

## Editor's Essay

# Painful Yet the Most Amazing Memory

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Writing is often very painful. Editing could oftentimes be worse. While writing reveals inner thoughts, editing highlights and elaborates the theme of the initial writing. In this nature, both writing and editing could be painful but enjoyable activities. All manuscript authors report their research findings through collaborative efforts of writing and editing. By doing this, scholars can contribute to the growth of any academic discipline of their choice.

For this mission, both novice and established scholars should submit their research findings in peer-reviewed journals. If scholars publish their research in flagship journals, they will likely be recognized in the field. The age-old dictum, publish or perish, includes the application of “publish and flourish” not only to an individual researcher but collectively to the communication field as well.

Researchers, once young, become old and then retire. For the preparation of this editorial note, I visited the *Media and Society* [언론과 사회] website which started its publication in the summer of 1993. On its inaugural volume, the journal's six editorial board members revealed the purpose of a new, rigid, and accountable blind review system for its publication. In that era, the Korean Society for Journalism and Communication Studies (KSJCS) did not provide a rigorous blind review for possible publication

although the association has performed its missions since 1959.

From the first issue of *Media and Society*, I found the following introductory remarks:

The primary planning intention of *Media and Society* is to provide another new stimulus for the more faithful development of domestic research in journalism and communication studies. For this, it will be more important than anything else to continuously print out a lot of carefully selected manuscripts. However, such ideas alone do not satisfy realistic expectations. The intellectual tension and rigor of all participants, as well as broad interest and active enthusiasm must be supported first. It is also required for the editors involved in the planning and operation, the submitters who wish to present their research, the reviewers who were requested to review the manuscript, and the readers who are exposed to the outcome printed. The above collaboration among manuscript submitters, editors, reviewers, and readers would be a basic virtue for the establishment of the new journal. (for the original in Korean, see Choi et al., 1993, pp. 2-4)

The founding editors are Hyeon Cheol Choi, Youngchul Yoon, Seung-Mock Yang, Seunghyun Kim, Sang Hyun Kang, and Myung-Koo Kang. Recently, I called Seunghyun and Seung-Mock to check the original wording of these introductory remarks and to understand why the names of these editors appear unconventionally in reverse Korean alphabet order based on their last names. My initial guess was that Choi was the first author because he was the responsible editor of the first issue. However, Yang said that “Kang usually appears first in any equally-shared writing. For the sake of balancing the uneven distribution of the authorship order, Myung-Koo Kang and Sang Hyun Kang agreed to take the last authorships of the remark.” K, which pronounced as “giyeok,” in Korean is the first letter of the Korean alphabet.

Thus, the last name of Kang appears up front in the name list whenever the names are arranged in alphabetical order. Whatever the real reason was for the reverse order of name appearance, I assume they had presented the reform spirit to the field in the early 1990s.

Among these six members, half of them have already retired and the remaining half will retire in 2021 or 2022. From their hard efforts and sincere devotion to the field, many of their former students have become recognized scholars and are growing as rising international stars in the field. I have benefited from their works and also been one of the many “free-riders” from the systems they upgraded in the field.

In its initiation, the Sunggok Journalism Foundation financially supported the publication of *Media and Society*. *Sunggok Journalism Review*, the first English academic journal that was also financially supported by the same foundation, disappeared after 12 years of existence (Shim, 2017). English journals in South Korea have shown the life cycle of birth, growth, and disappearance in a relatively short period of time. As the field's only existing all-in-English peer-reviewed journal in South Korea, *Asian Communication Research* needed to grow sustainably to play its unique role and functions in our scholarly community.

As an editor for the past four years, I have observed that non-collaborative independent research writing in English is, to say the least, a nearly impossible task for non-native speakers. The ACR would like to congratulate all those who took on this nearly impossible challenge of publishing an English manuscript as non-native speakers. In fact, the most published authors in the recent one-year period are Anna Mun at Chungbuk National University and Misa Park at Yonsei University. I truly congratulate them.

