



Martin A. M. Gansinger, Ayman Kole (Eds.)

Mapping Media Responsibility

Contemporary Aspects of Morals, Ethics
and Social Discourse



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Dedicated to Ahmed-Nouri and Atilla

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Table of Contents

Martin A. M. Gansinger & Ayman Kole

Plagiarism and profit. Ethical and moral issues of scientific writing and academic publishing in the 21st century 14

Philip Effiom Ephraim

Whistleblowing and social responsibility in a surveillance system: Appraising the morality of the Snowden disclosures 50

Abbas Zakria Qasmi

The representation of Islam in Western electronic media
(A critical discourse analysis of an interview with Reza Aslan on a Fox news webcast called *Spirited Debate*) 72

Anna Babitskaya

An integral discourse of justice as a discursive space in modern Russia. Definitions of 'future' and its connection with 'historical past' 108

Mercy Okon Ikpi

The press, insecurity and national development in Nigeria
(A content analysis of *The Guardian* and *The Sun* newspaper) 138

Anna Babitskaya

The representation of Belorussian cinema in *On the screens* magazine 156

Abbas Zakria Qasmi

The New York Times ' depiction of Madrasas in Pakistan 176

List of Tables and Appendices

Abbas Zakria Qasmi

The representation of Islam in Western electronic media
(A critical discourse analysis of an interview with Reza Aslan
on a Fox news webcast called *Spirited Debate*)

Appendix A: *The Interview* 103

Anna Babitskaya

An integral discourse of justice as a discursive space in modern Russia.
Definitions of 'future' and its connection with 'historical past'

Appendix A: *Excerpt: The Court of Time. October 1917.*
The Bolsheviks destroyed or saved Russia? 136

Mercy Okon Ikpi

The press, insecurity and national development in Nigeria
(A content analysis of *The Guardian* and *The Sun* newspaper)

Table 1: *News reports on insecurity* 148

Table 2: *National development* 148

Anna Babitskaya

The representation of Belorussian cinema in *On the screens* magazine

Table 1: *Special editions and total number texts* 164

Table 2: *The number of texts fully dedicated to the following subjects* 164

Table 3: *Number of texts about the news of celebrations of important date* 165

Table 4: *Usage of words premier, holiday, anniversary* 165

Table 5: *Correlation of foreign and Belorussian movies which are
considered in festival and important events context* 166

Table 6: <i>Announced movies</i>	166
Table 7: <i>Announced Belorussian movies</i>	166
Table 8: <i>Informative journalistic genres</i>	167
Table 9: <i>Types of articles</i>	169
Table 10: <i>Application of framing theory</i>	170

Abbas Zakria Qasmi

The New York Times' depiction of Madrasas in Pakistan

Table 1: <i>Total number of times the word 'Madrasa' is used</i>	187
Table 2: <i>No. of times the publications mention 'Madrasas in Pakistan'</i>	188
Table 3: <i>Two categories, namely opinions and news reports</i>	189
Table 4: <i>Inclination of the terms used in the publications</i>	190
Table 5: <i>Inclination of the publications: annual breakdown</i>	190

About the Editors

Dr. Martin Abdel Matin Gansinger (born 1979 in Austria) studied Communication Science and Political Science at the University of Vienna and passed both with distinction. His Master's thesis discusses recursive patterns of cultural, social, and political resistance in various forms of Black American musical expression and the potential of HipHop as an alternative communication-structure for the compensation of dysfunctional representation through mainstream-media and has been published in 2008. He furthermore analyzed the conditions of communication and interaction in regard to the practice of collective improvisation as a musical method and its correspondence to the concept of the Ideal Speech Situation as introduced by Habermas – as well as its efficiency in the context of Intercultural Communication – to attain a Doctor's degree in Communication Science (published 2010).

Next to being an editor and journalist for *jazzzeit* magazine and Vienna-based radio station orange 94.0 from 2005-2009 he has been working as a PR-coordinator for the internationally awarded, independent label JazzWerkstatt Records. Martin Abdel Matin Gansinger conducted several long-term field studies abroad and received financial funding through the University of Vienna's research scholarship. He spent a year in Ghana in coordination with the Vienna Institute for Development and Cooperation and Prof. John Collins from the University of Ghana/Accra, researching Intercultural Communication processes in the context of transfusional West African music styles – including an extended stay at the local compound of the Jamaica-based *Bobo Shanti-Mansion*, one of the strictest subdivisions of the *Rastafari* faith, and allowance to their communal *Nyahbinghi* ceremonies. Further field research aiming at extemporaneous communication techniques and its use in traditional knowledge- and recognition-systems has been done in Fez/Morocco and the convent of the Naqshbandi Sufi order in Lefke/Cyprus where he is working and residing since 2009. He is currently holding the position of an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Communication at Girne American

