



香港浸會大學
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Deconstructing the BRICS

Colin Sparks

Department of Journalism

Hong Kong Baptist University

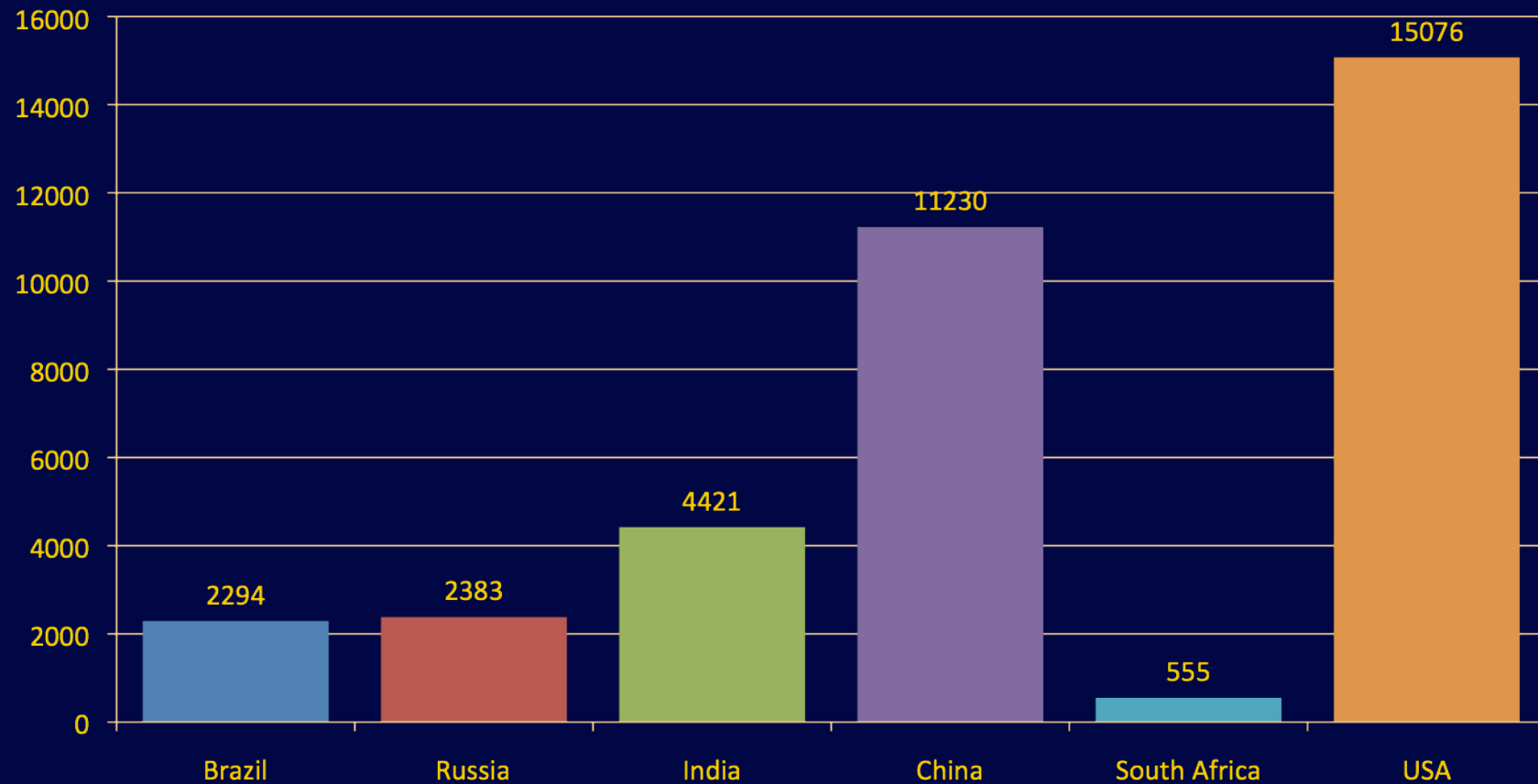


Introduction

- The BRICS are a geopolitical reality
 - Albeit a fragile one
- Is the category a useful one for media analysis?
 - Obviously shorthand for important changes
- Review some aspects of their economies
- Look at some aspects of their media
- You can find the text in the OJC soon



