INTRODUCTION

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The *Routledge Companion to Media Anthropology* defines the widening and flourishing area of media anthropology, and outlines key themes, debates, and emerging directions. Developed at the junction of several disciplines such as media studies, cultural studies, communication, and science and technologies studies (STS), media anthropology has achieved significant insights about human life as it is conducted through media. This field has answered enduring questions about the sociocultural implications of media technologies in our world. Amid the diffusion of new technologies and media infrastructures, shifting social and political configurations, and changing theoretical frameworks and debates, media anthropology has now been growing for more than 20 years. The *Companion* showcases the most relevant developments in the field, draws together the work of scholars from across the globe who have carried out influential studies, provides an overview of past and contemporary research, and brings different approaches into dialogue with each other. With this introduction, we demonstrate the relevance, urgency, and scope of this volume, and outline its structure and content.

At the turn of the millennium, four volumes contributed to establish the field of media anthropology and outline the state of-the-art of this research area: *Media Worlds* (Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod, and Larkin 2002), *Anthropology of Media: A Reader* (Askew and Wilk 2002), *Anthropology and Mass Communication: Media and Myth in the New Millennium* (Peterson 2003), and *Media Anthropology* (Rothenbulher and Coman 2005). These earlier volumes engaged in conversations about mass media and explored the very early genres of digital and internet culture. Since then, communication technologies have significantly changed and diversified. This heterogeneity has yielded a broad range of analytical approaches and different types of social and cultural anthropology. For example, questions of representation and interpretation that dominated the study of mass media and broadcast communication have been followed by questions about technology and materiality that characterize the study of digital media and cultures. We believe that differences between media and their related conceptual categories should not lead to further sub-disciplinary divisions. We instead think that multiple anthropological trajectories and traditions might benefit from more cross-fertilization. For instance, issues of representations, imagination, and meaning–making are central aspects of contemporary digital cultures, as well as matters important to technologies and materiality that lie at the core of broadcasting and media production.

New media do not make old media obsolete. Media history is rather characterized by processes such as "remediation" (Bolter and Grusin 1999), integration, and convergence. The latest technological and media industry developments are making it even more apparent that old and new media are integrated into each other. Older mass media continue to persist through the assimilation of digital forms, and new media integrate older technologies. For example, TV streaming services such as Netflix contribute to processes of datafication. Spotify radio is a form of social media, and YouTube, initially designed as a social media platform, has been increasingly used as a broadcasting channel to communicate with larger audiences. Processes of remediation and integration have characterized the development of new media throughout the last two decades. Artificial intelligence systems use algorithms that adopt features from previous forms of computing. Social media have incorporated elements of both earlier one-to-one phone communications and broadcast media, and thereby, processes of "production" and "reception," traditionally at the core of mass media anthropology, are often entangled with practices of "participation" or "exchange." In this volume, we have ensured that different scholarships and approaches are brought into dialogue with each other to make sense of increasingly complex media ecologies. We also connect the study of broader socio-political processes and social changes to rapid technological transformations as well as continuities.

Media anthropology is a messy and open field characterized by its major developments and directions. This field not only has developed at the intersection of other disciplines, but also at the junction of broader debates in anthropology, such as those around inequality, social change, identity, migration, mobility, relationships, and politics. In the last two decades, technologically-mediated practices have become part of many more aspects of people's everyday lives, and the study of media has become an unavoidable part of many anthropological research projects whose primary analytical focus is not media. We want to make the theoretical horizons and the tools of media anthropology available to the larger community of anthropologists who are approaching media for the first time. The lack of a broad-based media anthropology journal has made this Companion even more relevant within the entire discipline of anthropology.

In the last two decades, media anthropology has been rapidly growing worldwide, with conferences, publications, and graduate programs in this field taking place across Europe, North and South America, East Asia, and Australia, as well as in Africa, where the Anthropology of Communications often includes foci on media. As a result, media anthropology has been playing a more important role in the interdisciplinary field of media and cultural studies. Ethnographic methods, as well as anthropology's conceptual tools and lenses, have shaped dialogues and debates outside the discipline. Digital ethnography has developed into a prominent methodological approach in interdisciplinary contexts (Pink et al. 2016; Hjorth et al. 2017), and during the years of the COVID-19 lockdown, has become even more popular among media scholars working under mobility restrictions. Anthropology has refined and enriched media studies' conceptual tools, such as the concept of affordances (Costa 2018), mediatization (Madianou 2014), media practices (Brauchler and Postill 2010), ritual (Couldry 2003), and myth (Coman 2005). Interdisciplinary cross-fertilization prompts the need to redefine the specifics of anthropological perspectives on media.

