

English Abstracts

Andreas Fahr / Tabea Böcking: Up and Away? Causes of Channel Escape (Nichts wie weg? Ursachen der Programmflucht), pp. 5–55

Communication studies generally understand television use as a proactive process: recipients use different forms of media for their own gratification and to satisfy their own needs. The user switches channels until the optimal benefit has been achieved. Until now, little attention has been given to the causes of avoidance while watching television. This paper considers this perspective, interpreting channel hopping also as a reactive minimization of damage. The classic model of gratification discrepancy is supplemented by the perspective of escaping, with reference to findings from the psychology of cognition and emotion. The empirical study based upon these findings particularly identifies negative emotions (for example repugnance, despondency, annoyance, fear) as well as boredom and lack of authenticity as major reasons for channel escape.

Keywords: television use, channel escape, uses and gratifications approach, program choice, program change

Monika Suckfüll: Three Levels of Analyzing Media Reception Processes. Empirical Evidence for a Phylogenetic Level of Film Reception (Drei Ebenen der Analyse von Medienrezeptionsprozessen. Empirische Evidenz für eine phylogenetische Ebene der Filmrezeption), pp. 26–45

This paper outlines three different levels which can be used to analyze processes of media reception: phylogenetic, ontogenetic and “actualgenetic”. The phylogenetic level is based on findings in evolutionary psychology, which are concerned with basic mechanisms of information processing inherent to all humans. Of central concern on the ontogenetic level are ways of using media (so-called reception modalities), which manifest themselves in the processes of learning or socialization. Depending on the social situation in which the recipient is confronted with a particular medium, the reception process takes on an individual quality on the “actualgenetic” level. This paper proposes to differentiate the particular conditions, which have to be taken into account with regard to media reception processes. Physiological measurements made during Lars von Trier’s film “Dancer in the Dark” (2000) are used to illustrate methodological considerations. Intra- and inter-individual variations can be clarified through a combination of longitudinal- and cross-sectional analyses. Indications of phylogenetic aspects (deception and threat) result from an analysis of aggregated processes. Finally, further theoretical and methodological approaches for describing media reception processes are discussed.

Keywords: processes of media reception, film reception, Dancer in the Dark, reception modalities, evolutionary psychology

Wolfgang Donsbach / Thorsten Laub / Alexander Haas / Hans-Bernd Brosius: Adaptation processes in Communication Science. Topics and Origins of Research in the Communication Journals "Publizistik" and "Medien & Kommunikationswissenschaft" (Anpassungsprozesse in der Kommunikationswissenschaft. Themen und Herkunft der Forschung in den Fachzeitschriften „Publizistik“ und „Medien & Kommunikationswissenschaft“), pp. 46–72

Articles in scientific journals are often called the "nerves of a discipline," mainly because they reflect current developments in a research field. A few studies have previously dealt with publications in the most important communication journals in Germany (Brosius 1994, 1998; Neuberger & Hohlfeld 1998). This paper builds upon the results of those studies and in some cases presents a more in-depth view. Using quantitative content analysis, the authors analyzed the content of the two most important German-language journals for the field, "Medien & Kommunikationswissenschaft" and "Publizistik," between 1998 and 2003. The results show that communication scholars have included new media such as Internet and e-mail into their research and publications. As a consequence, interpersonal communication is again moving into focus. Results also show a growing professionalization of the field, as more and more authors are based in the core departments of our discipline and are educated as communication scholars themselves. The publication productivity of individual institutions has shifted somewhat compared to the results of prior studies. The number of publications by individual authors follows Lotka's law and is comparable to other fields.

Keywords: scientific journals, productivity, (history of) communication studies

Christoph Neuberger: Formats of the Current Public Sphere in the Internet. On the Relationship Between Weblogs, Peer-to-Peer Content and Portals to Journalism. Results of a Explorative Survey among Content Producers (Formate der aktuellen Internetöffentlichkeit. Über das Verhältnis von Weblogs, Peer-to-Peer-Angeboten und Portalen zum Journalismus – Ergebnisse einer explorativen Anbieterbefragung), pp. 73–92

Weblogs, peer-to-peer content and portals are some of the services that have developed over the course of the institutionalization of the World Wide Web. As media schemata (in the sense of constructivist media culture theory) they serve to limit the uncertainty of content producers and users in dealing with the new medium. The emergence of socially determined patterns of media use is far more decentralized and varied in the Internet than in other types of media. For one thing the abundance of options provided by the Internet creates a greater formability of services; for another, as a result of easy access to the Internet-Public, a large number of content producers are participating. An explorative survey among content producers was conducted, in order to clarify to what extent the types of services in the Internet are already institutionalized and in order to determine their relationship to journalism. The consistent use of standardized schema names, the concordant schema knowledge and the orientation towards the same models prove that portals and weblogs are already fairly established and consensual schemata. A large number of peer-to-peer content producers and weblog authors see their own role in journalistic terms. They saw their strengths not only in their ability to present content subjectively and evaluatively; they also believed that they provided their users, in some respects, with equal or better information than other types of journalism. Over and above this they have at their disposal mechanisms of

quality assurance – through public criticism provided by users and other content producers.

Keywords: media schema, Internet, journalism, weblogs, peer-to-peer content producers, portals

Frank Lobigs / Dirk Spacek / Gabriele Siegert / Rolf H. Weber: More Legal Protection for TV Program Formats? A Study in Media Economics and Media Law (Mehr Rechtsschutz für TV-Formate? Eine medienökonomische und medienrechtliche Untersuchung), pp. 93–119

This paper examines whether the right of ownership of TV program formats should be strengthened, an issue which is of primary importance in media politics and journalism studies. Media economics, specifically the economic theory of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) forms the basis of the analysis. It is applied to mass media in a general systematization for the first time. Based on a detailed examination of media law, existing regulations for the legal protection of the ownership of TV program formats will be shown to be rudimentary. However, analyzing the dynamic market for TV program formats with regard to media economics, and providing empirical evidence, the authors conclude that the lack of legal protection is made up for by actual economic protection.

Keywords: intellectual property rights, right of ownership, copyright, TV program formats, market in TV program formats

Sascha L. Schmidt / Patrick Vogt: Assessment of synergy potential considering as example the mega-merger of AOL and Time Warner (Beurteilung von Synergiepotenzialen am Beispiel der Megafusion von AOL und Time Warner), pp. 120–137

The merger of AOL and Time Warner to the largest integrated media, entertainment and Internet conglomerate in the world was not only the biggest merger in economic history, but also one of the most controversial. The authors analyze the merger using two theoretical M&A approaches focusing on the company perspective, the so-called “capital market school”, and the “strategic management school.” The merger was judged positively from both perspectives. However, with recourse to research on strategy processes, the authors show that neither a capital market assessment, nor an investigation into the strategic fit of the two merger partners is sufficient to estimate the probability of success of the merger ex ante. Problems arising with the development and implementation of the merger strategy played an important role in this, as did the industry branches of the merger partners. Moreover, a comparison with similarly large mergers in other industry branches reveals general problems with mega-mergers. The authors suggest that besides the synergy potential, a further factor for the viability of the merger concept should be determined, which can be used to validate the chances of success of an M&A transaction. In this context the cultural compatibility of the merger partners has to be taken into consideration too.

Keywords: AOL, Time Warner, merger, fusion, capital market school, strategic management school, post merger management, implementation of strategies, synergies, media industry