

## **“The news where you are”: putting the geo in media studies**

Christopher Ali

*Media Localism: The Policies of Place*, University of Illinois Press: Urbana, Chicago, Springfield, 2017; 272 pp.: £18.99. ISBN: 9780252082238

Karin Fast, André Jansson, Johan Lindell, Linda Ryan Bengtsson, Mekonnen Tesfahuney (eds.)

*Geomedia Studies: Spaces and Mobilities in Mediatized Worlds*, Routledge: New York, London, 2017; 288 pp.: £110.00. ISBN: 9781138221529

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At the end of BBC television’s national news programme, the newsreader signs off, with ritual precision, by handing over to the regional news services with the words ‘...and now the news from where you are’. *Where am I, tell me?* I’m wont to ask on such occasions, looking to secure some sense of local and regional belonging as mirrored back through my television screen. On then trundles BBC North West Tonight which, between the moments of inane (and no less ritualistic) banter that the presenting team insist on sharing, covers news events in Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Lancashire, Cumbria, as well as parts of Derbyshire and Yorkshire. So *this* is where I am: an imagined community that is magically conjured up by the necessarily loose regional descriptor ‘North West’. Yet, geographically at least, I do not live in the North West, I live just across the English-Welsh border in North Wales, a few miles from the English city of Chester. In a post-analogue television landscape where the direction my television aerial is pointed in no longer so narrowly determines what is beamed into my living room, I could easily opt to change my default regional news setting to BBC Wales Today: another imagined media community in which otherwise quite disparate localities – from my home county of Flintshire in North East Wales all the way down to Cardiff or Swansea in the south west – are corralled into a similar geographic container in which news is transacted ‘where you are’. I am not sure whether BBC Wales Today speaks to a sense of ‘where I am’ any more than BBC North West Tonight does. Both, in their own way, seem as remote as Huw Edwards ‘down there’ in London giving the news on behalf of the nation (and what exactly is this ‘nation’? do we mean the

UK as a whole, extending to the devolved countries of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Island, or is this a rather more narrow, if tacit, reference to England?)

By way of a response to this opening anecdotal provocation, an entirely rational explanation might well be proffered, taking me through the detailed intricacies of national and regional media policies and regulations, pointing out the practical logistics of geographic taxonomies that are aligned with pre-established regional identities, and admonishing me for presuming to problematise common-sense understandings of where 'here' in fact is in the digital age. 'Where you are', our very reasonable interlocutor might insist, means the same as it ever did: the *place* where you are consuming your media content and in which you routinely choose to locate yourself, both in terms of geography and sociocultural identity. But what is this 'place' of which you speak? I counter, not wishing to fold over quite so readily in the task of spatially problematising everyday media practices. At which point, this hypothetical exponent of what Christopher Ali dubs 'default localism' gets up and walks away, reasoning that if the very foundational concepts we have at our disposal in discourses of media localism are themselves up for grabs, then what basis is there for meaningful or productive discussion?

What makes Ali's *Media Localism* both timely and productive is that it purposely inhibits the default response to get up and walk away, insisting, as it does, that key spatial terms such as 'local', 'regional', 'community', 'place' cannot and should not be immune to critical scrutiny and that policy thinking that is being marshalled through the 'empty signifier' of the local (p. 25) should not go unchallenged. By problematising these terms, Ali asserts, we not only cast much needed critical attention on what he refers to as the 'epistemological question of the local' (p. 19), we can also lay the groundwork for a processual understanding of the multifarious spatial practices that constitute how and *where* media geographies are being performatively transacted against, around, underneath, in consort with, or in wilful disregard to established structures of media and place. Some of the broad questions the book confronts, therefore, are 'what does it mean to be local in the digital age?', or, more obliquely precise, those that tackle the problem of 'how to localise the ether' (p. 18). The fact that *Media Localism* succeeds in answering neither of these questions directly should by no means be taken as a shortcoming. If anything it is one of the book's key strengths inasmuch as it sets out to furnish the reader with the requisite tools to work through the epistemological question of the local and its knotted implications as

applied to specific case studies and concrete empirical examples. In respect of the former (the critical tools) it is critical discourse analysis and critical regionalism that Ali methodologically foregrounds in his interrogation of the local. 'Critical regionalism', he notes, 'reminds us that the local is more than just our feet on the ground. Rather, it is constructed through history, actions, viewpoints, contexts, discourses, and, of course, places' (p. 24). The empirical locales to which he turns his critical attention are Canada, the United States and the UK, examining in each how ideas of localism discursively inform the political economy, broadcast histories, and policy frameworks governing strategic alignments between media industries and the places or spaces they are seen to in some way serve (or, indeed, create).