For all these reasons, we felt the urgency to compile a *Companion* that explores prior and emerging developments, and that deems media anthropology as an inclusive research field encompassing a variety of analytical perspectives and different media technologies. Our conceptualization of media includes technologies that produce and shape content, and that provide connections between people, and between people and technologies. Our definition is intentionally broad to facilitate wide-ranging explorations of how forms of mediation influence

communication, social relationships, cultural practices, participation, and social change, as well as production and access to information and knowledge. This inclusive and comprehensive definition of media also fits within anthropology's main goal, which is the comparative study of context-specific cultural forms and practices.

Media Anthropologies

We have selected chapters that present a rich variety of ethnographic studies from all over the world and that cover different approaches and disparate media technologies, such as TV, radio, newspaper, gaming, social media, artificial intelligence (AI), and virtual reality. The *Companion* reflects the diversity of populations that use media in the contemporary world. First, chapters draw from ethnographic studies carried out in six continents, and cover the study of a large array of social, ethnic, and generational groups. The studies here focus on ordinary populations and sometimes on marginalized communities with attention to the ways that they have asserted agency or dismantled power in relation to media. We have also included chapters that "study up" (Nader 1969), such as examining the workings of authoritarianism and other repressive forces through a lens of media.

Second, the *Companion* includes contributions written by senior and emerging authors affiliated with a wide range of academic institutions across Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America, and North America, and come from different geographic, cultural, and racial backgrounds. We have prioritized the inclusion of voices from different identity categories and from across the globe. We do this in recognition of the "colonial baggage" (Harrison 1997) of anthropology as a discipline, as well as how media studies have privileged the idea of media production in "global centres" carrying messages unidirectionally to the "global periphery." Instead we orient this volume around the interplay of centre and periphery, and even question the clear distinction between the two. We also aim to counteract some of the most prominent aspects of anthropology that have historically justified its representation as the handmaiden of colonialism. Key amongst these problematic traditions is the centring of "Western" perspectives, understandings of what constitutes knowledge and its sources, and legitimation of certain aesthetics and forms of academic work at the exclusion of others. As such we have been mindful in our inclusion of authors who were born in, have spent parts of their careers in, and/or currently write from globally marginalized places. Their work reflects approaches to methods, analysis, argumentation, and writing conventions that decentre perspectives from those commonly used in Global North academic writing. Calls for "decolonization" in anthropology are right to focus on methodology, citational practices, pedagogy, and community involvement (see for instance McGranahan and Rizvi 2016). But above all, we recognize that anthropology will never shed its association with colonialism if it does not substantively include the works of people from all global subject positions. This must go beyond inclusion of only the "diverse" voices who are able to conform to the recognized Western modes of academic discourse. Instead we must embrace new ways of seeing, critiquing, and knowing.

Third, the *Companion* brings together chapters that are fundamentally rooted in anthropological and ethnographic methods, and at the same time emerge from creative and multi-method approaches that include digital methods, interviews, participant-observation, diaries, and analyses of artifacts. As the diversity of chapters across the entire volume illustrate, methods vary according to the aims of research within media encounters and are intimately informed by the relationship between research questions and cultural contexts. All chapters give a brief background to the methods the author employed and to the novelty of their current interventions. As such, the volume is not intended to have an extended section on methods or be a handbook

of methods as there are now several widely available (see for instance Boellstorff et al. 2012; Harrison 2018; Kozinets 2020; Sanjek and Tratner 2016).

