

## Reviews

Cristina NISTOR,

*Acoperirea mediatică a situațiilor de criză*  
[*Media Coverage of Crisis Situations*]

Cluj-Napoca, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2015

Crisis communication is one of the most complex and difficult PR activities, as both the success or the failure of a crisis communication strategy may determine the public image and market position of an institution or even a country. This is the reason why crisis communication must be conducted according to clear and specific principles and must have certain characteristics that a PR specialist definitely has to master. Also, understanding how public opinion works and its mechanism is essential to managing a crisis communication strategy, as an effective management of public opinion and public demands/expectations is a key element in getting public understanding and support (Irimieș, 2013).

When talking about media coverage of a crisis situation, one has to face and overcome even greater challenges, as the public opinion is strongly influenced not only by personal beliefs, but also by the filters applied to the message delivered and to the overall situation, that is the media reflection of the real crisis.

This is one of the reasons that the research I have chosen to present- „Media Coverage of Crisis Situations”- conducted by associate professor Cristina Nistor, may be considered and must be regarded as a benchmark in what the study of crisis situations and communication is regarded.

The book is the perfect tool for any student, journalist or communication specialist that may at any time confront a crisis situation or approach the field of crisis communication as a researcher.



It is a book on journalism, it is a book on public relations and communication, it is a book on terrorism. It is a book that approaches theoretical concepts as well as real life situations, dramatic circumstances as the 9/11 attack and its media coverage.

The author approaches the subject in an extremely thorough manner, starting with a theoretical presentation of media industry from perspectives to roles, agenda-settings and relation to politics and political environment. It is an essential chapter especially for students and young researchers that get an overall image on what media is and have a start point for future researches and investigations.

The second chapter continues the theoretical introduction in the field of media and journalistic event coverage defining basic concepts for media analysis, such as news, public opinion, media consumer, media influence and so on.

Only starting from chapter three, after having established strong basis and having cleared any aspect related to the information transporter, the research focuses on more spectacular aspects like crisis, crisis communication and media coverage of crisis situations. The chapter stays in the area of theoretical research by defining and explaining aspects related to different types of crisis situations and types of crisis management. A very important chapter that connects the two major parts of the research conducted by Cristina Nistor regards the journalistic terrorism, the publicity that provides any form of terrorism the visibility it needs to grow, inspire and frighten.

The second major part of the book is a very thorough and empirical analysis of the media coverage of terrorist attacks produced in the USA on September 11, 2001, commonly known as the 9/11 operation, the most visible terrorist attack ever.

The analysis reaches a various range of topics and essential aspects of real media coverage of the 9/11, starting with a thorough and very clear presentation of the research methods the author used for her analysis, so as both the premises, the outcomes and the leading path bear no risk of misunderstanding.

Furthermore, the author analyses special editions of printed American papers with 9/11 as leading and, in most cases, exclusive topic, as well as regular editions of the most important American publications, in order to end the chapter with a very pertinent presentation of the conclusion of the press analysis.

In *Critical Perspectives on Media Coverage of 9/11*, the author approaches delicate aspects regarding the conflict or cohabitation of verified information and rumor in media, different techniques of manipulation and distracting public attention and awareness.

In most cases, where the crisis management is involved, the public will judge the response to the emergency or crisis of an organization based almost exclusively on news disseminated by the media. This way, the public's perception about the response or the actions of an organization, society or even a situation will be

determined to the most extent by how its PR and crisis management specialists communicate.

Crisis communication is part of the crisis management process and includes actions of strategic management of the message, of the time and of the channels necessary to communicate effectively with the media, employees, customers, consumers and decision makers (Burnett, 1998). Communication in a crisis situation should focus on facilitating defusing the crisis using efficient and rapid communication methods (Irimieş, 2013).

The research conducted by Cristina Nistor not only provides important theoretical basis for any future research, but offers an insight to the real journalistic activity as well as to the crisis management systems. The book is not only a handbook, but also a testimony of what media coverage of a crisis situation really means. It presents the facts, real dramatic situations, actual media products in order to end with a whole chapter of final accurate conclusions and a practical guide of media communication and a set of rules meant to help improve media and public communication in real crisis situations.

