

Extraordinary Issue: Coronavirus, Crisis and Communication

It does not need to be said that we live in extraordinary times. A world of unprecedented mobility has come to a shuddering stop. The majority of the world's population is living under some form of quarantine, and work, sustenance and sociability have been almost entirely mediated. As scholars of media and communication, there are critical developments in play that deserve our attention and our voice.

There has never been a time in which media systems have been able to convey such detailed and universal coverage of an historical event in real time, with the added capacity to keep us all in touch and to give us a voice too. At the same time, the vast social narrative of this pandemic has been visibly characterised by confusion, misinformation, disinformation, charges of conspiracy, cover-ups and multi-vocal denials.

Despite the failure of promises given on their capacity for prediction of precisely this scenario, the world's tech companies are rapidly developing a host of systems to help us all negotiate life in the time of coronavirus. Some of these, such as tracing apps, are likely to prove controversial, while the products of the online economy are enjoying intense demand from grateful housebound populations.

In amongst this, public health experts have been thrust into the limelight, as they try to guide nations and their leaders, as have economists seeking to secure our futures in the absence of a machine that was never intended to stop. Media experts, too, have their part to play in helping people to make sense of the times that we are living through.

With this in mind, *Media International Australia* would like to invite submissions of essays, commentaries and articles for an extraordinary issue of MIA that discusses the global, national, local and intensely personal aspects of media and communication in the time of the coronavirus. We welcome these contributions from colleagues across all places and disciplines.

We invite submissions in two categories:

- 1) Essays and commentaries, up to 2,000 words, on current developments and issues related to the pandemic and communication.
- 2) Detailed articles, of 6,000 to 8,000 words, addressing aspects of media and communications in key areas, such as: health communication, social media, journalism and public discourse, commerce, politics, culture and logistics.

We intend to publish a selection of submissions received before the end of 2020, and to meet the urgency of the moment, we therefore invite submissions by **14th June 2020**.

We understand that this tight turnaround means that contributors will be likely be sharing their evolving thoughts and experiences, without time in many cases to prepare detailed empirical papers. Nonetheless, we feel that our obligation as scholars, and as a journal, is to come together in conversation and to make sense of the multi-faceted role of media and communication in this extraordinary moment.

Authors can submit directly to MIA at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/MIA>

Please indicate your submission is intended for the special issue.

For enquiries, please contact: Adrian Athique (a.athique@uq.edu.au) and Craig Hight (craig.hight@newcastle.edu.au). The extraordinary issue will be edited by the board of MIA.