Democracy, Journalism and Technology: New Developments in an Enlarged Europe

edited by

Nico Carpentier
Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt
Kaarle Nordenstreng
Maren Hartmann
Peeter Vihalemm
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Tobias Olsson

DEMOCRACY, JOURNALISM AND TECHNOLOGY: NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN AN ENLARGED EUROPE

THE INTELLECTUAL WORK OF ECREA'S 2008 EUROPEAN MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION DOCTORAL SUMMER SCHOOL

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Presentations during the Poster Workshop
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Introduction:
The intellectual work of ECREA's 2008 European media and communication doctoral Summer School in Tartu

Nico Carpentier

1. The Summer School's history

The Summer School was established in the early 1990s by a consortium of ten (Western) European universities, initiated by the Universities of Stendhal (Grenoble, France) and Westminster (UK) (see Manuel Parés i Maicas's chapter in this volume). From then on, these participating universities have organised annual summer schools for communication studies PhD students, which lasted for one or two weeks and took place in a wide range of locations, including Grenoble, Lund, Barcelona, London, and Helsinki. In 2005, the Summer School moved for the first time to the Department of Journalism and Communication of the University of Tartu. In 2008, it ran from 28 July until 8 August 2008. During the 2005–2008 period, the consortium was expanded in order to bring 'new' and enlarged Europe's expertise and students into the Summer School tradition. This expansion resulted in a present-day consortium of 21 participating universities: Ankara, Amsterdam (UvA), Barcelona (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona), Bergen, Bremen, Brussel (VUB), Budapest (Eötvös Loránd), Erfurt, Grenoble (Stendhal Grenoble 3), Helsinki, Jönköping, Kaunas (Vytauto Didziojo), Ljubljana, Milan (Holy Heart), London (LSE), London (Westminster), Lund, Prague (Charles), Roskilde, Stirling, and Tampere.

In line with this process of expansion, the Program Committee selected the theme 'Democracy, journalism and technology: New developments in an enlarged Europe' for the 2008 Summer School. This theme allowed the Summer School to combine the consortium's material expansion with a content-related focus on the notion of European expan-

sion and the related strong need for further European democratisation, all within the context of mediatisation and communication. The intertwining of the organisational and content-related issues led to the following four objectives of the 2008 Summer School.

a) to provide an intercultural and multilateral dialogue between academics of new and old EU member states focusing on an enlarged Europe, democracy, participation, and journalism, and the European knowledge society,

b) to provide mutual support for doctoral studies in Media and Communication at the expanding network of the partner universities and ECREA,

c) to expand the collaboration to universities not yet members of the network,

d) to create a respectful but critical dialogue between academic researcher, governments, civil society and media industries focusing on new demands and developments in media within an enlarged Europe and a European knowledge society.

2. THE PEDAGOGICAL AND DIDACTICAL APPROACH OF THE SUMMER SCHOOL

The twelve-day 2008 Summer School was based on a combination of lectures, workshops, student-workshops and working visits. Traditionally, especially the Summer School lectures are related to the yearly theme of the Summer School, but nevertheless still manage to address a wide range of topics. The academic staff from the partner universities, complemented by media industry, journalism, and museum institution representatives, is responsible for these lectures, part of which can be found in this publication.

The core format of the Summer School is nevertheless based on the so-called student-workshops, which are oriented towards providing the PhD students with extensive and high-quality feedback. For this purpose, the following specific procedure was used. After their application is approved, participating PhD students each send in their 10-page papers. On the basis of the papers, the PhD students are then divided into three groups or flows, and each student is attributed a lecturer-respondent and a student-respondent. Moreover, a so-called flow-manager (a member of the academic Summer School staff) is also attributed to each of the flows. These flow-managers coordinate the activities of the student-workshops' flows for the entire duration of the Summer School.

During the student-workshops, each PhD student presents his or her project, which is then commented upon by the student-respondent, the lecturer-respondent and the flow-manager, and finally discussed by all participants. At the end of the series of student-workshops, a joint workshop is organised, where the diversity of paradigmatic, theoretical and methodological approaches is discussed, combined with the intellectual lessons learned at the Summer School.

More than in the previous years, the lectures and student-workshops were complemented by a series of other workshops. These other workshops provided the PhD students with more practical training on issues related to making posters, publishing and abstract-writing, oral presentations, interviewing, discourse analysis, and ideological analysis. A second group of workshops informed participants on issues related to the European research landscape and the European educational landscape. The working visits gave the participants more insights in Estonia's media structures, politics and history.

3. The people / the hall of fame

At the 2008 Summer School, 48 PhD students participated.

The first flow group consisted of Barış Engin Aksoy, Zykas Aurelijus, Tamas Bodoky, Yana Breindl, Jill Campaiola, Bodin Cyrille, Martin Duch, Imke Hoppe, Gabriel Moreno, Cristina Muntean, Catarina Passos, Evelin Pullerits, Aynur Sarısakaloğlu, Maha Taki, Camilla Tønnevold, and Ausra Vinciuniene.

Matthias Berg, Ignacio Bergillos, Marco Bräuer, Sara Cannizzaro, Sascha Hoelig, Laur Kanger, Tuğba Kanlı, Jeong Kim, Radka Kohutova, Jannie Møller Hartley, Víctor Manuel Navarro, Gladys Ortiz Henderson, Inan Ozdemir, Celina Raffl, Núria Reguero, and Ana Sanchez Laws were the second flow group.

María Soliña Barreiro González, Sarah Boyles, Enrique Canovaca, Simone Carlo, Matthias De Groof, Valentyna Dymytrova, Lawrie Hallett, Anne Kaun, Maria Kyriakidou, Anna-Maria Mäki-Kuutti, Yiannis Mylonas, Faïza Naït-Bouda, Natalia Pueyo Ayhan, Riitta Saastamoinen, Vienna Setälä, and Laura Suna formed the third group.

All of their abstracts, and a selection of six chapters based on their work, are included in this publication.

The Summer School also had 22 academic lecturers: Michael Bruun Andersen, Bertrand Cabedoche, Bart Cammaerts, Nico Carpentier, Peter Dahlgren, Maren Hartmann, François Heinderyckx, Anastasia Kavada, Beybin Kejanlioğlu, Richard Kilborn, Jens E. Kjeldsen, Roy Langer, Denis McQuail, Hannu Nieminen, Kaarle Nordenstreng, Tobias Olsson, Manuel Parés i Maicas, Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Irena Reifová, Ebba Sundin, Peeter Vihalemm and Marina Villa.

In addition to the Summer School lecturers, the programme also included a presentation by Indrek Treufeldt at the Estonian Public Broadcasting Service, a visit to the Estonian History Museum, and the screening of two documentaries at the Estonian National Museum which all provided valuable insights into Estonia's media, politics, culture and history.

Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt was the coordinator of the Summer School, supported by the Program Committee, which consisted of Kaarle Nordenstreng, Peeter Vihalemm, Slavko Splichal, Maren Hartmann, and Nico Carpentier. The latter two, together with Bart Cammaerts, Tobias Olsson, and Hannu Nieminen, acted as the Summer School's flow-managers.

4. THE EVALUATION

The 2008 Summer School was characterised by a high level of student (and lecturer) satisfaction. During the evaluation workshop at the end of the Summer School and in the (written) individual evaluations, the participants expressed their enthusiasm about their Summer School experience. The following citations from the individual feedback forms provide us with a good overview of the most common reactions to the general (evaluative) questions:

- *[T]he Summer School was very instructive experience that already brought me a lot further in my work.*
- *Colleagues were in general very open, kind, tolerant and curious. Some brought precious input by comparing my work to their experiences. Mixing high level PhD students with beginners was a good idea- very useful input & feedback from experienced people. Yet different EU Schools of thinking were too strong in some colleagues' approaches, thus limiting opportunities of dialogue.*
- *The respondents' feedback was extremely useful, thorough & constructive. The flow manager was impressive at engaging in depth with every single project.*

The Summer School remains a rewarding but very intensive experience because of its duration, as these three citations illustrate:

- *It was a lovely time but we didn't have time to do much besides being at the university and sleeping.*
- *... more free time, especially in the week-end. This would certainly increase the participation rate in the 2nd week*
- *I would recommend just a little more time perhaps just one more afternoon more, as a break that can be used for individual work.*

At the same time, the Summer School evaluations have also produced a large amount of critical advice for future improvements of the Summer School format. Mostly the advice focused on requests of more free time as outlined above, but participants were also asking for more informal meetings with lecturers. Moreover, they suggested to increase the interactive parts of the workshops, and to use the lectures to show more of the insides of the research practice.

5. THE SUMMER SCHOOL BOOK

A significant part of intellectual work of the 2008 Summer School is included in this book. In this book, a first (small) part focuses on the Summer School itself, and includes (apart from this introduction) an overview of the Summer School's history from 1992 to 2007, written by one of the founders of the Summer School, Manuel Parés i Maicas.

The second part of the book has six sections. In the first section on Journalism, Denis McQuail defines journalism more as a public occupation and less as a profession. In the two following chapters, Nico Carpentier and Faïza Naït-Bouda look at journalistic identities. Nico Carpentier analyses the combination of flexibility and rigidity that characterises these journalistic identities, while Faïza Naït-Bouda takes the identity of the *pigistes* as a case study of identity construction. Kaarle Nordenstreng's chapter looks at the possibilities for cultivating journalists for peace.

The second section focuses on Media, publics and active audiences. Jens E. Kjeldsen's chapter deals with the conditions for public rhetoric, while Ebba Sundin gives voice to young media consumers talking about their ways of dealing with the news. Beybin Kejanlioğlu revisits Walter Benjamin's work on the author as producer to search for its applicability in more contemporary settings, in combination with an experiment in collage and mashup writing. In the fourth chapter of this section, Maria

Kyriakidou analyses the reception of distant suffering by Greek audiences, focussing on their empathic reactions and the possible link with cosmopolitanism. Finally, Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt's chapter has a closer look at the processes of inclusion and exclusion in a digital Estonia.

The third section – Media and becoming political – takes a broad perspective on the political, scrutinising the role of mediation within this domain of societal problem-solving. The section starts with Peter Dahlgren's theoretical chapter on television's role in contributing to citizen's involvement in politics. This chapter is followed by two case studies: Fredrik Miegel and Tobias Olsson's chapter on The Pirate Party, a file-sharing movement that turned into a political party, and Anastasia Kavada's chapter on the movement for alternative globalisation's use of email within its decision-making processes. Finally, Marco Bräuer's chapter investigates the usability of resource mobilisation theory to study citizen action groups.

In the fourth section, which is entitled Media and space, Jeong Hee Kim first writes about the politics of visibility, and the price that sometimes is paid for becoming visible in online spaces. Maren Hartmann's chapter looks at public viewing during EURO 2008, and how watching football moves into a diversity of public spaces. In his chapter, Gabriel Moreno studies how transnational audiences deal with the representation of spaces in which they live(d). In the fourth chapter of this section, Maha Taki looks at the identity strategies of bloggers in contested and sometimes dangerous online spaces.

In Media, ideology and culture, Irena Reifová first analyses the ideological constructions in communist serials. This is combined with a case study on the representation of work in communist and post-communist serials. Then, Bertrand Cabedoche analyses the nano-technology debates and the contemporary mediated representations of science. In the third chapter of this section, Manuel Parés i Maicas fleshes out the political implications of the UNESCO convention on cultural diversity.

Embedded within some of the Summer School's Workshops, the three chapters in the last section (Doing research) focus more on research praxis. Jeffrey Wimmer's chapter discusses the potential of several methods and previous research projects to analyse the social meanings of digital games. Roy Langer's chapter enters into the diversity of discourse analysis methodologies and offers suggestions on their appropriateness, taking the Danish Cartoon crisis as an example. Finally, François Heinderyckx's chapter describes the do's and don'ts of oral presentations.

The book ends with the abstracts of the projects of all 48 PhD students that participated in the 2008 Summer School. Throughout the book, a series of pictures selected from the immense Summer School archive are included. Based on the picture taken by Tuğba Kanil our former Summer School student Ilija Tomanić-Trivundža produced the cover. Our special thanks to our other photographers: François Heinderyckx, Camilla Tønnevold and Lawrie Hallett .

6. A FINAL WORD OF THANKS

The Summer School is supported by a wide range of individuals and institutions. The (old and new) consortium partners, ECREA and the EC all provide invaluable support to this long-standing initiative. Lecturers and flow managers have over the years invested a lot of energy in lecturing and providing PhD support. The PhD students themselves have shown an eagerness which can only be admired and applauded. Of course, most of the credit goes to the organisers: the members of the Program Committee, the Faculty of the University of Tartu and especially to the Summer School coordinator, Pille Pruulmann-Venger-feldt and her assistant Margit Meiessaar, who made it all possible.

Even this book illustrates the intensity of the ongoing collaborations, with its many contributors, editors and language editors[1], also financial collaboration in preparing it, provided by Lifelong Leaning Programme, the Univesrity of Tartu and the Danish National Research School for Media, Communication and Journalism. Being produced within an almost impossible time frame (for a third time), this book bears witness of the Summer School spirit, which every year creates a unique learning experience. For this, all involved are thanked (in many of the Summer School languages) for their intellectual investment and the (learning) pleasure they have generated: thanks to you all, merci pour vous tous, danke euch allen, bedankt aan iedereen, aitäh kõigile, paldies visiem, gracias a todos, gràcies a tots, tack till er alla, tak til jer alle, kiitos teille kaikille, grazie a tutti voi, kærar þakkir til ykkar allra, köszönöm mindnyájatoknak, takk til alle sammen, obrigado a todos, go raibh míle maith agaibh, shukran, najlepša hvala vsem, ačiū jums, dziękuję bardzo Wam wszystkim, asante sana and hepinize teşekkürler.

WEBSITES

The European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School
    http://www.comsummerschool.org/
The Researching And Teaching Communication Book Series
    http://www.researchingcommunication.eu/
The European Communication Research and Education Association
    http://www.ecrea.eu/
The ECREA Young Scholars Network
    http://young.meso.ee/
The Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency
    http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/
The Centre for Educational Programmes
    http://www.archimedes.ee/hkk
The University of Tartu
    http://www.ut.ee/
The Institute of Journalism and Communication of the University of Tartu
    http://www.jrnl.ut.ee

NOTES

1   Our special thanks to Denis McQuail and Richard Kilborn for the language-editing of the student chapters, and to Marcus Denton for his appreciated help.