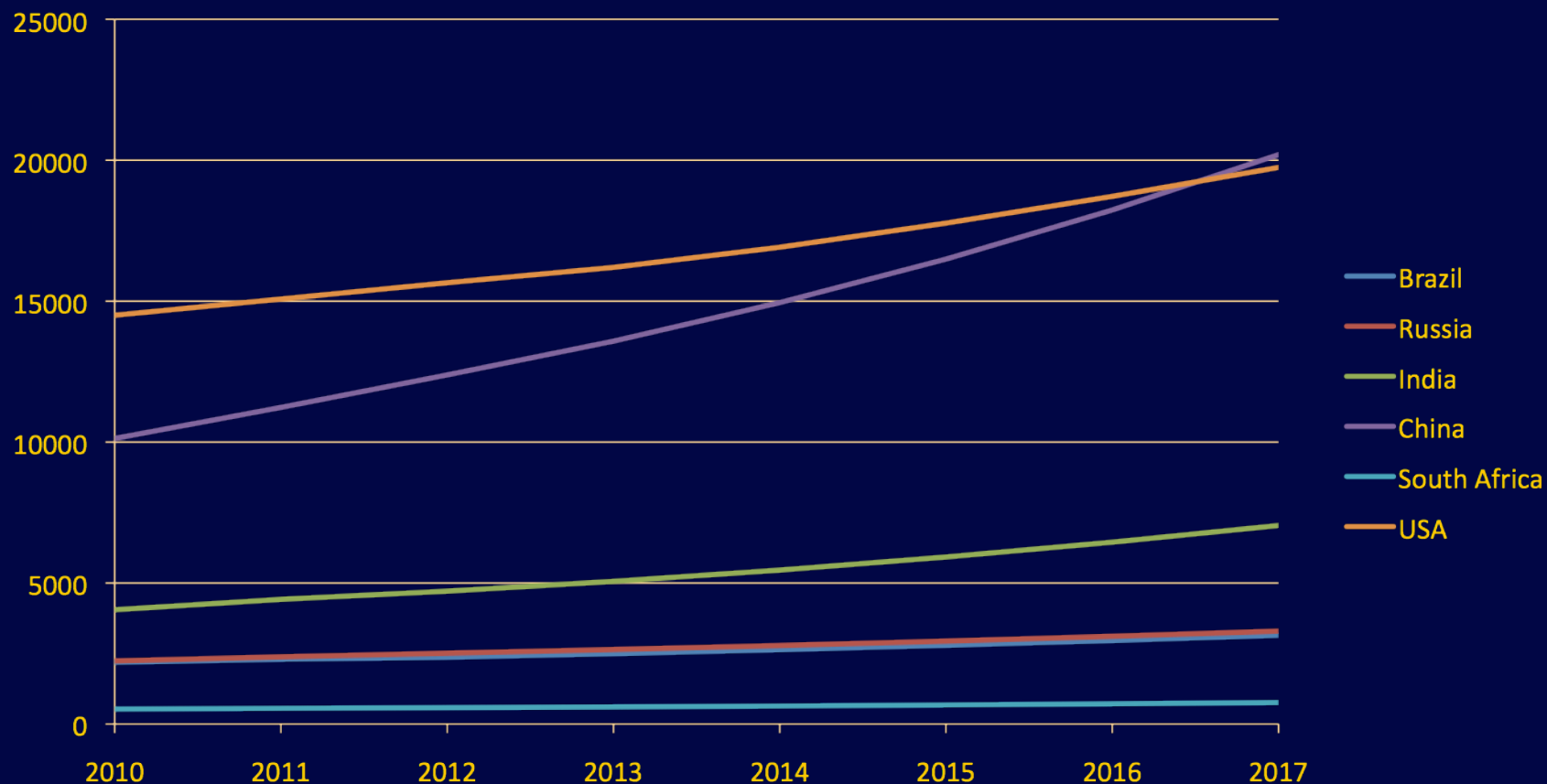
2011 GDPs in US\$bn at PPPs



Source: IMF World Economic Outlook Database



Projected growth of GDPs in US\$bn at PPPs



Source: IMF World Economic Outlook Database



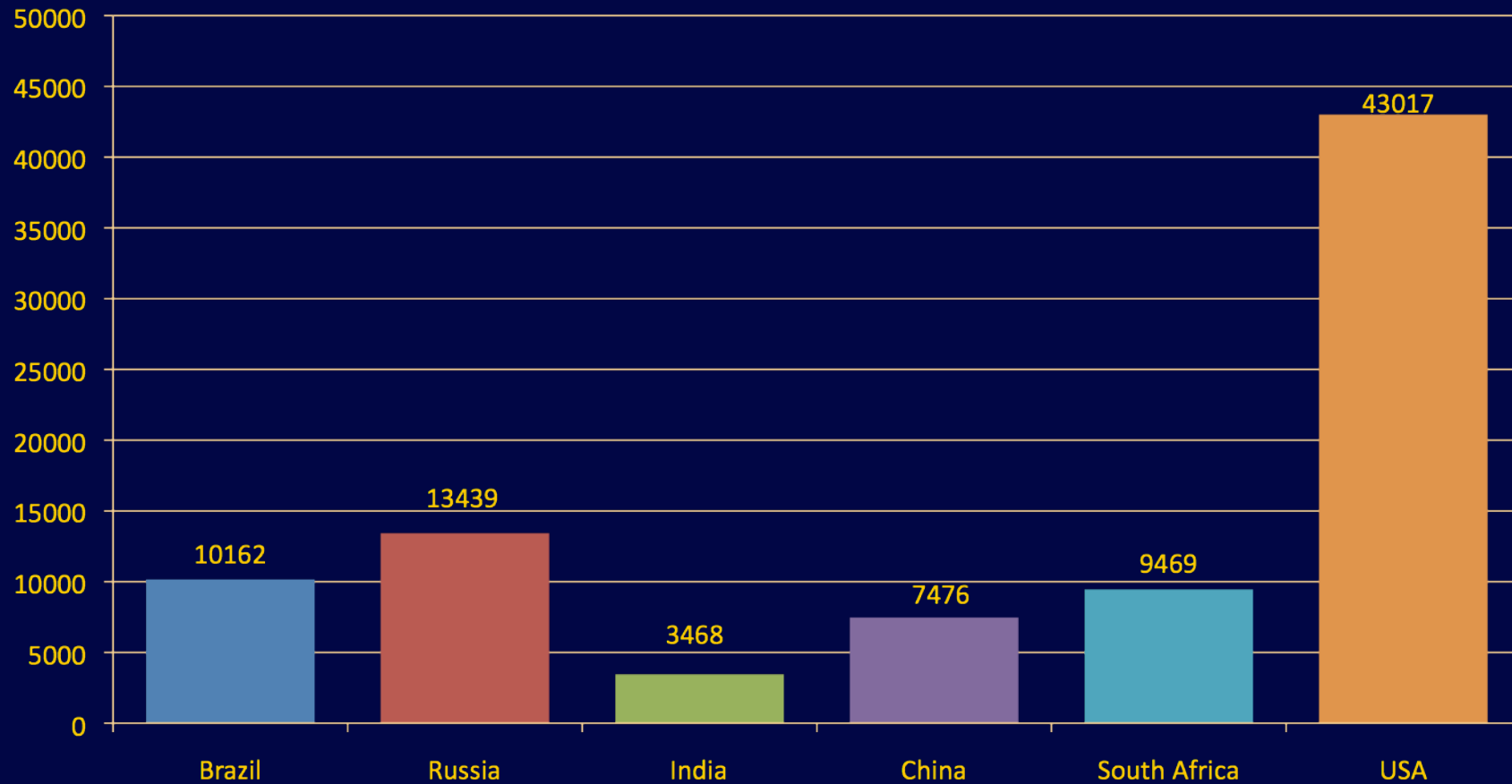
Projected percentage growth 2010-2017 and absolute gap with US in US\$bn at PPPs

