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Editorial

Which conditions engender the success of participation in local television? Editor Gabriele Hooffacker looks at various research projects at Leipzig University of Applied Sciences (HTWK) - they have examined the way citizen reporters contribute to local television.

How do the editorials of English Online Newspapers in Russia ideologically represent the U.S. Presidential Candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump? Swetlana Maschinez searched for answers in a critical discourse analysis.

The historical paper of this number is about Daniel Defoe as a journalist. Editor Horst Pöttker looks at Defoe's self-understanding and professional ethos as a journalist. Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) not only wrote the novel Robinson Crusoe, one of the most circulated book in world history, but he also edited and authored one of England's first political magazine *The Review*.

How can the state promote journalism? Carsten Brosda Senator for Culture and Media of the City of Hamburg, gives an answer to this question in his essay for journalism research.

Lutz Frühbrodt highlights the area of conflict between content marketing and journalism. His debate „The peculiar logic of the content marketer“ asks whether content marketing has justified critics of established mass media? Or whether they are just lobbyists for their own cause.

Please feel free to discuss along with us. You can comment all texts directly or you can send us an E-Mail: redaktion@journalistik.online.

But now: Take pleasure in reading number 3 of Journalism Research!

Ideological Representation of the U.S. Presidential Candidates in the Editorials of English Online Newspapers in Russia

A Critical Discourse Analysis

by *Swetlana Maschinez*

Abstract: This study examines the ideological representation of the U.S. Presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in the editorial sections of the three English-language online newspapers in Russia: Sputnik International, Russia Beyond the Headlines and The Moscow Times. Through Jäger's framework, van Leeuwen's model of the social actors' representation, and van Dijk's notion of ideological square as powerful tools of enquiry within Critical Discourse Analysis, several tactics could be identified that were applied to influence public's opinion about the candidates. The results showed that state-owned Russian media outlets made increasingly favorable comments about Donald Trump while consistently ridiculing and offering negative coverage of Hillary Clinton. In addition, an enemy image of America was constructed in the discourse, showing it as a scapegoat for Russia's negative actions and its negative development since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

1. Introduction and Outline of the Study

On November 8th 2016, the citizens of the United States of America voted for their 45th President. Although both candidates, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, generally represented the principles of the Democratic and Republican parties respectively, each candidate contributed a unique dimension to the campaign.

In particular, Russia's involvement in the 58th quadrennial American presidential election can only be described as extraordinary. In fact, the election was overshadowed by fears that Russia was actively seeking to help Donald Trump win, as well as by the apparent mutual sympathy between Trump and the Russian president Vladimir Putin. Even today, the question of whether Russian cyber- and information-operations launched during the campaign were a deciding factor in the outcome of this election still remains to be answered.

This study aims to investigate how English-language online newspaper editorials in Russia expressed

their political ideologies in the presidential election. In order to address this overall aim, the study first looks at several tactics that were applied by the selected English-language online newspapers in Russia in order to ideologically represent the two U.S. Presidential candidates during the final four months of their campaigns. In other words, the main objective of the study is to look at the ideological depiction of the two candidates in the English media in Russia and the rhetorical techniques and strategies the writers employed in their editorials and/or opinion columns. In light of the objectives mentioned above, the main research questions in this study are:

1. What tactics did the selected media outlets employ in order to influence the readers' opinion about the U.S. Presidential candidates?
2. How were the U.S. Presidential candidates ideologically portrayed in the editorial positions of the three English language online newspapers in Russia?
3. What ideological groups are constructed in the discourse of the three selected online newspapers?
 - What ideological position do these groups represent?

2. Theoretical Framework

Russian media, as well as people all over Russia, have expressed a high interest in the U.S. Presidential election. The reason for the constant monitoring of the election can be explained by the fact that the next President could dramatically influence the relationship between Russia and the United States. Consequently, many people in Russia (including those not so interested in politics) were reading and watching the news, discussing the campaign goals of the candidates, and making assumptions and forecasts.

As Malenova (2016: 68) states, in the Russian media the election was often portrayed as a circus, where each candidate was a magician who always pulled a new rabbit out of his or her hat. Moreover, according to her, the coverage of the two Presidential candidates in general as well as their metaphorical portrayals were extremely contradictory in the Russian media. As Kluver (2016) points out, the Russian media depicted Donald Trump during the campaign as a "reasonable" candidate and mainly focused on Trump's "business acumen, his strong leadership skills, and his willingness to pull away from NATO" (p. 67). In contrast to Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton was tied to numerous conflicts over Russian engagement in Syria and the Ukraine.

2.1. Editorials

Opinion columns, also called "editorials," are texts aiming at presenting the views of the newspaper's editorial board on an issue. In other words, editorials are comments and evaluations on news events of national concern that have already been reported in the newspaper. Such news items

may be “political, economic, educational, religious or general socio-cultural issues that border on the welfare of the people” (Ashipu, 2013: 48).

Generally, editorial pages can be considered as a kind of “media discourse,” that belongs to the large class of opinion discourses (van Dijk, 1995; Farrokhi and Nazemi, 2015: 157). Fowler (1991) and Reah (2002) state that the main aim of an editorial is not only to arouse interest and curiosity in readers but also to influence the reader’s views and speak for the news organization’s point of view through analysis and comments on the news. Bhatia (1993, p. 170) and Ogunsiji (2001) argue that an editorial offers the views and opinions of the newspaper, and is normally regarded as the newspaper’s analysis, discussion, opinion or verdict on the issues of the day. Moreover, due to their ideological role editorials are expected to be linguistically complex.

2.2. The ideology concept

According to van Dijk (1998a: 23), the concept of ideology is “one of the most elusive notions in the social sciences.” Although the concept of ideology is vague, it is often used in the media and in the social sciences. Moreover, it has been defined in many ways by various schools of thought and by a vast number of different scholars working on ideology, power relations, hegemonic trends as well as discourse studies. Despite this variety, van Dijk’s (1988) definition is particularly well suited for the purpose of this study, as it allows analyzing ideology through a critical discourse analysis approach. According to van Dijk (2006b), the definition of ideology is complex and multidisciplinary.

For this reason, he proposes several theses in order to clarify his notion of ideology. The first one is that ideologies are primarily some kind of “ideas,” i.e. belief systems. The second assumption implies that there are no private, personal ideologies because ideologies as belief systems are socially shared by the members of a collectivity of social actors. The third thesis assumes that, compared other socially shared beliefs, such as sociocultural knowledge or social attitudes, ideologies are rather “fundamental” or “axiomatic” (van Dijk, 2006b). Consequently, they control and organize other socially shared beliefs of a fairly general and abstract nature. Finally, van Dijk (2006b) argues that ideologies are gradually acquired and sometimes change over a time period and thus, consequently need to be relatively stable. In order to acquire or change ideologies, usually many discourses and experiences are necessary.

2.3. Critical Discourse Analysis

According to van Dijk (1998c: 352), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is “a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context.” Thus, researchers take an explicit position with regard to social inequality and aim to understand, expose,

and resist it. Their main focus is to present various ways in which these inequalities are enacted by the privileged and resisted by the underprivileged. In relation to this approach, Fairclough (1995: 132) notes that the main aim of CDA is to “systematically explore the opaque relationship of causality and determine between a) discursive practices, events, and texts, and b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes.”

In other words, CDA is an approach that is generally interested in analyzing “social phenomena which are necessarily complex and thus require a multi-methodical approach” (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 2). The central principle of CDA, however, is its critical approach. The approach analyzes specifically the use of issues of power, hegemony and resistance in various fields of language. Consequently, it also pursues the aim of CDA to reveal hidden relationships and causes between discourse and society that are not obvious to the people involved in the discourse (Fairclough, 1992: 9). Thus, in this context, “critical” implies showing hidden connections, relations and causes.

Critical discourse studies can involve many dimensions. One important dimension focuses on ideologies framed and propagated in various discourses in social contexts. As Fairclough (1989) states, one of the main objectives of CDA is to deconstruct ideological assumptions that are hidden in written texts or oral speech in order to resist and overcome various forms of power. Deciphering ideologies is essential because “ideologies are typically, though not exclusively, expressed and reproduced in discourse and communication, including non-verbal semiotic messages, such as pictures, photographs and movies” (van Dijk, 1995: 17). In other words, CDA mainly focuses on how social relations, identity, knowledge, and power are constructed through written and spoken texts in communities, schools, the media, and the political arena (Luke, 2005).

3. Methods

3.1. Analytical frameworks

In this study, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is the main analytical approach. The study employed three frameworks as powerful tools of enquiry within Critical Discourse Analysis, proposed by three different CDA scholars, in order to analyze various aspects specified in the research questions.

The analysis addressed the first research question mainly with the CDA approach of Siegfried Jäger (2015), who was the first to publish a German-language book about the methodology of CDA using Michal Foucault’s discourse theory. According to Jäger, the first step in a CDA is the conception and planning phase. Here, the researcher must choose and explain his or her general subject and discourse plane. The second phase is the material identification phase. The concrete corpus for analysis must be identified, delineated, and all specifications must be justified. In the subsequent collection phase, a general characterization of data sources must be provided.

The next step is the actual analysis of the corpus. This is divided into two parts: the structural

analysis and the detailed analysis. A structural analysis should roughly capture the characteristics of articles on particular aspects of interest, such as illustrations, layout, the use of collective symbols, the vocabulary, and so on, and identify which forms are typical for the newspaper (Jäger, 2015: 95-97). The next step is a detailed analysis of typical discourse fragments (Jäger, 2015: 98-108). For this purpose, discourse fragments that are typical for the particular newspaper are selected on the basis of the structural analysis. A detailed analysis should cover the following aspects of the typical discourse fragments: the context, surface of the text, rhetorical means, content and ideological statements, as well as the discourse position and the overall message of the article. At the end of the detailed analysis, the interpretations of single aspects are combined into a total interpretation of the article. Finally, the last step proposed by Jäger (2015: 108-111) is the synoptic analysis. Here, a final assessment of the newspaper's discourse position is made. The findings from the structural analysis and the detailed analysis are interpreted in relation and in comparison to each other.

The second research question focuses on the depiction of the two U.S. Presidential candidates, which is why van Leeuwen's (2008) framework analyses the representation of social actors is an important part of this study. In his book on the representation of social actors, van Leeuwen (2008: 32) introduces "a sociosemantic inventory of the ways in which social actors can be represented." His model allows the critical enquirer to "bring to light [...] systematic omissions and distortions in representations" (van Leeuwen, 1993: 194). To this end, several morpho-syntactic categories of his inventory were used in this study to look at the ways Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump were represented as actors in the editorials. The selected categories analyzed in this study were: inclusion and exclusion, suppression and backgrounding, activation and passivation, subjection and beneficialisation, individualization and assimilation, determination and indetermination, and finally nomination and categorization.

In order to answer the third research question, the researcher identified, scrutinized, and compared the ideology carrying categories proposed by van Dijk (1995; 2006a). His notion of the so-called "ideological square" helped to identify ideological groups in the discourse and to understand the reasons for their existence. The concept of the ideological square mainly focuses on the strategies of a positive "in-group" description and a negative "out-group" description (van Dijk, 1998a). The double strategy of this binary opposition comprises van Dijk's semantic macro strategies, which provide the features for positive self- presentation and negative other-presentation. As van Dijk (1998a) observes, the ideological square acts as a kind of justification for the presence of inequality in the society by polarizing "in-groups" and "out-groups" through the process of emphasizing "Our" good properties/actions and "Their" bad ones as well as mitigating "Our" negative properties/actions and "Their" positive ones (van Dijk, 1998a: 35). There are numerous discursive structures and strategies that aim at helping to acquire, express, enact and reproduce ideologies in a discourse (van Dijk, 2004). Van Dijk (1998a: 45; 1995) defined several ideology-carrying categories that were applied in this study: surface structure, syntax, lexicon, local semantics, global semantics, and rhetoric. Furthermore, in his paper "Politics, Ideology, and Discourse" (2006a), van Dijk elaborates on 27 ideological strategies, among which the fundamental dichotomy of "self positive-representation" and "other negative-representation" stand out. The selected key terms of the

framework are the following: Actor Description; Categorization; Disclaimer; Evidentially; Hyperbole; Implication; Irony; Lexicalization; National Self Glorification; Number Game; Polarization; Presupposition; and Vagueness (van Dijk, 2006a, p. 735).

3.2. Analysis

This study focused on examining editorials published in the last four months before the 58th quadrennial American presidential election (July to November 8th 2016). As for the choice of the media outlet, there are a number of English online newspapers in Russia that mainly target an international English-speaking audience, internationally-oriented residents of Russia, and Russian citizens abroad. Table 1 presents the top 10 English-speaking online newspapers in Russia sorted by their global Alexa traffic rank, Facebook fans, and their Twitter followers.

Table 1: *Top 10 English Online Newspapers in Russia*

Rank	Newspaper	Facebook Fans	Twitter Followers	Alexa Rank (global)
1	Russia Today	4.331.866	2.589.259	368
2	Sputnik International	1.123.145	187.000	892
3	Meduza	185.126	966.600	2.338
4	Russia Beyond the Headlines	280.901	16.447	18.828
5	Russian Insider	204.419	27.314	35.855
6	TASS	27.314	37.792	41.478
7	The Moscow Times	727.856	113.946	53.071
8	English Russia	60.487	36.218	54.710
9	Pravda Report	70.033	21.324	76.197
10	CNN Point	37.996	491	9.515.931

Last updated on November 8th, 2017

There were a number of criteria for the selection of the news portals for this analysis such as language, orientation of the media outlets, presence of an editorial section and/or an opinion column, and size of the outlets. A relevant selection criterion was that the media outlet needed to be popular and well-known among social media and internet users in general. Although *RT* is the most widespread Russian broadcaster that is also watched and read internationally (Alexa global ranking 340), this media outlet was excluded from this research. The reason for this decision was *RT*'s focus on an op-eds by guest writers, so that the opinion of the *RT* editors remained unclear.

After reviewing the most important and popular English online newspapers in Russia and taking all the selection criteria into consideration, 27 editorial pieces in three media outlets were chosen for the final analysis: *Sputnik International* (16 articles), *Russia Beyond the Headlines* (6 articles) and *The Moscow Times* (5 articles). The first two media outlets are most likely to represent the "official" governmental view. *The Moscow Times*' angle of reporting was considered worthy of investigation as an alternative, non-governmental Russian opinion on events.

For the detailed analysis two articles per newspaper were selected due to the fact that in sum they represented the main discourse strands of the particular paper and exhibited the media outlet's typical features, such as visual signs, rhetoric, etc.

4. Results

4.1. Jäger's CDA approach

Sputnik International

Structural analysis of *Sputnik International*'s discourse showed that Russia and its attitude toward elections as well as the Russian-U.S. relations in general were the focal points of its discourse. The main discourse strands were Clinton's anti-Russian election campaign, the candidates' connections to Russia, and Russian opinion on which candidate would contribute more to an improvement in Russian-U.S. relations.

The detailed analysis of two *Sputnik International*'s editorials revealed that although both candidates had diametrically opposed views on Russia, neither of the candidates gave Russians real hope of a relief in tensions with Washington. Consequently, since there was no prospect for improvement, it would be important to maintain the status-quo. In other words: predictability in foreign policy is always better than unpredictability, which unsubtly means that "predictable foe" Clinton was better than "unpredictable friend" Trump.

The synoptic analysis revealed several tactics applied by *Sputnik International* in order to influence the public opinion could be identified. The first and most obvious tactic is *Sputnik*'s application of visual signs, especially the eye-catchers and/or pull quotes. These are usually short pieces of text set

in larger type than the rest of the page and intended to attract attention. They were especially used in order to highlight experts' positive opinions on Trump or experts' negative opinions on Clinton.

The second tactic applied by *Sputnik International* was spreading of misinformation, withholding of some important facts on particular issues, or implying information without providing any evidence. For example, the media outlet stated that neither *RT* nor *Sputnik* were state-run media outlets, although there was evidence that they were both operated by companies funded by the Russian government (Intelligence Community Assessment, 2017).

The third tactic was the victimization of Trump and Russia. *Sputnik International* consistently cast Trump as the target of Clinton's accusations and unfair coverage from traditional US media outlets that, according to *Sputnik*, were subservient to a corrupt political establishment. This tactic was intensified through an assimilation of Hillary Clinton and other Trump's opponents into groups while individualizing Donald Trump within the discourse: Clinton and her supporters ("Clinton camp," "Hillary's team," "Clinton's campaigners," "Clinton supporters") and also Trump's undesirable supporters ("radical hate groups," "white supremacists," and "racist hate groups") were juxtaposed in opposition to the individual Donald Trump. This created an impression of unfairness and contributed to the intention of the outlet to depict Trump as a victim. Moreover, additional victimization of Russia through Clinton's accusations regarding the WikiLeaks email dump and sanctions over Ukraine portrayed Russia as Trump's partner in crime. Paradoxically, *Sputnik* denied any direct connections between Trump and Russia..

Finally, the word choice as well as the rhetoric of the discourse in terms of Clinton's anti-Russia campaign revealed several interesting techniques for influencing public opinion. Expressions such as "anti-Russian hysteria," "using the Russian card," "conspiracy theory," and "Cold War" were very prominent within *Sputnik's* discourse. For example, the metaphor "Russian card" stood for Russia's involvement in the American election and was often used in combination with Clinton's accusations of Russia being responsible for the WikiLeaks file dump. However, the editorial pieces either denied such accusations referring to the fact that there was no evidence or just constructed an axiom of Russia's innocence. This was achieved by the use of tactics such as anonymous indeterminations, exaggerations, ironical remarks, and generalizations in order to cause ambiguity and thus an ability to not give rise to precise truth conditions.

Russia Beyond the Headlines

The structural analysis of the RBTH's discourse identified two main topics addressed by the media outlet: Russia's view on the American elections and the electoral campaigns of the Presidential candidates. The three main discourse strands were the anti-Russian campaign of Clinton, Trump's popularity in Russia, and Russia's favorite candidate.

