ORIGINAL ARTICLE

“Thinking Dirty”: Digging Up Three Founding “Matriarchs” of Communication Studies

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The field of communication scarcely examines issues of gender in documenting its own historiography. Consequently, Hortense Powdermaker, Mae Huettig, and Helen MacGill Hughes do not seem seminal to the development of communication scholarship during its nascent era of the 1930s–1960s, despite these women working and publishing within the same academic circles as Harold Lasswell, Dallas Smythe, and Paul Lazarsfeld. Social, economic, and political factors diminished their contributions to what we now call media effects theory, political economy of communication, and media studies. This article uses feminist standpoint epistemology theory to examine some of these early moments in the history of communication scholarship, to theorize about the consequences of its development, and to suggest the value of future recovery work.


“Thinking dirty”—what a powerful metaphor for describing the academic endeavour. At one and the same time it provides a strategy for inquiry and an attitude toward life: the knower who is not content with merely studying social processes but wants to change them through his actions.

—(Robinson, 1998, p. 66)

In a 1998 Dallas Smythe Memorial Lecture on the value of feminist approaches for analyzing social communication, Gertrude Robinson declared that “thinking dirty”—a Smythian method illuminating critical blind spots in communication systems—was foundational to her development as a feminist scholar. She explains that this method was for her, “grounded in a set of personal experiences” that defined her as both “insider/outsider,” with the ability to perceive women’s subordination in relation to male dominance, and thus, the marginalization of women’s communication research in publications, in classrooms, and in critical conversations (1998, p. 66). Robinson and other female communication scholars responded by exploring and valorizing women’s work in the field of feminism and gender communication (Ardizzoni, 1998; Dervin, 1987; Hennessey & Ingraham, 1997; Rakow, 1986, 1989;
Yet there is still more exploration of women’s work in the field necessary, because there are still canonical blind spots to overcome. As Mendes and Carter (2008) emphasize, at the core of what is “feminist” is “research that studies communication theories and practices from a perspective that ultimately is oriented toward the achievement of ‘gender justice’” (p. 1701).

Mainstream historiographies privileging male scholarship in communication suggest that women were either absent or minimally involved in the field at its beginning. Largely forgotten are the names of Mae D. Huettig, Helen MacGill Hughes, and Hortense Powdermaker, even though these women each helped define communication studies during its emergent, interdisciplinary development. Their work merits further exploration as a resource for communication historiographic research, because even in early-to-mid 20th-century academia, women were able to “think dirty,” both about the role mass communication played in society as well as their own roles in the male-dominated academy (Shields & Dervin, 1993, p. 66, quoting Harding, 1986, 1987). By way of remedy, this requires discussion of the work these women produced in the context of early communication scholarship. It also demands an exploration of the discrimination that circumscribed their work via a feminist standpoint epistemology framework. And finally, also necessary is a critique of the consequences that structural sexism affecting these women had for the discipline itself. The question that must be answered by this analysis is why a field that was from its outset characterized as heterogeneous and unorthodox would choose to marginalize heterodox female scholarship that brought groundbreaking research to the academy.

Chroniclers of the field between the 1930s and 1960s describe the early communication studies within which these women worked as having been situated in both academia and government, with additional ties to the business sector. Its beginnings were also heavily interdisciplinary in that communication studies emerged from a confluence of sociology, anthropology, psychology, linguistics, and economics (Dennis & Wartella, 1996; Peters & Simonson, 2004; Robinson, 1988). Media effects theory, audience studies, public opinion, propaganda, speech communication, and agenda setting dominated the academic discourse on mass communication, and the institutions under which these discourses developed—the Payne Fund Studies, Princeton Radio Project, the Motion Picture Research Project (MPRP), and others—functioned to both bridge the methodological boundaries between academic disciplines, business, and government policy and also to establish norms for scholars and their research.

The women featured in this project each struggled to find a scholarly “home” in the academy during this time and are exemplary of many female academics, past and present. In their letters, articles, and books, Huettig, Hughes, and Powdermaker detail their experiences within the nebulous burgeoning of the social sciences. Each woman had intellectual potential to be among those now known to have defined the communication field: Mae Huettig wrote one of the first political
economic analyses of Hollywood filmmaking in *Economic Control of the Motion Picture Industry* (1944), in *News and the Human Interest Story*, Helen MacGill Hughes was an early critical political analyst of news content (1940), and Hortense Powdermaker experimented with mass communication research in the United States in *Hollywood, the Dream Factory: An Anthropologist Looks at the Movie-Makers* (1950) and in international contexts afterwards. Coming from economics, sociology, and anthropology, their scholarship also defines what was at the core of “interdisciplinarity” in communication research in the early-to-mid 20th century.

I came upon Mae Huettig’s work in 2001, while researching a graduate project on the globalization of film and was struck at its clarity and currency. Having come to critical Marxism through Wasko, Dallas Smythe, Thomas Guback, and others, it was surprising that Huettig was not officially part of the canon. Communication historiographers do nod to Hortense Powdermaker, but not to credit her efforts in establishing the credibility of communication as a discipline. Hearing about the disjuncture, my graduate advisor, Carol Stabile also suggested I continue digging and include Helen MacGill Hughes’s pioneering critical work in news, which reflects this piece’s current triumvirate. This article required traveling to archives where these women worked: the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Chicago, and the University of Pennsylvania. My research was well received in venues such as the Console-ing Passions International Feminist Media Conference, but rejected by three of the top journals in Communication and Media Studies—consequently, it has been 6 years of hope, multiple drafts, and perseverance to find a venue. It is indicative that even half a century later, the value of women’s work must still be justified.

**Feminist standpoint theory**

In the introduction to *Sex & Money, Feminism and Political Economy in the Media*, Meehan and Riordan (2002, pp. 4–8) argue that ignoring the substance of women’s everyday lives “can be detrimental . . . for it oversimplifies the complex interlocking forms of oppression to which women are subjected.” Feminist standpoint theory is a methodology for explicating how these “relations of domination” contour women’s lives (2007, p. 580). Feminist standpoint theory critiques the epistemological privilege that establishes the structures of social science research agendas. It also critiques the gender relations these structures ignore, yet reinforce. Although there has been some controversy over definition and methodology, in “Standpoint Epistemology and Beyond,” Naples (2007) provides clarification on what is the core of standpoint theory: to raise questions about the “way power influences knowledge in a variety of fields,” to offer an “intersectional analysis of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and other social structural aspects” as they affect women’s lives (p. 580), and to raise consciousness about both knowledge production and social life (pp. 579–580). Feminist standpoint can aptly illuminate these early moments of communication studies where the viewpoint of female academics and their research were subordinated to the larger goal of disciplinary cohesion, salience, and status as the field struggled to earn
credibility separate from other, more mature fields such as anthropology, sociology, and economics. As three women who allow us to question knowledge formation in the field, in part because they questioned it themselves, Huettig, Hughes, and Powdermaker are appropriate for feminist standpoint epistemological theory praxis. The marginalization of these women’s work demonstrates how institutionalized sexism in academia delimits what we know about a field of knowledge and also what we know about our world and the relations within it, concerns central to communication.

