

**AEJMC – ICD Live Chat with Dr. Sallie Hughes**  
**Thursday October 21, 2010**

[Comment From AmyAmy: ]  
Hello! Welcome to our ICD Live Chat!  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:02 Amy  
1:02

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]  
Hello everyone!  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:02 Celeste Bustamante  
1:02

Sallie:  
Greetings from Miami  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:02 Sallie  
1:02

[Comment From JeannineJeannine: ]  
Thank you. Hello Everyone!  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:02 Jeannine  
1:03

[Comment From JeannineJeannine: ]  
We are fortunate to have the opportunity today to have this online chat with Dr. Sallie Hughes, the author of “Newsrooms in Conflict: Journalism and the Democratization of Mexico.” Dr. Hughes’ area of expertise includes studies of the news media and politics in Latin America. She holds a joint appointment at the University of Miami in Journalism and Latin American Studies.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:03 Jeannine  
1:03

[Comment From JeannineJeannine: ]  
I am based at the University of Arizona and am joined by Amy Schmitz Weiss from San Diego State University. We both will be moderating the session.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:03 Jeannine  
1:04

[Comment From JeannineJeannine: ]

We want to thank professor Hughes for joining us today to discuss some of the largest issues facing journalists and academics in the field of journalism in Mexico. We hope to discuss news media freedom and violence, news media accountability, access to information, journalism ethics, concentration of broadcast ownership, Internet delivery, and cross-border collaboration.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:04 Jeannine  
1:04

[Comment From Jeannine]Jeannine: ]

We ask that you identify your affiliation when you first enter the conversation. There could be up to a 30-second delay on your posts. We will chat for up to 30 minutes.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:04 Jeannine  
1:05

Amy:

Let's go ahead and start our conversation. Dr. Hughes: How did you develop your research interest in Latin America? What inspired you to go in this direction?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:05 Amy  
1:07

Sallie:

I guess it was evolutionary more than revolutionary. I was in college during the Central American civil conflicts and got my initial interest there. Then, I did an MA in Latin American Studies after working in journalism in Miami. From there, I was fortunate enough to land a job as a journalist in Mexico during a very exciting period, the mid 1990s.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:07 Sallie  
1:07

Jeannine:

Could you tell us which countries you have focused your research on and why? For you, what makes those countries, or Mexico specifically, unique to investigate, learn and research?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:07 Jeannine  
1:08

Sallie:

Good question. I think studying any other country brings to the forefront things we take for granted in our own media system. For example, I was not fully aware of the

pressures that the economic system places on journalism until I began to study journalism in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:08 Sallie

1:09

Sallie:

That may seem strange, since most of what the media covers about Latin American journalism has to do with violence and state pressures. There are economic pressures too.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:09 Sallie

1:09

Amy:

To what extent have newsrooms changed in Mexico since you conducted research for your book?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:09 Amy

1:11

Sallie:

I think that Mexican journalism since the 2000 election that ended (sort of) the PRI regime is now facing a perfect storm -- expanded organized crime, weak government accountability mechanisms, pressures from multimedia-tization, and the concentration of ownership in broadcasting and telecommunications.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:11 Sallie

1:11

Sallie:

This is having multiple effects on the practice of journalism. Most concretely in the press, the level of investigative journalism has gone down, although it seems to be migrating to other forms.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:11 Sallie

1:12

Jeannine:

In your book, you wrote about three models of journalism that had emerged in Mexico in the last years of the 20th century -- the civic model, the market-driven model and the authoritarian model. In your description of the civic model in Mexico, journalists monitor government activity to hold those in office accountable. During our chat today, it would be great to have you tell us a little about the old- and transition-style journalism in Mexico. And from your observations in the last five years, how has "watchdog" journalism fared in Mexico?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:12 Jeannine  
1:12

Sallie:

In broadcasting, we see a corporate driven news agenda that is multifaceted -- more plural, more sensational, and used to forward corporate agendas.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:12 Sallie  
1:12

Sallie:

Good question. I am going to try to answer in pieces.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:12 Sallie  
1:12

Jeannine:

Great!