The European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School 1992–2007

Manuel Parés i Maicas

1. Introduction

The process of the internationalisation of the higher education has been receiving more attention and emphasis over the past decade. Doctoral summer schools occupy an important position in this context, and we can be proud that in our field a dynamic, European-based Summer School has been in continual operation since 1992. Every year it has been offering students from many countries the opportunity to come together in a stimulating international environment, where they get feedback on their dissertation projects, encounter professors from a range of different perspectives, and participate in a variety of workshops. Not least the networking that emerges among the students has proven to be a useful career asset. As one of the founders of the original Summer School network in the field of communication education and research, I have decided to contribute to this year's Summer School book with an overview of the history of our Summer School project. My primary aim is to offer a view of the origins the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School (EMCDSS), the participating scholars and universities, the role of the students, its successive locations and the fundamental economic support of the Erasmus programme. The text reflects my personal perspective based upon the documentation that is still available [1]. I have indicated in the chronological text displayed in the Appendix where information is lacking because of missing documents.

2. Origins

I am not certain how the idea of the EMCDSS network originated. A document entitled '*Les atéliers doctoraux (communication) d'été du Réseaux européen (et médias) de formations doctorales*' (*The summer doctoral workshops (communication) of the European (and media) doctoral network*) contains the most interesting, but not exhaustive, information. The document was, with Bernard Miège's aid, published by GRESEC (*Groupe de recherche sur les enjeux de la communication*) of Université Stendahl, Grenoble 3. Published in 1994/5, it remains a useful resource of information about the origins of our Network.

The main proponents of the idea were the distinguished Spanish scholar and sociologist José Vidal Beneyto, who at the time occupied the post of Director General of Education, Culture and Sport of the Council of Europe and the late Professor Paul Beaud of the University of Lausanne[2]. The initial idea had an enthusiastic reception from Bernard Miège, then director of GRESEC, Université Stendahl, Grenoble 3; Peter Dahlgren[3], Stockholms Universitet; Enrique Bustamante, Universidad Complutense de Madrid; the late Mauro Wolff[4], Università di Bologna; Nicholas Garnham, Polytechnic of Central London[5]; Philip Schlesinger, University of Stirling; Denis McQuail, Universiteit van Amsterdam and Manuel Parés i Maicas, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

Several informal meetings were required to discuss the network's content, objectives and financing. Finally an agreement was reached. The first formal meeting took place in Paris, in May 1990 (according to a document written by Bernard Miège in June 1990). After other meetings, the representatives of EMCDSS agreed in March 1991 to the text of the network's Convention. The network of universities (and representatives), which signed the agreement were: Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Jean-Claude Burgelman); Université Stendahl, Grenoble 3 (Bernard Miège); Polytechnic of Central London (Nicholas Garnham); University of Stirling (Philip Schlesinger); Université de Lausanne (Paul Beaud); Leibniz Universität Hannover (Klaus Schönbach); Stockholms Universitet, (Peter Dahlgren), Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Enrique Bustamante), and Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Manuel Parés i Maicas). The 1991 members agreed, in principle, that only one university would represent each country, with the exceptions, for different reasons, of Spain and the United Kingdom.

The main idea was to create an integrated network of European universities, selected for the quality of their education and research programmes in the field of communication, promoting the European

dimension of Communication Studies, and stimulating interdisciplinary approaches. The network's primary objective was to exchange professors and students between the members. We wished to reinforce the need of creating a European background and awareness in the field of communication.

A fundamental precondition for ensuring the productivity of any international network, academic or otherwise, is the choice of languages used within the network. The founding members originally decided that the official languages of the network, in all its activities, would be English and French. The criteria for the representatives of the universities was that they should possess either a good working knowledge of both languages or should be fluent in one language and have the ability to understand the other. This was essentially a rule for the students, because of the difficulty in applying the same criteria to the Professors.

The probable reason for the students initially abiding by the language norm was because Grenoble hosted the first five Summer Schools (1992–1996). Thereafter as the Summer Schools travelled around Europe (Madrid 1997, Lund 1998, London 1999–2003, Helsinki 2004 and Tartu 2005–2008) the use of French gradually diminished to the point of non-usage. The principal underlying factor is the exponential increase in English as the dominant transnational language in academia. Consequently students have become increasingly fluent in English. All network members regret the loss of French as a network language, but realistically it was unavoidable.

From the start, the EMCDSS members decided on an innovative structural plan for the workshops involving Professors and doctoral students from network member universities as well as invited Professors from non-member universities. The network members agreed in principle that the limit for student attendance would be three for each member university[6] and that students would not repeat their attendance. Each session would be devoted to a relevant topic in the field of communication education and research. The sessions were divided into two parts: In the morning EMCDSS Professors and the guest Professors would discuss the different aspects of the chosen topic followed by a general debate with the students. In the afternoons, students would present an overview of their doctoral thesis. A discussion followed each presentation.

The Professors initially participated in two different ways: Lectures and Workshops (also called Working Groups or *Ateliers*). Later, the Workshops were split into regular Workshops and Student Feedback

Workshops. An 'evaluation' meeting occurred on the last day of each Summer School at which students and Professors evaluated the proceedings from their different points of view. Proposals for changes were taken into consideration during the organization of the next Summer School.

The students participated as representatives of their universities. The application form now requires the following information: academic profile; an abstract of the doctoral project; the project's main paradigm; the theoretical framework; the methods used; the main objective; the time spent on the project and the time remaining for completion.

The financial support for the network has mainly come from the Erasmus Programme of the European Union. The network did receive modest funding from the Council of Europe in 1992 and Grenoble received financial aid from the Conseil Régional Rhône-Alpes for a period of four to five years. Through the Intensive Programme, Erasmus provided the core funding that was essential for EMCDSS to achieve the primary aim of developing European education and research in communication sciences. Bernard Miège (Grenoble), initially, managed the Erasmus Intensive Programme funding, followed by Manuel Parés i Maicas (UAB), Vincent Porter (Westminster), Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere) and Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt (Tartu)(the latter supported by a Programme Committee). A key aspect of Erasmus funding is the availability of mobility allowances for the students, although the Summer Schools do 'charge' a nominal tuition fee to cover a part of its operating costs.

From 2002, students from non-member universities could also access the Summer School through the European Consortium for Communication Research (ECCR) and later the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)[7]. This has meant an important new thrust for both the individual members of EMCDSS and the network as a whole.

Furthermore, the number of partner universities of the EMCDSS increased between 2002 and 2006. In 2006 these universities included six of the ten founding members which signed the 1991 Agreement: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Grenoble, Westminster, Stirling and Brussels. The members that were added were Bergen, Budapest, Erfurt, Helsinki, London (LSE), Lund, Roskilde, Tampere and Tartu[8]. The network expanded further in 2007 when Bremen, Ljubljana, Kaunas and Jönköping became members[9].

Also the network's management structures have changed since 2005 when the University of Tartu began to organize the Summer School.

From then on, the local coordinator (Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt) was supported by a Programme Committee, consisting of Nico Carpentier, Maren Hartmann, Kaarle Nordenstreng and Peeter Vihalemm. Slavko Splichal joined the Programme Committee in 2007.

3. CHRONOLOGY

I have in the Appendix a chronological history of EMCDSS' annual activities. I have concentrated on the following categories: 1) Universities represented; 2) Professors and their scientific contributions through lectures; 3) Invited professors (non-EMCDSS members), and their contributions; 4) Development of the teaching formats; 5) Other interesting aspects to be mentioned.

I have made omissions of two important aspects of the Summer Schools. Both of these omissions are due to incomplete information. The respective organizers of most of the Summer Schools have offered excursions to historical places, leisure events and artistic activities to the participants. Every event has had relevance and content appropriate to the Summer Schools, but were not included in the Appendix.

I would also like to have mentioned the names of the students who have attended every session, but in some years the information was not available. So to avoid any discrimination I have, regretfully, decided not to mention any of the students by name. I am, however, convinced that a good number of the students have already obtained their doctoral degree and I know that some are already assistant-Professors and even Professors.

All networks must, in order to meet the challenges of achieving their objectives and meeting the institutional and individual expectations of their members, continuously develop and review the structure of their operations. This is especially true for an organisation interested in developing research and education in communication sciences.

There have for example been changes in the format and content of the lectures from one named Lecturer (1992), to a named Lecturer and a named Discussant (1993 and 1994), to a Lecture followed by a Supporting lecture on the same topic/theme (1995), and then a reversal to a single Lecturer. Westminster began to use a theme for the Summer School (2000, 2002 and 2003).

With the move to Tampere-Helsinki and later Tartu, the PhD-student feedback system was structurally improved. So-called 'flow-managers' became responsible for a subgroup of PhD-students, providing each of

'their' students with feedback. In addition, each participant was attributed one student-respondent and one Lecturer-respondent, maximizing the feedback received by each participant in the Student Feedback Workshops. Also the launch of the 'lecturer and student' book in 2006 has been an important step. Apart from a regular print version – as part of the newly established Researching and Teaching Communication Book Series – an electronic version was also made available for free at the Book Series Website[10].

Moreover, the size of the network increased considerably, both at the level of member universities and at the level of participants. For instance, the inclusion of ECREA as a partner had a substantial impact on the number of participants. Finally, the network's management structures were also modified, to support the local organisers, and increase the managerial efficiency of the network (whilst maintaining a democratic decision-making culture).

4. CONCLUSIONS

Over the past sixteen years, the EMCDSS initiative has developed into one of the most serious and successful contributions in promoting and reinforcing the European cultural and communication identity. This is mainly due to the network's interdisciplinary approach and the success of the Summer Schools' activities.

The development of a PhD student-centred approach, providing high quality feedback is one of the best known and satisfying results of the Summer Schools. An element of this success has been the quality of the contributions of the students' doctoral research.

The key turning points during the sixteen year period were (i) the decision to accept the members universities' offers to host the Summer Schools, which in 1996 began to move the Summer Schools around Europe; (ii) the decision in 2002 to welcome members of ECCR and later of ECREA to attend, which opened the Summer School for participants outside the consortium members; and (iii) the publication of the first EMCDSS 'lecturer and student' book in 2006, which permitted the achievement of a key aim, namely to provide a 'platform' to publish doctoral students' research articles.

Furthermore, the EMCDSS would not be the success of today without the fundamental inputs of a number of groups:
  ▪ All the universities and their representative Professors, who have participated either as members, or equally important, as guests, in

the EMCDSS activities have invested great efforts in the Summer Schools as well as in approaching new developments in research and education with both national and international perspectives.

- The doctoral students, a percentage of whom are Latin American, African and Asian students (most of them studying at European universities), who attend the Summer Schools are crucial to the EMCDSS. Close to four hundred students have participated in the sixteen Summer Schools held between 1992 and 2007. Within the context of communication sciences' research and education, the students who have participated in EMCDSS are the future of our field. Their beneficial involvement, reflected in those former students who are now assistant-Professors and Professors, ultimately legitimizes the time and effort invested in EMCDSS.
- The Erasmus Intensive Programme's funding has proven crucial to the EMCDSS.
- Also ECREA's role is noteworthy because ECREA assisted in making the EMCDSS accessible to students of non-member universities, and provided financial and logistical support for the Summer School.
- The Universities which have offered to host the Summer Schools have exhibited exemplary skills in organising them, as well as creating and maintaining a relaxed learning environment suitable for the student participants of these intensive courses.

The concept of 1990 saw fruition in 1991 with the signing of the Convention and has gone from strength to strength in the ensuing sixteen years. I believe that EMCDSS, supported by the network's beliefs in practical interdisciplinarity and a democratic environment, will continue long into the future; successfully and satisfactorily accomplishing the aims and objectives, which are the same since its foundation: the development of European education and research in communication sciences.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Appendix:
A historical overview of the Summer Schools

EMCDSS I
1992, Université Stendahl, Grenoble 3

Lecturers and *Lectures*
Bernard Miège (Grenoble), *Objectives and method*; Enrique Bustamante (Madrid), *A European individual space: the film on TV*; Nicholas Garnham (Westminster[11]), *The problem of identity in social science*; Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona), *The concept of cultural identity*; Slavko Splichal (Slovenia*[12]), Title not specified; Mauro Wolf (Bologna), *The point on the media reception theory*; Paul Baud (Lausanne), *Public Opinion and Cultural Identity.*

Working Groups
Enrique Bustamante, Jean-Claude Burgelman, Bernard Miège, *Communication public policies*; Nicholas Garnham, *The Public Service*; Manuel Parés i Maicas, Philip Schlesinger and Slavko Splichal, *The regional identity*; Bernard Miège and Jean Caune, *The aim of firms to find an identity through communication techniques*; Louis Quéré and Jan Ekecrantz, *The role of the media in the production of events*; Mauro Wolf, Klaus Schönbach and Boris Firsov *Media reception.*

Universities (and Students)

Barcelona (3)	Lausanne (1)	St. Petersburg* (2)
Brussels (3)	Lithuania* (1)	Stirling (2)
Grenoble (3)	Ljubljana* (1)	Stockholm (3)
Hanover (2)	Madrid (3)	Westminster (2)

EMCDSS II
1993, Université Stendahl, Grenoble 3

Lecturers, <u>Discussants</u> and *Lectures*
Carlo Marlettti (Torino*), <u>Manuel Parés i Maicas</u> (Barcelona), *Media and Political cultures*; Jean-Claude Burgelman (Brussels), Nick Garnham and Vincent Porter (Westminster), <u>Bernard Miège</u> (Grenoble), *The evolution of the public services*; Klaus Schönbach (Hanover), <u>Erik Neveu</u> (Rennes*), *Political sphere and symbolic changes*; Peter Dahlgren (Stockholm), <u>Louis Quéré</u>, *Mediatisation and citizenship.*

Information relating to the working-groups, the Universities represented and their students is missing.

EMCDSS III
1994; Université Stendahl, Grenoble 3

Lecturers, Discussants and *Lectures*
Bernard Miège (Grenoble), E. Prado (Barcelona) and Jean-Claude Burgelman (Brussels), *The Information Society*; K. Robbins (Newcastle*), H. Verstraeten (Brussels) and J. Widmer (Freiburg*), *Transcultural Aspects*; P. Dalhgren (Stockholm), K. Schönbach (Hanover) and Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona), *The Ethics of Communication*; R. Zallo (Bilbao*), V. Porter (Westminster) and E. Bustamante (Madrid), *The new tendencies of the Cultural Industries.*

Working Groups
The students formulated proposals concerning the topics of the working groups. Regrettably the students who attended nor the topics discussed appear in the documents.

