

## Abstracts

### **Latin American Telenovela: Between Media Imperialism and Cultural Pluralism**

Philippe Meers

Several Latin American scholars have made a substantial contribution to the paradigmatic debate on international communication. In this debate between adherents of media imperialism and cultural pluralism theses, the telenovela is introduced as an interesting case. It is often considered to be a classic example of contra flow: the export of television programmes against the unilateral flows from the US and Europe to the so-called Third World. It is supposed to be the ultimate refutation of the media imperialism thesis. The actual value of the telenovela as an argument for declining dependency is evaluated on different levels: ownership and production system of the telenovela industry, content and values of the programmes and especially contra flow from the South to the North. Partly on the basis of a study on telenovela flows to Europe, critical remarks are formulated on the validity of the telenovela as contra flow and on the optimism of cultural pluralism theories.

Keywords: international communication, telenovela, contra flow, media imperialism, Latin American television

### **Web Electronic Publishing: Towards a New Mediamodel?**

Piet Porteman

Online newspapers and news services are a recent and important phenomenon on the World Wide Web. It is a difficult task to define online newspapers and news services. Claiming that electronic publishing is little other than print transferred to the electronic medium is as wrong as saying that electronic publishing is radically different from print. Technological innovations tend to blur the boundaries between the different media domains. In this article we try to place online newspapers in the existing framework of the media by describing their main dimensions and by comparing them with other models of media. Interactivity, multimedia, selection and other new functionalities give online newspapers unique characteristics. Finally we come to a new theoretical media model, the Web Electronic Publishing model.

Key-words: new media, online newspapers, World Wide Web, Internet

### **Role of the Press in the Democratization of Guatemala**

Lisbeth Van de Merlen

Although the press in Guatemala is more or less acting like a watchdog, its function in society remains rather limited due to a lot of problems inherent not only to the press but also to society. The main press-related problems are self-censorship, intimidation, corruption, difficulties with gathering information and the links with the economic elite, in short, the continuing discrepancy between legal framework and reality. At the same time, there is an influence from broader social phenomena: such as illiteracy and the country's bad infrastructure.

Keywords: democratization, Guatemala, press