The detailed analysis of the two selected articles identified and explained several reasons for

Trump's popularity in Russia. Moreover, the editorial pieces favored Trump's presidency over Clinton's presidency because of Clinton's negative history with Putin from her time as Secretary of State, which would make it difficult to improve the Russia-U.S. relationship.

The synoptic analysis of the *RBTH*'s discourse strategies revealed several tactics that editors applied in order to influence the opinion of its readership. An important tactic was the application of visuals in the *RBTH* discourse. For instance, cartoons were used for editorial pieces that focused on the anti-Russian campaign of Clinton and her accusations against Trump for his apparent connections to Russia. Within the discourse, these two aspects were either rhetorically ridiculed or ironically refuted, which was intensified through the use of cartoons as headers of the editorial pieces. Another tactic was the partial assimilation of Hillary Clinton to the "U.S. Democratic Party," "American Democrats," and "Democrats," especially when talking about Russia's role in the American election and Clinton's accusations against Russia.

In line with this, a partial victimization of Russia could be identified. Russia as an actor was depicted as a victim abused by Clinton and her campaigners in order to attack Trump. Several rhetorical and stylistic tactics were applied in order to influence the readers' opinion about the candidates. The most prominent tactic was the use of ideologically loaded words, metaphors, and ironic remarks. For example, the terms "Russian card," "demonization of Russia," "devil," "diabolic cunning," and "Cold War" were only used in connection with Clinton. Another important tactic was to include only anti-Clinton quotes from the experts, use indeterminations in order to achieve vagueness, and misinforming the readers by implying statements without supporting the argumentation with proven facts.

The Moscow Times

The structural analysis of *MT*'s discourse identified only one main discourse topic, which was Russia's politics. Here, three discourse strands deserved closer attention: Trump's connections to Russia, the alt-right movement, and Russian-U.S. relations.

The detailed analysis showed that with the "Trump phenomenon," it is now time for big changes for the West. Moreover, these changes have already happened in Russia but they have always been criticized by the Western society.

The synoptic analysis revealed several tactics applied by *MT* in order to influence public opinion could be identified. Firstly, visual signs were applied in order to support the content of the editorial pieces. These visual signs were mostly photographs or photomontages supporting to the text. Secondly, the authors of the editorial pieces were reluctant to clearly express their discourse positions. They mostly relied on quotes from Western media outlets on topics such as Trump's connections to Russia and Russia's role in the WikiLeaks email dump. However, the discourse strand of WikiLeaks was not prominent within the *MT* discourse and the hacking attack was only mentioned

once. Thirdly, the authors mostly individualized both candidates within the discourse, although a few times they assimilated Trump to an “anti-establishment constituency.” Clinton on the other hand was once assimilated to a “Hillary Clinton administration.” This shows that in comparison to the other media outlets analyzed in this paper, MT did not victimize Trump and constructed groups that supported him instead of opposing him. Finally, the authors widely used ideologically loaded words and metaphors in their discourse. The most prominent metaphors and minus words were: “Cold war,” “conspiracy,” “the Russian trap,” and “the Trump card.”

The overall picture of Russia and the West that was established in *The Moscow Times*'s discourse was predominantly negative. Russia was depicted as being the same as the West, although Western society refuses to acknowledge it. This is the reason why Russia subtly mocks and indirectly sabotages America, as long as it does not admit the similarities.

4.2. Social Actors Representation According to van Leeuwen

Within the editorial pieces of *Sputnik International*, Hillary Clinton was slightly more included into the discourse than Donald Trump (51 vs. 49 percent). However, she was also more excluded (65 vs. 35 percent) and more backgrounded (80 vs. 20 percent) than Trump. The editors of *Sputnik* strongly referred to Trump in terms of his occupation and emphasized his role of the Republican nominee, a successful businessman, and a “bombastic” millionaire. Yet, the researcher found that the editorial pieces of *Sputnik International* mainly focused on Hillary Clinton, her email scandal, as well as on her accusations of Trump and Russia. Clinton was activated as an individual within the discourse, mainly in terms of her accusations against Trump (52 percent). She objectified and labeled Trump as a “Russian agent,” a “Kremlin tool,” an “unwitting agent” of Vladimir Putin, and a “Moscow’s man.” As a reaction to these accusations, Trump was first passivated (53 percent), but later activated (48 percent) when he defended himself or denied the allegations. Moreover, the prominent individualization of Trump (71 percent), as well as an enhanced assimilation of Clinton (96 percent) into the “Clinton Camp” or “Clinton Team” intensified the effect of victimization of the Republican candidate within the discourse.

Contrary to this, the editorial pieces of *Russia Beyond the Headlines* focused mostly on Donald Trump as social actor (62 percent). Additionally, Clinton was more excluded (90 percent vs. 10 percent) and backgrounded (90 percent vs. 10 percent) than Trump. Trump was also almost twice as much nominated (67 percent vs. 33 percent), formalized (77 percent vs. 23 percent), categorized (67 percent vs. 33 percent), and appraised (83 percent vs. 17 percent) as Clinton. The authors labelled him as “an eccentric billionaire,” the “Republican enfant terrible,” the “flamboyant Republican presidential candidate,” a “witty provocateur,” and in contrast, referred to Clinton as a “meticulous intellectual.” In addition, Trump was also more activated than Clinton (76 percent vs. 24 percent). In terms of the category individualization and assimilation, Clinton was most likely assimilated to the “U.S. Democratic Party” or “Democrats” (91 percent) while Trump was mostly depicted as an individual (71 percent).

The focus of *The Moscow Times* was clearly on the Russian-U.S. relations, which is why the two candidates were not always in the focus of attention. However, both candidates were treated similarly within the discourse, although Clinton was more activated (68 percent), which could be explained with her active role in the accusations of Trump. Within the editorial pieces of *The Moscow Times*, Donald Trump was slightly more included into the discourse of the online newspaper than Hillary Clinton (54 to 46 percent). The authors categorized (58 percent vs. 42 percent), and especially functionalized (67 percent vs. 33 percent) Trump more than Clinton. She was referred to as “a candidate of the establishment,” and “Democratic nominee” whereas Trump was described as the “Republican Presidential candidate,” “doubtlessly talented Donald Trump,” and “The Donald.” In comparison to Trump, Clinton was more activated (64 percent vs. 36 percent) and much less passivated (32 percent vs. 68 percent). Trump was more often treated as a subject in comparison to Clinton (67 percent vs. 33 percent) and slightly more individualized.

4.3. Ideological groups and ideological square

Within the discourse of *Sputnik International*, three major ideological groups could be identified: Russia, the Clinton camp and the United States. The most prominent ideological square was established between the group of Russia/Kremlin/Moscow as “Us” and the Clinton camp/Clinton campaigners/Hillary’s team as “Them.” The second constellation was Russia/Kremlin/Moscow as “Us” and the White House/America/the United States as “Them.”

As for the discourse of *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, also three main ideological groups were identified: the U.S. Democratic party, the Clinton camp, and Russia. The ideological square was established between the U.S. Democratic Party/American Democrats/Democrats as “Them” and Russia/Kremlin as “Us.” In addition, the Clinton camp was represented as the opponent of Russia (“Them”), separately from the overall foe – the U.S. Democratic Party.

Contrary to this, five ideological groups could be identified within the discourse of *The Moscow Times*: Russia, the West, the United States, the U.S. political establishment, and the Trump supporters. The most prominent ideological square was established between Russia/Moscow/Kremlin (“Us”) and the West (“Them”) as well as between America/Americans/the White House (“Them”) and Russia/Moscow/Kremlin/Russian political elite (“Us”).

As can be seen, the analysis of the ideological squares showed different enemy images and out-groups among the analyzed media outlets. While *Sputnik* explicitly focused on the Clinton camp and the U.S. government in general as the enemy image, the *RBTH* differentiated between the Democratic Party as a whole and the Clinton camp as a part of the Democratic Party. Within the discourse strand of the Russian-U.S. relations, the editors depicted the Democrats as the out-group, whereas their focus in the discourse strand of the WikiLeaks email dump was on the Clinton camp as a part of the Democratic Party. The depiction of the out-groups in *MT*, however, was more global than in the previous two media outlets. The main out-groups were the West, USA, the U.S. political establishment (which is basically the Democratic Party), and the Trump supporters, while the focus

was mostly on the West and the USA. The U.S. political establishment was the rival of the Trump supporters or the “anti-establishment constituency” and of the Russian government.

Several tactics were used in order to emphasize the own positive and the opponents’ negative sides, as well as to de-emphasize the own negative and the opponent’s positive sides. On the discourse level “general,” proposed by van Dijk, positive self-representation of Russia and negative others-representation of the Democrats could be especially observed within the discourse of *Sputnik* and *RBTH*. In the case of *MT*, Russia as “Us,” as well as the West and the Americans as “Them,” were represented neutrally or negatively. Interestingly, the West and America were largely held responsible for Russia’s recent questionable actions, such as the annexation of Crimea, as well as the country’s negative development over the past years. However, although Russia is “an unpredictable and recalcitrant” player, it is the United States that should change its course (Lipmann, 2016). Yet, the American establishment is seen as unwilling to contemplate compromise and is instead anxious to punish Russia rather than negotiate solutions.

As for the discourse level of “form,” several tactics to establish an ideological square could be identified. First, *Sputnik International* in particular used surface structures in order to create a positive Russia image. Through callouts and pull quotes, the editors highlighted positive experts’ quotes about Russia and its achievements. In terms of the syntax of the discourse, Russia as an actor was always activated when it had to deny any accusations or defend itself from allegedly unfair accusations in general. This tactic ensured a direct focus on the actor, although the editors did not provide any evidence and did not support their arguments with objective facts. However, Russia as a social actor has also been passivated in order to focus the readers’ attention on the actor as affected by negative action of others: “Russia has been routinely dragged into election debates” (Sputnik4).

On the discourse level of rhetorical means, all analyzed media outlets used alliterations in order to draw readers’ attention to particular sections of the text, and to create rhythm and mood. The most prominent alliteration that should support the out-group building were the Clinton camp and Clinton campaigners. In addition, several semantic figures and operations such as metaphors, irony, hyperboles, and repetitions were used in order to draw readers’ attention on the social actors. Especially *RBTH* applied the tactic of irony to depict the in-group/out-group relations. The editors mostly used ironical remarks to ridicule America in general or explicitly the Clinton camp: “As if America does not have more important problems” (Bovt, 2016), “the willy plot that even the Soviet KGB couldn’t dream of” (Lukyanov, 2016). Finally, especially *Sputnik International* used the technique of repetition within its discourse to emphasize Russia’s and the Russian media innocence in America’s accusations.

In terms of van Dijk’s discourse level of meaning, several strategies are important to note. In the discourse structure of the lexicon, particular lexical choices as exaggeratedly negative addressing of Russia from the Clinton camp as well as the usage of the minus words and phrases could be identified. For example, the Clinton camp addressed Russia as “Big bad russkies” (Sputnik5), the “dark side” (Sputnik6), a “feared puppet master behind Trump” and “alleged perpetrator of the DNC computer network hack” (Trudilyubov, 2016). Moreover, it used such minus words and ideologically

loaded words as “demonization of Russia,” (RBTH2), “devil,” “diabolic cunning and a willy plot” (Lukjanow, 2016), as well as “anti-Russian hysteria” (Sputnik5), “conspiracy-toned discussion” (Trudilyubow, 2016), etc. in connection to Russia. Especially in terms of the WikiLeaks conflict, the authors used the tactic of implicitness/presuppositions and evidentiality in order to de-emphasize Russia’s negative actions or to deny them. For example, in Sputnik7 and Sputnik8, the authors of the editorial pieces implied that Russia had nothing to do with the email leak without providing any evidence or explanation on this issue.

However, the most important tactic was the victimization of Russia in connection with generalizations and specifications, especially within the discourses of *Sputnik* and *RBTH*. The media outlets extensively described all the things the Democrats accused Russia of and made only general declarations about Russia’s actual role in the conflict in order to avoid explicit statements.

Moreover, the authors of the editorial pieces very detailed depicted the situation with the primaries before the WikiLeaks scandal and thus emphasized the assumption that the leak was used by the Democrats in order to blame the country’s intelligence services for the document leak. A number of indeterminations could be identified in terms of the WikiLeaks scandal that were used in order to de-emphasize Russia’s role in it and to distract the reader from this sensitive topic: “the voices have instantly emerged claiming that the leak was organized by the Russians” (S6). Consequently, the negative actions of the Clinton camp were highlighted through specifications, while the negative role of Russia was played down by generalizations.

5. Discussion

This study examined the ideological representation of U.S. Presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in the editorial sections of the three English-language online newspapers in Russia: *Sputnik International*, *Russia Beyond the Headlines* and *The Moscow Times*. After the CDA analysis on the basis of Jäger (2015), van Leeuwen (2008), and van Dijk (1995; 2006a), extensive answers to research questions could be found.

In order to answer the first research question of what tactics the selected media outlets applied in order to influence the readers’ opinion, on the basis of Jäger’s CDA framework (2015), this study has identified several strategies that were frequently used by the media outlets as effective devices in persuasion and justification. The most prominent tactics were the application of the visual signs, ideologically loaded word choice and lexicalization, rhetorical figures, hyperboles, implicitness, evidentiality, spreading of misinformation, victimization, polarizations, disclaimers, and comparisons. Although all analyzed media outlets used visual signs in order to influence their readership, the main difference between them was the way of their application within the discourse.

While *Sputnik International* mainly focused on the anti-Clinton and pro-Trump callouts and pull quotes from the experts, *Russia Beyond the Headlines* and *The Moscow Times* used photomontages

and caricatures that supported ideological messages in the editorial pieces. These messages were also supported by the editors' ideologically loaded word choice as well as rhetorical figures, such as metaphors, irony and hyperbole. Especially in the discourse of *Sputnik* and *RBTH* ideologically loaded words and phrases, such as the *Cold War*, the *Russian agent*, and the *Kremlin stooge*, were used by editors in connection to Trump and Russia. All three media outlets extensively employed metaphors, such as the "Russian trap" and the "Russia card." In addition, spreading of misinformation, the withholding of important facts on particular issues, implying information without providing any evidence, and using indeterminations in order to achieve vagueness were especially prominent tactics within the discourse of *Sputnik* and *RBTH*. Finally, a consistent depiction of Trump and Russia as the target of Clinton's accusations and an allegedly unfair coverage from the traditional US media outlets showed especially *Sputnik's* and *RBTH's* aim to victimize both actors.

The second research question of how both candidates were depicted as social actors within the discourse was addressed on the basis of the framework proposed by van Leeuwen (2008). Although Clinton was slightly more included into the discourse of *Sputnik* than Trump, *RBTH* and *MT* included her into their discourse less often as an individual. In general, she was more excluded from the discourse and more often backgrounded than Trump. Moreover, especially in the case of *Sputnik*, Clinton was often referred to by her first name whereas Trump was addressed by his surname. Within the discourse, Clinton was also often activated in terms of her accusations of Trump having ties to Russia and Russia's role in the American election and the WikiLeaks scandal. Trump, however, was mostly passivated when receiving the accusations and later activated in order to defend himself or deny the allegations. In line with this aspect, the already mentioned victimization tactic applied by *Sputnik* and *RBTH* was supported by an assimilation of Hillary Clinton into a group (i.e. the Clinton camp) and at the same time individualization of Donald Trump. The individualization of Trump depicted him as a more independent individual in comparison to Clinton and supported the impression of victimization since Trump's opponents operated in groups while he appeared to operate alone.

In contrast to *Sputnik* and *RBTH*, *MT* individualized and treated both candidates more similarly without victimizing Trump. These differences could be explained with different orientations, corporate lines, and financial structures of the media outlets. The state-funded outlets like *Sputnik* and *RBTH* mainly focused in their coverage of Clinton's email scandals, her anti-Russian attitude, and the role of WikiLeaks in the election campaign. They showed Trump as a "controversial" candidate and emphasized his sympathy for Russia. On the other side, the focus of the independent media outlet *MT* was more global and its focus mostly was on the Russian-U.S. relations. The overall picture of Russia and the West established in the *MT's* discourse was predominantly negative, as Russia was depicted as being the same as the West, although the West refuses to acknowledge this similarity. This is the reason why Russia subtly mocks and indirectly sabotages America until it admits the similarities.

Finally, the last two research questions - what ideological groups were constructed in the discourse and which ideological positions they represented - were addressed. The analysis allowed to identify

the different in- and out-groups constructed in the media's discourse. While *Sputnik* explicitly focused on the Clinton camp and the U.S. government in general as their enemy image, the *RBTH* differentiated between the Democratic Party as a whole and the Clinton camp as a specific part of the Democratic Party. Within the discourse strand of the Russian-U.S. relations, the editors depicted the Democrats as the out-group, whereas within the discourse strand of the WikiLeaks email dump their focus was on the Clinton camp as a particular part of the Democratic Party. The depiction of the out-groups in *MT*, however, was more global than in the other two media outlets. The main out-groups were the West, the USA, the U.S. political establishment (which was basically equated with the Democratic Party), and the Trump supporters, although the focus mostly lay on the West and the USA.

Furthermore, the researcher applied the concept of the ideological square to the analysis of the discourse. Prominent positive self-representations of Russia and negative others-representations of the Democrats could be observed within the discourse of *Sputnik* and *RBTH*. Especially *RBTH* focused on rhetorical figures such as metaphors, hyperboles, repetitions, and irony in order to emphasize and/or ridicule America's or the Democrats' negative actions. In case of *MT*, Russia was depicted more positively as in-group, while the West and the Americans as out-group were represented either neutrally or negatively. Moreover, the West and America were widely made responsible for Russia's recent questionable actions and its negative development over the past years. Especially *Sputnik* used surface structures in order to create a positive image of Russia through callouts and pro-Russian pull quotes from experts. On the level of syntax, Russia as an actor was always activated when it had to deny any accusations and passivated in order to focus the readers' attention on the actor affected by the actions of others, such as being dragged into American election debates. With regard to the WikiLeaks conflict, authors used the tactic of implicitness/presuppositions and evidentiality in order to de-emphasize Russia's negative actions, that is, its actual and provable role in this issue. Moreover, the tactic of victimization was widely used especially by *RBTH* and *Sputnik*, mostly through generalizations and specifications. The media outlets described in detail all the things the Democrats accused Russia of, yet generalized Russia's actual role in the conflict in order to avoid explicit statements on this sensitive topic. In other words, the negative actions of the Clinton camp were highlighted through specifications, while the Russia's negative role was played down by generalizations.