Universities (and Students)

Barcelona (4)	Grenoble(4)	Stirling (3)
Brussels VuB (1)	Lausanne (1)	Stockholm (3)
Hanover (2)	Madrid (5)	Westminster (3)

EMCDSS IV
1995; Université Stendahl, Grenoble 3

Lecturers, *Lectures* and supporting Lecturers and *Lectures*
P. Dahlgren (Stockholm), *Media Identity and the experience of political*; A. Noguero (Barcelona), *Political Public Relations in Spain*; K. Schönbach (Hanover), *The role of mass media in election campaigns*; Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona), *1995 local elections in Spain*; Bernard Miège (Grenoble), *Presidential French elections communication*; Patrice Flichy (CNET – PARIS*), *Media, techniques and society* and N. Garnham (Westminster), *Communication and technology, current debates on convergence.*

Working Groups
The students formulated proposals concerning the topics of the working groups. Regrettably neither the students who attended nor the topics discussed appear in the documents.

EMCDSS V
1996; Université Stendahl, Grenoble 3

Lecturers and *Lectures*

Jean-Claude Burgelman (Brussels), *Information Society and Future Challenges to Communication Policy*; Enric Marin Otto (Barcelona), *History of Communication: Identities and ecosystems of communication;* Vincent Porter (Westminster), *The History of communications networks;* Pascal Verhoest (Amsterdam), *Structure and (telecommunication) policy in the Information Society.*

Working Groups

The students formulated proposals concerning the topics of the working groups. Regrettably the topics discussed do not appear in the document.

Universities (and Students)

Barcelona (4)	Grenoble (4)	Madrid (3)
Brussels (VUB)(3)	Hanover (3)	Stirling (3)

Publication

The University of Grenoble 3 (Institut d'Etudes Scientifiques Avancées) published a book, under the title of '*Atélier doctoral d'été 1996, Histoire et espaces dans la société de consommation*' (*Doctoral Workshops of Summer 1996. History and spaces in the consumer society*) which was a collection of all the students' contributions. The book had six sections: Reception of the programmes; Public Space; Methodologies, History and Comparative Studies; Communication Policies; Economy of the Communication; Other contributions.

EMCDSS VI
1997; Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Lecturers and *Lectures*

Francesco Panese and Paul Beaud (Lausanne), *Knowledge and visual viewing;* Peter Dahlgren (Lund), *A preface to TV analysis;* Klaus Schönbach (Hanover), *Visual Dimension of Newspaper;* Enrique Bustamante (Madrid), *Information-Network and Development;* Jean-Claude Burgelman (Brussels), *Communication Policies and Telecommunication;* Bernard Miège (Grenoble), *Communication and economic and social development in the European Union;*

Working Groups

Stylianos Papathanassapoulos (Athens*); Manuel Parés i Maicas and Antoni Noguero (Barcelona); Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere*); Philip Schlesinger and Nancy Morris (Stirling); Nicholas Garnham and Vincent Porter (Westminster).

The students formulated proposals concerning the topics of the working groups. Regrettably those topics discussed do not appear in the document for this Summer School.

Universities (and Students)

Barcelona (4)	Grenoble (3)	Madrid (7)
Brussels (3)	Hanover (5)	Stirling (2)
Stockholm (2)		

EMCDSS VII
1998; Lunds Universiteit

Lecturers and *Lectures*

Paddy Scannell (Westminster), *Why Media and Communication research?* Karin Becker (Stockholm*), *The Analysis of Visual communication;* Peter Dahlgren (Lund), *Media Research and Cultural Studies;* Vincent Porter (Westminster), *Convergence in the Media Industries;* Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere*), *Nordic Media Research Today;* Klaus Bruhn Jensen (Copenhagen*), *Media Research Methodologies: the current State;* Jean Caune (Grenoble), *Processes of Communication and Aesthetic Mediation in the social field;* Nancy Morris (Stirling), *Media and Globalization.*

Working Groups

The students formulated proposals concerning the topics of the working groups. Regrettably those topics discussed do not appear in the document for this Summer School.

Universities (and Students)

Barcelona (1)	Lund (3)	Stirling (2)
Grenoble (2)	Madrid (3)	Tampere* (2)
Westminster (3)		

EMCDSS VIII
1999; University of Westminster

Lecturers and *Lectures*
Paddy Scannell (Westminster), *The relevance of history to media research;* Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere*), *Normative theories of the media;* Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona), *Social Movements and the Media;* Annette Hill (Westminster), *Current Directions in Audience Research;* Peter Dahlgren (Lund), *Citizenship, Identity and the Media;* Caroline Pauwels (Brussels), *European Media Policy;* Bernard Miège (Grenoble), *Communication and Education;* Vincent Porter (Westminster), *Researching the Information Society.*

Working Groups
The students formulated proposals concerning the topics of the working groups. Regrettably those topics discussed do not appear in the document for this Summer School.

Universities (and Students)

Barcelona (1)	Hanover (2)	Stirling (1)
Brussels (VuB) (2)	Lund (2)	Tampere* (2)
Grenoble (4)	Madrid (2)	Westminster (4)

EMCDSS IX
2000; University of Westminster

Overall theme
Communication and Civil Society

Lecturers and *Lectures*
Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona) and Nicholas Garnham (Westminster), *Intellectuals and Civil Society;* Bernard Miège (Grenoble) and Vincent Porter (Westminster), *Communication and Civil Society in Western Europe;* Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere*), (i) *Communication and Civil Society in Eastern Europe;* (ii) *Communication, Civil Society and Globalization;* Klaus Schönbach (Hanover), *Opinion and Civil Society;* Jan Servaes (Brussels), *Civil Society and Alternative Means of Communication;* Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere) and Vincent Porter (Westminster), *Civil Society: A comparative overview.*

I do not have any information concerning this Summer School due to a fire at the University which destroyed the archives.

EMCDSS X
2001; University of Westminster

Lecturers and *Lectures*

Vincent Porter (Westminster), *Human Rights, Freedom of Expression and Ethics in Europe;* Brian Winston, *The Ethics of Journalism;* Peter Dahlgren (Lund), *The Twilight of Ethical Journalism? On planning one's hopes on the internet;* Norberto Minguez (Madrid), *Business Ethics and Corporate Image;* Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere), *Media Ethics in Europe: In Search of Core Values;* Annette Hill (Westminster), *Big Brother 2000: The Real Audience and the Ethics of 'Actuality';* Richard Kilborn (Stirling), *Consenting Adults: Public Participation in Television Programmes;* Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona), *The Ethics of Political communication;* Claudine Carluer (Grenoble), *Quelle Régulation Mondiale pour l'Information Financière;* Caroline Pauwels (Brussels), Topic not mentioned in documents.

Working Groups

There were different groups with the participation of the Professors in the section above.

Universities (and Students)

Barcelona (4)	Lund (2)	Tampere (2)
Brussels (3)	Madrid (3)	Westminster (3)
Grenoble (1)	Stirling (2)	

Publication

The Centre for Communication and Information Studies, University of Westminster, published a booklet *Ethics and Mass Communication in Europe*, edited by Vincent Porter which includes papers presented by the lecturers.

EMCDSS XI
2002; University of Westminster

Overall theme

Public access and public service broadcasting in the digital age

Lecturers and *Lectures*

Theme 1: Contributions on Public Access

Rico Lie and Jan Servaes (Brussels), *Culture, Communication, Globalization and Localization;* Nico Carpentier (Brussels), *Beyond the virtual binary: ICTs tools for bridging cultural divisions;* Bart Cammaerts (Brussels), *Social Policies in the Information Society: A critical perspective*

on the digital divide; Peter Dahlgren (Lund), *Reconfiguring civic culture in the new media milieu;* Bernard Miège (Grenoble), *Toward a communication approach about the insertion of ICT in the education field.*

Theme 2: Contributions on Public Service Broadcasting

Vincent Porter (Westminster), *Public Service Broadcasting in Europe;* Taisto Hujanen (Tampere), *Public Service Television in a digital multiplex. From coordinated universalism to channel profilization;* Gregory Lowe (Tampere and YLE*), *Public Service Radio and DAB: The chicken and the egg;* Gregory Lowe (Tampere) and Ari Alm (YLE*), *is DAB a dud? Why the greatest thing since sliced bread is toast … . And why it's toast of the town;* Steven Barnett, *Can public service broadcasting survive the government's new Communications Act?*

Working Groups & Universities (and Students)
The relevant information for the Working Groups and Universities (and Students) is unavailable.

Publication
The Centre for Communication and Information Studies, University of Westminster, published the booklet *Public Access and Public Service Broadcasting in the digital age*, containing the papers presented by the Professors.

<u>**EMCDSS XII**</u>
<u>**2003; University of Westminster**</u>

Overall theme
Media reception: Issues and practices

Lecturers and *Lectures*
Kim Schroeder (Roskilde*), *Televised populism? Popular news formats and viewers' negotiation of politics. Report from a Danish reception study;* Nicholas Garnham (Westminster), *Media Economics and Information Society Policy;* Robert Picard (Turku*), *Audience Expenditures for Media Use;* Dominique Pasquier (University of Paris*), *Young People and New/Old Media;* Jean Pierre Esquenazi (University Jean Moulin, Lyon*), *Media Audiences;* Nick Couldry (London School of Economics*), *Media Rituals;* David Gauntlett (University of Bournemouth*), *Gender and the Media;* Richard Kilborn (Stirling), *Reception of Wildlife Documentary;* Sonia Livingstone (London School of Economics*), *Young People and the Media;* Jean Seaton (Westminster), *Researching the BBC;* Paddy Scannell (Westminster), *The Meaning of Live in Broadcasting.*

Workshops

Kim Schroeder (Roskilde*), *Beyond the qualitative/quantitative divide metho-dological challenges for audience research;* Nico Carpentier (Brussels), *Articulations of the Audience;* Peter Dahlgren (Lund), *New Perspectives on Media and Democratic Engagement;* Noureddine Miladi and Koko Kondo (University of Westminster), *Researching Diasporic Audiences;* Bart Cammaerts, title not given; Alexander Nazarov (Southern Denmark*), *Researching European Audiences*

Universities (and Students)

I do not have available any documented information concerning the universities and students participation.

EMCDSS XIII
2004; Tampereen yliopisto in cooperation
with Helsingin yliopisto (in Helsinki)

Overall theme

Media Industries in Changing Europe

Professors and *Lectures*

Nico Carpentier (Brussels) and Pertti Hurme (Jyväskylä*), *European landscape in communication research;* Robert Picard (Jönköping*), Vincent Porter (West-minster), Peter Dahlgren (Lund), *European Media Landscape;* Elena Vartanova (Moscow*), Alexandr Korochenski (Rostow*), Dmitri Strovsky (Jekaterin-burg*), *Media Industry in Russia;* Ullamaija Kivikuru (Helsinki), Nico Carpentier (Brussels), Marju Lauristin (Tartu*), *Media and political culture;* Peeter Vihalemm (Tartu*), Bart Cammaerts (L.S.E.*), *Media and political structures;* Bernard Miège (Grenoble), Ilkka Tuomi (Sevilla*), *European perspectives of ICT;* Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona), Richard Kilborn (Stirling), Greg Lowe (Tampere), *Ethics and Public Service;* Peter Golding (Loughborough*), Roy Langer (Roskilde), *State of the Art in Communication Research.*

Workshop

Annette Hill (Westminster), moderator: *PhD research and publishing*.

Working-groups were established according to the previous criteria.

Universities (and Students)

The students presented their doctoral contributions in three different groups under the responsibility of 'flow-managers' Nico Carpentier, Maren Hartmann and Hannu Nieminen, respectively.

Amsterdam (1)	Latvia* (2)	Saint Petersburg* (1)
Barcelona (3)	Lugano* (1)	Stirling (1)
Bergen (1)	Lund (1)	Tampere (2)
Brussels (2)	Madrid (2)	Tartu* (2)
Grenoble (2)	Moscow* (2)	Westminster (2)
Helsinki (6)	Roskilde (1)	

EMCDSS XIV
2005; Tartu Ülikooli

Overall theme

Media and Everyday Life

Lecturers and *Lectures*

Marju Lauristin (Tartu), *Economic and Social Context for Changes in Estonian Everyday life*; Hannu Nieminen (Tampere), *Disobedient media – unruly citizens*; Bart Cammaerts (L.S.E.), *Cultural jamming techniques in political communication*; Virpi Oksman (Tampere), *Net sociability in the daily lives of young people and seniors*; Louise Philips (Roskilde), *The interplay between media and citizens' representations of politics and everyday life*; Margit Keller (Tartu), *A touch of classics: George Simmel on culture and everyday life in the late modern society*; Bertrand Cabedoche (Grenoble), *Foreign Cultures in Transnational Media*; Maren Hartmann (Erfurt), *Walter Benjamin as a media theoretician: (De)structuring everyday life*; Nico Carpentier (Brussels), *The constructions of everyday life' and 'ordinary people' through televisional practices*; Denis McQuail (Amsterdam), *Relevance of everyday life for media research*; Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona), *Ethics of everyday life*; Richard Kilborn (Stirling), *Feeding the Media machine*.

Workshops

Pille Pruulman-Vengerfeldt (Tartu), *Getting to know each other*; Pille Pruulman-Vengerfeldt (Tartu), *What does an European communications student need?*; Tarik Sabry (Westminster), *Westminster papers in Communication and Culture – publishing options for PhD students and junior scholars*; Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere), *Bologna framework for PhD's – what good could it do?*

Universities (and Students)

The students presented their doctoral contributions in three different groups under the responsibility of 'flow-managers', Nico Carpentier, Bart Cammaerts and Maren Hartmann, respectively. Every presentation had four key/essential participants: the student presenter, a student-respondent, a lecturer-respondent and the group's flow-manager.

The students represented the following Universities:

Brussels (2)	Helsinki (4)	St Petersburg (1)
Canterbury, New Zealand (1)	Jyväskylä* (1)	Stirling (1)
Erfurt (2)	Lapland (1)	Tartu (2)
Erlangen-Nuremberg (1)	Lund (1)	Tampere (5)
Grenoble (2)	Roskilde (1)	Westminster (2)

EMCDSS XV
2006; Tartu Ülikooli

Overall theme

Enlarging Europe – enlarging participation?