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Dr. Ayman Kole (born 1980, Sydney, Australia) completed an experience course at the prestigious Australian, Film, TV and Radio school whilst still a student studying in High School in 1996. He studied intensively at the University of Sydney, completing a BA in Arts with triple majors: English, Performance Studies and Studies in Religion in 2002. He also finished a scriptwriting course at the same University. He worked as a High School English Teacher before completing his MA in English at the University of Sydney in 2006. During his studies in the Masters Degree program, he wrote the short story 'The Mirror' which was selected as the Phoenix Journal finalist and published by Sydney University Press. He later was successfully accepted as a PhD student at Charles Sturt University to commence work on his thesis encompassing Literature, History and Creative Writing. His objective was to explore the historical, cultural and social landscape of Eastern Europe and the Middle East with a focus on the 17th century and he spent time in Turkey and Cyprus conducting thorough historical research. In his work, Ayman investigated how people can be manipulated and just how quickly firmly held beliefs can be either modified or replaced in light of effectively staged performances. Furthermore, his thesis aimed to alert inquisitive minds to the cons and trickery of harmful or pretentious movements and this message can be applied to the realm of religion and politics today. One of Ayman's strengths in writing is his richly detailed research and his ability to create a fascinating narrative not from only one cultural perspective, but from many competing social groups of the selected era. Indeed, his profound insightfulness of the 17th century, illustrating the differences and commonalities between the major religions of the area are just as relevant today as they were in the past. His novel 'Mark of the Crescent' was published in Australia. He currently holds the position as Assistant Professor and Head of Social Media Department at Girne American University, Faculty of Communication. He primarily lectures in Literature, Creative Writing, Film & TV Production, History of Communication, Film Criticism & Analysis, Scriptwriting, Advertising, World Cinema, Public Relations and Media Studies.

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Introduction

'Don't shoot the messenger'

Throughout the history, almost every type of media has been blamed and confronted with accusations of direct or indirect responsibility for things that went wrong. From the burning of books in the middle ages to theater plays deemed to promote immorality, comics and TV negatively influencing the learning capacity of kids, cinema used for manipulative propaganda purposes or the endearing campaigns of Tipper Gore and the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants against devil-worshipping heavy metal-bands and derogated, drug-abuse and violence promoting Gangsta Rap polluting radio waves, corrupting the youth, as well as seemingly homophobic tendencies in Jamaican dancehall – deemed murder music by gay rights-activists – media and its content seem to have been held responsible for every illness that befalls society.

Rappers on the other hand would throw the ball back to those entrusted with influence for shaping society by considering themselves street journalists, simply capturing and reflecting what they are exposed to on a daily basis. Satanic black metal bands lean towards the economically rewarding shock value by underlining the entertaining and sales-boosting effect of gruesome, martial wardrobe and gallons of blood-substitutes wasted on stage shows in a time where letting your hair grow over the collar of your shirt doesn't do the job anymore for adolescents oriented towards provocation. Art schools are full with promising attendants that grew up on comics, ego-shooters are regularly attested a miraculous and de-escalating katharsis-effect by studies, and the stigma of sensationalism once worn by TV has now migrated into the webspace since a while. The claim remains the same though, with news now disseminated via online portals the question of whether or not the spacious coverage of suicides, mass shootings and terror attacks is fatally tied to a spinning wheel of violence, a vicious circle of instrumentalized propaganda and guaranteed generation of clicks did not disappear.

In addition, new scapegoats have been identified. Relatives of victims have sued Facebook and Twitter for promoting terrorism by providing a platform for the distribution of extremist ideology. A generation of digital supermen and virtual beauty queens are constantly busy uploading proofs for their perfect, happy lives on thoroughly well-taken accounts – yet, hardly managing to live up to their own exaggerations, instead they become vulnerable to patterns of depression. Social media in general provides an even more humiliating stage for mobbing than any classroom ever did – seemingly leading to an increase in suicidal victims due to magnified pressure – and uncontrolled hate speech in open online-forums are more and more seen as a threat to social peace. Besides serving as a deadly tool in a considerable amount of deadly selfie-accidents that even caused the Russian government to run a preventive campaign, smart phones have been criticized for being highly addictive, dumbing down kids and involving them in potentially exploitative and compromising activities like sexting. In August 2016, an Austrian court obliged a man by decree to de-install the messenger service Whatsapp on his daughters smart phones due to them repeatedly being victims of sexual harassment by other users. *Are we back to shooting the messenger?*

As has been illustrated, the area in which media responsibility is negotiated reaches much more far than your regular discussion of ‘video games and violence’ or ‘children and advertising’. Therefore, in this book we attempt to map out a bigger picture of possible aspects to be considered, with a special focus on recent developments and challenges.

