Research Article

The Power of the "Audience-Public": Interactive Radio in Africa

Sharath Srinivasan[1] and Stephanie Diepeveen[1]

Abstract
Scholars of media and politics mostly recognise that audiences and publics are constructed, but fall short of explaining precisely how their indeterminate and imagined nature can be the basis of their political significance. Interactive broadcast media provides a valuable empirical lens for inquiring into why this may be case. The convergence of newer digital communication technologies with more established radio and television broadcasts is shifting opportunities for news media to affect citizen-state relations. These possibilities are pronounced on the African continent, where mobile telephony and increasingly plural media landscapes have given rise to popular and widespread interactive talk shows. The involvement of audience voices alters the nature of the media space where political communication happens. Through a comparative study of interactive shows in Zambia and Kenya, this article interrogates what audience participation means for the political nature and possibilities of the interactive radio and TV broadcast. Ict shows how the indeterminate audience is the basis for competing ideas about power, authority, and citizenship among the different participants in the show, including politicians, media professionals, and audience members. The power of the "audience-public," brought into being through the interactive broadcast, it is argued, arises from in-between these participants in public discussion, who each invest in multiple and competing imaginaries of the elusive audience in pursuit of diverse ends.

[1]University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

Corresponding Author:
Sharath Srinivasan, Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Cambridge, Alison Richard Building, 7 West Rd., Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB3 9DT, UK.
Email: ss919@cam.ac.uk

Introduction

Across the African continent, the liberalization of the media sector and the rapid rise in mobile phone use are facilitating a convergence of traditional broadcast media and digital technologies. Popular new broadcast formats enable audience participation through calls, short messaging service (SMS), and social networking sites. These trends in Africa sit within global transformations in the media sector brought about with digital communication technologies. Opportunities for audiences to both produce and consume news are growing. Equally, there are new opportunities for control and analysis of audiences (Anderson 2011b; Chadwick and Stromer-Galley 2016).

Answers to questions asked elsewhere about audiences, public discussion, and political power in the digital age appear not to hold on the African continent. The convergence of new technologies with the media sector in Africa compels specific attention (Gilberds and Myers 2012; VonDoepp, 2017). Changes have been rapid, with technology developments, media contexts, and political realities that are distinct from western experience. The popularity, diversity, and reach of interactive broadcast shows in everyday African realities steer us to examine "new" media spaces in different and contextually grounded ways.

Interrogating the political significance of interactive broadcast shows is shaped by these shows' distinct nature as "live" spaces of discussion. A short illustration of the interactive show, "Let's Be Responsible," aired in Zambia in 2011–2012, showcases this particular and complex nature. The Lusaka City Council sponsored this weekly call-in show on a popular private radio station, *Phoenix FM*. As the show's name suggests, the city council sought to nurture subjectivities in support of market solutions to public goods provision. The Mayor of Lusaka, local councilors, and even the area Member of Parliament (MP) participated as guests. Early on, the weekly show struggled to attract audience interest and participation. The sponsor's paternalistic intentions jarred with what the host, knowing his audience well, thought would be an engaging format. The host began to adopt a more critical tone while interviewing guests, and actively supported audience members' use of the show to question the legitimacy of elected representatives, subjecting them to a higher standard of scrutiny.[1] Over time, the show became more confrontational and critical of government leaders' actions, or lack thereof. The nature of citizen-state relations thus nurtured through the show differed from what the sponsor imagined, as it was also informed by the host's and callers' perspectives and contributions.

The progression of "Let's Be Responsible" into an open critique of elected representatives indicates how competing ideas about changing audience-publics in interactive broadcasts affect their political possibilities. Received wisdom suggests digital media make the audience increasingly "knowable" (Anderson 2011a, 2011b). Yet "Let's Be Responsible" indicates some uncertainty about the audience that is central to how the interactive show unfolds. This article begins from this empirical reality in the African context.

The fluid indeterminacy of audiences, illustrated in "Let's Be Responsible," lays bare the limitations of conventional polarities in media studies that see audiences as

never, or as always, publics. At one extreme, a dominant framing for analyzing broadcast audiences comes from critiques of twentieth century mass media, and sees audiences as passive consumers and objects of manufactured consent (Habermas 1991). This monolithic argument has been countered by claims (Silverstone 2007) that audiences are *always* participants and *always* publics because of their constitutive role in any broadcast media production. The rise of new communication technologies reinforces this view of the audience, blurring the roles of producers and consumers of news (Jenkins 2006; Papacharissi 2010). Yet such an overstated rebuttal obscures the analytical value of distinguishing between audiences and publics. Dayan (2005) provides a compelling justification for maintaining this distinction, identifying publics in the collective imagining of themselves versus audiences in the act of consuming.

This article's contribution lies at the nexus of two established moves in the literature that adopt more subtle understandings of audiences and publics. First, a shift in how audiences are approached in media and popular culture scholarship insists audiences are not silent or mere consumers of a performance but are agents who are self-consciously addressees and participants and who co-produce broadcast shows (Barber 1997; Chignell, 2009; Dayan 2005; Fitzgerald and Housley 2007; Lee 2002; Livingstone 2005; Mwesige 2009; Schulz 1999; Spitulnik 2002). Second, critical social and cultural studies have succeeded in demanding a shift from conceptualizing the public to recognizing multiple publics and counterpublics (Calhoun 1992; N. Fraser 1990; Warner 2002).

Through in-depth study of interactive broadcasts in Kenya and Zambia, this article draws on, combines, and extends these two moves to argue for a fuller understanding of how the "audience-public" comes to matter politically through interactive shows. First, we acknowledge the agency of audiences but insist that of equal or greater importance is how other actors—whether show hosts, guests, authority figures, or audience members themselves—imagine and address audiences. Second, we agree with the need to unearth publics in their plurality, but go further, following Hannah Arendt's theorization of the public realm in locating the very power, and thus political significance, of audience-publics in their indeterminacy. Such indeterminacy allows audience-publics to be imagined, convened, and invested in by different actors, thereby actively constructing ideas of citizen and authority through public dialogue. This premise persists in the African context; the audience might be increasingly traceable but, in powerful ways, it remains elusive. Crucially, both publics and audiences continue to be imagined. The article argues the political significance of interactive shows in Africa lies precisely in their continuing underdetermined yet malleable nature. Invested in by dominant political authorities, and those who play self-regarding roles of "mediator," "representative," or "educator," discussions on interactive shows retrieve the potential of politics in the mediated public realm.

Literature Review

Early debates in western scholarship over the political significance of the audience-participant in political talk shows were framed by opposing views on their effect on

citizen participation. Some voiced reservations about violent and "virulent" language on talk shows (Rehm 1996: 141). Others saw the promise of unstructured public debate or discussion, potentially even informing policy (Bucy and Gregson 2001; Lee 2002; Page and Tannenbaum 1996). These debates have been complicated alongside changes in communication technologies. Much of western scholarship has moved away from a focus on simple forms of convergence of broadcast media and communication technologies, such as the talk show (Livingstone and Lunt 1994). Politics is being performed through diverse spaces (Craig 2016), no longer approachable through methodological nationalism given the way digital networks link disparate people and ideas almost instantaneously (Volkmer 2014). There are new forms of fragmentation and interdependence in political communications (Chadwick 2013), premised on power inequalities but also appearing more accessible and open.

Scholars' interrogation of the effects of technological changes on the structure of journalism (Loosen and Schmidt 2012), and what this means for conceptualizing the audience, is by no means closed. The audience cannot simply be viewed as consumers of information, or even the product of media regimes. The audience also exists as "empowered networks" in which production and reception of news are increasingly entangled (Loosen and Schmidt 2012; Papacharissi 2010). Couldry, Markham, and Livingstone insist on a degree of openness surrounding the audience, rooted in people's continued agency to shape their own address (Couldry et al. 2010; Couldry and Markham 2006). The audience might be increasingly analyzable, but who engages and how, and how participants perceive the broadcast, should not be overdetermined.

