Editorial

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Over the years, a considerable amount of predominantly American academic research has addressed the relationship between media and foreign policy (e.g. Cohen, 1967; Entman, 2004; Nacos et al., 2000), especially during international crises (e.g. Hallin, 1986; Bennett and Paletz, 1994; Mermin, 1999), but cross-national research on the subject has remained relatively rare (Stolle & Hooghe 2005). Consequently, it is still unclear to what degree country characteristics, such as differences in national media systems, political systems and position in the international system, affect the generality of the US-originated theories of media-state relations. This issue of WPCC brings together five articles which contribute to widening our understanding of media-foreign policy nexus across countries as '[r]eal advances in theoretical development with respect to the media and foreign policy will ultimately depend on our looking at more countries, rather than just at more cases' (Cohen, 1994: 11).

The first article, Cristina Archetti's 'Un-American Views', raises critical questions about the validity of US-originated theories of media-state relations. For instance, she argues that development of communication technology has created a new environment in which journalists produce content leaving old paradigms outdated. Archetti also questions whether they could be applied to other countries: 'the relationship between political actors and the media, and with it the media-foreign policy nexus, needs to be evaluated according to cultural, political, and social country-specific criteria.' Her criticism rests on rigorous analysis of press coverage of the September 11 terrorist attacks and the lead-up to the war in Afghanistan in France, Italy, Pakistan and the US. Finally, Archetti calls for a multidisciplinary approach to the study of media-foreign policy relationship.

The second article investigates international news in a Slovene newspaper *Delo*. Ilija Tomanić Trivundža's research shows that *Delo*'s international coverage has changed dramatically since 1980 reflecting the differences between Yugoslavian foreign policy and current Western-orientated foreign policy of independent Slovenia.

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The coverage of the Third World has declined drastically and puts greater emphasis on negative news stories such as natural disasters. Tomanić Trivundža focuses especially on news photography, which is usually neglected in the analyses of foreign news, arguing that there has been 'a shift toward symbolic use of visuals, either in a form of less formal portrayal of political actors or through the use of photographs that have little or no direct connections to the reported events.'

The third article explores the relationship between the British government and the BBC. More specifically David McQueen focuses on *Panorama*'s coverage of Iraq from the lead-up to the war of 2003 to the beginning of the insurgency. Textual and content analysis of *Panorama* programs is supplemented by interviews with BBC staff. McQueen's conclusion on *Panorama*'s record on Iraq echoes W. Lance Bennett and Steven Livingston's (2003, 359) notion of 'semi-independent' media with 'uneasy and often disjointed combinations' of autonomy and dependence.

In the fourth article, Ian Taylor dissects the Iraq debate pointing the way towards a multidimensional reading of foreign policy debates. Meanwhile, US-originated theories of media-state relations have often adopted rather simplistic coding protocols such as hawkish/dovish (Zaller and Chiu 1996, 2000) and critical/uncritical (Mermin 1999, 43) which often fail to reveal the actual substance of foreign debates. Taylor, in turn, avoids simplistic labelling of pro/anti-war in order to 'explore the objectives and the reasoning' behind different positions in the complicated debate over Iraq.

The final article adopts a somewhat wider perspective on media's role in foreign policy by looking at how foreign influence contributed to Milosevic's overthrow in Serbia in 2000, the so-called Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003 and the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004. Gerald Sussman and Sascha Krader argue that rather than being spontaneous political upheavals they involved meticulous planning and considerable Western political and financial assistance to opposition groups and selected media outlets. The opposition groups also received assistance in the training of activists and employment of marketing techniques. These 'revolutions', which in the view of Russia's foreign policy elite were Western intelligence agency operations, replaced Russia's allies with pro-Western governments. Even though the article was written before the current crisis in Georgia, it offers valuable insights into the increasing tensions in Russia's relations with the West.

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