6. Conclusion

Starting with Siegfried Jäger's CDA approach, this study identified several tactics that were used by the three examined Russian media outlets to depict Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump during their election campaigns. Among them were strategies such as application of visual signs, ideologically loaded word choice and lexicalization, rhetorical figures, hyperboles, implicitness, evidentiality, spreading of misinformation, victimization, polarizations, disclaimers, and comparisons. Furthermore, this research showed that two of the three media outlets favored Clinton as the next American President with regard to the future Russian-U.S. relations. According to the discourses of,

although both *Sputnik International* and *The Moscow Times* deemed either candidate not beneficial for a harmonious Moscow-Washington relationship, Hillary Clinton was seen be the better President due to her stability and predictability in terms of her predominantly negative attitude toward Russia. However, *Russia Beyond the Headlines* progressively emphasized Clinton's negative attitude toward Russia and prominently endorsed Trump as a favorable candidate on the basis of his sympathy for Russia and Vladimir Putin.

In general, both Presidential candidates were widely criticized within the discourse of the analyzed editorial pieces, although especially the state-owned Russian media outlets *Sputnik* and *RBTH* made several favorable comments toward Trump while often ridiculing Clinton. The main reasons for this increasingly negative coverage of Clinton were her accusations of Russia for being involved in the WikiLeaks email scandal and for Moscow's alleged interference in the U.S. election. In addition, this research found some attempts to undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process through victimization and allegedly unfair coverage of Trump from traditional U.S. media outlets as well as Clinton's and the Democrats' "dishonest methods" in the WikiLeaks email dump.

On the basis of van Leeuwen's framework of social actor representation, the researcher identified the prominent strategy of assimilating Clinton to a "Clinton camp" while individualizing Trump in order to support the notion of victimization. At least in the coverage of *Sputnik* and *RBTH*, Trump was depicted as an outsider, victimized by a corrupt political establishment and defective democratic process that aimed to prevent his presidency due to his sympathy for Russia. According to the analyzed media outlets, Trump's sympathy for Russia was misused by the Clinton team in order to attack him and Russia at the same time. Finally, this study also showed that all three examined media outlets took a defensive pro-Russia position. The media discourse constructed an enemy image of America, in which it serves as a scapegoat for Russia's negative actions and the country's negative development since the collapse of the Soviet Union. America is also held responsible for the negative Cold War image of the current Russian-U.S. relations. Consequently, this enemy image of America, in combination with Clinton's accusations and her apparent misuse of Trump in order to attack Russia and vice versa, might arguably have led to this defensive pro-Russia position and a solidarity with Trump, which was expressed in the less-than-critical coverage in the analyzed editorial pieces.

About the author

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Citizen reporting: between participation and professional journalism

Formats of citizen journalism in local television

by Gabriele Hooffacker

Abstract: Which conditions engender the success of participation in local television? What motivates citizen reporters and what do editorial departments expect from them? Which formats are suitable? Various research projects at Leipzig University of Applied Sciences (HTWK) have examined the way citizen reporters contribute to local television. The results can be used to derive factors that influence the success of participative formats in local television.

“The future of professional journalism may lie in the intelligent involvement of the audience.” Christoph Neuberger makes this prediction at the end of his overview of research into citizen journalism (Neuberger, *Bürgerjournalismus als Lösung? Empirische Ergebnisse zu den journalistischen Leistungen von Laienkommunikation*, 2012). Wiebke Möhring sees participative formats, especially in local journalism, as an opportunity to improve participation in public processes (Möhring, 2015). Mobile end devices and their connectivity have made the production of moving images, from filming to editing and distribution, much more accessible (Staschen, 2017). Involving citizens, with their smartphones and consumer cameras, in the program formats of local television stations is the next logical step.

In local and hyperlocal contexts, participative formats give television viewers an opportunity to collaborate on journalistic reports or to create them from scratch. Editorial departments benefit not only through ideas for topics and support in editing, but also in the form of greater loyalty from readers or viewers. However, many fear that journalistic quality may suffer (Christmann & Tadic, 2018).

At the heart of this investigation is the audience, who are shifting from a passive ‘lean back’ role to an active role - “switching flexibly between the roles of communicator and recipient” (Neuberger, *Konflikt, Konkurrenz, Kooperation*, 2014). Entire fields of research are today dedicated to the inclusion of journalism and the audience (for background: Loosen, 2016).

The central question is what motivates the citizen journalists. Are they even interested in participating in local television? Which sections of the population come into question? Are these

amateur communicators able to contribute regularly, despite the time needed for production? A series of projects at HTWK Leipzig has examined these questions and the options for this kind of participation over many years. Their work focuses on two key questions: Which conditions engender the success of participation in local television? And what might suitable formats for citizen participation in television look like?

The change in production conditions and the difficult economic situation of many television stations, especially small local ones, needs to be taken into account. A joint project by IiM Institut für innovative Medien gGmbH and the Forschungs- und Transferzentrum (FTZ) at HTWK Leipzig, funded by the Sächsische Landesanstalt für privaten Rundfunk und neue Medien (SLM), resulted in a website and app to make the workflow between citizen reporters and editorial departments easier (Bürgerreporter - Chancen für das Lokal-Fernsehen, 2015). It also developed a phase model for collaboration between a local television station and amateur communicators, and tested new formats for participation. The findings can be used to derive criteria and initial suggestions for how participative moving image formats can work at a local level.

Starting point and status of research

Extensive research has already been conducted on the potential to participate in local press via the internet, weblogs and other formats (e.g. Engesser & Wimmer, 2009; Sehl, 2013; Neuberger, Langenohl, & Nürnbergk, 2014). Citizen radio and public channels exist in many German states, albeit with a very limited reach (Möhring, 2015; Förster, 2017).

The situation of smaller local broadcasters varies widely from state to state. On average across the country, around half of their income comes from advertising. However, the television providers differ widely in terms of their production processes and systems. Some broadcasters function with just two or three staff, while others employ up to 30 people. There are also significant differences in the schedule structure and number of repeats (Gomon, Hooffacker, Einwich, & Niebling-Gau, 2017).

The former East German states have always enjoyed a diverse landscape of local television channels. Saxony, in particular, has Germany's highest density of television channels (Stawowy, 2011). This wide variety of local broadcasters historically goes back to the 'antenna associations,' many of which have existed for generations. In the GDR, their role was to ensure television reception in the region (Liljeberg & Krambeer, 2012). Broadcasters often work with very few staff and under enormous economic pressure. However, this gives them a geographical proximity to their audience that large public broadcasters cannot afford.

In a practical experiment in 2015, the SLM and HTWK examined the extent to which the concept of participative citizen journalism can be applied to local television stations (Bürgerreporter - Chancen für das Lokal-Fernsehen, 2015). They used an online platform to help establish and support a community that would generate new contributions independently (Welz, Hooffacker, Kulisch, Datko,

& Thiergen, 2017). The studies explored here were conducted using this specially-programmed Reporter-Go app.

But what does 'citizen journalism' mean? Christoph Neuberger notes the confusion of terms. As defined by Joyce Y. M. Nip, strictly speaking the term refers to news production by citizens, independent of professional journalism (Neuberger, Bürgerjournalismus, 2012). However, the investigations in Leipzig were based on communication studies expert Steve Outing's broader definition of citizen journalism, in which he includes the entire spectrum of journalistically-relevant communication by amateurs, including in the context of professional journalistic media. Outing argues that the individual forms are almost impossible to separate (Burmeister, 2008).

In 2005, Outing defined the fields of activity of citizen reporters for local journalism in blogs and described them in an eleven-layer model (Outing, 2005). He places these eleven layers of citizen journalism in blogs in order of increasing professionalism on the part of the amateur communicators:

Layer 1: Comment functions

- Users can merely comment on texts

Layer 2: Add-on reporter

- Users can act as sources for certain texts

Layer 3: Open-source reporting

- Collaboration between the professional journalist and the reader
- Users are asked to provide their specialist knowledge or ask questions

Layer 4: The citizen bloghouse

- A blog hosting service invites users to participate

Layer 5: Set-up of blogs

- Users blog under the "brand" of the editorial department/distributor

Layer 6: Stand-alone citizen journalism site: Edited version

- Users write their own texts, which are edited by editors

Layer 7: Stand-alone citizen journalism site: Unedited version

- Texts are not edited before publication
- Inappropriate content can still be removed

Layer 8: Print edition of model 6 or 7

- Selected articles from a blog are integrated into the newspaper's print edition
- Texts are only edited for spelling and grammar

Layer 9: Hybrid or professional and citizen journalists

- Citizen reporters are given the full range of tasks of professional journalists
- However, they are not employed

Layer 10: Mix of professional content and content from citizen journalists

- No distinction between texts from citizen reporters and professional texts (from the point of view of the reader)

Layer 11: Wiki journalism

- The readers and journalists are the same people

The researchers in Leipzig needed to shape a theoretical framework for examining potential participation in local television by citizen reporters. Based on the work of Steve Outing and Jana Burmeister, they derived five layers of citizen reporter involvement in local television content, which were presented in detail at the pre-conference to the DGPK annual conference 2016 in Leipzig (Welz, Hooffacker, Kulisch, Datko, & Thiergen, 2017). Just as in Outing's work, the layers are in order of the citizen journalists' level of independence and professionalism:

Layer 1: Crowdsourcing in topic sourcing and research

The editorial office asks the citizens to help them work on an existing topic. The content provided is then filtered, prepared and integrated into the relevant program. Although the result is tailored to the editorial requirements, it can be demotivating for the citizen journalists, as their contribution is barely visible.

Layer 2: Add-on reporting

The citizen reporters supply additional information and materials on a specific topic or event. The broadcaster checks the material provided and may incorporate it into the piece. Again, it is the editorial office that specifies the topic. The low quality that can be expected from the material supplied is negligible.

Layer 3: Citizen journalism with editorial support

The citizen reporters choose their topic themselves, in consultation with the editorial office, and supply material on it. The broadcaster then checks the material and builds a piece around it. This type of collaboration demands close cooperation between the reporter and the broadcaster, such as in the form of regular participation in editorial meetings. It also demands greater television journalism skills on the part of the citizen reporter.

Layer 4: Vloghouse - Broadcast slot for citizen journalism

In the vlog (video blog) format, the citizen reporter has a fixed broadcast slot, which he himself fills independently with a broadcast-ready piece. This means that he has a lot of design freedom, but also requires significant skill. Viewers are able to recognize the vlog as a participative format.

Layer 5: Editorially independent citizen journalism

The citizen reporter submits entire pieces on topics of his choice, practically ready for broadcast. The broadcaster may be able to specify or request a specific topic. This bears a certain level of risk for the broadcaster when it comes to quality and choice of topic; on the other hand, the high level of independence is very attractive to the citizen reporter. Mitteldeutsche Rundfunk has trialed this kind of citizen participation in a pilot project, in which citizen journalists had the chance to create pieces using equipment and other tools from the broadcaster (Eydnier und Schlappa, 2015).

A quantitative online survey conducted between February 9 and March 1, 2016 used these five layers as the basis for investigating what motivates citizen reporters to become involved. The survey was posted on the citizen reporter portal myheimat.de and the Leipzig-based citizen reporter project Heldenstadt. 76 persons provided usable responses (Welz, Hooffacker, Kulisch, Datko, & Thiergen, 2017).

Analyzing the demographic data of the survey reveals an interesting age distribution: Hyperlocal blogs are dominated by the older generation, with 84% of those surveyed aged 50 years of older. More than half of those surveyed could imagine collaborating with a local television station.

When it comes to the topics, derived from the typical themes of local television channels in Saxony, the users listed culture as very interesting, and are also interested in events and history. Local politics and news are less important. The survey showed that local television broadcasters can expect less support in sport and business. The interests of the citizen reporters are thus totally different from the topics typically reported on by local journalists (Pöttker & Vehmeier, 2013).

So why do citizen journalists do what they do? Top of the list are sharing their own opinion, creativity, gathering experience and maintaining contact with others. The users listed the opportunity to pursue their own interests and topics as the main reason for their work, although feedback and the ability to reach the largest possible audience are also important. Financial incentives are seen as irrelevant. One aspect that should not be underestimated is the citizen reporters' desire to enhance both their journalistic and their technical skills.

According to the respondents' own assessment, self-promotion is less important. However, analyzing their open responses on their motivation indicates otherwise, with multiple respondents mentioning the opportunity to promote their own society, church congregation or other voluntary roles. One respondent gave a critical view: "No 'untrained' journalists, please! We need more professionals in print media, radio and television again" (Welz, Hooffacker, Kulisch, Datko, & Thiergen, 2017).

Interim conclusion: There is great interest in participation in local television among a predominantly older audience. Their motivation comes from a desire to deal with their own choice of topics and draw attention to their own work. This motivation to make a contribution to the social life of their community and ensure media coverage should be valued - even if it is not a primarily journalistic objective, but an objective that can be attributed to public relations in the very broadest sense.

Test case: University television

In order to test the suitability of the results in practice, various practical projects were launched with master's students at HTWK Leipzig's Media faculty. This included both long-term cooperation with local television channels in Leipzig and Muldental and the use of *floid*, the university television channel at HTWK, as a test object.

The use of university television as a test case is justified as it demonstrates structural similarities: A hyperlocal audience uses the medium, which is tailored to the target group, to discuss shared topics and their own involvement. A comparable project on the incorporation of participative journalism by a professional editorial office was also conducted in North Rhine-Westphalia on TU Dortmund's teaching channel *nrwision* (Möhring, 2015).

Over several semesters, new TV formats were developed to incorporate viewer pieces into the schedule of the university channel *floid*. The analysis shows the conditions that need to be met if the participative format is to work. Some of the results described here were presented at the "Die neue Öffentlichkeit" [The new public] conference in Leipzig in fall 2017 (results below as in Christmann & Tadic, 2018).

The pieces for *floid* are organized and produced by students at HTWK Leipzig, and distributed via the website www.floidtv.de and sometimes via the local channel Leipzig TV. The idea is that participative television formats will enable *floid* to cover more topics and offer a varied range of

pieces. In turn, this would enable the audience to publicize their own content, while giving the broadcaster the opportunity to consolidate the link to its viewers, better address content requested by the audience, and increase viewer involvement and the level of awareness. It is also hoped that it will be a way to attract new staff to the editorial office.

So how motivated is a student audience? Which topics would be of interest to them? In order to answer these questions, two *floid partizipativ* campaigns are briefly presented and analyzed below.

The online platform *www.buergerreporter.net* was used to transfer data between the citizen journalists and the editorial office. Having emerged from a preceding project together with the SLM (Bürgerreporter – Chancen für das Lokal-Fernsehen, 2015), the responsive platform for uploading videos is accessible to registered users via smartphone. It is also used for cooperation with local television broadcasters.

Bachfest Leipzig: Dating back to 1908, this music festival attracts an international audience to Leipzig with a mix of events, including many that are free. *floid* has traditionally been tasked with organizing the live broadcast of the open air concerts on Leipzig's market square. In June 2017, four *floid* editors acting as citizen reporters interviewed visitors and filmed them using smartphones. At the end, the interviewees were asked: "Would you sing or hum a Bach melody for us?" Of the around 60 visitors asked, 30 were willing to give an interview, and many of them sang. This resulted in 25 videos, a compilation of which was posted on the *floid* website (*floid-Redaktion*, 2017).

In terms of the five-layer model, the student reporters were used as in Layer 3: They delivered individual clips that were then combined in the editorial office to form a guest piece. The interviewees were thus in a classic situation similar to that of a survey; their average age was around 45 years. The high level of involvement corroborates the result of the preceding study, which found that older participants are more interested in such participative TV formats related to local issues.

25 Years of HTWK Leipzig: On June 14, 2017, HTWK Leipzig celebrated its 25th anniversary with a program of lectures, presentations and music. Students, staff, supporters, sponsors and friends of the university were asked by the *floid* team to send birthday wishes to the HTWK in the form of videos. The participants each drew a card and were then filmed on smartphones. The results were then uploaded for the *floid* editorial office via the *www.buergerreporter.net* platform. In terms of the layer model, this process is a mixture of Layer 2 (add-on reporting) and Layer 3 (the participants film themselves and upload the results via the platform). In addition, everyone, including those who had no interest in participating, was presented with a questionnaire to find out their motivation.

The *floid* editors talked to around 50 students during the event. 14 of them took part in the campaign, resulting in seven videos. This corresponds to participation by 28 percent of all people to whom the campaign was presented in detail. 30 questionnaires were used and completed (Christmann & Tadic, 2018). The average age of the participants was 24 years. The most commonly stated reason for participation was "creativity" (59 per cent), followed by "an interesting topic" and

“community,” each with 53 per cent. The competition element, i.e. the opportunity to win something by taking part, had only a low impact at 28 per cent.

So what prevented those surveyed from taking part in a participative campaign? Analysis of the questionnaires shows that the fact that the videos are posted publicly is a significant barrier for the participants. The most common response given (by 16 of 30 of those surveyed) was that they did not want to be seen in front of the camera. Other reasons included a lack of time and interest.

Factors in the acceptance of participative formats

The studies, practical projects and analysis of the questionnaires essentially result in three success factors for a participative format. They are crucial to the success of such a format, in the sense that the format is accepted and used by the participants (Christmann & Tadic, 2018).

1. The participant must be interested in publicizing the topic. If the participant is to take on the role of citizen reporter, it is essential that he is intrinsically motivated to contribute to this topic.
2. The technical barrier needs to be as low as possible in order to prevent the participants from losing interest in participating. Having to spend a lot of time on technical processes such as registration, activation etc. is seen as an impediment.
3. The participant must have control over publication. He himself must be able to decide if and when content should no longer be accessible, for example when it is no longer up to date and thus less relevant.