Successive chapters provide rich and detailed analysis focused on media localism in and across the North Atlantic triangle, from which Ali draws conclusions that reflect the three national contexts as a whole. The first of these is the observation that media regulators and policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic routinely fall back on 'default localism', referring to an instrumental understanding of localism as familiar, uncomplicated, and resistant to anything other than the commonplace assumptions that tether localism 'exclusively to place, interest, or capital' (p. 181). The second key conclusion Ali points to is the way that default localism works to stymie challenges to or deviations from the status quo, exerting 'political and commercial pressures [that work] to stifle or obfuscate alternative regulatory proposals vis-à-vis the local from entering concrete policy decisions' (p. 169). Localism's default setting, in other words, quells attempts to champion, explore or instigate more dynamic and heterogeneous articulations of the local. In so doing it upholds dominant and hegemonic spatio-economic structures that are benignly and efficaciously in sync with the global neoliberal marketplace. A recognition of the utility of critical regionalism, another of the book's concluding propositions, offers a means by which it is possible to 'push back on both the complacency of default localism and the political economy of localism' (p. 197-8). The preliminary steps towards such ends, as adroitly set out in Chapter 1, 'Mapping the Local', is to do precisely that: to map the discursive boundaries of the local and to tease out its constitutive complexities, challenges and polymorphous definitions. Accordingly, Ali walks us through different adumbrations of the local or different localisms: *local as practice* (the local not just as a place on the map but as an experience that differs from person to person and place to place); *local as place* (intrinsically place-

bound and spatially defined); *local as community* (a more flexible and elusive rendering of local-as-place (although, importantly, not necessarily place-bound) often romanticised or coloured by a nostalgic, *gemeinschaft* vision of an organic social collective, as exemplified, perhaps, by the Queen Vic, the local pub in the long-running BBC soap *Eastenders*); *local as market* (an idea of the local where 'markets for goods and services [come] first, and cultural and political communities second' (p. 41)); *local as resistive* (the local as 'authentic' and hence vulnerable, necessarily resistive to the threat posed by global market forces); *local as fetish* (often a consequence of the resistive mode, where the local is fetishised and seen 'through the rose-tinted glasses of nostalgia and sentimentality' (p. 44)); *local as critical* (for Ali this is the optimum perspective on the local to be reached for, one in which critical regionalism dialectically re-frames understandings of the local by allowing its many tensions and contradictions to play out, in the process critically exposing the 'taken-for-granted assumptions and power dynamics engendered within the discursive construction of the local' (p. 47-8)).

A major plank of Ali's critical unpicking of default localism are the contradictions that lie at the interface between what he calls 'communities of place' and 'communities of interest' (or between 'spatial localism' and 'social localism'). This can be usefully illustrated by once again thinking through the media localisms that presume to 'locate' me as a consumer of local or regional news media. The short montage of city landmarks and other iconic markers of place that appear in the opening credits of BBC North West Tonight serve to define and cohere a community of place in which 'we' as consumers of the programme are bound together by our (assumed) affiliation to a regional entity known as the 'North West'. 'We' are a community by dint of the boundary that this particular media localism draws around a group of people who in all other respects are anything but a 'community'. It is, after Benedict Anderson, an 'imagined community' that is precariously held together but only so far as it feeds and nurtures a local habitus of place and identity: a meaningful sense of sociocultural and geographical belonging that does not discount or close off the dense meshwork of communication vectors that thread their rhizomic way through traditional media landscapes, no less the new media ecologies and phantasmagoric digital worlds that are proliferating at an ever-vertiginous rate. I do not presume to speak for other viewers of BBC North West Tonight, but, with the possible exception of the weather forecast, I cannot read anything that is meaningfully 'local' into anything I am confronted with in any given

routine encounter. The fact that the programme is on at all usually stems from the need to rapidly switch over from Channel 4 at 6.30pm when, *The Simpsons* having just finished, *Hollyoaks* is about to begin (an apparently Chester-based soap that feels about as local as *Beverley Hills 90210*). What BBC North West Tonight demonstrably does *not* do (for me at least) is feed or nurture a local habitus of place and identity.