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:12 Jeannine  
1:13

Sallie:

Journalists were stenographers who supported the state from their positions in private sector media outlets. They were part of a system of social control in the broadest sense.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:13 Sallie  
1:13

Sallie:

The PRI regime survived because of material advancement in urban centers, selective use of oppression and cooperation, rotation of political elites within the party, good relations with big business and the military, division of the opposition, and the manipulation of national symbols and control of information. The media helped with the last two components.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:13 Sallie  
1:13

Sallie:

Journalists did this for much more than financial reasons. There were material incentives at every level, company owner, editor, columnist, reporter, but also an ideology of journalism that supported what they were doing, role-modeling, and socialization in newsrooms.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:13 Sallie  
1:14

Sallie:

This subservient or collusive behavior changes even before the macro-structures of the political economy change in the mid 1980s and 1990s. There were a few notable examples prior to 1986 -- El Norte in Monterrey, El Imparcial in Hermosillo, Uno-Mas-Uno/La Jornada en Mexico City.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:14 Sallie  
1:14

Sallie:

Then, along with political liberalization and the strengthening of the market, the number of publications practicing a civic form of journalism begin to rise.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:14 Sallie  
1:15

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]

Hi, this is Celeste Gonzalez de Bustamante from the University of Arizona School of Journalism. Thanks for doing this chat Sallie. How do new technologies change the game for civic journalism, opportunities for civic journalism, and watchdog journalism?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:15 Celeste Bustamante  
1:15

Sallie:

Investigative journalism, while not practiced in a sustained away, has a flourishing in the 1990s. I can offer some examples if you are interested, but in the 2000s it is pressured on many fronts.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:15 Sallie  
1:16

Jeannine:

Thanks, Dr. Hughes. We'll let you answer the questions coming in.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:16 Jeannine  
1:16

Sallie:

Hi Celeste. One of the ways journalism in the newspapers that were investigative in the 1990s has been effected is that the same journalists who before could work on

one piece have to publish across multiple platforms. They have to do more with the same number of journalists and they have to write fast and furiously (like we are). So some say it has hurt IR in the press.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:16 Sallie  
1:17

Sallie:

We are seeing IR rise in new forms though -- great non-fiction, investigative books, as well as human rights documentary.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:17 Sallie  
1:17

Jeannine:

We know that Mexico has become the deadliest country for news media in the Western Hemisphere with local public officials, state-security forces, and the cartels harassing and targeting journalists. From your perspective, how has this impacted the work that they do and the work of researchers in the field of journalism?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:17 Jeannine  
1:18

Sallie:

One thing before I answer, a great resource for terrific book-length journalism in Mexico is the [www.prende.org](http://www.prende.org) publications page. I can offer others too.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:18 Sallie  
1:18

Sallie:

[www.prende.org.mx](http://www.prende.org.mx)

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:18 Sallie  
1:18

Amy:

Thanks for that link Dr. Hughes

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:18 Amy  
1:18

Jeannine:

These are great.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:18 Jeannine  
1:19

Sallie:

OK, going back to Jeannine's question about researchers. I asked the same question to political science researchers at LASA two weeks ago because no one was talking about the role of drug traffickers.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:19 Sallie  
1:20

Sallie:

I wonder if Manuel Chavez is online and wants to talk about doing research in the drug zones? I will tell you I would act as I did as a journalist, very cautiously and with trusted intermediaries.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:20 Sallie  
1:20

Jeannine:

Manuel, are you out there?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:20 Jeannine  
1:21

Sallie:

As for the journalists, they have self-censored. They have little other choice. The state is not protecting them and their own efforts to jointly protect one another have largely failed.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:21 Sallie  
1:21

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]

I can tell you that in terms of teaching journalism in areas of conflict and violence, it has changed the way we approach teaching in a dramatic way.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:21 Celeste Bustamante  
1:21

Jeannine:

Tell us how, Celeste.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:21 Jeannine  
1:22

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]

At the UA we've developed various teaching components in the classroom regarding safety along the border. We've held workshops.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:22 Celeste Bustamante

1:22

Sallie:

Journalists have tried a couple of things -- joint investigations published anonymously (which ended because newspapers near the border were too afraid to publish) and pressure for a federalization of crimes against journalists. There seems no political will to do the latter -- the federalization of crimes. Impunity is a huge problem.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:22 Sallie

1:23

Sallie:

I agree Celeste and would like to see those materials. We have had the same problem with Haiti. Our university has banned travel there. But when it opens, we would like to do sensitive, important and safe work there.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:23 Sallie

1:24

Sallie:

Travel for students to Haiti, I mean. Many professors are going.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:24 Sallie

1:24

Jeannine:

Ah, you are working on a book about Haiti, Dr. Hughes, yes? This must be an issue.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:24 Jeannine

1:24

Jeannine:

A number of years ago, you wrote about the barriers to news media independence, assertiveness and pluralism in countries in Latin America. The barriers included residual laws from authoritarian times that had a chilling effect and issues with norms in the journalism profession. To what extent have these issues resolved or regressed in Mexico for journalists from your perspective?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:24 Jeannine

1:25



Sallie:

It is a working paper. I hope to expand the work, but also am reticent to leave my focus on Mexico. Mexico is a fascinating country.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:25 Sallie

1:25

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]

What I wanted to say was the goal is not to stop students from going across the border, but to have a realistic sense of what's going on. This is different from other schools that have banned students and faculty from crossing into Mexico, i.e. SDSU, UT system. I'd be glad to send materials. I feel like I'm stomping over everyone, sorry.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:25 Celeste Bustamante

1:25

Sallie:

Responding on laws...