Regarding university television, Veronika Christmann and Komnen Tadic come to the conclusion that, “if used properly, participative formats give an editorial office the opportunity to present their view of things and draw attention to topics that usually receive little attention. The interaction between the user and the editorial office plays a big role in this (...). The solution lies in cleverly combining a professional editorial office with motivated users that become participating citizen reporters” (Christmann & Tadic, 2018).

Test case: Local television

Another project, however, highlights the differences between the expectations of the citizen reporters and those of the broadcaster’s editorial office. This project investigated the collaboration between volunteer citizens and a professional local television editorial office in the fields of sport and culture. For a broadcaster that has to fill a lot of air time with very few staff, involving amateur communicators like this demands a great deal of support and supervision (Welz, Hooffacker, Kulisch, Datko, & Thiergen, 2017).

Small local television channels usually work at the limits of their resources (Gomon, Hooffacker, Einwich, & Niebling-Gau, 2017). With the need for a high level of support and supervision, pieces by citizen reporters are difficult to incorporate into the schedule. Two further teaching and research projects by Uwe Kulisch and Gabriele Hooffacker in the winter semester of 2017/18 and the summer semester of 2018 conducted this kind of collaboration between volunteer citizen reporters in the field of sport and culture and a professional television editorial office, Leipzig Fernsehen, as an example. Master's students then analyzed the results in qualitative surveys of those involved (Erthel & Zschammer, 2018).

As well as the citizen reporters themselves, the editorial offices of Leipzig Fernsehen, of a local online portal and of floid, including two mobile "citizen" reporters from floid, were also involved. With the new format "flog" (floid vlog) having become established at that channel, the teaching and research project asked about the background to that success.

A huge effort was put into supporting and supervising the cooperation with Leipzig Fernsehen within the project. Multiple pieces were produced, filmed initially by the supporting students themselves, later independently under instruction from members of the society. Only a single piece was broadcast - filmed and edited by the master's student. It was the only one considered suitable for broadcast by the television editorial office. Further pieces produced by the societies themselves were not broadcast. Guided interviews were conducted to find out the causes of this.

The analysis of the survey highlights the different expectations of the cooperation held by the various actors. Felix Ammann, Managing Editor at Leipzig Fernsehen, ultimately applies the same requirements to pieces from citizen reporters as to those from trainees and interns. In his view, the main problem with participative pieces is maintaining the standards of television journalism. For example, he says, the sound quality might be too poor or the storytelling insufficient for broadcast. It is also difficult when citizen reporting regularly focuses on similar topics, such as soccer games. On the other hand, he sees the "direct link to the viewer" as an advantage. Lea Quandt, Chief Editor at floid, makes similar arguments, also listing acquisition and training of amateur reporters as an additional difficulty (Erthel & Zschammer, 2018).

When it comes to the societies involved, Björn Mencfeld, volunteer coach and press officer at SV Lindenau 1848, views cooperation with a classic local television channel as having only limited attractiveness in terms of the target group. He argues that there are other local and specialist portals that the club can use to reach its (young) audience in a more targeted way. Mencfeld would like to see citizen reporters report on his club regularly, as the active club members are unable to achieve regular, fast reporting. The technical problems could be resolved with a little assistance, he argues. Jens Straube from the club Mühlenstraße 14 disagrees, seeing the technical barriers as significant. In addition, a lack of time prevents the already fully-stretched club staff from further productions, he says (Erthel & Zschammer, 2018).

A survey by Media Technology students Theresa Möckel and Kyra Prohaska was also analyzed. They had launched the participative format "flog" at the university television channel floid as a test format

for the use of mobile end devices instead of classic camera equipment. Both had previously held management roles at floid and have relevant technical and journalistic skills.

In the interview, they highlight the simplicity and speed of mobile production and the opportunity to take the viewers “behind the scenes.” With mobile technology, they say, “citizen reporters” have fewer reservations and production is simply enjoyable. They argue that a good “fan base” is very important for success, with social media an important element in this kind of participative format. The “flog” was picked up and continued by other students who valued both the lightweight equipment and especially the fact that there is no need to adhere strictly to formats of television journalism such as news or reporter piece. All in all, they say, the participative format has a greater emphasis on opinion and is more subjective and personal (Erthel & Zschammer, 2018).

The two master’s students conducted a further interview with Robert Dobschütz, who works for a local online newspaper (Leipziger Internet-Zeitung, LIZ). The LIZ is also occasionally published in print and already incorporates content from citizen reporters into its online segment. The online paper is open to participative video content, too, and is planning an expanded platform for this kind of content. Robert Dobschütz expects citizen reporters not to produce finished journalistic content, but to complement traditional journalism in terms of both topics and presentation.

Results for participative formats in local television

The requirements of local television editorial offices and the possibilities of citizen reporters do not always match up. Television editorial offices want pieces that are produced as quickly and professionally as possible, i.e. participation in the sense of **Layer 5** above: “editorially independent citizen journalism.” This means that citizen reporters would submit complete pieces on topics of their choice and adhere to agreed topics and deadlines, just like professional journalists.

However, the usually unpaid citizen journalists from sports clubs or local cultural societies cannot achieve this kind of up-to-the-minute professional journalism – even if they wanted to. They see their possibilities as closer to those in **Layer 3**: “citizen journalism with editorial support.” This means that they would propose their topic in coordination with the editorial office and deliver material on it. The broadcaster or other external citizen journalist with professional skills would then have to check, edit and complete the piece.

The most promising format appears to be that of **Layer 4**: “vloghouse – broadcast slot for citizen journalism.” It has a fixed broadcast slot and is easily recognizable to viewers as a participative format. Citizen reporters enjoy a lot of freedom in terms of design, but are also required to work with a high degree of independence.

Outlook

The results from the teaching and research projects at HTWK Leipzig tend to corroborate the assumptions of Christoph Neuberger and Wiebke Möhring on the importance of participative formats for the future of professional journalism in practice quoted at the start of this paper. The danger of pieces produced by citizen journalists predominantly transmitting content that supports their own public relations objectives can be prevented by tapping into the citizen reporters' own critical awareness. However, the needs of the local broadcasters and those of the citizen reporters involved in the participative formats will never be a perfect match.

Like those of university television channels, editorial offices in local television have few resources to spend on supporting citizen reporters. They place the same expectations on participative as on traditional journalistic formats and sometimes have reservations about mobile journalism. In contrast, local and hyperlocal platforms pursue different goals, seeing themselves and participative formats in particular as complementing traditional journalism.

The next step will therefore be to investigate the workflow between citizen reporters with mobile end devices and the incorporation of participative formats in online-affine hyperlocal editorial offices. Potential cooperation partners in this are less traditional local television channels and more hyperlocal blogs or alternative platforms of local or cultural journalism, inspired by student-run university television. This will be used as the basis for developing processes and models for incorporating participative formats, which can then be applied to practice at local television channels. However, the main focus will be to develop topics and formats that complement, rather than replace, traditional journalism.

Translation: Sophie Costella

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Journalism Started with its Professional Ethos

Daniel Defoe on Publicness, Press Freedom and its Limits[1]

by Horst Pöttker

Abstract: Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) not only wrote the novel Robinson Crusoe, one of the most circulated book in world history, but he also edited and authored England's first political magazine, The Review, which appeared three times a week from 1704 to 1713. In addition to covering the war in France at that time, Defoe also wrote for The Review what can be called "theoretical articles" that reveal his self-understanding and professional ethos as a journalist. This paper deals with some of these articles as well as with Defoe's ideas concerning the public, the public sphere, public opinion, public discourse, public life, publicness, publicity (all expressing various aspects of the German word *Öffentlichkeit*), press freedom and its legitimate limits.

In discussions about the tasks of and dangers to journalism, no other term is more often used than the noun *public*. No term, however, is also more ambiguous. This becomes evident, for example, in translations of texts dealing with the topic of communication. For the German term *Öffentlichkeit*, there are a number of English equivalents such as *public*, *public sphere*, *public opinion*, *public discourse*, *public life*, *publicness*[2] or *publicity*. The most appropriate word for the translation can only be suitably chosen if all connotations of the context are carefully observed. Normally, it will not be enough if the translator simply uses the same word in all circumstances. This indicates that the term *Öffentlichkeit* has different meanings in the original German language.

What does the term "public" (German: "Öffentlichkeit") mean?

To a great extent, the confusion derives from Jürgen Habermas's famous book *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (Habermas 1971), in English translation *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Habermas 1989), which was first published in the early 1960s. As the title suggests, Habermas's investigation is based on a historical conception. It begins in the eighteenth century and reconstructs the decline of "the" public sphere since the Enlightenment. Since nothing positive can result from a process of a decline, Habermas's work has contributed to the tendency today to regard publicness as something problematic and even dangerous. This imputation becomes most evident in the title of a 1979 book by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann entitled *Öffentlichkeit als Bedrohung*

[*Publicity as a Threat*] (Noelle-Neumann 1979). As only something substantial can alter its structure, many people adopted the idea that “the” public sphere must be viewed as a substance or concrete thing. This interpretation, however, is a prerequisite for the frequently repeated argument that it is no longer possible to speak of only *one* public sphere and that, instead, a differentiation into numerous partial public spheres is unavoidable.

One should, however, become skeptical when one attempts to trace the history of the German word. For a long time, only the adjective *öffentlich* (public) was used. Until the mid-twentieth century, use of the noun *Öffentlichkeit* (public) referred only to the sense of the older word *Publizität* (publicity). In the long run, the imputation that public discourse is a dangerous substance or construct, i.e. a kind of monster, must necessarily throw an unfavorable light on those who produce public discourse—first and foremost, the journalists. In order to criticize this approach, I will refer to an author who not only enjoys the highest circulation in world literature, but who had also already developed a sense of self-esteem for being a journalist from the very beginning of the Enlightenment.

Daniel Defoe: A pioneer of journalistic mentality

Many of us have known Daniel Defoe since childhood as the author of *Robinson Crusoe*. Far less well known is the fact that this world-famous author had been a political publicist for many years before he published his first novel, which entered the canon of obligatory knowledge, at age 60.

Before turning to fiction, Defoe had already produced controversial, ironic writings such as *The Trueborn Englishman* (1701) and *The Shortest Way with Dissenters* (1702) that commented on topics of the day such as xenophobic tendencies (against King William III of Orange) or religious intolerance (by the Anglican Church). His outspokenness had landed him both in jail and on the pillory several times. While still in prison, Defoe founded the first political-moralistic weekly paper, *The Review* (1704)[i], which was then followed by Richard Steel's *Tatler* (1709) and Jonathan Swift's *Examiner* (1710).

Defoe's four-page *Review* continued to appear until 1713—initially only once a week, but then three times a week for the rest of its existence. Originally conceived to report on the protracted Spanish War of Succession in which England and France were opponents, the weekly paper also dealt with various other topics in the years following its creation. “The contributions which Defoe wrote himself included, besides political subjects, questions of economy and society. The material living conditions of individual groups of the population, the professional and, resulting thereof, the social position, the economic activities of the whole nation and the role of the trade as the source of national prosperity were subjects Defoe dealt with.” (Kalb 1985: 22).

In Defoe's world—England at the turn of the seventeenth to the eighteenth century—lies the origin of all that has characterized democratic capitalist societies down to the present, i.e. postulated and acknowledged human rights, parliamentary institutions, market regulation, free enterprise and

independent media to name but a few. It is not surprising that this epoch also saw the genesis of a profession which is indispensable to the interaction of the functional elements of Western societies: journalism.

It should be borne in mind, however, that this “profession” does not only mean “the specification, specialization and combination of achievements which form for a person the basis of his continued maintenance or capacity of earning a living.” (Weber 1972: 80) In contrast to such an individualistic and economic definition such as that of Max Weber, this profession also includes a variety of special competencies necessary for the optimal fulfillment of a task that is important for both the individual and society. Last but not least, such competencies comprise professional awareness and the skills that are necessary to accomplish the professional task. Defoe’s example demonstrates that such professional mentality had already developed its basic principles around 1700. As one of the first journalists, he publicly reflected on his profession and its requirements.

Defoe: On the use of the freedom of the press for society

As in several other texts by Defoe, this can specifically be seen in an article appearing in the March 29, 1711 issue of *The Review*. Here, Defoe outlines his opinion on the intended taxation of the press proposed by the last queen of the Stuart dynasty, Queen Anne, and the ruling Tories. The tax came into effect soon thereafter in the form of the so-called stamp tax.

The said article reads as follows:

He that will speak at all must speak quickly; and he that has but a little while to speak ought to speak to the purpose. This I observe not from the proposal in a printed paper only, but from a letter I have sent me, insulting me with what the *Examiner* gives a hint of, viz., laying a tax upon public prints and pamphlets. ...

It will be a fair acknowledging that they cannot answer the arguments by reason and fair disputing; that demonstration is against them, that words cannot defend them, and they dare not bring their logics to the test with their enemies. ...

It is fairly acknowledging that their practices, whether in politics or morals, will not bear the light; and that ‘tis their interest to prevent the secret histories of their persons or party being made public. ...

A design to suppress printing on either side can be nothing but a design to suppress truth; since if falsity, scandal, slander, or anything that merits reprehension is published, the laws are already strong against them; and if in anything they are defective, the Parliament is sitting to add such new provisions as may seem necessary. But to lay a universal load upon everything, or, in English, to

silence mankind, is a plot against truth, against the friends of virtue, learning, and religion, as might be made appear on many occasions.

To make such a thing general, without distinction of the subject, prevents all the attempts against vice, profaneness, and immortality; all the helps to instruction, education, and religion, and all the useful essays in learning, improvement, morality, commerce, religion, or other useful things which in small manuals have oftentimes had good effect upon the world, and may still. ...

The attempt will not answer the design; for though it may suppress useful things, as above, and rob the world of the advantages from the labours of honest men ...

(...) to lay a prohibition in general, without exception, is to suggest they have something to do they dare not let the people hear of; it is to padlock the mouths of the free people of Britain; it is to deprive men of their fair and just defense or vindication; and, which I think may merit a consideration by itself, it is to invade the properties, the livelihoods, and the employments of families and trades innumerable whose dependence and whose estates lie in several parts of the printed trade not at all concerned with the state or the government, and who in common justice must be made exceptions in such a general design. ...

Among these are to be reckoned patents and properties in copies of smaller books such as almanacs, catechises, psalms, little manuals of many sorts, religious and moral, the copyright to which are estates to many families ...

Meantime, that some restraint should be put to scandal, ribaldry, and reproach, to insulting governments, vilifying ministers of state, invading men's reputation, and the like, by obliging every man to *set his name* to what he writes, making the proceedings in personal injury summary and decisive; ...

Every honest man would be desirous of having such a law made, the sooner the better. All the rest savours of guilt, party interest, encroachment upon liberty, arbitrary imposition upon the people ... (Payne 1951: 77-81)

Publicness as a necessary condition for the functioning of self-regulation

The common denominator of this text is its concept of publicness despite the fact that the author expressly mentions this only sporadically. Why does Defoe refrain from explicitly demonstrating this? By the beginning of the civic age, publicness was obviously already a vague, highly negative concept that could only be defined through the negation of its opposite.

Its constitutive component is the quality of *openness*. Publicness means the *absence* of barricades, blocks and barriers. The perception of every human being has access to what is meant by the term *public*. In German the term *Öffentlichkeit* is the noun derived from the adjectives *öffentlich* (public)

and *offen* (open). Every attempt to construct positively a concept of the public sphere, for example in the form of a group of subjects actually participating in communication about certain topics or functioning as a kind of political institution (which is necessary for the function of state institutions), leads *nolens volens* to a loss in terms of the principle of unrestrictedness that is essential to the concept of publicness.

That Defoe had this negative concept of publicness in mind can be seen, for example, in his readiness to accept a certain amount of limitation of the freedom of the press regarding its political contents and intentions. Today one feels inclined to regard this as a kind of opportunistic behavior towards the ruling power as we have grown accustomed to the institutional restriction of press freedom since the civil-democratic revolutions in the United States and France that led to the advancement of the idea of public discourse to the rank of a constitutional principle. One can, however, also regard this as an expression of Defoe's understanding of the necessary openness of social communication. He could do without certain political functions of the press because he had something greater in mind—namely, the rescue of the principle of publicness in a more comprehensive socio-cultural sense.

A careful observation speaks in favor of this interpretation. By refraining from a positive definition, one can find in Defoe a remarkable sensitivity for the usefulness, even necessity of publicness for society and each of its individuals. Publicness is necessary so that—to use Defoe's own terms—scientific, moral and religious knowledge can spread. For this reason, publicness is an essential precondition for the individual to be able to shape her or his life on the level of cultural development. Moreover, publicness is necessary so that the individual can successfully withstand unjustified accusations and assaults. Publicness is therefore a human right, a fact often neglected in the complaint that the public sphere constitutes a threat to the private sphere.

Defoe's observation that not only the harmful, but also the useful press was limited by the stamp tax also anticipates the simple truth that people in modern, parceled societies with a variety of media at their disposals can construct a more realistic picture of the world for themselves. These people are in a better position to cope with external problems than people who are obliged to rely on primary experiences without possible recourse to the media for their constructions of reality.

The benefit of publicness to the individual results in a benefit to society: Only if the individual members of a society defend their right to inviolability and self-determination and participate in the decision-making process of their whole social world can a modern society perceive its problems and solve them. We define this as the capacity for self-regulation.

Complex formations of society in which social communication is too strongly restricted by ideological, political and legal barriers remain unviable three centuries after Defoe's general insight into the advantages of the principle of publicness. This became evident with the collapse of the socialist systems in Eastern Europe and the conservative-authoritative regimes in Latin America and South Africa near the end of the twentieth century.

