

knowledge about the extent of the disaster, the size of relief efforts and the involvement of locals and tourists as 'citizen journalists'. At first glance, then, *Asian Tsunami and Beyond* and *Communicating Disasters* promise to fill this gap. Both books are critical of the mass media reaction to the tsunami, and ask how the media coverage of such disasters in general can be improved. Both books are similar in their position that participatory communication must play a large role in the process. *Asian Tsunami and Beyond* deals with the four main affected countries — India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand — examining in detail each country's mass media coverage of the disaster itself, the longer-term relief efforts, and the role played by the media and journalists. Its self-stated aim is to be a reference tool for journalists and journalism educators, as well as relief organisations, and most of the chapters are highly critical of some of the reporting in the four countries, particularly when it comes to covering long-term issues such as the rebuilding efforts.

The main strand running throughout the various contributions is strongly in favour of a more active role for the media, using arguments from the field of communication for social change. Yet the book takes the approach that media must simply change with relatively little critical discussion of how this can realistically be achieved. While there is, of course, an argument for a more active role, I would have preferred a more nuanced approach to this debate, with perhaps a more scholarly treatment — particularly in the closing chapter, which suggests a large number of media strategies without really going behind these arguments to see whether they are realistic demands.

of permanent campaign is clearly supported by some chapters focused on significant episodes prior to the official beginning of the campaign. Obviously, Madrid's bomb attacks on 11 March partially changed the original design of the book, and there are two chapters devoted to clarifying what happened in Spain between 11 and 14 March.

A strong aspect of the book is its multi-theoretical approach to the object of study. Readers can explore alternative scholarly traditions, such as agenda-setting studies, framing or the spiral of cynicism applied to the same phenomenon. Some of these studies are put into practice for the first time in Spain, so this book is trying to open new ways for many Spanish speakers working on communication research.

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Challenger: Asian Tsunami and Beyond, Asian Media Information and Communication Centre and Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 2006, ISBN 9 8141 3603 4, 266 pp., US\$29.00.

Gunawardene, Nalaka and Noronha, Frederick (eds), *Communicating Disasters: An Asia Pacific Resource Book*, UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok and TVE Asia Pacific, Bangkok, 2007, 150 pp., Free download at www.tveap.org.

Despite its magnitude in terms of the loss of human lives, the Asian tsunami of Boxing Day 2004 has so far generated surprisingly little academic treatment in the field of journalism and communication research. This is despite the fact that media reports played such an important part in generating