# Editorial

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All contributions to this issue acknowledge the growing centrality of internet and social media infrastructures. Kevin Liu explains how the conglomeration of Tencent in China enabled science and technology development, economic growth and a vast commercial-state surveillance complex. For merchandisers and advertisers, internet and social media functionalities such as apps, portals and the iCloud mesh with financial and household payment systems. For state and Party agencies, these functionalities are conjoined with data bases, data mining algorithms and facial recognition software. Public concerns about privacy are assuaged by the twin, official rhetorics of technological and national progress. Nikos Smyrnaios and Franck Rebillard's longitudinal research in France between 2003 and 2016 documents the predominance of the internet industry over online news media. From interviews with news publishers and individuals from internet firms, they identify a process of *infomediation* whereby major social media platforms effectively host routine practices of news gathering and editorial decision making. For Graham Murdock and Benedetta Brevini, communication systems are central to the Capitalocene – a new historical epoch defined by the global-environmental repercussions of industrial capitalism and fossil fuel extraction. Earth temperature rise, anthropogenic climate change and increasing greenhouse gas emissions trigger multiple feedback loops. These include sea level rise, ocean acidification and the degradation of agricultural ecologies. Against this background, communication systems facilitate the promotion of environmentally damaging hyper-consumption. At the same time, data centres, iCloud computing and other digital media applications increase electricity generation, energy extraction and $CO_2$ emissions. Consequently, radical proposals for de-carbonized economic development necessarily require radical changes in the organisation of contemporary communications.

Peter Thompson's commentary on the aftermath of the Christchurch mosque shootings of March 2019 explains how social media networks facilitate the propagation of extreme right ideologies and terrorist atrocities. The Christchurch Call summit in Paris, involving the European Commission, 17 governments and eight major digital media corporations was largely a symbolic threat

containment exercise. As Thompson points out, any genuine strategy for restricting violent, extremist online content needs to be multifaceted and multi-scalar. Digital corporate value chains need to be delineated in order to identify regulatory intervention points. From there, the possible agents and mechanisms of intervention must be established. To this end, national and supranational domains of regulation must be coordinated. Martin Becerra's commentary on the distinctiveness of Latin America`s broadcasting history acknowledges the regional significance of a global trend – the technological convergence of audio-visual media, the internet and telecommunications. This represents a historic challenge for advocates of public broadcasting and community media throughout Latin America. Major private interests have taken advantage of a new digital environment which also allows multiple operators to broadcast through the internet. Martin Hirst's *Navigating Social Journalism*, here reviewed by Wayne Hope, highlights the strategic importance of social media corporations, platforms and applications. They constitute a digital vortex which siphons advertising away from mass media organisations while accelerating the circulation of fake news. Under neoliberal capitalism, digital technologies and online infrastructures enhance the modalities of corporate and state propaganda. Yet, they also afford new techniques and opportunities for politically engaged 'integral' journalists.