

*The Digital Glocalization of Entertainment: New Paradigms in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mediascape*, by Paolo Sigismondi. New York: Springer, 2011. ISBN 978-1-4614-0907-6. 135pp.

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Craving more Fear Factor, Carrie Underwood, Clay Aiken, or Pudsey the puppy dog? Good, because as exemplars of “new paradigms in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global mediascape,” they are quite likely to persist as popular communication in lucrative, global media markets. And, perhaps even more to your liking, they may also put Hollywood on its back foot as upstart firms from smaller media markets saturate innumerable channels in transnational markets. Paolo Sigismondi offers an empirical study and theoretical reflection on the sources of imminent disruption to Hollywood’s dominance of global culture markets, providing business, technological, and regulatory perspectives.

This book is the third title in the series, *The Economics of Information, Communication, and Entertainment: The impacts of digital technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, by Series Editor Darcy Gerbarg. The title of this short volume is unwieldy, but Sigismondi presents a clear account of global media trends that serve to challenge and reinforce Hollywood’s dominance. The author inquires into the ways by which Hollywood’s cumulative competitive advantage in production and distribution is threatened internationally by non-scripted entertainment. Institutional “logics” and “trajectories” informed by work by Griffin, Fligstein, Thornton and Ocasio, Bielby and Harrington, and Straubhaar provide a useful framework within which Sigismondi presents rich empirical research on transnational media flows. The Big Brother format and NBC’s 2008 Olympic coverage provide recurring examples of the trend towards non-scripted and reality programming localized for national media markets but programmed and circulated transnationally.

Part I of the book offers theoretical and empirical reminders of Hollywood’s continued dominance of global audiovisual markets, with historical explanations of shifting business strategies among the key players. Part II develops the theme of the challenges to ongoing Hollywood dominance, including the evolution of new genres that escape the institutional logics cultivated by the major US studios. The upstarts upon which Sigismondi focuses are Endemol, FremantleMedia, and Grenada International, all known for their non-scripted productions. Part III focuses on the potentials for changes in the delivery platforms, business models, and technology to further undermine Hollywood dominance, through both market and non-market means. This section also contains the satisfying and well-researched case study on the NBC 2008 Olympics coverage as “digital glocalization of entertainment.”

Sigismondi links Hollywood's declining hegemony to case studies illustrating the rise of competitive strategies by media conglomerates with a successful record of developing franchises and what Jenkins and others would call transmedia properties. After acknowledging some of the normative and aesthetic consequences of a tidal wave of non-scripted entertainment across media markets, Sigismondi presents some persuasive arguments as to why Hollywood has behaved in some predictably conservative ways to deregulation, technological changes, new business models, and pirates. The book concludes with reflections on the potentials for Silicon Valley and Route 128 (Massachusetts) to participate in an overthrow of Hollywood firms' lingering dominance over digital production and distribution. The cross-firm strategy of windowing is under ongoing pressures to change or disappear as digital content and distribution pursues new platforms in ever-broader markets outside of Hollywood's control. However, the transformative potentials of a constellation of new competitors, while postulated, are not yet borne out in practice. Cheekily, the author proposes that media researchers in California might pursue mutually beneficial research and consulting with high-tech firms not yet competing head-on with Hollywood institutions.

Sigismondi's work provides a bridge to and from many other contemporary texts on audiovisual cultures, media studies, industry studies, and global media. The book covers familiar territory in media economics, communication law and policy, and technology studies, making it suitable as a textbook for undergraduate or graduate students. Its emphasis on disruption and discontinuity provides a compelling narrative that comports with much critical thinking in the field of global media studies, as are neighboring motifs such as loose integration / tight diversification, regionalization, and hybridity. I welcome the effort to portray the system-side of global media in a time when so much of the scholarly research on non-scripted entertainment emphasizes its marketing appeal.