

## **Navigating the Intersections between Media, Politics, and Culture in Latin America and Latino Contexts: A Comprehensive Exploration**

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The Journal of Latin American Communication Research is proud to present its 12th volume, the first 2024 issue. It brings together a diverse array of studies that reflect the dynamic and multifaceted landscape of communication research in Latin America. This issue comprises six articles, each analyzing different aspects of media, communication, and their intersections with political, social, and cultural phenomena across Latin America and beyond. These contributions not only highlight the region's unique contexts but also provide comparative insights that resonate on a global scale.

The opening article by Arthur Ituassu from Pontificia Universidade Católica de Río de Janeiro, titled "Digital Media and Democracy in Brazil and Mexico," examines the profound impacts of digital media on the democratic processes in two of Latin America's largest democracies. Ituassu's comparative analysis reveals how digital media has reshaped political communication and public discourse in Brazil and Mexico, emphasizing the roles of fake news, radicalization, and government manipulation of the public sphere. The study highlights the rise of populism and the strategic use of digital platforms by unconventional political actors, providing crucial insights into the evolving media landscapes of these nations.

César Bolaño of Universidade Federal de Sergipe and Fabrício Zanghelini from Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina offer an intriguing dialogue in their article, "A Dialogue between the Concept of the Industrial-Economic Healthcare Complex and the Brazilian Political Economy of Information Communication and Culture." This piece bridges Brazilian public health thinking and the political economy of information communication, focusing on the Industrial-Economic Healthcare Complex (CEIS) concept. The authors dissect the relationships between health, national development, and digital platforms, critiquing the capitalist accumulation logic inherent in current economic development models. This critical perspective

enriches understanding how health and information economies intertwine in contemporary Brazil.

In "The Complexities of the New Latina Televisual Conservative Voice in the United States," Danny Méndez from Michigan State University explores the intriguing shift among Hispanic voters during the 2020 U.S. presidential election. Méndez analyzes the media personas of conservative Latina hosts Ana Navarro and Myrka Dellanos, highlighting their roles in shaping political discourse and engaging audiences across English and Spanish-speaking platforms. This study provides a nuanced view of media representation, political identity, and cultural dynamics within the Hispanic community in the United States, shedding light on the broader implications for media and politics.

Eliseo R. Colón Zayas from the University of Puerto Rico contributes an in-depth analysis of "Rivalries and Resonances: Aesthetics and Chronotopes in the Digital Sensorium of Netflix's *Narcos* and *La Casa De Papel*." By employing Bakhtin's concept of chronotopes, Colón Zayas explores the narrative structures and aesthetic elements that make these Spanish-language series resonate with transnational audiences. The study underscores the role of cultural practices and textual aesthetics in the streaming era, revealing how algorithmic structures influence both the production and reception of audiovisual content. This paper critically examines the intersection between technology, culture, and media consumption.

Ruben Ramírez Sánchez from the University of Puerto Rico – Río Piedras presents a compelling discussion on "Simulations of Climate Change: CGI and Hyperreal Representation in *The Day After Tomorrow* and *Geostorm*." Utilizing Baudrillard's concept of the hyperreal, Ramírez Sánchez examines how CGI techniques in Hollywood films create hyperrealistic portrayals of climate change. By analyzing the science fiction disaster genre, the paper delves into the implications of representing climate change through hyperreal simulations and the potential impacts on public perception and understanding of environmental issues. This study bridges media theory and environmental communication, offering a fresh perspective on visual representation and its societal effects.

Samária Araújo de Andrade reflects on the inseparability of the material and symbolic dimensions in journalism by addressing three interrelated aspects: a) the material dimension that tends to privilege market aspects and that in recent years is traversed by phenomena linked to

digital infotecnological transformations; b) the symbolic dimension and journalism as an activity of sense production; and c) the idea of a hegemonic model of practiced journalism.

Aileen Estrada Fernández and Maritza Maymí Hernández's "Actor-Network Critical Reading of Social Media and Political Activism in the Era of the Fiscal Oversight Board in Puerto Rico" is an empirical analysis studying the relationship between critical media reading skills and political activism among university students during the imposition of the Fiscal Oversight Board upon Puerto Rico by the U.S. Congress. Through a survey and binary logistic regression analysis, the authors find a significant, though moderate, correlation between media literacy and activism. This research underscores the importance of critical media skills in fostering effective political engagement, especially in contexts of socio-political turmoil.

Finally, Manuel Avilés Santiago examines three Puerto Rican TikTok content creators, engaging bicultural and bilingual millennials and Gen Zers Latinx audiences, and analyzes how humor is used as a tool to critique hegemonic linguistic ideologies regarding the use of Spanish in the United States and as a pedagogical tool and emphasizes its ability to convey culturally the complexities surrounding the linguistic experiences of young Puerto Ricans, in contrast to the hegemonic linguistic ideology.

This issue of the Journal of Latin American Communication Research provides a rich tapestry of research that spans across various dimensions of media and communication studies. From the intricate dynamics of digital media and democracy to the critical intersections of health, politics, and culture, the articles collectively enhance our understanding of how media shapes and is shaped by societal forces in Latin America and beyond. The journal continues to be a vital platform for scholarly discourse, fostering a deeper comprehension of the complex and ever-evolving field of communication research.