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Meda MUCUNDORFEANU

*The German-language Press in Romania during the Communist Period. Case Study: the Newspaper Neuer Weg*

[*A History of the German Media in Transylvania during the Communist Period*]

Mittweida Hochschulverlag, 2015



Meda Mucundorfeanu is part of the young generation of researchers in the field of communication, working at the Babes-Bolyai University in Romania. In 2009 she started teaching at the German Department for Communication Science, PR and Advertising in Cluj-Napoca, her first position being that of a research assistant. Since 2014 she has been a lecturer at the same Department and, since 2010, Meda Mucundorfeanu has also been an associated lecturer at the Faculty of Media of the University of Applied Sciences in Mittweida, Germany.

In order to understand Meda Mucundorfeanu's preoccupation with the history of the German minority in Romania and especially with the history of the German press in Transylvania, we have to take a closer look at her education. She is an alumni of the German High school in Sighișoara, and had close ties with the German population in Romanian during her childhood. She became familiar with the German press in Transylvania through classes she had at school. Her academic background is an interdisciplinary one: she studied communication science and linguistics, both at the Bachelor's and at the Master's level. The author is also a state-certified translator and interpreter in the languages Romanian, German and English. She graduated from a Ph.D programme in the field of History, with the distinction *very well* in the year 2012. Consequently, her dissertation, published in the form of this book, is an interdisciplinary study of the history of the German-language media in Romania during a certain period.

*The German-language Press in Romania during the Communist Period. Case Study: the Newspaper Neuer Weg* (original title in German: *Die deutschsprachige Presse in Rumänien während der kommunistischen Zeit. Fallstudie: die Zeitung Neuer Weg*) is the title of Meda Mucundorfeanu's first book, following an extensive list of published papers, some of them in scientific journals in English, German and Romanian.

One cannot address the topic of the 20th century German press in Romania without explaining the general context. For this reason, the author devotes the first chapter of her book to the history of the Germans living in Romania during the

given period. Their history is to be regarded as a part of the history of 20th century Europe. A relative large German minority in Romania left the country before the Second World War. However, after the war, a large part of the German population stayed in Romania. The largest Exodus happened in the 90s. The next chapter of the book presents the development of the media in Romania during the period of real socialism. The author's approach is complex. The historical, economic and legal conditions are presented. Although the author focuses on print media in her paper, she takes the opportunity to offer us a general image of the entire media system in Romania, including radio and television. In the communist era, the education in German language continued, and so did the media.

The following chapter includes the author's empirical work. Two research methods have been used. The first is content analysis of selected articles from the newspaper *Neuer Weg*, on issues that were of importance for the German minority in Romania. Secondly, expert interviews have been conducted by the young researcher in order to shed further light on the topic. The choice of methods, their application, their analysis and the presentation of the results are proof to the expertise of the author. *Neuer Weg* was the German newspaper with the biggest audience. However, there were other media outlets that provided information in German. It is interesting to see that some of the issues that were considered important for the German postwar history were not reported in the German press in Romania. There was always a focus on cultural aspects and even during the communist time there was a preoccupation for the preservation of the ethnic identity, visible in the media.

Meda Mucundorfeanu's book is a consistent contribution to the history of the German language press in Romania. She has taken a thorough look at the content of the media, revealing some common points but also some differences between the tenors of the mainstream media and those of the media of an ethnic minority in communist Romania. Her book reveals a new perspective on the history of the German minority in Romania, as well as a new perspective on the history of the media in the language of a minority in Romania during communism.

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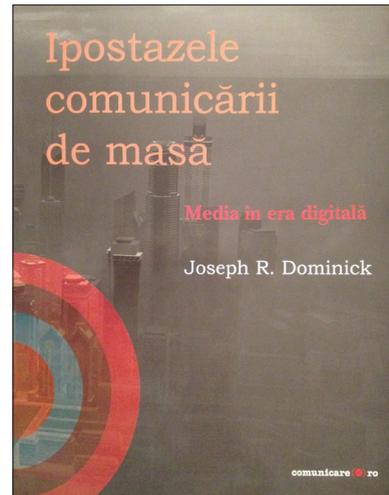
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Joseph. R. DOMINICK

*Ipostazele comunicării de masă: Media în era digitală*  
[*The Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in the Digital Age*]

București, Comunicare.ro, 2009



### *Who's who?*

Joseph R. Dominick is an associate professor at the College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Georgia where he used to be head of Radio, TV and Film Department between 1980 and 1985. Formerly he had taught at Queens College, City University of New York.