These arguments also find resonance in media scholarship in the African context. Here, early scholarship on audience participation took a more positive view of its possibilities to enable the vocalization of popular voices, and to counter regimes with authoritarian tendencies. As Karin Barber noted early on, performances constitute audiences (what she terms *addressivity*), but "equally important, however, is the fact that audiences themselves, by choosing to participate, constitute themselves as members of a collectivity" (Barber 1997: 355). Audiences help constitute the "meaning" of performances in different ways, but a premise for investigating this has been the view that audience reception of media is also "production," even outside of the specific use of interactive media.

These perspectives on audiences offer avenues for interrogating the political nature and significance of broadcast media, most importantly, where the audience directly participates in the discussion as in interactive shows. In Africa, interest in how audience participation co-constitutes the broadcast as a mediated public realm draws attention to the logic and structure of the show and media house (Bosch 2013; Moyo 2013; Willems 2012). The inclusion of a "new" and "different" voice with interactive shows compels some scholars to reconsider who constitutes the audience and its relationship to production. Mwesige (2009) argues that the "silent majority" listenership are actively involved in giving meaning to the content of interactive shows in a shared "public" dialogue and, therefore, are involved in production (also Schulz 1999). For Dayan (2005), if this aspect is given explicit regard by media actors, then "meaning-making audiences," which can be publics, are possible.

This article agrees with these lines of analysis but argues such a reconsideration of the audience is not confined to researchers. It occurs in the imaginations of those involved in the broadcast. The audience is ever present, but never fully knowable, a viewpoint that runs counter to a view in contemporary scholarship that digital media bring greater means of measuring and representing the audience (Anderson 2011a; Tandoc 2014). In the African context, participants in interactive shows continue to operate with some uncertainty about the audience. This perspective sits comfortably with constructivist views of the media (e.g., Coleman and Moss 2011). Participation is not solely defined through the act (indeed all listeners are latent—and potentially active—participants) but also through others' interpretations of the possibility of the act, the act itself, and others' responses. The ephemeral character of the participating audience provides for plurality and fluidity in how it is imagined by diverse participants.

Publics too are best understood as elusive, and made possible in the intersection of actions, imaginaries, and relations of diverse and dispersed actors. Critical work on publics (Calhoun 1992; N. Fraser 1990; Warner 2002) points to multiple contested publics rather than "the" public or public sphere, providing scope to identify "publics" in diverse spaces including the interactive broadcast. There may be a dominant public or idea of it, but its assertion of being "the" public is a product of real political work to create it as so. The exclusionary nature of dominant publics, both as matters of material access and sociocultural barriers to participation, requires critical examination but not at the expense of recognizing alternate or "counter" publics. As we de-institutionalize and dislocate our idea of "a" or "the" public, we again adopt a constructivist approach, and focus on their contingent and ephemeral qualities. For Michael Warner (2002), it is self-creation and self-organization in the circulation of texts, even in audio or visual form, which distinguishes a public. They are a relation among strangers that is enacted through public address. This conceptualization underscores the elusiveness of publics.

From here, rather than move swiftly to a normative discussion about the desired political contribution of mediated publics (Coleman and Moss 2011; Ruiz et al. 2011), the indeterminate nature of being "public" forms a basis for the audience-public's political significance. This phenomenological view of political significance can productively draw on the approach employed by Hannah Arendt. Arendt locates the value and potentiality of publics in the capacity for unpredictability. People can collectively reshape a common world between them by speaking openly and publicly with strangers (Arendt 1958). The indeterminacy of open and public dialogue allows participants to relate in new and different ways. This is crucial to our argument, namely, that how actors orient to the *possibilities* of a public "out there," and imagine it to be, contributes to what that public, if at all it does, comes to be.

These conceptualizations of audiences and publics are the foundation for our investigation of mediated audience-publics in Africa and their political significance. The view of interactive shows as indeterminate spaces, in which participants pursue different designs, suggests the value of an empirically grounded and conceptually flexible approach to understanding when and how an "audience-public" might arise. We should

not presuppose the emancipatory potential of mere audience participation (and dismissing this potential if participation appears biased or limited), rather we must consider the audience-public within the context in which it is convened. Our investigation goes beyond identifying the creation of an imagined community through the talk show and its indeterminate audience-public, as has been explored outside the African context (Fitzgerald and Housley 2007; Flew and Swift 2015). Crucially, ideas of who this audience is matter to how different actors orient toward the space. Collectively, as participants contend with uncertainty about who else might be engaged as spectators and critics (Arendt 1992: 63), they configure shared ideas of belonging and difference. This productive capacity, located in-between participants in public discussion, becomes the essence of the power of audience-publics, and the crux of our analysis of the political significance of interactive broadcast shows in Kenya and Zambia.

Background

The origins of broadcast media in Kenya and Zambia sharply contrast with what we have underscored as the participatory, ephemeral, and dynamic view of the audience and its potentiality. Broadcast media was introduced to disseminate information to a "passive" audience by the British colonial administration. The British administration initially used radio broadcasts to reach European settlers in urban areas (Mytton 1983). The first government broadcasting station in Lusaka targeting the wider population was launched in 1940, aimed at improving the relationship between subjects and the colonial government, for instance refuting rumors and circulating positive messages about the Second World War effort (Simutanyi et al. 2015). Colonial radio broadcasts targeting Africans in Kenya also began during the war and were carefully managed. The colonial administration approached broadcast as a means to shape a passive audience into the type of subjects they sought to rule. Efforts to control the airwaves were couched within a concern to limit the spread of ideas by liberation movements, notably the Mau Mau (Mitullah et al. 2015). Nevertheless, the colonial state could not fully control broadcast media or its audience. Limited resources meant local staff could influence the broadcast (Brennan 2015). Furthermore, throughout the continent, the affordances of press and broadcast media were seized upon in efforts to resist colonial and minority rule (S. R. Davis 2009; Newell 2013).

The postcolonial state continued to seek to control broadcasting as both countries were increasingly characterized by single-party dominance (Mitullah et al. 2015; Ochilo 1993). Shifts to multiparty political competition in both countries in the 1990s paved the way for greater variation in broadcast media, reflecting continental trends toward liberalization. Political and economic factors continued to shape what "liberalization" of the media sector meant, as Ciboh (2017) has noted in the Nigerian context. In Kenya, public reports provide evidence of links between elite politicians and broadcast media (Nyanjom 2012; Oriare et al. 2010: 38–39), with politicians found to have ownership stakes in some private media houses. Also, accounts of hate speech on vernacular radio stations, specifically in the context of postelection violence in 2007 and 2008, led to increased scrutiny of the media sector's potential to incite violence

(Mitullah et al. 2015). The politicization of broadcast media and the media's relationship to public violence provoke ongoing controversy over its scope and effect. Interactive talk shows are implicated in these controversies, as a common format on vernacular radio stations and an outlet for public debate (Ismail and Deane 2008).

In Zambia, partisan divisions and electoral contest shape media practices and regulation (Banda 2006). There is evidence of government harassment of critical stations, shows, and hosts under both Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) and Patriotic Front (PF) governments. Increasingly apparent since the 2008 presidential by-elections, the media in Zambia also reflects partisan cleavages. When state media under the MMD government appeared to take a propagandistic stance, the main independent newspaper in Zambia, *The Post*, aligned with the then-opposition party, PF (A. Fraser 2016). After 2011, the PF government was found to repress some online publications and target opposition politicians after participating on radio talk shows (Simutanyi et al. 2015:7).

