



## Building a Foundation: Hanga András (ed.) – **Kommunikációs terek 2016**

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A year prior to the publication of the book *Kommunikációs terek 2016* (Communication Spaces 2016), there was a project with a similar name that aimed to create a periodical publication which could further the relevance and appreciation of communication and media as a science and give an overview of what some of the young Hungarian scholars in this discipline are currently working on. Thanks to the dedication and perseverance of the editor and writers, the tradition continued this year with the publication of *Kommunikációs terek 2016*. Hanga András, the President of the National Association of Doctors' (NAD) Department of Communication and Media Studies (DCMS), once again took up the mantle of editing the publication. Her work tied together 16 different scholars including herself, who in some capacity are either in connection with the DCMS, or the Doctoral School of Social Communication at Corvinus University of Budapest, where András also studies. This connection also shows in several of the papers that were submitted, as the reader can find clear traces of the mark left on the authors by Özséb Horányi's school.

Because the main aim of the publication is to lay a firm groundwork that further studies and scholars can base their research on, there are some limitations that come with this as well. Because of the broad spectrum the book covers, in some cases, it is hard to find the inherent connection that binds some of the papers to the field of communication and media studies. The other drawback, which is clearly present and even acknowledged by the editor in the foreword,<sup>1</sup> is that there is a current lack of active discussion and reflection going on between the authors. Even with these issues, the book is a great milestone that helps us get one step closer to get past these problems, and hopefully the publications that will follow this book will be able to address these problems and build on the groundwork that their predecessors have laid.

The structure of the book consists of three chapters, plus a report on the proceedings of the 2016 Tavaszi Szél Conference by Márton Demeter. The first

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1 András, H. (ed.), 2016. *Kommunikációs terek 2016* (Communication Spaces 2016) Budapest–Sepsiszentgyörgy: DOSZ-T3, ISBN: 978-615-5586-02-6.

chapter consists of the abstracts of the presentations in the Workshop Discussions of the NAD DCMS. The second and most expansive chapter contains 8 essays written in 2016 by the members of the DCMS, and the last and final chapter consists of 13 reviews of Hungarian and International papers and publications.

Before the main chapters of the publication, Márton Demeter in the short report of the 2016 Tavaszi Szél Conference brings up an interesting and important point about the state of Communication and Media Sciences in Hungary. Both at the conference and at the National Scientific Students' Associations, the section for this discipline was the most popular, which is a good sign. The next step should be to deepen the impact of their work and legitimize the place of the discipline within the scientific community. The numbers and the interests of young scholars are definitely there, we just need to focus our energies and help to build a firm groundwork they can stand on. Publications like this are a great way to give a place for these authors to come together and show off their work to each other. What we need to do now is to open up to formal scientific debate and discussion amongst the researchers to help each other grow further.

The first chapter consists of the abstracts of the presentations given at the NDA DCMS workshops. These were given by some of the professors and lecturers who are actually teaching most of the researchers who published essays in the next chapter. It gives the book a good and strong start, as we can read what – and how – experienced researchers write about and currently find an interest in. First, we have Petra Aczél, who focused on the phenomena of big data and the organically bound changes in human attention and the new patterns of information behaviour. It was interesting to see that in the paper Aczél refers to the ideas of McClure about how the pre-digital and digital generation finds and uses information. Amongst many other differences, the born digital generation generally prefers to find information quickly, they trust this information more and rarely double-check their sources. This divide – after some careful observation – was in most cases visible even in the scholars who published their essays in the book. It was interesting to see where the information they were using in their research was coming from, and how did they verify them. Next, we have the paper by Rozália Klára Bakó, who wrote about an exploratory study they conducted, which was aimed at identifying multimodal communication practices of children aged 4–8 and the way digital and mobile technologies are changing the way they are learning. This was really nicely tied together with the previous essay, as there were some common points that the two can build upon. Finally, we had Mátyás Domschitz, who drew parallels between the popular self-help books and their groundwork they build upon such as the work of Max Weber and the main tenets of religion. Once the reader familiarizes themselves with the basis of these books, the parallels outlined become quite clear.

