

CALL FOR CHAPTERS

Media Studies Meet Drug Research

Edited by

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THIS VOLUME PROPOSAL IS TO BE SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW TO **ROUTLEDGE** AS THE EDITORS RECEIVED INITIAL POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMISSIONING EDITORS. SUBJECT TO THEIR FINAL DECISION, THIS BOOK WILL GO AHEAD AS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED BELOW.

The idea underpinning this book is to bring together media scholars and drug researchers to highlight the intricate interconnections of either of the two domains. Our purpose is to discuss different themes of these interdisciplinary fields of mediated action and substance use and related activities. Mind-altering, self-enhancing, mundane and special, controversy-laden and thought-provoking, highly addictive and divisive at times – both contemporary media and drug use are inherently personal and very much public endeavors at the same time. This book searches for convergences and mutual inspirations from each of the perspectives.

Aiming at a comprehensive outlook, the collection attempts to cover major themes, like paradigms informing both areas of scholarship and major processes covered in each of the fields. It also zooms into the micro level of individuals using or making media or drugs and group processes. Additionally, important themes covered are the technologies or market structures on the macro level and devices and materialities on the micro level.

In this call, we seek contributions distributed thematically across a spectrum of comparative or comprehensive themes to juxtapose the state of the art in media studies and drug research. In doing so, we search for interconnections, mutual inspiration, transversal themes, and theoretical and empirical dialogues between the two fields. On top of that, this book intends to map the overlaps and enable transdisciplinary dialogue across the two fields, aiming at studying idiosyncrasies or the phenomena that are both related to media and drugs, which include discussing, obtaining, or supplying psychoactive substances over digital platforms.

PARADIGMS AND FRAMES

The volume encourages, but is not limited to, the following topics:

Theoretical and conceptual underpinnings. Papers in this section can explore:

_____ Disciplinary genealogies: e.g., how media studies' shift from mass communication paradigms to digital and platform perspectives parallels drug research's evolution from criminalization/prohibition models to harm reduction approaches.

_____ Theoretical developments connecting both fields and overlapping concepts within them: notions like “mediating forces,” “regulation,” or “affordances” could be analyzed in the context of psychoactive substances.

_____ “Moral panics”: both media technologies (e.g., video games, social platforms) and drugs are often subject to moral panics. Analyzing these through a comparative lens can yield insights into cultural narratives around “danger” vs. “liberation.”

RATIONALES AND PROCESSES

Empirical manifestations of key frameworks and underlying rationales that drive behavior in both media and drug domains. Papers in this section can explore:

_____ Key overlaps: pleasure, deviance, and normalization appear in both fields. “Deviant” media use vs. deviant drug use, for example, can be juxtaposed with their normalization in mainstream culture (e.g., cannabis mainstreaming, social media platform ubiquity).

_____ Emerging trends: blockchain marketplaces for drug sales, “dark web” use, or decentralized social media point to shared processes of decentralization, anonymity, and hyperconnectivity.

USERS AND IDENTITIES

Central to both media and drug use are the concepts of **agency, subjectivity, and identity**. Papers in this section can focus on:

_____ Identity and stigma: drug users often face stigmatization, just as certain subcultural online behaviors (e.g., certain fandoms or “extreme” communities) may be stigmatized.

_____ Platforms & influence: roles such as influencer, vendor, buyer, or content creator can be reframed to show parallels between commerce in illicit substances and user-generated content in the gig/sharing economy.

_____ Intersectionality: vulnerable groups – by race, class, gender, or sexuality – may disproportionately encounter harm or unequal power structures in both drug use and media usage.

COMMUNITIES AND MOVEMENTS

Studies here can illuminate **collective formations** around both fields:

_____ Subcultures: whether it is a “conspiracy theories culture” or an online fandom, both revolve around shared interests, identities, and sometimes a stance against mainstream values.

_____ Advocacy: social movements that advocate for drug policy reforms (e.g., harm-reduction activists) increasingly leverage social media for mobilization.

_____ Digital activism: meanwhile, certain online communities champion less restrictive drug policies, coordinate supply chains, or share resources about safe use.

REPRESENTATIONS AND NARRATIVES

Of interest is **the way drugs are pictured, told, or imagined via media**. Multimodal representations of the substances, people who use them and their effects can be scrutinized here:

_____ Mediated representations of substance, inc. mass cultures, illicit vendors, or emerging (cannabis) industries.

_____ Narratives and discourses, especially multimodal and in different – so-called – social media platforms of use and by people who use drugs.

TECHNOLOGIES, INDUSTRIES, AND MARKETS

This theme centers on **economic and technological infrastructures**. Papers in this section can relate to:

_____ Industries: cannabis regulation and commercialization in multiple countries parallels the rise of platform capitalism (YouTube, Twitch, etc.) in media.