Defoe's idea of publicness becomes most impressive when he connects its use to the absence of general provisions regarding the press, be they political-ideological or (as in the case he fought against in 1711) economic in nature. The basic condition required by the media—so that they can fulfill their task of creating public discourse in the sense of preferably unrestricted social communication—consists of their general freedom to choose and investigate topics as they please and to use the various types of description at their disposal. This freedom is completed by the indispensable professional duty of journalists to publish. For (and we may add this after the epistemological debates since the Enlightenment) the decision about which subjects need publicness and which do not is in itself a problem of the openness of social communication. The definition and perception of the question of relevancy cannot be transferred to special institutions or persons (censors, watchdog groups, etc.)—since nobody can know in advance what he or she does not know yet—but must be left to public discourse, which requires in principle the absence of restrictions in the field of communication.

As Defoe was already aware, the freedom of the press is neither an optional cultural luxury, nor a professional privilege of journalists, but an element indispensable to the function of modern social structure. A society's capacity to solve problems and its self-regulating capacity, i.e. its existence, depend on this freedom. Each form of ruling or external power that attempts to restrict the principle of the general freedom of journalistic work sooner or later harms society and ultimately itself. General restriction of the freedom of the media means general limitation of public discourse, and this general restriction amounts to an admission that the exclusion of certain conditions and practices could not be upheld in an open controversy, in an inter-subjective examination "by reason, argument, and matter of facts" (Payne 1951: 78), how Defoe it expresses.

An interesting side issue is Defoe's observation that the stamp tax would deprive families working in the press sector of their economic existence. In contrast to Karl Marx 130 years later (cf. Pöttker 2001: 49), when the economic and professional roles of publishers and journalists had begun to separate due to the historical process of the division of labor and the differentiation of functions, Defoe, still publisher and journalist in one person, does not have an eye for the contradictions but for the similarities between freedom of the press and freedom of the trade. This appears far-sighted if one considers that a socially relevant public sphere has so far only been able to develop under the conditions of a market economy and capitalism but not in systems that are controlled from a centralized political and economic power. Although serious science cannot predict with certainty that this will remain the case, the experience of history tends to speak in favor of Defoe rather than Marx, a fact that has so far scarcely been noticed, let alone systematically verified by critical communication research.

After all, Defoe may perfectly represent the ideal of the literary journalist of the Enlightenment who separates information neither from opinion, nor self-publicity, nor even fiction, but takes advantage of these subjective ingredients so that the different components finally converge to become information.

Defoe's fight against lies of the press

One year later, the stamp tax having meanwhile come into effect, Defoe wrote another article about problems of the press and published it in *The Review* on July 19, 1712. This article includes the following paragraphs:

I always thought it was the right of Englishmen to have liberty to speak freely in things relating to their general interest, only with this just restraint, viz., that they spoke truth, but I never thought that liberty extended to a general latitude of forging what stories they thought fit, and speaking by their own authority whatever they pleased, without respect to matters of fact. ...

I speak this with a melancholy retrospect to the sin of the day, in which raising and publishing mere fictions, mere forgeries of our own, and spreading them out for news, to please or serve the parties we are concerned for, is grown so general a practice that indeed it is become the jest of the town, and 'tis the common greeting now in a morning - Well, neighbour, what news?

Truly, says t'other, I am but just come, I don't know, pray, what is the lie of the week? Or what is the lie courant[3] for the day? What a wretched posture are we come to that we receive lies, knowing or believing them to be so, and please ourselves with them, to confront one another, and make good the scandal we deal in!

It would be too dirty a piece of work to rake in the general laystall of parties and expose the wretched particulars; how do our newswriters carry on the wicked war, and throw lies at one another every post, just as our boys throw dirt at one another in the street.

To come off of this we have a new invention, for what cannot our projectors for Hell do in that case? Viz., to dress up a formal story and call it "a letter from Holland"; the concern whether it be true or no is then no more upon us, it is a story left on the reputation of somebody abroad. This way we have every post a packet of such forged stuff, as well of one side as the other, that it is intolerable. I clear none of the parties of it; the crime is general.

And what's the lie of the week now? Alas, this very week has been so fruitful of lies that it is hard to determine; but I think the lie of the greatest magnitude, the master lie that came over this post at the head of the swarm, may be allowed to be that of the Duke of Ormond's army burning a church and burning 270 of the poor people, inhabitants of the village, alive in it, not suffering them to come out. Is this story likely to be true? Do Englishmen use to do thus? Is the Duke of Ormond of such a bloody, barbarous disposition? This I could not omit taking notice of. And what a day do we live in that such a piece of news will go down with us! ...

I have sometime wondered at the folly of those people who are satisfied in lying if a printed lie will but hold one day, and though it be detected the next, they think it worth while to go through with it. But now I am convinced of the usefulness to them of this way of lying, though it be but for a few

hours. How often has a formal lie come hot out of the oven into Exchange Alley, served the interest of the contrivers to the tune of 2 or 3 per cent in the price of stocks between nine o'clock and two? And though it has been cold again before night, nay, though it has been traced in those few hours, how have the managers made it answer all the ends of truth to them? Sold their stocks off at a good price, and stand and laugh at you into the bargain? Nay, make the advantage of the very detecting their own forgery, and make a second gain, by buying in cheap what before they sold out 2 or 3 cent dearer.

In politics it is the same. ... (Payne 1951: 73-75)

Defoe's consciousness of internal limitations of publicness

Despite his insisting on a negative, public-oriented understanding of the freedom of the media as freedom *from* restrictions and not as freedom for the publication of certain messages, Defoe leaves no doubt that this does not constitute an excuse for statements of every kind. The journalist whose professional task is to create public discourse through the general obligation to publish, needs no further reasons to conduct investigations and subsequently publish her or his findings in a form that interests the public. But it may happen that there are sufficient, even compelling reasons which force a journalist to *refrain* from publishing a certain fact in a certain form. A professional journalist is not in a position to answer the question why he or she actually reports on a certain subject, but the journalist must be able to explain why he or she *refrains* from publishing certain facts. Sufficient reasons for not publishing a fact may lie in the lack of journalistic qualities in the text or the fear of violating the general morality when such violations are considered intolerable even after careful reflection on the competing professional duties.

Defoe does not so much deal with the rivalry between professional duties and universal prohibitions on which today's debates regarding the ethics of the media concentrate, but he reflects on the central professional quality of *truth* and the resulting requirements thereof. In a concrete case, there may arise from these requirements the necessity to refrain from using the freedom of the press, which is generally necessary for creating public discourse, if the topic is not in accordance with these requirements. If there is no quality of truth, the journalist is well entitled to refrain from publishing an event.

Three constituents of truth

Defoe explicitly mentions three constituents of truth in his texts of 1711 and 1712: *Correctness* (or accuracy), *honesty* (or truthfulness) and *independence*.

The element of *correctness* concerns the central question of whether or not the basic duty to publish should be obeyed. Defoe deals only sporadically with this problem in his writings against the stamp

tax, laying much more emphasis on it in his polemics against the warmongers in the press. Already in the first paragraph he talks of the necessary “respect to matters of fact.” It seems that we have not progressed much after three centuries of epistemological debates: Correctness means that a statement is in accordance with something that—after inter-subjective, verifiable sensory perception (by experience, empirically)—can be regarded as a “fact”. Despite all constructionist insights, which were already inherent, for example, in Immanuel Kant’s theory of knowledge (cf. Kant 1956), this is an indispensable requirement of journalistic information: The information must be correct, must be able to withstand inter-subjective verification and not merely—as in scientific hypotheses—be in principle empirically verifiable on an inter-subjective basis. If this is not the case, or if the fact is doubtful to an intolerable extent, then its publication is either unjustified or only admissible when the existing doubts are indicated to the reader.

This last point brings us to the second of Defoe’s components of truth, i.e. the question as to *in what manner* a topic should be published. Because of subjective selectivity in general and the resulting fact that all knowledge is a construct (further keeping in mind that doubts regarding the correctness of all information can never be fully excluded), truth—especially in the practice of journalism, which is subject to the requirements of immediacy—cannot be taken from the substantial quality of a single statement, but can only result from a virtually unending process of correcting and completing. This process is only achievable in the course of unrestricted inter-subjective communication.

According to this concept—the only one applicable in the field of professional journalism—publication is the precondition of truth. It is not the case that the verification of truth is the precondition of publication. The process of finding truth is maintained if a journalist who issues a statement reveals her or his doubts regarding its objectivity by identifying her- or himself. This declaring of unavoidable impairments to the truth, which is expressed in the routine conveyance of news, for example, by indicating the source of a piece of information in a news item, can be called *honesty* or *truthfulness*. Defoe vehemently demands this kind of truthfulness when he calls the spreading of anonymous news one of the greatest evils in the press. He insists that the obligation to disclose the subject standing behind a publication is the best protection against abuses of press freedom because it stimulates a kind of self-regulation through the possibility of holding the subject in question publicly accountable. In Defoe’s opinion, this is a decisive argument against restrictions of the press in general. He therefore regards as justified even legal steps taken against the practice of indicating only an author’s initials.

The third component of truth that Defoe mentions concerns the conditions and the behavior of the subject issuing a journalistic statement. In order to be in a position to report or comment truthfully, the journalist must be *independent* of political parties and other institutions with their various special interests. He must see it as his sole task to create publicness, which is, of course, also a particular interest, although one of a special kind. Defoe’s fight against the press influenced by the great political parties of his time, the Whigs and the Tories, shows that creating publicness or public discourse on one hand and participating in the struggle for power on the other demands different and incompatible requirements in terms of actions and self-expression. That organisations like political parties, unions or churches involved in the execution of social power (and therefore

dependent on such principles as hierarchy and confidentiality) are doomed in the long run to publishing failure—in contrast to enterprises that are primarily interested simply in gaining the attention of the general public—has never been more evident than in the development of the media in the second half of the twentieth century.

Not having to write what a party, an association, a church or a government requires is, first, a substantial part of journalistic liberty and, second, a precondition for orienting oneself in the objective of finding truth. Both are indispensable elements for the creation of publicness and public discourse. In the nineteenth century, even Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were well aware of this. Contrary to a widespread, erroneous belief, both men shared the opinion that they “only wanted to have a paper independent in pecuniary aspects from the party”, for “being dependent, even upon a Labor party, is a heavy lot”, as Engels wrote to August Bebel (Fetscher 1969: 234).

Separation of fact and opinion, news and commentary?

It is interesting that Defoe does *not* speak of a quality standard which actually only developed and finally prevailed during the nineteenth century in the course of the social differentiation of institutionalized labor and the family, the public and private spheres, masculinity and femininity, classic and popular culture, and information and entertainment—namely, the *separation of fact and opinion, news and commentary*. From the point of view of honesty, this standard is highly problematic because it nourishes an illusion of truth as the substance of a single news item, that the total absence of subjective ingredients and selections is possible in this narrative form. From a critical perspective, this claim to be objective seems to be put forward in order to camouflage the influence of particular interests on the transfer of information, thereby making such influence especially effective.

In contrast to newspapers like the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*—which in an act of self-promotion praises itself for the by-no-means obvious principle of separation—a serious, world-famous paper like the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, with a tradition reaching back to the Enlightenment, has never emphasized to practice a strict separation of news and commentary. The prevailing journalistic genre in this case is the correspondent’s report offering a mixture of abundant and precise information with the unprotected, clearly recognizable opinion of the writer. This can also be seen as honesty or truthfulness when a subject identifies himself as the producer of a text, thereby serving truth understood as an open, never ending process of communication.

The dialectic of press freedom and truth

Regarding the element of *independence*, it becomes clear that both the journalist’s commitment to truth and her or his general freedom are not at all opposed as is often insinuated. Both are necessary preconditions for the success of journalistic work, not excluding but completing and

sometimes overlapping each other as in the case of the criterion of independence from the interests of power.

At the same time, there is a dialectic of freedom: If journalists exercise freedom without observing the commitment to truth with its manifold obligations, the resulting failures of the media justify external legal measures, which leads to a limitation of the principle of the media's freedom. From a professional standpoint, this is especially deplorable because it means a restriction on the possibility of creating publicness. Journalists must therefore report in a correct, honest and independent manner in order to defend the freedom of the media as an essential precondition for the execution of their professional task. In individual cases it can happen that the concrete conditions of journalistic practice or even other requirements for journalistic quality, such as immediacy or comprehensibility, may lead to an unintentional violation of the obligation to write the truth. But in the interest of their professional task, journalists cannot afford to regularly disregard correctness, truthfulness and independence.

Defoe's error

In one respect, however, Defoe was wrong: Common sense is not sufficient to demonstrate that the news that hundreds of people had been driven by other people into a church and then burned alive was false. At least since Daniel Jonah Goldhagen's book *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (Goldhagen 1996), we know that the unimaginable took place during the death marches of concentration camp prisoners at the end of World War II. Even in the face of military defeat, Germans drove thousands of Jews into a barn and burned them alive (cf. Goldhagen 1996: 433). When the American magazine *Life* published photographs of the unimaginable Holocaust crimes in May 1945, many Americans could not believe what they saw and considered it to be war propaganda of their government, just as Defoe had done more than two centuries before.

We may take from this a lesson: Whether something is correct or not cannot be measured in terms of our imagination. It can only be measured by what our eyes see, our ears hear and our hands feel. The perception of our senses, especially the professionally educated senses of journalists, should be free to register what logic and humanity otherwise consider unimaginable.

Translation: Chris Long and Johannes Rabe

About the author

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Footnotes

[1] A version of this paper has been presented at the Euricom Colloquium *Foundations of Communication Studies in pre-20th Century European Thought*, April 3-5, 2003, Piran, Slovenia.[2] The term *publicness* designates the quality or state of being public. Though it has since fallen out of use, *publicness* appears in English documents dating from the seventeenth century and the time period corresponding to Defoe's publishing career.

[3] An allusion to the *Daily Courant*, Britain's first daily newspaper, which was founded in 1702 and which Defoe often criticized for its inaccuracy.

How can the state promote journalism?

The legacy of Joseph Pulitzer

By Carsten Brosda

Abstract: If the state were to promote journalism in a targeted way, we would be able to motivate and support journalism that aspired not only to empirical analysis but also to provide context and thus form part of a critical and emancipatory practice of enlightenment. There are four fields of action that could be pursued in order to promote journalism for the common good: a contemporary legal framework; improved education; targeted support for innovation; and promotion of an “editorial society.”

When Joseph Pulitzer bought the *New York World* in 1883, there was no way of knowing that it would develop into one of the most influential newspapers of its day. His first editorial became a manifesto for the independence of journalism. He argued that the role of independent journalism is to fight for progress and change, and against injustice, poverty, and corruption. According to Pulitzer, publishers and journalists should not be allowed to be members of political parties and should maintain “radical independence” in all other ways, too. In short, he believed that newspaper people had a duty not to specific interests, but to the common good.

The fundamental principles Pulitzer listed back then remain unchanged to this day. Around 150 years later, the Federation of German Newspaper Publishers (BDZV) states in its guiding principles that “The newspapers are economically and journalistically independent. (...) The newspapers play the role of a watchdog in the public interest.” [1] Journalists inform their recipients and thus make a relevant contribution to the complex process of forming opinions and policy in a democracy.

As in Pulitzer’s day, the relationship between the media and policymakers is nothing if not complex. However, when it comes to protecting democracy, both are on the same side.

Journalists as watchdogs of democracy

Two key forces are buffeting the foundations of the rule of law, freedom and plurality of opinion in today’s world. The first is autocratic regimes; the second the fragmentation of social discourse into individual filter bubbles, aided by algorithms. Faced with these adversaries, a democratic and constitutional state should have a great interest in allies who are obligated to the same fundamental

values.

The potential of newspapers to act as a medium relevant to democracy was described as far back as 1787 by state theorist Thomas Jefferson, before he became US President:

“This formidable censor of the public functionaries, by arraigning them at the tribunal of public opinion, produces reform peaceably, which must otherwise be done by revolution.”[2]

Journalistic media organize the day-to-day conversations that a modern society conducts with itself on the questions of the day. They communicate important information and points of orientation, thus creating an understanding of the coherence and cohesion of functionally nuanced social systems.

This applies to this day. Going beyond any specialized localism, journalists can be the impetus behind public processes of understanding and, ideally, reform. In an age in which anyone can publicize his thoughts and opinions to a ubiquitous public at almost no cost and without having to run them by an editor acting as a filter, there is an even more urgent need for media and people that can distill this mass of information and opinions into a discourse relevant to the common good.

Intermediaries like Google and Facebook can serve up content that is tailored to each user’s personal preferences. In doing so, the focus on the relevance of the information to the individual, an orientation on the common good, and therefore public relevance, necessarily play a less important role in how the information is selected and presented.

The fact that Google, Facebook, and, more recently, Snapchat act as promoters of journalism makes sense for society, but changes little in terms of their fundamental disposition. As they rely on professional content, they have an interest in media using their platforms. Journalism can benefit from this, but we must not use it as the only way to safeguard journalism’s position in society.

To promote or not to promote?

One urgent role that the state must perform is to guarantee freedom of the press and to create the legal and regulatory framework needed to achieve this.

While considerations for promoting the press and journalism that go far beyond this are common in many countries[3], this debate is limited by certain reservations in Germany. Historic reasons may be behind this: When Germany was restructured after the Second World War, the Allies saw the independence of the German media as a crucial pillar of the country’s democratization.

Even today, state promotion quickly leads to suspicion of state influence - a suspicion that would be particularly serious in the media sector. In Germany, many press businesses enjoyed a good economic position for so long that decades went by with no need for promotion. This situation has now fundamentally changed, with many media businesses facing significant economic difficulties as a result of structural change.

However, a look at our European neighbors, for example sales support in France, shows that even extensive state support has only improved the situation of journalism slightly.

In general, journalistic content must be able to stand its own on the market for readers without external promotion. Only then can the medium show whether it is viable. After all, users' willingness to pay for a service remains the best proof of how highly they value it. In future, the priority will have to be to convince users that it is worth making a contribution to financing journalistic content. If at all, promotion models only come into question when they concentrate precisely on weak points, market failures or aiding innovation and are designed carefully so as not to cause any dependencies - direct or indirect.

