

Mining the Media: How Community Radio Breaks Through Extractivist Discourse Articulations in a Context of Disaster and Socio-environmental Conflicts

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Abstract

Mining extractive companies have extended their operations to other realms, such as the management of media. Thus, from a space of physical intervention, they start to conquer a space of symbolic representation, creating a gap between local communities' perceptions of the mining process and the perception that is spread through media outlets about the operations in the territories. In Chile, this perception is complicated by the participation of the mining industry in media ownership and the overall concentration of media. Through critical ethnographic fieldwork, analysis of national and local community media examples, this article explores an ongoing socio-environmental conflict in the Choapa Valley where the copper mine Los Pelambres operates. It does it by first discussing how the mining industry pursues narratives of extractivism in the Chilean media and then discussing how local communities defy this narrative by creating their description of the territory through local media outlets.

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