As the two friends wandered through the snow on their way home, Piglet grinned to himself, thinking how lucky he was to have a best friend like Pooh.

Pooh thought to himself: “If the pig sneezes, he’s f*cken dead.”
Unit Two: From Media to Mediatization

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12 August 2015

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Recent theories of mediation

- **Asif Agha (2011):** “To speak of mediatization is to speak of institutional practices that reflexively link processes of communication to processes of commoditization. In linking communication to commoditization, mediatized institutions link communicative roles to positions within a socioeconomic division of labor, thereby expanding the effective scale of production and dissemination of messages across a population, and thus the scale at which persons can orient to common presuppositions in acts of communication with each other.... Mediatization is a narrow special case of mediation....”
We might ask...

- Insofar as mediatization relates to commodification, is there a single market logic that organizes commodification? Are there not “capitalisms” rather than a single capitalism with a unified logic?
We might ask...

- Is mediatization always tied to commodification?
  - The “Zapatista revolution” was mediatized from the start; was its media logic commodification?
  - Anti-globalization social movements: are they tied to a single market logic?
Recent European theories of mediatization

- Meanwhile, in Europe, there is an explosion of research on mediatization in the U.K., Scandinavia, and elsewhere
Recent European theories of mediatization

Couldry & Hepp 2013: it has emerged as the most likely “winner” in a race between many terms, all cumbersome or ambiguous to varying degrees—mediazation, medialization, mediation—that have been coined to capture somehow the broad consequences for everyday life and practical organization (social, political, cultural, economic) of media, and more particularly of the pervasive spread of media contents and platform through all types of context and practice. Put simply, something is going on with media in our lives, and it is deep enough not to be reached simply by accumulating more and more specific studies that analyze this newspaper, describe how that program was produced, or trace how particular audiences make sense of that film on a particular occasion.
Recent European theories of mediatization

- Couldry & Hepp 2013: Until the mid-2000s the three approaches to media research
  - textual analysis
  - political economy of production
  - audience or reception studies
- comprised the majority of media and communications research.
- Together they still failed to answer key questions about why media mattered so much (and increasingly more).
Recent European theories of mediatization

- This was followed during the early 2000s in essays that explored the concept of “mediation” as a dialectical term for the continuous interchange whereby media shaped or were shaped by broader life and culture (Silverstone, 2005).
Recent European theories of mediatization

- Silverstone (1994), together with David Morley, emphasized the role that television especially played in the regulation of society’s basic structures, the family: not just the family in isolation, but the family as a node in various important regulatory grids (state, education, leisure, everyday knowledge).
- This was followed during the early 2000s in essays that explored the concept of “mediation” as a dialectical term for the continuous interchange whereby media shaped or were shaped by broader life and culture (Silverstone, 2005).
De los medios a las mediaciones (1987) virtually unknown until translated into English, and even for a decade longer.

The terms “media” and “communication” are some of the most reified terms in the modern lexicon.

Creating their commonsense definitions and embodying them in such “communicative technologies” as newspapers, radio, television, and now the Internet, cellphones, and social media played a crucial role in creating such powerful categories as “the state,” “society,” and “the people.”
Starting in the 1920s, for example, radio transmission made it seem possible for such abstract entities as the people, the state, and corporations to speak, and at the same time, such acts of speaking shaped how listeners experienced radio broadcasts.
Rather than researching “the media” or “communication,” we should take such notions as objects of investigation and see how various parties continually made and use them.

Did not actually use the term “mediatization”
Third wave of mediatization studies

- Starting in 1990s, a more heterogeneous convergence around “mediatization” that
- Spring from Foucault’s emphasis on the diffused networks of linkages, apparatuses, and habits with everylife, rather than simply as exerted by elite institutions.
- Growing presence of the anthropology of the media
- Internationalization of research on the media (International Communication Association (ICA))
Emergence of 2 approaches

- Institutionalist approach: Coming mainly from journalism studies and political communication, the institutionalist tradition understood media as an independent social institution with its own sets of rules.
Institutionalist approach

Mediatization here refers to the adaptation of different social fields or systems (for example, politics or religion) to these institutionalized rules. The latter are mainly described as a “media logic” (Altheide & Snow, 1979): that is, in the widest sense of the word, institutionalized formats and forms of staging.
The social-constructivist approach

- This tradition highlights the role of various media as part of the process of the communicative construction of social and cultural reality
The social-constructivist approach

