

English Abstracts

André Donk / Frank Marcinkowski / Josef Trappel: Concentration, Journalistic Self-Perception and Internal Democracy. An International Comparison of the News Media's Contribution to Democracy (Konzentration, Selbstverständnis und innere Demokratie. Nachrichtenmedien und ihr Beitrag zur Demokratie im internationalen Vergleich), pp. 501-519

Comparative research often focuses on analysing the degree of press freedom in political systems, or investigates journalistic and professional cultures. However, scholarly studies rarely compare media systems' contribution to democracy. In this paper, we present an approach to investigate the empirical significance of news media to democratic freedom in Western societies. Drawing on a set of aspects that were derived from democratic theory, we investigate media structures as well as the performance of media organizations themselves; discussing empirical material collected in nine European countries as well as Australia. Our focus is the German perspective, which we compare to the data from other countries. For each of these countries, secondary analyses of central aspects of the relevant media structures were conducted, and combined with semi-standardised interviews with editors-in-charge from the leading news media in each country (print, radio, TV, Internet).

Key words: media system, media structures, functions of the media, comparative research, democratic theory, promotion of democracy, journalistic professionalism, production of news, media concentration

Thomas Koch / Romy Fröhlich / Magdalena Obermaier: Two Places at Once. Freelance Journalists' Role Conflicts Regarding Part-Time Work in PR (Tanz auf zwei Hochzeiten. Rollenkonflikte freier Journalisten mit Nebentätigkeiten im PR-Bereich), pp. 520-535

Roughly 40 % of German freelance journalists work in PR. However, this is a challenging task for most of them. PR and journalism fulfil two different functions in democratic societies. Journalism is supposed to perform a public duty, making a contribution to the common good. PR, by contrast, represents the interests of a certain party. As a result, the double role of journalists working in PR involves contrary and conflicting expectations, and working in both fields leads to role conflicts. This paper attempts to find out how journalists perceive this issue, and how they deal with potential role conflicts. Drawing on material derived from semi-structured interviews with freelance journalists who also pursue secondary employment in the field of PR, we show that all interviewees are aware of the conflicting potential; however, they tend to find conflicts only in their colleagues rather than themselves. We found that the participants of our study used four strategies to avoiding such conflicts: topic separation, careful selection of the PR client, and passive shielding of their PR activities or making them transparent. Moreover, our respondents used three strategies to coping with inevitable conflict situations. We noticed, firstly, a merging of roles, i.e. a change in self-conception. Secondly, the interviewees downplay their work in PR. And thirdly, they distance themselves from the responsibilities involved in their dual roles.

Key words: freelance journalists, public relations, expectations, inter role conflicts, job perception, self-perception, semi-structured interview

Christina Schachtner: Cultural Flows and Virtual Publics. The Role of the Digital Media in Transcultural/Transnational Discourses (Cultural Flows und virtuelle Öffentlichkeiten. Die Rolle digitaler Medien in transkulturellen/transnationalen Diskursen), pp. 536-560

This paper focuses on research about the cultural flows that have occurred and spread with the digital information and communication technologies constituting new publics. Drawing on concepts of transculturality, transnationality and public spaces, this paper asks whether transcultural publics can occur within digital networks that operate across national boundaries; and if so, what forms of life can emerge in these public spaces. I re-discuss results from a study of subject constructions of children, adolescents and young adults in virtual communicative spaces, which seem to suggest that transcultural publics are a growing potential in digital networks. However, whether or not transcultural trends emerging in virtual publics will turn into social trends depends on parameters in the real world, for instance, aspects of education, global media ethics and the development of new forms of political/administrative affiliation moving beyond that of nationally oriented citizenship based on territory and ancestry. This paper has both a theoretical and empirical focus; and it is analytic as well as normative. The case studies I chose to discuss have been selected according to their illustrative significance.

Key words: digital networks, culture, transculturality, transnationality, public space, hybrid forms of life

Holger Schramm / Johannes Knoll: Are Radio Music Broadcasts changing? Towards the State and Significance of Music Research of German Radio Stations in 2011 (Wandel der Musikprogrammierung im Radio? Stand und Stellenwert der Musikforschung bei deutschen Radiosendern 2011), pp. 561-576

Generally, most of what is broadcast on the radio is music. Moreover, music is the main reason for many listeners to turn on the radio in the first place. Radio stations, therefore, attempt to distinguish themselves by focusing on particular music genres; thus aiming at certain audience groups. Ten years ago, we conducted an initial representative study (Schramm, Petersen, Rütter & Vorderer 2002) that allowed us to show that journalists working in radio stations rely on data from audience research rather than on their gut feeling when tailoring their music programmes to please their target group. A new, contemporary representative study investigates if this trend has increased or decreased within the last ten years, thereby exploring the significance of the newly emerging online feedback possibilities for audience members with regard to music broadcasts. Our present study is – just like the one from 10 years ago – conceptualised as a census survey. All radio programmes in Germany were contacted. The results indicate an unbroken strong significance of traditional standardised music research, as well as a still minor, but increasing significance of online research. We also distinguished between public service and commercial radio.

Key words: radio research, music journalism, music programming, radio formats, market research

Ralf Spiller / Stefan Weinacht: 'An-Institute' in the field of German Media and Communication. Findings from a Qualitative Study of a Specific Form of Institutionalisation of Science in Germany (An-Institute im Bereich der „Medien und Kommunikation“. Befunde einer qualitativen Studie zu einer Organisationsform von Wissenschaft in Deutschland), pp. 577-598

The German so called 'An-Institute', i.e. independent institutes that are associated to a University, play an important role in the transfer and reception of scientific findings between different universities. They conduct research and provide developments, and they provide knowledge and technology transfer to the industry. They also partly train students. For scholars, the 'An-Institute' are institutions which can be launched relatively easy. Yet, they serve as proof of practical relevance to scientific endeavours of university units. Still, analyses of German 'An-Institute' operating in the field of media and communication have not been conducted yet. This paper examines the market of 'An-Institute' in Germany. It focuses on the advantages and disadvantages of this kind of organization from the perspective of scholars. Thus, we conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews with leaders of such institutions. The results indicate that the analysed 'An-Institute' show a very heterogeneous activity and size. According to their profiles they can be classified into three groups. These are: 'avoidance' institutions that aim at a work situation beyond German higher education policy regulations; 'entrepreneur' institutions striving for economic gain; and 'corporations or donor mediated' institutions, serving as extended workbenches in the R&D context.

Key words: An-Institute, market analysis, knowledge transfer, research and development (R & D), qualitative Interviews