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:25 Sallie

1:25

Jeannine:

Thank you, Celeste. We should start a location for these materials.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:25 Jeannine

1:26

Jeannine:

Yes, the laws.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:26 Jeannine

1:26

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]

Definitely.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:26 Celeste Bustamante

1:26

Sallie:

A lot has improved at the federal level. Criminal defamation was done away with, for example. However, it still exists on the state level and is used by newly empowered local political bosses to punish or silence critics, including journalists.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:26 Sallie

1:26

Jeannine:

And insult laws?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:26 Jeannine

1:27

Sallie:

My understanding is that insult laws have also been ended at the federal level, but stay on the books in some states.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:27 Sallie

1:27

Amy:

Dr. Hughes, from what you can gather, to what extent are journalists supported by their news organizations on these legal matters?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:27 Amy

1:29

Sallie:

It varies. There was a case a few years ago where journalists from El Universal and La Jornada were called in by the PGR to give evidence in criminal investigations. Those newspapers were able to work politically to quash the subpoenas. There is now a shield law protecting them. I need to check whether it is federal or DF. Sorry... it's been a while since I looked at this. I believe it is federal. Most of the advances have been in the DF and in the federal laws. The states are the most problematic and we as researchers should be paying more attention to them.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:29 Sallie

1:30

Jeannine:

Dr. Hughes, I know that you have conducted research related to access-to-information legislation in Mexico. Do you know the extent to which journalists or civil society are using Mexico's state or federal access-to-information laws?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:30 Jeannine

1:30

Sallie:

Journalists use it a lot, but it has not yet become systematic or penetrated down to the low levels of government. Again, the federal laws are much better and easier to use than the state laws.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:30 Sallie  
1:30

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]

Do we have time for one more question? Sallie, I know this is a huge question, but how have the changes in Mexico regarding the escalating violence changed the way you teach International Communications/Journalism, if at all?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:30 Celeste Bustamante  
1:31

Sallie:

What a great question!

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:31 Sallie  
1:32

Jeannine:

We have 15 minutes if you all still want to keep going. Dr. Hughes?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:32 Jeannine  
1:32

Sallie:

I need to address it more. I am teaching more theoretical classes than field labs, so keep that in mind. I look at this as a problem of weak institutions during a political transition. The other forms of social control have not been replaced by democratic institutions that can protect human rights and guarantee safety. It's also an economic issue. So I try to put it in context, as well as teach about journalistic strategies to be able to operate in these zones.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:32 Sallie  
1:32

Sallie:

Sure...

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:32 Sallie  
1:33

Jeannine:

Great. It turns out there's a buffer of that time.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:33 Jeannine  
1:33

Amy:  
Very interesting approach, Dr. Hughes...  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:33 Amy  
1:33

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]  
Humm...interesting. So, is it that drug cartels are filling a void?  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:33 Celeste Bustamante  
1:34

Sallie:  
Well, I am a Latin American Studies PhD. We focus on context. And I draw from sociology and political science. So I try to put the media in their social and societal context.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:34 Sallie  
1:35

Sallie:  
I think, if I haven't said it before, this is a perfect storm. Weak institutions plus an enormous expansion of the roles of Mexican drug cartels.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:35 Sallie  
1:35

Amy:  
You have noted that corporate control of national broadcast television is virtually in the hands of one or two companies. Could you chat with us a little about this history and recent developments?  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:35 Amy  
1:35

Sallie:  
Since the 1990s, older forms of social control under the PRI have weakened and have yet to be replaced by solid mechanisms of democratic accountability or state capacity. Governors and local bosses can act without restraint against critics. Oaxaca and Puebla are probably the worst cases. The activities of drug cartels have expanded in Mexican territory, from simply trans-shippers working for the Colombian cartels, they have become financiers, local dealers, and trans-shippers.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:35 Sallie  
1:35

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]  
That's seems like a good way to think about it.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:35 Celeste Bustamante  
1:36

Sallie:  
So.. a perfect storm  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:36 Sallie  
1:36

Sallie:  
On television concentration... the interesting thing to me is how that "industrial configuration" is being reproduced in digital communications, or at least there is a trend in that direction.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:36 Sallie  
1:37

Jeannine:  
Is there evidence of the extent to which this media ownership concentration has influenced coverage?  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:37 Jeannine  
1:37

Sallie:  
For example, Televisa controls about 39 percent of the national pay TV market as of 2008. The next largest competitor controlled about 19 percent.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:37 Sallie  
1:37

Sallie:  
Oh yes. Pro-reform politicians have been erased from news coverage and would-be competitors have been vilified on the air.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:37 Sallie  
1:38

