addresses key social problems with sociological tools related to technology access, use, and impacts/outcomes. She has published on a number of topics including the XO laptop program in Birmingham and the use of ICT resources to improve older Americans’ quality of life. The body of her work was recognized by the CITASA Award for Public Sociology in 2013 and the CITAMS Career Achievement Award in 2016.

Laura Robinson is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Santa Clara University. She earned her PhD from UCLA, where she held a Mellon Fellowship in Latin American Studies and received a Bourse d'Accueil at the École Normale Supérieure. In addition to holding a postdoctoral fellowship on a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation funded project at the USC Annenberg Center, Robinson has served as a Visiting Assistant Professor at Cornell University and the Chair of Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology Section in the American Sociological Association (formerly CITASA) for 2014–2015. Her research has earned awards from CITASA, AOIR, and NCA IICD. Robinson's current multi-year study examines digital and informational inequalities. Her other publications explore interaction and identity work, as well as new media in Brazil, France, and the United States.

Barry Wellman directs the NetLab Network and is a Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Ryerson University's Social Media Lab. He is the former S.D. Clark Professor of Sociology at the University of Toronto. Wellman's most recent book is the prize-winning *Networked: The New Social Operating System* (with Lee Rainie, Director of the Pew Internet and American Life Project) published by MIT Press in Spring 2012. The book analyzes the social nature of networked individualism, growing out of the Social Network Revolution, the Internet Revolution, and the Mobile Revolution. Prof. Wellman is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He founded the International Network for Social Network Analysis in 1976/1977. He is the Chair-Emeritus of both the Community and Information Technologies section and the Community and Urban Sociology section of the American Sociological Association. He has been a keynoter at conferences ranging from computer science to theology. He is the (co-) author of more than 200 articles that have been co-authored with more than 80 scholars and is the (co-) editor of five books.

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Mary Chayko is a Sociologist, Teaching Professor, and Director of Interdisciplinary Studies at Rutgers University's School of Communication and Information. Her research is on the impact of digital technology and social media on relationships, community, society, and self. She is the author of *Superconnected: The Internet, Digital Media, and Techno-Social Life* (Sage Publications), now in its second edition; *Portable Communities: The Social Dynamics of Online and Mobile Connectedness* and *Connecting: How We Form Social Bonds and Communities in the Internet Age*, both with SUNY Press; and many published articles. She served on the Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology (CITAMS) Section Council of the American Sociological Association from 2015 to 2017.

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K. Hazel Kwon is an Assistant Professor of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University. Her research centers on online communities with an emphasis on the dynamics in which networked environment influences public engagement, collective sense-making, and anti-social behaviors. The National Science Foundation and Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory have supported her research previously. She has received the Dordick Dissertation Award from the International Communication Association (ICA), Emerging Scholars award from Association of Education for Journalism & Mass Communication (AEJMC), and multiple paper awards from ICA, AEJMC, and National Communication Association.

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Yotam Shmargad is a Computational Social Scientist in the School of Government & Public Policy at the University of Arizona. In his research, he runs experiments, links and analyzes large datasets, and uses computer simulations and natural experiments to study how digital media augment the patterns of connectivity between people – the size, density, and diversity of our social networks – and the implications that these Big Nets have for our social and political lives. Shmargad's work has appeared in the *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, the *Journal of Politics*, the *Journal of Information Policy*, and the *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, among other venues. Before joining the University of Arizona as an Assistant Professor, Shmargad earned his PhD in Marketing from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

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Alicia Wanless-Berk is an internationally recognized Researcher of Information Warfare and Propaganda, having identified models and patterns of information campaigns. Alicia has presented her work to senior government, military, and academic experts at Wilton Park, Oxford University, the Hedayah Centre, NATO's ARRC, the NATO-USSOCOM Joint Senior PsyOps Conference, the UK's JIAG, and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Alicia's work has been featured in CBC, Forbes, and The Strategy Bridge. She is currently the Director of Strategies at the Centre for Dynamic Research.

James C. Witte is a Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Director of the Center for Social Science Research, and Director of the Institute for Immigration Research at George Mason University. Witte has written numerous articles that have appeared in journals such as *The European Sociological Review*, *Population and Development Review*, and *Sociological Methods and Research*. He has also published three books, *Labor Force Integration and Marital Choice*, the *Internet and Social Inequality*, and *The Normal Bar*. *The Normal Bar*, co-authored with Chrisanna Northrup and Pepper Schwartz, was released in 2013 and made the *New York Times* bestseller list. Recent major projects have included the privately funded Institute for Immigration Research, the National Science Foundation funded Digital Archive Project, and the University Partnership with the University of Karachi funded by the US State Department and a study of civic engagement and economic success among immigrant professionals, conducted with support from the Corporation for National and Community Service. Witte served as Chair of the Communication, Information Technology, and Media Sociology section of the American Sociological Association from 2005 to 2007.