Further on, the second chapter consists of eight essays written by the members of the NAD DCMS. These researchers are varied greatly based on overall experience, scientific mind-set, and the state of their research. Some are full-fledged, completed case studies and research papers, while others are from authors who are just trying to test whether or not their research will hold any water in the long run. It was interesting to see the wide range of topics they covered and also the different forms of research methodologies they based their works upon. The issue of gender clearly captured the interest of some of the scholars, as the first four papers directly or indirectly build on this. First, we have Zita Komár, who analysed the appearance of rhetorical and grammatical elements in various speeches of male and female orators. This study is trying to lay a foundation for a further, more in-depth research into this topic to clearly try to understand, define, and categorize how male and female speakers operate. After this, Ágnes Nagy brought the readers on a journey about the different gender issues concerning macroeconomic indicators and possible ways to solve them. Katalin Gyürke narrowed this down a bit, and focused more on the representation of women in news media, with the clear goal to bring gender studies and media sciences closer together. After the clearly gender-focused studies, we have the essay from Adrián Lips, which still balances somewhat near this category, as he is examining the myth created around Katalin Karády, in which a new type of woman was created based on her performance in the movie *Halálós Tavaszi*.<sup>2</sup> It is clear to see even just by glancing at the titles of these essays that even though they have some similarities in the scope of their research they are still vastly varied both on their approach and their goal. This wide spectrum becomes even wider as it becomes harder to find ways to connect the following essays. The first one of these was by Gabriella Richmann, who focused on learning and knowledge, while delving deep into the research of Nonaka to see whether his model of dynamic organizational knowledge creation can be used in the ever-changing organizational sphere. After this, we take a dive into branding and marketing with the essay co-written by Hanga András and István Szakács about how national identity can shape brand communication and loyalty. They base this on a case study concerning *Igazi Csíki Sör*. Out of all the essays, this was clearly the most practical one, tying together scientific methods with real-life application. If we want to legitimize our discipline further, we definitely need to create more connections like this. This was followed by an essay by Judit Gabriella Tóth, which focused on how deeply childhood traumas and memories would stay with a person and how fast some triggers could bring up vivid memories in those who had lived through these events. Last, but certainly not least, Ágnes Bánkúti focused her efforts on the non-verbal communicational aspect of dance.

Overall, while the essays varied wildly by their topic, scope, and the state of their research, they were all unique in some aspects. It is vitally important that young scholars have an opportunity to show their work in some way to other like-minded people because this is the only way they might receive useful feedback and advice on how to proceed further. It was interesting to see that most works were quite enjoyable to read as they had an eloquently crafted structure, which created an easy flow of information throughout the essays. Unfortunately, in some cases, they turned out to be a bit too easy to read, as the paper lost the use of necessary scientific language to convey an appropriately deep and worthwhile message.

The last chapter contains 13 reviews of works of both Hungarian and international scholars that in some way connect to the discipline. This connection is in most cases much clearer than it was with the previous essays, although there are some where there is hard to find any connection at all. The authors have also heavily left their mark with their style on the reviews: some are quite cut and dried, only giving a description of the content of the subject of their work, while others are presenting a nicely researched and eloquently written review, which gives the reader a much deeper understanding of these works. The critical components of the reviews are interesting to delve into: while most authors stayed at a crucial distance from the work they were reviewing, there were people on both ends who failed to do so. There are some reviewers who clearly had an agenda choosing their object of review, propagating a message they believe in, offering no critical approach to the content, while others took a more adversarial stance because of the subjective approaches and ideas the authors had.

Overall, *Kommunikációs terek 2016* is an important step forward to highlight the role of communication and media sciences and to give opportunities for young researchers to come and work, think and publish together, and, in the long term, start a crucial back-and-forth discussion, which can help this field grow and move forward in the future. I honestly hope that the next publication can build on the grounds that it started to lay down in the last two years.