As the reassuringly predictable stream of local news – infused with the usual blend of cliché, banter and home-spun sincerity – starts to wash over me I am more than likely to find myself distractedly reaching for my tablet or smartphone. In an instant I have fled, once again, a media space I feel little or no meaningful attachment to and sought refuge in a destination – a *locale* – I hope to find altogether more nourishing. If I were an avid user of social media (I'm not) I might choose this moment to enter the space of a different form of media localism, perhaps one that feels closer to what I would want from and value in a community. Such a scenario brings us closer to what Ali refers to as 'communities of interest'. Unlike communities of place, the digital space of communication to which my attention is now turned is placeless to the extent that those who make it a community (if that is what it is) could be located anywhere. *Place*, if by this we mean a material locale, earth-bound in its physicality, replete with symbolic markers of shared social belonging and the histories and narratives that have invested these with meaning, is not a prerequisite for the formation of communities of interest. They are social spaces, but that sociality is not predicated on geographical proximity (however contrived or 'imagined' this may in fact be in practice). In this respect, and insofar as those that dwell or move through such spaces *do* experience them as meaningful social communities, they can also count as 'places', albeit not on the terms that make communities of place 'places'.

As we see here, it is very easy to tangle ourselves in knots when we begin to scrutinise the conceptual language of media localism through the problematising lens of critical regionalism. In one sense, there is nothing especially novel or groundbreaking about the spatial localism vs. social localism distinction. As is discussed in the first part of the book, a specific focus on media localism is but part of a much broader theoretical discussion around ideas of place, community, mobility, and identity in an era of globalisation, space-time compression, and self-proliferating and ever-expansive digital networks. But where the book does push debates in significantly new directions – and where it deserves to find its niche – is in re-framing the epistemological question of the local squarely around media

policy and regulation. In so doing, Ali also makes a powerful case for why all of this matters; why it is important not to slip into default localism mode and to be open and alert to other articulations and practices of space as mobilised across the landscapes of new media ecosystems. The question of the local thus extends to questions that probe the nature of democratic governance; the place of community media in workaday structures of media localism; the role of ‘merit goods’ in local media policies, a social democratic intervention that makes the economic case for ‘cross-media subsidy and for increased public support through regulation and public expenditure’ (p. 194); or, drawing on Henri Lefebvre’s writings on the right to the city (more recently taken up by David Harvey), the ‘right to be local’: for example, the right to *be* local rather than to merely buy local (the reductive neoliberal model of localism); to refine and reclaim an idea of localism that ‘permits us to imagine greater access both to the information we require as citizens, consumers, and human beings, and to the infrastructure that we require to live in the twenty-first century’ (p. 204).

When glimpsed through the lens of *Geomedia Studies* (Fast et al 2017), an edited collection that is also the focus of this review essay, it is instructive to ruminate on where *Media Localism* most comfortably sits in terms of its disciplinary alignment. Given that its author is based in a media studies department (at the University of Virginia), the book’s obvious key constituency is scholars in communication and media. But factor in the central engagement with space and place – and the problem of the local – then it is no less equipped to speak to a broader field of study that finds fruitful points of connection on issues that relate to urbanism, local/regional politics, digital society and economy, place-making, community empowerment and citizen participation, smart cities, locative media, or digital activism and the right to the city. Moreover, the book’s geographic remit self-evidently lends itself to interests that fall well within the disciplinary orbit of geographers, and by this reckoning the work can be assumed to form part of a growing body of scholarship that clusters under the banner of geomedia studies. However, as *geomedia* is not a term that crops up anywhere in *Media Localism*, we need to turn to Fast et al’s collection in order to get a clearer sense of what geomedia studies in fact is as an aggregation of disciplinary orientations.