Fourth, all chapters make new interventions, either building on original ethnographic data or drawing from prior material. Some contributions are more explicitly theoretical than others, but all engage with important current debates. We grouped the contributions in three parts, named "History," "Approaches," and "Thematic Considerations." The part on "History" traces foundational scholarship in media anthropology as well as the history of senior scholars' works and their impact on the development of the field. The second part, "Approaches," provides an overview of the main perspectives in media anthropology, including "materiality," "representation," "infrastructure," and "practice." These do not constitute four discrete categories, but rather offer four different foci that stand in dialectical relations with one another. "Materiality" and "Representation" stress two opposite aspects of mediation processes, which are always to some extent connected and intertwined. Representations are materially shaped, and material forms are embedded in symbols and meanings. In a similar manner, "Infrastructure" and "Practice" highlight two complementary motives. The first stresses the role of larger systems and structures, while the second foregrounds situated micro media practices. The third part, "Thematic Considerations," includes six sections that reflect current research and relevant topics in media anthropology in the early 21st century: "Relationships," "Social Inequality and Marginalization," "Identities and Social Change," "Political Conservatism," "Surveillance," and "Emerging Technologies." We provide further details on each of the sections below.

Histories

The first section reflects on the interplay between the changing and enduring nature of media anthropology. It analyzes how the field started and developed in conversation with long-standing discussions in anthropology and the interdisciplinary study of media. The three chapters in this section shed light on different aspects of the linkages between media technologies, the global socio-political context in which they are situated, and the theoretical horizons used to make sense of media-related cultural processes. They reflect upon the ways in which theoretical and methodological approaches have transformed in relation to social and technical changes. Mark Allen Peterson offers an excellent account of the history of media anthropology. He first explores the origins of the subfield as entangled in an historic moment characterized by the presence of radial and broadcast media that privileged a focus on production, circulation, and consumption of symbolic content and configurations. The chapter then considers the more recent theoretical developments that emerged in response to the challenges that digital technologies posed to the pre-existing conceptual tools and frameworks in media anthropology. Philipp Budka traces the history of the anthropological studies of indigenous media, which played an important role in consolidating the field of media anthropology during the 1990s. His chapter critically discusses the cultural activist approach to the study of indigenous media, and advocates paying more attention to technical constraints and infrastructure of communication, as well as to the everyday ordinary media use of indigenous people. Conrad Phillip Kottak and Richard Pace retrace the trajectories of Kottak's long-term foundational research project on the effect of television and new media in small towns and villages in Brazil. The chapter stresses the importance of longitudinal research to study media and social change, and social histories of local communities. It engages with issues of media power, influence, and effects, which balance and complement Peterson's engagement with symbolic and interpretive anthropology. These three contributions together reflect upon the past and help map out the future of media anthropology. They engage with lively sets of conversations, debates, and theoretical perspectives, and

all show how new questions tied to diffusion of digital media and cultures are better answered by taking into account the multiple conceptualizations of media-related processes that have been developing over the last decades. These three chapters contribute to our call for an anthropology of media that is plural and engages with long-standing debates developing at the intersection of numerous anthropological and interdisciplinary traditions.

Approaches

The volume's second part foregrounds approaches to thinking about what media is and does, in addition to how media can be used to understand aspects of social life. Depending upon one's perspective, media may play dramatically different roles in supporting human sociality, self-expression, and creativity. This second part explores specific dimensions, complications, and opportunities for engagement that revolve around media as infrastructure, media as practice, media as materiality, and media as representation. Approaches naturally intersect and rarely can be contained in singular categories. Nevertheless, taking a deeper dive into specific approaches reveals insight about the process of mediation in terms of what they offer, and at times, what they fail to do. Taking the literal meaning of approach as "to come nearer to something," the chapters in this part work towards getting closer to understanding what media does and what it means to particular groups operating within disparate cultural contexts.

The first set of chapters, included in the "Media as Infrastructure" section, illustrate how, seen in a certain light, media may act as infrastructures that support human interaction. They support exchange of ideas and communicative acts. In "Media as Practice," the second set of chapters explores how media facilitate and indeed embody forms of practice. The day-to-day individual actions that are accomplished with and through media add up to much larger worldviews and understandings of how media impact human behaviour. In the third set of chapters, titled "Media as Materiality," the authors show that despite discourses emphasizing ephemerality, media has tangible, physical dimensions through which sociality is conducted and sensorially experienced. Finally, the fourth set of chapters underscores the importance of perspectives that conceive of "Media as Representation." Representational media do not merely reflect, but also create human subjects. Media offer proposals for how humans are perceived and reconstituted through them. Each series of chapters offers a scholarly conversation that provides insight into how to approach the study of media.