I also checked articles that were most read on the ACR DBpia website within the recent one-year period. The first was “Writing Research Papers in APA Style: A Practical Guidance” (see Jin & Chung, 2018). The second was “Discovering Research Topics in the Communication Field from 1997 to 2017 Using Structural Topic Modeling” (see Lim, Park, & Paek, 2019). One indicates the difficulty of writing research following the APA style, and the other addresses the ACR readers’ interest in the field’s identification of research.

Brenda Dervin, my former thesis advisor who is an ICA fellow, once said something that I will never forget. During my graduate training nearly 40 years ago in Seattle, she stated that scholarly activities of *writing and editing* [sic] are the most valuable and honorable activities any human being can do in her or his life. This maxim speaks volumes. I have followed her footsteps as a newcomer in the field and hold her statement dear to my heart.

Another source of my inspiration for writing and editing research articles came from Jack McLeod, my doctoral advisor in Madison, Wisconsin. Between his shy yet calm demeanor, there was always a voice of reason as he always had the purest smile whenever he got the answer to solving his curiosity in research. Whenever I visited his office, he was always engaged in something related to conducting or preparing new research. Jack and his graduate students conducted surveys every year since 1968. The famous Madison’s sample of media studies became popular and well-known to the world since most communication theories including agenda-setting, framing, and information processing were elaborated in Madison through their empirical analysis.

My undergraduate advisor at Korea University was Sangwon Lim. He showed both Brenda’s passion and Jack’s kind and

gentle demeanor with diligence in solving his curiosity of philosophy behind free speech and its influence on democracy.

The outgoing editorial team strived for the ACR's sustainable growth since the summer of 2017. The ACR publication committee would like to congratulate the editorial members on their collective and individual efforts to achieve their missions. The editors who were responsible for each issue publication are Sung-Yeon Park, Gi Woong Yun, Byung Hee Kim, Tae-Il Yoon, and myself. The associate managing editors comprised of Miri Moon and Bora Lee.

I would like to especially thank Miri for her nearly four years of service from 2017 to 2020 as an assistant even after she completed her doctoral study in England. I would also like to recognize Sookeung Jung for assisting the editorial leadership of Sunny Yoon, Doobo Shim, and Wonjun Chung from 2015 to 2017 in rebuilding the ACR as the only all-in-English peer-reviewed journal of the field in South Korea. With Sookeung, Miri, and Bora's managerial commitment, the ACR passed the Korea Research Foundation's very competitive evaluation of being indexed both in 2017 and 2020, respectively. With these editorial members' commitments, the ACR continues its mission as one of the prestigious Korean Citation Indexed journals.

## **Highlights of 2020 Winter Issue**

In this Volume 17 Number 3 issue, we publish four research articles and one book review. We also deliver the ACR's Special Report of the national survey on Koreans' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to the 4th Industrial Revolution.

The leading article in this issue deals with Hak-Soo Kim's life-long thoughts on communication, science, and their

transdisciplinary nature of the relationship to community problems. With an interdisciplinary perspective of the communication process, he suggests possible solutions to important social problems that we are currently facing, such as climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. In this era of crisis, Hak-Soo suggests that we must cooperate to solve these global problems through inter-connected communication activities across various interdisciplinary principles.

I have known Hak-Soo for nearly 40 years since we met in Seattle in 1983. When he requested a thorough review of his manuscript with error-free editorial work over the phone, he told me that this article would be his last peer-reviewed one. In order to publish this article, Hak-Soo said he spent several years of thinking, writing, and editing. I was honored to publish his article, but also heartbroken by these remarks that it will be his last peer-reviewed paper.

Doobo Shim conducted a very important and superb historical analysis of Korea, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and the remaining mainland of China's collective efforts in filmmaking. I believe many ACR readers, even including me and other Koreans, may not be familiar with the cultural origin of the Korean Wave. Furthermore, many will be curious about the social reproduction of how and why Korean films, soap operas, and other cultural "Hallyu" products have gained much global popularity and exposure since the late 1990s. Beyond the layperson's question, how can we explain *Parasite*, a Korean film, winning four Oscars at the 92nd Academy Awards in 2020?