Taken at face value, geomedia studies defines a subject area that we might assume broadly encompasses theoretical and methodological intersections between media and

communications on the one hand, and geographical knowledge and practice on the other. I say *broadly* as to attempt to draw a line around this intersectional zone of inter- or cross-disciplinary traffic would take some doing. Not least because how or where one might define a disciplinary space into which to neatly bundle ‘media and communication studies’ is itself no walk in the park, any more than it is for geography. Disciplinary boundaries, as with their geopolitical counterparts, are increasingly porous, the ‘territory’ they attempt to define ineluctably amorphous. It is with this in mind that the coinage of neologisms such as ‘geomedia’ can in no small part be accounted for. We can track these shifts and interdisciplinary realignments also in the rhetorical use of the navigational term ‘turns’ evident in much of the discourse that has sprung from the media/geography or media/space interface. And in this respect *Geomedia Studies* is an instructive case in point. We learn of a *communicational turn* that has taken place in geography and a corresponding *spatial turn* in media and communication studies (Fast et al, p. 2). Indeed, there are a number of turns that our attention is drawn to in the book’s introduction and across the chapters that comprise the first part of the book, ‘Theorizing Geomedia’: a *cultural turn* in geography (Wilken, p.23); an *ethnographic turn*, *circulatory turn*, and *practice turn* in media studies and related disciplines (Parmett and Rodgers, p. 65-7); a *material turn* in media studies and in research on mobilities (Sheller, p. 79). With particular regards to space, I have critically taken this discourse of ‘turns’ to task on a number of occasions (see, for example, Roberts 2012, 2018; Roberts and Hallam 2014) and there is no pressing need to rehearse these misgivings here. But in attempting to map some of the aforementioned intersectional traffic this language of ‘turns’ does raise certain epistemological questions as to the disciplinary underpinnings that hold geomedia studies in place.

In their introduction to the collection, Karin Fast et al submit that ‘*Geomedia Studies* tries to capture and make sense of the new cartographies that have emerged in the wake of new media’ (p. 1). The *geomedia* appellation, they continue, ‘is first and foremost meant to signal the truly interdisciplinary nature of the research field...a *space of encounter*’ (p. 2, emphasis in original). While, as a dynamic and productive space of encounter, the interdisciplinarity of this expansive field of research is certainly one of its defining characteristics, this is arguably undermined by an insistence on the idea that disciplines have *turned* towards the embrace of new theoretical and/or methodological frameworks. If anything, this arguably has the effect of reinforcing existing disciplinary boundaries rather

than spurring on the process of their necessary dissolution. If, initiating some kind of interdisciplinary tango, geography turns towards culture and media/culture/communication studies, for its part, turns towards space (towards the *geo*) then this helps cement a rather rigid or formalised space of encounter in which seemingly discrete and monolithic traditions recognise in each other critical perspectives they have hitherto lacked. Not only does this inhibit recognition of the rich multidisciplinary melee of ideas and influences that have otherwise left their trace on scholarship that makes this space of encounter what it is (whether from anthropology, sociology, urban design, architecture, urban studies, tourism and mobility studies, spatial humanities, geohumanities, spatial anthropology, posthuman studies, visual and digital arts – *as well as* geography and media/communication studies), it also inhibits recognition of the different ways that scholarship *within* respective disciplines has already ventured into these pastures new (i.e. before any mooted turn).

The principal task the editors of *Geomedia Studies* have set themselves, then, is selling the idea of geomedia as a viable proposition. In this respect the bulk of the theoretical heavy lifting takes place across the first five chapters and in Scott Mcquire's afterword. For Fast et al, geomedia is a concept that 'captures the *fundamental role of media in organizing and giving meaning to processes and activities in space*' (p. 4, emphasis in original). This does of course depend on how 'media' is being defined and, acknowledging that it can be 'slippery' (p. 4) to pin down, the editors do at times give the impression of trying to ride two horses. On the one hand, – and this is where I think the conceptual underpinning of geomedia is at its most persuasive – it is the technological specificities attached to rapid developments in digital communication and media that are the driving factor in pulling together cross-disciplinary engagement. Locative media and the many opportunities, challenges and synergies afforded by innovations in mobile communication technology, from GPS-enabled mapping tools to networked ('smart') cities, from augmented reality to wearable media and embodied digital connectivity, have opened up a space of critical enquiry that extends well beyond the established precincts and disciplinary loci of media and communication studies. So the crucial technological underpinnings to geomedia, and the related sociocultural impacts of what the editors refer to as processes of *geomediatization* (p. 7), are undoubtedly at the core of what geomedia studies in fact studies. However, in reaching for 'a more inclusive and less technology-centred understanding of geomedia' (p. 4) the pliability of the term, for me at least, seems

altogether less effective. The suggestion that geomeia studies ‘should analyse and problematise the relations between any and all communication media and various forms of spatial creativity, performance and production across material, cultural, social and political dimensions’ (p. 5-6), while laudable in its scope, begs the question of whether all the manifold and less ‘disciplined’ permutations of scholarly activity that otherwise speak to these and other concerns automatically fall under the ‘geomeia’ banner. As mentioned earlier, Ali’s *Media Localism* certainly does all the things this formula prescribes, yet does not carry the ‘geomeia’ tag, nor does it especially need to. So does it count as geomeia studies on the terms the editors are setting out in their introduction?

