

# Abstracts

## *Irene Neverla: Media Criticism and Media Journalism. The Challenges of (Self-) Reflection in a Medialized Society*

Times of crisis promote media criticism, therefore today's processes of intensive social and medial transition, as well as populist currents also in the media, offer a great deal of material for media criticism and media journalism. In this article the current status of three types of media criticism are addressed by way of overview: media-practical media criticism, in particular with regard to journalism, scientific media criticism of the communication sciences and journalism and lastly the non-professional, ordinary media criticism of the wider public. We are often confronted with the latter in the form of radical right-wing populism. The backgrounds and abysses related to populist media criticism are discussed, as well as the potential for insights concerning professional journalistic and scientific media criticism.

## *Nikolaus Jakob/Ilka Jakobs/Oliver Quiring/Tanjev Schultz/Christian Schemer/Marc Ziegele: Media Scepticism and Media Cynicism. Functional and Dysfunctional Forms of Media Criticism*

In this article media scepticism and media cynicism as functional and dysfunctional forms of media criticism are differentiated. It investigates how conspiracy-theoretical patterns of thought and media scepticism as well as media cynicism are interrelated and how this attitude affects trust in the media. The results show that a media critical disposition, which is constructive and does not assume either sinister intentions or conspiracies, is substantially more widespread than radical media cynicism. Further, they show that media sceptical consumers possess a higher degree of trust in the media and are more strongly situated in the moderate sections of the political spectrum. Media cynicism is accompanied by the belief in conspiracy theories and leads to higher levels of dissatisfaction with democracy and to an increased frustration with politics.

## *Horst Pöttker: Gladbeck Revisited. (Self-)Criticism of Journalism – a Critical Analysis*

This essay readdresses and analyses (self-)criticism pertaining to the journalistic mistakes committed in connection with the Gladbeck hostage crisis in 1988. Demands made for restrictions on the broadcasting of such television images have proven problematical, being justified as providing a “forum” for criminals and as being unsuitable for the public. On the other hand, restrictions appear to be necessary on research which hinders the police from protecting hostages, for example, and therefore become a part of the events being reported. As news coverage in a media society is inevitably also involved in the observed events, in that it can fuel criminal motivations, the traditional

journalistic self-image of the uninvolved observer has become an ideology. Today a self-understanding is appropriate, whereby as a journalist one is a part of the events and an effort should therefore be made towards independence and impartiality.

### *Leif Kramp/Stephan Weichert: Hatred on the Net. Suggestions and Recommendations for Editorial Departments*

When it comes to reporting on social controversies, an explosive mood often unleashes itself in the commentary areas of news websites. Many newsrooms have already closed their online commentary sections due to an overload of excessive hate speech, trolling and other destructive forms of user articulation. Particularly in social media – and not only for journalists – it has now become a question of social cohesion on how to deal with user comments. The article summarizes the results of a study for the Media Authority North Rhine-Westphalia concerning hate commentaries submitted by members of the audience of online news sites and the resulting implications for editorial moderation strategies. The authors advise newsrooms to systematically develop approaches for user dialogue – even with hate driven commentators.

### *Viera Pirker: Catholic, Female, Instagram. Insights into Platform-Unique Practices*

To be sure, Instagram is considered a superficial “influencer platform”, but it is also used in many ways for various thematic communications including questions concerning religion and faith. Thereby, visual and textual strategies related to religion, the representation of religious identity, but also individual image strategies and communal development can be observed, as well as forms of expression of a (sub)cultural affiliation, which are lived and expressed with specific symbols, affects and interactions. Informal religious education takes place here for the 15-35 year age-group. In this article the social-scientific conditions related to Instagram are described and two U.S. American catholic accounts are depicted by example regarding their operations on Instagram.