	Brazil	Russia	India	China	South Africa	USA
Growth	44%	47%	74%	99%	44%	36%
Gap 2010	12312	12262	10448	4371	13972	--
Gap 2017	16600	16449	12703	-453	18985	--

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook Database



2011 per capita GNI in 2005US\$ at PPPs



Source: United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report 2011



Estimates of GINI income coefficients

Country	UNDP 2000-2011	World Bank (most recent)
Brazil	53.9	54.7 (2009)
Russia	42.3	40.1 (2009)
India	36.8	33.4 (2005)
China	41.5	42.5 (2005)
South Africa	57.8	63.1 (2006)
USA	40.8	40.8 (2000)
Hong Kong	43.4	43.4 (1996)
Sweden	25.0	25.0 (2000)
Japan	--	24.9 (1993)

Source: United Nations Development Programme *Human Development Report 2011*
World Bank *Poverty and Inequality Database*

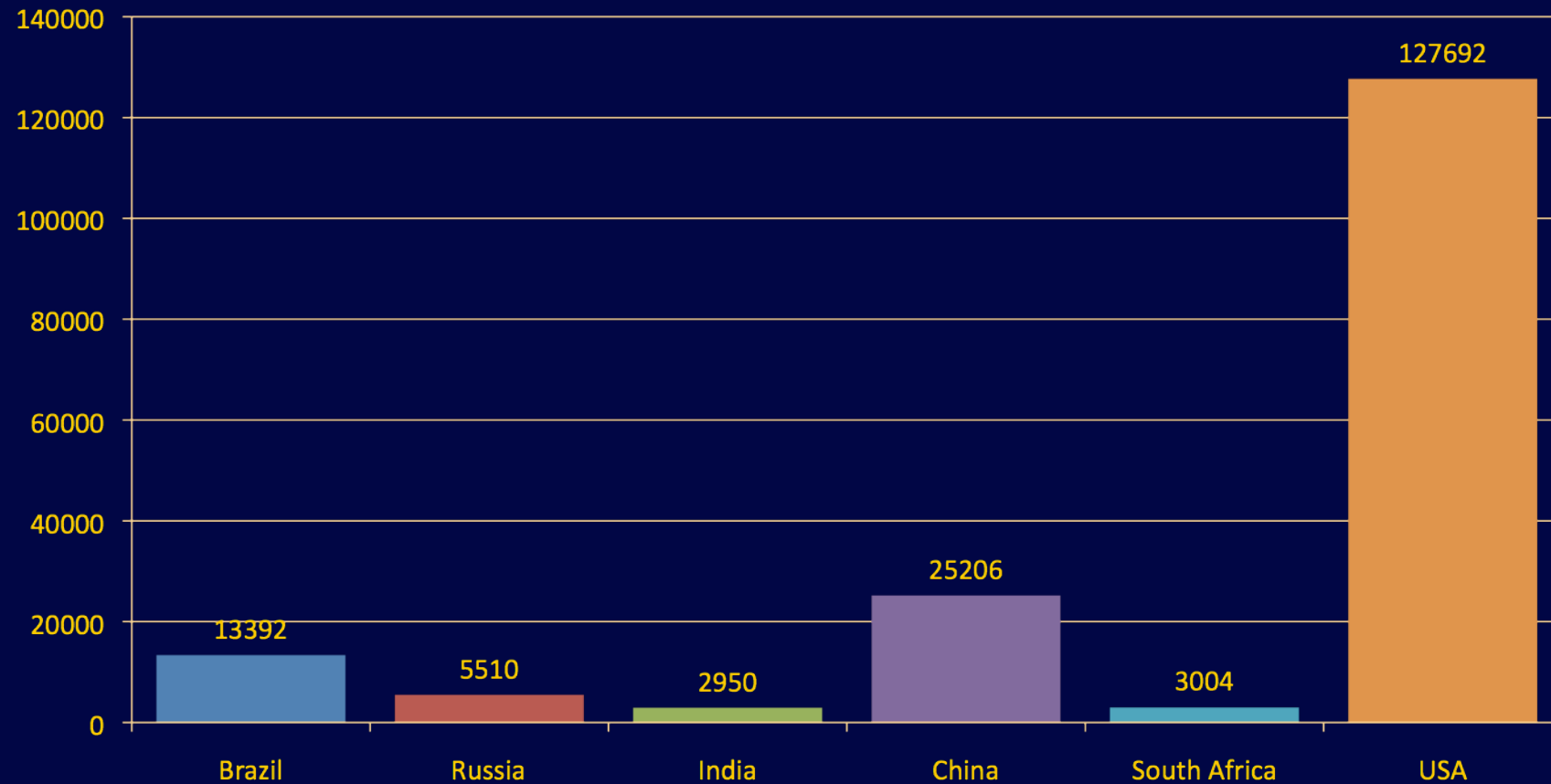


To summarize

- The scale of these economies varies greatly
 - China is by far the largest
- The rate of growth of these economies varies greatly
 - China is the fastest
 - China forecast to have a larger economy than the USA in 2017
 - For the others, the gap will actually increase
- They are all relatively poor countries
 - Including China, which only has a large economy because it has a large population
- They are all exceedingly unequal countries
 - Of the same order of magnitude as the USA, UK, HK
- None of these factors are unique to the BRICS
- In none of these respects are the BRICS more similar than some other countries



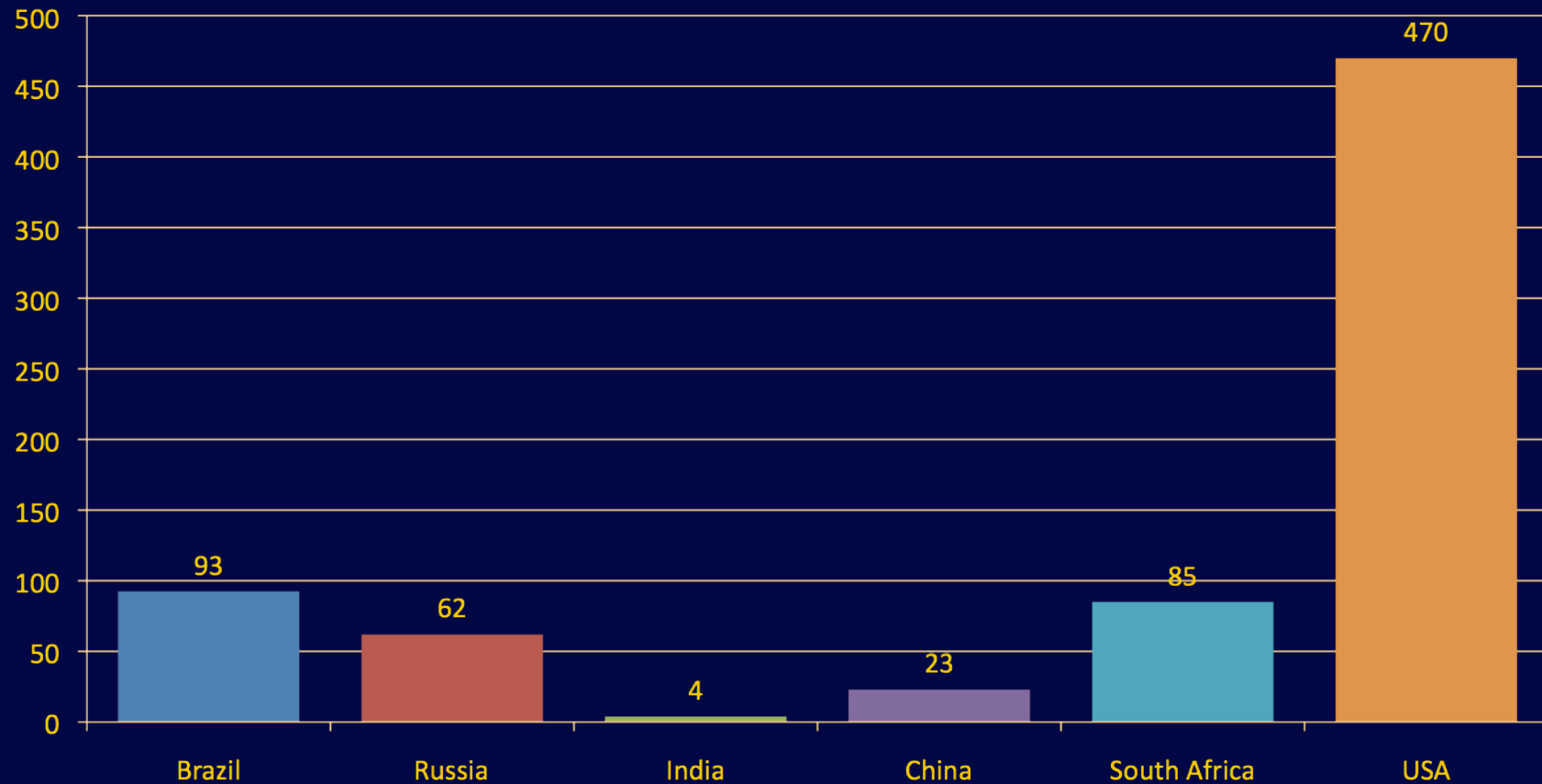
Advertising Expenditure 2011 at Constant 2005 \$USm