According to this approach, mediatization captures both

- how the communicative construction of reality is manifested within certain media processes
- how specific features of certain media have a contextualized “consequence” for the overall process whereby sociocultural reality is constructed in and through communication.
"Mediatization" does not refer to a single theory but to a more general approach within media and communications research. It analyzes critically the interrelation between changes in media and communications on the one hand, and changes in culture and society on the other. Mediatization has quantitative as well as qualitative dimensions. Quantitative aspects refer to the increasing temporal, spatial and social spread of mediated communication. Qualitative aspects refer to the specificity of certain media within sociocultural change: It matters what kind of media is used for what kind of communication.
Jurgen Strömbäck’s 4 stages:

- The first aspect of the mediatization of politics is the degree to which the media constitute the most important or dominant source of information on politics and society.

- A second aspect is the degree to which the media are independent from political institutions in terms of how the media are governed.
Jurgen Strömbäck’s 4 stages:

- A third aspect is the degree to which the media content is governed by a political logic or by media logic.
- A fourth aspect is the degree to which political actors are governed by a political logic or by media logic. This “deepest” level of mediatization involves a convergence of media and other institutions.
Hallin (1992) on soundbites and politics

- Measured the length of soundbites in US presidential elections on national network news
  - In 1968, average soundbite 43 sec
  - In 1988, 9 seconds (now around 7)
- What does this mean for mediatization (didn’t use term)?
  - More active intervention by journalists in making political news
  - Internalization by politicians of media logics
Theoretical principles

- Might we gain some analytic advantage by taking into account
- The relationship between pragmatics and metapragmatics?
- The model of and model for dimensions of metapragmatic models?
- Dimensions of decontextualization, recontextualization, and entextualization?
And now to Prof. Silva’s question about how to techniques constructed for micro-analysis in looking at the macro

- How to get beyond such broad generalizations to actually see what is going on?
- How to use the tools of applied linguistics (including ethnography and discourse analysis) to add depth and specificity?
A point of departure

- Don’t start with “the media” and “culture and society”
- Start with a smaller textual and institutional field that can be documented and analyzed in more depth
For example... medicine... why?

- An area that has been left out of most research on mediatization (anthropology of the media, journalism studies)

- Neglected by science-technology-society studies (e.g., beginning of Latour’s *We Have Never Been Modern*)
For example... medicine... why?

- Small area of “health communication” research that focuses on health news
For example... medicine... why?

- A huge part of media markets globally!
- New York Times: often 3-8 articles daily, dedicated reporters, in all sections, often a health story on front page
- #3 topic in national network television coverage
- Huge focus of Internet news & social media
For example... medicine... why?

Parallel transformation from

- *Medicalization* (Zola 1972): the increasing extension of medical practices and forms of authority into wider spheres of life

- **to biomedicalization** (Clarke et al. 2003): the greater interpenetration of biomedicine with other social structures, such as industry, the state and the mass media, the increasingly central role of science and technology, the proliferation and diversification of flows of biomedical knowledge through public channels, and the growing internalization of this process in identities and modes of self-construction
For example... medicine... why?

- Organized on an ideological separation of “the media” vs. “medicine” as involving boundary-work that separates two metapragmatic models (“two cultures”)
  - Health communication founded on:
    - Biomedical hegemony: health professionals as producing knowledge about health
    - Metapragmatic transparency as model: “communication” as perfectly reproducing biomedical content in circulation and reception processes
  - Scientific communication:
    - Latour: “Circulating reference” from the rainforest to the scientific journal
For example... medicine... why?

- Thus, a perfect example because it represents the enmeshment of:
  - two powerful logics, media and medical
  - Two powerful and also rapidly shifting institutional fields, recently affected (and affecting):
    - The rise of digital media
    - The changing nature of capitalism ("neoliberalism")
  - Both enjoy tremendous visibility globally, but shaped by national and other forms of variation
Media and Health Study
Charles Briggs and Daniel Hallin, PIs

- Countries where research conducted: Cuba, Singapore, the United States, and Venezuela
- Collaboration with teams in Argentina and Mexico
- Media included:
  - Newspapers
  - Radio
  - Television news
  - Web
  - Social media
Media and Health Study

- **Content analysis:**
  - Quantitative: permits comparisons
    - Between media “platforms” (newspapers of different sorts, television, radio, Internet, social media)
    - Between news coverage and epidemiology
    - Between countries
    - Over time (1960s through present for print media)
  - Qualitative analysis: using a variety of perspectives
Media and Health Study

