

# The Routledge Companion to Media and Activism



# THE ROUTLEDGE COMPANION TO MEDIA AND ACTIVISM

The Routledge Companion to Media and Activism is a wide-ranging collection of 42 original and authoritative essays by leading contributors from a variety of academic disciplines.

Introducing and exploring central debates about the diverse relationships between both media and protest, and communication and social change, the book offers readers a reliable and informed guide to understanding how media and activism influence one another. The expert contributors examine the tactics and strategies of protest movements, and how activists organize themselves and each other; they investigate the dilemmas of media coverage and the creation of alternative media spaces and platforms; and they emphasize the importance of creativity and art in social change.

Bringing together case studies and contributors from six continents, the collection is organized around themes that address past, present and future developments from around the world. *The Routledge Companion to Media and Activism* is an essential reference and guide for those who want to understand this vital area.

**Graham Meikle** is Professor of Communication and Digital Media at the University of Westminster in London. His other books include *Social Media: Communication, Sharing and Visibility* and *Future Active: Media Activism and the Internet.* 

# **CONTENTS**

Notes on contributors Acknowledgements		x xvi
	Introduction: making meanings and making trouble  Graham Meikle	1
PART I Themes		17
1	Looking back, looking ahead: what has changed in social movement media since the internet and social media? <i>John D. H. Downing</i>	19
2	The nexus between media, communication and social movements: looking back and the way forward  Donatella della Porta and Elena Pavan	29
3	Nonviolent activism and the media: Gandhi and beyond Sean Scalmer	38
4	Can the Women's Peace Camp be televised?: challenging mainstream media coverage of Greenham Common  Anna Feigenbaum	47
5	Artistic activism Stephen Duncombe and Steve Lambert	57
6	Alternative computing  Leah A. Lievrouw	65

	ART II Organizations and identities	
7	Transformative media organizing: key lessons from participatory communications research with the immigrant rights, Occupy, and LGBTQ and Two-Spirit movements  Sasha Costanza-Chock	77
8	Affective publics and windows of opportunity: social media and the potential for social change  Zizi Papacharissi and Meggan Taylor Trevey	87
9	Social media and contentious action in China Zixue Tai	97
10	Connective or collective?: the intersection between online crowds and social movements in contemporary activism  Anastasia Kavada	108
11	The communicative core of working class organization  Jesse Drew	117
12	Digital activism and the future of worker resistance  Lina Dencik and Peter Wilkin	125
13	Forming publics: alternative media and activist cultural practices Ricarda Drüeke and Elke Zobl	134
14	Social media activism, self-representation and the construction of political biographies  Veronica Barassi	142
	et III civist arts	151
15	Cats, punk, arson and new media: art activism in Russia 2007–2015 Yngvar B. Steinholt	153
16	Art as activism in Japan: the case of a good-for-nothing kid and her pussy Mark McLelland	162
17	Music and activism: from prefigurative to pragmatic politics  Andrew Green and John Street	171

# Contents

18	Small 'p' politics and minor gestures: political artists, politics and aesthetics in contemporary art  Maria Miranda and Norie Neumark	179
19	I can haz rights?: online memes as digital embodiment of craft(ivism) Victoria Esteves	187
20	Feminist protest assemblages and remix culture Red Chidgey	196
	et iv etics of visibility	205
21	Affective activism and political secularism: the unending body in the Femen movement  Camilla Mohring Reestorff	207
22	The purchase of witnessing in human rights activism Sandra Ristovska	216
23	Palestine online: occupation and liberation in the digital age Miriyam Aouragh	223
24	Turning murders into public executions: 'beheading videos' as alternative media  Joe F. Khalil	232
25	Urban graffiti, political activism and resistance Noureddine Miladi	241
26	Leaktivism and its discontents  Athina Karatzogianni	250
27	Counter-cartography: mapping power as collective practice André Mesquita (translated by Victoria Esteves)	259
	RT V ntesting narratives	269
CO	mesting narratives	209
28	Climate justice, hacktivist sensibilities, prototypes of change Adrienne Russell	271