Within such changes and continuities, technological advances have distinctly reshaped the possibilities of broadcast. Since the early 2000s, both countries have experienced a rise in access and use of mobile telephony, and its convergence with broadcast media. In 2016, there were 81.28 mobile phone subscriptions per hundred inhabitants in Kenya, and 74.95 per hundred inhabitants in Zambia.[2] Acknowledging new opportunities for participation through mobile telephony is not to suggest the audience did not contribute before. Audience participation in content production precedes newer communication technologies, evident in letter writing, event announcements, and song requests (Willems 2012). Interactive broadcast shows present a clear evolution in a longer story, presenting different and expansive possibilities for audience participation. The content of interactive shows varies, spanning a range of subjects from politics and current affairs to social issues, religion, development, and music. Of particular interest here are talk shows on topical current affairs and politics. In addition to audience participation through calls, texts, and social media messages, shows often include studio guests from government and civil society. Studio guests converse with the host, and can address contributions from audience members. The result is a dynamic space for public discussion of political competition and government.

Not enough is understood about how and why newer politically oriented interactive broadcast shows might be politically significant. The popularity of interactive shows in Kenya and Zambia, and the participation of government and civil society leaders, indicates a perceived value. Yet the continued uncertainty of the audience brings scope for actors to imagine the participating audience differently. Therefore, this paper asks of such shows: How do participants imagine the audience? And, as participants engage through distinct perspectives, how do the nature and presence of multiple imaginaries shape the emergence of the audience-public and these show's political possibilities?

Method

This article is based on in-depth case study research conducted in Kenya and Zambia on a diverse selection of media houses. The findings considered in this article are part

of a two-year research project interrogating political participation through interactive radio and TV shows in Kenya and Zambia, and its political effects (Srinivasan and Lopes 2016; Fraser 2016; Simutanyi, Fraser and Milapo, 2015; Mitullah, Mudhai and Mwangi, 2015; Lopes, Mudhai et al 2015).[3] The wider project examined the mechanisms by which the interactive media format might affect citizen-state relations and policy-makers' behaviors.

Kenya and Zambia were selected for in-depth analysis as representative of liberalized media spaces in sub-Saharan Africa where mobile telephony has, albeit to different degrees, fostered a flourishing of interactive shows. Of particular interest were country contexts in which political competition and logics of accountability were such that these show formats were being seized upon by both media and governance actors. Researchers employed a multitude of methodologies, including household surveys, focus groups, interviews, field observations, and behavioral records of SMS activity, to explore audience and in-studio experiences. Qualitative case study research was done around specific stations and shows to explore causal pathways, show and station organizational dynamics, and linkages with local and national politics.

This article draws on interviews with show hosts, producers, guests, and frequent or "serial" callers, and in-studio observation conducted through this project. A purposeful sample of stations was taken for in-depth observations, taking into account the diversity of active stations in both countries: national and local, and public, private, community, and religious broadcasters. In Zambia, we investigated Lusaka-based stations, Radio Phoenix and Yatsani Radio; the public and national broadcaster ZNBC; Breeze FM in Eastern Province; and the private TV station, Muvi TV, with supplementary interviews and observations at Millennium Radio and Feel Free Radio. In Kenya, we studied interactive shows on Radio Nam Lolwe, which broadcasts from Kisumu in western Kenya; the national private broadcasters, Radio Citizen and Citizen TV; and community-based Koch FM in peri-urban Nairobi.

In Kenya, in addition to in-studio observations, the team conducted sixty-two key informant and group interviews with audience members, panelists and hosts, show guests, and frequent or serial callers in 2013 and 2014. This resulted in interviews with twelve hosts, sixteen guests, seventeen "serial" callers or texters, and twenty-four audience members, and three focus groups with audience members. Fieldwork in Zambia included 115 interviews conducted between 2011 and 2013. Thirty-one hosts, nine donor and international organization representatives, forty-seven guests, and fourteen serial callers and audience members were interviewed, most independently and in a few cases in pairs. One group interview with audience members was also conducted.

Data analysis was done using MaxQDA, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software that enables linked coding. Analysis was guided by a codebook organized around the project's research questions, developed collaboratively by the project team. Documents and their content were coded. Iterative coding supplemented the codebook. This led to the addition of emotional codes to help organize interviewees' attitudes. Two research assistants coded the data. Both were trained to consistently use

MaxQDA and the codebook. Another reviewer cross-checked coding to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness.

Findings

In what follows, we empirically explore the nature and political significance of the audience-public in interactive political talk shows in Zambia and Kenya. We highlight similarities in how the audience-public is imagined by participants in both countries. We draw out patterns across interactive shows, which might inform further study and hypotheses about their nature and political effects. We also highlight how and where context and individual experiences become important to these dynamics. In so doing, we reveal the complex and contradictory nature of imaginaries of the audience-public. They are inflected with characteristics informed by wider events and specific experiences on air. In turn, participants articulate and enact different ideas about citizen-state relations and their relationship to the mediated public realm.

We divide the imaginaries of the audience-public that emerged through these case studies into two broad groups. First, the audience-public is imagined not only as an elusive but also as a lurking authority figure, an image that not only motivates particular modes of address but also brings anxiety and self-censorship. Second, the audience-public is imagined to be ordinary citizens. Here, too, participants' perspectives give way to more specific and contradictory imaginings. The ordinary citizen may be deemed an ignorant subject of education. This intermingles with a desire to canvass public opinion and learn from the voices of the ordinary citizen.

The Audience-Public as an Authority Figure

Irrespective of the country, station, or show examined, interviewees who were participants in interactive political talk shows responded to the indeterminacy of the audience by imagining they were speaking to authority figures. Different explanations as to why they were convinced political authorities were listening were put forward, but with the same underlying rationale: The interactive show was a public dialogue that was difficult for political authorities to ignore.

Making proximate the elusive authority figure. From one perspective, imagining the authority figure was listening gave hosts and callers the chance to imagine the show as a powerful public space to compel leaders to acknowledge citizens' concerns and respond. Hosts and callers from both countries expressed a resignation that authority figures, once elected, resisted interacting with their constituents.[4] Continuing interactions between elected leaders and citizens outside of elections required citizens to push leaders to listen.[5] Speaking on the radio or TV broadcast was one way this could be done. Citizens as audience members could speak publicly while authority figures listened, also from within the audience.

Illustrating why this was the case, one serial caller from Lusaka explained politicians risked appearing unresponsive if they did not pay attention to the live broadcast. A politician might lose the support of both those in higher positions of authority and the

electorate who might be listening.[6] Comparing the efficacy of different strategies to attract a leader's attention, he commented, "if I go to the media, I think it is a shortcut. The MP or the minister will look at it, [and say] 'Oh, there is this issue in my constituency.'"[7]

Hosts and callers shared this view. In Zambia, one host argued citizens wished to be heard by those in government,[8] and the interactive show allowed this to occur.[9] Similarly, a station manager at the religious broadcaster Yatsani Radio commented,

> People are very willing to be heard on the radio because I think they want to have [an] audience with their area Member of Parliament. It is a general complaint in Zambia that once elected, [MPs] are hardly seen in their area.[10]

The same motivation animated the reflections of a Zambian "serial" caller:

> Thank God that all these radio [have an] effect. All these radio stations, they are being listened to by even government officials because what you say today, you hear them complaining.[11]

In Kenya, serial callers indicated they used the interactive show to seek action by both public service deliverers and elected representatives.[12] One male member of a fan club of Radio Nam Lolwe in western Kenya commented,