Lecturers and *Lectures*

Peter Dahlgren (Lund), *New Media and Civic Representation: Beyond 'Deliberative Democracy*; Nico Carpentier (Brussels), *Power and management in Temptation Island;* Maren Hartmann (Erfurt), *Media Ethnography: A method, a methodology or a research philosophy*; Richard Kilborn (Stirling), *Tracking real lives: The documenting of personal histories;* Bart Cammaerts (L.S.E), *Blogging the Iraq War: Challenging Mainstream Journalism*; Heller Maria (Budapest, Eotvos Lorand University), *Public debates on enlargement in Central/Eastern Europe;* Louise Phillips (Roskilde), *Participatory dialogical approaches to the communication of research-based knowledge*; Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere), *'Four Theories of the Media' reconsidered*; Denis McQuail (Amsterdam), *Media Roles in Society;* Priit Hobemägi (Tartu), *Audience participation in newspaper making;* Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona), *Ethical and deontological self-regulation in the process of European enlargement*; Friedrich Krotz (Erfurt), *Rethinking 'Digital Divide': From a technically based understanding to a concept referring to the social capital of Bourdieu*; Bertrand Cabedoche (Grenoble), *Does turning to Media contents allow grasping European Realities;* Marju Lauristin (Tartu), *Introduction to the Estonian political system;* Evar Tallo (Tartu), *E-governance: What does Estonia have to teach to the world?;* Hannu Nieminen (Helsinki), *The media in European public sphere(s);* Peeter Vihalemm (Tartu), *Overview of Estonian media system*; Anthony McNicholas (Westminster), *Only primary source will do?*

Workshops

Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt (Tartu), *Networking; e-learning*; *PhD. Supervision;* Maren Hartmann, *European educational landscape;* Nico Carpentier and Bart Cammaerts, *Writing an abstract*; Nico Carpentier, *European research landscape;*

Universities (and Students)

The contributions of the students were presented with the same criteria applied in 2005, through three groups, under the responsibility of Nico Carpentier, Bart Cammaerts and Maren Hartmann.

The students represented the following universities:

Amsterdam (2)	Budapest (1)	Latvia* (1)
Antwerp (1)	Erfurt (2)	London (LSE)* (1)
Barcelona (4)	Ghent* (2)	Lund (1)
Pompeu Fabra (1)	Grenoble (2)	Oslo* (1)
Bergen (1)	Helsinki (1)	Postdam* (1)
Bochum* (1)	Ibadan (Nigeria)* (1)	Roskilde (2)
Bremen* (1)	Intercollege (Cyprus)* (1)	Stirling (2)
Brussels (3)	Jyvaskyla* (1)	Tampere (2)
Bucharest* (1)	Kalmar* (1)	Westminster (4)

Publication

The Summer School's book in 2006 set a new landmark for the Network, being the first to include papers by both lecturers and students as well the students' abstracts. The sections of the first part of the book are as follows: Media and Democracy; Participating in Europe; Participating in European Media; Theorizing communication; Communicating knowledge; Methods and techniques. The second part of the book is devoted the abstracts of all the participating students.

   The book, *Researching media, democracy and participation (The intellectual work of the 2006 European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School)*, is edited by Nico Carpentier, Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Kaarle Nordenstreng, Maren Hartmann, Peter Vihalemm and Bart Cammaerts (Published by Tartu University Press, Tartu, 2006). The publication was supported by a Socrates Erasmus IP, the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA), the University of Tartu and the Network of 14 universities.

EMCDSS XVI
2007; Tartu Ülikooli

Overall theme
Media technology and Democracy in an enlarged Europe

Lecturers and *Lectures*
Nico Carpentier (Brussels), *Narrating the city. Power and participation in digital storytelling projects;* Denis McQuail (Amsterdam), *Communication Technologies: Beyond determinism;* Bart Cammaerts (LSE*), *Blogging, Online Forums, the public sphere and extreme right' in North Belgium;* Lars-Ake Engblom (Jönköping), *Iceland – a World Media Laboratory;* Jostein Gripsrud (Bergen), *Culture and public sphere in the age of digitalisation;* Hannu Nieminen (Helsinki), *Democratic regulatory framework for European Media;* Tobias Olsson (Lund), *A Tripartite Analysis of Civic Website: Understanding Reklamsabotage. Org;* Manuel Parés i Maicas (Barcelona), *Considerations about the European Identity;* Bertrand Cabedoche (Grenoble), *Digital revolution and cultural diversity in writing media. How France is dealing with such a problem;* Jo Bardoel (Amsterdam), *From Public Service broadcasting to Public Service media;* François Heinderyckx (Brussels), *The Academic Identity Crisis of the Communication Researcher;* Tomasz Goban-Klas (Jagellionian*), *From forbidden fruit to overabundance. The consumption of American movies and television in Poland;* Aukse Balcytiene (Kaunas, Vytautas Magnus), *Institutional and Journalistic Approaches to Application of New Media Technologies in EU communication;* Marju Lauristin (Tartu), *European Public Sphere – the gap between East and West.*

Workshops
Kaarle Nordenstreng (Tampere), *European educational landscape;* Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt (Tartu), *From student to lecturer-changing sides?;* Nick Jankowski (Royal Netherlands Academy, Amsterdam*), *Online-research-virtual ethics;* Richard Kilborn (Stirling), *Interviewing informants* (*for purposes of a research project*); Nico Carpentier and Bart Cammaerts, *Abstract writing;* Xin Xin (Westminster), *How to do fieldwork;* Nico Carpentier, *EU research sphere;* Louise Phillips (Roskilde), *Discourse Analysis;* Maren Hartmann (Erfurt), Julian Gebhardt (Erfurt), *Ethnography (part 1 and part 2).*

Working Groups
The contributions of the students were presented with the same criteria applied in 2005. The 'flow managers' were Nico Carpentier, Bart Cammaerts, Maren Hartmann and Hannu Nieminen.

Universities (and Students)

Amsterdam (2)	Erfurt (2)	L.S.E* (2)
Barcelona (4)	Grenoble (3)	Ljubljana (4)
Bergen (1)	Helsinki (2)	Lund (1)
Bremen (3)	Jagiellonian* (1)	Munich* (1)
Brussels – VUB (2)	Jyväskylä* (1)	Phillips, Marburg* (1)
Brussels – ULB (1)	Latvia* (1)	Söderstörn Jönköping (1)
Stirling (1)	Tampere (2)	Tartu (2)
Westminster (3)		

Publication
EMCDSS published the second annual volume, *Media Technologies and Democracy in an Enlarged Europe (The intellectual work of the 2007 European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School)*. Edited by Nico Carpentier, Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Kaarle Nordenstreng, Maren Hartmann, Peter Vihalemm, Bart Cammaerts and Hannu Nieminen; published by Tartu University Press. The format of this book is largely the same as the 2006 publication: The first part is split into the following sections; Technology, Democracy and Policy; Journalism; Communication and participation; Participation and citizenship; European perspectives; Methodologies; Learning and being. The second part of the book is devoted to the abstracts of all the participating students.

NOTES

[1]   See also the online archives of the Summer Schools for 2002–2005 (http://www.vub.ac.be/SCOM/IEPDC/iepdc.html) and 2006-now (http://www.comsummerschool.org).

[2]   A condition of EU funding for networks is that all members come from EU states. Switzerland is not an EU state. Consequently the University of Lausanne's involvement in EMCDSS had to cease once Erasmus began funding EMCDSS. Paul Beaud died in 2005.

[3]   Dahlgren subsequently moved to the Lunds Universitet.

[4]   Sadly, Wolff died in 1993, soon after the inaugural Summer School.

[5]   The Polytechnic of Central London became the University of Westminster in 1992.

[6]   The limit does not hold for the 'host' university.

[7]   ECREA which was created in 2005 from the merger of ECCR and the ECA (the European Communication Association).

[8]   In addition, Krakow (Jagiellonian) was also a member from 2006–2007.

[9]   Milan (Universita Cattolica Del Sacro Cuore), Prague (Charles University) and Ankara University became members in 2008. In 2009 the Berlin University of Arts will also be added.

[10]   See the book series website: http://www.researchingcommunication.eu/

[11]   All locations in parentheses are 'University of ....' unless otherwise stated; see for example London School of Economics which is also referred to as L.S.E.

[12]   * denotes guest status.

PART TWO
Research

Visit to the Gunpowder Café featuring Lawrie Hallett
© Camilla Tønnevold

Section one:
Journalism

Richard Kilborn at Student Feedback Workshop

© Lawrie Hallett

Journalism as a public occupation: alternative images

Denis McQuail

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is primarily concerned with the relationship between journalism and society and with different conceptions of this relationship, especially those that arise from a disjunction between the social theory of journalism (or the press) and the practice of journalism on a day to day basis in contemporary media. For the most part, the latter have become a branch of the industry, engaged in providing services to the public, with profit either as a condition or a goal. Although this feature has always been present, there is an alternative and once stronger concept of journalism as an institution of public life, especially in relation to politics. In the view of many social theorists this basic fact implies duties and obligations for journalism as well as freedoms. Amongst the ideas of what constitutes journalism these two versions are often in tension although not necessarily in contradiction. Journalism can be, and is, accomplished without reference to any theory, relying on some communication skills, common sense, a basic honesty of purpose and a 'feel' for the news and what underlies it. Its potential benefits for the public good are not directly related to whether or not it is carried for profit.

Practitioners of journalism generally view it as a practical task of reporting on current events to be accomplished as well as possible in circumstances that are much less than ideal. The relationship to society is seen primarily as one of an observer to the events and circumstances of the world. Journalism aims to reflect this reality as accurately as possible and to convey an account to a potential audience. Journalists, in the first instance, react to society, as it were, and do not typically seek to change it. Nevertheless, there are variants of journalism that do accept a mandate to interpret and to influence. Many journalists will claim, or just accept, that their reporting will have some real-world consequences,

whether intended or not. It is this possibility that provides the main bridge between the outlook of theorists and that of practitioners, however far apart the two worlds seem to be.

The title introduces the term 'public occupation' to refer to an occupation that takes on, or is attributed, some task with potentially wide public implications. Its activities are supported by and sometimes necessary to other social institutions. It is carried out with some degree of transparency and it is open to public scrutiny, without necessarily being carried out under public supervision or primarily for public benefit. There are a range of occupations that might qualify for the term, mostly in service industries or in the fields of justice, health, education and politics. The degree of 'publicness' is quite variable. The concept is deliberately chosen to avoid reference to the narrower term of 'profession', although the work of professionals is often of a public character in much the same sense. Later on, the idea of a profession will be examined as a possible yardstick for determining the actual or desirable condition of journalism as it is currently practised.

The aim of the paper is to distinguish the most significant variations in the public profile of journalism, with particular reference to the alternative conceptions of theorists and those arising from research evidence concerning journalism. The purpose lies in the wish to understand how social circumstances and technology are changing both the nature of journalistic practice and also the identities adopted by, or attributed to, journalists. Changes under way also challenge some of the propositions of theory about the role that journalism either does or ought to play in society. The main focus of reflection is on the role of journalism in democratic political processes, not only because of their centrality, but also because democracy itself is also said to be under new challenges.

In setting out on this task, we are fully aware that that there are numerous different kinds of journalism depending on topic, genre, medium and chosen purpose. The many variants have little in common beyond the self-chosen designation as a journalist and making some claim to report or comment on ongoing events of a public character. However, the main focus is on the mainstream media (a term widening to include a range of online and 'independent' forms). A working definition of journalism for present purposes might read: 'The publication of accounts of contemporary events, conditions or persons of possible significance or interest to the public, based on information believed to be reliable'. This leaves open the question of what might count as publication and also the criteria for assessing significance and interest. It does not address what is sometimes a key question, that of

whether what counts as journalism must be done as work for financial reward, although it is not assumed here that a 'public occupation' is necessarily rewarded financially. To do so would exclude a range of journalistic activities undertaken for non-profit purposes or otherwise non-institutionalised forms.

2. THEORETICAL RESOURCES FOR CONSTRUCTING AN IMAGE OF JOURNALISM

There is no single agreed view of the actual, 'normal' or appropriate relation of journalism to society. There is rather a set of different formulations, derived from various sources with little in common, apart from the assumption that such a relationship does exist and is important. Essentially, we are dealing with a range of ideas about the purposes and or consequences of journalism, often with a normative tendency expressed in prescriptions and assertions of how journalism ought optimally to be carried out. Some of the sources referred to, however, do not seek to prescribe, only to explain and describe the probable role of journalism. Three main types of source can be drawn upon: 1/general theory of society, mostly sociological and objective in intention; 2/the findings of empirical research into the sociology of work and professions; 3/social normative theory of the press of a radical or conservative tendency, with an element that is specifically critical (and which will be termed critical social theory).

Theory of society, dating to the latter nineteenth century, sometimes included references to the part played by the emerging mass press (and then other mass media of film and radio) in the key themes of sociology, namely social solidarity, cohesion and control on the one hand and change, fragmentation and 'modernisation' on the other (see especially Gabriel Tarde in Clark (1969)). The 'press', and thus journalism in particular, was seen as closely implicated in these social processes, largely without purpose of its own, but simply by virtue of its key role in the interconnection of large numbers of individuals and their many activities in the large scale arena of social life. Many of the changes in personal consumption, residence, beliefs, mores, fashions and opinions characteristic of the emerging modern mass society were stimulated by and amplified by way of newspapers and then other media. Despite the apparently strong connections of this kind, the relevant theory is quite general and does not get close to identifying the nature of journalism itself (but see Hardt, 2003). Much can be said of political theory despite

the large dependence of contemporary democratic institutions on journalism, especially way of a more or less informed and influential mass public opinion.

The *sociology of work and occupations* developed from the 1930s onwards and was gradually applied to the journalistic occupation (e.g. Rosten (1937)), revealing a great deal about how news work is accomplished and how journalists working in news organizations tend to see their task and their role in society. For the most part, the resulting body of evidence does not go beyond sketching the range of possible orientations of journalism to society and it tends to confirm the view that the work of journalists is mainly shaped by the various demands of the news industry and the structure of work relations within news organizations. The balance of preference of journalists for the various roles made available by their work has been well described, leading, it appears, to a dominant consensus on what professionalism requires (see, e.g. Weaver, 1999). This model, in turn, is likely to govern questions of the relationship to society. The nature of the model is described and evaluated below.