On the academic side of things, the generally welcomed open-access to scientific data on the net in many cases does not seem to encourage students and scholars to intensify the facilitated research practices but – in combination with tools like Google Translate – tends to tempt them to look for an easy way out and to opt for solutions of equally convenient and unethical nature. Due to the fact that a significant number of studies dealing in detail with versatile and sophisticated methods being used to commit academic fraud by students and scholars alike already exists, the opening chapter

attempts to shift the focus more on the publishing industry and its ethically and morally charged aspects of academic integrity and profit-orientation.

Chapter two discusses the ethical dilemma that whistleblowers like Edward Snowden have to face when they decide to disclose confidential information of public concern to the media, using DeGeorge's Five Criteria Moral Model and the Universal Dignity Theory. In the following contribution, ideological stereotypes of the *Orient* in regard to the representation of Islam in Western media are pointed out in a Critical Discourse Analysis of a controversial interview on Fox News. Furthermore, the negotiation of discursive space in modern Russia in the form of a contemporary court-style TV show that instigates a discourse of justice between the country's historical past and envisioned future is demonstrated in Chapter four of this book. The next contribution is looking at the role of the press in shaping discursive patterns of insecurity and national development in Nigeria by analyzing respective contributions of national newspapers in that context. In Chapter six, the representation of the Belorussian movie industry in the only national magazine dedicated to cinematography serves to discuss the discursive influence of media on negotiating national identity and self-perception. As a concluding contribution to this volume, the depiction of Madrasas in Pakistan in *The New York Times* is analyzed to furthermore add to the evaluation of media impact on the social discourse on Islam and terrorism after 9/11.

Martin A. M. Gansinger & Ayman Kole, February 2017

*Martin A. M. Gansinger
Ayman Kole*

Plagiarism and profit. Ethical and moral issues of scientific writing and academic publishing in the 21st century

Abstract: The purpose of this article is to provide viewpoints and discussion of a variety of potentially problematic aspects and mechanisms regarding academic publishing in relation to economical and ethical issues. Starting with the establishment of wide-scale internet access in the beginning of the 21st century, a considerable increase of plagiarism and more sophisticated forms of academic fraud, expanded infrastructure of academic publication channels and forms, combined with strong tendencies of concentration in terms of research disciplines and outlets have now led to certain undesirable developments. Next to the general business model operating according to these parameters, the purpose, reliability and authenticity of circulated rankings and grading systems of academic publishers as well as citation indexes will be critically discussed in relation to new open access possibilities that start to question the outdated structures of the established system.

Keywords: Plagiarism, Academic Publishing, Academic Rankings, Open Access Publishing, Media Concentration

Introduction

The strong emphasis on education throughout the last century combined with a more competitive globalized job market has led to a significantly increasing number of young men and women hungry for post-graduate higher education certificates – welcome to the ever-expanding world of scientific publishing. Never before in history did society produce such a huge number of higher educated people – and higher educated unemployed people in consequence. Representatives from all walks of life try to unethically enhance their professional profiles and as shown by former German Minister of Defense Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg (Schröder & Thagard, 2011), neither political integrity nor aristocratic descent seem to serve as a protection against the plague of plagiarism (Eddy, 2013). Considered as one of the key features in evaluating academic performance, the publication of scientific writing has become the main element for graduates to set themselves apart from the growing mass of equally trained uniform competitors (Kellermann, Guggenberger & Weber, 2016). With the principles of demand and supply being placed in favor of the publicity providers, the field of academic publishing has the potential to turn into a battlefield on which one of the first two casualties to be mourned might be morals and ethics (Born, 2003; Austin, 2008; Bretag, 2013; Heckler & Forde, 2015). Considering the significant amount of time and money that is invested in unrightfully getting hold of an academic degree, universities may ponder the possibility of offering a PhD in plagiarism as the next logical step, with the successful candidates preferably employing their expertise to severely scrutinize the academic output for forgery attempts.

PhD – Plagiarists hijacking Degrees

Without a doubt, plagiarism is one of the most critical issues affecting the academic world and hence, deserving of serious, immediate attention. It is alarming to see that many MA or PhD students in our digital era have resorted to techniques that not only question their academic integrity, but clearly demonstrate the inclination to submit work that is not their own. Many labels can and have been attributed to its defense: a case of human error, or carelessness; or perhaps an innocent example of the author not knowing how to cite a passage properly. Indeed, a small amount can be the result of such misdeameanors, but the question still stands whether this is a sufficient and satisfactory argument. Furthermore, such blunders bring to mind the importance of the draft processes before submission and publication, or at least, the briskness of corrections once these errors are noticed. If overlooked, then it appears that the hallways of academia can easily transform into haunting grounds regarding the future careers of some aspiring scholars, including their supervisors. It would not be farfetched to speculate that the damage can be extended to the Faculty, and as a result, affect the reputation of the entire university. Yet, one thing is certain, the academic field has a primary duty in demonstrating a professional attitude towards promoting sound research and informing society. Needless to say, this should be conducted within ethical boundaries, but certainly not to provide a window of opportunity for piracy, that is - blatant copying, or outright copy-and-paste.