If the introductory nailing down of geomeia feels heavy-handed in places, its theoretical application stretched a little too thinly to sustain a clear sense of its constituency or core field of practice, McQuire’s afterword, by contrast, offers a more circumspect and ruminative assessment of what and where the reach of geomeia extends to:

Is ‘geomeia’, then, best seen as a new moment in ‘media and communication studies’? Or is it a different approach to – or within – geography? Is it more useful for understanding the impact of contemporary media on mobility studies? Or is it better positioned as a constitutive dimension of debates about globalization? If it is something of a cop-out to answer ‘all of the above’, my caveat is this would only be the case if such an answer obviated the need to revisit and revise existing disciplinary paradigms... What is striking here is the extent to which the various authors recognize a need to challenge their dominant disciplinary paradigms in order to penetrate salient features of the present. (McQuire p. 250)

Deploying ‘geomeia’ as a strategically discursive tool with which to problematise and unsettle existing disciplinary orientations, McQuire moves the discussion beyond the tangled question of what, exactly, geomeia *is*. What he does instead is shift our attention towards what it is that those who variously fall within its orbit are in fact *doing*, and how, by doing what they are doing, geomeia-tagged scholars are rethinking and reworking their dispositional practices in response to interdisciplinary – or post-disciplinary – reconfigurations.

For example, geographer Gillian Rose's chapter on smart cities certainly offers an insightful glimpse into the ways cities are becoming 'smart', if by this is meant the development of digital infrastructures, the harvesting of big digital data, the investment in digital knowledge economies and the pursuit of new and innovative 'smart solutions', and so on. But what the chapter more directly addresses is the way the smart city is *represented* in glossy corporate imagery and promotional videos; how the smart city concept is operationalised through the audio-visual discourses and 'operative images' that neoliberal structures of corporate governance require to promote their vision of smart city-making. In a practical sense, then, we could readily concede that a cultural geographer working with media representations is by definition engaged with 'geomedia studies', if we insisted on applying this term. But equally, and arguably more productively, we might highlight the important *methodological* underpinnings that Rose brings to her work as a scholar for whom visual tools and methods – across a spectrum of uses – have proven demonstrably effective in critical geographical approaches to urban spatiocultural practices.

Rose's chapter is the first in the section of contributions labelled 'Geomedia Spaces'. The spaces that are explored in Tindra Thor's chapter are those that play host to a singularly urban mode of communication in the form of graffiti. As 'an ethnographic exploration of how makers of graffiti are (de)territorializing urban space through aesthetic and spatial interventions in Stockholm' (p. 115) it is again the methodological tactics deployed that open up the *spaces of encounter* that the author makes her own as a geomedia practitioner. Through immersive and reflexive engagement with urban spaces experienced as social and material spaces of encounter, Thor puts to work a range of performative tools, from interviews re-imagined as 'place-making events', to 'go-alongs' with graffiti artists (re-imagined as 'tag-alongs'), which refer to ethnographic work accompanying artists as they go about their practice, or to approaches that experientially draw on the sensory and embodied impressions encountered in the field. To boil down the richness and fecundity of these spatial interventions to a classificatory notion of 'geomedia space' arguably limits the scope of where – and how – such approaches may find fruitful dialogue with other (inter)disciplinary engagements with cultures and practices of urban space. Similarly embedded in the social, cultural and economic fabric of city spaces, Lukinbeal and Sharp's study of 'on location' filming in San Diego explores the history of location production in the city and the ways in which it has tapped into the symbolic and economic capital of the city