> You can have trouble with seeing the big and important people who have led us, and this is a problem. You cannot see them. You cannot speak to them. Even when trying to call them, you cannot get the number to call him [or her]. Now, you know, even the big and important people that we elected, the politicians, listen to radio. Now, if you talk on the radio, if you offer your views, he will listen. Now, that is the first thing that helps.[13]

In imagining the show and the audience in this way, some serial callers saw themselves as occupying a privileged position between authority figures and other citizens.[14] In Zambia, some self-identified as an "activist" or a "trouble shooter."[15] Personal characteristics, specifically an interest in and a passion for matters of governance and self-confidence, were seen to enable them to use the media to "amplify the voices of the silent people."[16] A perceived privileged channel to political leaders motivated ongoing participation. Referring to local and national elected politicians, one serial caller stated,

> I still have hope. . . . These people, they have their own plans. They have got their own priorities, but . . . when you continue emphasizing, one day I think they will be able to listen to me. You know, it's the question of having that kind of patience, and you need to continue.[17]

In Kenya, the imagined listening authority figure even compelled some in positions of leadership to participate. A few political and civil society leaders participating as guests in-studio explained they would speak on air to ensure their views were heard by other leaders. An in-studio guest from the Law Society of Kenya on Citizen TV's

morning talk show, "Power Breakfast," explained that he would seek opportunities to speak on a talk show to force a conversation with another authority figure:

> I was trying to basically send a message not to the public but to the judiciary and the Judicial Service Commission [JSC], to the Chief Justice, to the Chief Registrar that what they were doing was wrong and, that if they do not watch, that was going to have an adverse effect to the judiciary itself and the JSC. I wanted that to be clear so that they can know that a stakeholder like the Law Society of Kenya is saying this is not the right thing to do.[18]

Another guest on "Power Breakfast," a senator from western Kenya, suggested the media sector helped bridge a gap between elected representatives and citizens. She explained, "It [this situation] therefore leaves it to the media to then bridge the gap because as they say 'Power abhors a vacuum.'"[19]

A few hosts also imagined a unique role for themselves tied to an ability to address the listening but "otherwise absent" authority figure. These hosts claimed they had a responsibility to err on the side of the citizen in their statements on air. The host might use his or her position as convener of a show to effectively circumvent a divide between the citizen and the authority figure. Their role was not to enable "citizens" to speak directly on air per se but to speak for them, and voice the interests of the "voiceless" and the "common *mwananchi* [citizen]."[20] A host from the national private TV broadcaster, Citizen TV, claimed, "Sometimes you have to take a stand but based on facts. Sometimes you have to sort of support a cause, especially if it is not a controversial issue." In contrast, if he perceived an issue to be more open to debate, like electoral competition between parties or candidates, and therefore lacked a clear solution or preferred viewpoint, he would avoid taking a side.[21]

Similar views emerged among hosts in Zambia. When a show host was asked whether the radio station could change the way a locality is governed, she replied, "Yes, because it is giving a voice to the community and it is standing between the people in authority and community."[22] Again, this host claimed the role of a representative of citizens to a listening authority figure. Taking this further, in Kenya, one radio host from Radio Nam Lolwe explained that he served people in his role as talk show host, perhaps even more people than a ward representative or MP.[23]

The lurking and surveilling authority figure. Imagining the audience to include authority figures had varied effects on hosts' and audience-callers' engagement on air. As well as empowering them to speak to authority figures, it resulted in some self-censorship. Justifications for self-censorship differed by country, reflecting recent political events and experiences on air.

In Zambia, hosts of Lusaka-based, Radio Phoenix, and Breeze FM in the rural Eastern Province capital town, Chipata, expressed concerns about the radio show as a surveilled space. Such a view is perhaps unsurprising given evidence of targeted government harassment of those who voice opposing views on air, indicating the state was aware of, and concerned with, show content. An apprehended threat of political

repression of the media (A. Fraser 2016) is reflected in imaginaries among hosts and callers that indicated the state or a political faction *might* intervene, *might* threaten them based on what was said, and *might* attempt to bias the space. One host of the public broadcaster, ZNBC, claimed the president and his advisors scrutinized what was said on their interactive shows.[24]

At Breeze FM, the image of the audience as a surveilling authority figure was aptly illustrated through the figure of Gogo (Grandfather) Breeze. A host of several interactive shows, Gogo Breeze constituted an authoritative figure vis-à-vis his audience. Even he limited what he said on air:

> For example, the topic of tonight, I did not want them to mention people's names because it is dangerous, because you can easily be accused. You never know some people may be recording. So if they have recorded and have heard that you have spoken this, [and then] it goes to court, you can be implicated.[25]

Hosts in Kenya also tended to suspect political leaders constantly monitored what was said on air.[26] However, they appeared to cautiously accept some forms of regulation. Listening authority figures were imagined to include regulatory bodies that monitored what was said because it could incite violence. Voicing this, one male host from the community broadcaster, Koch FM, stated,

> Radio is not a joke, and you cannot entertain friends on radio at the expense of the nation. That day someone I know calls and begins saying bad things on radio like inciting one tribe against the other, I cannot allow such. I have to stop him and warn all my listeners that we must remain sensible.[27]

Recollections of postelection violence in 2007 and 2008 in Kenya frame this acquiescence toward regulation. Public reports in Kenya identified the role of media broadcasts in inciting postelection violence (Kenya National Commission on Human Rights 2008; Media Council of Kenya 2012). In the aftermath of the 2007–2008 violence, a radio host of a morning call-in show on Kass FM, Joshua arap Sang, was indicted at the International Criminal Court, accused of inciting violence through his radio talk show.

Still, even here, not all viewed regulation of media broadcasts as a means to effectively address political divisions and hate speech. One guest on Radio Citizen, a Muslim Sheikh, took the view that open dialogue could reveal divisive sentiments and, thereby, help in addressing them. He suggested that in Kenya, the fear of a comment being labeled as hate speech could result in self-censorship by in-studio and audience-participants. Without vocalizing views, he argued, it was not possible to address misunderstandings and drivers of hatred, in this instance, across religions.[28]

A common imaginary of the audience as the authority figure, thus, both provided for optimism about how this makes elusive authority figures seem addressable and fostered suspicion that the lurking authority figure brings wider power inequalities to bear on the interactive show. The interactive show became a space in which authorities

were imagined to articulate their control through surveillance. It also became a powerful tool for active citizen engagement, albeit one requiring self-regulation so as to not attract repression, or foster polarization or political violence.

The Audience-Public as "Ordinary" Citizens

Besides some participants imagining the audience as an authority figure, many participants in the interactive show also imagined a more commonsensical possibility, that the audience comprised "ordinary" citizens. Turning specifically to hosts and guests, different ideas about the audience as citizen emerge: The citizen is someone to be, variously, educated, listened to, or campaigned to. As will be unpacked in this section, concerns tied to the wider political context mixed with experiences on air to shape participants' views of "the citizen" as the audience-public, and how they relate to political authorities.

