

## **We're Back: Introduction to the Fall 2015 Issue**

**Philippe Ross, Ph.D.**, University of Ottawa

It has been a couple of years since the CJMS was last published, owing to founder and editor David Spencer's illness and subsequent retirement, and the uncertainty that followed as to the Journal's editorship and direction. Although this period of inactivity certainly dragged on longer than it might have, it was perhaps inevitable given David's almost single-handedly founding and running the journal over the years. Of course, no serious academic publication can be the work of a single individual and David would be the first to share the credit with the authors, reviewers, editorial board members and production assistants that were persuaded to come onboard and to contribute to the CJMS since it opened for business in 2005. To say nothing of the start-up funds made available to the Journal through the Rogers Chair at the Faculty of Information and Media Studies, University of Western Ontario, founded that same year. But it is worth acknowledging the efforts David made to launch a publication many felt would not work but in which he strongly believed, and those he made to continue running it -- in many ways as a labour of love -- long after the funding dried up. And it is worth reiterating some of the ideas that drove the project from the start and which justify its continued existence -- starting with this (long overdue) Fall 2015 issue.

As our mission statement reads, the Canadian Journal of Media Studies exists to provide a forum for research and discussion for both scholars and professional media workers pursuing interests in Canadian media issues and issues which, without being specifically Canadian in nature, are more broadly of interest to the Canadian media research community. The mix of academic and professional perspectives has been a hallmark of the Journal over the years and it is one that we hope to maintain, as it is key to our understanding of

the complex and ever-evolving relationship between media and society. Another is its commitment to publishing the work of emerging or junior scholars -- which David Spencer saw as a particularly important objective, built into the project from the outset. This feature of the CJMS I feel must not only be maintained, but expanded. Indeed, although the number of academic publishing venues has increased exponentially across the web in recent years, it is fair to say that the quantity is not matched by the quality. While the increasing number of outlets is perhaps welcome, being published in an online journal is arguably of little value to less experienced scholars -- and indeed the research community as a whole -- if the peer-review process leading up to publication is not up to standard. This is why it is more important than ever to offer a venue that is not only accessible to young scholars, but one also that does not 'cut corners' when it comes to the evaluation process. It is fair to say that the CJMS enjoys a more modest status than established journals in the field, including in Canada, but we enforce the same kind of double-blind peer-review process and we strive to ensure that prospective authors are provided with thorough and constructive feedback, regardless of evaluation outcome. In short, we feel do things right and hopefully word gets around.

A third key feature of the CJMS which David Spencer was keen to develop is its bringing together of media research in both English and French. This was the reason I joined as Associate Editor in 2008, and it resulted in a more sustained effort to solicit submissions from francophone researchers, with some success, as this and previous issues shows. There are plans to step up our visibility in the coming months and to revamp our website's content in both official languages, and we hope this will allow the Journal to prosper as it undertakes its second decade. If the papers collected in this Fall 2015 are anything to go by, we have every reason to be very optimistic.

### **Contributions in this issue**

The first paper, by **Tracy Moniz**, explores the significance of femininity in framing women's wage labour in Canadian newspapers during the Second World War. Applying a feminist media studies

theoretical lens and using content analysis, the paper argues that, despite the massive mobilization, social necessity and political economic impact of women's wage work, newspapers prioritized gender, not labour. It considers the ways that photographic coverage, discursive frames and story topics in the news coverage foregrounded femininity and subordinated and objectified female labourers, thereby reinforcing and perpetuating gender stereotypes.

**Mohamed Ali-Allioui's** paper focuses on a particular socio-cultural group, the Kabyles, as a deterritorialized Berber minority claiming the recognition of their cultural and linguistic identity, and he shows that the Kabyles' case constitutes a relevant field of research to observe the dynamics between group identities and socio-technological networks. The author argues that appropriation of the Internet leads to a diversification of identity references and a transformation of representations, thus resulting in more value for the group. These processes bring about the implementation of new media and identity practices that transcend constraints in both time and space, and they promote the manifestation of the group's will to independently set up a space for expression and collective action, allowing the emergence and the spread of a new politics of identity.

Next, **Mark Lowes** applies critical discourse analysis to five urban planning documents to assess the constitutive role they played in efforts to brand and placemarket Toronto as an emerging world-class creative city during the period 2003-2008. The analysis ties the documents together to illustrate an over-arching shift in how "Toronto-as-creative city" was envisioned in the initial 2003 text to the 2008 document. The paper concludes that this discourse is a constitutive feature of urban revitalization strategies aimed at creating a distinctly promotional milieu to attract creative workers and activities from the cultural sector. In the case of Toronto during this distinct timeframe, planners and marketing companies link identity-building to their distinctly promotional images of Toronto.

In his paper, **Duncan Koerber** examines the way that media have been positioned in the study of crisis communication. The paper asserts that crisis communication researchers have generally

relegated media (mass media, new and social media) to a secondary or background position in studies of crises even though media are absolutely central to all crises in major ways. Through the consideration of framing, news values, ritual, amplification, and publics, the paper brings together a scattered literature to create a coherent description of how media is and should be considered in the study of crisis communication.

Lastly, **Normand Landry, France Aubin and Michel Sénécal** present a review article on social movements devoted to the development and collective appropriation of digital media technologies. The paper focuses more specifically on the articulation of two categories of militant practice, which appear as forms of resistance to the power relations and domination exerted through control measures aimed at the uses of digital media technologies, and in the processes of governance through which these control measures are defined, debated, and applied.

On the whole, the papers collected in this issue give a good indication of the quality and breadth the Journal strives to achieve, and I am sure they will make for stimulating reading.