The body of relevant *social normative theory* of the press is very extensive and has deep historical roots. For the present purpose, our main interest is in what public goals are sketched for the occupation and what roles are prescribed as desirable or ideal for the journalist, usually assuming that there is some choice to be made and some freedom to make it. Following on from the American Commission on Freedom of the Press (1947) and the pioneering work of F. S. Siebert et al. (in *Four Theories of the Press,* 1956), the main variants of normative theory that are relevant today can be described under the four headings of: liberal; public interest; communitarian; and development. Each of these posits a different ideal form of journalism's relation to society, but all have in common that they are formulated from the 'outside', so to speak, defining the rationale and purpose of journalism from a priori principles.

> *Liberal* theory exalts individual freedom of expression and publication over all other goals and forms of relationship to the wider society. Journalism has no set purpose and should accept no limits to its autonomy, a principle going far beyond the outlawing of censorship. The production of news should ideally be governed only by the working of the market, often somewhat idealistically described as the 'free marketplace of ideas'. Particular journalists will choose their own purpose or market and orient themselves accordingly without any

overarching purposes and without imposed responsibilities from the society.

Public interest theory covers all branches of theory that assign some positive social purpose to the work of journalists, on behalf of some higher general interest and wider public good (beyond simply plea-sing clients or the immediate audience and making money). Journalism may be allocated a range of possible duties and obligations, especially those that support the work of other social institutions, such as politics, justice and education. The services and obligations in question mainly relate to the provision of a flow of reliable infor-mation and explanation. Varieties of public interest theory have been named as theory of the Fourth Estate, Public Sphere theory and Social Responsibility theory. A version of the last named generally legiti-mates public service broadcasting. Public interest theory inevitably sets some limits to the freedom of journalism and has some bias towards institutionalisation and social control.

Communitarianism has some related characteristics, but it is mainly directed at the needs of small communities, groups and minorities sharing some specific conditions and interests. It favours journalism that supports participation and collective engagement and the values of dialogue. The journalism it favours is likely to be voluntaristic and non-commercial, not the sort typical of mainstream news media. This theory supports both oppositional and advocative journalism on behalf of collective goals.

Development journalism identifies a special role for journalism in circumstances of scarce media facilities, and extensive and urgent social and economic necessity. There is some pressure on journalists to subordinate their personal or professional interests to the common good, sometimes as defined by government or other official agencies. The link to society is thus one of quasi-direction.

Critical social theory specifically avoids prescribing any proper role of journalism in society, even though it may itself be advanced by jour-nalistic work. The main origin lies in (neo-)Marxist theory, as developed mainly in the second half of the twentieth century. It is essentially a critique of the actual role played by journalism of all kinds in the dominant forms of society of the era, whether capitalist, communist or simply corporatist. The critique identifies most journalism, even when socially well intentioned, as serving to support an oppressive social order by way of propaganda, diversion from reality, or hegemonic

distortion of the true state of affairs. This seems to rule out critical theory as a guide to a realistic profile of the journalistic occupation, but its propositions are not implausible and do have some support in empirical evidence about how journalism often works.

The source materials outlined are very diverse and give no single coherent picture of the nature of journalism as a central occupation of the public sphere. Each line of theory tends to subordinate the task of journalists to an ulterior and rather limited set of criteria of merit. The prescriptions rarely take account of systems and conditions within which journalists have to work. At the same time, even in this summary form, they provide a rich mine of ideas about the purposes and potential significance of journalism in society. The material will be drawn upon at a later point in this chapter to sketch two predominant and competing images and visions of journalism. Before doing so we need to look more closely at the idea of a profession which has provided the chief template for constructing a consistent model or ideal type of the work of journalists. As we will see later, the standard of professionalism turns out to be both unattainable and inappropriate for modelling the social role of journalism, but it does contribute some important elements and it provides a *bridge* between competing versions.

3. THE CONCEPT OF PROFESSION AS A FRAME
OF REFERENCE FOR JOURNALISM

Since the earliest days of collective self-organization in the later nineteenth century there has been a movement towards the 'professionalization' of journalism, as a solution both to material problems and problems of status in society. The acquisition of professional standing would also regulate important aspects of the relationship with society, bringing certain obligations and commitments. It would also help to resolve some of the conflicts with which journalists find they have to struggle, especially over their degree of freedom to report, in the face of proprietorial and management control as well as pressure from the state and other interests. The concept of a profession worked out mainly in the sociology of work and occupations, with deep roots in the sociology of Max Weber, proposes certain general criteria or standards that are implicit in the recognition of any occupation as a profession. For the most part these criteria are derived by reference to existing 'classic' examples of profession that have emerged spontaneously from the division of labour in society. The principal models for guidance were found

in the practice of law, medicine and science/education, with quite a few other relatively modern claimants in fields such as engineering, finance, architecture, etc. Not all these occupations are equally 'public' in character, but each has some element of 'publicness'. These were the established occupations to which journalists looked for equivalence of status and rewards, despite their beginning from a position of generally low status and low rewards. The advantages (not only for journalists) of professionalization were very clear, although the criteria to be met were not all equally reachable or even consistent with the nature of journalistic work and purpose.

The chief criteria of a profession can be set out as follows:

- Having a core skill, requiring a high level of education and training.
- Having an institutional embodiment for control of entry, standards and accountability.
- Having an ethic of service to the client.
- Having an ethic of service to the society.
- Following known codes of ethics and norms of conduct.
- Having a degree of autonomy.
- Having an attitude of detachment and impartiality in performing the role.
- Being potentially a vocation or calling.

It is clear that the set of criteria does deal with the essential matters of standard of work and the relation to the wider society. However, the occupations that are conventionally given the status of profession do not meet all these criteria completely or equally and there are many disputable cases, and many new claimants. There has been much debate about the degree to which journalism does meet the criteria as set out and the consensus view, reached on various grounds, seems to be that journalism is either not yet a profession in this sense or that it cannot and should seek to be considered one.

Taking the criteria in turn, a brief assessment suggests the following conclusions. In respect of the *core skill*, there is some uncertainty as to what this is. Journalists often have acquired considerable communication skills, but these are not unique to the practice of journalism. Journalists often see their principle skill as more as a flair or a creative ability that cannot simply be learnt or taught. There is often a high level of education but it is not always deemed necessary for high performance as a journalist. At best the issue remains undecided. There are many different kinds of journalism requiring different sorts of abilities. In respect of

institutionalization, there are also very large variations within and between countries in the degree to which the profession is organized to act as a profession. Institutionalization may also be regarded ambivalently by some journalists, more as an instrument of control than a protection. There is only a limited *ethic of obligation to a client*, since the identity of the client is not clearly known, beyond the general concept of the prospective news audience. This is open to variable definition. The *ethic of responsibility to society* is inevitably quite weak, beyond the question of avoiding harm, since the public good to be served is open to quite diverse interpretations and journalists have the right and even obligation to decide this matter for themselves. Most journalists work in situations that recognise and follow codes of norms and ethics, although procedures for enforcement are not usually very strict and cannot easily be so without endangering autonomy.

The *autonomy* of journalists is widely recognised as being circumscribed, especially by their position in a work organisation, itself owned and controlled by others who can claim a stronger version of autonomy. Professional *detachment* is quite firmly embedded in the attitude and work practices of most journalists in observing and reporting as objectively as possible, but it is also arguable that certain kinds of journalism need at times to be engaged and involved if they are to serve audience and society. They cannot all and always act like experts or civil servants. Finally, on the *vocational* question, there is no doubt that the journalists often see their work in vocational terms, but for most, most of the time it is unlikely to be more than paid work, however much it is personally satisfying. Moreover, when it is a vocation it is even less likely to meet some of the criteria listed, especially that of detachment.

As indicated at the outset, there are broader reasons why it is not really possible to classify journalism as a profession in the accepted sense. The brief comments made earlier in relation to the criteria, suggest some basic incompatibility that relates to the very nature of a 'public occupation', as defined in a certain way. Some of the more important points supporting this conclusion are the following:

- Journalism as a paid occupation cannot claim a monopoly over the central activity of observing, reporting and publishing about public events. This is open to all citizens in a free society.
- The degree of freedom that a journalist may sometimes require to adequately perform the public element of the role is probably not compatible with accepting the institutional restraints that go with professionalism.

- In particular not all journalists can promise to be neutral and balanced on all issues and events. Active involvement may be called for, especially one that is driven by a personal view of the vocation.
- The interests of the client conceived as an audience may not coincide with the interests of society as a whole.
- Journalism cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of reporting, except where predictable harm might be involved, leading to lower accountability than professionalism usually requires.

It should be emphasised that the departures from the norm of a profession as outlined above do not mean that journalists cannot or do not often seek to achieve a high level of professional*ism* in respect of skill and intention, but that the form it takes cannot be limited to any single model or type. As long ago as 1918, Max Weber commented on the outsider status of the journalist, saying that it lacked a 'fixed social classification'. It is not clear that this has changed, despite advances in 'professionalization'. It is worth noting, however that Weber was not disparaging of (political) journalists. In his 1918 'Politics as a vocation' speech, he said that '*a really good journalistic accomplishment requires at least as much 'genius' as any scholarly accomplishment*' and that '*the responsibility of every honourable journalist is, on the average, not a bit lower than that of a scholar*' (Weber, 1948). Of course it is quite arguable that the occupation of scholar is not a profession.

Despite these conclusions, it has been revealing to apply the test of a 'profession' to the journalistic occupation and we can see that a certain model of professionalism could be constructed that might fit a certain style of journalism in certain media circumstances. The test has also been useful in helping to delineate the contours of a 'public occupation', although that is beyond the scope of this chapter.

4. A SKETCH OF ALTERNATIVE VERSIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOURNALISM AND SOCIETY

On the basis of the arguments presented, and in line with the opening remarks about the disjunction between social theory and journalistic practice we can propose two approximate versions (or visions) of the occupation in respect of its public position, one essentially a view from outside, the other from inside, the former drawing on theory, the second

mainly from evidence collected from inquiries into the self-conceptions of journalists.

Firstly, the *social normative* view of the relation to society involves the following principal elements:

- An assumption that journalism (or the press) is a social institution, whether or not constituted as a body protective of working journalists. It involves a complex of activities and relationships that serve important social purposes with close connections to other institutions of society. This situation brings with it obligations as well as supporting certain rights.
- The main right is that of freedom of expression and publication, but not without some form of public accountability for conduct and consequences. Freedom is not simply lack of restraint.
- A belief that journalism has power for public and private good and that this power should be used for positive public ends not just for private or sectional profit.
- The main instruments of improvement of journalism and realisation of the conditions mentioned will in practice be some form of professional institutionalization, involving voluntary self-regulation.
- Intervention in the organization or practice of journalism by law or regulation may be justifiable on grounds of larger public interest (but not simply will or interest of the state).

This vision does appeal to some journalists and selected sectors of the media. It generally accords with the ideas of vocationally oriented journalists, although even they would prefer, or even require that the relationship indicated would be reached by free choice and not by imposition or control. However the majority of journalists would not recognise this as an acceptable formulation and it is clearly contrary to the liberal version of press theory as briefly outlined above. The view sketched also promises a higher status as a profession that offers some benefits to journalists collectively.

An alternative view of the relation to society can be distilled from what might be called the *working theory* of journalism, something that has been described as a 'professional ideology' (see for instance Carpentier's and Naït-Bouda's chapters in this volume) of the majority of practitioners, especially in mainstream western media. For the most part the perspective outlined below is consistent with a self-conception on the part of journalists of their occupation as more a trade, craft or even art than a profession in the classic sense examined above, although it does

involve a strong notion of professional*ism* in the sense of high com-
petence in consistently delivering reliable and useful accounts of reality
according to criteria of relevance and interest to the public (or a chosen
audience). This version is a form of collective wisdom that embodies
some essential 'rules of the game' and practical 'rules of thumb' for
reporting in situations that are always less than ideal. This is not really a
theory nor a true 'ideology' in the accepted sense, but it does provide
journalists with a protective and self-justificatory version of their work
and work culture.

The main elements are as follows:

- Journalists in their work should be independent of control by the
  main powers in society, requiring no permission, or licensing by
  authority.
- Their primary task is to monitor all aspects of social reality and
  report on it in an honest and objective manner.
- Their main point of orientation in society is the public, or chosen
  audience within that. Benefits to the public good will flow from the
  press meeting demands and needs from diverse quarters of society
  in an even-handed way.
- They can take no responsibility for the consequences of their repor-
  ting where this is done in accordance with accepted conventions
  and within the law.
- Their primary skill is that of selecting and reporting on aspects of
  reality according to consistent criteria of significance, relevance
  and interest to the public and rules of objectivity and impartiality
  developed within the occupation. Effective communication to the
  public is also claimed as a skill.
- The occupation of journalism is supported by a working culture
  that emphasises freedom, and openness and a mythology that
  celebrates the power of the press, its devotion to truth and its
  fearless defence of the public interest as watchdog and campaigner.

4. Conclusion

This article has presented two contrasting views of the relationship of
journalism to society as expressed, respectively in the view of social-
normative theory of the press and that arising from the working practice
of journalists. Neither version really fits the classic model of a profession
although the former more so, with some correspondence to the public
service ideal. Both versions are constructions or ideal types, unlikely to

accurately represent the outlook of any particular theorist or journalist. They are not the only constructions possible. For instance, different versions would be needed to account for the model of the partisan press that was once rather common and still lives on. Both versions would be rejected by critical theory as mystifications of the true connection the news media and power in society. Neither version has much to say to or about new forms of citizen journalism that are appearing with the internet, nor will have much relevance for the truly alternative or insurgent forms of journalism. In countries emerging from autocratic rule, with varying degrees of privatization and freedom, there are mixed elements of autonomy and control from society. There are simply too many forms of journalism to be captured by a single dominant version of the relation to society.

Even so, we can draw a few conclusions from this exploratory discussion, along the following lines. Firstly, we might agree that all versions are inescapably ideological in character, just as news cannot help being ideological. Secondly, it seems likely that all varieties of journalism will claim some power to influence society and, given the right conditions, it is impossible to deny this power, if only because the supporting belief is so widespread and strong. The relevant type of power is 'soft' and indirect, stemming from the influence of the flow of public information on opinion and attitudes. Thirdly, it seems that all versions support the belief that there is an empirical social reality that can, in principle, be identified and recorded. Fourthly, there is an equal assumption that some degree of freedom and independence is a necessary condition of effective journalistic work. Without this, the information and views disseminated could not claim any reliability and would be without influence. Finally, no version of the relation to society denies that there is such a relation and no version claims any right for the press to be an independent source of power or without some form of accountability, if only by way of the market or the pressure of public opinion.