Mae D. Huettig

Huettig is the only scholar in this piece who did not pursue a career as an academic, even though she built a formidable professional network on the 1940s MPRP alongside Blumer, Lasswell, Lynd, and Wirth—significant catalysts in communication who came from various fields to shape its methodology. At least one record of Huettig’s most significant contribution to communication is still in circulation: her dissertation, *Economic Control of the Motion Picture Industry, A Study in Industrial Organization* (1944), which was published 2 years after she earned her Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania. One of the earliest analyses of film as an industry, *Economic Control* can still be considered an original history and critique of film as a corporate medium in the period leading up to the transformative 1948 Paramount Decree. She declares in the “Preface” to *Economic Control* that the goal of her research was to piece together previously unavailable data about the film industry to illuminate the profitability of distribution and exhibition to filmmaking, which were central to the feasibility of not just production, but also the entire industry (1944, p. v).

Her scholarship reflects both her deep immersion in the network of people involved in the case, as well as her thoroughgoing exploration of the political and economic functioning of the industry—it is prototypical political economy of communication. Huettig demonstrated an academic interest in critiquing the health of national media industries from a noncommercial, theoretical perspective that injected a much-needed alternative into the preoccupation with media effects and persuasion in early communication research. One of Huettig’s most important contributions to the study of film is her conclusion that the structure of the industry—vertical integration—created such significant barriers to entry that no new filmmakers beyond the “Big Eight” could ever enter the market, so antitrust regulation was critical. Dallas Smythe’s work followed on the heels of Huettig’s and many other subsequent scholars working in political economy of communication have cited her research. Yet, Huettig has not been included in any histories of the field, not even in the two-volume series, *The Political Economy of the Media* (Golding & Murdock, 1997), the subfield that resonates most closely with *Economic Control of the Motion Picture Industry*.

Huettig developed her acute sense of industry at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania from 1930 to 1932. She studied industrial economics at the newly formed Industrial Research Unit (IRU) under the guidance of Dr. Anne Bezanson. Bezanson was a founder of the Wharton IRU, the first business research
center in the United States, and in 1929, she became the first woman to join the standing faculty in the Graduate School and to hold a senior professorship at the University of Pennsylvania (Lloyd, 2001). She was one of the primary influences on Huettig’s dissertation (Huettig, 1944, p. vi). Under Bezanson’s tutelage, Wharton IRU students refused to take for granted that economic progress should be the supreme goal of the U.S. industry (“Industrial Progress,” 1946). The work of IRU students such as Huettig was Marxist in its understanding of the “conditions of economic progress,” and their critical analyses included issues of labor relations and wages, alongside profit margins and organizational theory (IRU, 1946, p. 5). Although the faculty and students of the Wharton IRU studied a variety of industries (retail, hosiery, coal, etc.), it was Huettig who recognized the value of critiquing the Hollywood industry. Huettig’s viewpoint likely resulted from her unique intellectual location, which overlapped several more conventional disciplines, including economics, business, and sociology. Her affiliation with government agencies whose concern for monitoring the business practices of the U.S. media corporations in the 1930s and 1940s, disposed her to consider culture industries as significant subjects of study.

During her tenure at the IRU, Huettig’s work caught the attention of Leo C. Rosten, an academic-turned-screenwriter who also served as Chief of the Motion Pictures Division of the Office of Facts and Figures and as Deputy Director of the Office of War Information. Rosten started the MPRP in the middle of the Department of Justice’s antitrust suit against Hollywood around 1940, as the Rockefeller Foundation started supporting filmmaking research from 1935 to 1954 (Buxton, 1994, 2001). Rosten hired Huettig in 1939 as a Research Associate for his pet project, the MPRP, which later became fodder for his acclaimed book, Hollywood: The Movie Colony, the Movie Makers (1941), a social scientific, empirical analysis of moviemaking culture. With a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, Rosten, together with Huettig, Lynd, Wirth, and Blumer, studied the Hollywood industry and its monopoly over production, distribution, and exhibition of film. The MPRP was also advised by Lasswell (1958) who, in “Communications as an emerging discipline” accorded “graduate schools of business,” like Wharton with an “indispensable place in communication studies,” because they had already been “actively concerned with the institutional realities of economic systems” (p. 247).

According to Lasswell’s assessment about the indispensability of business studies, Huettig’s graduate studies at Wharton allowed her inside access to networks of power within the communication discipline; and her participation in the MPRP, which played a role in the Paramount Decree of 1948, should have secured her a place in it. However, Lasswell’s assertion did not take into account the gendered hierarchy that characterized communication studies. For example, Huettig’s work provided a critical materialist blueprint for an empirically focused political economy of communication industries, yet she and other women like her who worked on the MPRP were subordinate research associates, rather than principle investigators. Huettig therefore had to decide if “working in a world structured by others for their purposes” as a research assistant was a fair exchange for being able to publish her
own study of Hollywood (Hartsock, 2002, p. 355). The male scholars working on the MPRP—such as Lasswell and Lynd, Lazarsfeld, and Hadley Cantril—were not only able to set the agenda for communication studies and also for mass communication policy and research initiatives into the foreseeable future, while many of the female assistants such as Huettig completed the legwork.

Her innovation of combining industrial analysis with mass communication was among the first to correctly portray Hollywood as “a maze of intricate relationships,” which limited creativity, “due in part to the nature of the product and in part to the unique interdependency of the major companies” (Huettig, 1944, p. v). Even though Rosten ran the MPRP, Huettig was the authority of a “thorough-going study” of film revenues “broken down as to source, i.e. from affiliated theatres as compared to rentals from other theatres, as well as complete tabulations of cost and returns on specific pictures” (Huettig, 1940–1942; Huettig to I. Lubin, April 17, 1940). She focused on filmmaking as a convoluted process whose production-for-profit culture determined what kinds of films were possible. Huettig also explored the allocation of resources that governed filmmaking, believing that part of her task was to examine, “Who decides what films are made; or . . . why are films what they are?” (1944, p. 58). She found that by “virtue of the division of labor within the business, film distributors and exhibitors are much more closely in touch with the movie-going public than are the producers, and they trade heavily on their advantageous positions” (1944, p. 58). Industry choices were dominated not by filmmakers, but by the businesspeople who followed after them in the chain of production.

