

English Abstracts

Herbert Kubicek / Stefan Welling: On the verge of a digital divide in Germany? Approximation to a hidden problem with economic and social policy volatility (Vor einer digitalen Spaltung in Deutschland? Annäherung an ein verdecktes Problem von wirtschafts- und gesellschaftspolitischer Brisanz), pp. 497

Although the number of Internet users is steadily increasing this growth is distributed very unevenly between and within different countries in the various population groups. Whereas it is sometimes claimed that previously underrepresented groups (in particular, women, senior citizens and people with a low level of formal education) were catching up, the following article shows through new methods of evaluation that the gap between young and old and between persons with higher school education and persons with secondary school education is in fact widening over time and that the problem known as the Digital Divide exists in Germany too. The article identifies the new kinds of requirements involved in acquiring information and the high obstacles associated with gaining this competence as the main reason for this development. These barriers should be surmounted through experiments, whose findings should be exchanged in a network.

Joan Kristin Bleicher: Between human zoo, a collection of curios and permanent theatre. Stage-management strategies in the "Big Brother" container and their societal functions (Zwischen Menschenzoo, Panopticon und Dauertheater. Inszenierungsstrategien im „Big Brother“-Container und ihre gesellschaftlichen Funktionen), pp. 518

Media research analyses with a literary studies orientation of broadcasting form and content reveal that television programmes constitute facets of a mirror of our society. The reality show "Big Brother" is the media point of intersection for two lines of societal development at the beginning of the 21st century. On the one hand, the programme is the result of the acceptance by society of permanent observation; on the other hand, it corresponds to the growing significance of media presence for the positioning of the individual within the societal hierarchy. The following article initially describes how "Big Brother" fits in with the programme development of the Nineties and outlines with reference to the first set of programmes how the editors stage-manage the candidates and how the candidates in the programme make use of television's established character patterns to enhance their audience appeal. Finally, returning to the initial thesis of television as a mirror of society it is shown how the show's "rules of the game" for the candidates reflect current societal demands.

Armin Rott / Stefan Schmitt: Weekend and sunshine ... Determinants of viewer demand on the German television market (Wochenend und Sonnenschein ... Determinanten der Zuschauernachfrage auf dem deutschen Fernsehmarkt), pp. 537

The article analyses major determinant factors of viewer demand on the German television market. The main determinants are identified and their effects on the average daily viewing time are quantified on the basis of econometric estimations. A total of about 55,000 data were evaluated on daily viewing time, precipitation, temperature, daylight, and calendar and programme effects between 1 July 1996 and 30 June 2000. About 93 %

of the variation in daily viewing time can be explained through environmental variables, calendar data and special events. Detailed analyses confirm varying influences of the weather variables in particular depending on the time of year and the day of the week: in spring and in summer their effect on viewing time is much greater than in autumn and in winter. The effects of the weather are the greatest in the (advertising-relevant) group of 14- to 49-year-olds. Within the environmental variables, daylight and temperature have a greater influence than precipitation and sunshine, and viewing time on the weekend depends on the weather to a much greater extent than on the remaining days. On the whole, however, the weather variables have a much weaker effect than that of the days of the week and of public holidays. The article concludes with a discussion of the model's forecasting possibilities.

Philomen Schönhagen: Evaluation of the integrative potential of mass media – theoretical and methodological considerations (Evaluation des Integrationspotenzials von Massenmedien – theoretische und methodische Überlegungen), pp. 554

The article takes up Otfried Jarren's exposition on the accomplishments and potential of mass media with respect to 'integrative communication' (cf. M&K 1/2000) and develops a number of theoretical as well as practical research-related ideas on the empirical analysis of such accomplishments. Jarren's ideas are summarised in a brief overview and set in relation to a theoretical approach, which proves extremely fruitful with regard to the problem of societal integration by the media, as presented by Jarren. This enables, among other things, a clear characterisation of, on the one hand, the functions of 'intermediary institutions' such as political parties, associations, etc. as participants of communication and, on the other hand, of the mass media as brokers of communication. Furthermore, methodological considerations result in the sense of the 'extended model' for the empirical analysis of the integrative potential of mass media called for by Jarren. Specific sub-questions are derived for empirical analysis and an extended content analysis is presented, which would be promisingly applied in this content.