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Northumbria
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NEWCASTLE

**Resilience and Stabilization in post-
conflict situations**

**The media, communications and security
nexus**

Dr. Sarah Bowman

What is civil society?

- Taylor (2009)
 - Citizens
 - Institutions
 - Media
 - NGOs
 - INGOs
 - Business
 - Governance

 - Strong civil society embedded within societal resilience



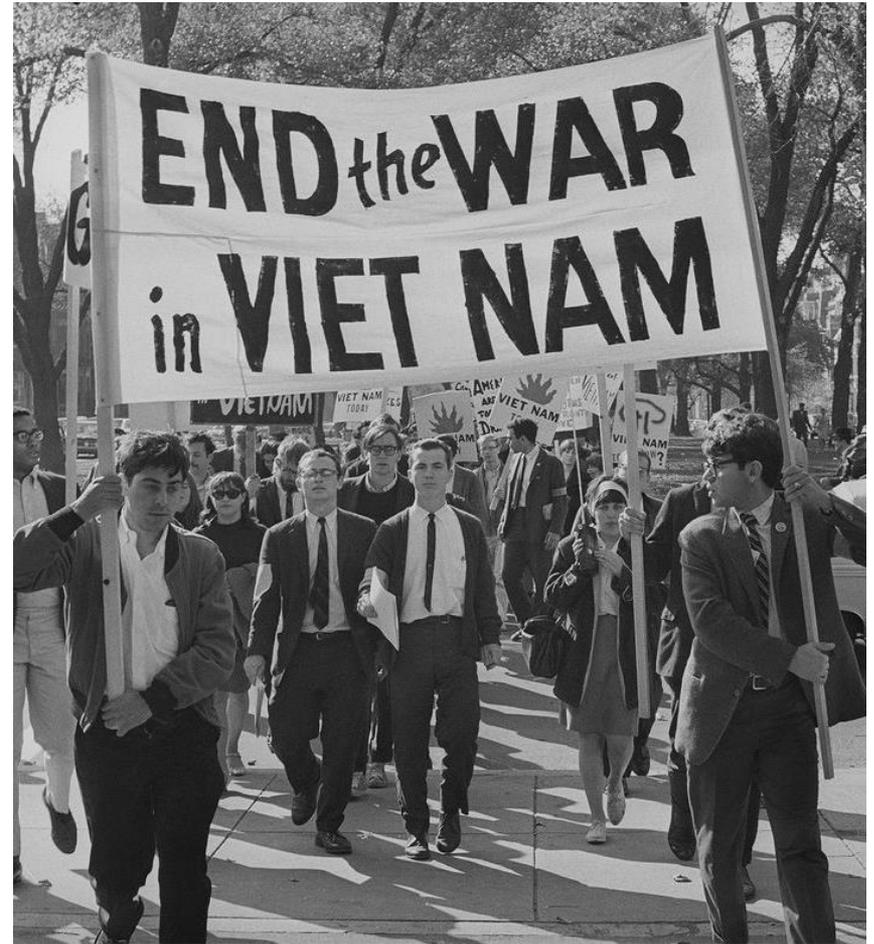
