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Author	李, 津娥(Lee, Jinah)
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Book Review

Introduction to Media Communication,
YAMAKOSHI Shuzo (ed.),
Keio University Press, Tokyo, 2017, 393 Pages

LEE Jinah*

Introduction to Media Communication, edited by YAMAKOSHI Shuzo, is based primarily on a lecture series titled "New media environment and journalism" of Correspondence Course at Keio University with additional chapters for publication. This book provides a broad perspective on contemporary issues in media and society. It is geared mostly to upper-level university students as a textbook on media communication, but also appeals to a wider audience interested in the field of media communication and journalism.

Based on an interdisciplinary work on media communication, including law, political science, sociology, and social psychology, the book is structured into three sections: *Understanding media communication, understanding the changes brought about by digitalization*, and *understanding the society through news*. Section 1 "Understanding media communication" aims to encourage readers to think methodically about news and journalism, comprised of "Basic concepts of news research" (Chapter 1), "The effects of news" (Chapter 2), "Journalism and law" (Chapter 3), and "Freedom of the press worldwide" (Chapter 4). Section 2 "Understanding the changes brought about by digitalization" highlights the relations between emerging digital media and society, in which the traditional mass media and new technologies intertwine, in insightful chapters such as "Digital media and political sociology of news" (Chapter 5), "Changing news diffusion process and journalism" (Chapter 6), "Broadcasting, Internet, and freedom of expression" (Chapter 7), and "Social media and political participation" (Chapter 8). Section 3 "Understanding the society through news" is dedicated to critical discussions of contemporary issues such as "The Okinawan issue and journalism" (Chapter 9), "Legitimacy of nuclear energy policy and media" (Chapter 10), "Globalization and international flow of news" (Chapter 11), and "Global news and international relations" (Chatper12).

The book opens with an introductory chapter, "Basic concepts of news

* Professor, Department of Communication, Tokyo Woman's Christian University.

research," authored by OISHI Yutaka, which introduces basic and crucial concepts in news production. The chapter depicts a discussion of concepts such as collective memory, narrative, reality on social news sharing, and problems with online data curation. Chapter 2 "The effects of news," authored by LEE Kwangho, gives an overview of news effects with major media effects models and theories such as knowledge gap hypothesis, agenda-setting effect, the spiral of silence, exemplar effect, and framing based primarily on social psychological approach.

Section 1 has the other two chapters that look into critical issues in journalism. Chapter 3 "Journalism and law" by SUZUKI Hidemi and Chapter 4 "Freedom of the press worldwide" by KARASUDANI Masayuki deliver detailed discussions on the institutional basis and freedom of the press in light of law and political sociology respectively. Chapter 3 discusses the value and range of the freedom of the press that is fundamental to journalism and law, and issues in legal limitation of journalism including courtroom coverage, the force of testimony of news sources and document submission, privacy protection, and state secrets and specific secrets protection. Chapter 4 looks into different degrees of freedom of press among nations, drawing on a wide range of global discussions and data including the four theories of the press, a comparative study of the media systems of 18 countries after the cold war, survey results and index development on freedom of the press by the *Freedom House*.

Chapter 5 "Digital media and political sociology of news" by YAMAKOSHI Shuzo presents a new perspective on journalism in the new media environment brought about by digital media and the Internet focusing on the change in production, transmission, and consumption processes of news such as news distribution channel, use of UGC (user-generated content), big data and investigative journalism. Furthermore, the chapter notes the relationship between digital media and journalism in the broader political and social context through a discussion on the changing public nature of media and populism in the digital media age. LEE Kwangho's Chapter 6 "Changing news diffusion process and journalism" describes the influence of changes in the media environment on the news diffusion process. The chapter explains the patterns and the determinants of news diffusion, focusing on the news sharing on *Twitter* and significant changes in the news production by presenting the concept of crowdsourcing, gate-jumping, and ambient journalism. Chapter 7 "Broadcasting, Internet, and freedom of expression" authored by SUZUKI Hidemi explains the freedom of the press in the new media environment in light of media law. Points raised in the chapter include regulation by *Editing of Broadcast Programs*, Article 4 of the *Broadcasting Act* with regard to broadcasting, and adjustment of conflict between protection of freedom of expression, and honor rights and privacy infringement in terms of information distribution on the Internet. Chapter 8 "Social media and political participation" by YAMAMOTO Nobuto illuminates as to how social media facilitates political participation through analyses

of recent domestic and foreign cases, such as anti-nuclear protests after the Great Kanto Earthquake in Japan, the Arab Spring, and the Anti-Austerity Movement in Spain, which is also referred to as Indignados Movement.

Furthermore, YAMAKOSHI Shuzo's Chapter 9 "The Okinawan issue and journalism" provides a way of understanding the issues regarding Okinawa and the postwar Japanese society, through a comparison of media in Okinawa and nationwide media. Chapter 10 "Legitimacy of nuclear energy policy and media" by KARASUDANI Masayuki confers nuclear energy policies and media through the concept of legitimacy and the analysis of news coverage. Chapter 11 "Globalization and international flow of news" by OISHI Yutaka covers global flow of news, and the final chapter (Chapter 12) by YAMAMOTO Nobuto entitled "Global news and international relations" demonstrates models and theories in relation to the changing media environment and international relations.

The book covers numbers of salient topics within the field of media communication and journalism. Indeed, the diverse perspective provided in it is of great significance. The authors who have contributed to the book represent different areas of this field, which lead readers to acquire deep insights into media communication of our age. Although it is beyond the scope of this book, discussion on media content other than news could enable readers to understand media communication from a different dimension, leading to a development of their comprehension on the whole field of media communication. Research methodology of media communication and journalism would be also useful for those hoping to study the subject area. Although the structure and organization of the book allow the reader to easily follow the main issues in media communication on the whole, adding a section on global issues in media communication to the book would help reader's better understanding of the issues. Overall, the book should provide an excellent resource for those new to the field of media communication and journalism with an interest in learning the theoretical basics and their application to the analysis of media and society.