# Contents

29	The British National Party: digital discourse and power Chris Atton	280
30	Mapping social media trajectories in Zimbabwe Bruce Mutsvairo	289
31	The case of the destroyed plaque: social media, collective memory and activism in Cartagena, Colombia  Anamaria Tamayo-Duque and Toby Miller	298
32	The media strategy of the Aboriginal Black Power, Land Rights and Self-determination movement  Gary Foley and Edwina Howell	307
	T VI	
Ch	anging the media	317
33	Policy activism: advocating, protesting and hacking media regulation  Arne Hintz	319
34	Media activism: media change?  Natalie Fenton	329
35	Fan activism Samantha Close	337
36	Acting out: resisting copyright monopolies  Steve Collins	346
37	Disability and media activism  Katie Ellis and Gerard Goggin	355
PAR	T VII	
Bey	ond social media	365
38	From digital activism to algorithmic resistance Emiliano Treré	367
39	On the question of blockchain activism  Oliver Leistert	376

# Contents

40	'Dear Mr. Neo-Nazi, can you please give me your informed consent so that I can quote your fascist tweet?': questions of social media research ethics in online ideology critique <i>Christian Fuchs</i>	385
41	Beyond 'report, block, ignore': informal responses to trolling and harassment on social media  Frances Shaw	395
42	Organized networks in the age of platform capitalism Geert Lovink and Ned Rossiter	404
Index		415

# **CONTRIBUTORS**

**Miriyam Aouragh** is a senior lecturer at the University of Westminster, London. Her PhD focused on the implications of the internet during the Second Intifada (University of Amsterdam) and her postdoctoral work (Oxford Internet Institute) concerned the political role of internet technologies for grassroots activists in Lebanon. A more recent project (Leverhulme) was about digital infrastructures and the Arab uprisings.

**Chris Atton** is Professor of Media and Culture at Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland. His books include *Alternative Media* (Sage, 2002), *Alternative Journalism* (Sage, 2009) and the *Routledge Companion to Alternative and Community Media* (Routledge, 2015). He is co-founder of the *Journal of Alternative and Community Media*.

**Veronica Barassi** is a lecturer and the convenor of the BA Anthropology and Media degree in the Department of Media and Communications, Goldsmiths University of London. Her work has appeared in top-ranked international journals and she is the author of *Activism on the Web: Everyday Struggles against Digital Capitalism* (Routledge, 2015).

**Red Chidgey** is Lecturer in Gender and Media at the Department of Culture, Media and Creative Industries, King's College London. Her research interests lie in the intersection of protest, material culture, gender and memory. Her monograph *Feminist Afterlives: Feminist Memory in Postfeminist Times* is forthcoming with Palgrave Macmillan.

**Samantha Close** is an assistant professor of Communication at DePaul University, Chicago. Her research proceeds through both writing and the creative production of film and comics. It focuses particularly on transforming models of creative industries, labour and capitalism.

**Steve Collins** is a senior lecturer in the Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies at Macquarie University, Sydney. His research focuses on the music industry and the intersections of copyright law, fair use and creativity.

**Sasha Costanza-Chock** (pronouns: they/them) is a scholar, activist, and media-maker. They are currently Associate Professor of Civic Media at MIT, Massachusetts. Their work focuses on social movements, media justice and community-led design. More: http://schock.cc.

**Donatella della Porta** is Dean of the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Scuola Normale Superiore, Florence, where she directs the Center on Social Movement Studies (Cosmos) and the ERC project Mobilizing for Democracy on civil society participation in democratization processes in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America.