Media as Infrastructure

The concept of infrastructure is viewed along numerous, nuanced dimensions in this section of the volume. Hardly a neutral substrate, infrastructures may deeply influence what is possible when accomplishing interaction and knowledge exchange. Infrastructures involve much more than technical platforms; they can be conceptualized, for instance, in terms of emotional infrastructures that help individuals and groups to self-actualize and accomplish goals. Infrastructures can mistakenly be seen as taken-for-granted backdrops for action, when in fact, infrastructures play a crucial role supporting, and sometimes failing, the needs of media participants. Anthony Kwame Harrison's chapter leads off the section by taking us back in time to the world of hip hop in the United States, in an era when older forms of media, specifically CD-Rs, were used for demo purposes to promote musicians. He explains how circulation of music instantiated soft infrastructures of emotions, aesthetics, and feelings of collective belonging in hip hop communities. He shows that studying these infrastructures reveals how social collectivities form. The chapter by Jerome Crowder, Peggy Determeyer, and Sara Rogers

examines an array of old and new media to discuss the challenges and even struggles of using a variety of digital technologies to promote medical literacies amid community dialogues. The authors trace why infrastructures around technologies of information dissemination, such as networked digital files, failed older populations of participants. They provide lessons learned for moving forward with promoting academic and community partnerships and attend closely to supporting digital inclusiveness when disseminating medical information. In her chapter, Patricia G. Lange examines the platform of YouTube as an infrastructure for supporting video exchange and commensurate sociality. The chapter traces how socially motivated vloggers from the U.S. ultimately left the site for other social media such as Twitter to deepen social exchange that they felt was not being adequately supported by YouTube. The chapter ultimately seeks to broaden conversation about what media migration means, by examining its similarities and differences to traditional, physical migration in the anthropological record. Thomas M. Malaby's chapter engages with infrastructure as defined by the design and implementation of material technologies and protocols that may be appropriated across contexts to influence a wide range of interactions. He concludes this section by exploring how rituals in gaming underwrite what is considered real through continued performances. Malaby analyses the role of "hypomediacy" in which practices of game remediation are denied, with implications for how institutions use gaming infrastructures to make claims about reality. All the chapters in the section explore various ways in which infrastructures may be viewed, as well as their influences in shaping social worlds.

Media as Practice

Practice theory as applied to media anthropology served an important role in expanding the field beyond textual and audience consideration, which remain important, but constitute only part of the human mediation saga. Scholarship in practice theory has explored an astonishing range of everyday mediated practices and social processes. A key aspect in practice theory is that everyday interactions and practices may seem small, but often add up to quite serious consequences that influence larger societal concerns. John Postill sets the stage with a provocative chapter that calls for recognition that many media anthropological studies are essentially about understanding media effects – despite this concept's past connotations and uncertain position in media anthropology. He urges moving beyond aversion to this topic based on effects theories of the past, and instead invites anthropologists to acknowledge the many ways that media have demonstrably impacted people's social worlds. The chapter by Elizabeth A. Rodwell explores past visions of future television that promised interactivity for a broadcast medium. Examining a grand experiment of combined television and web-based interactive practices on Japanese social media, she concludes that the promise of democratization of television has yet to be fully realized, given media industry structures and their consistent dependence on governmental approval for broadcast practices. Kyle Moore's chapter examines everyday practices in location-based gaming to explore how games shape representations and understanding of place amid urban mobility. Analysing gaming communities in Australia, Moore shows how map-making practices in gaming expose how mobilities become unequally distributed, such that spaces and their uses become contested. The final two chapters in this section offer fascinating approaches to method, expanding the ethnographer's toolkit while also drawing on new methods to provide insight into subjects such as how human bodies connect to media, memory, and specific mediated affordances. In his chapter, Gómez Cruz reformulates modes of anthropological observation by orienting away from the ethnographic practice of assessing the past and instead inviting photographic practices that look toward a speculative future. He proposes a

photomedia method to illustrate how images and imagination serve as anthropological practice, and how media production itself is anthropology. By photographing discarded COVID masks in Australia − a result of everyday mask-wearing − he illustrates how photography as anthropology exhibits multiple functions simultaneously, including serving as object, method, and intervention or visual activism. Finally, the chapter by Christoph Bareither examines tourist media practices at Berlin's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, including images that are posted to social media. He contributes to both media anthropology and practice theory by advocating a content-as-practice approach that examines how practices of media creators live on through digital content, thus outlining a new perspective for conducting ethnographic research through images.

