

these developments, it is to be expected that scholars in the field of communication research are trying to rework the original media event- definition. This is exactly what the anthology *Media Events in a Global Age* is trying to do. Edited by Nick Couldry, Andreas Hepp and Friedrich Krotz, the anthology aims to provide an updated understanding of media events that better fits today's reality. Whether or not the editor's and their contributors manage to achieve this goal, however, is highly debatable.

First of all it is worth noting that the book does not question the original definition provided by Dayan and Katz. Although they do try to update it, none of the authors explicitly question its underlying assumptions. This constricts the contributors and one could question whether the changed media landscape and technology calls for the development of new theories instead of revision of old ones.

A bigger problem with *Media Events*, however, is that it suffers from a glaring lack of coherency. The degree to which the individual contributors actually attempt to answer the editors' call for providing a new understanding of the media event-concept is varying at best.

Regarding the individual contributions, the first two articles are written by Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz themselves, giving the two authors the chance to revise their own concept. In his article, Dayan still maintains the original divide between media events as such and just news; in fact, he argues that each of these two categories have different effects on the public sphere. Thus, he does not necessarily want to include events such as big disasters in the media event category. Here, interestingly enough, he disagrees with Katz, who in her contribu-

tion calls for just such an inclusion, and says it would make more sense to talk about integrative versus disruptive media events.

One such disruptive event that is covered in the book is the attacks of 9/11. In her article Agnieszka Stepenska makes the point that although what happened was indeed a media event, it failed to perform the integrative, neo-durkheimian functions that was included in Dayan's and Katz's original definition. This failure to integrate, stems from the fact that the attacks were interpreted very differently around the world.

In pointing this out, Stepenska exposes a major problem with the underlying project of the book: The editor's want to keep the idea of an integrative function of media events from the original definition, while at the same time broaden its scope to better match increasing globalization. While there can be no doubt that many events today are indeed broadcasted globally and that it therefore would make sense to analyze them with common criteria, it is extremely difficult to argue that there is a globally shared understanding and interpretation of these events.

Nonetheless, the book does point to an interesting field of future research, raising the question whether new so-called social media has changed the role of the public. In other words, have ICTs made it possible for consumers of media to not only observe, but also actively participate in the framing of media events. Thus, depriving the media and organizers of such events of their monopoly on controlling the frame.

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## The Economics of Enough

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Book Review of *Diane Coyle* (2011). **The Economics of Enough**. Princeton University Press.

An 'economy of enough' is one where economic decisions are based to a great extent on ensuring economic, social and environmental sustainability. In her recent book Coyle argues, the current western economies are far from such a state, in fact, she claims that "framework for shaping policies" has brought them to "the point of unsustainability in a number of ways". The financial crisis and the consequent surge of government debt due to bailouts and rescue funds is only one example of this phenomenon. As she explains, there is no easy fix for the issues that arise from the economic behavior in Western countries. Moreover, that fix (or, preferably, solution) can only be applied by future generations that have to carry the burden of debt and inequality. Thus, it is the present

generation's duty to set up a path with a framework that will enable them to do so.

In first the chapter, *Happiness*, Coyle sets the grounds of argumentation for her line of reasoning, as she claims that there is a positive connection between happiness and GDP growth. This means that reducing economic growth is not a viable option when considering how to tackle the looming problems of unsustainability. The following chapters provide ample information and evidence about the "formats" of unsustainability and some root causes in developed countries: environmental and financial, given rise to by increasing inequality and diminishing trust.

Specifically for environmental problems she does not illustrate any approaches that go beyond increased saving and reduced consumption, although she states that depletion and deterioration of resources is only partly linked to economic

growth. In light of decreasing acceptance of climate change in both the political sphere and the general public (mostly due to a lack of legitimacy of the responsible organizations and institutions), a sufficient or even major change in consumption pattern is unlikely. Thus, the actual challenge is to find ways to improve the energy balance and yield, which can to some extent be passed on to the scientific community that is most knowledgeable in that field.

Another point is the issue of measurement. Most – if not all – economic policy decisions are based on measurements and statistics about economic performance. The framework of indicators and measurements that is currently in use was developed after the great recession in the last century. However, as Coyle describes, the economy has changed and shifted in various ways in recent years, so much that a new index of economic performance has to be developed in order to accurately assess the state of an economy not only with respect to monetary matters, but also the social state and the sustainability of the trends.

Similarly, Coyle claims that market failure is not due to inherent problems of the economic models, but rather because of a drastic divergence between the values that some markets – e.g. the financial markets – are supposed to be based on and which they do on fact act accordingly to.

Coyle’s “Manifesto of Enough” – the final chapter- Coyle presents a set of suggestions for an approach to solve or mit-

igate the crisis. Some may criticize these as too half-hearted, but radical changes are most of the time a very difficult endeavour, since the consequences of our behavior are in the future and even then may not be immediately obvious to the majority of citizens. For instance, a complete cease of paying pensions and welfare benefits may help reducing the budget deficit in the short term, would however not be accepted by the general public and even if, it would in no way tackle the root cause of the unsustainability of pensions schemes. In that respect, I agree with the majority of suggestions as they are aimed at the underlying reasons for failures of government or markets. Unfortunately, the proposed measures to take do not incorporate the concept of an *economy of enough* as much as could be expected from the overall setting.

The book reads, despite the worrying information, not at all alarmist and has a rather rational tone. That coupled with the wide range of information makes the book well worth reading in order to get a broad, reasonably detailed idea of the problems we face globally. Of course, a knowledgeable reader who is engaged in that subject area anyway is unlikely to gain a lot from this book, although some ideas Coyle points out are worthy of further discussion.

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## Public Policy and Mass Media: The Interplay of Mass Communication and Political Decision Making

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Book review of *Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten and Katrin Vlomer* (Eds.) (2010). *Public Policy and Mass Media: The Interplay of Mass Communication and Political Decision Making*. Routledge.

“Do the media govern?” – This question, raised in previous scholarly work, seems to be a great concern among political actors, who commonly claim that media influence has increased and effectively turned into a problem as a result of round-the-clock pressure from the press. Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten and Katrin Vlomer, editors of *Public policy and mass media: the interplay of mass communication and political decision making*, point out that the subject has so far received little attention from researchers. The book gathers contributions on a wide range of topics and attempts to advance in filling this research gap by exploring whether, to what extent and under what circumstances the media affect public policy.

From the theoretical perspective, one of the linkages discussed by the authors is the indirect effect media may have on

policy-making through its ability to influence public opinion. It is argued that the impact of the media on public opinion is of crucial importance for political actors because of its potential electoral consequences and changes in the political environment as a whole. For the same reasons, however, policy-makers can certainly profit from influencing the media in an attempt to gauge support for their own agenda.

As a consequence of these two general mechanisms relating media and politics, research has been so far dominated by a dichotomy between the agenda-setting thesis (“the media tells politicians what to think about”) and the indexing thesis (“politicians tell the media what to write about”). The authors aim at contributing to a different, more complex framework of analysis that takes into consideration the nuances of this relationship.

The book draws an analytical distinction regarding the influence of the media on two dimensions of policy-making: the policy debate and the policy institutions. The former is strongly associated with how policy issues are defined and