**Lina Dencik** (PhD, Goldsmiths) is Senior Lecturer at the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies at Cardiff University, Wales. She is the author of *Media and Global Civil Society* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); co-author, with Peter Wilkin, of *Worker Resistance and Media* (Peter Lang, 2015); and co-editor, with Oliver Leistert, of *Critical Perspectives on Social Media and Protest* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

**John D. H. Downing** is author of *Radical Media* (second edition 2001) and editor of the *Encyclopedia of Social Movement Media* (Sage, 2011). He has taught at universities in Greenwich, Massachusetts, the City of New York, Texas and Southern Illinois, and in China, Denmark, Finland, France, Mexico, Qatar and Turkey.

**Jesse Drew**, Professor of Cinema and Digital Media at the University of California at Davis, researches working-class alternative and community media. His recent book is *A Social History of Contemporary Democratic Media* (Routledge, 2013).

**Ricarda Drüeke** is Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Salzburg, Austria. Her main areas of research are theories of the public sphere, gender media studies, and social movements and protest.

**Stephen Duncombe** is an activist and Professor of Media and Culture at New York University. With Steve Lambert, he is co-founder and co-director of the Center for Artistic Activism: http://artisticactivism.org.

**Katie Ellis** is Senior Research Fellow in Internet Studies at Curtin University, Perth. She has published six books addressing various aspects of disability and the media and is series editor of *Routledge Research in Disability and Media Studies*.

**Victoria Esteves** is a doctoral researcher at the University of Stirling, Scotland. Her research focuses on the circulation of participatory cultures online, specifically how internet memes are remixed and circulated, and how subsequently they gain social and political meaning.

**Anna Feigenbaum** is a co-author of *Protest Camps* (Zed, 2013) and author of *Tear Gas* (Verso, 2017). Her writing can be found in a variety of academic and media outlets including *The Guardian*, *The Atlantic* and *Open Democracy*.

**Natalie Fenton** is Professor of Media and Communications at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her latest publications include *Digital*, *Political*, *Radical* (Polity, 2016); *Misunderstanding the Internet* (Routledge, 2012, 2016) (with James Curran and Des Freedman); and *New Media*, *Old News* (Sage, 2010). She is also an activist and is on the Board of Directors of *Hacked Off* and a founding member of the *Media Reform Coalition*.

**Gary Foley**, professor, actor, activist and esteemed academic historian, was a key member of the Aboriginal Black Power movement and was a critical figure in establishing the Aboriginal Tent

Embassy of 1972. He has been at the centre of major political activities in Australia for more than 40 years.

**Christian Fuchs** is a professor at the University of Westminster, London. He is co-editor of the journal *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique* (http://www.triple-c.at). His research focuses on critical theory and the critical study of the role of media, communication(s) and the internet in society: http://fuchs.uti.at.

**Gerard Goggin** is Professor of Media and Communications, University of Sydney. Gerard was introduced to disability media activism in the early 1990s, working for an Australian technology and consumer rights NGO. His books include *Digital Disability* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), *Disability and the Media* (Palgrave, 2015), *Routledge Companion to Disability and the Media* (Routledge, 2018) and *Voices of Democracy: Listening to Disability* (Routledge, 2018).

**Andrew Green** is currently Early Career Lecturer at the University of the West of Scotland's School of Media, Culture and Society, having been awarded his doctorate in Ethnomusicology by Royal Holloway, University of London in 2016. His research focuses on music and politics in Mexico, and he has work published and forthcoming in peer-reviewed journals, including *Popular Music, Popular Music and Society*, and *Ethnomusicology Forum*.

**Arne Hintz** is a senior lecturer at Cardiff University, Wales, where he leads the MA Digital Media and Society, and co-directs the Data Justice Lab. His publications include, among others, *Beyond WikiLeaks* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and *Digital Citizenship in a Datafied World* (Polity, 2018).

**Edwina Howell** completed her PhD in Anthropology on the activist strategies of the Black Power Movement through the life of Gary Foley in 2013. She has now worked with Professor Foley for over a decade.

**Athina Karatzogianni** is Associate Professor at the University of Leicester. Her research focuses on the intersections between digital media theory and political economy for the study of the use of digital technologies by social movements, protest and insurgency groups: http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/media/people/dr-athina-karatzogianni.