• Interviews:
  - Journalist working in the media, including both health journalists and others (including reporters, producers, and editors)
  - Policy-makers
  - Researchers
  - Clinicians and public health practitioners

• Laypersons: interviews, focus groups
Media and Health Study

- Ethnography:
  - Observation and interviews in a wide range of institutions
    - Local, state, national, and international public health offices
    - Clinical facilities
    - Media institutions
  - Reception analysis: doing ethnography to see how people move between sources of knowledge about health, including traditional media, social media, Web, clinicians, relatives, friends, etc.
  - Permits us to follow media representations of crisis from start to finish
The micro-macro question

- But we are still at a macro level, with many micro-practices to document and connect
- So, pick a form/event (Rabinow), an event that seems to introduce or transform forms
The H1N1 ("swine flu") pandemic
The NBC Evening News

- 24 April 2009 broadcast
Fighting Deadly Flu, Mexico Shuts Schools

By MARC LACEY and DONALD G. McNEIL Jr.

April 24, 2009

MEXICO CITY — Mexican officials, scrambling to control a swine flu outbreak that has killed as many as 61 people and infected possibly hundreds more in recent weeks, closed museums and shuttered schools for millions of students in and around the capital on Friday, and urged people with flu symptoms to stay home from work.
Dr. Richard E. Besser, one of the nation’s top public health officials, has won raves for his televised swine flu updates. His parents said he had been calmly reassuring since childhood, but Dr. Besser said weekly stints in the 1990s as a television health reporter in San Diego helped.
Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication: Pandemic Influenza
“Basic Tenets of Emergency Risk Communication”

- Don’t over reassure.
- Acknowledge uncertainty.
- Express that a process is in place to learn more.
- Give anticipatory guidance [regarding possible negative outcomes].
- Acknowledge people’s fears.
- Express wishes. “I wish we knew more.”
- Give people things to do.
What does this mean to us?

- Powerful ideology of language and discourse, including of the performative effects of discourse about health
  - Producing trust and compliance
  - Keeping “the public” from panicking
- Teaches a metapragmatic model for the production of discourse about health
- Rehearses the pragmatics of health crisis discourse production
Exercises or scenarios

- Massively funded by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for all local, county, state, national units
- Simulate either bioterrorist “attack” or an epidemic of a novel virus
- Both on-line and in vivo
- In vivo include a JIC “Joint Information Center” populated by journalists (ex-reporters) working for health and security agencies
- Meta-metapragmatics? News stories are done on biosecurity exercises
Bioterrorism “exercises” or “scenarios”
Back to pragmatics & metapragmatics

**Metapragmatics: Bazell, NBC, 24 April:** “it would be a very good time for all the communities to review the preparedness plans they were supposed to come up with. We'll see in the next few weeks if [preparedness plans] need to be put in place.”

- Frames H1N1 as a security issue
- Invokes the “crisis & emergency risk communication” metapragmatic model
- Cites Besser’s metapragmatics (“I think that it’s important that people should be paying attention to what’s going on”)

The pragmatics of his own discourse organized precisely in terms of this model, precisely as those of researchers, public health officials, politicians (Janet Napolitano, Barak Obama)
Metapragmatic layering in the “exercise”:

- Entire event is a metapragmatic model for a possible bioterrorism attack.
- Entire event is a metapragmatic model, both implicitly and explicitly, of discourse about H1N1.
- Press releases model the simulated discourse production.
- Mock press release metapragmatically model news coverage.
- Working reporters cover the exercise.
- The “hotwash” at the end of the exercise provides a metapragmatic model of the day’s metapragmatics and a model for the future—primarily future exercises.
Entextualization

- Extracts discourses of genetics, public health, security, and journalism and weaves them into a standard journalistic genre
- Constructing discursive pasts (including 1918-1920 flu pandemic) and projecting discursive futures (review preparedness plans, put them into place,
Why news coverage of H1N1 is particularly interesting

- The status of H1N1 as a success story for health risk communication—in the eyes of both most (but not all) health officials and journalists
- As often contrasted with the quintessential of failure in health communication: 10-4
  - (news of the anthrax attacks of October 2001)
Did this metapragmatic model shape pragmatics?

- To some extent....
Harvard School of Public Health
A(H1N1) Survey

- 29 April and 6 May: “How closely are you following news about the recent outbreak of swine flu? Are you following the news very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not at all?”

