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Review

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Boczkowski's ground-breaking book offers a pathway to understanding the shortcomings of journalism in the early days of the digital age. Although it is based on data collected in the southern part of the Western Hemisphere, its lessons are relevant worldwide. The implications of such a theoretical framework can guide research on news across media. In that case, imitation might be more than just flattery. It might help develop a new paradigm for understanding journalism in the digital age.

The Professional Guinea Pig: Big Pharma and the Risky World of Human Subjects

By Roberto Abadie

Duke University Press. 2010. 200 pages. \$79.95 cloth, \$22.95 paper.

Reviewer: Elita Poplavska, *University of Minnesota*

David Onion, Frank Little, Spam and Farm Girl are just a few of the self-defined professional human guinea pigs that live in West Philadelphia and offer their disciplined and compliant bodies to serve the needs of the research industry in exchange for money. Participating in clinical trials has become a full-time job for each of them: they might enroll in five to eight trials a year, deriving an annual income that is close to \$20,000.

How does this professionalization occur? Does monetary compensation affect the way participants think about the risks and benefits involved in the studies? Do existing ethical frameworks protect paid subjects? Are they exploited in the current trial economy? Roberto Abadie, the author of *The Professional Guinea Pig*, uses ethnography to explore these questions. He chronicles the experiences of the human guinea pigs of the ever-growing research industry.

Abadie spent more than a year living in an anarchist community in West Philadelphia observing and interviewing individuals attracted to “guinea-pigging” because of the flexibility and income it offers. To add an additional case study, Abadie spends time with a group of poor, mainly black and Latino men and women testing HIV drugs for phases II and III of the clinical trial they are participating in.

The Professional Guinea Pig is the first ethnographic account of the experiences of paid research subjects. The work is a thoughtful anthropological contribution to the prevalent philosophical discussions of the protection of research subjects. Abadie puts the long ethical debate into social, political and economic context.

To develop and test new medications, the pharmaceutical industry depends on willing human volunteers to participate in medical research. Until the 1980s, human subjects for most studies were recruited from institutions such as orphanages, mental hospitals and prisons. After the research on institutionalized populations was banned, the pharmaceutical industry was forced to develop strategies for recruiting new, suitable research subjects. Abadie calls what the industry ultimately developed “market recruitment.” Healthy, disciplined and willing bodies for clinical trials are recruited through market mechanisms, a process that transforms human subjects into commodities.

The shift from an industrial economy towards a service economy that occurred in Philadelphia in the 1950s has been unable to provide enough employment and has led to the emergence of a mass of vulnerable and unemployed workers. Philadelphia makes a good place for Abadie's study because it is the home of several medical schools and more than 25 hospitals. All these factors make the area particularly attractive for major pharmaceutical industry research.

Abadie is concerned about the human subject's ability to evaluate the risks related to the research studies they are consenting to participate in. The research subject community has developed their own strategies for evaluating risks. The author provides examples of some participants who avoid trials that involve psychotropic drugs and others who believe that plenty of water, cranberry juice and some herbs will eliminate all chemicals from their blood a few days after the trial is over.

Although most participants do not nourish any illusions towards the pharmaceutical industry as a benign institution, the author states that study participants make their choices in a social context characterized by overwhelming economic constraints. In other words, it is inaccurate to view these participants purely as volunteers given the economic forces that limit their choices in the first place. In this way, the current ethical framework surrounding so-called autonomous volunteers who make informed decisions about participating in the clinical trials fails to consider the economic system under which decisions may be made in duress. In order to maintain a livelihood, some participants may also disregard critical information about the risks of a particular study, the long-term effects of which may be impossible to monitor.

The Professional Guinea Pig offers critical tools to reflect on and understand the relationship between the commodification of human subjects in clinical trials and how participant risk is construed and managed by the subjects themselves. Abadie demonstrates that the current organization of clinical trials exposes volunteers who become professionalized to new, unprecedented issues. These research subjects do not have the right to worker's compensation, health insurance or even to the minimum wage. The change in recruitment populations unfairly targets a particular socio-economic group, creating a *new* type of captive and vulnerable population.

Well aware of commodification of their bodies, professional guinea pigs attempt to challenge the power embedded in the organization of clinical trials. For example, participants disrupt trials by not following the drug regimes and prescribed diets when possible. These individual acts of resistance are a way to recover their humanity and show their opposition to a powerful institution. Yet, as the author argues, these revolts have little effect on the outcome of clinical trials or the status of the research subjects.

While Abadie's primary engagement is descriptive, his substantive findings about the pharmaceutical industry as part of the dominant structure of the market lead him to ultimately provide some normative engagement towards the end of the study. He argues for a centralized register of research volunteers, for the evaluation of the short- and long-term risks for research participants and, finally, for the recognition of Phase I volunteers as workers with legal protections. Although these implementa-

tions will not eliminate all risk, Abadie stresses that they will significantly reduce the mistreatment of research participants.

It might seem that professional guinea pigs are a rare group, and many scholars insist that informed consent process is an appropriate form of protection for these people. Yet, Abadie posits that the professionalization of participants is increasing, and that the new trial economy exploits individuals who disproportionately bear the risks of new medication trials, the benefits of which are allocated to many of us. This book is an important contribution to understanding of current issues related to clinical research. Moreover, it is an invitation to further the public debate and develop policies that are better suited for research subject protection.

Terrorizing Women: Femicide in the Américas

Edited by Rosa-Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano

Duke University Press. 2010. 382 pages. \$95 cloth, \$26 paper.

Reviewer: Laura Jennings, *University of South Carolina Upstate*

Over the past year, the media has directed considerable attention to drug cartel-related violence and murder near the Mexico-U.S. border, particularly in the Ciudad Juarez area of Chihuahua, Mexico. This contrasts with the relative media silence surrounding the disappearance, torture, rape, mutilation and murder of hundreds of young women in the same area since the early- to mid-1990s. In *Terrorizing Women: Femicide in the Américas* editors Fregoso (professor of Latin American & Latino studies at University of California Santa Cruz) and Bejarano (associate professor of criminal justice at New Mexico State University) and the authors of individual chapters detail the widespread violence against women in Latin America in recent decades. This work addresses not only the anti-woman crimes in Ciudad Juarez but also persistent and extensive violence against women in Guatemala, Costa Rica and elsewhere.

The overall purpose of *Terrorizing Women* is to describe, illuminate and frame the gendered violence in Latin America and to discuss various community and activist attempts to bring attention to—and stem—the violence and bring the perpetrators to justice. The authors' perspectives add to a growing body of feminist theory from the global south. In some cases the authors are using ideas of northern feminists and adapting them; in other cases they build from scratch new theory to address adequately the connected forms of gendered violence in Latin America.

Terrorizing Women has numerous strong points to recommend it, including the clear illustration of the links between globalization, patriarchy, organized crime and government, and economic policy which lead to the creation and maintenance of societies in which women can be violated, abused and killed with almost total impunity for attackers. The writers do an excellent job of showing the complexity of the situations and the intersectional nature of oppressions leading to widespread violence against women. These include economic and power disparities at the local, state and global