**Anastasia Kavada** is Senior Lecturer in the Westminster School of Media, Arts & Design at the University of Westminster, London. She is co-leader of the MA in Media, Campaigning and Social Change, and Deputy Director of the Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI).

**Joe F. Khalil** is Associate Professor in Residence at Northwestern University in Qatar. He is engaged in researching questions of youth cultures, alternative media and media industries in the Arab world. He authored a policy monograph on Arab satellite entertainment television and public diplomacy and is also a co-author of *Arab Television Industries* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

**Steve Lambert** is an artist and Associate Professor of New Media at the State University of New York, College at Purchase. With Stephen Duncombe, he is co-founder and co-director of the Center for Artistic Activism: http://artisticactivism.org.

**Oliver Leistert** works at Leuphana University of Lüneburg. He was awarded a PhD in 2013, and was the winner of the *Surveillance & Society* book award in 2014. His main interests include

algorithms, sociality, affect and media. He co-edited (with Lina Dencik) Critical Perspectives on Social Media and Protest: Between Control and Emancipation (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

**Leah A. Lievrouw** is a professor in the Department of Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research focuses on the relationship between digital/new media technologies and social change. She is the author of *Alternative and Activist New Media* (Polity, 2011; second edition in preparation).

**Geert Lovink** is a media theorist, internet critic and author of *Dark Fiber* (MIT Press, 2002), *Zero Comments* (Routledge, 2007), *Networks Without a Cause* (Polity Press, 2012) and *Social Media Abyss* (Polity Press, 2016). He is the founder of the Institute of Network Cultures at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and a professor at the European Graduate School (Saas-Fee/Malta) where he supervises PhD students.

**Mark McLelland** is Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies at the University of Wollongong and a former Toyota Visiting Professor of Japanese at the University of Michigan. He is author or editor of over 10 books, most recently *The End of Cool Japan: Ethical, Legal and Cultural Challenges to Japanese Popular Culture* (Routledge, 2016).

**André Mesquita**, PhD in Social History, is a researcher and the author of *Insurgências poéticas:* arte ativista e ação coletiva (Annablume, 2011) and *Esperar não é saber: arte entre o silêncio e a evidência* (Funarte, 2015), and co-author of *Desinventario: esquirlas de Tucumán Arde en el archivo de Graciela Carnevale* (Ocho Libros, 2015).

**Noureddine Miladi** is Associate Professor of Media and Communication at Qatar University and former Head of Department of Mass Communication. He is co-author of *Media and Crises: The Art of Manipulation, Misinformation and Propaganda* (Al-Falah Books, ed. 2015, in Arabic) and *Mapping the Al Jazeera Phenomenon 20 Years On* (Al Jazeera Centre for Studies, ed. 2016). He is editor of the *Journal of Arab and Muslim Media Research*.

**Toby Miller** is Research Professor of the Graduate Division, University of California, Riverside; Sir Walter Murdoch Professor of Cultural Policy Studies, Murdoch University, Perth; Professor Invitado, Escuela de Comunicación Social, Universidad del Norte, Colombia; Professor of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, Cardiff University/Prifysgol Caerdydd, Wales; and Director of the Institute for Media and Creative Industries, Loughborough University London.

**Maria Miranda** is an artist and, since 2013, an Australian Research Council (DECRA) Research Fellow at Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne. Her publications include *Unsitely Aesthetics: Uncertain Practices in Contemporary Art* (Errant Bodies Press, 2013).

**Bruce Mutsvairo** is Associate Professor in Journalism Innovation at University of Technology Sydney. He studies citizen participation and digital activism in sub-Saharan Africa. He completed his PhD at Leiden University, the Netherlands.

**Norie Neumark** is a theorist and artist (www.out-of-sync.com). Her monograph *Voicetracks: Attuning to Voice in Media and the Arts* (MIT Press, 2017) explores voice and new materialism. She is Honorary Professorial Fellow at VCA, Melbourne; Emeritus Professor at La Trobe University, Melbourne; and founding editor of *Unlikely: Journal for Creative Arts* (http://unlikely.net.au).