Actively shaping the change in the media ecosystem

For many years now, the sales and advertising revenue of conventional publishing houses has been falling as a result of digitalization and the changing media environment. The old formula of generating two thirds of income from advertising and one third from sales is long gone. Today, journalism has to be largely self-funding. The economic challenges this presents to media companies sometimes makes it difficult for them to initiate the transformation processes needed, hindering investment and dampening the joy of innovation. All this is happening at a time when willingness to experiment should really form the foundation of forward-looking journalistic formats. As a result, it is increasingly important to ask whether the economic problems faced by so many media companies are putting structural limitations on the quality, diversity and freedom of the press going forward.

The intensity and historical uniqueness of this change demand further examination of the steps it will take to safeguard journalism as a democratic resource for the long term. There can be no doubt that there is a need for positive stimulus to drive the process of digital transformation in journalism forward more boldly. At the moment, if editorial offices change at all, it is too often influenced by ever more extensive money-saving measures - a fact that especially applies to many small local and regional newspapers. However, even for large daily newspapers, investigative research is expensive and demands a high level of expertise, especially when it concerns modern scoops such as the data analyses of the "Panama Papers" and "Paradise Papers".

Anyone who believes that journalists should continue to play a role in the realization of democratic public life in future, needs to guarantee that they are truly able to fulfill this role with modern, including digital, means.

In fact, we are facing much deeper structural change. Increasingly, our media face a problem not only with their profit models in digital media contexts, but also with their audience's expectations. When users have access to new sources of information in more and more forms, conventional journalism itself needs critical examination. Journalistic services need to legitimize themselves to their users time and again. This means that the communicative tasks of journalists need to reposition themselves if they are to remain relevant in the future.

Delivering journalism is a difficult journey that demands a long-term approach. By promoting journalism in a targeted way, we can provide motivation and concrete support for journalistic actions that aspire not only to empirical analysis but also to provide context and thus form part of a critical and emancipatory practice of enlightenment.

Four fields of action appear particularly suited to giving journalism orientated towards the common good an increased chance of survival in Germany:

1. A contemporary legal framework

If journalism is to be able to remain self-funding in future, it will require a media structure that can deal with the new environment. In Germany, the federal and state governments are working together to create a reliable framework for publishing houses and journalists, in areas such as improved legal protection for journalistic content, press wholesale, and the enforcement of the reduced rate of VAT regardless of the form of distribution.

In addition, it needs to be made easier for charities to support journalism.[4] Promoting journalism is still not recognized as a charitable purpose in its own right.

This is one of the reasons why only 120 of the more than 21,000 charitable foundations in Germany are active in this field, largely conducting activities to support education, science and research, understanding between different nations, or the democratic state. [5] There is a wide spectrum of support activities, ranging from prizes for journalists to funding journalists in difficult economic situations, promoting media competence and holding symposia. It would be better if journalistic production were not only honored *ex post*, but also supported *ex ante*.

Networks of journalists in the same vein as large American research offices like ProPublica are another important reason to add the promotion of journalism to the catalog of charitable purposes contained in Art. 52 of the German Fiscal Code. This kind of non-profit organization produces content that is relevant to society, funded from various sources, and thus enjoys a very particular form of independence. If their emergence and development could be supported, journalistic organizations like this could become interesting stakeholders in the German media landscape, too.

2. Improved education for journalists

If we want dedicated, intelligent and versatile journalists in the future, too, we need good institutions for their education. One person who undoubtedly recognized this was Pulitzer himself, who provided funds for the world's first school of journalism in his will. Educational institutions teach not only the tools of the trade, but a professional ethos. Protected from the pressures of the market, they can reflect on the structural changes and incorporate them into new methods and skills in journalistic education.

One plausible option would be for the state to take on responsibility for teaching journalistic skills at universities. The opposition to academia still cultivated in many fields of media and journalism to this day is a particular feature of the German media landscape that has no place in today's world. We must recognize that practical elements of training, such as traineeships, are unsuited to generating the innovation skills editorial offices need. Academic education and the experiment and laboratory conditions it provides can help.

The structural changes triggered by advances in technology mean that learning does not end with initial training. Constant improvement in knowledge transfer and lifelong learning are essential for journalists if they are to develop new strategies in a public world increasingly organized digitally.

Given this background, it would seem a good idea to promote exchange between universities and practitioners all over the world. Local journalists who do not work in a large urban region suffer particularly from a lack of opportunities to learn modern ways of working or even to launch their own start-up. Fellowships, research sabbaticals and advanced seminars could create new options for journalists. Once again, it is down to educational institutions to develop new forms of outreach teaching that enable knowledge to be transferred right into editorial offices. One option would be bursaries that enable people to spend a few months working in the editorial office and share their knowledge in their field of expertise. Such experts could include, for example, outstanding editors from non-competing media from Germany and abroad, data analysts, audience researchers etc.

3. Targeted support for innovation and transformation

One crucial factor will be the establishment of a culture of innovation in journalism that takes on research and development strategies and agile development beyond traditional routines. Hamburg has had very positive experience in this field with its *Next Media Accelerator*^[6] (nma). The nma brings media start-ups from all over the world to Hamburg, promotes them and brokers contact with established media houses. Recently, the second round of financing tripled external investment - a clear indication of how much the media companies involved benefit from this promotion or and collaboration with young media start-ups. The accelerator model should serve as an example for how to promote media innovation.

As part of Hamburg's *nextMedia*^[7] initiative to promote the city as a business location, the City

Senate is also supporting the digital transformation process at the media companies based there by focusing on the dynamics of innovation at the interface between content and technologies. It uses sector platforms and appropriate formats to bring project partners together and support knowledge transfer. In the virtual reality (VR) segment, for example, publishing houses and other media houses can work closely with VR producers to develop prototypes and test their own content in VR.

4. Empowerment for the community of editors

The transformation of the media world demands particular skills not only from journalists, but increasingly also from users. These include understanding digital mechanisms and communicative responsibility among amateur journalists. At the same time, the transformation is increasing awareness of the challenging work done by qualified, professional journalists.

The media studies expert Bernhard Pörksen created the term “the editorial society” to describe the idea that all citizens should base their behavior on journalistic principles. The core ideas behind his code of ethics for communication in the digital age are reflection and responsibility.

One body taking the first steps towards this kind of training for amateur journalists is the “Reporterfabrik”[8] run by the Correctiv charitable research center. The project’s supporters include the Hamburg Office for Culture and Media.

Working together across multiple channels, we can and must ensure that what counts in future is not the loudest voice, but the most incisive analysis of lifeworld contexts. In times of fast change, one thing is often forgotten: There are some things that do not change. Pulitzer’s principles of thorough research, accuracy and independence are one of them – and so is humans’ need for truth.

Translation: Sophie Costella

About the author

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[1] <https://www.bdzv.de/der-bdzv/das-leitbild-der-zeitungen/>

[2] <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/default.xqy?keys=FOEA-print-04-02-02-3837>

[3] Cf. e.g. Deutscher Bundestag, Wissenschaftliche Dienste 2017: Öffentliche Förderung journalistischer Informationsmedien in ausgewählten Ländern.
<https://www.bundestag.de/blob/508970/e0e7132a038f913f9cdecf6991760835/wd-10-064-16-pdf-data.pdf>

[4] Cf. The discussion in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia:
<https://correctiv.org/blog/ruhr/artikel/2017/01/18/rot-gruen-fuer-gemeinnuetzigen-journalismus/>

[5] <https://www.stiftungen.org/verband/was-wir-tun/vernetzungsangebote/arbeitskreise-foren-und-expertenkreise/expertenkreis-qualitaetsjournalismus-und-stiftungen.html>

[6] <http://www.nextmedia-hamburg.de/events/partner-events/next-media-accelerator/>

[7] <http://www.nextmedia-hamburg.de>

[8] <https://correctiv.org/reporterfabrik/>

The peculiar logic of the content marketer

Justified critics of established mass media? Or just lobbyists for their own cause?

By Lutz Frühbrodt

Abstract: Again and again, leading names in content marketing (CM) have questioned whether the media system in Germany is fit for purpose. They claim that journalism is under-resourced, not independent, and active only in user-unfriendly filter bubbles. In contrast, they say, content marketing – advertising using journalistic means – is user-friendly and beneficial. In fact, “corporate journalism” is often of higher quality, they argue. However, analyzing their arguments shows that the logic of CM lobbyists is often skewed.

“#Journalism: Many a content marketing project could replace the media, since we don’t have to pay for them,” tweeted Klaus Eck on July 4, 2018. Eck is the boss of the Munich-based agency d.Tales, which offers advertising through journalistic means – otherwise known as content marketing (CM).[1] Eck is known not only as a proven expert who has compiled his expertise into various guides to CM (cf. e.g. Eck/Eichmeier 2014), but also as a leading lobbyist for a group of people who want to legitimize this specific form of commercial communication to an expert audience. Eck’s pithy statements have repeatedly attracted attention in recent years, establishing him as a public champion of content marketing.

Content marketing versus journalism

Eck is certainly not the only representative of the sector campaigning in public. Karsten Lohmeyer, for example, until the start of 2018 Chief Editor at The Digitale, Deutsche Telekom’s CM agency, put his point across in feisty blog posts and with assertive panel performances in which he claimed that traditional media had lost almost all their independence. Another leading CM lobbyist is Andreas Siefke, Chair of the *Content Marketing Forum*. Siefke emphasizes that CM is “corporate journalism” that faces traditional media titles on an equal footing at the very least.

The thrust and objective of statements like these are always the same: They are intended to feed and reinforce doubts about journalistic media’s fitness for purpose. In addition, they aim to gain greater recognition for content marketing as an unavoidable alternative to journalism, entirely equivalent in

terms of both function and quality. It is clear that the CM lobbyists are speaking out not as neutral experts, but always *pro domo*. However, this does not in itself mean that their views are distorted or even wrong. So how justified are CM's claims and this criticism of journalism? In order to find out, this paper analyses how plausible and accurate various core statements, represented by relevant quotes, are.

1. Content marketing is pushing journalistic content out because it is free.

Our starting point is the tweet from Klaus Eck quoted above: “#Journalism: Many a content marketing project could replace the media, since we don't have to pay for them.” In his tweet, Eck referred to an article recently published on his own blog *Indiskretion Ehrensache* [Indiscretion a matter of honor] by Thomas Knüwer, former editor at *Handelsblatt* and now a media consultant. Entitled “Journalismus: Bald nur noch ein Luxus der Wohlhabenden” [Journalism: Soon to be a luxury only the wealthy can afford] (Knüwer 2018), the article looks at various aspects of the topic but largely rails against digital paywalls and rising print prices for journalistic media. Knüwer imagines a particular form of digital division: “high-quality journalism and exclusive news – that will soon be a luxury that only a small section of society can afford. The rest will have to settle for fake news and politically radical websites.”

Eck's comments are based on the assumption that Knüwer's dark prediction actually comes true. However, there is plenty of reason to doubt his forecast – it is more of a polemic for exaggerated effect. After all, as we know, prices left to market forces are governed by supply and demand. The crucial aspect in this case is what is known as the elasticity of demand: When a certain price level is reached, demand drops and sales collapse. In the real world, this means that neither printed daily newspapers nor digital paywall models are likely to exceed certain price levels. A media world in which financial and functional elites are the only people who can afford reliable information seems an extremely surreal prospect. In addition, journalistic products are hardly suitable as luxury goods, whose primary function is to create a social distinction. Newspapers and magazines are not comparable with Louis Vuitton handbags or Brioni suits.

Instead, the great majority of the media (with the exception of glossy magazines) are mass-produced goods for which users do not want to pay much – few consumers pay more than one hundred euros per month. This alone reduces the credibility of Knüwer's theory. The theory also claims that the only alternative to traditional media is fake news producers and politically radical websites. Surely Knüwer would not consider his own blog among this phalanx of extremists?

The fact is that, despite some paywalls, the majority of serious online journalism remains available to users free of charge. Also undeniable is the fact that many traditional media failed to get on board with digitalization at the start, with some media houses making strategic errors in introducing new profit models. However, the main hurdle facing managers, editors and authors is the free-of-charge culture of the internet, which was established early on and will be almost impossible to change 25

years later. Although most consumers love to do their shopping online, only a handful are willing to pay for services offered on the internet itself.

This is the fundamental dilemma facing journalistic media. Although basic information about key events and developments are available all over the internet, credible verification of this information, a balanced context or exclusive research providing new information are not only a journalistic service, but also demand investment in the form of finance and staff. These costs need to be covered by takings, so it is no wonder that journalistic media want to see users pay for their 'refined' information. Ways of doing this include advertising on the website, paywalls, and license fees for public service broadcasters.

In order to gain ground in this difficult situation, all (apparently) free alternative services need to thwart the efforts of classic media. However, an important distinction needs to be made: So far, content marketing has only attacked political and business journalism in a few isolated cases. Instead, CM is largely expanding in the usual playgrounds of popular culture - in fashion and lifestyle, and above all in fields in which traditional journalism previously held a kind of monopoly as a source of advice - from medical advice to which new smartphone to buy. While users of *test.de* have to pay Stiftung Warentest a few euros to download a full product test, they can get it for free from electronics chain Saturn's *Turn On* or mobile provider Telefónica's *Curved* - without ever knowing exactly what is behind these 'tests' and what the (perhaps) commercial interests of the testers are.

Having said that, the CM services only appear to be free of charge. The content of topic pages, blogs and videos is created by agencies like Klaus Eck's d.Tales - a service for which the advertising companies pay a lot of money. This comes from the budget of the PR departments or, even more frequently, from marketing. Just like in the case of classic advertising, all the costs for this ultimately influence the sales price of the products that the content marketing is intended, at least in part, to promote. One consumer might want to use *Turn On* for information and then purchase his new tablet not from Saturn, but from a competitor. Another, who does buy from Saturn, is helping to pay for the 'invisible' advertising. This eternal principle of advertising works just the same way in content marketing as in traditional methods. When a company puts an advertisement on a journalistic news site, the costs are also passed indirectly on to the customer - regardless of whether he as a media consumer has paid attention to the advert or not.

Whether it is media financed by advertising, those that work more with paywalls and subscription models, or content marketing, companies that advertise incur costs that they then hope and indeed need to recoup through the sales price. Klaus Eck's tweet might therefore appear logical on first reading, but it is ultimately a naïve calculation.

2. Traditional journalism is in a terrible state. Companies therefore have to go to greater lengths to establish their own channels of communication in order to be heard.

In an interview about the relationship between journalism and public relations (PR), Eck claimed that, “If the media are no longer accessible for companies, because the editorial offices are overstretched and have little time for the needs of PR, then PR practitioners have no choice but to publicize their topics actively in order to reach their respective target groups. This turns press staff into content marketers” (Duran 2018). Eck considers specialist media largely superfluous, as they usually consist of thinly-staffed editorial offices simply placing ‘guest articles’ from companies in their publications (Sohn 2017).

Eck’s conclusion on journalism today is overwhelming negative. “Trust in the media has suffered at the hands not of content marketing, but of apparently poor journalism. Many media consumers want to see their own reality reflected and are disappointed when journalism offers them something outside their own filter bubble.” But the agency chief then goes on to qualify his statement, admitting that journalistic media have regained some trust.

Karsten Lohmeyer, formerly an editor for television magazines produced by Hubert Burda Media, is even tougher on traditional media. “I would never consider content marketing journalism in the pure, true definition of the word,” he writes. “But the same applies to what feels like around 95 percent of that which calls itself journalism these days.” He goes on, “A large proportion of the mishmash of media produced every day consists of trivial entertainment, rehashed press releases, poorly-researched user value and, sadly, all too often poorly-camouflaged product placement” (Lohmeyer 2017). Later on, he complains that journalists are only interested in a “good story” and pay no attention to search engine optimization (SEO) or expanding reach (Sohn 2017).

The message behind all these quotes can be consolidated in a few key messages: Traditional media work with editorial offices that are barely fit for purpose. The journalists that work there are too interested in their own stories and not in their audience. This self-centered view has lost them credibility. The majority of traditional media is not independent anyway. So is there any truth in these claims? Are they disparaging journalistic media unfairly? Or is their criticism essentially justified, if a little over the top?

It is undeniable that the media has suffered a structural crisis since 2002. Although intervention from the media houses has gone some way to limit the damage, the crisis is far from over. The challenge of the internet, the associated loss of advertising markets and the sometimes erratic search for new profit models has led to often painful falls in sales and profits, especially for daily newspapers. However, only a handful of editorial offices have had to close completely. Although there have been significant job losses, these have largely been the result of media houses making much better use of synergies than before – for example by having just a single correspondent office in Berlin that supplies all titles with articles, rather than multiple separate offices.

There is no doubt that the level of staffing in some editorial offices is not ideal. The image of a two people sitting in an office putting together guest articles for a specialist magazine, so smugly described by Klaus Eck, has always had a grain of truth to it, at least for smaller titles. A more recent and more worrying trend, however, is for local and regional newspapers to publish sometimes

totally unedited press releases as news - a clear violation of the German Press Code. The influence of advertising and commercial concerns on local reporting seems to have increased in general (cf. Arnold/Wagner 2018: 190ff.). It is easier for companies to make themselves heard when there are so few staff in the editorial offices. But it does not mean, as Eck claims, that commercial communication will be forced to rely on its own channels in future - quite the opposite.

The credibility crisis in the established mass media Eck describes is primarily down to the radicalization of parts of German society. First via social media and increasingly in online magazines (*Compact* etc.), political forces on the left and especially the right 'fringes' have attempted to create an alternative public sphere by villainizing the established media as "lying press" or "mainstream media." However, there are other reasons why between a quarter and a third (depending on the survey) of people in Germany have doubts about the credibility of traditional journalistic mass media (cf. Otto 2017).

These included (and still do in some cases) a lack of willingness to enter into active dialog with media users and to address their needs. However, significant progress has now been made here, negating Eck's argument that most journalists have nothing to offer media users except their own filter bubble. Quite apart from this, journalistic media have a public duty to promote the formation of public opinion. This necessarily means that relevance at least sometimes takes precedence over clicks and apparent public popularity. Klaus Eck paints a picture of editors providing publicity and ignoring the real-life concerns and social needs of most people. Such an image triggers associations with the groundless accusations of those spreading propaganda about the 'lying press' and cannot be what Klaus Eck means.