Source: World Advertising Research Centre



Per capita adspend in \$US in 2011



Source: Derived from World Advertising Research Centre



香港浸會大學

HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

To summarize

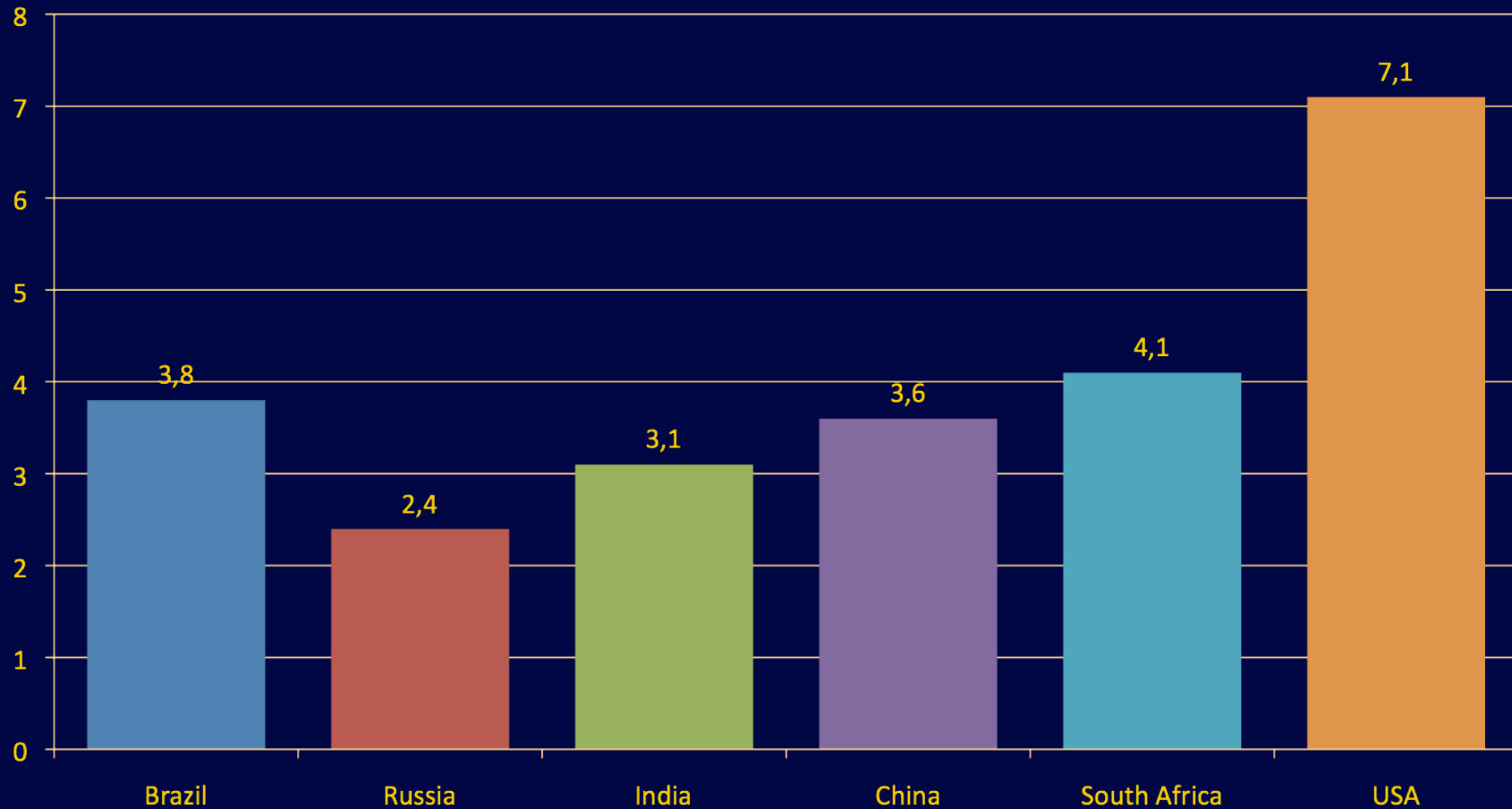
- The US media industry is vastly richer than those in the BRICS
 - Much higher advertising revenues
 - Much higher subscription revenues
 - Likely to remain the dominant source of global media for some time
- The low per capita adspend means that only mass audience products can have high production values
 - Niche media for elite audiences are viable



香港浸會大學
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

A rough measure of corruption

(Higher score = less corruption)