Of course, with the advancement of technology, the internet has re-shaped communication to the point where it is deemed revolutionary. These changes have entered society in different formats, from entertainment to business modules to playing a central role in the education and research sectors. Gone is the physical journey to the library. The strenuous search through bookshelves has been replaced by hand-held instruments. These portable devices such as smart phones, notebooks, Ipods and I pads (with available wireless internet service) have not only reversed the natural or traditional act of research, but has done so in great haste. The researcher – to use an old

idiom – has now *cut to the chase*. Volumes of books have been replaced by abundant websites, initiated by a few key-words typed in Google search, or similar online motors. Indeed, the availability of international resources to scholars anywhere in the world, simultaneously, is advantageous on a tremendous scale and must be acknowledged as a positive, necessary development. The argument of data collecting being both less time-consuming and cost efficient cannot be dismissed. In particular, the immediacy of question-based research in terms of online surveys provides direct electronic storage, fast compilation and therefore offers a convenience not reached in the traditional handwritten method.

However, the drawbacks must also be open to discussion as plagiarism is fast becoming one of the main problems in academia today. Barrett (2011) mentioned a survey named ‘Incidents of cheating in universities, 2005/06 vs 2009/10’ published in *The Telegraph* (2011, March, n.d.) conducted in over eighty universities which uncovered how cheating has become a primary issue and is showing no signs of decreasing in their country. In fact, during the 2009-10 academic year, over seventeen thousand incidents were documented; sadly, an increase of 50 per cent in the past four years had been noted. More alarming, however, is that the true figure is estimated to be much higher, as details could only be provided on the most serious cases. The article asserts that plagiarism accounted for the majority of the seventeen thousand incidents at British universities during that period.

Schroth (2012) described university education as not only intellectual, but also one concerning morals. Hence, the academic dishonesty of plagiarism should not be counted as a mistake and should be viewed as a crime. He also quotes Kenneth Goldsmith from the University of Pennsylvania about the process of what is now called ‘patch writing’ – a method of weaving together various fragments from other writers into a ‘tonally cohesive whole’. That is, re-phrasing for example a Wikipedia entry with another article, and merging it with their own additions. Goldsmith sums up his argument by saying ‘For them the act of writing is literally moving language from one place to another.’

As can be seen from both articles, plagiarism is likened to an epidemic and a plague to convey the widespreadness of this intellectual violation in Britain and the United States. Yet, the problem cannot be seen as a territorial one, or a matter restricted to western institutions. In truth, it is a worldwide headache in dedicated scholarly spheres that demands immediate attention. The recent article in *Times of India* by B.K. Mishral (2016) openly highlighted the controversy stirred by a PhD student at Patna University, India. The research scholar, Kamal Raj Sapkota of Patna University, published an article by D.C. Mohana of Bangalore University under his own name, and changed the title to avoid detection. The academic council at Patna University cancelled the registration of Sapkota, and has also called upon his supervisor D.N. Thakur to further explain this harmful embarrassment which threatens the university's reputation. It must be noted that this case of plagiarism only came to light when Mohana complained that his paper had been copied. One wonders, if Mohana had not realized this piracy of his paper, whether Sapkota would have completed his PhD thesis as a promising young academic with ease.

In Australia, the nuisance also has taken root and is growing in capacity as covered on news.com.au in the article 'Plagiarism on rise at Australian universities as academics face pressure to pass international students' (2015, n.d.). The issue was nationalized on television through the popular *Four Corners* news program broadcasted on the state-funded ABC channel. One academic was documented as having said that there are a group of students who shouldn't be allowed to graduate and another is on record for expressing how 'staggered' they were by the increase in plagiarism. Dr. Zena O'Connor from the University of Sydney has admitted that there are some cases where plagiarism constitutes up to eighty per cent, if not one hundred per cent of the paper. O'Connor told *Four Corners* that 'that level of extreme plagiarism I didn't see five or ten years ago.'

Equally disturbing, in the field of academia, the plagiarist has nothing to offer. Their research articles have no intrinsic value, as someone else's ideas are simply reproduced and passed off as their own. As such, the situation in China warrants serious attention