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Wenhong Chen, Shelia R. Cotten and Aneka Khilnani

Since the beginning of CITASA's sponsorship of *Emerald Studies in Media and Communications* (ESMC), the series has published research by CITAMS members and enriched the section's sense of intellectual community. More recently, ESMC has also sponsored the Media Sociology Preconference and organized its closing plenary sessions. Given these fruitful relationships, as the 30-year anniversary of CITAMS approached, it seemed only natural to invite the CITAMS past chairs and community to contribute to a special volume celebrating the event. We invited current section chair Wenhong Chen and past chairs Barry Wellman, Shelia R. Cotten, and Laura Robinson to join forces with Casey Brienza, founder of the Media Sociology Preconference. Their mission was simple: find the best current scholarship highlighting the present state of our dynamic field and showcase contributions regarding the growth and history of the section with an eye to the future. To our delight, overwhelming response produced not one, but two volumes with lead editors Barry Wellman and Casey Brienza. The first of the two volumes – *Networks, Hacking, and Media – CITAMS@30: Now and Then and Tomorrow* – features scholarship on the state of the field by past CITAMS chairs, as well as a feast of interdisciplinary scholarship on networks and relationships. The second of the two volumes – *The M in CITAMS@30: Media Sociology* – probes the relationships between inequalities and media, as well as providing includes a scintillating array of scholarship on cultural production and consumption. Both volumes highlight some of the best of the vibrant, interdisciplinary scholarship in communication, information technologies, and media sociology.

This special 17th volume is entitled *Networks, Hacking, and Media – CITAMS@30: Now and Then and Tomorrow*. With contributions from former and current section chairs, the first section deals with the development of our section and its scholarship over the last 30 years. Authors Deana Rohlinger and Jennifer Earl lead this first section with their article entitled, "CITAMS at Thirty: Learning from the Past, Plotting a Course for the Future." Viewing the section as both an

intellectual enterprise and an organization, they explore key aspects of the section's history with an eye to charting a stable and successful future. Their analysis draws on membership data from the ASA and reports by outgoing section chairs to highlight successful strategies for section evolution and development, particularly in terms of formalizing CITAMS' governance. Contending that "CITAMS leadership works hard to update its mission, structure, and name in ways that accurately reflect a quickly changing field," they also show the need for consistent good leadership by enumerating challenges that may be engendered by bad leadership. Rohlinger and Earl's work provides important insights for future section leadership seeking to expand our section's impact and reach, while steering clear of pitfalls.

Next, James C. Witte, Roberta Spalter-Roth, and Yukiko Furuya examine CITAMS' activity vis-à-vis the review and publication processes of the *American Sociological Review*, considered by many sociologists to be a premiere publication venue. Their work, "Section Membership and Participation in the *American Sociological Review* Publication Process," sheds light on the underrepresentation of our section members as authors and reviewers. They compare our section to the ASA Methodology Section by drawing on the newly created *American Sociological Review (ASR)* Digital Archive. Their findings show that:

... controlling for differences in the gender and age composition of the two sections, CITAMS members are significantly less likely than Methodology Section members to participate in the *ASR* publication process.

They find that CITAMS members are less likely than members of the Methodology Section to either submit their work for publication in *ASR* or be asked to review by *ASR*. Witte, Spalter-Roth, and Furuya suggest that, in the future, submissions by CITAMS members might grow through increased innovative collaboration with sociologists affiliated with other ASA sections with greater participation in *ASR*.

Edward Brent concludes the section with "How Information Technology Transforms the Methods of Sociological Research: Past and Future." His work reviews a 30-year history of the section in light of significant IT changes that have impacted section research methods. He provides a valuable historical overview of the growth of computers and the social sciences from the late 1980s and early 1990s during which our section began. Interjecting his own experiences as an academic and software engineer, he also bookends the analysis with an overview of contemporary digital research methods. In his words:

This work is neither an unbridled and uncritical celebration of this increasing role of IT in research nor a slippery slope argument predicting inevitable doom. There are social pressures toward greater use of IT in social research. Such methods offer great promise. But there may be an argument for not transforming too fast. The issue of whether more automated methods of research are superior to less automated ones is not always based solely on the quality of the analysis.

Brent's work closes with a consideration of the future of sociological research in light of continued technological evolution.