Huettig’s chapter titled “The Motion Picture Industry Today” begins with criticism about the lack of transparency regarding vertical integration as well as the industry’s deception about its role in the American economy. Making movies, argues Huettig, is actually “not the most important [activity] with respect to the amount of corporate income” generated by Hollywood (1944, p. 73). Instead, it is the fixed capital investments: real estate holdings, theaters, and music production companies, which minimize profit risk (1944, p. 73). Thus, the major’s argument in the Paramount case that vertical integration was crucial to the survival of the industry was misleading, because “[e]xternal menaces to the stability of the motion picture industry are few” (1944, p. 150). In Huettig’s estimation, filmmaking was far from a “free market”; and only by “springing forth as a fully integrated unit, equipped for production, distribution, and exhibition simultaneously, could a new company secure a substantial share” of it (1944, p. 150). In the final sections of her book, Huettig broadens her critical sweep to include concerns about the lack of power behind the earlier U.S. government antitrust decisions that did not initially force “divorcement of production and distribution from exhibition” (1944, p. 140).

As the MPRP’s primary research assistant, while her research for the book was underway, Huettig became involved in the United States v. Paramount Pictures, Inc. case. In obtaining information about the profit history of major studios, Huettig worked with Thurman Arnold, the prosecutor who testified on behalf of the American Theatres Association; with Paul Williams, whom she described as “the special attorney
in charge of the anti-trust suit”; and also with Isador Lubin, a commissioner for the U.S. Department of Labor, who provided her and the prosecution with “unpublished governmental data” on Hollywood (Huettig, 1940–1942; Huettig to I. Lubin, April 17, 1940). In discussing Huettig’s involvement in United States v. Paramount Pictures, Inc., which resulted in major studios divesting themselves of their theater holdings, Hollywood historian J. A. Aberdeen wrote in a personal letter to me that he believed Huettig had been a witness in the case and that her research likely influenced its outcome, but he could find no official documentation of her involvement. Aberdeen’s book, Hollywood Renegades: The Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers (2000), charts the Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers (SIMPP) and their struggles against the monopoly of the studio system in the 1930s and 1940s. Economic Control was published shortly before SIMPP successfully petitioned the government to reactivate the Paramount antitrust case in 1944. It was nearly impossible for any studio—other than the Paramount Pictures, Inc.; Loew’s, Inc.; Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation; Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc.; Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation; Columbia Pictures Corporation; Universal Corporation; and United Artists Corporation—to grab even a smallest slice of the film market pie (Aberdeen, 2000). As for Huettig’s involvement in the struggle, Aberdeen could find no official evidence of Huettig’s participation as a testifying witness. Nonetheless, Aberdeen’s book acknowledges his own, and others’, indebtedness to her work. He said Hollywood Renegades:

almost contained a few paragraphs about the importance of Huettig’s book on the antitrust struggle in the 1940s. I suspected that the book helped SIMPP bring attention of [sic] the anticompetitive studio practices, and ultimately influenced the outcome of the Paramount Supreme Court decision of 1948. (J. A. Aberdeen, personal communication, January 5, 2004)

Aberdeen’s explanation of Huettig’s absence from Hollywood Renegades as a Paramount witness provides yet another example of structural sexism that Huettig encountered during her career. The gendered division of labor employed on the MPRP, with male scholars directing female scholars, extended to the relationships Huettig was able to cultivate with those whom she worked in industry and government. Despite her involvement in an important moment in the U.S. policy on communication, and despite groundbreaking research into the industry, in correspondence between Huettig and her male colleagues, she often was addressed as a female or “little girl” rather than as a colleague; her responses mirror this register from an unthreatening subordinate’s position. For example, in letters to Lubin and to Arnold, Huettig employed mildly suggestive language—language ironically reminiscent of Hollywood films of the same era—even referring to herself as their “frisky girl” on one occasion and referring to Lubin as “my dear Commissioner” in another. In one letter to Lubin, she writes:

Dear Lub: You remember me—I’m the girl you left behind you. While I could easily wax wistful about your complete silence, I’ll refrain from playing the
eternal feminine on account of I know how busy you must be with the piled-up work which probably awaited your return. (Huettig, 1940–1942; Huettig to I. Lubin, April 17, 1940)

Even today, the tenor of the relationship between Huettig and her male colleagues remains evocative of gender roles infantilizing women. Huettig’s letters also typify what standpoint theory explores as an insider/outsider positionality. As a female researcher on one of the most significant mass media research agencies of the mid-20th century, Huettig inhabited and frequently negotiated a “contradictory social location as an insider in one respect and an outsider in others” (Harding, 2007, p. 46; Naples, 2004, p. 373). Huettig’s tone reveals her position as a female outlier of a male-dominated network of power and highlights how “feelings of otherness” became incorporated into her “self-perceptions and social interactions” as her letters demonstrate (Naples, 2004, p. 375). Not only did Huettig pretend that a man’s work was more important than her own, at other times in her correspondence, Huettig employed a mildly sexual tone, rather than one of collegiality. In the same letter as above, Huettig writes to Lubin “See what I want from you? . . . I won’t attempt to thank you for any effort you may exert in this direction because words would be a bit inadequate” (Huettig, 1940–1942; Huettig to I. Lubin, April 17, 1940). In a letter Lubin wrote to Huettig that she would have access to major movie studio files once the Paramount case got underway in New York City, Lubin adds at the end of his letter: “I am expecting you to stop off on your way to New York. Why not plan to take a few days vacation down in the country at my place? Bring your bathing suit and some old slacks” (Huettig, 1940–1942; I. Lubin to Huettig, May 31, 1940).

Female researchers often lacked the cultural and institutional authority required to access spaces of power reserved for white-collar males. Huettig’s relationships with her colleagues were embedded in processes that positioned gender as more determinant than intellectual capability (Naples, 2004). Furthermore, the question of access was not limited to Huettig’s research, but likely her entire life. Yet, the sexist system in which Huettig worked and lived also informed her capacity to see the film industry and monopolization “in terms of the structure and organization of the [film] industry as a whole”; in fact, she argued that the individual parts of the industry—whether parts meaning production, distribution, and exhibition or the parts meaning individual film studios—were unintelligible, except understood as parts of “the whole” (p. v). As Dervin (1987) clarifies, feminist scholarship focuses on networks rather than “compartmentalization” and wholes rather than parts (p. 108). Huettig’s clarity about vertical integration in filmmaking was undoubtedly a consequence of her own experience with power consolidation in the academy; it was no more a “free market” without barriers to entry than was film. Working under Bezanson surely illuminated for Huettig that her tenure on the MPRP represented a division of labor similar to that of Hollywood, where male scholars “traded heavily” on their gender to dominate disciplinary directives through their power over female researchers who preceded them in the chain of scholarly production.
Once the MPRP concluded its work and the Paramount case closed, Huettig had published her dissertation as a book but still had to find work outside of the academy. During this same period, Rosten, Lasswell, Lynd, Blumer, and Wirth had already established their academic credentials. While it may have been possible that Huettig left what could have been a cutting-edge communication studies career for another calling around the inception of World War II, this might be the least likely scenario. Having to defer to her husband Lester, his career, or her colleagues was a more likely outcome. Huettig may have relied on one of the many men she corresponded with on the MPRP for an introduction to a new position in another industry. The last letters in her archival file at the University of Pennsylvania suggest she might have used her Ph.D. in industrial relations, and also her connection with Lubin to gain entry, first into diamond drill bit production and then into aerospace at Lockheed Corporation, although the outcome is unknown (Huettig, M., 1940–1942, I. Lubin to Huettig, September 10, 1942). Huettig also possibly left academia to follow her husband into industries where his connections would be useful but where she would always be seen as his inferior. The lack of further information about her work after the MPRP—in fact, her virtual disappearance after her dissertation went into print—underscores the efficacy of the structural sexism of the period. At the same time, Huettig’s legacy, Economic Control, is no less theoretically significant. Standpoint theory reveals that the liminal, gendered space Huettig inhabited in her short-lived tenure in academia also allowed her to see how similar power dynamics operated between “major” and “minor” players in Hollywood. Perhaps for Huettig, the practices of block booking and cooperation between the “Big Eight” film studios were reminiscent of the structural practices of academia where individuals cooperated to privilege certain topics, methodologies, research questions, theoretical conclusions, and a certain gender of scholar.

