Defining the Geographic Boundaries of the U.S. Public Sphere: Can We Go Global?

Lauren Kogen, Ph.D.

11/16, 12:30 p.m., Dolphin, Asia 4

Abstract:

This paper explores how the U.S. news media define the geographic boundaries of the public sphere, using the topic of hunger in Africa as a starting point of investigation. Do the news media provide information in a way that allows news audiences to discuss this issue in the same way they provide information on hunger in the U.S? By comparing coverage of the two loci – the U.S. and Africa – and combining critical discourse analysis and frame analysis, the author argues that the news media define the geographic boundaries of the public sphere for American news consumers, and in doing so construct hunger in Africa as a topic for which potential solutions should not and need not be discussed nor addressed by the American public.