The host's imaginary: power and profit in convening the masses. Show hosts in both countries often imagined the audience as expansive and inclusive. For private broadcasters, the broadcast as a commercial space could thrive and attract advertising money as a result of its popularity with its intended listenership. In turn, how hosts structured shows and facilitated discussion could affect the number of listeners and audience-participants. Among hosts on private stations in Kenya, choosing issues relevant to the ordinary person, which touched their daily lives, or giving an audience-participant a brief moment of publicity by naming them on air, was thought to heighten audience engagement.[29] Station practitioners in Zambia discussed how commercial stations relied on advertising revenue for their ongoing sustainability. Attracting a bigger listenership could bring advertisers or show sponsors.[30] Advertising was less central to the functioning of public and religious media houses, yet there remained a sense they succeeded by reaching a general population.[31]

Still, individual hosts were interested in more than simply attracting more listeners. Distinct from commercial incentives, some hosts imagined the interactive show had a unique significance because it brought together authority figures and citizens in one discussion, with the authority figure as a studio guest and citizens as the audience-public. One host of several interactive shows on Radio Phoenix in Lusaka, Luciano, was particularly clear in espousing this view. The shows that Luciano convened, including "Let's Be Responsible," often included a politician as a guest. The interactive radio show enabled citizens within the audience-public to directly question political guests.[32] Authority figures could seek to avoid the heavier mediation of other forms of journalistic publications, such as print newspapers, and speak directly with citizens.[33] As a host, Luciano took on a responsibility to facilitate a civil discussion comprising a respectful dialogue between the anonymous citizen and the in-studio political guest.[34]

Other hosts, particularly those who actively sought to cultivate a public identity, more explicitly used their position to educate the audience-public. As known figures, some hosts explained that they could play an important pedagogical role on air. In

Zambia, this was most apparent in cases in which an interactive show was convened around the personality of its host. On Breeze FM in Chipata, Zambia, the charismatic host, Gogo (Grandfather) Breeze, structured his "Fireside Chat" talk show around his own knowledge. The show allowed for discussion but concluded by affirming Gogo Breeze's perspective. He identified himself as his audience's grandfather and, on this basis, claimed a moral authority to assemble a public. The show became an intimate but unequal space premised on a grandfather-grandchildren relationship (Englund, 2015a, 2015b, 2018). Gogo Breeze himself explained,

> We allow our listeners out there; we give them a subject just like I have done this evening. I tell them this is the subject, let's talk on this one. Then people ring the station and then we interact. At the end I give my final remarks of the findings and so on just as I have done, like that. So the people out there will take that fact. The grandfather has spoken we must take this and we have to follow this.[35]

A driving concern for Gogo Breeze was to draw his listeners into an unequal conversation in which he shaped his audience. He attempted to do so by allowing callers to express their concerns, listening and then responding with instructions to audience members.

The in-studio guest's imaginary: Citizens or subjects as it suits. Current affairs and political interactive shows, as seen in "Let's Be Responsible" on Phoenix FM in Lusaka, often involve hosts discussing with audience members and in-studio guests from government or civil society. Media houses often facilitate this interaction by bringing leaders into the studio to participate on air and engage with audience-participants. We found that the authority figure's experience as part of the broadcast with media personnel and audience members influenced how they imagined the show, the audience, and its political significance. Their interests and experiences resulted in slightly different ideas from the host about the audience and show's limitations and possibilities.

The choice of a government or civil society leader to participate as an in-studio guest was tied to a distinct set of concerns about the audience and why it mattered politically.[36] For some studio guests interviewed, this choice was driven by a view that vocal audience members were citizens who were knowledgeable and candid. Hidden within the dispersed audience, audience-participants spoke openly without fear of reprisal; through this, they could give insight into the viewpoints of the wider citizenry and become a measure of public opinion. Some guests took the frequency and content of callers' contributions as evidence of the wider reception of their message on air. Taking the example of an interactive show on Radio Citizen in Kenya, one guest, a Kenyan religious leader, explained,

> To us, our achievement or success of the program or of any program that we are involved in comes from the reception of the audience, from the questions we receive and from the calls that come in. In case we do not receive any calls then we know that maybe the message wasn't clear. But if we get a response of maybe over one or two calls from the listeners then we know that the message has been taken.[37]

Over the course of the Zambian show "Let's Be Responsible," the view that developed among guests was that the citizen, as participating audience member, was opinionated and vocal. One Zambian MP commented, "It [the radio] protects them [callers]. They can really mouth off and tell you how they really feel."[38] Some guests in the series valued this openness among audience-participants. One public relations officer from the Lusaka City Council explained, "If we don't get the negative part of the concerns then we will be assuming that we are doing well and things are not well. So we would rather they come and explain."[39] Similarly, two ward-level representatives concurred,

> We may think we are doing the right thing and yet we are not doing the right thing. When people call we need to accommodate those criticisms and though some are praises, some are criticisms. We need to accept everything that comes so that we are built from there.[40]

Not unexpectedly, this was not the only way that guests imagined the audience and not the only motivation for their participation. Quite opposite, some guests saw and experienced the audience caller as uninformed. The authority figure participated to ascertain this lack of knowledge, and even respond. The live broadcast facilitated an immediate exchange between an "uninformed caller" and an "informed studio guest."[41] In Zambia, one MP, after a series of guest appearances on radio stations in Eastern Province, explained he did so to educate callers and the wider audience, stating, "People need to know. It's actually a mandate for us as government to educate people about every policy that we come up with, and people should also provide an insight."[42] The defining feature of the interactive show might be the participating audience member, but guests' motivations for participating did not necessarily emphasize the audience member's voice.[43]

The perceived malleability of the audience-participant was viewed both positively and with caution in Kenya. As explained above, since the 2007–2008 postelection violence, there has been heightened attention to the potential for broadcasts to incite violence among citizens. In contrast, guests also viewed the susceptibility of the audience in positive terms: Statements on air might contribute to more informed and responsible citizens. Turning to western Kenya, one MP, on participating in an interactive show on Radio Nam Lolwe, commented, "I learnt that the audience need information. Information is lacking somehow, and there are small things that they want to know yet we deny them."[44]

Competing imaginaries of the audience as informed and uninformed citizens resulted in vacillating views of the audience as "citizens" and as "subjects" by in-studio guests. These perspectives coexisted in uneasy ways. In Zambia, some guests admitted it was still important to listen to audience members' concerns even when seeking to educate. An executive director of a civil society organization, after appearing on Phoenix FM's "Let the People Talk," explained,

> It's a two-way system. These platforms are there for us, for example as leaders, to inform the people and educate them. The people, also, they will educate because the most experienced person, for example when you talk about poverty, is not Hon. Simbao [MP for Senga Hill constituency] here [and] it's not me. It is a person who is calling from Kanyama, who has experienced the real thing.[45]

In sharp contrast, active audience members were also imagined as needy and gullible mass subjects who must marvel at their patron's largesse. Commenting on another Zambian MP's appearance on call-in shows, one MP commented,

> He will use the . . . call-in radio as a way to . . . make people assume that every development program that happens is in the gift of the "big man," right? "Either it happens because I decided it happens or it doesn't happen because I decided it doesn't happen."[46]

Irrespective, though arguably precisely because, of these shows' interactive nature, politicians could use them to convince listeners of the legitimacy of their authority, and challenge the authority of their political opposition. One Zambian government minister took the view that opposition parties were using talk radio to "gain political mileage from minds of people" and thereby "flamed their explanations" and "used the same radio stations to misinform people."[47] The talk show was treated as a conversation or debate *between* political opponents that occurred in the public eye.[48]

Guests' experiences on air could support a view of the gullible citizen or subject even amid audience members' active participation. Some guests re-interpreted caller's contributions as acts of masquerade by political opponents attempting to discredit them. To quote from a joint interview with an MP and county assembly member in Kenya:

> Opponents do sponsor. I got that clearly because there is a time I was on [the] radio and somebody asked me a very nasty question to put me down. And I knew that that is a question my opponent is likely to ask.[49]

In experiencing and imagining the audience in varying ways—as a knowledgeable citizen, as one to be educated, as the stooge of a political opponent, and as an object of competitive politicking—studio guests enacted competing ideas about the public realm within which citizens and state relate. The audience member as an informed citizen might enlighten the authority figure about citizens' priorities. The audience member as an uninformed citizen might be shaped into an educated citizen. The audience member as a malleable, even gullible, citizen, may be the focus of competitive mobilization and legitimation tactics. Finally, the audience member as the hidden political opponent might be engaged in a bout of electoral competition performed before a wider electorate. Not one of these imaginaries is dominant or exclusively true. Rather, the potentiality that each imaginary might hold was precisely what motivated guests to appear on interactive shows.