**Helen MacGill Hughes**

In *Mass Communication and American Social Thought*, John Durham Peters and Peter Simonson described Hughes' professional experience as a “a life whose broad pattern was repeated by a number of other talented, intellectual women of her generation” (2004, p. 118). Inclusion into a historiography of communication studies indicates that unlike Huettig, Hughes is part of its remembered history. But the “broad pattern” to which Peters and Simonson refer is what Huettig and Hughes have in common: That they both contributed scholarship that offered unique theoretical insight into a communication industry, but that they were both subordinated to their male counterparts. The contribution for which Hughes’ is most recognized and cited in other scholars’ work is *News and the Human Interest Story*, a history and critique of the social and political function of news (Hughes, 1940, p. i). As Robert E. Park—famous for coining the concept “human ecology” at The Chicago School of Sociology—points out in the introduction he wrote for the first edition of *News*, until Hughes’ book, there had been “almost no attempt to investigate the nature as
well as the political and social function of the news,” with some exception for Walter Lippmann’s *Liberty and the News* (1940, p. i).

By her own account, Hughes enjoyed a lengthy tenure in academia teaching in many of the most prestigious institutions: Brandeis, Wellesley, Tufts, and Boston University. She also published widely in academic journals such as *Public Opinion Quarterly, Journalism Quarterly, American Journal of Sociology (AJS)*, and the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, among others; 17 of her 40 professional years were also spent working at the AJS, where she eventually served as managing editor. Hughes also published in popular venues such as *Time Magazine*. Yet in an article on being a “faculty wife” from 1973, she observed that even though she clearly had her own intellectual capacity for an academic career, she admitted she felt that her husband’s professional success helped her keep her foot in the door of academia where it might have otherwise been closed to women like herself (Hughes, 1973).

Within a decade of acquiring her master’s in both Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Chicago in 1927, Helen Gregory MacGill had married sociologist (and classmate) Everett Hughes, completed her Ph.D. in Sociology, and started a family. Biographies of Everett Hughes suggest her legacy was that she “became an active partner in many of Hughes’ projects” (Hughes, E.C., 1975). But even a quick glance at her 1975 curriculum vitae suggests that she remained an active, independent researcher. In a candid assessment of this contradiction in a report on *The Status of Women in Sociology, 1968–1972*, Hughes makes a point relevant to her own as well as other women’s experiences that the “history of men’s opposition to the emancipation of women is perhaps more interesting than the story of the emancipation itself. It is a history that keeps repeating itself, in which prejudice is given expression in many guises” (Hughes & Weitzman, 1973, p. 3). The relevance of certain scholars and particular subjects in the academy, she says, are frequently decided “exclusively from the male perspective” (1973, p. 3). For Hughes’ own career, this opposition created a situation she called “the professional loneliness of women in academic life” as second-class academic citizens whose contributions receive little valorization (1973, p. 36).

Hughes had authored, coauthored, or edited nearly 20 articles and 13 books on a range of topics; those closest to communication studies were in the form of genealogies of the United States and Canadian presses. Hughes’ publication record began as early as 1936 with “The Lindbergh Case: A Study of Human Interest and Politics,” published in the AJS, a premier venue in the sociology field even today. “The Lindbergh Case,” a study of the changing role of the newspaper between the world wars, is Hughes’ first published analysis of news production. Here, the subject is the news and its evolution in the United States from political organ to a comprehensive publication. She compares it to the more politically didactic Berlin presses’ coverage and concludes that although the American press promotes a more passive reading public without connection to “thought and action,” it also focuses on “the person and the things he thinks important” (Hughes, 1936, p. 54). Unlike most academic critics of American news, Hughes’ comparison with the Berlin press demonstrated
that readers of politically oriented papers might sacrifice content to “political or theological abstraction,” while a popular approach to journalism puts the reader first (1936, p. 54). “The Lindbergh Case” was the beginning of Hughes’ formal interest in studying the culture, politics, and economics of media; as a Teaching Fellow at McGill University in 1928, Hughes also worked on a monograph of the French Canadian Press, “A Study of Nationalism in the French Canadian Press,” which never made it to a journaled print. After “Lindbergh,” she continued studying the political culture of print media: “Genealogy of Human Interest Stories” (Hughes, 1937b), “Human Interest Stories and Democracy” (Hughes, 1937a), “The Social Interpretation of News” (1942), and “Newspapers and the Moral World” (1945) followed from 1937 to 1945 (Hughes, 1975, p. 3). “The Social Interpretation of News” reads like a follow-up to the ideas presented in “The Lindbergh Case.”

But here Hughes no longer argues the American press promotes passivity; instead, the departmentalization of the American newspaper “[i]n a sense... may be said to organize or mobilize” readers by means of targeting professional, avocatory, or leisure concerns, whether via business, sports, amusement, or society sections (Hughes, 1942, p. 13). Moving forward on her earlier thesis in “The Lindbergh Case,” she zeroes in on conventional wisdom value judgments made about human interest-oriented stories. She asks, “is it somehow assumed that foreign news and business reports make a paper wholesome and respectable, while human-interest stories and thrillers are discreditable”? (1942, p. 15). The implication of this bias, she argues is that the “distinction amounts to the hypothesis that to read about things is good, but to read about people is bad” (1942, p. 15). Foregrounded for Hughes were the ideological assumptions inherent in this bias or inversion, which remained “obscure, invisible, or merely occasional and secondary” to other intellectuals analyzing the news (Hartsock, 2002, p. 355). Hughes’ status as an adjunct faculty and/or faculty wife positioned her to see the false dichotomy inherent in contemporary news analysis, because a similar dialectic governed the value of women’s and men’s work in academia. Hughes was able to perceive that human-interest stories were at once important because they drove sales, but were also labeled inconsequential, because they indicated that news was no longer exclusively the “possession of men of large affairs” (1940, p. 3). Hughes could critique the devaluation of human-interest stories, because as a female, chronic adjunct faculty she could see that the untenured shouldered (and still do today) primary responsibility for profitable endeavors such as teaching and editing, which simultaneously lacked prestige.

