Project Updates

SUDAN: Researching attitudes to conflict and peace in Darfur: Survey being developed

The Stanhope Annenberg Research Team just issued its second interim report as part of its effort to track currents of opinion about the conflict in Darfur. The report covers two key research areas: 1) The monitoring and analysis of opinion pieces published in Sudanese, Western, and Anglophone African press on Darfur between February and April 2008, and 2) The ongoing ethnographic study of debates carried out by Sudanese online communities through discussion boards/forums in April 2008. This is part of a wider, multi-track effort to gauge public opinion in Darfur related to the conflict and peace process. The goal is to provide negotiators and other parties to the peace talks with empirical information on the views and needs of those who have suffered from the conflict. Other components of the research are oral histories collected mainly in refugee camps and interviews with various Dafurian stakeholders, including members of civil society, the rebel movements, the government and academia. The Stanhope Centre and the Annenberg School were commissioned by Albany Associates to help devise a research strategy related to the
Darfur Peace Process in Sudan.

In early May, Iginio Gagliardone, a graduate student at LSE who has been instrumental in designing the research methodology for the project, traveled to Sudan to meet with organizations whose activities may benefit from our research project (Darfur Darfur Dialogue and Consultation, UN Joint Mediation Support Team) and to carry out training of local researchers in preparation for the second phase of the research. This next phase includes semi-structured interviews in North Darfur (with politicians, members of civil society, representatives of the rebel movements, and academics) and defining a model that can be also used in West and South Darfur.

Media Law Assistance Website (MLAW)

As part of our ongoing interest in media law and policy advocacy, CGCS is in the process of developing a prototype for a Media Law Assistance Website (MLAW). The site is intended to serve as an interactive hub, knowledge center, and resource for the emerging network of individuals and institutions around the world engaged in work related to media law and policy. To accomplish this goal, the site will be a gateway to information and tools (including current legal and policy documents) but will also emphasize and support collaboration, networking, and peer-to-peer assistance between media lawyers, regulators, policy makers, and civil society proponents. Aron Hsiao, a Ph.D. student in sociology at The New School for Social Research, is facilitating the creation and launch of the MLAW. Aron holds a Masters degree in the social sciences from the University of Chicago and undergraduate degrees in literary theory and cultural anthropology from the University of Utah and is the author of a number of books on technology and networks.

The MLAW concept came into being in part due to our participation in yearly seminars at Oxford University, bringing together lawyers, regulators, and academics, and our involvement in the International Media Lawyers Association. It is also stems from Prof. Price’s experience advising governments and media development projects on issues related to media law in transition. The original Media Law Assistance Website proposal was developed in consultation with the Legal Taskforce of the Center for International Media Assistance at the National Endowment for Democracy.

CGCS is preparing a report detailing the proposed site's long-term prospects and a strategic plan for its implementation, together with the site prototype, for the end of June.

Graduate Student Summer Research: Cote d'Ivoire

This summer Jean Brechman will be working with the non-profit organization, Search for Common Ground (SFCG), to help develop, implement and evaluate its Entertainment-Education (E-E) media campaign in Côte d'Ivoire. As part of this
campaign, SFCG is producing a television series that seeks to reduce ethnic and regional tensions, promote reconciliation and strengthen social cohesion. The show also aims to have a positive impact on viewer attitudes and behaviors, with specific attention to the prevention, testing and treatment of HIV/AIDS, the importance of registering children for citizenship at birth, and discouragement of gender-based violence. This summer, three pilot episodes will be aired across the country. SFCG will then conduct surveys and focus groups to evaluate reception of and engagement with the episodes. This data will inform the development and production of a full three-part mini-series and radio component.

Graduate Student Summer Project: Stanhope Centre, London

This summer, Solon Barocas, a doctoral student at New York University’s Department of Media, Culture, and Communication will be working at the Stanhope Centre to help CGCS organize a workshop planned for September 2008 in London on “NGOs as Gatekeepers.” He will also conduct research related to a developing collaboration with the World Bank’s Communication for Governance and Accountability (CommGAP) Program. Solon is a Student Fellow at NYU’s Information Law Institute, and his research interests center on the political and ethical implications of profiling, personalization, and predictive technologies. Solon was previously a Program Associate at the Russell Sage Foundation and earlier served as Deputy Editor of *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, housed at the London School of Economics, where he also obtained his MSc in International Relations. Solon graduated from Brown University with a BA in Art-Semiotics and International Relations. At the University’s Watson Institute for International Studies, he worked on the Information, Technology, War, and Peace Project.