Conclusion

This paper's contribution to a more global and less normative view of the convergence of new and old media, and its political significance, sits within a rich scholarship concerned with how audiences create content and constitute publics with some agentive capacity. Established models of the audience will continue to be disrupted with the rapid and evolving rise of digital media (Anderson 2011b; Loosen and Schmidt 2012). This brings an opportunity to examine intersections of media and politics in new ways,

freed from some past weaknesses, such as a bias toward western empirics as the basis for theory generation.

The view that actors' perceptions matter to the nature and politics of the interactive broadcast is not new (Squires 2000). This article has sought to take this view further by showing how actors' imagination in response to the uncertainty of the audience remains an important factor in Africa within the context of interactive shows, and underpins their political significance. We have underlined the importance of including and rethinking the imaginaries of other actors, such as show hosts and political guests. These other actors are not simply acting with greater awareness of the audience. From different actor perspectives, the audience in its possibilities and uncertainties is far from monolithic. Binaries of the audience-public versus the political authority, or the mass media audience versus the media house, are inappropriate given the experiences and actions of participants in the interactive show. It is more instructive to think of the interactive broadcast space in its entirety and the multiple imaginaries at play. In contemporary Africa, the interactive broadcast is an indeterminate space that is constantly being imagined, invested with meaning, and constituted through its participants.

Recognizing the interactive show as a contestable space tied to varied imaginaries of the audience-public, we conclude by reflecting on the political nature and possibilities of the shows examined in Kenya and Zambia, and their implications for how citizen-state relations are being energized by mediated audience-publics. These empirical insights are particular to the audience-public in Kenya and Zambia at a time when interactive talk shows have recently become popular. That said, they also contribute to broader arguments about how the audience operates as a public, and how the imaginings of participants matter to its potentiality as a public. The arguments here indicate scope for similar studies of participants' experiences and imaginaries in different contexts.

In each country, participants imagine the audience-public in contextually specific ways, and engage from this basis, for example, tempered by targeted repression in Zambia or postelection violence in Kenya. Nevertheless, we can observe some common bases of indeterminacy that are sources of the power of audience-publics across actors, shows, and countries examined. First, different ways of imagining the *proximity* of the leader to the "citizen" materialized through the interactive shows. In one imaginary, the authority figure and the "citizen" are part of one audience, sometimes speaking, sometimes silent, but copresent in the audience-public. In another, the mediation of the space by the station and the host distinguishes the two from one another, sometimes physically as one is located in-studio.

Second, in both countries, the *directionality* of voice is a point of difference between participants. Sometimes the host or caller is imagined as a representative of the people, speaking to the authority figure, either in the studio or part of an indeterminate audience. At other times, the host and the authority figure see the show as an educative space, speaking to the mass, uninformed audience. These differences give way to contrasting views about the *instrumental* versus *intrinsic* value of the interactive broadcast. For some actors, the interactive show is a platform to bolster one's position of authority or distinguish oneself from a wider anonymous public. For others, the show is imagined to enact a particular ideal of democratic life to be valued in its own right for the mere fact that it occurs.

Finally, differences also emerge in how participants view *representation*. Different actors claim representative roles through the interactive show. There is the government representative who sometimes participates as a studio guest and uses the show as a means to augment their relationship with constituents. There is the show host, who sometimes identifies as a representative of the interests of the audience-as-citizen, but who, at other times, might assume the role of a representative, perhaps "grandfatherly," authority figure within a different sociocultural order. There is also the serial caller, who distinguishes him or herself through participation on air and sometimes speaks as if to represent silent community members' interests.

Reminding ourselves of Arendt's ideas about the public realm, the indeterminacy of countervailing tendencies identified in the live discussion in Kenya and Zambia has been shown to be the basis of the interactive show's political power. This raises important questions about the continued preservation of uncertainty in African media in an increasingly digital age. Is the moment examined a brief interlude between more instrumentalist periods, the prior shaped by one-party governments and a future to come shaped by the knowledge affordances of digital connectivity? Will actors continue to operate within diverse imaginaries of the audience-public and the broadcast as a space of political possibilities in an increasingly digital age? Could the sense that the audience is increasingly "knowable" and "analyzable" limit the interactive show's potential to construct the "citizen" and the "public" in new ways?

At the point in Kenya and Zambia examined, the interactive show reflects how different individuals see, and wish to see, themselves with regard to current affairs and politics. No single actor has control over what public discussion becomes, who informs it, and who constitutes the audience. Taken together, the show enacts the power of the public realm, a power that lies precisely in-between its different actors. The indeterminacy of the audience-public, thus, becomes the basis of its relevance to politics. Arguably, this not only constitutes the interactive show as a public. Its related uncertainty turns the interactive show into a dynamic space in which citizen-state relations are publicly contested and constructed, as different actors imagine and act on ideas of the audience-public. As an expression of the power of the public realm, the interactive show is, thus, politically significant irrespective of its effects on events beyond its manifestation in time and space.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

Funding

Notes

1. Interview with *Radio Phoenix* host (interviewee reference initials: LH), December 4, 2012.
2. As reported by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). The source for Kenya mobile phone subscriptions comes from the Communications Authority of Kenya, and for Zambia, it is taken from data collected by the Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority (ZICTA).
3. The research that underpins this article was conducted as part of the 'Politics and interactive media in Africa' (PiMA) research project at the Centre of Governance and Human Rights, University of Cambridge. A collaborative research project, PiMA researchers included: Dr Sharath Srinivasan (University of Cambridge, Principal Investigator); Professor Winnie Mitullah (University of Nairobi, Co-Investigator); Dr Fred Mudhai (University of Cambridge and Coventry University); Dr Alastair Fraser (University of Cambridge and SOAS, University of London); Dr Claudia Abreu Lopes (University of Cambridge and Africa's Voices Foundation); Sammy Mangwi (University of Nairobi); Dr Stephanie Diepeveen (University of Cambridge); Nalukui Milapo (University of Zambia); Moses Maina (University of Nairobi) and Emmanuel Tembo (Centre for Policy Dialogue, Zambia). The authors gratefully acknowledge the various contributions made by the entire research team to the research that informs this article. For more information on the PiMA project, see https://www.cghr.polis.cam.ac.uk/research-themes/dmvp/pima.
4. Interviews with serial caller to *Radio Citizen* (F), October 28, 2013; serial caller to *Radio Citizen* (P), November 2, 2013; Zambia serial caller (B), December 10, 2012; Zambian serial caller (P), December 18, 2012; and Zambian serial caller (RA), August 15, 2013.
5. Interview with Zambian serial caller (P), December 18, 2012; and Zambian serial caller (B), December 10, 2012.
6. Interview with Zambian serial caller (B), December 10, 2012.
7. Ibid.
8. Interview with *Breeze FM* host (O), March 21, 2012.
9. Interview with Zambian serial caller (P), December 18, 2012.
10. Interview with *Yatsani* station manager (N), December 4, 2013.
11. Interview with Zambian serial caller (E), December 13, 2012.
12. Interview with serial caller to *Radio Citizen* (PA), November 2, 2013.
13. Original comment was made in Kiswahili and translated by the authors. Original text: "Unajua unaweza kuwa na shida na kuona wakuu wetu wenye walitupeleka na inakuwa shida. Huwezi waona huwezi ongea nao. Hata simu yao huwezi pata namba yake upigie yeye. Sasa unajua hata wakuu wetu tuliwapeleka wanasiasa wanasikianga redio. Sasa ukiongea kwa redio, ukitoa maoni yako, utasikiza sasa hiyo ni kitu ya kwanza inasaidia." Interview with man from a *Radio Nam Lolwe* Fan Club (DO), September 13, 2013.
14. Interview with man from a *Radio Nam Lolwe* Fan Club (DO), September 13, 2013, and with a serial caller to *Koch FM* (CA), November 25, 2013.
15. Interviews with Zambian serial caller (RO), December 21, 2012; Zambian serial caller (P), December 18, 2012; and Zambian serial caller (E), December 13, 2012.
16. Interview with Zambian serial caller (RO), December 21, 2012. Similar comments were made in interviews with Zambian serial caller (I), December 21, 2012, and a Kenyan serial texter to *Citizen TV* (J), December 1, 2013.
17. Interview with Zambian serial caller (RA), December 19, 2012.
18. Interview with lawyer and Chair of the Law Society of Kenya, October 28, 2013.
19. Interview with Kenyan Senator (B), no date.