*News and the Human Interest Story*, her book which follows “Lindbergh,” accounts for the historical development of the mass audience through analysis of the origins of the human-interest feature story. Hughes argued that form—whether medieval ballad or yellow journalism—is an index of the social and moral order of a given society. Throughout several chapters, Hughes shows the rise and fall of newspaper empires, and how each tried to create special readership attractions with banner headlines, scandalous stories, popular columnists, and so on (1940, p. xv). For the modern press, Hughes understood that the human-interest story was concomitant
with current capitalistic prerogatives because it helped publishers increase their cultural and economic capital by exploiting readers. Thus, her analysis is unique: She understood print media as a barometer of national cultural and economic institutions, where commercial concerns underlie “the interaction between major capital investments and the organization of mass publics” (Hughes, 1940, p. xv). Even though it is primarily sociological, her book News is still considered an essential text for those who study the history of the U.S. press and is assigned reading in newspaper history and advanced journalism courses.

During the next several decades of her career, Hughes focused on subjects more firmly sociological, including drug addiction, delinquency, crime, race relations, and human behavior. She also worked as an editorial assistant and managing editor at AJS. Then beginning in the 1970s, Hughes turned her attention to writing about her experiences as a quasi-faculty wife. In an article written for AJS in 1973, “Maid of All Work or Departmental Sister-in-Law: The Faculty Wife Employed on Campus,” Hughes averred that her professional disappointment at being a second-class academic citizen was clearly “an outcome of sexism” (1973, p. 772). In writing about how she became a menial staff member at AJS even after her own academic work appeared there, she remembers that, “in August 1944, the Journal’s editor,” Blumer (who had previously been her classmate) asked her to “be an editorial assistant” (1973, p. 767). There were, says Hughes, “two editorial assistants then: a typist who was not a sociologist and the student assistant, who got out the journal between classes and on Saturday forenoons, at token pay” (1973, p. 767). Hughes was asked to replace “a graduate student in sociology who was leaving on very short notice. The student was . . . a woman, for this was one of the few jobs open to the then rare female graduate students” (1973, p. 767). The position of editorial assistant she noted, “would never have been offered . . . even to a male doctoral student whose mentor would be watching paternally for an opening in which he could set his disciple’s feet on the path to a career like his own” (1973, p. 772). She then clarifies her decision to accept the job: “Our youngest child was in nursery school, and I was very glad to accept the offer” (1973, p. 767). She accepted the compromise of not being formally validated as an academic, for being able to make public her research and writing.

Hughes notes this was typical of the way female academics were exploited, along with teaching “unchallenging classes or classes at awkward hours,” while being offered “a remuneration which is not competitive,” in the form of “unrealistic” salaries and positions that turned into a blind alleys (1973, p. 770). As for her own remuneration at AJS, she says Blumer paid her “on the masthead: a letter . . . notified me that I was managing editor” (1973, p. 771). “Whatever the title” she asserts, “it was not a promotion in the usual sense, but an enhancement—a ruban or a rosette” (1973, p. 771). “At that time, however,” she explains, “consciousness-raising was not sparking the spirit of the faculty wife in a campus job” (1973, p. 767).

As Dorothy E. Smith asserts about the experiences of those like Hughes, “the institutions which lock sociology into the structures occupied by men are the same institutions which lock women into the situations in which they find themselves
As Hughes’ work at AJS took place in what Smith calls a “male social universe,” it is predictable that Hughes’ work would not be adequately rewarded. Even though she was a well-educated, well-published academic in her own right, by virtue of the political and social structures that undergird academia, the devaluation of Hughes’ expertise was predictable. Perhaps for male academics such as Blumer, the other roles Hughes inhabited—as a mother and wife to a fellow faculty member—in effect “naturalized” this discriminatory relationship. In writing on women in academia, Hughes expressed her disbelief that obstacles such as the faculty wife dilemma would disappear anytime soon; her only hope was that future female scholars would at least “be better able to negotiate” them (1973, p. 772).

As for the obstacles keeping Hughes from being considered fundamental to early communication studies, historian Gertrude Robinson (1988) writes that “deep-seated assumptions about inequality” keep women’s scholarship out of the historiographies of the discipline (p. 67). One of the most powerful practices reinforcing these assumptions is “that the authorities in the field—those who define our field’s parameters—rarely read this literature, and it therefore fails to become legitimated in importantly scholarly texts” (p. 67). Fortunately, women in the field of sociology did not hold the same assumptions about Hughes’ work. The organization Sociologists for Women in Society has created the Helen MacGill Hughes Lecturer on Women and Social Change as an award that commemorates her efforts by assisting future female sociologists who hope to continue her intellectual legacy. While it is reassuring that Hughes has been acknowledged by her “home” discipline, it also highlights that there are no women recognized as “matriarchal” figures of communication history (Robinson, 1998).

**Hortense Powdermaker**

Powdermaker’s work comes before any other published work that considers the importance of cultural practices in media production. Rather than seeing the study of culture and economics as separate pursuits, Powdermaker’s *Hollywood the Dream Factory: An Anthropologist Looks at the Movie-Makers* (1950), *Copper Town: Changing Africa, the Human Situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt* (1962), and several related articles make this connection. Of these three scholars, Powdermaker is perhaps the most publicly acclaimed, especially for her social anthropological studies of communities around the world and the mass media community (Peters & Simonson, 2004). Although mentioned in at least one historiography of communication, Powdermaker has never been accorded status as central to the development of communication, despite helping establish mass communication study as a full-fledged discipline in the early 1950s.

Powdermaker’s approach to cultural anthropology was cultivated by wide-ranging intellectual interests. Postbaccalaureate, Powdermaker served as an assistant to the director of education for Amalgamated Clothing Workers, a position in which she began to cut her teeth in a kind of “fieldwork” that would later be useful to her
as a model for observing Hollywood culture from the inside. Powdermaker (1966) confesses that she did not originally intend to pursue graduate studies or an academic career while visiting England; nonetheless, she began taking classes at the London School of Economics and Political Science and studied with some of the most significant scholars of the time. Working with founder of Functionalism, Bronislaw Malinowski, and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Powdermaker earned her Ph.D. in 1928 at a time when anthropology began to emerge (Hier & Kemp, 2002, p. 254). Yet, in her personal correspondence to colleague and friend Alfred Kroeber, then Chair of Anthropology at Berkeley, she admitted the resentment she harbored against Radcliffe-Brown was far more toxic than the subtle “the rebellious attitude” she harbored against Malinowski; she respected Malinowski’s work, his personal exuberance, as well as his family’s generosity, and he seemed to respect her as well—she was often invited to debate with him either at the school or at his personal family villa during school vacations (personal correspondence, March 12, 1954). Powdermaker’s distaste for the influence of Radcliffe-Brown foreshadowed her own approach to research: She would not be a practitioner of theory that privileged the objectification of research subjects and invalidated human experience.