_____ Supply and distribution: drug distribution may echo content distribution networks (including illegal or unethical content distribution).

_____ Algorithms: automated systems recommending content or matching buyers and sellers raise parallels in how markets are structured and regulated in both fields.

_____ Injustice or exploitation of gig workers, immaterial labor in media, and vulnerable growers or marginalized street drug vendors.

MATERIALITIES

Here, the focus is on **physical and technological “stuff”** that shapes interactions:

_____ Devices & substances: each has a “material agency” that influences user behavior, from the smartphone to the psychoactive substance.

_____ Spatiality: digital spaces, physical consumption spaces, and “third places” (clubs) can be studied comparably.

_____ Environmental impact of media production/drug production.

DOING GOOD AND BAD

This theme relates to:

_____ Ethical tensions: misinformation, trolling, or unethical platform design can be paralleled with harmful or exploitative drug practices.

_____ Conspiracy theories: both anti-vaccination campaigns and anti-harm-reduction conspiracies can reveal how certain groups leverage media to promote misinformation about substances or how certain narratives about substances perpetuate on social media.

POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE

This area has a particularly strong resonance for:

_____ Policy regimes: drug policies (prohibition, legalization, harm reduction) find parallels in media governance (content moderation, platform regulation, censorship).

_____ Institutional actors: government agencies, NGOs, and corporations shape the rules and regulations around media and drugs, sometimes in parallel ways.

_____ Surveillance: both digital media usage and drug consumption are subject to forms of state or corporate surveillance.

METHODS AND ETHICS

Papers in this section can focus on:

_____ Methodological innovation: the proposed interdisciplinary approach demands new or hybrid methodologies. For instance, ethnographic methods in drug research could inform online participant observation in digital subcultures (hard to reach populations)

_____ Ethical concerns: collecting sensitive user data (e.g., about illegal drug use) must comply with data protection and research ethics. Similarly, platform-based research might involve scraping user data or analyzing content that could be ethically fraught.

Editors' bios:

PIOTR SIUDA

(PhD; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1644-5915>), Associate Professor at the Faculty of Cultural Studies, Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz. His research spans internet studies and game studies. He authored articles in numerous top-tier journals such as *Social Media + Society*, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, *Games and Culture*, or *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy*. He is a Principal Investigator in the National Science Centre project titled “Rhizomatic networks, circulation of meanings and contents, and offline contexts of online drug trade.” He is a member of The Association of Internet Researchers and the Polish Society for Social Communication. He is also an Associate Editor for the SAGE *Journal of Creative Communication*. His full academic profile can be found on his website: <http://piotrsiuda.com>.

MICHAŁ WANKE

(PhD; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0413-9838>), a sociologist working as an assistant professor at the Department of Cultural Studies of the University of Opole, Poland. His research focuses on people who use drugs, especially in non-western contexts. He is a qualitative field researcher using a range of methods from ethnography and interviewing to arts based interventions. He also conducts research on migration related phenomena, most recently as a postdoc in a Horizon Europe PREMIUM_EU project aiming at uncovering migration benefits from left-behind regions in Europe. He published in and guest-edited international and Polish journals alike, and he received funding from Erasmus+, the National Centre of Science in Poland, and the Polish National Bureau for Drug Prevention (now National Centre for Addiction Prevention). Dr. Wanke is a member of the European Society for Social Drug Research, Association of Internet Researchers and European & Polish Sociological Association.

TIMELINE

Deadline for initial proposals (Extended Abstracts):

April 20, 2025

Notification of acceptance: April 30, 2025

Confirmation of publisher's interest: May 31, 2025 (tentative)

First drafts due: October 1, 2025

Editor comments: November 1, 2025

Final drafts due: December 31, 2025

Please note that the dates of “Notification of acceptance”; “First drafts due”; “Editor comments”; “Final drafts due” may change due to the publishing process – the authors will be informed in case of any changes happening.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Prospective authors should submit a short chapter proposal as a Word document to media.meet.drugs@gmail.com.

The proposal should contain:

- The name and contact information of the author(s), along with a brief bio
- The title of the proposed chapter
- Extended abstract of approximately 800–1200 words excluding references. The abstract should indicate the consistency, rigor, and relevance of the work.

Paper submissions should articulate the issue or research question to be discussed, the methodological or critical framework used, and indicate the findings or conclusions and/or the relevance to the general volume. Papers can present any research, analysis, or theoretical framing but should be written so that the importance of the work can be indicated. Please note that empirical chapters should include the research question and data to be analyzed.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please use the latest edition of the **Chicago (author-date) citation style**.

The authors should follow the T&F [sample chapter](#) and [Routledge Manuscript Preparation Guidelines](#).

Your submission should include all contributors' names, affiliations, email addresses, postal addresses, and 12 pt. double-spaced Times New Roman.

Please note that chapters not adhering to the guidelines will be returned to the author(s) for revision.