

Editorial:

Risk and Crisis Communication

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Crises are situations of the highest level of stress on decision-makers. They happen on all levels—social, political, economic, health, and so on. Communication can help in managing the crisis situation just as easily as it can do the exact opposite. During a crisis situation, the indicator of good or bad usage of communication is the degree to which it affects the escalation or de-escalation of the situation. When sound communication strategies are employed to instigate de-escalation during a crisis situation, it becomes an essential factor in helping adversaries to reach management. Washington and Moscow recognized the importance of communication during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis as an essential part of the bargaining process, and as an acceptable and valid substitute for some high-risk techniques. Both powers have acknowledged the relevance of communication as an aid to understanding and compromise. The lesson most frequently drawn from that crisis was the need to maintain open lines of communication with the adversary, not the reverse.

Communication is influenced by the circumstances and situations in which it is used. When the situation is a crisis and the circumstances are threat/risk, distortion of basics, uncertainty, tension, stress, surprise, and disputes, it is expected that communication will be used in various forms. Regardless of its several forms and strategies, risk and crisis communication aims to promote understanding among individuals within groups, organizations, governments, or nations in order to overcome the risky circumstances and manage the crisis, reaching some kind of settlement and the most possible desired ends.

The refereed papers in this issue of the *Global Media Journal -- Canadian Edition* shed light on the role of risk and crisis communication in relation to some contexts such as politics, the public's interest, criminology, healthcare, and terrorism.

Crisis management plans of corporations are the core focus of the first paper, titled "The Critical Role of Crisis Communication Plan in Corporations' Crises Preparedness and Management". Agnes Lucy Lando argues that organizations in Kenya often lack effective crisis communication due to the fact that they do not have crisis communication plans. The paper discusses several recent crises to highlight the negative consequences of such lack of crisis communication plans and the importance of including them within the wider crisis management plans of organizations.

Political organizations, as also demonstrated in Lando's paper, face challenges in communicating with the public during crises. The Arab League, as one of the major political organizations, is the focus of the next paper, titled "Transparence et communication publique: Étude du cas de la Ligue des États Arabes". Khaled Zamoum discusses transparency as a key public communication strategy. He explains that while various internal and external pressures require the League to respect several information rights, the institution does not have a structured coherent policy on public information.

One of the intersections between communication and crisis is the interdisciplinary study of media and criminology, in which cybercrime is a relatively new area of research. Rocci Luppicini, in his paper titled "Illuminating the Dark Side of the Internet with Actor-Network Theory: An Integrative Review of Current Cybercrime Research", looks into the influence of Actor-Network Theory on the most recent research on cybercrime. The paper uncovers the theory's role in key areas of current cybercrime, namely, cyber bullying, cyber theft, cyber terrorism, and cyber espionage.

Crises in healthcare systems highlight the dire need for effective communication regarding the risks of diseases and their consequences. Focusing on women's breast cancer, Arwa Luqman discusses, in her paper titled "The 'Asabiyya-Driven Structuration of Women's Breast Cancer in the Arab Region", the importance of establishing a well-founded regional network in the Arab world to ensure successful preventative and early detection measures. Evaluating the influence of the 'asabiyya-driven structuration, which is the cohesive force of the group that gives it strength in facing its struggles for progressive reproduction, the paper concludes that countries with a national cancer control program witness local strengthening 'asabiyya and 'asabiyya-driven structuration, while those without a national cancer control program witness weakening local 'asabiyya.

Similar to crisis, terrorism is a severe stress situation in which several factors can contribute to its exacerbation. In her paper titled "Radicalization of the Settlers' Youth: Hebron as a Hub for Jewish Extremism", Geneviève Boucher Boudreau argues that the city of Hebron has been a hub for radicalization and terrorism throughout the modern history of Israel. Conducting exhaustive ethnographic fieldwork and bibliographic research on Jewish communities and organizations, this paper discusses the transmission of social memory and the impact of Jewish movements on the uprising of violence and the growth of radical ideologies among new generations.

The book reviews section of this journal issue starts with a review article, "Democracy, Pluralism, and Deliberation", by Jason Hannan. This article reviews the three books: *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically* (2013), *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere* (2011), and *The Idea of Justice* (2009). Finally, Mohammad Ayish reviews *Propaganda and the Ethics of Persuasion* (2013) and Mahmoud Eid reviews *Inside Terrorism* (2006).

About the Editor

Mahmoud Eid is an Associate Professor at the Department of Communication, University of Ottawa, Canada. Dr. Eid is the author of *Interweavement: International Media Ethics and Rational Decision-Making* (2008), co-author of *Mission Invisible: Race, Religion, and News at*

the Dawn of the 9/11 Era (2014), editor of *Exchanging Terrorism Oxygen for Media Airwaves: The Age of Terroredia* (2014) and *Research Methods in Communication* (2011), and co-editor of *Basics in Communication and Media Studies* (2012) and *The Right to Communicate: Historical Hopes, Global Debates and Future Premises* (2009). His research interests focus on international communication, media ethics, media representations, decision-making, crisis management, conflict resolution, terrorism, Islam, Arab culture, Middle East politics, research methods, and the political economy of communication.

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