As a doctoral student she would be the first female anthropologist to conduct research alone on the island of Lesu in the South Pacific in the early 1930s; yet she had difficulties securing funding for the groundbreaking trip. Ultimately, the Australian National Research Council (ANRC) funded her, and a published work resulted from her ethnography, Life in Lesu: the Study of a Melanesian Society in New Ireland (1933). However, in a letter to Kroeber, Powdermaker described despising the “shadow” of functionalists such as Radcliffe-Brown, who chaired the ANRC and distributed its funding. She wrote the “personal allegiance” to him was costly because she felt the influence of a normative methodology, which she believed sterile because research subjects were simply static objects under the omnipotent analyst’s gaze (Powdermaker, H., 1950–1960; Powdermaker to A. Kroeber, March 12, 1954). Powdermaker chafed under what Smith (2004) calls “conceptual imperialism” or “a way of thinking about the world which is” salient simply through support by powerful practitioners in the field (p. 30). Powdermaker’s work never explicitly mentioned the idea of imperialism, conceptual or otherwise, but always implicit was the goal of questioning and critiquing normative processes.

Following Life in Lesu, Powdermaker earned a research associate position at the Yale Institute of Human Relations under Edward Sapir. Most renowned for “linguistic determinism” and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, he was an intellectual colleague of Lasswell. In “Who Are the Most Important Theorists of Communication” (1990)—written by James R. Beniger on the occasion of the publication of the International Encyclopedia of Communications (IEC)—Sapir ranked 10th as one of the “Most often named theorists of communication (Named in seven or more articles in the IEC),” while Lasswell ranked lower at 19 (p. 705). As a mentor, Sapir likely supported Powdermaker’s curiosity about communication playing an increasingly “central place in human life” (Beniger, 1990, p. 75). However, even as a student
of Sapir’s, who collaborated and contributed more frequently to communication research than he did, Powdermaker did not make Beniger’s list.

As early as 1945, Powdermaker had begun to gravitate toward media as a significant part of her research agenda and she approached Paul Fejos, director of The Viking Fund, to support a content analysis of 1940s filmmaking (Powdermaker, 1966, pp. 209–210). Fejos suggested Viking would fund the project, but only if she agreed to stay in Hollywood for 6 months. Under Fejos’ tutelage and a half-time visiting appointment at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) department of anthropology, Powdermaker ended up staying from mid-1946 to mid-1947, and she dedicated Hollywood to Fejos. Here, Powdermaker describes the disjuncture between cultural reality and fantasy in Hollywood a few years after the Paramount Decree. While her tone is largely neutral throughout the book, she is still skeptical that industry practices could consistently yield something of value, particularly because those who make films and television programming do so by functionalizing humanity, by boiling down its emotions, its needs, its vulnerabilities into “gimmicks” and “traditional plots” as a means to create and sell stories at a profit (1950, p. 285). Because, she says, members of the Hollywood industry simply do not think content “could be made differently” (1950, p. 284). Perhaps it was possible for Powdermaker to see the lack of reflexivity in Hollywood culture because of a similar absence in both anthropology and the still-developing field of communication toward both gender and alternative methodologies.

Stimulated in part by the methodology of the Lynds’ famous Middletown study, the Hollywood book best represents the unique vision Powdermaker contributed to anthropology and communication. Hollywood demonstrated that “movie making could be understood as a ‘big business,’ driven by economics and guided by power relations” (1950, p. 261). By acknowledging the antinomial nature of its inhabitants—“artists” versus “suits”—Powdermaker’s Hollywood transcended the intellectual assumptions of structural functionalism popular in the Harvard circle of Malinowski and Talcott Parsons at the time. Powdermaker’s methodology in Hollywood disregards the pervasiveness of a bias toward an “appropriate” scientific objectivity in social science of the period, which vehemently pits itself against humanist values. She saw Hollywood as perhaps more irrational and primitive in its beliefs than even the most remote communities of the time. She argues that “almost everyone” in Hollywood attributed “their own and other people’s successes to forces lying beyond their control” in the same way primitive peoples use magical thinking to make sense of their world (1950, p. 284). Working with formulas—such as bankable stars and plots, strategic openings of films—and sticking rigidly to them, creates rituals and taboos that are governed by the “supernatural.” The rationale for why media products exist as they do cannot be attributed to deliberate and rational decision making but instead to blind luck or the movie “gods” (1950, p. 285).

Following the publication of Hollywood, Powdermaker organized a Mass Communication Seminar at Queens College in 1951 (sponsored by Fejos, now at the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research), with the participation...
of Lazarsfeld and Lasswell, who each chaired their own sessions (Wenner-Gren Foundation, 1953, p. iii). In attendance at the seminar were other notables from a cross-disciplinary network, including Alfred Kroeber; Leo Lowenthal, then a chief at the International Broadcasting Division of the State Department of New York City; and others from medicine, psychiatry, history, literature, languages, and law; as well as members of the Rockefeller Foundation, the U.S. Army, and the Smithsonian Institution (Wenner-Gren Foundation, 1953, pp. 148–150). Powdermaker outlines that the purpose of the conference was to (a) recognize the increased reach of mass communication, (b) discuss the breadth and depth of the problems of mass communication that “no one discipline can cope adequately with,” and (c) discuss the role anthropology might play in mass communication theory, because “the practice and science of mass communication is becoming more and more cross-cultural” (1953, p. iv). The most important research agenda the seminar participants developed was to study the impact of mass mediated images on the ways in which people of a given society see themselves—an agenda Powdermaker herself would undertake in her next project in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia; Wenner-Gren Foundation, 1953, p. v).

Within a few years, Powdermaker published two articles based on her Rhodesian research, one in the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*: “Communication and Social Change, Based on a Field Study in Northern Rhodesia” and another in *American Anthropologist*: “Social Change Through Imagery and Values of Teen-Age Africans in Northern Rhodesia.” These were the first results of her sabbatical research study in the mining community of Luanshya in 1953–1954 and they demonstrate Powdermaker’s keen interest in the media. “Communication and Social Change” (1955) was based on Harold Lasswell’s formulation of mass communication analysis: “Who, says what, to whom, under what circumstances, and with what effect,” as it might apply to the import of Western mass media into this part of Africa (Powdermaker, 1955b, p. 431). Lasswell’s formulation was largely absent in her own field, and to her, Lasswell’s attention to how people respond to “symbols of communication” could give insight into how new symbols dovetail into old ones while a society undergoes change (Powdermaker, 1950, p. 431).

