

Barry Wellman and Arvind Singhal Win New SSRC/ICA Prizes

July 6, 2008 - The Social Science Research Council is pleased to announce the winners of two new prizes in media and communications research, sponsored in partnership with the International Communications Association:



Arvind Singhal, ICA: Communicating for Social Impact, May 2008

Barry Wellman (Sociology, University of Toronto) has been awarded the **Communication Research as an Open Field (CROF)** prize. The CROF prize is awarded to researchers who have made important contributions to the field of communications *from outside the discipline of communications*. It rewards dialogue with other fields and institutional locations that are generating vital new understandings of the communications environment and the public sphere.

Wellman is being honored for his consistently interdisciplinary work on the relationship between new information and communication technologies and the formation of social networks. Computer-supported work, virtual communities, and—more recently—mobile telephony have been prominent subjects of his research. Wellman's work has been shaped by collaboration with communication scholars, computer scientists, educators, geographers, historians, information scientists, lawyers, psychologists, and theologians, and through those collaborations found audiences in those fields. It has engaged a similarly wide range of geographies, from local studies of Toronto to work on Japan, leading to important reflections on the relationship between local and global. Wellman created the terms "network city" (1973), "network of networks" (1983), and "networked individualism" (2000); and with Keith Hampton, pioneered the use of "glocalization" in discussing computer-mediated communication networks. His co-edited book, *Social Structures: A Network Approach* has been named by the International Sociological Association as one of the "Books of the Century" (Cambridge University Press, 1988; reprinted, 2003).

Arvind Singhal (Communication, University of Texas at El Paso) has been awarded the **Communication Research as an Agent of Change (CRAC)** prize. The CRAC prize is awarded for research that has an impact on practice outside the academy, with clear benefits to the community.

Singhal is being honored for his work on 'entertainment-education communication strategies,' especially on the use of popular media forms for educating publics about HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other critical health problems. Singhal's *Combating AIDS: Communication Strategies in Action* and *Entertainment-Education: A Communication Strategy for Social Change* have both received widespread recognition for their contributions in this context. This work also informs Singhal's research on the relationship between grassroots and top-down social change, articulated especially in *Organizing for Social Change* (Sage, 2006; with Michael Papa and Wendy Papa). Singhal's research has found a broad audience outside the academy, including at the World Bank, the United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), UNICEF, UNDP, UNAIDS, UNFPA, the BBC World Service Trust, International Rice Research Institute, and Voice for Humanity.

The CROF and CRAC prizes carry awards of \$500. The Social Science Research Council is pleased to congratulate the distinguished recipients of this year's awards.

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