Doobo provides an excellent answer for this intellectual curiosity with a "historicist explanation." According to Stinchcombe, "the frequency with which social patterns reproduce themselves from year to year" requires a certain sociological explanation. After the certain historical process or

social trigger mechanism, “what existed in one year produced the same thing next year.” (Stinchcombe, 1968, p. 102).

Doobo explains, elaborates, and highlights the historical process of Kim Yom, Jeong Chang-wha, and other first-generation moviemakers in the early 20th century to transfer their ethnic identities to the Maestros like Im Kwon-taek and to other second generation moviemakers. Director Bong Joon-ho would be one of the third generation filmmakers who present their talents beyond a unique Asian perspective that was shown in the first and second generation moviemakers’ films. Our journalism and communication studies scholarship in South Korea has been transferred in similar ways as above.

Stinchcombe once argued that “the start of tradition may or may not be sociological.” He further argued that whatever the historical origins are, traditions tend to be maintained sociologically if they are functional to the sustainability of an existing system and structure. From this historicist explanation, I seriously wonder how Korean female golfers continuously won the major LPGA tournaments over the years. There must be a historical origin such as Se Ri Park’s winning the US Open in 1998. Since then, the so-called “Se Ri kids” have swept the LPGA Championship Cups. I have a reason to pay attention to these triumphant victories by female Korean golfers and their virtuous cycle of winning. I believe Korean and Asian journalism and communication scholars can share new knowledge in the field and produce a similar virtuous cycle of academic excellence through research collaboration.

I read and re-read Lida Meng and Soo Yeon Kim’s article on young Cambodians’ perception and evaluations of the corporates’ social responsibility in Cambodia. During the summer of 2018, they performed an offline survey and collected data in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. It reminds me of

the good-old-days of graduate training I received at the University of Washington School of Communication. I gathered my thesis data in face-to-face interviews visiting each Korean or Korean American household in the great Seattle metropolitan area.

After I completed my master's program, I submitted a part of my thesis to the *Journalism Quarterly* and published my first journal article with a few revisions (for analysis, see Kim, 2018). Thus, I mistakenly believed that publishing was quite easy in the field's top journal. Later, I recognized publishing a journal article is the most difficult and painful, yet one of the most satisfying accomplishments any scholar will experience.

As an editor and reviewer, I thoroughly examined the survey items and recognized that the authors considered young Cambodian's cultural values as their main independent variables and their CSR perceptions as their final dependent variables. They conducted an exploratory factor analysis and found four dimensions below the concept of corporate social responsibility. They are philanthropic, legal, ethical, and economic dimensions. Among the cultural values of collectivism, saving face, and Buddhism, only collectivism has positively related to young Cambodian's perception of importance regarding corporate social responsibility. I am curious as to why collectivism relates to young Cambodians' as well as other Asians' perceptions of corporate social responsibility.

One of the reasons I am interested in this study is that Koreans can share the experiences of development with Cambodians. As Koreans were once until the early 1970s, Cambodia has the reality of being one of the poorest countries in Asia. Young Cambodian college students may be able to avoid the developmental chaos and escape from social and economic crises that my generation of Koreans had endured and



persevered from the 1970s.

Felicia Istad performed an interesting study of Korean public diplomacy, the buzzword in the field of government public information activities. According to her, Talk Talk Korea is “one of the longest-running programs of its sort, making it possible to observe how the Korean government has communicated with foreign publics” globally. In this program, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) represents the actor while Talk Talk Korea is MOFA’s project of public diplomacy targeting foreign publics.

Felicia investigates “how MOFA as the initiator steers the dialogue” and which themes emerge within submissions by foreign publics. With a two-way symmetrical perspective, Felicia applies Grunig’s “excellence theory” of public relations to evaluate the MOFA’s performances in public diplomacy from 2012 to 2018 (see Grunig & Grunig, 2008).