Source: Transparency International *Corruption Perceptions Index 2011*



Persecution of Journalists in Selected Countries

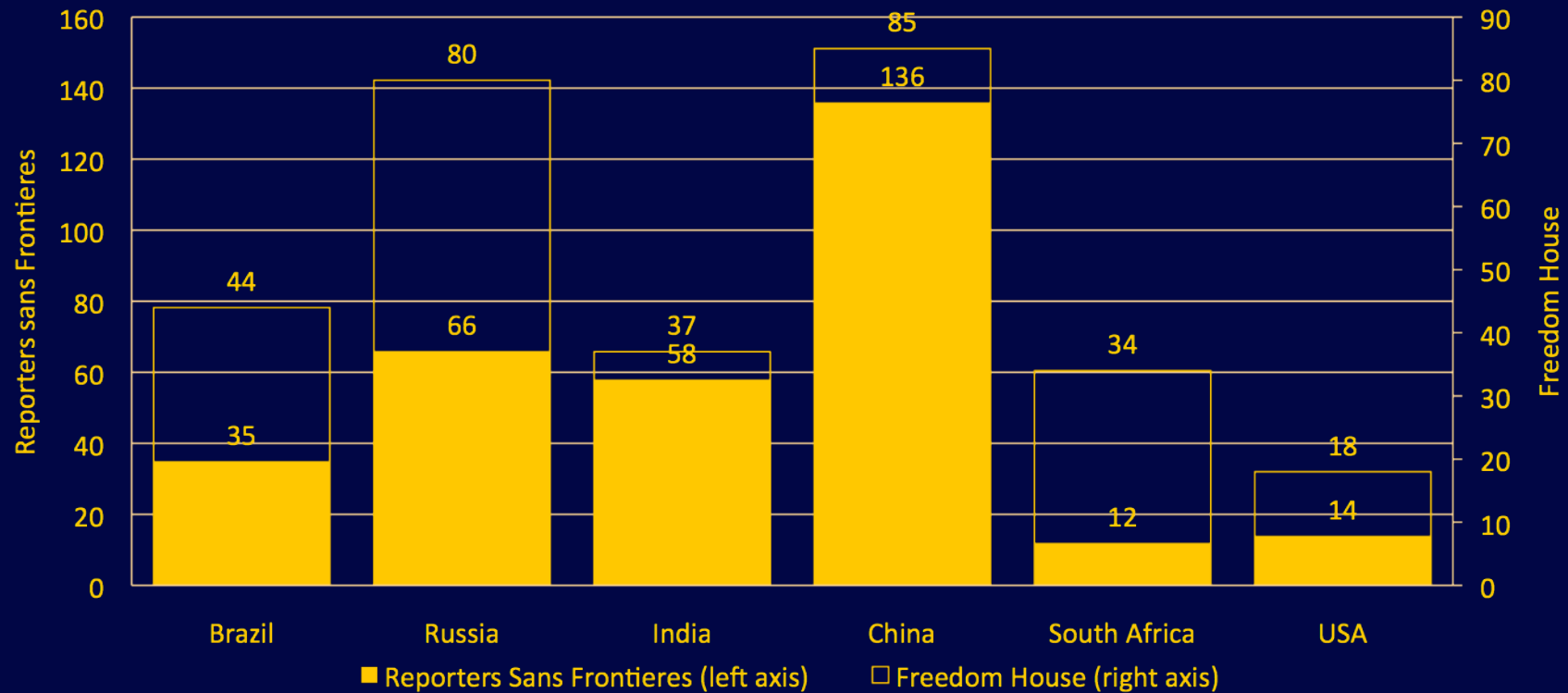
Country	Imprisoned Journalists 2012	Confirmed murders of journalists 1992-2012
Brazil	0	24
Russia	0	54
India	2	29
China	32	2
South Africa	0	3
USA	0	5
Finland	0	0

Source: Committee to Protect Journalists



Rough measures of media freedom

(Lower score = more freedom)



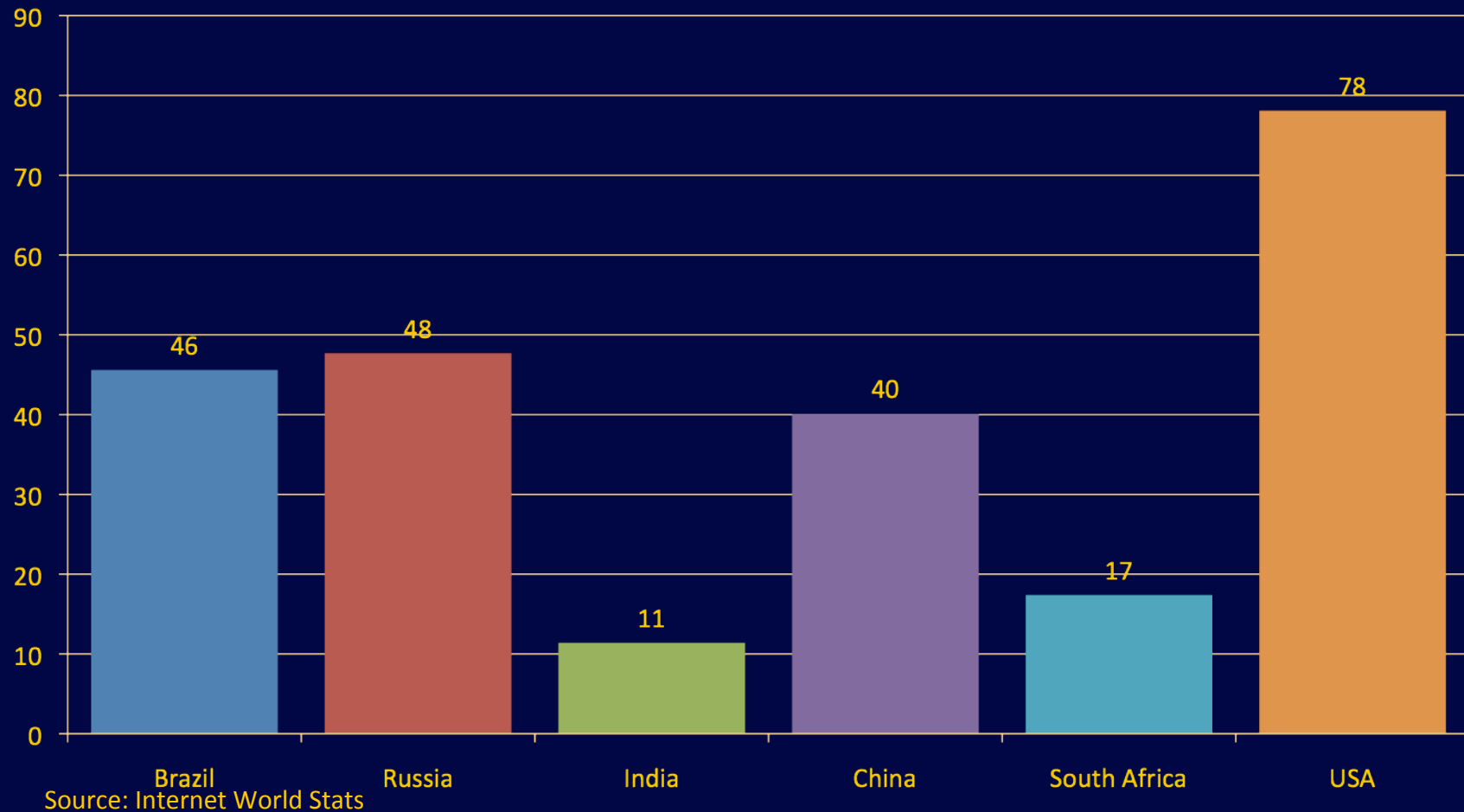
Sources: Reporters Without Frontiers *Press Freedom Index 2011-12*