Media as Materiality

The chapters in this section draw attention to media as part of socio-material entanglements. They emphasize the ways in which aspects of social and cultural life are manifested through media and digital technologies. The first chapter by Jordan Kraemer presents a comparative study of how digital platforms shape the material environments of urban life within the context of new social and spatial mobilities. Kraemer considers the impacts of restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Brooklyn and reflects on earlier fieldwork conducted in Berlin to compare and contrast how digital platforms restructure encounters with friends and neighbours. The materiality of media reveals public experiences of care and contestations over social inequalities in places that have been shaped by precarity and displacement. Rebekah Cupitt reflects on how deafness is framed in mainstream discourse as a disability, but it also creates a shared visual culture mediated through technologies. Through an investigation of the Swedish television's team for programming in Swedish Sign Language, Cupitt illustrates that technological mediation not only enhances the effects of Sign Language, it becomes a critical part of the repertoire for the embodiment and performative enactments of deaf identities. Following Cupitt's chapter, Alex Taylor provides a fine-grained study of the materiality of the cloud through an ethnographic exploration of data centres and the labour involved with data storage. The complexity of large-scale technological systems and the human actors that are part of cloud infrastructure in the form of labour, financial corporations, and institutions draw attention to the invisibility of the multiple working parts behind the seeming ubiquity of cloud storage and its maintenance. The final chapter by Sarah Pink, Yolande Strengers, Melisa Duque, Larissa Nichols, and Rex Martin establish approaching media as emerging technologies: digital technologies that produce, use, and share data as part of new configurations with larger automated systems. Building on the well-established trajectory in media and digital anthropology that has focused on situated practices of digital devices, Pink and her colleagues argue that the crucial element of connections with third parties represents a new moment in media materiality and mediated communication. They establish the theme that is picked up in the closing section of the book that media anthropology is creating a substantial body of research into the relationship between emerging technologies and everyday life.

Media as Representation

The section on representation highlights the symbolic and material consequences of who, what, and how representation (or lack thereof) takes place in relation to various forms of media. Jolynna Sinanan explores the production of images of Mount Everest through digital technologies and how they shape the ways in which Everest is imagined and experienced in Nepal. Her

focus on the mobile workforce (tour operators, guides, and porters) highlights how they are active producers in the visual economy of Everest within locally bound and global networks and how "visual work" is intertwined with making a livelihood. From this focus on images and the meanings they generate within different socialities, we then shift to concern with the lingering effects of colonial representation. Haidy Geismar and Katja Müller connect a critical history of digital technologies in museums to media anthropology, in order to emphasize their relationship to former practices of collection and display. They situate a study of top-down and bottom-up processes of display and archiving in museums in India in discussion with postcolonial and decolonial theories of representation. In their discussion, they challenge key power relations that are inherent within museum projects in relation to storage, collection, and display. The section concludes with a chapter that focuses on a lack of representation and efforts to reverse this erasure. Heather Ford shows both the ways in which some knowledge is marginalized and erased in online spaces and the efforts of individuals to abate inequalities that are a product of media structures. Her chapter on the legitimacy of oral citations on Wikipedia focuses on the Indian game of surr, demonstrating how regimes of power/knowledge remain connected to the legacy of colonial ideology. Together, these chapters explore both positive and negative effects of representation, and the ways in which politics – whether local or global – are always implicated.