Publishing

Call for Papers: Bridging the Gap Between Communications Research And Policy

The worlds of academia and policymaking are often portrayed as disconnected, unrelated spheres. In practice, however, collaboration between academics and policymakers is essential to developing sound policies and inspiring research that serves the public interest. In an ongoing effort to highlight the linkages between the academy and the policy world, CGCS, in collaboration with the Social Science Research Council, is soliciting papers that address efforts to connect research and communications policy. A first group of papers has been published as a “Special Section on Academic Research and Policy” with the online *International Journal of Communication*. Subsequent contributions will be posted on the SSRC’s Media Research Hub.

We are seeking short (approx. 2,000 word) informal contributions that explore this question in a variety of international contexts. Please contact Libby Morgan if you are interested in contributing.
**Call for Papers: Culture and Politics in African Media Studies**

The goal of this occasional paper series is to encourage scholarship, discussion and comparative research on contemporary issues within African media studies. We are especially interested in exploring how particular cultural and political factors have shaped the development of African media systems and vice versa. Possible topics include the role of media in the nation and state-building process, the consolidation of political power, reconciliation (or its failure) and conflict/post-conflict situations. ICT, radio, television, press, as well as other forms of media such as poetry, theater and sermons, will be considered.

We welcome contributions based on original research and those that look critically at prevailing assumptions within this field.

This project is a joint effort of the Center for Global Communication Studies (Annenberg School, University of Pennsylvania), the African Studies Center (University of Pennsylvania) and the Stanhope Centre for Communications Policy Research.

Please visit the [website](#) for more information and submission guidelines.

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**Graduate Student Spotlight - Chris Finlay**

As the world’s attention focuses on Beijing, Annenberg doctoral candidate [Christopher Finlay](#) is looking four years ahead, to London 2012. His dissertation examines how interactions between the myriad actors involved in the early planning phases of the London Games—from local community groups and individuals to international NGOs—influence the narratives of this global media event. In particular, Chris will be examining London 2012’s potential as a vehicle for British public diplomacy. Chris’s research interests include international communication, political communication and cultural studies. He maintains a [blog](#) on the Olympics and international communication.

Chris’s research on the evolving geopolitical role of the Olympics has benefited greatly from research assistantships with Prof. Price. Most recently, Chris collaborated closely with Prof. Price on the book, *Owning the Olympics: Narratives of the New China*. He contributed two chapters, “Toward the Future: The New Olympic Internationalism” and “New Technologies, New Narratives,” which he co-wrote with Annenberg graduate Lee Humphreys. In 2006, Chris co-organized two CGCS workshops on the Beijing Olympics. The first workshop, co-sponsored with Communication University of China, was held in Beijing in July 2006. The second conference was held at Annenberg in November 2006. With the support of CGCS, Chris and Annenberg PhD student Briar Smith initiated and helped develop the first Penn-in-Beijing summer abroad program for undergraduate students. This program, now in its second year, includes a course on the Beijing Olympics and Global Media Events. Chris was an instructor in the first year of the program and will return to
Beijing to teach Penn and Tsinghua University students this June in the program’s second year.

With the support of CGCS, Chris attended the Programme in Comparative Media Law & Policy at Oxford University in 2004. In 2007, CGCS support brought him to the China/East Asia Media/New Media Conference in Brisbane, Australia, where he presented comparative research on the construction of the London and Beijing Olympic host city bids. CGCS has also been instrumental in helping Christopher conduct research for his dissertation by funding travel to London.

Chris holds an MA in political science from Carleton University (Ottawa, Ontario) and a BA in political science and history from Simon Fraser University (Vancouver, British Columbia).

About CGCS

The director of CGCS is Professor Monroe E. Price, a leading authority on issues relating to media and civil society, media law and policy advocacy, and the intersection between communication, development, and globalization. The associate director of the CGCS is Susan Abbott. Abbott works with Professor Price on increasing international and comparative research and activities. She helps to identify and develop capacity with international partners such as CMCS in Budapest and manages international development projects. CGCS staff includes Sylvie Beauvais, Project Coordinator; Libby Morgan, Research and Editorial Coordinator; and Kate Coye, Annenberg-CEU Post-Doc. More information on CGCS Staff.

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Comments and suggestions for the newsletter may be forwarded to Sylvie Beauvais.