



Brazilian-U.S. Communication Studies Forum

Introduction

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"Global Spaces and Borders: Toward unified and interdisciplinary studies of communication" was the central theme of the Third Binational Communication Colloquium, which was held at Tulane University, March 25 and 26, 2008. The four papers published here are a sample of those presented at the colloquium, representing the diversity and distinctiveness of communication research currently being conducted in the U.S. and Brazil. The theme chosen for the conference reflects the ongoing concern that, despite our best efforts to utilize international research literatures and cross our professional borders, there is still a need for dialogic spaces to facilitate the exchange of our ideas between northern and southern hemispheres. The colloquium topics — comparative studies, media and culture, markets and political economy, and citizenship and transnationalism — represented a shared set of critical inquiries into globalization that nevertheless yielded differences, from the embedded national and regional perspectives engaged in asking research questions to the theoretical and methodological traditions consulted in answering them.

To wit, each of the four papers included in this forum addresses the impact of globalization on communication in Brazil. Whereas the Brazilian authors Suzy dos Santos and Veneza Ronsini stress the continuing hegemony of media conglomerates and class ideologies the U.S. authors Jessica Fifield and Laura Robinson emphasize contradictory resistances to hegemonic paradigms for understanding citizenship. Their research threads are concerned with violence and poverty, as well as social authority and control in understanding national specificities despite globalization. Taken together, these papers include both exemplary meditations on contemporary social problems in Brazilian society and artful mediations of the unique communication traditions of each specific field.

Initiated by the Brazilian Society for Interdisciplinary Communication Studies (INTERCOM), the colloquium began in 1990 as a way to promote binational exchange among communication scholars. Past U.S.-Brazil Colloquia have been held at the University of Texas at Austin in 2004, and at the Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro in 2006.

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