

Comparatively Speaking

Communication and Culture Across Space and Time

The chapters in this volume provide an excellent overview of the diversity of comparative mass communication research being conducted today. --Contemporary Sociology
"Obviously, a "review" cannot do justice to the depth of analysis reflected in each of the individual exemplars. What this review can do, however, is to assure potential readers that Comparatively Speaking generates questions that should stimulate discussion among scholars. The editors encourage other explorations of comparative research and, indeed in their final chapter offer directions for future research. Whether the questions raised focus on theory or methods, Comparatively Speaking will no doubt prove useful to scholars with various emphases in communication studies. The editors should be commended for their quest to help generate a body of literature directly connected to comparative research. And, the individual authors should be commended for engaging in research that directly relates to broader societal issues. This text will answer some questions, but more importantly, it will raise questions, which ultimately will stimulate discussion in this most important avenue of research. Overall, this text most certainly provides the groundwork for a generative approach to comparative studies." --Jeanine Congalton, California State University, Fullerton
Comparative research challenges preconceptions about the universal applicability of communication theories. By opening our eyes to communication patterns and problems that may go unnoticed if considering only one time or one place, comparative research forces us to define boundaries of application for these theories. With a wider awareness encouraged by this volume, we can explicitly or implicitly construct larger scale theories within which variations in time, space, and culture contribute. Inspired by the 1989 International Communication Association Conference, Comparatively Speaking both demonstrates how comparative research can be done successfully and provides a variety of analytical structures useful for research and teaching. Exemplar chapters span the range of communication research, from nonverbal expectancies to the economics of media industries--across levels of analysis, and over historical and individual-developmental time. Comparatively Speaking presents the benefits, pitfalls, and trade-offs of comparative research with wit and precision. Scholars and professionals from popular culture, sociology, political science, and all branches of communication will be stimulated to analyze varying exemplars against each other using the analytic structures of the editors and of the critics of comparative research.

This book provides an authoritative state-of-the-art review of comparative approaches to communication research in the context of time and location. Perspectives unique to mass, interpersonal, political, cultural and organizational communication are explored, while descriptions of well-known empirical projects reveal how collaborations worked and how problems were addressed across different periods and cultures.

Comparatively Speaking serves both as a student text and as a stimulus to further research in comparative communication research.



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