Structure of presentation

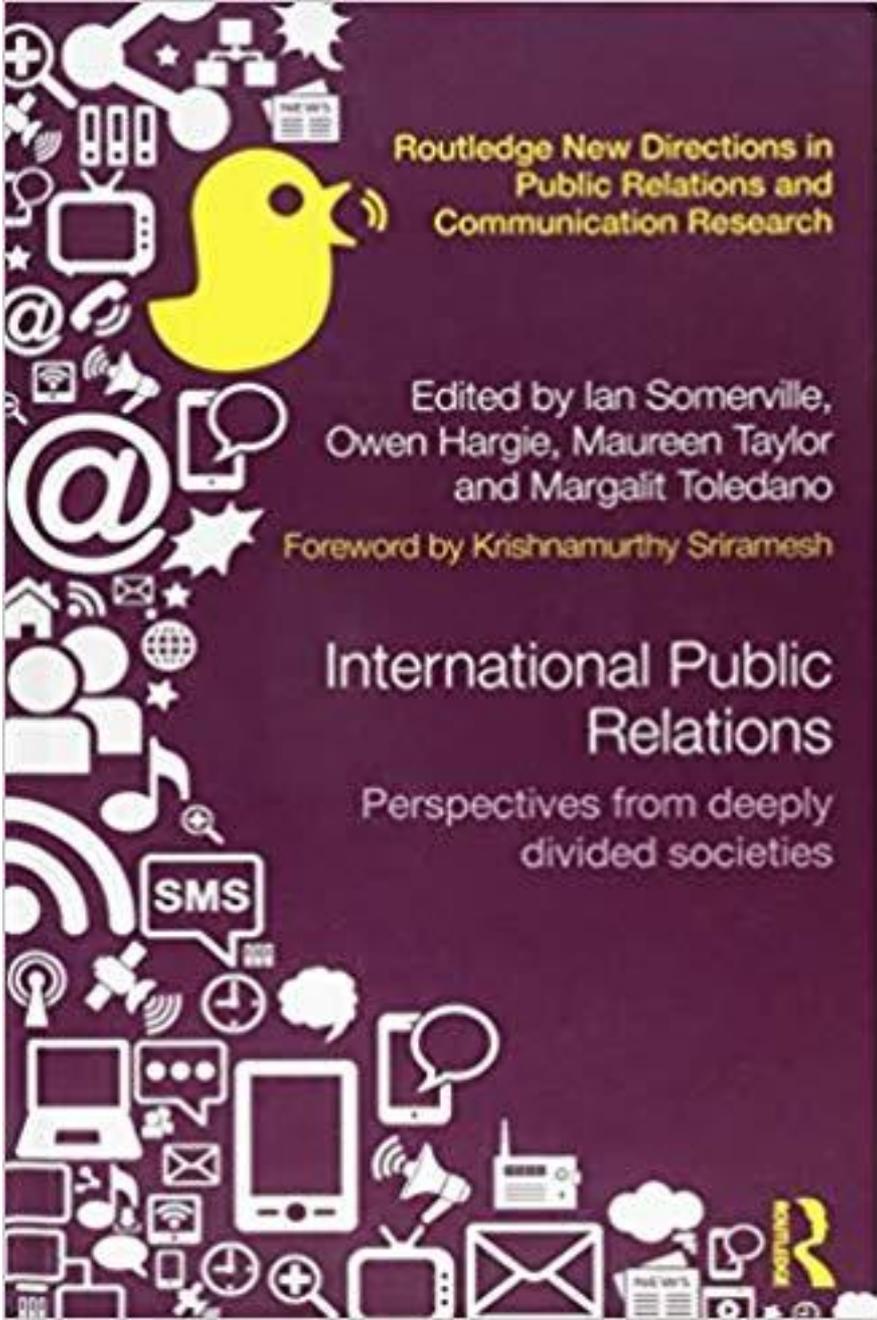
- What's the issue
- What do we know
- Current historical research/methods
- A suggested way forward
- Limitations etc



What is the issue?

- Communications and media critical in selling war, selling peace (Lowe, 2010)
- To understand better the role of media and communication in post-conflict (or divided) societies – what role do they play and the type of interventions necessary to rebuild/support civil society