as an urban ‘backlot’, establishing a profitable foothold within North America’s film production markets. Although the authors are principally concerned with on-location production in San Diego, and the political and economic factors that govern the way the city has been able to trade on its status as a backlot, as the study of a geomedia space what there is perhaps less attention paid to in the chapter (although I acknowledge that this was not its key remit) is a sense of how the symbolic capital that has helped nurture and sustain this industry over time has percolated down into consumption practices linked to the place-image of the city. This refers to the imaginaries and place myths that have taken root; the role played by film locations in the construction and engineering of a marketable tourist gaze; or the extent to which, as is the case in many other cities, the function of the city film commission is not limited to that of a driver of local film and television production but also extends to that of an agent in the branding and marketing of the city more generally (in this respect it is instructive to note that when the San Diego Film Commission was forced to close in 2013 as a result of budget cuts, it was incorporated into the San Diego Tourism Authority: see [www.kpbs.org/news/2013/aug/15/san-diego-film-commission-dismantled-now-what/](http://www.kpbs.org/news/2013/aug/15/san-diego-film-commission-dismantled-now-what/)). The emphasis placed on method and forms of sociocultural practice that are more evident in the other chapters that make up the ‘Geomedia Spaces’ section – including that by Møller and Klausen which ethnographically explores everyday forms of engagement with media technologies by the elderly and the way these facilitate embodied practices of homemaking – do not extend in quite the same way to Lukinbeal and Sharp’s contribution, rendering the section a little misshapen in terms of its thematic consistency. But otherwise, of the contributions as a whole, for me these are among those that command the most interest, not least because they seem less obviously burdened by the conceptual mantle of geomedia being forced upon them.

In the third section of chapters, ‘Geomedia Mobilities’, it is the mobility turn and the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ around which proceedings gather pace. In Maren Hartmann’s case it is the concept of *mobilism* that more specifically garners attention. Combining ‘a focus on mobilities with a focus on mobile media use’ (p. 178), for Hartmann mobilism offers a new perspective intended to ‘contribute to – rather than contradict – the mobilities paradigm’ although neither the clarity nor distinctiveness of this contribution are spelt out as convincingly as they need to be. As such, despite its attempt to thread these ideas into considerations of homelessness and media use, the chapter falls short in its stated aim of

translating the concept of mobilism into rigorous empirical application. Jansson and Bengtsson, on the other hand, more than hold their own in their study of network capital as this relates to the social and material structures of place in a small Swedish town. Focused around interviews conducted with a group of artists designed to shed insights into the ways that 'existing network capital [among the artists] might be converted into other forms of capital, notably cultural, economic and social capital' (p. 199), the discussion steers a broadly Bourdieusian course through analyses that reveal the limitations or invalidation of network capital as a resource built up over time but whose value is diminished when transplanted to a small provincial town. Struggles with securing social and material ties to place as experienced by those moving into or between places are shown to be ameliorated in part by recourse to communication networks and mediated communities that help sustain the structure of their habitus as artists. In their conclusion, Jansson and Bengtsson note:

As we have seen from the interviews, media-sustained networks and media-related skills are rarely recognised as important assets in the local cultural community or among politicians and public officials at the local/regional level. What is important to stress, however, is that this negation of network capital does not seem to diminish the significance of various forms of media and mediations. On the contrary, individual actors, in this case the newly settled artists and craftspeople, are forced to rely even more on mediated communication. (p. 211)

Although this point about mediatization is only really made in the concluding remarks, and thus seems rather under-played in the chapter as a whole, what it highlights is the precarious and uncertain 'place' of everyday social practices and localized structures of feeling, where, glimpsed through the critical lens of geomediatization, the habitus of place is as much the product of what Ali refers to as 'communities of interest' as they are 'communities of place'.

This brings us full circle inasmuch as what we are left with is the imprecision or semantic deficiency of the concepts that are routinely reached for – whether place, community, localism, or the local – when seeking to *locate* structures of identity and belonging amidst the proliferating spaces and mediascapes into which individuals find

themselves increasingly thrown. Putting the geo into media studies, however this is transacted and from whichever disciplinary vantage point this is mobilized, is a necessary and urgent project. But whether it *is* a project in the more instrumental sense of formalising a discourse of 'geomedia studies' is a question that opens itself up to wider critical reflection on interdisciplinarity and the methodological dispositions that are brought to the task of mapping, or – better – *navigating* the intricate meshworks where the *spatial* and the communicational are braided perplexingly together.

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