

Contents

Acknowledgements | 7

Foreword

by Peter Dahlgren, Lund University, Sweden | 9

Chapter 1: Introduction

Studying Tabloid Reading Cross-Nationally | 11

Background Contexts | 13

Book Outline | 17

PART I: TABLOIDS FROM A CROSS-NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Chapter 2: Similar Phenomena

Aspects of the British *The Sun* and the German *Bild* | 21

Profitable: *The Sun* & *Bild* as Commercial Enterprises | 21

Controversial: Historical Events involving *The Sun* and *Bild* | 29

Distinguishable: Editorial Characteristics of the Tabloid Press | 42

Conclusions | 51

Chapter 3: Differing Contexts

Media Systems & Journalistic Traditions in Britain & Germany | 53

Press History | 53

Press Laws | 61

Press Markets | 64

Professional Traditions | 67

Conclusions | 72

PART II: TABLOIDS IN THE ACADEMIC DEBATE

Chapter 4: Theorising Tabloids

Approaches to Popular Newspapers | 77

Implying Detrimental Effects: Traditional Approaches | 77

Turning to ‘The Other’: Alternative Approaches | 87

Conclusions | 95

Chapter 5: Milestones Revisited

Building on Previous Audience Studies | 97

Providing the Ground | 97

Newspaper Audiences in the Spotlight | 105

Tabloid Newspaper Reception | 108

Conclusions | 121

PART III: TABLOIDS FROM AN AUDIENCE POINT OF VIEW

Chapter 6: Methodology

- Planning, Devising and Carrying out the Research | 125
 - Comparing Nations: Conceptual Framework | 126
 - Devising the Tools: the Research Design | 129
 - Linking Principles and Practice: the Research Experience | 136
 - Reaching Conclusions: the Data Analysis | 154
 - Conclusions | 157

Chapter 7: Balancing Tensions

- The Politics of Reading Tabloids | 159
 - Trivialising Tabloids: the “Light Entertainment” View | 159
 - Scrutinising Tabloids: the “Flawed Journalism” View | 166
 - Endorsing Tabloids: the “Social Value” View | 174
 - Dismissing Tabloids: the “Ideological Imposition” View | 179
 - Conclusions | 187

Chapter 8: Fostering Engagement

- The Participatory Potential of Tabloids | 191
 - Access to News | 192
 - A Currency of Communication | 195
 - Spaces of Negotiation | 200
 - Conclusions | 208

Chapter 9: Managing Identity

- Tabloids as Tools for Social Belonging | 211
 - Rehearsing Nationhood: ‘the Trouble with this Country’ | 212
 - Flagging Nationhood: Socially Accepted Contexts of Patriotism | 224
 - Belonging and Distinction: Notions of Status and Class | 232
 - Conclusions | 238

Chapter 10: Tabloid Modes of Engagement | 241

- Reading Popular News | 243
- The Tabloids’ “Negotiative Space” | 247
- Subtle Distinctions: Cross-National Differences | 255
- Looking Ahead: Future Perspectives | 261

Bibliography | 265

Appendix: Focus Group Guide (English version) | 291