In this issue, we also covered the special report of a recent national survey of the 4th Industrial Revolution in South Korea. We also publish noted sociologist Chul-Kyoo Kim’s review of Jeffrey Sachs’s most challenging analysis for the new normal era. The title of the book is “The Age of Sustainable Development” and Chul-Kyoo suggests finding the solutions of what citizens, journalists, and communication scholars can do collectively as we face climate change and COVID-19 pandemic crises.

## **New Editors Coming: An Update**

As noted above, we carefully examine each manuscript several times before any manuscript is published in the ACR. These editorial practices have been consistent in our term. We found that there are many interesting facts and new information that our readers may not be familiar with. All authors have done a

very important and superb analysis of addressing public communication issues over time as they revised their manuscript more succinctly and thoroughly. For example, the ACR publication committee has checked the appropriate word choices, abbreviations, commas, single and double quotation marks, and expressions over the submitted manuscript and they were requested to be carefully revised.

The ACR would like to publish the manuscript that exactly parallels the 6<sup>th</sup> Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Strunk and White (2000) provide elementary rules and principles of composition in English. Following them, our editors requested the submitters to continuously revise, again and again, at least three to five times more, even after the manuscript was accepted for publication. Many authors were pleased with the ACR's editorial practices and showed us their satisfaction with the printed versions.

The maxim that we media and communication scholars share is that "every negative has a certain positive side." Even in this COVID-19 pandemic, several good things occurred. Another Korean female golfer, A Lim Kim recently won the LPGA US Open by sparking one of the great major comebacks in the US Open history. Prior to the pandemic, only athletes ranked 50th or higher were able to participate in the US Open, which is a feat in itself. However, many players withdrew from participation due to fears of contracting COVID-19 or due to travel restrictions. Therefore, the US Open in 2020 extended its participation eligibility to athletes ranked within the top 100. Sports has not been the only area in which there existed new opportunities. There were also benefits to the global climate. The world has seen a decline in air pollution and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emission.

Every article here including the ACR special report and book review deals with issues that arise from the COVID-19 pandemic.

With this optimistic perspective in mind, please enjoy reading the current issue during the winter break. Korean scholars are busy teaching at least three classes per semester. I also taught four classes this semester. In this predicament, there is a possibility for scholars to experience some challenges in executing their research functions.

For the last two years, we have searched for new editors and our search appears to have been a success. The incoming editorial team consists of Sungeun Chung, Bora Jin, and Kyun Soo Kim. The ACR journal cannot be successful without voluntary reviewers and turn-taking in editorial leadership (see Shim, 2019). Thus, we ask for more KSJCS members to join ACR's successful operation.

Let us congratulate these new incoming editors. We fully expect them to perform their duties as the new editorial leadership to further enhance the ACR to the next stage. It is time for the current editors to pass on the ACR torch to new editors with capable hands. Still and all, I am proud of the work we have done. Be assured, the ACR's storytelling of scholarship and its painful yet most amazing memory will continue on.

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## Acknowledgment of 2019-2020 Manuscript Reviewers

Number in parentheses shows the number of reviewed manuscripts. One thing we notice from the calculation is that the late Sae-Eun Kim reviewed the manuscript in August 2019. The ACR appreciates all her contribution to the field throughout her membership.

Sasha Allgayer	State University of New York at Geneseo
Crystal Anderson	Longwood University in Shreveport
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Dhiman Chattopadhyay	Shippensburg University
Young Jae Choi	Hallym University
Yun Jung Choi	Ewha Womans University
Sungeun Chung	Sungkyunkwan University (3)
Wonjun Chung	Suwon University
Mark Flynn	Emmanuel College
Anthony Fung	Chinese University of Hong Kong
Jeong-Yeob Han	University of Georgia
Kyle Holody	Coastal Carolina University
Mike Horning	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Yongick Jeong	Louisiana State University
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