Freedom House *Freedom of the Press 2012*

School of Communication

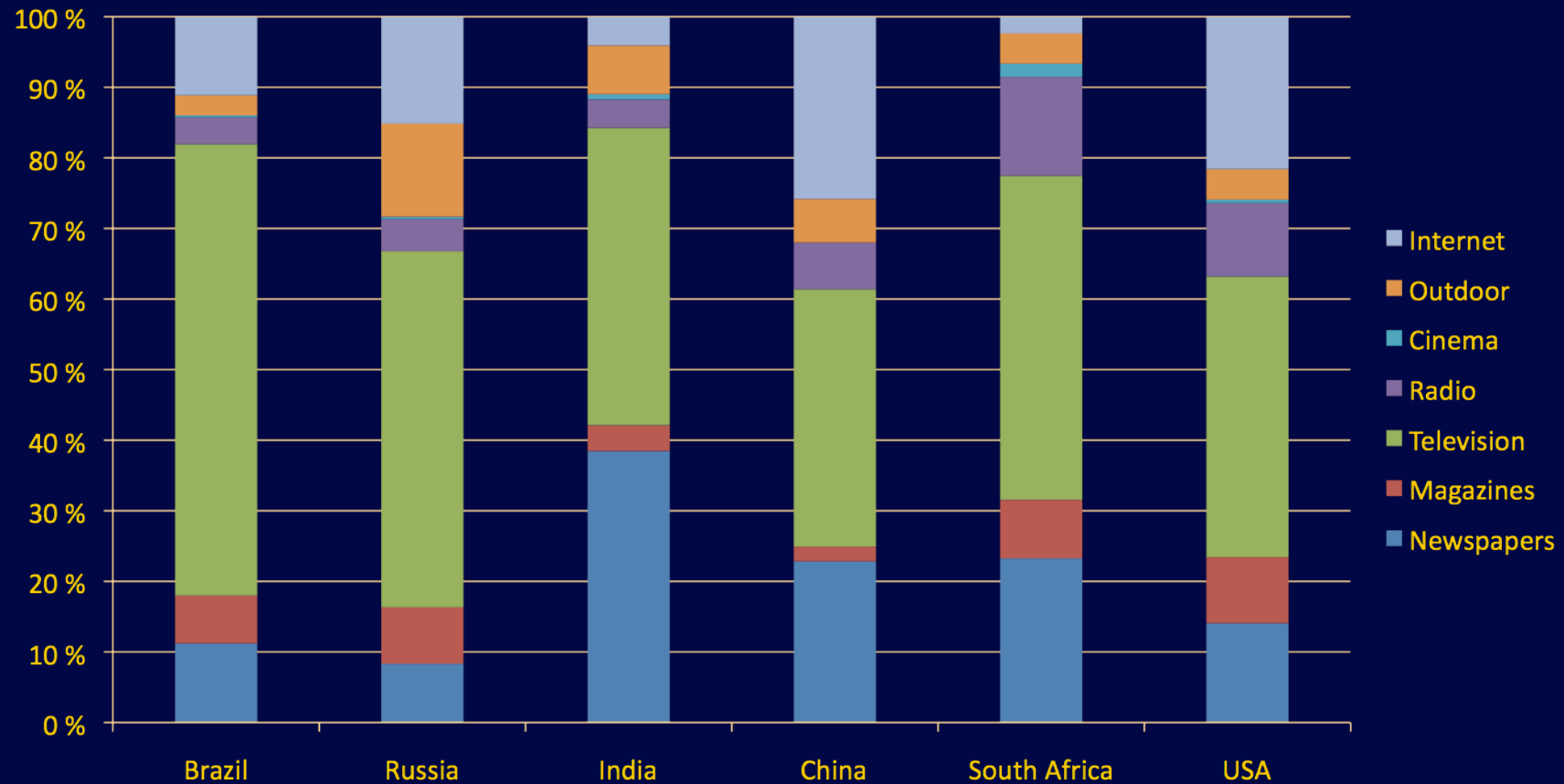


Estimated percentage internet penetration at 30 June 2012





Distribution of Adspend in 2011



Source: World Advertising Research Centre



香港浸會大學

HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

To summarize

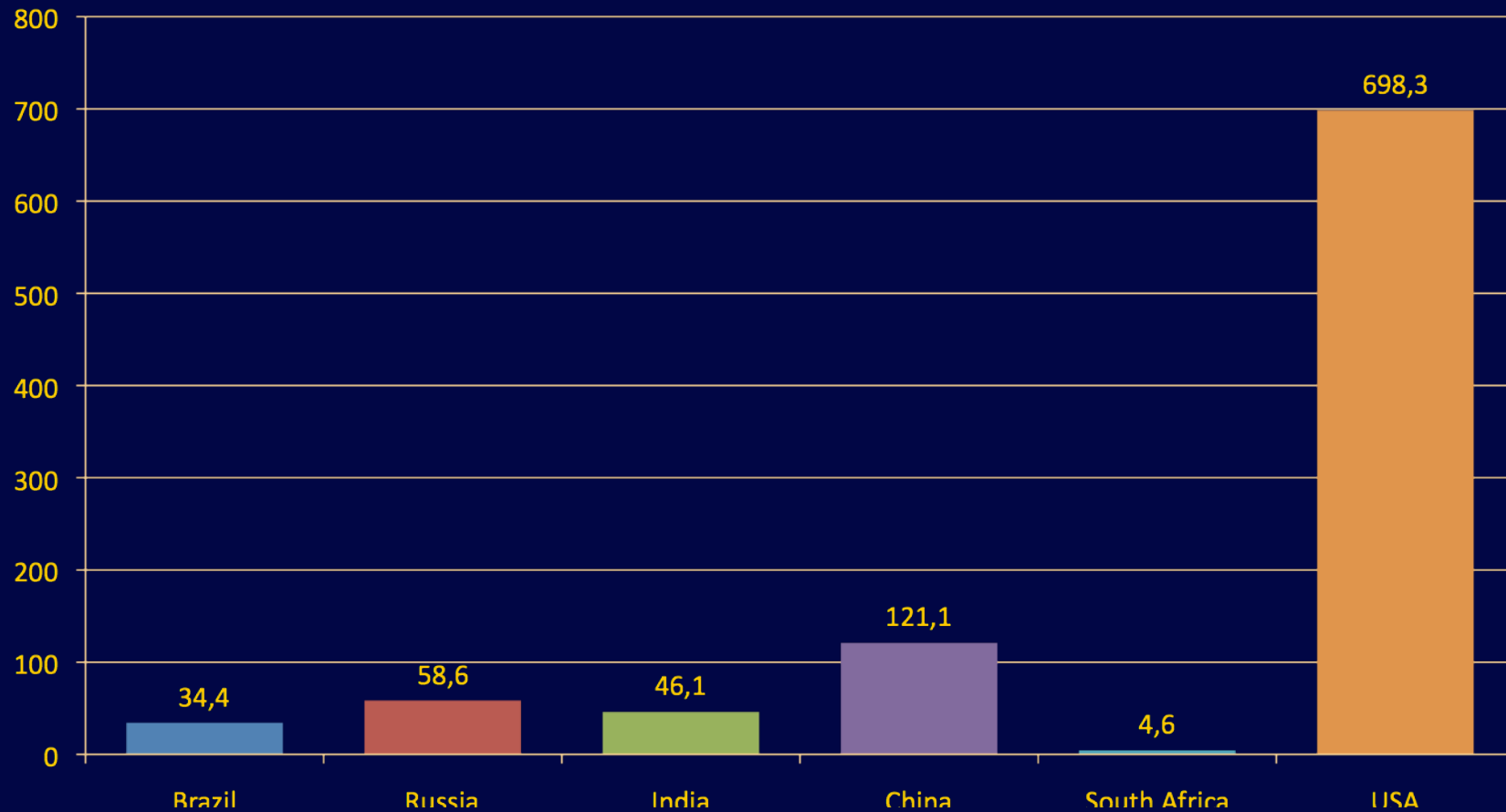
- Various forms of corruption are common amongst media and journalists
- Most of the BRICS are repressive towards journalists
 - South Africa is (was???) an important exception
- According the crude measures available, most of the BRICS have limited degrees of media freedom
 - Again South Africa is (was???) an important exception
- Internet penetration is very uneven
 - Overall much lower than the USA
- Newspaper readership is rising in all of these countries
- Advertising expenditure is moving online
 - Only China seems to be moving towards the US distribution of adspend
- Again, none of these factors are unique to the BRICS
- Again, in none of these factors are BRICS more similar than some other countries



香港浸會大學
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Not yet a military balance

Estimated expenditure in \$billion 2010



Source: SIPRI 2012



Conclusions

- The term “BRICS” is a journalistic and political slogan
- It does not have sufficient rigour to be used as an analytic category for scholars
 - This is particular true of media analysis
- Serious investigations need to identify the difference between BRICS
- Serious investigations need to be prepared to accept that other groupings might be more robust
- World Bank for example speaks of “BIICS” Its importance is that it signifies a major shift in human affairs
 - The evidence suggests that China is the major driver of this shift
 - In the longer term, India might also be a significant player
- The US will remain the main world power for some time yet