Routledge New Directions in
Public Relations and
Communication Research

Edited by Ian Somerville,
Owen Hargie, Maureen Taylor
and Margalit Toledano

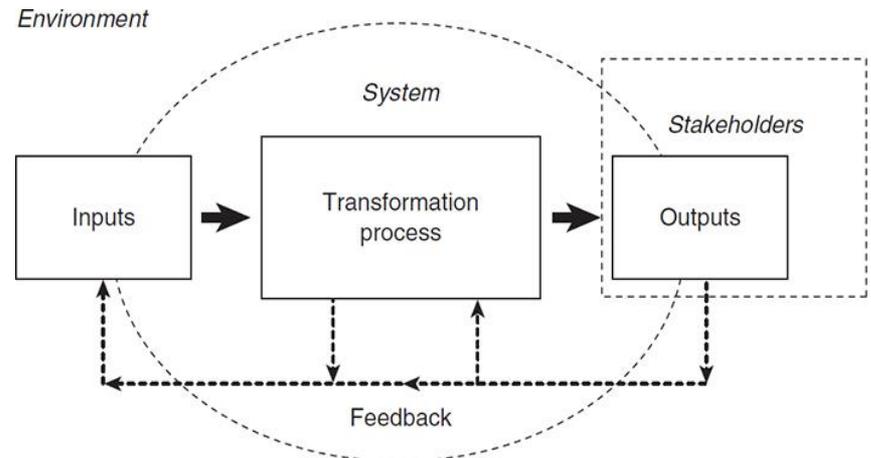
Foreword by Krishnamurthy Sriramesh

International Public Relations

Perspectives from deeply
divided societies

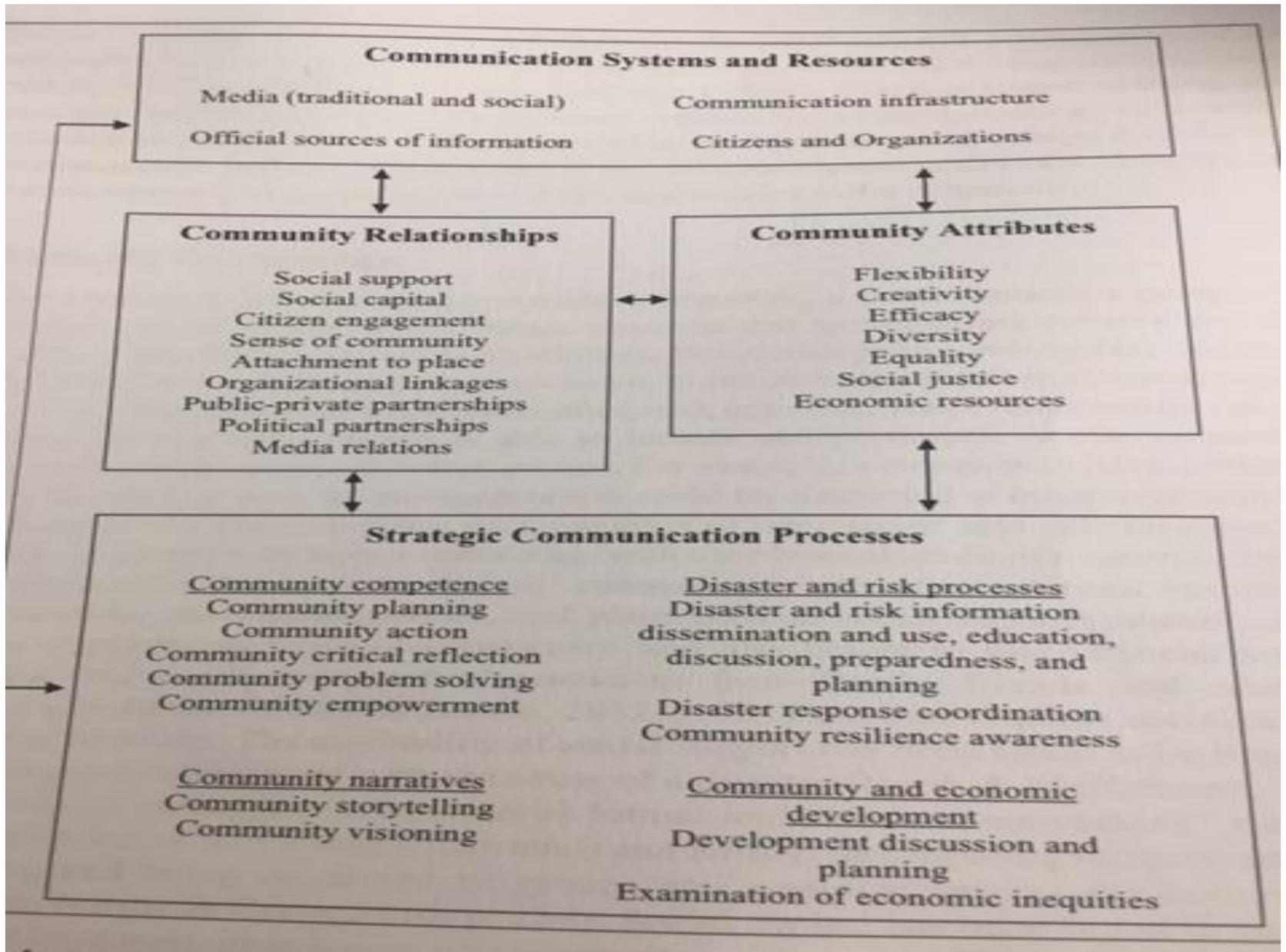
What do we know

- Communication, in some form, central component of all community resilience models (Houston et al., 2015) - natural and manmade disasters
- Community resilience = collective activity to foster recovery, adaptive capacities (Norris et al, 2008)
- Capacities: communication and information; community competence; social capital and economic development = strong link to systems theory



Communication and Information

- Narratives
- Responsible media
- Communication skills and infrastructure
- Trusted sources of information
- All scholars agree inc. Pfefferbaum and Neas et al. (2013) = systemic resilience
- Communication ecology perspective that includes:
 - Organizational
 - Mediated
 - Interpersonal
 - But also PR which is about developing relationships and community
 - Multimodal approach



A communication and media approach to community resilience (Houston et al., 2015: 274)

Methodology

- Philosophical position: social constructivism, interpretivist and exploratory
- Case Study (Stake, 1995; Merriam, 1998 and Yin 2002)
 - Interviews with those on the ground (Albany Associates, FCO)
 - Citizens involved in post-conflict territories
 - Conceptual lens: systems
- Content analysis
 - Media coverage re: narratives
 - Documents re: UN, UNICEF, UNESCO

- A case study is: *“a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not clear and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context”* (Yin, 2002:13)



Thematic Analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001: 388)

Case Studies



- Bosnia (and the Baltics) from the late 1980s
 - By 1991 wealthier republics of Slovenia and Croatia seceded from Yugoslav Federation
 - By 1992 Bosnia fell into civil war on independence and end of free media and rise of state control of information
 - Collapse of civil society
 - Following Dayton Peace Agreement influx of NGOs – media relations? Rise of alternative media