A further conclusion from the wider discussion might be that the frame of reference provided by the concept of a 'profession' is no longer very adequate to assessing the strengths and weaknesses of journalism, understanding its changing role in society, or providing goals for 'improvement' or development. This is only partly because of the diversity referred to, a diversity which is not essentially based on a single dimension of quality but on differences of fundamental purpose. No very adequate general alternative framework seems to be available, although it is possible that the 'field theory of journalism' developed on

the basis of the work of Pierre Bourdieu has more to offer as a way of typifying and understanding the varieties of journalism that exist (see Benson and Neveu (2005)).

Rᴇꜰᴇʀᴇɴᴄᴇs

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Identity, contingency and rigidity. The (counter-)hegemonic constructions of the identity of the media professional[1]

Nico Carpentier

1. INTRODUCTION

The question on the 'who-ness' or 'what-ness' of the media professional[2] is one of the theoretical and empirical problems that have enjoyed extensive attention within the domain of communication studies. This article wants to make a contribution to the discussion about this identity (in Western Europe) by calling upon Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory (1985).

In their discourse theory, which is situated within a post-structuralist and post-Marxist framework, Laclau and Mouffe claim that identities are contingent and fluid. Identities are over-determined by a diversity of discourses and subject positions that offer a multiplicity of identification points, thus guaranteeing the possibility of human subjectivity, agency and individuality. This core idea is combined with a model on how these identities gain their stability within the social. In order to theorize the dialectics of the fixity and non-fixity of meaning, they strongly built on two concepts: the Lacanian notion of the nodal point at the discursive level and the Gramscian notion of hegemony at the political level. Discourses are constructed by linking (or articulating) different elements into a discursive structure. These always-specific elements are selected out of a diversity of potential elements, a reservoir which Laclau and Mouffe call the field of discursivity. Privileged signifiers or nodal points provide the cement that creates the stability for these discourses. Second, at the more political level, Laclau and Mouffe focus on antagonisms that rupture the social. These antagonistic identities not only threaten each other but they are simultaneously seen as mutually constituent. Antagonisms, as materialized in a variety of social struggles, thus provide

identification points that not only rupture the social but also structure (and, in a particular way, stabilize) it. When an antagonistic position (and its discourses and nodal points) starts to obtain social dominance, Laclau and Mouffe revert to the explicatory capacity of the Gramscian notion of hegemony. The objective of hegemonic projects is to construct and stabilize nodal points that are the basis of a social order, the main aim being to become a social imaginary, or the horizon that *'is not one among other objects but an absolute limit which structures a field of intelligibility and is thus the condition of possibility of the emergence of any object'* (Laclau, 1990: 64).

These basic concepts of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory are transferred in this article from the political realm to the cultural and, more specifically, they are put to work to provide the theoretical backbone for the analysis of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic articulations of the media professional's identity. In the first part, a critical reading of the relevant literature is used to uncover the nodal points of the 'traditional' identity of the media professional. In a deconstructive combination with a number of 'alternative' media models and journalistic reform projects, the dimensions that determine the discursive field that surrounds this identity are laid bare. This discursive field, which offers the broadest possible (but still, by definition, incomplete[3]) overview of potential identification points, is used in the second part as a series of sensitizing concepts for the analysis of a specific broadcast practice. This case study consists of a qualitative content analysis of the seven so-called phone-in broadcasts of the VRT/Canvas program Ter Zake. The aim of this case study is to show the contingency and complexity of this professional identity and the interconnected on-screen practices, which do not always stay within well-defined (discursive) lines but become messier, crisscrossing the different articulations. At the same time, this case study aims to show the rigidity of the hegemonic nodal points, which still structures these identities and practices in a high degree.

2. NODAL POINTS IN THE IDENTITY OF THE MEDIA PROFESSIONAL

The discourse theoretical frame is used to analyze the complex set of (potential) identifications that are at the disposal of the media professional. Based on an extensive literature study, four nodal points[4] that fix this identity are extrapolated from the academic discourses that can be found in normative media theories, in 'traditional' journalistic theory

and in a number of journalistic reform projects aimed at rearticulating these identities. These four components are: (1) the (semi-)professional link to the media organization, (2) management, (3) autonomy and (4) objectivity.

In the case of normative media theory,[5] one of the most quoted lists – McQuail's (1994: 127 ff.) list of six normative theories, partially based on the 'original' typology of Four Theories of the Press (Siebert et al., 1956) – is chosen, and combined with models that relate more to public service broadcasting (Picard, 1985; Lowenstein and Merrill, 1990). Dominant models are the liberal model and the model of social responsibility. Alternative models are the participatory-democratic model, the development model, the Marxist–Leninist model and the authoritarian model. The public service models take an in- between position but do contain counter-hegemonic articulations. These counter-hegemonic articulations are further enriched by the use of a number of specific journalistic reform projects: new journalism, human-interest journalism, development/emancipatory journalism[6] and public (or civic) journalism.

In order to achieve my ambition, a 'confrontational' strategy is used: These nodal points are identified on the basis of the analysis of the antagonistic relations (or politicized binary oppositions) between dominant/hegemonic and alternative/counter-hegemonic models/projects. The alternative discourses all attempt to disarticulate elements from the hegemonic articulations and try to establish new articulations. At the same time, they form the constitutive outside that helps to construct and stabilize the hegemonic identity of the media professional.

The analytical emphasis is placed on these points of struggle and the elements that the alternative models/projects foreground in their discursive attacks on the dominant nodal points. The reason for this choice is that, within this discursive interplay, the nodal points, in particular, are subject to contestation. One of the consequences of this confrontation is that this struggle makes these hegemonic nodal points and their counter-hegemonic opposites (negative points of reference or constitutive outsides) clearly visible and identifiable. Inspired by Derrida's deconstruction – following Howarth's (1998) suggestion to fill the methodological gap of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory – these binary oppositions will be used to build a model of the field of discursivity.

3. HEGEMONIC NODAL POINTS IN THE IDENTITY OF THE MEDIA PROFESSIONAL AND THEIR COUNTER-HEGEMONIC CRITIQUES

3.1. Nodal point 1: the (semi-)professional link to the media organization

In the liberal model, one of the classic normative media theories that has played a crucial role in the hegemonic articulation of the media professional's identity, media organizations are seen as purely private organizations that function within a market economy, being profit-oriented and (economically) independent. In the model of social respon-sibility – which aims to correct the liberal model – media organizations remain private enterprises but are seen as stewards, who carry public responsibility. In both models, media organizations are deemed to be crucial in the distribution of information, which enables citizens to exercise formal (through elections) and informal (through 'public opinion') control over the state as a watchdog or fourth estate.

Within these models, media professionals are seen as individuals exercising a specific profession (see Weaver, 1998: 473–6) within hierarchically structured organizations. Moreover, they are part of a professional elite, which not only disposes of technical competences but also possesses an esprit de corps and an ethics of service (Teitler, 1974, quoted by Lammers, 1989: 351). An approach that is more situated within communication studies refers to the '*triad of professionalism*' (Oledzki, 1998: 286–8), in which, next to technical skills, relevant knowledge and ethics/deontology also figure. A variant has been developed by McNair (1998: 13), who speaks of professional ethics, aesthetic codes and routine practices. In these models, media professio-nals are rarely seen as being apart from the organization in which they are often employed (under different statutes – see McQuail, 1994: 188).

In the alternative models that explicitly foreground participation, as the participatory-democratic model, the development model and the related development and emancipatory journalism reform projects, this hegemonic articulation is heavily critiqued. In contrast, two-way communication and the right to communicate figure prominently in these models: '*Communication is ... seen as a two way process, in which the partners – individual and collective – carry on a democratic and balanced dialogue*' (McBride, 1980: 172). This approach, of course, also pressurizes the privileged position of the 'traditional' male/white media profes-sional, who finds himself located at one of the ends of the 'professional elite' versus 'member of the audience' dimension. One of the defining

elements of, for example, the community media movement is precisely the anti-elitist discourse claiming that journalistic tasks must not (and should not) be taken on exclusively by media professionals but that members of the community – within which such media are active – can also take on this role (Girard, 1992; McQuail, 1994: 131).

In the Marxist-Leninist model, a similar critique can be found. The 'revolutionary' journalist receives a mandate from the people based on '*his adherence to lines and positions which will not betray the people*' (Mattelart, 1980: 55). His/her task is to construct a revolutionary press together with the people and that it should be owned by the people. In this model, the media professional is articulated as being part of the revolutionary press, whose task it is to socialize and to mobilize the people. The emphasis for the media professional lies in his/her re-presentativeness (on the basis of a popular mandate), in their coope-ration with the people (to which journalists are expected to pass on their capabilities) and in the expectation towards the people to participate (as is witnessed by Lenin's accent on worker-correspondents [Mattelart, 1980: 51]). This again removes the elitist element from the media professional's identity and replaces it by the representative journalist who is part of the people, working together with them in partnership.

Finally, a more softened version of this representativeness can be found in the public service models. In their critiques of the traditional model of social responsibility, Lowenstein and Merrill divide the model of social responsibility into two submodels: the socio-liberal and the (new) socio-centric model, in order to incorporate public ownership of the channels of communication in normative theory. Lowenstein and Merrill (1990: 168, 170) emphasize more than once that the socio-centric model inherently requires the presence of a '*pluralism of voices*' or a '*multitude of competing voices*'. In a similar model, Picard (1985) makes the link between (public) broadcaster and public more explicit, for instance when he writes: '*media are operated for the citizen's use and for the protection of the citizens' social, economic, and political rights*' (Picard, 1985: 70). Although the media professional remains a professionally employed individual in the public service model, the notion of service (despite the critiques of paternalism [Williams, 1976]) creates the need for respon-siveness towards the (civic needs of the) public.

3.2. Nodal point 2: responsibility, property and management

Media professionals are often placed in a hierarchically structured entity and attributed specific responsibilities for the professional production of specific media products. This responsibility is complemented by the notion of psychological property (Wilpert, 1991). To realize the professional goals in a world dominated by routine and time – a '*stop-watch culture*' (Schlesinger, 1987: 83) – media professionals can make use of the production facilities that are owned (in the strictly legal sense of the word) by the media organization. Wilpert's (1991) theory of psychological appropriation provides support for the thesis that the control over these production facilities leads to a sense of property. It is precisely this combination of responsibility and (psychological) property that supports the articulation of the media professional as a manager of a diversity of resources, from technology via content to people (Livingstone and Lunt, 1996; Carpentier, 2001b), without, of course, attributing absolute power to them and eliminating the possibility that others will resist this management and without disregarding the influence of the media organizations' hierarchy on the media professional.

In the alternative media models and reform projects, the professional claim towards responsibility and (psychological) property is rearticulated by an emphasis on partnership, shared responsibilities and shared property. The 'revolutionary' journalist in the Marxist-Leninist model works in a situation where private property has been abolished and finds him/herself (as mentioned before) linked with the people in a form of partnership. A similar relationship, based on mutual understanding, can be found in the model of public journalism. The protagonists of this tradition – with Jay Rosen (1994) and Davis Merritt (1995) as the most prominent – plead for the active organization of (media) forums in the form of '*partenariats*' (Watine and Beauchamp, 1997) with (representatives of) the public/audience. This articulates the media professionals and their audiences as partners, a position that Manca (1989) – without placing himself explicitly within the tradition of public journalism – calls 'gate-opening' (instead of 'gatekeeping').

3.3. Nodal point 3: autonomy and independence

The third nodal point of the identity of the media professional is based on the importance attached to the freedom of expression. Autonomy and independence or the need to resist different forms of (internal and external) pressures (see McQuail, 1994: 190) are deemed to be crucial.

McQuail (1994: 252) writes about this: '*Perhaps the foremost expectation about media content is that it should reflect the spirit of free expression, despite the many institutional and organizational pressures ...*'.

Many critiques have been launched at the lack of autonomy and independence (Lukács, 1971; O'Neill, 1995), or at what Schlesinger (1987) has called the micro-myth of journalism but often without abandoning their plea for 'genuine' autonomy and independence. This hegemonic articulation is only radically inversed in the authoritarian model. In this model, the 'people' are not considered competent or interested enough to take political decisions, which makes the delegation of power to one (or a few) leader(s) necessary. Media professionals do not escape from this notion of delegation. As Lowenstein and Merrill put it, being a media professional in the authoritarian model is a specific privilege that these persons receive from the leader(s). Precisely on the basis of this privilege, the journalist has an extra moral duty to respect the wishes of this (these) leader(s), which causes a strong relationship of dependency and disarticulates the hegemonic element of autonomy.

3.4. Nodal point 4: objectivity

The fourth nodal point in the professional identity is embedded – even more than autonomy – in professional ethics and deontology. After all, media professionals claim access to the description of factuality and the representation of truth and/or authenticity, which makes support for this claim to truth-speaking unavoidable. Journalistic ethics and ritualistic procedures (Tuchman, 1972) guarantee the integrity, reliability and status of journalists as 'truth-speakers' (by analogy with Foucault [1978]) or '*authorized truth-tellers*' (McNair, 1998: 65).

An important nodal point in the broadly defined journalistic identity is, therefore, the concept of objectivity, or in the words of Lichtenberg (1996: 225): '*[Objectivity is] a cornerstone of the professional ideology of journalists in liberal democracies*'. This discussion is further complicated by the multi-layered nature of the term 'objectivity'. In this context, Westerståhl[7] (1983) has developed a helpful model. He distinguishes two basic dimensions of objectivity: factuality and impartiality. Both, according to Westerståhl, consist of two components. Factuality's components are relevance and truth(fulness) and impartiality's components are balance and neutrality. All these dimensions and components play a crucial role in the hegemonic articulation of the fourth nodal point.

But there is one important exception. McQuail and McNair both explicitly point to the distinction between news and editorial comments, in

which editorial comments do not require neutrality. Some media professionals do take on the role of commentator, which means that they have to be situated within opinion journalism.[8] This role is, for example, explicitly mentioned in Williams' (1976: 83) typology, in which four types of 'media contributors' are named: '*the creative artist, the performer, the reporter, the commentator or critic*'. By accepting this last position, counter-hegemonic elements are introduced within the identity of the media professional, which again illustrates the over-determined nature of this identity. This conflation is mediated by isolating opinion/editorial journalism from the 'traditional' approach by clearly demar-cating editorial comments and separating them from the news articles/items.