For one of her last projects in the 1950s, Powdermaker studied communities in Northern Rhodesia as an index of social change in Africa by touring in a “mobile cinema van” to ethnographically record the reactions her audiences had to Western media products. Her work was eventually published as *Copper Town: Changing Africa; The Human Situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt*. *Copper Town* germinated around communication of modern Western culture through the mass media as an indicator of social change in a regional mining community. The book attempts a holistic survey of the tribal past of the town, its economic order, and family life, but the largest portion of the book is devoted to leisure activities such as radio and movie-going as well as consumption of print media. Traces of media effects theory, including uses and gratifications and audience studies, alongside an analysis of mass media’s cultural implications can be found in the methodology of *Copper Town*, issues with which scholars in a variety of disciplines still grapple (Powdermaker, 1962, p. 270).
Although Kroeber (1955) described Powdermaker as “one of the upper-bracket scholars in the field of anthropology, with several books to her credit,” ultimately, the lack of funding for research at Queens College meant for her a rigorous year-round grant-writing schedule (Kroeber, A., 1950–1960, Kroeber to C. Eiseman, October 17, 1955). In 1955, she wrote that she was “allergic to ... bothering sponsors, etc., and I am doing this with great inner resistance. During the summer I more or less developed a philosophical acceptance ... However, it was easier to be philosophical when I was not on the Queens College schedule!” (Powdermaker, H., 1950–1960, Powdermaker to A. Kroeber, October 9, 1955). Her letters frequently mention the intense pressure of having to rely on a few scarce male mentors; and she disliked having to continually overburden Kroeber and also Lasswell with requests for recommendations and feedback on projects. In 1956, Powdermaker was hopeful for an appointment at Barnard, even though it required a salary reduction: It would have meant a reduced teaching load (Powdermaker, H., 1950–1960, Powdermaker to A. Kroeber, March 28, 1956). So when the Barnard position did not materialize, by 1958, Powdermaker had to settle for visiting professor at Columbia, part-time at Queens, and “giving a course at the N.Y. Medical college” all at once (Powdermaker, H., 1950–1960, Powdermaker to A. Kroeber, December 5, 1958).

It would seem that Powdermaker’s unique perspective on mass communication as it could reveal social order and change was inspired by the social, political, and economic conditions that she saw circumscribing her own career. In “Anthropological Stranger, the Intellectual Trajectory of Hortense Powdermaker,” Hier and Kemp (2002) posit Powdermaker’s difficulties were located in the fact that her “work failed to gain incorporation into wider disciplinary research agendas” such as anthropology, because she “charted alternative theoretical and methodological terrain” against the grain that always remained human-centered, even when the subject of her research was an industry such as Hollywood (p. 253). Patricia Hill Collins (1991) understands the impulse to create a universal standard of research that by necessity must eliminate “all human characteristics except rationality” to achieve “genuine science” (p. 205). She locates the affinity for the positivist social science approaches, popular in anthropology and communication at the time, in a need to standardize research against the “widely differing values, experiences, and emotions” of scholars in the field (p. 205). Yet, Collins also argues that rational positivism not only separates information from meaning but also, and most importantly, serves to reject valid knowledge claims—like Powdermaker’s—that come from outside epistemological privilege (p. 205). Not satisfied that her position in academic history “neither adequately reflects the significance of her work, nor her innovative epistemology,” Hier and Kemp have opened the door for historiographers to question whether Powdermaker’s unorthodoxy served her similarly in communication (p. 253).

A largely lone female academic struggling against the dominant epistemology, Powdermaker’s ability to resist gender stereotyping and discrimination through her own agency exclusively was difficult. In a letter that Powdermaker wrote to Kroeber in 1960, she confessed that her experiences had become oppressive enough
that she began to suffer from “anxiety-depression” and decided to convalesce in Tucson, Arizona (Powdermaker, H., 1950–1960, Powdermaker to A. Kroeber, January 20, 1960). Powdermaker’s letters make real Hartsock’s (2002) argument that institutions like academia foster isolation for women through an enforced duality of having to see yourself as others see you; this duality leaves women alone in a liminal space (pp. 354–356). In Powdermaker’s case, as her autobiography Stranger and Friend: The Way of an Anthropologist, suggests studying the world as both insider and outsider were not only the subject her life’s work as an anthropologist but the character of her life experience as well. And as her letters illustrate, she received contradictory messages—amplified by her gender—about the efficacy of her scholarship from mentors, colleagues, and funding institutions, which undercut the impact of her position as a scholar but enhanced her critical capacities. Ironically, the institutionalized sexism that dominated both anthropology and communication studies in the period—that is, the presumed affiliation between biological, social, and academic roles—was no less superstitious or mythological than the beliefs Powdermaker saw operating in Hollywood.

Summary and implications for communication historiography

Huettig’s interpretation of filmmaking as a “maze” of economic relationships, Hughes’s human-interest story analysis, and Powdermaker’s understanding of communication as both a socialization tool and example of economic irrationality are critical to political economy of communication, media effects, and media studies. From their positions as subordinate, faculty wife, and outsider, they could see beyond conventional studies of the time to analyze how media industry processes—and academia (at times)—front-loaded ideology. Perhaps the blind spot excluding Powdermaker, Hughes, and Huettig from the core communication historiography is the assumption that the social sciences and early communication studies were nearly completely masculinized fields—an ideology that persists today.

As social science communication scholars, Powdermaker, Hughes, and Huettig now seem to be in shadows of “giants.” Yet it was in some of the dominant schools of thought in the United States—the Universities of Chicago, Pennsylvania, and California at Berkeley—that these women studied and worked. Huettig and Hughes worked with the same network of established professors: Harold Innis, Herbert Blumer, and Louis Wirth, while Hughes studied under Innis and worked with Blumer for over a decade. Furthermore, both Huettig and Powdermaker traveled in the same intellectual circles with Harold Lasswell and Paul Lazarsfeld, either through research projects or developmental seminars in mass communication. While these women struggled to fund, publish, teach, and collaborate with others on their research, their male mentors and colleagues eventually came to stake the terrain as “founding fathers” of communication studies. In Brenda Dervin’s (1987) response to the disciplinary-defining Journal of Communication’s 1983 issue, “Ferment in the Field” (which included only one mention of the term “feminist”), she pinpoints the
gatekeeping process in the social sciences as one that establishes research by and about men as “normal” and that by and about women as “residual” (1987, p. 108). Because women (and their work) are seen as anomalies or special cases by virtue of gender as the “fundamental organizing category of human experience,” women working in communication studies have historically toiled at its edges to the benefit of their male counterparts and the institution at large (1987, p. 109). Yet, it was precisely because they were anomalies that Huettig, Hughes, and Powdermaker could see power structures operating in communication and academia in a way others could not.