20. Interview with *Radio Nam Lolwe* host (VJ), April 7, 2014, and with *Radio Nam Lolwe* host (LO), September 5, 2013.
21. Interview with *Citizen TV* host (JM), October 17, 2013.
22. Interview with *Yatsani* host (B), December 19, 2012.
23. Interview with *Radio Nam Lolwe* host (JO), September 5, 2013.
24. Interview with *ZNBC* host (R), December 9, 2012.
25. Interview with *Breeze FM* host (G), no date.
26. Interview with *Koch FM* host (D), November 18, 2013.
27. Interview with *Koch FM* host (M), November 11, 2013.
28. Interview with a Kenyan Sheikh and guest on *Citizen Radio*, June 14, 2013.
29. Interview with *Radio Nam Lolwe* station manager (W) April 7, 2014; with *Radio Nam Lolwe* host (L), September 5, 2013; *Koch FM* host (T) June 24, 2013; with *Radio Nam Lolwe* host (J), September 5, 2013; *Radio Citizen* host (L), July 1, 2013; and *Radio Citizen* host (F), July 1, 2013.
30. Interview with *Feel Free* host (L), July 24, 2012, and with *Radio Phoenix* presenter/producer (M), November 29, 2012.
31. Interview with *ZNBC* host (R), December 9, 2012, and *ZNBC* host (V), December 11, 2012.
32. Interview with *Radio Phoenix* host (L), December 4, 2012.
33. Interview with *Radio Phoenix* host (L), March 21, 2012.
34. Interviews with *Radio Phoenix* host (L), December 4 and 7, 2012.
35. There are other bases from which a host might arrive at a similar perspective on the interactive space as a chance to educate and inform the listener. Other hosts on *Breeze FM* located their source of knowledge in research and personal study (interview with *Breeze FM* host (P), n.d.), and an innate leadership quality (interview with *Breeze FM* host (S), n.d.).
36. A similar finding about politicians' views and interest in talk shows is identified in the Australian context (Fitzgerald and Housley 2007).
37. Interview with Kenyan Sheikh and guest on *Radio Citizen*, June 14, 2013.
38. Interview with Zambian MP (E), December 20, 2012.
39. Interview with Public Relations Officer, Lusaka City Council (K), December 17, 2012.
40. Joint interview with two Zambian Ward Representatives/Councillors (C&N), December 20, 2012.
41. Interview with Kenyan MP (O), September 17, 2013.
42. Interview with Minister for Eastern Province, Zambia (M), July 25, 2013.
43. Interview with two Zambian MPs and guests on *Muvi TV* (M&S), December 19, 2012, and joint interview with a deputy director in the Lusaka City Council and of the Zambia Environmental Management Agency (J&C), December 3, 2012
44. Joint interview with a Kenyan MP and a Member of the County Assembly (C&P), November 2, 2013.
45. Interview with Executive Director, Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP) (M), December 18, 2012.
46. Interview with Zambian MP (D), December 18, 2012.
47. Interview with Minister for Eastern Province, Zambia (M), July 25, 2013.
48. Interview with Kenyan Senator (B), n.d.
49. Joint interview with a Kenyan MP and a Member of the County Assembly (C&P), November 2, 2013.

References

Anderson, C. W. 2011a. "Between Creative and Quantified Audiences: Web Metrics and Changing Patterns of Newswork in Local US Newsrooms." *Journalism* 12 (5): 550–66.

Anderson, C. W. 2011b. "Deliberative, Agonistic, and Algorithmic Audiences: Journalism's Vision of Its Public in an Age of Audience Transparency." *International Journal of Communication* 5:529–47.

Arendt, Hannah. 1958. *The Human Condition*. London: University of Chicago Press.

Arendt, Hannah. 1992. *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Banda, Fackson. 2006. "Commentary: Negotiating Distant Influences: Globalization and Broadcasting Policy Reforms in Zambia and South Africa." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 31 (2): 459–67.

Barber, Karin. 1997. "Preliminary Notes on Audiences in Africa." *Africa* 67 (3): 347–62.

Bosch, Tanja. 2013. "Social Media and Community Radio in South Africa." *Digital Journalism* 2 (1): 29–43.

Brennan, James R. 2015. "A History of Sauti ya Mvita (Voice of Mombasa): Radio, Public Culture, and Islam in Coastal Kenya, 1947-1966." In *New Media and Religious Transformations in Africa*, ed. Rosalind I. J. Hackett, Benjamin F. Soares, and Francis B. Nyamnjoh, 19–38. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Bucy, Erik P., and Kimberly S. Gregson. 2001. "Media Participation: A Legitimizing Mechanism of Mass Democracy." *New Media & Society* 3 (3): 357–80.

Calhoun, Craig. 1992. "Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere." In *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun, 1–48. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Chadwick, Andrew. 2013. *The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chadwick, Andrew, and Jennifer Stromer-Galley. 2016. "Digital Media, Power, and Democracy in Parties and Election Campaigns: Party Decline or Party Renewal?" *International Journal of Press/politics* 21 (3): 283–93.

Chignell, Hugh. 2009. *Key Concepts in Radio Studies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Ciboh, Rodney. 2017. "Journalists and Political Sources in Nigeria: Between Information Subsidies and Political Pressures." *International Journal of Press/Politics* 22 (2): 185–201.

Coleman, Stephen, and Giles Moss. 2011. "Under Construction: The Field of Online Deliberation Research." *Journal of Information Technology and Politics* 9 (1): 1–15.

Couldry, Nick, Sonia Livingstone, and Tim Markham. 2010. *Media Consumption and Public Engagement: Beyond the Presumption of Attention*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Couldry, Nick, and Tim Markham. 2006. "Public Connection through Media Consumption: Between Oversocialization and De-socialization?" *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 608:251–69.

Craig, Geoffrey. 2016. *Performing Politics: Media Interviews, Debates and Press Conferences*. Cambridge: Polity.

Davis, Stephen R. 2009. "The African National Congress, Its Radio, Its Allies and Exile." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35 (2): 349–73.

Dayan, Daniel. 2005. "Mothers, Midwives and Abortionists: Genealogy, Obstetrics, Audiences & Publics." In *Audiences and Publics: When Cultural Engagement Matters for the Public Sphere*, ed. S. Livingstone, 43–76. Bristol: Intellect Books.

Englund, Harri. 2015a. "Forget the Poor: Radio Kinship and Exploited Labor in Zambia." *Current Anthropology* 56 (S11): 137–45.

Englund, Harri. 2015b. "Multivocal Morality: Narrative, Sentiment, and Zambia's Radio Grandfathers." *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 5 (2): 251–73.