The majority of the more formal attempts to rearticulate the hege-monic journalistic identity are aimed at the nodal point objectivity or its constituting parts. The concept of objectivity has been under heavy attack from different positions. These critiques can be summarized in the proposition that '*some say that journalism is not objective, others that journalism cannot be objective and still others say that journalism should not be objective*' (Lichtenberg, 1996: 225). In particular, this last critique – that journalism should not be objective – is important in this regard, since most of the alternative media models and journalistic reform projects will acknowledge this position.

Both the Marxist-Leninist model and the authoritarian model strive for the construction of a 'new objectivity', which is in line with the specific ideological projects these models propagate. But in doing so, they replace one objectivity by another objectivity, merely signifying the constructedness of the concept. More relevant in this context is that traditions like new journalism (developed in the USA during the 1960s) and human-interest journalism have pleaded for centralizing subjectivity (instead of objectivity). Undermining objectivity is an explicit goal, especially in new journalism. The journalist thus becomes a participant who uses literary techniques to describe the subjectivity of the 'cha-racters' s/he features. Human-interest journalism partially builds on this tradition by putting the accent on soft news, narration and 'story journalism' (Schudson, 1978) and on authenticity, the private sphere and 'intimization' (Van Zoonen, 1997). Though widely used, human-interest journalism thus still remains considered distinct from (and contested by) 'traditional' journalism as, for instance, Meijer (2001: 193) summarizes it: '*the conventional view [highlights] rationality, conflict, and content rather than emotionality, dialogue and impact*'.

A number of other reform projects are explicitly aimed against a component of objectivity, namely impartiality. The most important projects here are development and emancipatory journalism and public journalism. Crucial to these projects is their reluctance to adopt a too absolutist interpretation of neutrality. In development and emancipatory journalism, it is explicitly stated that neutrality does not apply when universal values, such as peace, democracy, human rights, (gender and racial) equality, (social) progress and national liberation, are at stake. The US-based public journalism tradition takes a similar position in its plea for reviving the public debate, for centralizing democracy as a universal value and for a tighter link between community and journalism – the so-called 'community connectedness'. The critique aimed at the traditional articulation of impartiality and the resulting 'detachment from the community' does not mean that any other form of objectivity should be rejected. In his book Doing Public Journalism, Charity (1995: 144) summarizes this pithily: '*journalism should advocate democracy without advocating particular solutions*'. The area of tension between involvement and neutrality and the new interpretation that the concept of neutrality consequently receives, is captured by Manca's (1989: 170–1) concept of 'pluralist objectivity'.

4. AN OVERVIEW OF THE DISCURSIVE FIELD OF THE MEDIA PROFESSIONAL

These four nodal points play a crucial role in the construction of the identity of the media professional, as they fix the meaning of this identity to an extensive degree. In this article, it is posited (based on its central place within the dominant normative media theories) that this construction has hegemonic ambitions. This identity is presented, in other words, as a self-evident social horizon or frame of reference. Other projects (or meanings) are consequently pushed away to the background or even deactivated (Sayyid and Zac, 1998: 262). This does not imply that the counter-hegemonic articulations are irrelevant and that the media professional's identity is totally rigid. In the words of Sayyid and Zac (1998: 262): '*Hegemony is always possible but can never be total*'.

This implies that when generating an overview of the diversity of journalistic identities, both the hegemonic and the counter-hegemonic articulations need to be considered and included. This inclusion allows a much richer approach to be developed towards this identity, where the counter-hegemonic articulations, that are often '*degraded, repressed, driven*

out and depreciated' (Oger, 1995: 61, my translation), are upgraded. Turning to a more deconstructive approach, one further step can be taken to increase this richness even more: Having identified the binary oppositions (to use Derrida's terminology), they now can be re-defined as dimensions, so that a number of intermediary positions can come into the picture.

This allows for the (re)construction of an overview of this discursive field based on four dimensions: objectivity/subjectivity, autonomy/ dependence, management/partnership (or gatekeepers/gate-openers) and professional elite/ representatives of the public (see Figure 1). In this scheme, the graphic stress is on the dimension of objectivity/subjectivity, in light of the importance attached to this dimension, both in the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic articulations. In order to clarify the difference between both sets of articulations, the elements that belong to the hegemonic articulation of the identity of the media professional are given additional emphasis by including arrows. In order to represent the structural openness of the model – in other words to symbolize that the closure of the discursive field that surrounds the professional identity is always spatially and temporarily situated – the circle that demarcates the model has not been closed completely.

Figure 1: The discursive field surrounding the identity of the media professional
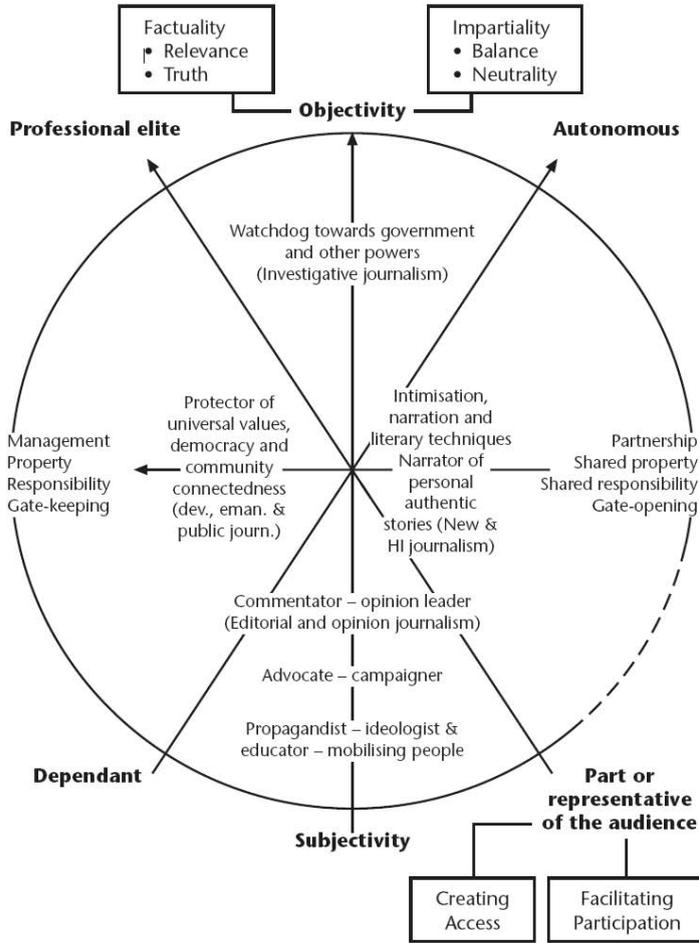
5. The phone-in's role in Ter Zake, a test-case in which the hegemonic identity of the media professional is breached

In this final part, the presence of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic articulations, captured in the previously rendered model, is used to examine an actual broadcast practice, using the phone-in programs of the North Belgian talk show Ter Zake as a case study. In all seven programs, the normal (or basic) format of the elite talk show Ter Zake is

replaced by a vox-pop format (to use Dahlgren's [1995] distinction between elite and vox-pop talk shows) in which 'ordinary viewers' can question key members of the political and religious elite on air. The timing and organization of this type of broadcast is strongly linked to the Dutroux case[9] or the events that surround the kidnapping and/or murder of young children in the mid-1990s in Belgium, eventually brought before a Belgian court in 2004. The Dutroux case can be seen in Gramscian terminology as an organic crisis in Belgian society, a concept defined by Smith (1999: 164) as a '*dramatic collapse in popular identifications with institutionalized subject positions and political imaginaries*'. Within the related discourse theoretical frame, the term dislocation is used to indicate a moment of social crisis, which cannot be located within the discursive structure and by which this discursive structure is severely disturbed.

In addition, the editorial staff of Ter Zake are touched by this dislocation: Witness the need to do '*something special*' about something that '*lives so strongly with the public*': '*That was also quite typical for the climate, the post- Dutroux climate of a public opinion in distress*' (TP6).[10] Since dislocations destabilize hegemonic discourses and identities and, at the same time, constitute the breeding ground for the origin of new discourses and identities (Laclau, 1990: 39), this case study offers an interesting point of view at which to start an examination of how rigid or sedimented the hegemonic articulation of the identity of the media professional has proven to be. Here, attention is mainly directed to the degree to which counter-hegemonic articulations are present in the phone-in broadcasts and to what degree this deviates from the identity of the media professional in the basic format of Ter Zake. The (temporal) sliding across the different dimensions of the media professional's identity and the subjects' unique positioning within this discursive field illustrates the dialectics of fixity and non-fixity and the complexity and overdetermined nature of identities.

5.1. Situating the phone-ins in Ter Zake

The basic format of the current affairs program Ter Zake (broadcast by the television channel Canvas of the North Belgium public broadcaster VRT) has barely changed since it came into existence in April 1994 and the general restyling of the VRT news and current affairs programs in January 2002. During this period, the two basic components are the reportages and the interview with one studio guest, the aim being to interpret and contextualize (mainly political) current events. The

editorial staff of Ter Zake have deviated from this basic format on a number of occasions, of which the phone-ins are the most important examples. In the course of Ter Zake's existence, seven of these phone-in broadcasts have been organized by the editorial staff of Ter Zake.[11]

This case study is based on a qualitative content analysis of the interviews with five editors of Ter Zake[12] and of the seven phone-in broadcasts.[13] The methodology is mainly based on Wester's work (1987, 1995).[14] Most important here is the use of an overview of the discursive field that structures the identity of the media professional as a series of sensitizing concepts (Blumer, 1969), in analyzing the material.

5.2. The four nodal points in Ter Zake

The first nodal point – the (semi-)professional link between the media professional and the media organization – is made visible by the (central) presence of the host, who accounts for the introduction and the epilogue, for the texts linking the items and for the interview(s) with the studio guest. The host can be seen as the (visual) representation of the editorial staff, which consists of employees of the media organization. Dahlgren's concept of the elite talk show offers a good description of the basic format of Ter Zake: '*on such programs, influential journalists would pose questions to important power holders*' (Dahlgren, 1995: 62–3).

In the organization of phone-in broadcasts, the host's role changes drastically. Instead of the introducing and interviewing role that characterizes the host in the basic format, he now more often takes on a mediating role.[15] In these broadcasts, the host passes on the reactions of 'the viewers' to the central guest, or he offers to 'the viewers' the possibility of questioning the central guest or holding him/her accountable. In this way, (at least partial) access to and participation in this broadcast by 'ordinary' members of the public is made possible and the editorial staff take on (more than usual) a position of gate-opener. An editor puts it as follows: '*So we wanted to let the public speak*' (TP2).

At the same time, these participants do not (always) have the professional training and/or capacities deemed necessary. This becomes articulated when some editors refer to the other-ness of the participants, showing that the opposition between 'professional elite' and 'ordinary people' remains in place. The following interview quote is about a broadcast in which the central guest is the Belgian cardinal Danneels. When a theme (deemed relevant) is not brought up by the participants, the host intervenes and continues questioning, because – according to one of the interviewees – '*that's the nature of some hosts*' (TP6). The inter-

vention in this specific case is explicitly legitimized by the otherness of the participants, based on the articulation of the difference between professionals and 'amateurs'.

> *In Danneels' case for example – the second time because it was me, so I know best about that – [continuing questioning] was necessary. Because Danneels had something to tell and that wasn't asked. It was about the trial and people wanted to know whether or not [he would accept] civil responsibility ... Nobody asked him that. Yes, that's amateur questioning for you. So we did it.* (Interview with TP4; my emphasis)

The second nodal point on responsibility, property and management is illustrated by the next quote, in which the editorial staff is strongly articulated as a collective of professionals. Witness the frequent use of terms as 'we' and 'our'. As a separate entity, this collective exists as a function of the program to be produced, which has to be original and creative.

> *Doing it this way we work with self-produced reportages and at the very most with one guest in the studio, an interviewer face-to-face with a studio guest. That is our format and it exists nowhere. Not like that. With this format we distinguish ourselves from anything that exists elsewhere. We try to create our own image amid the existing programs.* (Interview with TP2)

The editorial staff as a whole are responsible for the production of the program Ter Zake and regard themselves consequently as the owners of the necessary production resources. For example, hosts often refer to 'guests' using elements of the discourse of hospitality: politicians and/or experts are 'invited' to the studio, they are 'welcomed' to the program and afterwards they are warmly 'thanked' for coming. Moreover, hosts also often refer to the infrastructure using possessive pronouns, such as 'our studio'.

In the basic format, the editorial staff decides on the content of the program but even during the phone-in they do not relinquish their managerial role completely. Indeed, this aspect of their identity shows a high degree of obduracy: They remain '*decision-makers*' (TP5). In the pre-broadcast phase, they carefully select the central guest and organize a procedure to ensure that the participants are quasi-representing 'the public'. They are responsible for the structure of the broadcast. During the broadcast, the host – together with the editor-in-chief through an audio connection – is responsible for turn- taking and time management. Moreover, in a number of cases, the host will effectively continue asking

questions, resuming his role as an interviewer. Protecting the concept, structure and topic of the broadcast is also in the host's hands. Finally, the evaluation (after a broadcast) is a prerogative of the editorial staff.

Control over the broadcasts is not complete. Building upon Foucault's (1978) 'analytics of power', resistance is seen as an integral part of any form of the exercise of power. In the phone-in broadcasts, multiple examples can be found. A striking example of this resistance to management by the editorial staff is situated in broadcast 7. The participant is interrupted twice and asked to end his attempts to contextualize his question and to formulate the actual question by the following phrases: '*Mister Vankraainest, what is the actual question?*' and '*To the point,[16] Mister Vankraainest, to the point, what is your question?*' (Broadcast 7, TP3). The participant strongly resists by reacting to the second interruption with the exclamation: '*Well yes, but now I have the chance to have my say, sir*' (Broadcast 7,0724). The outcry is successful: The host immediately encourages him to go on: '*But of course, go on*' (Broadcast 7, TP3).

The third nodal point on autonomy arises in the interviews mainly in relation to the controlling function of the media (in this case Ter Zake). Ter Zake is described by the editors as a watchdog that tackles controversial subjects and guests. Sometimes the program is even explicitly defined by the editors as a form of investigative journalism. In the phone-in broadcasts, this watchdog/controlling function remains partially present but it is rearticulated as the confrontation of elite persons with the opinions and experiences of participants. One interviewee says: '*it has to be a confrontation: public [versus] guest*' (TP2). In this confrontation, the autonomy of the editors remains an implicit assumption that legitimizes, among other things, the strong management.