The second section of the volume begins with contributions by future section chairs and prominent section members. The scholarship provides examples of today's prominent communication and information technologies as they apply to networks and relationships. The first article is "In Sync, but Apart: Temporal Symmetry, Social Synchronicity, and Digital Connectedness" by Mary Chayko. Mary Chayko connects the first section of the volume on section history with

her work on a theme important to much section scholarship: relationships and community. Her work examines the “means and mechanisms by which digital connectedness, community, and solidarity are established.” Demonstrating how digital technologies contribute to social solidarity, she builds on Zerubavel’s concept of unity through simultaneity. Illuminating the importance of mediated “sociomental” connections, she argues,

The sociomental sharing of experience that can transcend space and time is foundational to social connectedness. It provides a means for people to establish intersubjectivity and common ground, obtain and exchange social capital, and build the social networks, relationships and communities in which they will become ensconced.

Chayko’s work foregrounds the themes uniting the second section of the volume – relationships and networks – in terms of the benefits and hazards of digital connectedness.

Benefits may be withdrawn when relationships fail, as we see in the next article that probes the darker side of mediating our relationships: “Romantic Dissolution and Facebook Life: A Typology of Coping Strategies for Breakups” by Anabel Quan-Haase, Andrew D. Nevin, and Veronika Lukacs. Studying young adults connected on Facebook to romantic partners, they show how digital media may increase the negative consequences of breakups by acting as a “high-stakes stressor”—a connection which is understudied in previous work. Here we see that once digital media engagements complicate romantic breakups, they generate negative experiences that necessitate coping strategies. In their words,

... Yet, some of the attempts to alleviate breakup distress in offline contexts can lead to new stressful situations on Facebook (Lukacs & Quan-Haase, 2015), which shows that coping strategies are complicated and context-dependent. This necessitates a new look at coping strategies as pertaining to the unique characteristics and affordances of Facebook.

Their exploratory study contributes a typology of seven Facebook coping strategies that they link to twenty-five actions that will be invaluable for future researchers.

From interpersonal romantic relationships we move to social networks in “Long Ties as Equalizers” by Yotam Shmargad. Using computer simulations, Shmargad examines the messages disseminated by competing groups to promote different points of view in various contexts from politics to marketing. With an eye to the potential impact of resource abundance and shortage on diffusion, he argues that the role of the social network structure is an important factor in “the inequalities in reach brought about by asymmetric access to resources.” Modeling asymmetric access to resources, and varying the number of places in a social network from where competing disseminators can “seed” their messages, Shmargad discovers that:

... when asymmetrically-seeded messages spread through the same social network, “long ties” – links connecting otherwise distant regions of the social network – decrease the disparities in diffusion brought about by unequal access to seeds.

Significantly, his research has important implications for future studies as he is also able to generalize this finding to “argue that information and communication technologies like Facebook and Twitter can foster dissemination equality by prioritizing interactions across long ties.”

The importance of analyzing networks is equally apparent in the next contribution entitled “Black-Hat Hackers’ Crisis Information Processing in the

Darknet: A Case Study of Cyber Underground Market Shutdowns” by K. Hazel Kwon and Jana Shakarian. Their research examines black-hat hackers in the context of crypto-market shutdowns as crisis events. Kwon and Shakarian’s study of a Tor-based darknet market forum allows them to inquire into collective information processing. Taking advantage of both content and network analysis, their research takes advantage of user conversations regarding cryptomarket information to reveal how community intelligence can be gathered by black-hat hackers. They find that despite the monetary and penal risks to black-hat hackers, black-hat communities:

... as a hidden organization may be resilient to crisis events thanks to their OpSec strategy-oriented culture and fragmented network structure. That said, anti-sociality was aggravated facing a crisis, leading some users to break the norm of anonymity.

The complexity of their discoveries indicates the importance of studying networks, crisis events, and different kinds of social actors, particularly understudied populations.

The volume closes with “I Click, Therefore I Am: Predicting Clicktivist-like Actions on Candidates’ Facebook Posts During the 2016 US Primary Election” by Marc Esteve Del Valle, Alicia Wanless-Berk, Anatoliy Gruzd, and Philip Mai. Their timely research on Facebook political data allows them to determine the factors predicting “likes” in key political campaigns. Analyzing “likes” regarding the top three candidates from the 2016 US primary election – Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, and Donald Trump – their results of an Ordinary Least Squared regression analysis showed:

... that the use of highly charged (positive or negative) emotions and personalized posts (first-person singular pronouns) increased “likes” across all three candidates’ Facebook pages; whereas visual posts (posts containing either videos or photos) and the use of past tenses were liked more often by Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders’ followers than by Trump’s followers.

Significantly, their study engages with larger questions regarding social media and deliberative democratic processes thanks to their consideration of organic engagement versus Facebook timeline algorithm and targeted ads.

In conclusion, the breadth of this research indicates the wide swath of scholarship taking place in the Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology section of the American Sociological Association. Contributions on the history of the CITAMS section indicate the power of our past, while current work on networks, hacking, and relationships are strong indicators of the section’s future promise. This discussion will continue in the next of the two volume series CITAMS@30 entitled *The “M” in CITAMS@30: Media Sociology*.