One clear indication of this progress is that fact that, today, the standards of good journalism dictate that editors do not simply blindly pursue their own story in a narcissistic manner, as Karsten Lohmeyer claims, but instead make sure that stories achieve the greatest possible reach. Some editorial offices now compose texts based predominantly SEO criteria rather than questions of style. Reach in the form of the highest possible click rates plays an increasingly important, even excessive role in some media houses. Some, for example, publish a list of the articles with the most clicks internally every day. They are clearly placing reach before relevance - and not always correctly. It is difficult to see why Lohmeyer puts such emphasis on reach, given that content marketing products usually achieve much lower click rates or noticeably lower rankings on search engines when they compete with comparable journalism. This, too, is likely to be connected to credibility.

So what about Lohmeyer's allegation that "what feels like" 95 percent of journalist media consists of trivial entertainment, rehashed press releases, poorly-researched user value, and barely-camouflaged product placement? This damning assessment is nothing more than a hugely distorted vilification of a profession whose importance and fitness for purpose becomes especially clear when one looks at countries like Russia, China or Turkey, which do not have a system of free and pluralistic media.

Alongside features such as periodicity and topicality, there are two key features that define

journalism: editorial independence and neutrality. In terms of their work, this means that journalists make every effort to achieve truth and authenticity, conducting research and providing information impartially, carefully, completely and with no predetermined result. In addition, the journalistic duty of care demands that all relevant sources are consulted and competing perspectives on the topic in question offered. Content marketing does none of this.

A certain gap between ideal and reality, between academic standards and professional practice, is inevitable. What ultimately counts is how close to or far from independence or dependence the individual fields are in the real world. Here it is clear - both subjectively and objectively - that the traditional media are still much closer to independence, certainly closer than corporate publications are.

Admittedly, there is nothing to say that it will remain this way for ever. The system is dynamic. There are certainly some developments we should be concerned about, for example at Gruner + Jahr, one of Germany's leading magazine publishers. Over the last few years, the media corporation has not only hugely expanded its content marketing unit Territory, but also brought its magazines strictly into line with commercial criteria. Their journalistic independence has not always come away unscathed. Even more serious, however, is the fact that, through its business policy, Gruner + Jahr is single-handedly helping to blur the line between journalism and commercial communication.

On the one hand, the group publishes celebrity-focused magazines like *Barbara* (Schöneberger) and *Gesund leben* (Eckart von Hirschhausen), which follow journalistic standards. On the other, the CM subsidiary Territory publishes the lifestyle magazine *BOA*, all about football star Jérôme Boateng. How clear is the distinction between journalism and PR here? Do the magazines differ significantly from one another? In this sense, Lohmeyer's view is right: There are undoubtedly worrying trends. However, using these trends as the basis for such a sweeping judgment is irresponsible. And after all, content marketing does not gain legitimacy simply because some journalistic media are opening up more to commercial and advertising interests.

3. Content marketing is in direct competition with journalism and in some cases even has the upper hand.

"Journalists and PR practitioners are locked in an exciting competition," Klaus Eck believes. "The question is always who can deliver the better content." Association President Andreas Siefke agrees: "There is no doubt that we ensure a more diverse range of opinion. However, I see no indication that we 'weeds' are strangling the precious flowers" (quoted in Frühbrodt 2016). Instead, Siefke sees a change of position in the apparent competition: "A few years ago, our benchmark was still to be at least as good as the titles on newsstands. Now there is a whole series of projects that are actually of much higher quality than the newspapers of the traditional media." According to Siefke, titles from the automotive and financial sectors in particular are playing in the journalistic "Champions League."

Karsten Lohmeyer encapsulates this confidence among CM producers in feisty fashion: “So, dear journalist colleagues, perhaps instead of condemning content marketing straight off, you should see it as a dangerous challenge – and as an incentive to finally become better again. As an incentive to show what good journalism can do. As an incentive to move beyond mediocrity that is causing journalism to drown in the medial mishmash.”

What these quotes all boil down to is this: Journalism and content marketing are in direct competition with one another. Journalistic media are sinking into mediocrity, while CM media are being promoted to the ‘Champions League’ and can act as a stimulus for journalism to display greater quality once again. As such, content marketing could actually play a positive role for society in a sense. Statements like this are the logical conclusion of a chain of arguments that criticizes and attacks journalism in order to legitimize content marketing and present it as an equal competitor.

There is certainly a debate to be had about quality and standards like style and depth of research. For all these arguments, however, there is no doubt that, although content management uses certain journalistic tools, it also differs significantly from journalism: It lacks institutional independence and neutrality. There is therefore a clear dividing line between the two fields. Content marketers have to define quality primarily based on external features of journalism – and, in case of doubt, on how penetrating a text on how to air a home properly is in describing the benefits of the underfloor heating that the company paying for advertising produces.

An analogy from another sphere of society is useful. While both have a law degree, a defense lawyer and a state prosecutor have completely different roles before a court. This division of roles is completely clear to any observer – but in public communication, the producers of content marketing want to blur the distinction between these vastly different roles as much as possible. In doing so, they hope that media consumers do not really mind whether the content comes from the keyboard of a journalist or a content marketer. These conditions would indeed create a competition situation.

All this hangs on the users’ media competence and especially their awareness of advertising. But it is secondary. First, the CM sector should and must create the greatest possible transparency around the content they offer. The oft-quoted example of *Curved* is not a one-off, as Siefke claims – there is a great deal of CM content for which it is not immediately or not at all clear who is behind it. This is often intentional, since media users are much less likely to find content credible if they can immediately see that it has been produced by a company. Despite this, clear labelling is essential if we are to achieve full transparency, so that users are truly free to decide whether or not to make use of a service. Although the German Public Relations Council (DPRR) and the German Association for the Digital Economy (BVDW) have issued a relevant Code of Ethics, it is very generic, even on the key question of transparency. Gabriele Hooffacker therefore suggests that PR practitioners, including content marketers, should subscribe to the more precise and comprehensive German Press Code (Hooffacker 2017).

Andreas Siefke’s Content Marketing Forum is yet to publish its own code of ethics. Its President prefers to ruminate on the fields in which the competition situation he plans will arise. “90 percent

of our editorial work is user value journalism that is certainly researched and done well, but that has more of a focus on service. This is something different from independent, critical journalism, which has to scrutinize companies and policymakers." There is little to argue with here. However, asked in the same interview about the issue of value transfer, the association President admits: "Of course the companies emphasize their key role as employers and in society - and do not hesitate to state what they believe policymakers could do better."

When looking for information and tips on practical topics, however, it is often difficult for media users to spot these intentions. This becomes a problem when not only companies, but also associations become involved in politics using journalistic means. *Rundblick - das Politikjournal für Niedersachsen* (www.rundblick-niedersachsen.de), for example, appears at first glance to be a traditional, journalistic online magazine focusing on topics in state politics. Even at second glance, the legal notice lists the Hanover-based Drei-Quellen-Mediengruppe as the publisher. Only right at the end of the very long text in the "About us" section is it mentioned that *Rundblick* is created by the trade association NiedersachsenMetall. The text promises that "The publisher guarantees journalistic freedom and is not involved in reporting." It is certainly true that the magazine rarely looks at topics directly related to employers in the metal industry. However, it is not difficult to see that the reporting is from the point of view of business. The project is reminiscent of earlier attempts by the Initiative Neue Soziale Marktwirtschaft to influence economic policy across Germany.

Summary: Developing a professional dialog

The analysis has shown that content marketing lobbyists are making use of the structural crisis in journalistic media in Germany for their own benefit, often working with exaggeration, distortion and even half-truths. Their main goal seems to be to enhance the status of commercial communication in the form of content marketing at the expense of journalism, whose fitness for purpose is presented as questionable. At the same time, professional journalism needs to produce quality as high as that of comparable CM products - in terms of external form - and make sure to prove its worth with its unique selling point of independence.

In all this, it is noticeable that CM lobbyists often react to even the slightest supposed criticism of their form of communication. There is no broad-based public rejection of content marketing. The only people to have voiced public criticism so far are Handelsblatt correspondent Hans-Peter Siebenhaar (Siebenhaar 2017) and Johannes Vetter, former spokesman of the state-owned Austrian company OMV (no ref. 2016). In addition to this, only a single critical academic survey of the topic has been published - by the author of this article (Frühbrodt 2016).

Also surprising is the often polemic undertone in the testimony of CM apologists. Representatives of the public relations sector are the ones who are most vociferous in demanding that companies both provide and receive dialog-oriented communication in public matters. The discourse on the relationship between journalism and content marketing gives them the opportunity to enter into a

constructive dialog. A more professional tone would be a useful first step.

Translation: Sophie Costella

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Footnote

[i] Es gibt zahlreiche Definitionen von Content Marketing in der praxisorientierten Ratgeber-Literatur. Eine ausführliche wissenschaftliche Definition liefert Frühbrodt (2017: 194): „Bei Content Marketing setzen Organisationen (Unternehmen) eigene digitale Medien ein, um mit nicht-werblichen, werthaltigen Inhalten die Aufmerksamkeit und das Vertrauen potenzieller Kunden zu gewinnen. Die informierenden, beratenden oder unterhaltenden Inhalte sind in ihrer äußeren Form wie journalistische Angebote aufbereitet, sind jedoch im Gegensatz zum Journalismus inhaltlich nicht unabhängig, sondern eindeutig interessen­geleitet.“

Deutscher Fachjournalisten-Verband (ed.): Journalistische Genres [Journalistic genres]

reviewed by Hans-Dieter Kübler



In the German-speaking world, ‘journalistic genre’ refers to the type of text and/or the form of presentation in which a topic is designed in and communicated by the media. News with its originally fixed lead style is a classic example, while reports, reportages and comment pieces have less rigid forms. They are described or even prescribed by introductions to journalism with a linguistic or rhetorical orientation, as either a description or a normative setting: How to write news was long part of the basic curriculum at schools of journalism. In the English-speaking world, on the other hand, the term has a much wider definition, argues Christin Fink in her introduction to this reader: It is almost a general term for the “various methodological and conceptional approaches to journalistic work” (9) and thus something that is entirely new and certainly interesting. In modern

media research, these perspectives are largely integrated into the concepts of framing and priming.

The numerous authors in this work provide portraits of 36 of these different attitudes, approaches, methods and concepts of journalistic work. The designations they propose for these are introduced in an unusual way with significant deficiencies. Many of the approaches, intentions and functions also overlap. They are divided into four fields: finding a topic (“Topic and story”), research, “writing and presenting,” and “business models” – although the latter only appears to include non-profit journalism as a separate section. Non-profit journalism is also mentioned as “public/civic journalism”, under “Topic and story”, and as “citizen journalism” under “Writing and presenting.” “Participatory journalism” is also very closely related, while “interactive journalism” focuses on the online contributions of citizens/non-professionals.

It is a similar story with “muckraking,” the sniffing around the ‘swamp’ that journalists did in American cities in the early 20th Century. The practice is considered a precursor of, if not a drastic synonym for, modern investigative journalism. There are therefore justified questions to be asked about why the editors, listed here only as Fachjournalisten-Verband, have taken the differentiation and segmentation to such extremes and what exactly they hope to achieve – especially as they apparently see their main goal as highlighting experimental ways out of what they consider the “crisis of (print) journalism.” Can this crisis really be put down to a problem of genre, even if this is defined here as a journalistic opinion? Or are structural distortions also to blame?

Another factor that cannot be overlooked in today’s journalism crisis is the common phenomenon of

“bandwagon journalism,” in which journalists simply reuse large parts of their colleagues’ reporting. Similar developments include “churnalism,” in which research is dispensed with for convenience or due to economic restrictions and existing news simply rehashed instead; “checkbook journalism,” in which informants are paid; and “embedded journalism,” in which journalists are incorporated into the dominant military (propaganda) strategy. All these attitudes and concepts run counter to the noble aims of upright, independent, serious and ultimately ‘objective’ journalism, yet have become common practice and undoubtedly contributed to the current crisis. The first two at least are anything but rare and have become proven business models, so it is difficult to see why they have only been mentioned in the introduction.

It is certainly commendable that the various texts explore and present the overwhelming variety of journalistic approaches around today. However, the individual articles display very different levels of thoroughness and content. In general, they briefly describe the development of the approach in question, highlight its functions and intentions, provide striking examples from various media, and finally argue about future trends and opportunities.

Some articles describe innovations and “crossing of borders” (18) that have occurred and undoubtedly continue to occur in journalism just as frequently as in any other creative process and that are not least due to developments in media technology. As courageously as the authors describe these, they will only be able to help overcome the crisis if these structural questions – such as the 100% private ownership structure of the press, its partial funding through advertising, the apparently unstoppable concentration in the online sector, the neoliberal reluctance to accept state promotion of a cultural asset etc. – are also resolved. Despite this, it will be interesting to see whether and how these broad designations of journalistic genres become established in Germany.

Translation: Sophie Costella

This review first appeared in rezeptionen:kommunikation:medien (r:k:m).

About the reviewer

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Deutscher Fachjournalisten-Verband (ed.) (2016): *Journalistische Genres*. Cologne [Herbert von Halem], 422 pages, EUR 59.

Volker Lilienthal, Irene Neverla (ed.): Lügenpresse [Lying press] reviewed by Marlis Prinzing



The cry of “lying press” acted like a siren in Germany. It shook things up, roused people and got people listening. But were the accusations true? This question was fiercely debated both in public and in private, and soon gave rise to others. What are the roles of journalists? Or better, which roles do they have left following the rise of tech-intermediaries like Facebook and digital technologies, in which the audience publish their own content? This irritating cry ended up triggering a long-overdue debate on the society we want to live in.

Around four years ago, the Islamophobic Pegida movement and the Alternativ für Deutschland (AfD) party turned an ancient term into their battle cry: “lying press.” They claimed that the media only communicated a distorted view of their positions, manipulated, and were guided by politicians and by their own interests. Chants of “lying press,” “lying press” banners, and violence and threats of violence against journalists amazed and worried many media companies, and gave them pause for thought. The same issues concerned and worried society at large. Do the media deliberately hide negative facts about refugees and Muslims? Did they have reasons for painting President Putin as the bad guy in the Ukraine conflict? Are they the mouthpiece of some kind of elite and just taking the public for a ride?

To find answers, communication studies researchers Irene Neverla and Volker Lilienthal presented 16 perspectives from academia and practice in a lecture series aimed at ordinary citizens at the University of Hamburg. They then brought these perspectives together in an easy-to-read volume: *Lügenpresse. Anatomie eines politischen Kampfbegriffs* [Lying press. Anatomy of a political battle cry]. The project is a success, as most of the papers not only explain the problem, but also communicate fundamental knowledge on how today’s media society works, what risks it holds and what needs to change. In addition, the book illustrates how useful it can be to link the findings of media researchers with the experiences of media professionals. This success also leads to the formulation of two remits: for researchers to constantly live up to their responsibility to society, and for media professionals to face the public, initiate or become involved in debate, endure headwinds

and be assertive when it comes to dealing with views that are not merely opinions, but hatred and (presumed) criminal offences.

Introducing the volume, Irene Neverla explains the conceptual history of why the public has always had a divided view of journalism. She writes that the term “lying press” as it is used today is an accusation of mendacity, a claim that deceitful elites are conspiring against “the people,” and an indication that ‘facts’ today are backed up by feelings rather than evidence. This is also a consequence of the way social media works, explains Katharina Kleinen-von Königslöw. Because self-affirmation and recommendation are the pinnacle of achievement on social media, views are reinforced and energetically championed, regardless of whether or not they are verifiable. Despite this, most people have more trust in the established media than they did before the “lying press” debates. Nayla Fawzi, Magdalena Obermaier and Carsten Reinemann refer to various studies that show this. However, they also show that those who have mistrusted the established media for a long time are now making their presence felt ever more aggressively, especially as they do not feel that established media take sufficient notice of them. Several authors describe the extent to which this anger now manifests itself in physical attacks against journalists in Germany (Martin Hoffmann, as well as Tobias Gostomzyk and Kai Gniffke).

So what can be done? Michael Brüggemann advises more differentiated reporting, describing this convincingly using the example of the climate change debate and the term “denier.” He argues that it is important not to tar everyone with the same brush, i.e. poorly informed people who voice critical opinions and those for whom the term “denier” is truly appropriate, as they deliberately disseminate untruths.

Some authors explain the disaffection between the public and journalism with unfortunate developments such as the proximity of journalism to elites (Uwe Krüger) and the appearance of proximity to government (Michael Haller, using the example of how the refugee crisis was reported). They then link this to suggestions for how to change things: Journalists should be more transparent about how they work (Haller) or appoint ombudsmen to do this for them (Horst Pöttker).

Freitag editor Jakob Augstein states that there is a need to really listen to what ordinary people are worried about, so that they can systematically be given a voice. *Spiegel* editor Klaus Brinkbäumer provides principles for a kind of journalism that explains the full diversity of the real world and maintains an attitude of critical distance, including to itself. This, he argues, would help journalists to admit to their own mistakes and to endure and take seriously the positions of others.

Giovanni di Lorenzo (*Die Zeit*) advises a greater focus on research, i.e. persevering with the power of facts and verifiable backgrounds. Society cannot reduce its reaction to political issues to feelings, he argues. The fact that knowledge is power has been clear since as far back as the Enlightenment. Heribert Prantl (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*) wants journalists to return to the role connected to the freedom of the press that is rooted in Article 5 of the German constitution. Becoming conscious of this once again is the beginning of “good” journalism, he argues.

Each of the lectures in the winter 2016/17 semester was attended by several hundred people - a clear demonstration of the huge need for knowledge and debate. This should motivate more media houses and educational institutions to seize the opportunity to explain what responsible journalism is, what we can expect from it, and the extent to which it forms the backbone and guarantees the continuation of a democratic society. In other words, ignorance is the enemy of democracy.

Translation: Sophie Costella

This review first appeared in rezensionen:kommunikation:medien (r:k:m).