Thematic Considerations

We have chosen six areas of thematic consideration which reflect a breadth of topics that are fundamental to understanding societies of the early 21st century. By looking at how these themes intersect with media from an anthropological perspective, we demonstrate the importance of anthropology's methods and theory to understanding the impact of media on social and personal life in the present era. First, we turn our attention to the classic anthropological topic of relationships, with chapters discussing media as diverse as digital currency, text and video-based forms of interpersonal communication, and more outward-facing forms of social media. They focus on the ways media have had a hand in shaping relationships – sometimes in local areas, and other times across borders. In the second section, we highlight the contributions of media anthropology to the study of inequality and marginalization. As the discipline of anthropology has become more aware of inequalities related to race, gender, religion, socio-economic status, and (post)colonial global dynamics, media anthropology has taken up these considerations as well. Here we highlight the ways different forms of online media have reinforced inequality, been used by activists to decrease marginalization, and in many cases, both simultaneously. Following this focus, the third section on identities and social change explores how media has both fostered and hindered a proliferation of identity-making practices against a backdrop of social inequalities. They discuss the ways media function to constrain or recast identification practices, as well as how people's uses of media are key to their own understandings and representations of selfhood. The fourth section switches perspective, concentrating on political conservatism. It investigates the ways in which different media have been used to serve the purposes of conservative political forces, movements, and institutions across different countries. In the fifth section, the thorny topic of surveillance is tackled from a variety of perspectives that include concerns about objectification and oppression, but also spur a disciplinary conversation about creative ways to re-appropriate the act of surveillance to achieve political ends and fight for LGBTQ+ rights. The sixth section highlights the contribution that anthropology brings to the study of emerging technologies and how they generate new media-related forms and practices. It focuses both on the appropriation of these technologies into people's everyday life,

and on processes of design and their imaginative components. Together, the various sections within "Thematic Considerations" thus demonstrate the importance of media anthropology for understanding the most pressing issues and anthropological concerns of the 21st century.

Relationships

The section on relationships focuses on the role of different media technologies in shaping personal and family ties, as well as group interactions and socialities. While social relationships have always been mediated, as shown by extensive anthropological studies, in the last two decades, the role of media industries and technologies has been unprecedented in molding the ways people meet, fall in love, communicate with relatives, and create and maintain friendships. The three chapters in this section investigate different media technologies and types of relationships. Xinyuan Wang describes the ways in which the massive usage of the Chinese social media platform, WeChat, has led to the formation of a new typology of friendship among older middle-class adults in Shangai, the "friends from WeChat group." Wang shows how the interactions between Confucian and Communist legacies and the possibilities afforded by digital media have not only shifted pre-existing social norms and everyday practices of friendships, but have also generated a new social category of friend. Tom McDonald, Holy Hoi Ki Shum, and Kwok Cheung Wong look at how monetary practices of Hong Kong cross-boundary students shape kin relations. Their chapter proposes treating money as social media, and stresses how communication and exchange are two inseparable aspects of payment and media practices as well. Donya Alinejad and Laura Candidatu explore mediated family lives in the context of migration and diaspora. They build on the study of intra-European migration from Romania to show the ways in which the subjective experience of long-distance mediated communication is embedded in narratives and imaginaries of migration. Unlike the two previous chapters, which privileged the study of media practices, this one focuses on the analysis of social discourses, narratives, and meaning-making around social media use in the context of migration.

Social Inequality and Marginalization

The section on social inequality and marginalization takes on the important subject of the ways media may reinforce social inequality or foster cultural changes that mitigate marginalization, as related to race, colonialism, and economic and educational disparities. It begins with Elisabetta Costa's exploration of how social media works as a source of hope for Italians still experiencing the fallout of the 2008 global economic crisis. She argues that while social media does little to improve job prospects, they are central to surviving structural inequalities at the same time as reproducing precarious workers' subordinations. Following this, Sirpa Tenhunen explores the contours of who has access to online spaces, in what ways, and under what circumstances, in her chapter on "digital relatedness." Concentrating on low-income and little-educated people in India, she demonstrates how digital media use is embedded in social relationships, and may serve to refashion hierarchies. Similarly taking up the themes of social relationships and inequality, Marlaina Martin discusses Black feminist film screenings as spaces for creating community and challenging power relations in the United States. She argues that the physical presence of viewers at these events is central to understanding their interpretations and sense of belonging. Relating these screenings to the co-presence in protest actions, she argues for their revolutionary potential. Conversely, Akil Fletcher discusses a disembodied form of racial marginalization and resistance through his research on Black online gaming groups. He illustrates the ways Black people must remain protective of their own online spaces in order to mitigate

what he calls the "magic circle of whiteness." In one of the two groups of focus in his chapter, Black space was quickly co-opted by white play and pleasure. Members of the second group he highlights were able to build community and joy, reinforcing his approach which eschews media determinism for a more contextual approach. Together, these chapters show that media – including gaming platforms, film screenings, smartphone browsers, and social media – are neither sources nor salvations of inequality. Rather, they may reinforce already existing forms of marginalization when uncritically left to reproduce social relations, or may be employed as tools of change when individuals and communities focus energy on social transformation.

