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Book review: Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Cosmopolitan Communications: Cultural Diversity in a Globalized World*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2009; 429 pp.: £17.99

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foundation of the early childhood industry. Trusted brands like Disney, BBC and Nickelodeon are increasingly functioning as the dominant global players. The challenge is to balance 'making production work as a sustainable business without sacrificing the plurality of supply that underpins the creativity, care and innovation of the best pre-school television' (p. 219). Maintaining a plurality of supply is difficult within the USA's relatively well-funded marketplace and the UK's continuing public service provision, but maintaining a plurality of cultural supply is a huge challenge in smaller nations.

Reference

Cassy, J. (2000) City tunes in to children's TV. *The Guardian*, 5th February. Available at: www.guardian.co.uk/business/2000/feb/05/6.

Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Cosmopolitan Communications: Cultural Diversity in a Globalized World*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2009; 429 pp.: £17.99

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The Himalayan country of Bhutan provides the starting point for Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart's *Cosmopolitan Communications*. In 1999, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck allowed television in Bhutanese households, making mostly foreign information and entertainment available to his people and changing their lives dramatically.

The subsequent and ongoing debate about the negative impact of foreign media leads to Norris and Inglehart's main question. In the tradition of previous studies on value changes, democratization and the role of the media (such as *Politics and the Press*, *Digital Divide*, or *A Virtuous Circle*), they ask: What are the effects of the increasingly international networks of communication that are encompassing more and more countries in the world?

The book's basic premise is the concept and the rise of what the authors call 'cosmopolitan communications': they argue that communication networks, particularly the media, 'bind people living in diverse communities and nation-states together', so that 'all humans increasingly live and interact within a single global community' (p. 8).

Norris and Inglehart are interested in the effects that this communication has on different countries, but are dissatisfied with current answers. Many authors argue that such communication will lead to a global convergence towards generally western values. Others fear the exact opposite, namely a polarization and radicalization (the 'Taliban Effect', p. 17) of certain countries that oppose the influx of perceived-to-be western morals and values. Others argue that we should expect a hybridization or fusion of both global influences and local adaptations, leading to a 'glocalized' world.

Norris and Inglehart rightly criticize these models for often relying on anecdotal evidence and broad, unproven assumptions. The authors put forward their own 'firewall model' in Chapter 2, which posits that news media do affect values and may accordingly initiate value change; however, they argue that these effects will not occur in all cases: they claim that this effect will be mediated by societal factors, i.e. the extent to which

countries are integrated in, or allow for, the cosmopolitan flow of communication. As they show in Chapter 3, the transnational exchange of movies, TV, radio, music, newspapers, magazines and books is a sizeable yet globally very asymmetrical phenomenon, emitted mainly from the global north (particularly from the US, Germany, France, the UK, and Canada) to the rest of the world. Many other countries are not well integrated into these exchange networks, have low domestic levels of media freedom and lack access to foreign news and communication infrastructures. Norris and Inglehart suggest that this type of setting will effectively work as a firewall, keeping media influences away from certain societies.

In Chapter 4, they demonstrate that additional ‘firewalls’ are at work within societies, in that poverty and lack of socioeconomic resources hinder sections of the population from accessing mass communication in many countries. Both societal and individual barriers can thus mediate any impact the media might have. The authors suggest that the global flow of media has ‘more nuanced’ (p. 30) effects.

The following chapters focus mainly on empirical evidence for the firewall model. Norris and Inglehart start by proposing a ‘Cosmopolitanism Index’ in Chapter 5, allowing them to sort countries by their integration into cosmopolitan communication networks. The index uses macro-level data, such as the KOF Globalization Index and Freedom House Ratings, as indicators to measure the extent to which countries are integrated into global networks, the free flow of information within these countries and levels of access to domestic media. As a result, the index differentiates between very cosmopolitan societies, such as Denmark, Estonia, or Switzerland, which have free access to multiple media channels, low barriers to cultural trade and few restrictions on independent journalists, and more provincial societies, such as Burma, Iran or Syria, where the state exercises considerable control over the media and other communications, cultural imports and journalistic freedom are restricted and public access to mass communications is low.

These media effects are then tested empirically. The authors find necessary data in the World Values Survey (WVS), a comprehensive survey that questions representative population samples in more than 80 countries worldwide. The research design underlying the book’s next four chapters is simple, namely: ‘To examine the direct effect of media use on social values, [by using] individual-level survey evidence to analyze the attitudes and values of representative samples of citizens, comparing those who do and do not regularly use the mass media, controlling for many other characteristics of the audience’ (p. 29). The indicator used to assess ‘media use’ is also rather simple. The authors measure whether or not an individual regularly uses ‘daily newspapers, radio/TV news, magazines, books, and the internet/email “to learn what is going on in your country and the world” ’ (p. 57); i.e. using a dichotomous question that, unfortunately, does not take the respondent’s length or intensity of use, level of interest, or attention into account.

Chapter 6 examines whether the respondents’ news exposure encourages nationalistic or cosmopolitan orientations, i.e. whether media consumers are more or less likely to identify themselves as a citizen of their nation, to express national pride, or to trust outsiders than are others. The authors show that media exposure is positively correlated to trust and tolerance towards outsiders as well as nationalistic orientations, even after controlling for age, gender and other sociodemographic characteristics. Furthermore,

they show that this link is stronger in more cosmopolitan countries and among those who use the media more often, which supports their firewall model.