About the reviewer

Dr. Marlis Prinzing is a Professor of Journalism Studies at Hochschule Macromedia in Cologne, focusing on ethics, the digital transformation and innovation. She is a columnist ("Der Tagesspiegel," "Der Standard"), presenter, author and editor. Previous roles have included Project Leader at the European Journalism Observatory at the University of Lugano and a guest professorship in Riga (Latvia). Dr. Prinzing gained her doctorate with a company and industry analysis (ABB-Wissenschaftspreis 2000).

About the book

Volker Lilienthal, Irene Neverla (eds.) (2017): *Lügenpresse. Anatomie eines politischen Kampfbegriffs*. Cologne [KiWi-Taschenbuch], 320 pages, EUR 9.99.

Barbara Brandstetter, Steffen Range: Wirtschaft. Basiswissen für die Medienpraxis [Business. Basic knowledge for media practice]

reviewed by Ralf Spiller



There is little debate on the importance of business for both the state and society. Economic developments also play a vital role for every individual, affecting issues such as job security, the personal tax burden and purchasing power. This makes it even more surprising that large sections of the population pay little or no attention to the business news. In a study by the Allensbacher Institut für Demoskopie in 2015, business came in tenth in a survey of people's favorite sections of media reporting, a long way behind local news, politics, sport and culture. Numerous other studies have come to the same conclusion.

In their compact book *Wirtschaft* from the Basiswissen für die Medienpraxis series, Barbara Brandstetter and Steffen Range investigate the question of why business journalism is so unpopular. But the authors do much more than merely answering this question and providing tips for how to improve the situation. Instead, they provide a clear, concise map of business journalism in Germany.

The book is divided into six chapters: Introduction (1), Role of business journalism (2), Actors and formats (3), Analyses and case studies from an academic point of view (4), Business journalism – prospects and outlook (5) and Service (6). The first chapter looks briefly at the history of business journalism, while the second outlines various schools of thought and types of media. The third chapter focuses on sources, forms of presentation and language in business media. A summary of previous – limited – research into business journalism in Germany is provided in the fourth chapter. Chapter Five presents around 15 theories on the business journalism of tomorrow. Finally, the Service section contains relevant literature and research sources for business journalists and a directory of advanced training institutions, journalism prizes and scholarships.

The book is very easy to read, divertingly broken up by short digressions on interesting cases in corporate reporting and brief interviews with leading business journalists. Unlike in many “How to” guides, the authors list their sources in line with academic texts. This gives the book further credibility and makes it a relevant publication not only for practitioners, but also for students and

academics. The authors succeed in meeting the series' aim of delivering books that have both an academic basis and a practical orientation.

The only point of criticism is that the sources are not always entirely up to date. The reader would be right to wonder why unique user figures from September 2015 are quoted for various online newspapers, when much more recent figures are available (cf. 52). Some of the books listed in the extensive bibliography also have more recent editions (e.g. Gehrau, *Die Beobachtung*, 2002, 2017).

However, this should not detract from the fact that the authors have succeeded in producing a work that is as substantiated as it is compact. One can only hope that it helps business journalism to become more appreciated by a wider section of society.

Translation: Sophie Costella

This review first appeared in rezensionen:kommunikation:medien (r:k:m).

About the reviewer

Ralf Spiller is Professor of Media and Communication Management at Macromedia University of Applied Sciences, Cologne.

About the book

Barbara Brandstetter, Steffen Range: *Wirtschaft. Basiswissen für die Medienpraxis*. Series: Journalismus Bibliothek, Vol. 4. Cologne [Herbert von Halem] 2017, 254 pages, EUR 18.50.

Felix Koltermann: Fotoreporter im Konflikt [Photo reporters in conflict]

reviewed by Evelyn Runge



In his dissertation *Fotoreporter im Konflikt: Der internationale Fotojournalismus in Israel/Palästina* [Photo reporters in conflict: International photojournalism in Israel/Palestine], Felix Koltermann examines the production conditions faced by Israeli, Palestinian and international photojournalists. “As a result of the constitution of the Middle East as a center of news, a separate system of photojournalism, related to the conflict, has developed here. As communicators, photoreporters working there are among the most important journalistic actors in the region” (10, cf. also 159). Koltermann links two points of view in his study. From the perspective of communication studies, he is interested in “the actions of the photoreporter as a communicator within journalistic institutions” (17). He supplements this with questions from peace and conflict science, in particular regarding the “actions of the photoreporter as a social actor within the conflict” (ibid.).

Koltermann’s chosen method is qualitative guided interviews: “The personal accounts of the photoreporters makes the actions of photojournalists accessible for analysis and thus enables the field of photojournalistic production in Israel and the Palestinian territories to be reconstructed” (18). Between September 2011 and April 2012, Koltermann interviewed 40 subjects in Israel and Palestine – 30 men, nine women and a mixed couple of photographers (cf. 179). A standardized questionnaire provided information on aspects such as education, earnings, language skills and social insurance (cf. 179ff.). Koltermann decides against triangulating the results, for example by analyzing images that the respective photojournalist has taken, on the grounds that “questions of representation [are of] less significance” in his study (176, cf. also 416). By examining the production and working conditions of international photojournalists, Koltermann joins the ranks of researchers currently displaying increased interest in these topics (cf. e.g. Gürsel 2016, Vowinckel 2016, Runge 2015, 2016).

Koltermann includes many aspects in his investigation, including the professional socialization of photoreporters (cf. e.g. 184ff.); how they view their role (cf. e.g. 205ff.), including in relation to assistance in conflict situations, for example when people are shot at or killed (cf. 347ff.); the psychosocial and emotional consequences of reporting visually on crises (cf. 377ff.); and the differences in freedom of movement and freedom of the press that the photojournalists experience based on their origins and where they live (cf. 316ff.). Koltermann uses a map he has drawn himself to demonstrate the way the photoreporters move between Israel, the Palestinian territories and

Gaza (cf. 317). Working routines in conflict situations are shaped by access to the field (cf. 387ff.), including language skills in Hebrew, Arabic and English, as well as the gender of the photographer, given that gender segregation is “virulent in large parts of the [...] societies in Israel and the Palestinian territories” (389).

Koltermann uses his results to develop a “typology of journalistic actors” that presents the working roles of local and international photoreporters, which differ “in terms of their photojournalistic actions and their institutional connections” (403ff.). In this list, the author also includes more recent developments, such as that of the “NGO documentarist” (“documentary photographers that mainly live off commissions for INGOs and NGOs in the fields of humanitarian aid, human rights and development cooperation,” 409), the new activist (“on the cusp of being a *citizen journalist*,” 407, italics in original) or the socio-documentary activist (“the most political type apart from the ‘news activist’,” 409f.). Koltermann uses the nine categories to extract the different spheres in which the Israeli, Palestinian and international photojournalists are able to act. The international photojournalists are able to move around most freely, while the Israelis have what Koltermann refers to as a medium “regime of movement” and the Palestinians the lowest (413, cf. also 417). It would be a good idea for future research to examine Koltermann’s actor typologies in different locations in order to check whether they still apply and therefore can be used as generalized terms.

Felix Koltermann’s perspective also comes from his wide range of both practical and theoretical experience. Having graduated in both photography and “peace and security studies,” he gained his doctorate in communication studies with this work. He has travelled in Israel and the Palestinian Territories for many years, addresses aspects such as the politicized architecture and landscape in exhibitions of his photography, teaches about the conflict in adult education, and publishes usually smaller works on the topic (e.g. Koltermann 2017). His work reflects his deep familiarity with the region and its actors, benefitting from detailed knowledge of the working conditions of the photojournalists, the political situation and the local incidents that impede their work (cf. 173ff.). Koltermann reflects on his own role as researcher and makes great efforts to ‘pay back’ the knowledge he has gathered on the ground in meetings, lectures and discussions, so as not to come across as “the white researcher, socialized in Europe,” who takes his expertise “back to Germany” (172).

The main weaknesses of the work lie in the way the publication is organized. The book does not have an index - neither for people nor places nor subjects. This is essential for such an extensive and fundamental study. Various sub-chapters have almost identical titles, such as “Psychosocial consequences of conflicts” (102), “Psychosocial consequences” (114) and “The psychosocial consequences of the work” (381); or “Ethics in photojournalism” (80), “Photojournalistic ethics in practice” (340) and “Photojournalistic ethics in conflicts” (396). Some chapters close with a brief summary, while other do not. Apart from a map of the West Bank showing its division into Areas A, B and C in line with the Oslo Accords (cf. 138), the book does not provide any maps of Israel, Jerusalem or Gaza. These would have been a great help to those new to the topic, without personal knowledge of the areas concerned.

All in all, Felix Koltermann's book *Fotoreporter im Konflikt: Der internationale Fotojournalismus in Israel/Palästina* comes highly recommended. The author displays great expertise and detail in describing how asymmetries at a political level affect the day-to-day work of photojournalists and thus structure specific visual narratives.

Translation: Sophie Costella

This review first appeared in rezensionen:kommunikation:medien (r:k:m).

About the reviewer

Dr. phil. Evelyn Runge conducts research into the production conditions of photojournalists in the digital age ("Image Capture"). She receives funding from the *Martin Buber Society of Fellows in the Humanities and Social Sciences* (BMBF foundation) and the *Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace* at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel. Her research focuses on photography in theory and practice; media sociology; image databases and archives; journalism; and digital storytelling. She studied Political Science, Journalism Studies, Modern German Literature and Sociology at LMU Munich, before training as an editor at the Deutsche Journalistenschule in Munich. Her book *Motor/Reise. Handbuch für die Medienpraxis* (with Hektor Haarkötter) was published by Herbert von Halem Verlag in 2016. Journalistic work has been published in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*, *Cicero*, *Die Zeit*, and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, among others. Dr. Runge is also an alumna of the Junge Akademie at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and the Leopoldina German National Academy of Sciences (member 2011-2016).

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About the book

Felix Koltermann (2017): *Fotoreporter im Konflikt. Der internationale Fotojournalismus in Israel/Palästina*. Bielefeld [transcript], 456 pages, EUR 49.99

Jan Fredrik Hovden, Gunnar Nygren, Henrika Zilliacus-Tikkanen: *Becoming a Journalist*

reviewed by Volker Banholzer



The idea of the 'Nordic model' has long been popular in debates on political, economic and social issues in continental Europe, and especially in Germany. There can be no doubt that the societies and political systems of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden have a lot in common politically, culturally and socially.

Given this likeness, it comes as no surprise that clear similarities are also seen in the media systems and the ways journalists are trained in those countries, regardless of the different effects of digitalization, media convergence and globalization. The Digital News Report 2017 (Reuters Institute 2017), for example, documented that people in Norway, Sweden and Denmark are the most willing to pay for online news. The edited volume reviewed here also focuses on the education of journalists in line with an identifiable Nordic model. Tracing back to the Nordic Conference for Journalism Teachers in 2014, the anthology brings together examines key aspects of journalist education, with multiple articles on each.

The first chapter focuses on similarities and emphasizes the Nordic Model in the education of journalists. The second chapter is dedicated to the professional fields and orientations of upcoming journalists at universities and education institutions in each of the Nordic states. The third chapter summarizes the challenges of journalist education, highlighting, for example, the contradiction between the content of education and the demands of the market, promoting women in the professional field, the representation of minorities in editorial offices, and the necessary international orientation. The final chapter addresses practical questions on skill development in view of the challenges presented in newsrooms and by new business models.

The fact that only two of the 27 authors are not involved in academic journalist education can be put down to the academization of journalist education and the volume's conference origins. When discussing edited volumes or conference publications, it is inevitable that some contributions will be

omitted. This review therefore attempts to highlight the aforementioned focus topics without evaluating the individual papers.

The anthology provides extensive insight into journalist education in the Nordic countries. This insight is linked to investigations and discussions in German journalism studies and schools of journalism (cf. for example Altmeyden/Höfberg 2002 or Dernbach/Loosen 2012) and can provide inspiration. Even though few of the papers take an explicitly comparative approach - the inter-Scandinavian comparison in the paper by Jan Fredrik Hovden and Rune Ottosen "New Times, New Journalists?" and the comparison of Sweden and Poland by Gunnar Nygren being two examples - it is a useful read. The relevance of the papers that focus only on a single Nordic country is also underscored by the latest developments and discussions on fake news, representation of minorities and dealing with uncertainty and climate change. For their paper "Burdens of Representation," Gunn Bjørnsen and Anders Graver Knudsen investigated students at Norwegian schools of journalism who are members of ethnic minorities and are confronted with a wide range of expectations from their social and professional environments.

An international approach has long been standard in Scandinavia. Terje Skejerdal and Hans-Olav Hodøl's paper "Tackling Global Learning in Nordic Journalism Education" examines how this approach and the current global challenges influence journalism education in Norway. They describe how a visit to West Africa, integrated into the curriculum, has especially influenced the careers and expectations of female journalism students.

Also worthy of consideration are the conclusions from the paper by Roy Krøvel, which describes how the perspective of trainee journalists on complex topics changes. Taking the way journalists cover climate change as his case study, he notes that the trainee journalists' views are initially strongly tied to those of their teachers, before shifting to incorporate those of professional colleagues as their education progresses. Krøvel interprets this as a sign that journalists are required to cover wide fields and thus do not see themselves as skilled enough to deal with complex topics or highly-specialized experts.

One paper makes the interesting and unfortunate finding that, despite the belief that gender equality has long been established in Scandinavia, journalism in Scandinavia - specifically Norway - still displays the same phenomena that have recently been the subject of debate in Germany: Although the majority of those undergoing journalism education are female, the profession remains dominated by men. In her paper "Women Train In- and Out of Journalism," Hege Lamark comes to the conclusion that, despite the gender targets, this is still an issue for journalist education.

The question remains of whether a uniform Nordic model exists despite similar challenges facing other Western democracies; and whether journalism and journalist education in the Scandinavian countries can be described as a separate model, in the same way as the 'Nordic model' welfare state. The Scandinavian countries are similar in many ways - and their media systems, media policy and media use are no exception. In their investigation of European media systems, Hallin/Mancini (2004) described the Scandinavian countries as a homogeneous group and the ideal example of the

democratic-corporatist model. All other European media systems saw the early establishment of a mass press characterized by external pluralism, with the party press playing a significant role. In Scandinavia, on the other hand, ownership is highly concentrated, journalism is highly professionalized and self-regulation institutionalized. Despite this, the states have a strong structural influence on the media system, where press freedom is seen as crucially important. In Sweden, the basis of how the press is understood, the principles of transparency, and the ability to view documents from public bodies and tax authorities is currently creating a conflict with European data protection regulations.

Given these similarities and cultural connections, both the volume's editors and Elin Gardeström see parallels between the development and current structure of journalist education in the four Nordic states. This usually goes back to local and private business initiatives in the post-war years, most of which were then quickly turned into national, university-based programs. The authors believe that journalist education developed in similar ways in all four countries due to the low language barrier. This enabled those educating journalists to share their approaches – collaboration that was institutionalized as early as the early 1960s. The Nordic countries tend to take a dual approach to education, combining practical and academic content and allowing access for those with fewer academic qualifications. Despite this, the profession is highly academized in Scandinavia.

Media systems, journalism education and media policy face the same challenges in the Nordic states as they do in other Western democracies. As stated by Nord (2008) in relation to the classification of Hallin/Mancini (2004), the Scandinavian countries are no longer ideal specimens of the democratic, corporatist model. In this volume, Arne H. Krumsvik also finds that Norway is moving towards a liberal model, “driven by digitization and commercialization of news media,” although the central measures in media policy “are still grounded in the era of political press” (181). Norway and, especially at the moment, Sweden are attempting to keep up with these developments in the short term with legislative initiatives on platform-independent media promotion (cf. Nordicom 2016). These initiatives demand that 20 percent of the articles have to come from a medium's own editorial office and that advertising can only account for 40 percent.

Further discussion has been triggered by the idea of tying support to a democracy clause that would exclude racist-oriented print media, which is currently entitled to support. For the long term, Sweden is also planning a digital public service broadcast channel whose 500 journalists would help both to compensate for the reduction in broad-based coverage and to correct fake news. Other media would then be able to use items from this channel free of charge.

The discussions about current media policy and the articles compiled in this volume show that there is much to be gained from examining the Nordic media systems and their journalist education – regardless of whether or not one believes in a distinct Nordic model of journalist education.

Translation: Sophie Costella

*This review first appeared in *rezensionen:kommunikation:medien (r:k:m)*.*

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About the reviewer

Prof. Volker M. Banholzer conducts research at Nuremberg Tech into innovation and technology communication in journalism; marketing and PR; innovation and technology governance; technology conflicts and technology assessment; and technology and communication structures in Sweden and Germany. At Nuremberg Tech, Banholzer leads the Technical Journalism and Technical PR degree program and is Academic Head of the Innovation & Digital Leadership certificate program offered by the Ohm Professional School.

About the book

Jan Fredrik Hovden, Gunnar Nygren, Henrika Zilliacus-Tikkanen (Hrsg.) (2016): *Becoming a Journalist. Journalism Education in the Nordic Countries*. Series: Research Anthologies. Gothenburg [Nordicom], 334 pages, EUR 28.

Journalismus



Claudia Mast (Hrsg.)

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CLAUDIA MAST, Prof. Dr., leitet das Fachgebiet für Kommunikationswissenschaft und Journalistik der Universität Hohenheim (Stuttgart). Die Kommunikationswissenschaftlerin wurde 2015 zur ›Professorin des Jahres‹ gewählt. Schwerpunkte ihrer Lehr- und Forschungstätigkeit sind Innovationen im Journalismus und in der Unternehmenskommunikation, redaktionelle Strategien der Publikumsansprache, strategische Kommunikations- und Themenplanung sowie Wirtschaftsjournalismus und Unternehmensberichterstattung. Die Universitätsprofessorin war viele Jahre in leitender Position bei der Siemens AG tätig und hat zahlreiche Fachbücher über Journalismus, Kommunikationsmanagement und Wirtschaftsberichterstattung veröffentlicht. Sie ist in verschiedenen Gremien tätig, u. a. im Verwaltungsrat der Deutschen Welle (Bonn).



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