Jeannine:

Ah, interesting.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:38 Jeannine  
1:38

Sallie:

Even the Supreme Court was pressured... that was in some content analysis I did the summer of 2008. The other cases are well known in Mexico.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:38 Sallie  
1:38

Amy:

Where may we find that study you are referring to Dr. Hughes?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:38 Amy  
1:39

Sallie:

So.. I called it market-driven in my book. Today I would have to say that the market is trumped by corporate interest to maintain a quasi monopoly in open air TV and to get advantage in the billion-dollar digital media and communications industry.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:39 Sallie  
1:39

Sallie:

I think it is just the way corporations work. They use their resources to their advantage. News in Mexican TV is a political resource.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:39 Sallie  
1:39

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]

And you have said that much more content analysis of news coverage would be helpful in understanding what's going on.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:39 Celeste Bustamante  
1:40

Sallie:

I agree. I have some, by the way, that is coming out in a cross-national study of diversity in Latin American Network News. Should I plug the book?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:40 Sallie  
1:40

Amy:

Yes, please share with us.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:40 Amy

1:40

Jeannine:

Yes, please do.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:40 Jeannine

1:41

Sallie:

It's edited by Merike Blofield and called The Great Gap. The Politics of Social Inequality in Latin America. Penn State Press. I did the media chapter with doc student Paola Prado.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:41 Sallie

1:42

Jeannine:

Excellent. Dr. Hughes, what types of collaborating relationships are you seeing within the country and cross-border, among journalists and scholars?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:42 Jeannine

1:42

Amy:

Thanks for sharing that with us.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:42 Amy

1:42

Sallie:

Trends -- some are obvious. The prevalence of white men in journalistic positions, the focus on government and the upper class minority. One thing we document well is the non-diversity in news agendas across the region -- crime and government, especially crime. This is even in Uruguay, which is not a crime-filled country.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:42 Sallie

1:43

Sallie:

There are great collaborations across countries by Latin American journalists. It is a wonderful use of new communications technologies...

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:43 Sallie  
1:43

Sallie:  
Some of it focused on free press issues, others on general professionalization issues.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:43 Sallie  
1:44

Amy:  
Ah, very interesting.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:44 Amy  
1:44

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]  
As far as the trends that you mentioned, I would imagine this is more prevalent on TV than print.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:44 Celeste Bustamante  
1:44

Sallie:  
As for cross-scholarly collaborations, AEJ could play a big role in promoting that. Everyone does it individually. There is not an institutional home for US-Latin American collaborations. Want to do it?  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:44 Sallie  
1:44

Amy:  
Great idea Dr. Hughes!  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:44 Amy  
1:44

Jeannine:  
Definitely! Great suggestion.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:44 Jeannine  
1:45

Sallie:  
Good. I'll help.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:45 Sallie



1:45

Jeannine:

Thanks, Dr. Hughes. It looks like we have one more minute. What advice would you give to young scholars seeking to conduct their research on Latin America? Are there any resources or texts you suggest they consider? Is there anything that you would like to add?

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:45 Jeannine

1:45

[Comment From Celeste BustamanteCeleste Bustamante: ]

I think that's a wonderful suggestion.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:45 Celeste Bustamante

1:46

Jeannine:

We'll let this be the launch!

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:46 Jeannine

1:46

Sallie:

Celeste, yes, the content analysis was of the two top network newscasts in Mexico, Uruguay, Chile and Costa Rica. The cases were chosen for variation in levels of social inequality.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:46 Sallie

1:47

Jeannine:

Great study.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:47 Jeannine

1:47

Jeannine:

We want to thank you very much for spending your time with us today, Dr. Hughes. It has been a great session.

Thursday October 21, 2010 1:47 Jeannine

1:47

Amy:

Thank you so much Dr. Hughes for your time with us today!  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:47 Amy  
1:47

Jeannine:  
If any of you are interested in contacting Dr. Hughes for more information, please  
send her an e-mail message at: [shughes@miami.edu](mailto:shughes@miami.edu)  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:47 Jeannine  
1:48

Sallie:  
Cross-national content analysis is difficult in many ways, and it is time consuming.  
Perhaps that could be a first project or grant application. We'll talk.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:48 Sallie  
1:48

Sallie:  
Thanks for this. It was an interesting experience.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:48 Sallie  
1:48

AEJMC:  
Thank you for your participation today.

We are now closing the chat.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:48 AEJMC  
1:48

Jeannine:  
Let's definitely talk. We'd like hours more with you.  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:48 Jeannine  
1:48

Jeannine:  
Thanks again!  
Thursday October 21, 2010 1:48 Jeannine  
1:48

Jeannine:

This session will be archived on the ICD website via transcript form in upcoming days.