Identities and Social Change

The chapters exploring identities and social change approach the ways media has become central to individuals' crafting of identity within larger social formations, often both reinforcing them and cultivating subtle forms of social change along the way. Nell Haynes discusses the emerging practice of tattooing Indigenous symbolism in Bolivia as a form of identity making. Yet, she cautions that rather than this being a wholly affirmative celebration of Indigenous Andean peoples, it is complicated by the ways indigeneity in Bolivia has been absorbed into nationalist projects which do not always benefit Indigenous communities. She demonstrates how tattooing, like other forms of media, draws from and contributes to ideological transformation of the quotidian to the political. Brooke Bocast discusses female university students' bodies as spaces of contestation within media related to public health. Global health NGOs target students in HIV awareness campaigns while at the same time tabloid newspapers circulate sexually explicit images of female students. She argues that despite their vast differences, these two forms of media do violence to young women's claims to personhood by constructing them as promiscuous and immoral. Finally, Baird Campbell writes about social media as a key mode of self-making for transgender people in Chile. Taking into consideration competing aims of visibility, security, and social change, he demonstrates, through a focused story of a transgender woman, that media are part of a larger socio-technical sphere in which individuals are able to enact "authentic" selves, while simultaneously foreclosing and reducing the range of available models of gender expression and identity. Campbell argues that this contributes to discussions of social media as technology that may be understood as spaces of both homogenization and transgression. Together these chapters draw from a range of anthropological discussions on identity and selfhood, showing how a wide variety of media are intimately connected to self-making and self presentation projects in contexts of inequality related to race, gender, and colonial histories.

Political Conservatism

Whereas other thematic sections in this volume engage with topics and concepts that have been at the core of the anthropological endeavor for many years, this section explores what we consider now to be a fundamental theme in the anthropological study of media, which is political conservatism. While during the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century the ethnographic study of the interplay between media and politics has prioritized the investigation of progressive social movements and revolutionary politics, in the last decade, a growing scholarship has explored media-political relations in the context of groups and institutions that aim at promoting traditional values and ideas. Peter Hervik builds on the findings of his previous research projects on racialized discourses and exclusionary reasoning in Denmark to explore the work of strategic ignorance, which is ignorance that is actively produced to serve specific

ends. He calls for a media anthropology that focuses on the crisis of facts and engages with the epistemology of ignorance production. Similarly the chapter by Leighton Peterson and Jeb Card engages with the crisis of facts. They explore the production and circulation of pseudo-science and conspiracy discourses of the US-based QAnon and Q-aligned social networks within a media ecology made of old and new media, and characterized by spreadability, circulation, and bricolage of content and symbols. Erkan Saka's chapter describes almost a decade of pro-government political trolling in Turkey, and reflects on the methodological challenges of doing research on trolling at different historical moments. The chapter also argues that political trolling in Turkey forms a discursive community that functions on a voluntary basis. Raul Castro investigates pro-life mobilizations in Latin America as representative of larger trends of morality-centered politics. By building on Turner's notion of "social drama," he formulates the concept of "social media drama" to account for the media practice of filming public assemblies, live-streaming them on social media platforms, and watching and re-experiencing them again. Castro shows that these cultural performances reinforce activists' own values and ideas, while also serving educational purposes. These four ethnographically grounded studies offer new ways of thinking about new and old questions on the intersection between media and conservative politics in the early 21st century.

