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## News in a glasshouse: media, publics, and senses of belonging in the Dutch Caribbean

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## NEWS IN A GLASSHOUSE MEDIA, PUBLICS, AND SENSES OF BELONGING IN THE DUTCH CARIBBEAN

Sanne Rotmeijer

1. News making is not the exclusive domain of professional news media ('the news'), but in this dissertation I argue that it also refers to how ordinary people turn local, national, and international events into widely circulating stories ('news'). (*This dissertation*)
2. In public life, 'the news' takes shape in an institutional public (where formal liberal democratic institutions operate, such as the media houses, politics, and civil society), while 'news' is practiced in a popular public (where every day informal news making emerges, such as the circulation of stories at birthdays, on the street as well as informally in the institutional corridors). (*This dissertation*)
3. 'The news' in the institutional public and 'news' in the popular public interact closely, whilst remaining analytically distinct: the latter contests (explicitly or not) the dominant institutional version of social facts in the public sphere/institutional public. (*This dissertation*)
4. A focus on popular news practices ('news') next to institutional news practices ('the news') exposes how social groups without (much) social power turn events into stories. These have been historically excluded from the institutional public's ideal public sphere. (*This dissertation*)
5. The Caribbean is one of the places that reveals that the public sphere has always been contested by multiple publics in between oppression and invention.
6. The distinctiveness of Caribbean 'island life' lays in its extensive relationality with the world, rather than in rigid notions of insularity, smallness, and isolation from the world. This leads us to think about islands as connected spaces brought together by oceans rather than as separated by them.
7. Instead of turning away from words, such as recent critical scholarship drawing from '(new) materialism' calls for, academics should rethink what stories mean and do as an ongoing practice of making ourselves present into the world (Ingold, 2022).
8. Whether in the Dutch Caribbean or in The Hague: 'the news' gets its news via personal connections, the grapevine, informal get-togethers, and other modes of (popular) 'news' circulation.
9. On Curaçao and Sint Maarten it is common knowledge that 'people who live in glasshouses, shouldn't throw stones'. Among the higher social classes this implies: don't criticize others if you can't handle hearing it yourself). Among the lower social classes, it means: don't speak truth to power as one could lose the little one has (similar to the Curaçaoan saying: 'Words and stones that go, don't return').
10. Rather than the popular saying that "sometimes science is a lot more art than science" (Rick & Morty, 2013), science inevitably is art, taking aboard that "art constitutes information that remains in formation" (Hoelscher, 2021, informed by James Baldwin). If science would answer all questions, there wouldn't be any science left.
11. Doing (multi-sited) fieldwork is like being the protagonist in the movie 'Everything Everywhere All at Once' (2022). It comes down to radically choosing what life offers in the here and now, and what is presented to the audience.
12. Writing a dissertation is a life course in pragmatism. Or, as my mother usually says: "Als het niet gaat zoals het moet, dan moet het maar zoals het gaat".