Similar results are found in other areas. Media exposure is also positively correlated with individualistic and conservative economic attitudes, in that media consumers tend to value individual achievement, success and free markets with minimal government intervention (Chapter 7). Moreover, 'users of the mass media are generally more liberal towards sexual and moral values, less tolerant of unethical standards of public life, less religious, more liberal in family values, and more egalitarian towards the roles of women and men' (p. 234, Chapter 8). Chapter 9 shows that political and civic engagement – such as confidence in institutions, membership in social movements, interest in politics and party support – is also positively correlated with media use.

Most of these correlations are strongest in cosmopolitan societies and among media users, as the firewall model would predict. Norris and Inglehart thus deduce that media effects do exist, but that, as expected, 'the existence of multiple firewalls [prevents] the mass media from penetrating parochial societies and thus influencing the culture in these places' (p. 261). This conclusion does not necessarily dictate any particular long-term trajectory; given that societal infrastructure and communicative openness develop differently by country, global convergence or divergence are both still a possibility. The authors therefore provide an additional longitudinal analysis of 11 countries in Chapter 10, using different WVS waves from 1981 to 2005. They can show an increase of cosmopolitan communications in all countries, ranging from the USA and Europe to Argentina, Mexico, South Korea, or South Africa. Yet the authors can also show that although values are changing across the board, substantial differences remain between cosmopolitan and parochial societies: 'compared with more parochial societies, more cosmopolitan societies were characteristically less religious and nationalistic in their cultural values, as well as displaying more liberal sexual moralities and greater political engagement. They were also less supporting of neo-liberal free market economics; although regarded by some as the home of capitalist values, in fact many affluent societies believe that the state needs to continue to play an important role in the economy' (pp. 280–1). The authors therefore interpret the long-term data as suggesting 'that the polarization thesis is a more accurate depiction of cultural change rather than the convergence thesis' (p. 284).

Overall, *Cosmopolitan Communications* has a lot of merits. It is an easily accessible yet bold study, dealing with a grand question in a comprehensive and methodologically transparent way. Moreover, it offers a wide variety of interesting findings that will certainly add another spark to the ongoing debate about media globalization and its effects.

The book will also receive its fair share of criticism, for example about its overall research design. As any study with such an enormous scope, it forces readers to accept several trade-offs along the way, which not everybody will be able to do. The most fundamental trade-off is that the study almost entirely relies on quantitative measurement. Even though the authors provide in-depth case studies for several countries to illustrate and strengthen their argument, the overall structure of the study, and all of its major conclusions, rely on statistical evidence. This level of abstraction inevitably neglects some country specifics and is thus unable to meet demands made by scholars who advocate more specific case study analyses.

Similar shortcomings are visible in some of the indicators, which were rather rough and sketchy at times. The most important example is the main indicator for the independent variable, media use. The authors measure media use dichotomously, without including the intensity, content, or audience attention. Some other indicators are problematic, too, such as using Gross Domestic Product as an indicator for media access because alternatives are lacking and both are closely related (see p. 154). The authors are very aware of these shortcomings, admitting at one point that finding more appropriate indicators would simply be 'extremely complex in a study involving scores of countries' (p. 297); however, some measurements, including some crucial ones, remain problematic, and this weakens the robustness of the results.

Two final criticisms touch upon the premise of the entire study and upon its interpretations. Concerning the first point: many of the authors' interpretations rely on the assumption that the values that are found in 'cosmopolitan' countries and among media users are the values that 'cosmopolitan' mass media advocate. However, this implicit assumption about the characteristics of media content is not proven empirically. The authors provide only anecdotal evidence to support this claim, although it carries a lot of weight in the overall argument. The second criticism concerns the assumption of causality made in the book. Most of the analyses draw from cross-sectional data from one WVS wave and therefore simply show correlations. These correlations may indicate causal linkages, but may also be the result of self-selection biases or other explanations. Again, the authors are very aware of this difficulty and address it in their book, but cannot fully overcome it.

These questions can nevertheless prove to be starting points for further research. Basing such research on studies like *Cosmopolitan Communication* will, without a doubt, be worthwhile.

Anna Triandafyllidou, Ruth Wodak and Michał Krzyzanowski (eds), *The European Public Sphere and the Media: Europe in Crisis*, Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke and New York, 2009; ix + 286 pp.: £55.00

Reviewed by: Richard Rooke, *London South Bank University*

Whether a European Public Sphere (EPS) exists or not is a question being raised by many disciplines. As such this work must be seen in the light of a growing band of high quality work raising questions over the possible relationship between the idea of a wider geopolitical 'Europe', on the one hand, and on the other, the political-media-cultural assumptions that underpin its development. These include how the various societies have been brought together from very different ideological and historical roots. Using media reaction to various crises the work challenges the idea of a recognizable 'European public sphere'. The work allows for a variety of debates that range around how meaningful media evidence can be in such political or even sociocultural questions. In common with so many of us interested in the topic, coming to strict conclusions is not easy and this book does not set out to give easy answers. It does provide for a string of