 - Role of media inc. social and grassroots interventions to create a ‘Euro-Baltic identity’

Case Studies

- Somalia (civil war 2009-present....)
 - Changing media actors and embryonic press freedom
 - Role of media reporting in driving/preventing violent extremism
 - Accountability of state security institutions and media and security services relationships – training sessions
 - Community initiatives in those areas recovered from Al-Shabaab control – town hall debates, sporting activities, networks to build resilience, consultation forums



Case Studies

- Nigeria (a paradox)
 - Nigeria suffers a variety of complex political problems including inequality, corruption, oil disputes, national disunity, media and the Boko Haram insurgency
 - Growth of grassroots organisations eg Peace Initiative Network
- But also:
 - Centre for Democracy and Peace Building (NI)
 - Darfur, Western Sudan (local scriptwriters, weekly radio drama since 2013, diverse communities)
 - Establishment of communications regulators and public service broadcasters



Way Forward

- Through case studies attempt to:
 - Identify elements of community resilience post conflict
 - Better understand organisational linkages and role of media and PR in this
 - Reflect on the role of multi-disciplinary teams and collaboration to support specific interventions

resilience:

“[t]he capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to challenges that threaten the function, survival, or future development of the system.”

—Ann Masten, Professor, University of Minnesota
College of Education and Human Development

Final Reflections: Pillars of Peace

- Think about how this work links to Institute for Economics and Peace framework:
 - Well functioning government
 - Sound business environment
 - An equitable distribution of resources
 - An acceptance of the rights of others
 - Good relations with neighbours
 - Free flow of information
 - High level of human capital
 - Low levels of corruption



Limitations

- Qualitative
- Bias
- Sampling
- Access
- Reliability
- Replicability

- But still worth doing....



the world
is full of
interesting
things...

References and Further Reading

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