Former editor in chief at Journal of Broadcasting, Joseph R. Dominick wrote successful volumes, published over 40 articles in specialized publications, conducted various research grants and was a consultant for organizations as Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and American Chemical Society.

The digital era came to essentially change not only the entire media industry, but the communication process as a whole. Communication became more and more invasive, but meanwhile more and more distant, media got to be more intrusive, but superficial at the same time, lacking field research and documentation, real investigation and interaction. All or almost all feedback got to be received through electronic feedback from distant and faceless media consumers.

What is actual mass communication and how did electronic media change the day-to-day practices? Which is the real place communication holds in nowadays society? These are only few of the questions that Joseph R. Dominick's book provides answers for. And as the book is designed to feed electronic media consumers, it is extremely well-adapted to their needs: eye-catching through short body texts, strong pictures, suggestive titles.

The book is structured in six major parts starting from different aspects of mass communication: theoretical and historical issues, ethical aspects of mass communication, media industry, public relations, advertising and, of course, the new media.

As I have briefly mentioned already, the book starts with theoretical and historical aspects. The first part guides the reader through different complex elements of communication, such as delivering and receiving the message, the feedback and so on. It also presents major communicational frames, such as

interpersonal communication, technology assisted communication, general mass communication, internet/ online mass communication and other basic elements without which the understanding of the field would be dramatically altered.

As a natural follow-up, the second and third chapter offer different and very pertinent perspectives over mass communication, analyzing the role mass communication has within society as a whole and the ways people actually use media, together with a thorough approach of the historical and cultural framework of media communication.

The second part focuses on the print media, analyzing newspapers, magazines and books both from historical, traditional point of view and from the new electronic era perspective and its almost unlimited resources. The author makes an extensive presentation of the evolution of print, from geographical as well as chronological point of view, going through the process of auditing, cost analysis, types of property and human resources.

Electronic media is the central theme of the third part of Joseph R. Dominick's book that goes through the big deal of electronic innovation and mass audience, major historical crises, the evolution of audio media (the radio) and its spectacular contexts (the birth and overwhelming popularity of rock and roll, music charts, incredible audiences). The same part presents the rise of film industry from Edison's lab to worldwide cinema industry and box-office.

Television and eventually the internet are the remaining aspects Joseph R. Dominick deals with in the same third part of his book in order to leave room for PR and advertising which are presented from different perspectives.

The last two parts of *The Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in the Digital Age* approach both ethical issues and control systems, as well as social effects of mass-communication, future perspectives in development and impact studies.

Apart from being a very well-structured research paper, Joseph R. Dominick's book is a perfect study tool, as it not only is eye-catching as I have already mentioned, but also full of practical examples, keywords, clarifying review and reflexive questions and bibliographical recommendations

While introducing essential concepts of mass communication, the author facilitates the optimal understanding through apparently superficial, colorful details and stories about really serious situations and circumstances. This eases the reading and also helps memorizing important aspects of mass communication concepts, evolution and paradigm.

Also, every single chapter bears a set of didactic tools (basic notions, reviews, keywords, bibliographical recommendations) meant to help students sort and settle the information gathered over the pages.

The research conducted by Joseph R. Dominick in his *"Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in the Digital Age"* is thus not only a didactic instrument,

a handbook for students in communication and other related fields of study, but also a concise encyclopedia of media communication from its early stages to present days and perspectives, from old and outdated printing machines and broadcasting systems to innovative new media, providing essential theoretical basis for any future research.

*The Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in the Digital Age* thoroughly approaches all issues regarding different modern mass communication systems: history, structure, economic background and framework, feedback, perspectives, conceiving a realistic perspective over the more and more complex situations and circumstances that media has to face in the nowadays digital age.

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