Englund, Harri. 2018. "*Gogo Breeze: Zambia's Radio Elder and the Voices of Free Speech.*" Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fitzgerald, Richard, and William Housley. 2007. "Talkback, Community, and the Public Sphere." *Media International Australia* 122:150–63.

Flew, Terry, and Adam Swift. 2015. "Engaging, Persuading, and Entertaining Citizens: Mediatization and the Australian Political Public Sphere." *International Journal of Press/ politics* 20 (1): 108–28.

Fraser, Alastair. 2016. "The Political Economy of Sponsored Call-In Radio in Zambia." PiMA Working Paper #5, University of Cambridge Centre of Governance and Human Rights, Cambridge.

Fraser, Nancy. 1990. "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy." *Social Text* 25/26:56–80.

Gilberds, Heather, and Mary Myers. 2012. "Radio, ICT Convergence and Knowledge Brokers: Lessons from Sub-Saharan Africa." *IDS Bulletin* 43 (5): 76–83.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1991. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Trans. Thomas Burger. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Ismail, Jamal Abdi, and James Deane. 2008. "Commentaries: The 2007 General Election in Kenya and Its Aftermath: The Role of Local Language Media." *Press/Politics* 13 (3): 319–27.

Jenkins, Henry. 2006. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press.

Kenya National Commission on Human Rights. 2008. "On the Brink of the Precipice: A Human Rights Account of Kenya's Post-2007 Election Violence." Preliminary Edition. Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, Nairobi, Kenya.

Lee, Francis. 2002. "Radio Phone-In Talk Shows as Politically Significant Infotainment in Hong Kong." *International Journal of Press/politics* 7 (4): 57–79.

Livingstone, Sonia. 2005. "On the Relation between Audiences and Publics." In *Audiences and Publics: When Cultural Engagement Matters for the Public Sphere*, ed. Sonia Livingstone, 17–42. Bristol: Intellect Books.

Livingstone, Sonia, and Peter Lunt. 1994. *Talk on Television*. London: Routledge.

Loosen, Wiebke, and Jan-Hinrik Schmidt. 2012. "(Re-)discovering the Audience." *Information, Communication & Society* 15 (6): 867–87.

Lopes, Claudia Abreu, Okoth Fred Mudhai, Winnie Mitullah, Neo Simutanyi, Sam Balongo, Stephanie Diepeveen, Alastair Fraser, Nalukui Milapo, Sammy Mwangi, Emmanuel Tembo, and Sharath Srinivasan. 2015. "*Interactive media audiences in Africa: A comparison of four constituencies in Kenya and Zambia.*" PiMA Working Paper #4. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Centre of Governance and Human Rights.

Media Council of Kenya. 2012. "*The Performance of Vernacular Radio Stations in Kenya, September/October 2011.*" Nairobi: Media Council of Kenya Monitoring Report, Media Council of Kenya.

Mitullah, Winnie, Okoth Fred Mudhai, and Sammy Mwangi. 2015. "Background Paper: Politics and Interactive Media in Kenya." PiMA Working Paper #2. University of Cambridge Centre of Governance and Human Rights, Cambridge.

Moyo, Last. 2013. "The Digital Turn in Radio: A Critique of Institutional and Organizational Modeling of New Radio Practices and Cultures." *Telematics and Informatics* 30 (3): 214–22.

Mwesige, Peter G.. 2009. "The Democratic Functions and Dysfunctions of Political Talk Radio: The Case of Uganda." *Journal of African Media Studies* 1 (2): 221–45.

Mytton, Graham. 1983. *Mass Communication in Africa*. London: Edward Arnold.

Newell, Stephanie. 2013. *The Power to Name: A History of Anonymity in Colonial West Africa*. Athens: Ohio University Press.

Nyanjom, Othieno. 2012. "Factually True, Legally Untrue: Political Media Ownership in Kenya." Internews Research Paper. https://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/resources/Internews_FactuallyTrue_Legally_Untrue-MediaOwnership_Kenya2013-01.pdf

Ochilo, Polycarp J. Omolo. 1993. "Press Freedom and the Role of the Media in Kenya." *Africa Media Review* 7 (3): 19–33.

Oriare, Peter, Rosemary Okello-Orlale, and Wilson Ugangu. 2010. "The Media We Want: The Kenya Media Vulnerabilities Study." Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Nairobi, Kenya.

Page, Benjamin I., and Jason Tannenbaum. 1996. "Populist Deliberation and Talk Radio." *Journal of Communication* 46 (2): 33–54.

Papacharissi, Zizi. 2010. *A Private Sphere. Democracy in a Digital Age*. Cambridge: Polity.

Rehm, Diane. 1996. "A Tower of Babel: Talk Shows and Politics." *Harvard International Journal of Press and Politics* 1 (1): 138–42.

Ruiz, Carlos, David Domingo, Josep Lluís Micó, Javier Díaz-Noci, Koldo Meso, and Pere Masip. 2011. "Public Sphere 2.0? The Democratic Qualities of Citizen Debates in Online Newspapers." *International Journal of Press/Politics* 16 (4): 463–87.

Schulz, Dorothea E. 1999. "'In Pursuit of Publicity': Talk Radio and the Imagination of a Moral Public in Urban Mali." *Africa Spectrum* 34 (2): 161–85.

Silverstone, Roger. 2007. *Media and Morality: On the Rise of the Mediapolis*. Cambridge: Polity.

Simutanyi, Neo, Alastair Fraser, and Nalukui Milapo. 2015. "Background Paper: Politics and Interactive Media in Zambia." PiMA Working Paper #3. University of Cambridge Centre of Governance and Human Rights, Cambridge.

Spitulnik, Debra. 2002. "Alternative Small Media and Communicative Spaces." In *Media and Democracy in Africa*, ed. Goran Hydén, Michael Leslie, and Folu F. Ogundimu, 177–205. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Squires, Catherine R. 2000. "Black Talk Radio: Defining Community Needs and Identity." *Press/Politics* 5 (2): 73–95.

Srinivasan, Sharath, and Claudia Abreu Lopes. 2016. "Africa's Voices Versus Big Data? The Value of Citizen Engagement through Interactive Radio." In *Voice and Matter: Communication, Development and the Cultural Return*, eds. Oscar Hemer and Thomas Tufte, 155–172. Gothenburg: Nordicom, University of Gothenburg.

Tandoc, Edson C. 2014. "Journalism Is Twerking? How Web Analytics Is Changing the Process of Gatekeeping." *New Media and Society* 16 (4): 559–75.

Volkmer, Ingrid. 2014. *The Global Public Sphere: Public Communication in the Age of Reflective Interdependence*. Cambridge: Polity.

VonDoepp, Peter. 2017. "The Promise, Challenge, and Foundations of Media Collective Action: Illustrations from Sub-Saharan Africa." *International Journal of Press/politics* 22 (4): 510–26.

Warner, Michael. 2002. "Publics and Counterpublics." *Public Culture* 14 (1): 49–90.

Willems, Wendy. 2012. "Participation-in What? Radio, Convergence and the Corporate Logic of Audience Input through New Media in Zambia." *Telematics and Informatics* 30 (3): 223–31.

Author Biographies

Sharath Srinivasan is the co-director of the University of Cambridge's Centre of Governance and Human Rights (CGHR). He is also David and Elaine Potter lecturer in Governance and Human Rights in the Department of Politics and International Studies and a fellow of King's College, Cambridge.

Stephanie Diepeveen is a postdoctoral research associate with the University of Cambridge's Centre of Governance and Human Rights.

The Power of the "Audience-Public": Interactive Radio in Africa

Srinivasan, Sharath; Diepeveen, Stephanie