Surveillance

The topic of surveillance and the oppressiveness of being watched has long been a societal concern. Given the complex and embedded apparatus of surveillance in contemporary society, we have sailed past Orwell's dystopian fears which are now our reality. Surveillance is imbricated in social life in ways even he could not have imagined. Rather than solely human entities who might be held accountable for their oppressive watching, it is now algorithms or complex formulas that are being deployed to surveill and make decisions that profoundly shape human worldviews, interactions, and subjectivity. The chapters in this section tackle this complex subject in nuanced ways. Veronica Barassi urges consideration of understanding how technical surveillance in everyday life in the U.K. and the U.S. has produced algorithmic profiling in which people are reduced to qualities that facilitate commercialism in ways that are profoundly objectifying and belittling. People feel the effects of surveillance in the form of algorithmic violence, and she draws on the anthropology of bureaucracy to deepen understanding of individual impacts of surveillance in everyday life. In his chapter, Benjamin Ale-Ebrahim examines surveillance from a very different perspective, exploring forms of lateral surveillance in Islamic culture. Contrary to the idea that surveillance is always a negative practice, Ale-Ebrahim notes that promoting ethical behaviour by encouraging it among observed peers is part of foundational Islamic practice. Queer Muslims have used the platform of Twitter to engage in lateral moral surveillance. As an important practice, social media participants do not protest surveillance per se, but rather call out the behaviour of those who hypocritically condemn queer Muslims while they themselves engage in questionable practices that violate Islamic principles. Queer Muslims counter-surveill homophobic and transphobic detractors in ways that reveal important dynamics in interpersonal surveillance that are not part of any governmental apparatus. Finally, Alex Wolff also takes up surveillance in the context of LGTBQ+ rights in their fieldsite of South Korea. Long denied a political existence, young queer and trans activists post anonymous images of people at group meetings and gatherings on social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Using anonymity strategically, they enumerate their existence by showing, contrary to governmental claims, that queer populations exist and demand social, legal, economic, and political recognition. While avoiding traceable identities, their demands

to be seen constitute powerful and creative ways of claiming existence and protecting their sur-
vivability. Taken together, these chapters demonstrate the complexities of surveillance, and how
the practice must always be considered in political terms.

Emerging Technologies

From the perspective of technological disciplines and industries, emerging technologies are
those that have not fully become integrated into everyday life, are not fully realized in terms
of the markets they are intended to reach, or have not had their intended impacts on society,
as envisaged by design. A growing area of scholarship in the social sciences is taking a more
critical view as to what design processes might imagine and how emerging technologies could
be met, challenged, recreated, and reimagined according to different populations. For example,
popular keywords associated with AI in countries in the Global North are "innovation," "inclu-
sion," and "ethics," whereas keywords that are related to challenges and opportunities of AI in
countries considered to be located in the Global South are "sovereignty," "rights," "justice,"
"postcolonial," and "decolonial." The chapters in this section present recent studies of the
implications of emerging technologies in a variety of contexts. Heather Horst and Sheba
Mohammid argue that machine learning in the form of wardrobe assistants reinforce ideas of
normative style according to ideals of predominantly Western countries in the Global North.
Their study of Amazon Echo Look in the Caribbean island of Trinidad reveals how aesthetics
of colour and femininity are shaped by regionally inflected concepts of style and fashion. The
next chapter by Christian Ritter continues the theme of the ways that emerging technologies
can draw or deflect attention of the gaze by examining the design and uptake of augmented
reality apps that can be downloaded onto camera phones. These apps in Tallinn, Estonia are
contributing to urban tourism and a renewed appreciation of heritage sites. Zoë Glatt's chapter
considers how algorithms in YouTube's recommender systems might be felt and experienced, as
explored through an ethnography of content creators. Her chapter draws attention to the ways
in which algorithms might be designed as a series of code and numbers, but remain a different,
elusive beast to the people whose content and data contribute to the scale and complexity of
algorithmic systems that are ultimately in the control of large, technological corporations and
not users. Nicola J. Bidwell, Helen Arnold, Alan F. Blackwell, Charlie Nqeisji, |Kun Kunta
and Martin Ujakpa build upon critical, regional studies on emerging technologies in Africa
and argue that combining ethnographic research with computational expertise can contribute
to meeting the ideal of making AI more inclusive and explainable. They explore the stories
of the Ju|'hoansi people in Namibia to reveal the experiences, livelihoods, and knowledge
practices of such marginalized groups. Finally, the closing chapter by Lisa Messeri explores the
ways in which both ethnographic and virtual reality (VR) practices and promises seek to create
an experience of "being there." She critically examines the definition of immersion between
these two areas and how anthropological thinking might contribute to a critique of immersion
according to VR industries. These chapters present a recent showcase of the intersection
between anthropology and ostensibly the newest media in the form of emerging technologies.

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