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<thead>
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- June 2009: “How closely did you follow news...?”

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Harvard School of Public Health
A(H1N1) Survey

- **29 April**: “From which source have you gotten the most information about the swine flu outbreak: local TV news, national network TV news, cable news, newspapers, or the Internet?”

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Local TV news</th>
<th>National network TV news</th>
<th>Cable news</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
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- **6 May**: “Have you gotten or shared an information about H1N1 or swine flu online on sites such as Twitter, blogs, Facebook, or discussion boards?”

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6 May: “How satisfied are you with the information public health officials have been providing about the H1N1 or swine flu outbreak? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not too satisfied, or not at all satisfied?”

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6 May: “How satisfied are you with the way public health officials have been managing the response to the H1N1 or swine flu outbreak? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not too satisfied, or not at all satisfied?”

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</table>
Did this metapragmatic model shape pragmatics?

- But not always…
- Comments sections of websites for “mainstream media” and social media: anti-immigrant, anti-state, demedicalization, etc. discourses proliferated
- Parodies of the metapragmatics and pragmatics of “crisis and emergency risk communication”: The DailyShow “Snoutbreak”
Co-producing the H1N1 Pandemic

- The process was widely dispersed among institutions and sites
- Involved a variety of types of professionals, health and media
- Distributed among a variety of types of texts, media, vocabularies, etc.
- Centrality of rehearsal to: exercises and scenarios, media training for officials and researchers. Texts largely created in advance, details emerge with pathogen...
Back to Dr. Silva’s question

- Our case study on H1N1 also included:
  - Comparative analysis of newspaper, TV, radio, Internet, and social media coverage, esp. April – July 2009
  - Other media sources (such as the DailyShow)
  - Interviews with the key journalists who “broke” and developed the story and with local journalists
  - Interviews with health professionals, including public health officials (including Besser), researchers, clinicians
  - Interviews and focus groups with laypersons
  - Ethnography of media trainings and biosecurity exercises (online and in vivo)
The study of biomediatization also included other case studies, where the same combination of quantitative and qualitative textual analysis and ethnography:

- Biotech and pharmaceutical corporation coverage (the pharmaceuticalization of society, Joao Biehl)
- Racialization and biomediatization (both in Venezuela with indigenous/non-indigenous opposition) and esp. Africa Americans and Latinos/as in the United States
This process did not involve the translations into popular language by journalists of a preexisting biological object.

The biological object was just emerging, and very little was known about its biology.

“The swine flu epidemic” was co-produced by media and health professionals.

The product was a hybrid, part biology, part media.

This process had significant health policy and fiscal implications.

It occurred largely without professional or public scrutiny and debate.
Lessons for the study of mediatization

Defining mediatization as “of institutional practices that reflexively link processes of communication to processes of commoditization” (Agha) is problematic, in that

- It leaves the category of “communication” intact, its borders continuing to limit inquiry
- Mediation is insufficient as a notion the capture complex processes of co-production
- “Institutional” does not provide the complexity needed to understand the dispersal and connections across sites
- Commodity, a unified logic of capital, is certainly involve here (given the role of the commercial media, pharmaceutical corporations, etc.) but it does not provide us with much traction in understanding these processes nor in grasping either media or other logics in many cases.
Lessons for the study of mediatization

- Pragmatics: complex co-production of new objects and subjects across borders of institutions, sites, forms of professional authority; important not to look only at media objects & sites
- Metapragmatics: boundary-work, the constant projection of separation of social fields
- Need to document in depth the production and circulation of texts and the involved microprocesses as well as ways in which they get linked and separated
- It is especially worthwhile to attend to processes of socialization/regimentation that produce and contest metapragmatic and pragmatic dimensions of mediatization
Project participants & funding

- Faculty participants (U.S.): Charles L. Briggs, Daniel C. Hallin, Clara Mantini-Briggs

- UC Berkeley students recently participating in project: Deirdre Clyde, Rachael Erlich, Natalie Fries, Alice Hwang, Andrew Ignacio, Wyatt Lienhard, Erica Magill, Shannon Najmadabi, Lina Pervez, Elizabeth Rocha, Carolina Adjunta, and Ian Wilson

- Funding sources: UC-MEXUS/CONACYT; The Center for the Study of Race and Gender, UCSD; Salus Mundi Foundation; and the Committee on Research of UCB and UCSD