With feminist standpoint as its framework, the present project highlights how the epistemology of early social science research “served hierarchical power relations in the larger society,” to “decolonize” women’s work in the field, an impulse that can be located in the goal of methodological objectivity and disciplinary coherence (Harding, 2007, pp. 45, 47). Certainly it appears that the field of communication began as a White, male-dominated field if we limit it to its “seminal” figures. But such a limitation tells us more about the structure of privilege in academia than it does about the variety of individuals who nurtured the field into existence. Sandra Harding argues that social science research can be “scientifically less than maximally effective” because it creates significant “gaps” between the validation of women’s and men’s work in the field, regardless of the merit of contribution (Harding, 2007, p. 45). What communication studies has lost as a consequence of these sociostructural sexist gaps is a sense of its true heterogeneity—of discipline, of methodology, and most significantly, of gender.

Feminist standpoint theory acknowledges a debt to women’s political movements of the mid-to-late 20th century, but it might also be said that the women’s movement owes a debt to women such as Huettig, Hughes, and Powdermaker, who not only served as intellectual role models but also—in the case of Powdermaker and Hughes—demonstrated faith in documenting their own experiences in struggling for equality within the academic community. Echoing Donna Haraway, Hartsock (2002) argues that the “knowledges of the dominated” can indeed “constitute alternatives”; here, Huettig, Hughes, and Powdermaker represent such an opportunity to construct a new epistemology for the historiography of communication studies (p. 358). The present project is not intended to be holistic—there is much more “thinking dirty” to be done. Many more women like Huettig, Hughes, and Powdermaker remain to be discovered; reclaiming their work would result in a more ambitious and inclusive canon of communication historiography.³ Reclamation would also provide exemplary material for textbooks in communication, for academic courses that seek to highlight interdisciplinary research or explore communication history; and reclamation can be more than just a presentation panel or two, but perhaps even a guiding theme for a conference or other professional activity.

To claim that the scholarship of Huettig, Hughes, Powdermaker, and others like them did not contribute significantly to early communication scholarship is to reveal how still firmly rooted is the impulse to silence female scholarship. Instead, these women should be reconsidered as foundational to communication studies. Giving voice to the silent and questioning the basis on which values are established and
reinforced allows for the centrality of female experience in the field. As Mendes and Carter (2008) emphasize, this centrality in the field must be predicated on “research that studies communication theories and practices from a perspective that ultimately is oriented toward the achievement of ‘gender justice’” (p. 1701).

Archival sources

Everette Cherrington Hughes. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Library.

Notes

2 Before the MPRP, Blumer wrote two book-length studies under the Payne Fund studies: Movies and Conduct (1933) and Movies, Delinquency, and Crime (1933), early applications of media effects theory to the personal accounts of adolescents’ and juvenile delinquents’ relationship of movie watching to their lives. The Payne Fund studies were the first to evaluate movies’ impact on American youth in an eight-volume, 2-year series.
3 Peter Simonson has an example of such a project, the film Out of the Question: Women, Media, and the Art of Inquiry. See http://www.outofthequestion.org/.

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“思想肮脏”：对传播研究中三个创始“女家长”的挖掘

【摘要：】

传播学领域极少研究性别问题，特别是在记录本学科的史学史方面。因此，尽管Hortense Powdermaker, Mae Huettig, 和 Helen MacGill Hughes与同时代的Harold Lasswell, Dallas Smythe, 和 Paul Lazarsfeld在同一个学术领域工作和发表文章，这些女性似乎并未在20世纪30年代至60年代传播学的最初发展阶段起到一样的启蒙性影响。社会、经济和政治因素削弱了这些女性对我们现在所说的媒介效果理论、传播政治经济学和媒体研究领域的贡献。本文运用女权主义的立场认识论来研究传播学历史上早期的一些里程碑，使传播学发展的成果理论化，并提出未来挖掘工作的价值。
« L’esprit mal tourné » : retrouver trois « mères » fondatrices des études en communication

Résumé

Le champ des communications étudie à peine les enjeux de genre, en particulier lorsqu’il est question de documenter sa propre historiographie. En conséquence, Hortense Powdermaker, Mae Huettig et Helen MacGill Hughes semblent guère déterminantes dans le développement de la recherche en communication à ses débuts dans les années 1930 à 1960, et ce, bien que ces femmes aient travaillé et publié dans les mêmes milieux universitaires que Harold Lasswell, Dallas Smythe et Paul Lazarsfeld. Des facteurs sociaux, économiques et politiques ont réduit leur apport aux champs que nous appelons aujourd’hui la théorie des effets médiatiques, l’économie politique de la communication et les études médiatiques. Cet article utilise la théorie épistémologique féministe du point de vue (feminist standpoint epistemology theory) pour examiner certains de ces premiers moments dans l’histoire de la recherche en communication, pour théoriser à propos des conséquences de son développement et pour suggérer la valeur de futurs travaux de redécouverte.
„Dreckige Gedanken": Drei Gründungsmatriarchinnen der Kommunikationswissenschaft neu besehen

El Diálogo, el Activismo y el Cambio Social Democrático

Resumen

Este ensayo provee una descripción sistemática de varias posiciones sobre el diálogo y las implicancias para el entendimiento del activismo y el cambio social. Describe tres orientaciones hacia el diálogo—colaboración, cooptación, y agonía—las cuales son diferenciadas de las presuposiciones acerca de la omnipresencia del diálogo, el rol de la diferencia, y las concepciones de poder. Argüimos a favor de una propuesta multifocal agonística del diálogo centrada en los asuntos de poder y conflicto en el activismo. Esta perspectiva ilumina una gama amplia de tácticas activistas para el cambio social privilegiando los métodos orientados hacia el consenso. Estos enfoques son ilustrados en 2 estudios de caso etnográficos que destacan la importancia de las teorías del activismo y el dialogo del lego.
다리를 생각하기: 커뮤니케이션 연구에서의 세가지 기본적 모계가정을 파헤치기

요약

커뮤니케이션 분야는 젠더, 특히 그 자체의 역사적 기록을 정리한다는 점에서, 지금까지 해당 연구를 통한시하여 왔다. 결론적으로 Hortense Powdermaker, Mae Huettig, 그리고 Helen MacGill Hughes 는, 이들 여성들이 Harold Lasswell, Dallas Smythe, 그리고 Paul Lazarsfeld 와 같은 학문영역에서 연구하고 그 결과들을 출간했는데도 불구하고, 1930년대부터 1960년대 젠더연구의 초창기동안의 커뮤니케이션 연구의 발전에 거의 중요시되지 않았다고 할 수 있다. 사회적, 경제적, 그리고 정치적 요소들은 우리가 현재 미디어 효과 이론, 정치경제학, 그리고 미디어 연구라고 지칭하는 분야에 대한 그들의 공헌을 감소시켰다. 본 연구는 이들 초창기 운동을 커뮤니케이션 연구의 역사내에서 조명하기 위하여, 이러한 발전의 결과들을 이론화하기 위하여, 그리고 미래연구가치를 제안하고자 페미니스트적 인식론을 이용하여 연구를 단행하였다.