**Zizi Papacharissi**, PhD, is Professor and Head of Communication at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is also editor of the *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, and founding and current editor of *Social Media & Society*.

**Elena Pavan** is Assistant Professor at the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Scuola Normale Superiore, Florence. Her interdisciplinary work addresses both theoretically and methodologically the nexus between collective action/political participation and digital media.

**Camilla Møhring Reestorff** is Associate Professor and Leader of Center for Cultural Participation at Aarhus University. She is editor of *Conjunctions: Transdisciplinary Journal of Cultural Participation* and author of *Culture War: Affective Cultural Politics, Tepid Nationalism and Art Activism* (Intellect Ltd, 2017).

**Sandra Ristovska** is an Assistant Professor in Media Studies at the College for Media, Communication and Information at the University of Colorado Boulder. A scholar and a filmmaker, she examines issues about media activism, human rights, visual epistemologies and evidence.

**Ned Rossiter** is Professor of Communication at Western Sydney University. He is the author of *Organized Networks: Media Theory, Creative Labour, New Institutions* (NAi Publications, 2006) and *Software, Infrastructure, Labor: A Media Theory of Logistical Nightmares* (Routledge, 2016).

**Adrienne Russell** is Mary Laird Wood Professor of Communication at University of Washington, Seattle. She is author of *Journalism as Activism: Recoding Media Power* (Polity Press, 2016), and co-editor of *Journalism and the NSA Revelations: Privacy, Security and the Press* (I.B. Tauris & Co., 2017).

**Sean Scalmer** teaches history at the University of Melbourne. He has written several books on the history of social movements and political campaigning, and he is the co-editor of the journal *Moving the Social*.

**Frances Shaw** (PhD, UNSW) is an honorary associate at the University of Sydney. Her research interests include feminist digital activism, harassment and cyberbullying, the ethics and politics of digital healthcare, and online supportive networks.

**Yngvar B. Steinholt**, Associate Professor, teaches Russian culture, literature, history and society at Institute of Language and Culture, UiT – Arctic University of Norway. His research spans Soviet and post-Soviet popular music, contemporary Russian art activism and sonic representations of Russia.

**John Street** is a professor of politics at the University of East Anglia. He is the author of several books, including *Music and Politics* (Polity, 2012) and (with Sanna Inthorn and Martin Scott) *From Entertainment to Citizenship: Politics and Popular Culture* (Manchester University Press, 2013).

**Zixue Tai** is an associate professor in the College of Communication and Information Media at the University of Kentucky. His primary area of research pertains to the social, political and cultural ramifications of the new media sector in China.

**Anamaria Tamayo-Duque** is a lecturer in the Institute for Media and Creative Industries, Loughborough University London and Assistant Professor in the Dance and Theater Department, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia. She has a BA in Anthropology from the Universidad de Antioquia and a PhD in Critical Dance Studies from the University of California, Riverside.

**Emiliano Treré** is a lecturer at the School of Journalism, Media and Culture at Cardiff University, Wales. He has published extensively on the challenges, the opportunities, and the myths of media technologies for social movements and political parties in Europe and Latin America.

**Meggan Taylor Trevey** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She studies political communication, political psychology and democracy.

**Peter Wilkin** (PhD, Southampton) is Reader in the School of Social Sciences at Brunel University London. He is the author of *The Political Economy of Global Communication* (Pluto Press, 2001) and co-editor, with Mark Lacy, of *Global Politics in the Information Age* (Manchester University Press, 2006). He has more recently published *Worker Resistance and Media* with Lina Dencik (Peter Lang, 2015) and *Hungary's Crisis of Democracy* (Lexington Books, 2016).

**Elke Zobl** is Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and head of the program area Contemporary Arts and Cultural Production, a cooperation for science and art between the University of Salzburg and the Mozarteum University Salzburg.