

## English Abstracts

**Torsten J. Gerpott / Maike Schlegel: Online newspapers: Characteristics and application potentials of a new media offering (Online-Zeitungen: Charakteristika und Anwendungspotenziale eines neuen Medienangebotes), pp. 335-353**

For a number of years now, the publishers of German daily newspapers have also been engaged in activities on new online markets in the form of composite offerings that are primarily connected with their core product. Despite the growing relevance of these new services, analyses that focus systematically on the characteristics features of the new online offerings and their application potentials for publishers have hardly been conducted so far. Such scientifically grounded research, however, has considerable practical significance – not just for media economics research and communications research, but, in particular, for established publishers that market both types of services – with respect to the further development of their corporate and competitive strategies. Working on the basis of a newspaper perception anchored in the institutional media concept, i. e. in the primacy of a content-related spectrum of activities designed to resolve specific communication needs, the following article, therefore, derives a classifying description of the constitutive characteristics of an online newspaper through the additional inclusion of a variety of technical carrier media, in particular of online media, and their specific features. A comparative examination of the online newspaper with the printed newspaper product enables a description of substantial differences in these activities and, above all, a profiling of the application potentials of the new media offering.

**Wolfgang Schulz: “Human dignity” in the concept of regulating depictions of violence by the media. Symbolic use, improper use and abuse of a legal concept (“Menschenwürde” im Konzept der Regulierung medialer Gewaltdarstellungen. Symbolischer Gebrauch, Fehlgebrauch und Missbrauch eines Rechtsbegriffs), pp. 354-370**

The concept of “human dignity” not only plays a central role in the media policy and legal discussion of Big Brother and similar phenomena but also in the permanently accompanying violence discussion that takes place with varying intensity. The article outlines the concept of regulating the depiction of violence in the context of the youth protection and the protection of human dignity. Working on the basis of the concept of human dignity and its protection by Art. 1, para. 1 of Germany’s Basic Law (“Grundgesetz”), an objectifying understanding is criticised and – for legal rules that trigger legal sanctions – an interpretation developed that is strictly orientated to a subjective violation of law. Only the dignity of specific persons can be violated, although the associated scope of application can change as society changes. The article urges that the programme-related societal demands associated with the media-critical recourse to human dignity should be distinguished and also separated in regulatory terms from the legal protection of youth on the one hand and from the protection of the dignity of specific persons on the other hand.

**Sibylle Hardmeier: Opinion polls in journalism. News value, precision and audience (Meinungsumfragen im Journalismus. Nachrichtenwert, Präzision und Publikum), pp. 371-395**

The following article deals with the quality of newspaper reports in connection with the results of opinion polls. With reference to the three concepts news value, precision and audience, the varying requirements confronting media-makers when editing opinion poll reports are discussed. It is quantitatively substantiated that opinion polls have a news value and – outside of election periods too – are integrated into media reporting. At the same time, it is shown that the precision of these reports often leaves a great deal to be desired and that news values are often constructed through misinterpretations and over-interpretations. For this reason, a number of suggestions on how to optimise reporting are subsequently formulated. The focus of the presentation is on journalists. Inverting the perspective, the conclusions can also be implicitly derived for the producers of opinion poll data. In the assumption, however, that the opinion research market does function properly, it is fair to hope that a professional demand on the part of journalism will also change and perhaps indeed improve what opinion research has to offer.

**Stefanie Averbek: French communications research, semiotic perspectives and the spheres of the Postmodern (Die französische Kommunikationswissenschaft, semiotische Perspektiven und die Sphären der Postmoderne), pp. 396-404**

In M&K No. 1/2000, Ulrich Saxer examined the postmodern discussion surrounding the subject of “communication” in France. In their reply (M&K No. 2/2000), Sigfried J. Schmidt and Joachim Westerbarkey primarily turn their attention to Saxer’s assessment of radical constructivism as a postmodern variant. Schmidt and Westerbarkey raise the question whether French communication sciences were reducing to postmodern perspectives. The following article takes up this aspect, since precisely this is not the case. The article primarily relates to the considerable presence of the semiotic current in French communications research, of the “Science de l’information et de la communication”, as taught at French universities. This conceptual direction is probably by and large unknown in Germany. It also becomes clear that there is a critical discussion about postmodern positions as well as about the “contexte constructiviste” within French communications research itself.

**Armin Scholl: Has journalism research done everything wrong? A reply to the criticism of journalism research by Elisabeth Klaus and Margret Lünenborg (Hat die Journalismusforschung alles falsch gemacht? Eine Erwiderung auf die Kritik an der Journalismusforschung durch Elisabeth Klaus und Margret Lünenborg), pp. 405-412**

In the last issue of “Medien und Kommunikationswissenschaft”, Elisabeth Klaus and Margret Lünenborg criticised journalism research and called for a culture-oriented approximation. This sweeping criticism must be refuted on account of logical errors, inadequate investigation and incorrect presentation of objective facts. The criticism levelled by the authors suggests consequences with which journalism research cannot comply if its subject matter is to remain in focus. The approximation to the Cultural

Studies called for in the article is rash and hardly promises success, since neither the previous possibilities of systems theory journalism research have been fully exploited nor can Cultural Studies do justice to the hopes pinned on it regarding its ability to examine new sets of questions in the field of journalism research.