The fourth nodal point too, objectivity, is also assumed to be self-evident and comes up relatively few times in the broadcasts and interviews. A nice example of this is the swallowing of the term relevance – one of the key components of objectivity – in the following interview-quote. 'Social relevance' is implied as a criterion for selection.

> *You do see it in our evaluation meetings or also in our day-to-day practices. They say: oh this is a lighter subject: a balloonist, a mountaineer. Those are light subjects. No social . . . Yes, literally light subjects.* (Interview with TP4)

One of the rare occasions where objectivity and, more specifically, the component balance become an issue can be found in the first phone-in broadcast. In his final sentences, the host explicitly legitimizes the choice

made by the editorial staff to invite only Cardinal Danneels as the central guest. The critique of being unbalanced and biased clearly instigated the need to defend their choices publicly. This defence is based on referring to the format of the phone-in and the balanced selection of participants. At the same time, this fragment shows the consequences of the control exercised by the editorial staff. Moreover, it also contains a series of elements from the discourse of hospitality discussed earlier:

> *Mister cardinal, thanks for coming to the studio. And you viewers I thank for your numerous calls, of course everybody couldn't get a chance to speak. We had to make a choice. There were questions about the choice of our guest too. Many asked us why there wasn't a representative of the freethinkers present. Our answer: we didn't want a debate in the studio, we wanted a con-frontation between the viewers of no matter which tenor and the cardinal. This was Ter Zake for now, we'll be back tomorrow . . .* (Broadcast 1, TP3)

The shift in the role of the media professional in the phone-in broadcasts has at the same time a strong impact on the articulation of objectivity in the broadcasts. The central idea of this format is to give 'the public', 'the people' or 'the viewer' an opportunity to speak: '*It's the broadcasts based on the questions of the listeners, the viewers, it's their questions*' (TP5; emphasis to indicate the stress by the interviewee). This turns Ter Zake into a forum, in which (part of) the public can actively participate by questioning members of the political (and religious) elite and (to a lesser extent) by elaborating their opinion and engaging in a discussion with the central guests, allowing them to introduce their specific perspectives. These participants can also confront the central guests with their authentic experiences (for instance concerning poverty and abuse). This element introduces an even more subjective angle to the program and attributes public relevance to private experiences in a way which is related to human-interest journalism.

(Co-)organizing democratic processes – an important aim within the tradition of public journalism – is, according to one interviewee, not the (first) ambition of the editorial staff of Ter Zake, in spite of the fact that the organization of a phone-in can be, at least partially, situated within this domain:

> *To organize democracy is not our first assignment, but nothing prevents us from seeing a phone-in as a part of that, of course. But for a very [laughs] very small part anyway. It is not that ambition that we can have, I think, and it is also not our assignment.* (Interview with TP5)

6. CONCLUSION

Despite the theoretical starting point that there are many potential points of identification for media professionals, their identity is, at the same time, fixed by a number of hegemonic nodal points. These nodal points articulate the media professional as objective, as a manager of people and (other) resources (based on their responsibility/property), as autonomous and as a member of a professional elite who are (semi-) professionally linked to a media organization. As new articulations and contestations of this hegemony are always possible, adequate attention needs to be directed to these counter-hegemonic articulations, which are (at least partially) oriented towards the rearticulation of the professional identity and its four nodal points. This 'confrontational' strategy allows a four-dimensional model to be developed, one in which individual or collective identifications are situated in a (discursive) field, in which any agent can potentially take on a unique position, without remaining blind to the rigidity of the hegemonic articulation of this identity.

The analysis of the identities of the editors of the program Ter Zake within the context of the seven phone-in broadcasts exposes this inter-play between contingency and rigidity, showing over-determination at work. The organic crisis or dislocation caused by the Dutroux case has pushed the editorial staff of Ter Zake into a (temporary) rearticulation of their own identity, in which (at least more than in the basic format) the role of gate-opener, facilitator of access and participation in a public forum is taken up.

At the same time, the hegemonic nodal points remain strongly pre-sent and these can be seen in the definition of the participants as 'others', in the editorial management that is even stronger than usual, in the importance attributed to the confrontation between elite persons and 'ordinary' persons, in the efforts to be quasi-representative, in the maintenance of (ultimate but not complete) control during the broadcast and a hesitance to take on a more active role in deepening democracy.

The most important argument that shows the impermanence of this rearticulation is, however, the fact that after these seven broadcasts – which took place over a period of two years concluding at the end of 1998 – the editorial staff has put aside this format for different reasons, partially of a practical and technical nature. After seven phone-ins, the phone-in had lost a lot of its novelty in the eyes of the editorial team and was ultimately labelled 'unsuitable for television'. Without disputing the truthfulness of these reasons, it can be stated that the need to overcome diverse problems has disappeared together with the Dutroux dislocation.

In the case of Ter Zake and, arguably in many other cases, the agoraphobia (see Drijvers et al., 2002: 21) of the media professional or his/her fear to leave the safe haven of the 'traditional' hegemonic identity construction (and the interconnected practices) has proved to be too difficult to overcome.

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NOTES

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2   The term media professional refers to a broadly defined journalistic identity within the realm of non-fiction (thus, for example, including the so-called popular journalism – Meijer, 2001).

3   Since such a field of discursivity contains all elements which can potentially be articulated with this identity, the complete charting of this discursive field is a discourse-theoretically untenable point of departure, which would imply the limiting of the limitless.

4   The four nodal points are discussed in arbitrary order.

5   In the discussion of these models, the intention is expressly not to check them for their ideological supremacy. It is also not intended to test these models for their use for the analysis of the factual organization of the mass media. The truth claims of these theoretical frames are, in other words, not under discussion in this article.

6   Development journalism is the older and more common name for this tradition. Emancipatory journalism was developed as a model by Shah (1996) later on and places more stress on the role of journalists within new social movements.

7   The analysis by Westerståhl used here has not remained free from critique. These conceptual critiques (Clijmans, 1979; Boone, 1998) must, however, be situated within the ontological discussion of objectivity, which allows Westerståhl's conceptualization to remain manageable for the purposes outlined in this article.

8   Media organizations as a whole can also take stands, as, for example, does the party-political press but also as independent media organizations do (in the form of 'advocacy' and 'campaigning') (Seymour-Ure, 1974).

9   This stress can be found in the choice of topics of the phone-in: of the seven phone-in broadcasts, two are completely on the 'case Dutroux'. A third broadcast discusses the consequences of the murder of one of the children (Loubna Benaïssa) for the politics of integration. Also in the broadcast with the then Belgian Prime Minister Dehaene as the central guest, Dutroux is discussed extensively. The other phone-ins deal with paedophilia in the Belgian Church, social unrest in the Belgian educational system and the position of Brussels in Belgium.

10 The statements by these editors are not linked with their names. Instead, a code is used, which starts with 'TP' and is followed by a number. Participants are indicated with a 4-number code, in which the first two refer to the broadcast.

11 In five of the broadcasts that use the phone-in format, 'viewers' can put questions by telephone to a central studio guest, who is present in the studio together with a host-journalist from Ter Zake. In two other broadcasts, the questions for the central studio guest had been recorded previously and shown as a short reportage to that central studio guest (and the viewers). A number of analyses specific for this last group are not discussed in this text.

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¹³ More detailed descriptions of this analysis can be found in the Dutch and/or French research publications (Carpentier, 2001a; Carpentier et al., 2002).

¹⁴ Moreover, next to a number of more modest techniques for validation, there is mainly chosen for respondent validation (using Heller's 'group feedback analysis' methodology [1969, 1976]) and for triangulation (by complementing this qualitative content analysis with a quantitative content analysis of these broadcasts and with content analyses of three other audience discussion programs for public and commercial broadcasters). These results are not discussed in this article.

¹⁵ At the time of the interviews with the editors, all hosts were men. In the mean time, this has changed.

¹⁶ Translated in English, 'Ter Zake' means 'to the point'.

From identity to identity strategies. The French *pigiste* group identity as an exemplary case study

Faïza Naït-Bouda

> *When people ask me for my profession, if I say: pigiste journalist, they look at me with pity. If I say: freelancer [they look at me] with admiration! And if I say: independent journalist … with irony!*
>
> Anonymous *pigiste*

1. INTRODUCTION

The journalistic profession has often been described as a profession with many particularities, for instance caused by differences in national characteristics and by historical circumstances. Despite of the emphasis on these particularities, there is still an agreement that the journalistic identity claims a specific role and status in society, which is '*defended by their occupational ideology*' (Deuze, 2004: 275)[1]. This journalistic identity is essentially defined by a set of shared ideals and myths, and by the elaboration of professional ethics that are often enshrined in a regulatory framework.

In the French case, the legal backbone for the societal acceptance (and construction) of the journalistic identity was created in the 1930s, when journalists were legally recognized as 'real' professionals[2], thanks to the lobby work of the first French union SNJ[3]. But this law only concerned the wage-earning journalists and intentionally excluded the journalists working for several employers: the *pigistes*[4]. As they were often considered amateurs or 'fake' journalists, and were said to be damaging to 'real' journalism, they had to wait for forty years to be legally recognized as 'real' professionals and to gain the same rights and responsibilities as wage-earning journalists.

In the past, working as a *pigiste* was the result of a choice, in order to be independent and free from employers. Nowadays the situation has changed and the *pigiste* embodies a status which is often far removed from the early twentieth century's ideals of freedom and independence. In practice, we can distinguish between two kinds of *pigistes,* depending on whether they are *pigiste* by choice or by necessity, or in other words, depending on the way their *pigiste* status grounds their individual journalistic identity. The first type, which concerns the majority of the *pigistes*, has not opted voluntarily for the *pigiste* status. Two elements can explain this. Firstly, the French 'media boom' of the 1980s generated an exponential increase of journalists [5]. Consequently, the journalistic profession had to face more newcomers than its labour market could accommodate. These newcomers did not find themselves in a comfortable position as they had to (at least in the beginning of their careers) combine trainings and short term jobs. During this unstable period, they joined what is called the *'pool'* of *pigistes*[6]. Secondly, the economic crisis that the media sector has had to face since the beginning of 1990s, has lead employers to increase flexibility on the work floor. Consequently, employers have in many cases decided to outsource (journalistic) work and thus make use of the large number of external and casual workers. These workers are usually also considered *pigistes*.

Alternatively, the *pigiste* status can also be the result of a conscious choice, and in that case it does contribute strongly to the individual journalistic identity. These *pigistes* can be considered the heirs of the Cressard Law[7], and they are the ones that claim a special status based on the specificity of the organization of their work and their pay, without detaching themselves from the foundations and ideals of the referent group of wage-earning journalists. This chapter will focus on this second type of *pigiste*, where the *pige* is practised as a chosen lifestyle, materialized by a particular organization of work (working conditions, organization of working time, autonomy, …) and motivated by independence. Because of the particularity of their position, these *pigistes* are also more inclined to express a desire for the acceptance by the entire professional guild.

2. *PIGISTE* RESEARCH

In recent years, journalism studies has shown a growing interest in the French *pigistes* and their counterparts abroad. Nevertheless, also within the French *sciences de l'information et de la communication*, attention for the

pigistes remains fairly limited, also because the *pigistes* are most often used as an argument to show the professional precariousness and the need for renewal of the journalistic profession (Marchetti and Ruellan, 2001), and not as a central object of research.

Also, the question of journalistic identity has been raised frequently by those involved in French communication research, but again the specificity of the journalistic identity of the *pigistes* did not receive much attention. Furthermore, there is an *a priori* assumption about the *pigiste* identity, namely that it still borrows heavily and exclusively from their referent group, while in reality the *pigiste* identity has evolved differently over time, and different strategies have been used in its construction. It is an argument that can be legitimized by the fact that the legal recognition of the *pigiste* status as professional journalists occurred forty years later than was the case for the wage-earning journalists.

In this chapter the *pigiste* journalists are used to analyze the ambiguity of the identity of journalists, and its complex relationship with historical trajectories and social renewal projects. This chapter will try to shed light on how the *pigiste* identity draws on some of the same principles as other professional-journalistic communities, while at the same time their differences are affirmed through a number of discursive strategies in order to build a specific professional identity in order to stand out in the journalistic professional mass. Before doing so, the notion of identity, and its relationship to the journalistic field must be clarified.

3. THE POLYSEMIC CONCEPT OF IDENTITY

As a concept, identity has long been a focus of attention in philosophy, sociology, psychology and more recently in the information and communication sciences. The identity concept was used by theoreticians in order to determine the nature of socialization, sometimes assimilating the concept into a process of learning, while in other cases it became linked to the social functions of a habitus. In some other cases, it was also seen as a polysemic component of the social construction of reality.

The French sociologist Claude Dubar (1998) has enriched these contributions with a sociological theory of identity, where he distinguishes between an '*identity for others*' (given by/to members of society), and an '*identity for yourself*' (through a process of socialization and constituted by acts of belonging). The individual is thus always a socially defined being, through its feelings of belonging. Identity is also constitutive for the group in the sense that it is defined by common and

mutual actions and processes of socialization. Individuals are seen to develop 'identity strategies' to reduce the possible dissonance between these two identity components. We can find more support for this line of reasoning in interactionist theory, which sees an individual's identity being built through a definition of the self that comes from the 'outside'. This identity is constructed through processes of mutual identification, distinction or opposition with other identities. In other words, the awards, the claims or the denials of attributes, function as acts of social integration and designation, and are mediated through their interaction with the environment. In short, the image an individual has of himself (or herself) is the product of this ongoing negotiation with others.

From this perspective, the journalistic identity is a construction which for an important part includes subjectivity and interpretation. Claude Dubar's work precisely shows that these multiple identity constructions are also played out in the professional field, where professional identity abides by the same rules and follows the same construction processes as is the case with individual identities. We can thus see that the professional socialization process remains a complex modelling process, which varies according to the professional groups under scrutiny.

Some researchers have studied how identity is constructed in relationship to specific professional bodies. This is for instance the case with Everett Hughes (1958). This sociologist argued for the need to break with the structuralist-functionalist approach that legitimated the reasoning that professional groups themselves used. More specifically, he distinguished between the '*foundations of the professional organization*' and '*its modes of legitimating*'. As Larson (1977: xii and xiv) summarized it: '*Ideal-typical constructions do not tell us what a profession is, only what it pretends to be [...] Everett C. Hughes and his followers are the principal critics of the 'trait' approach and ask instead what professions actually do in everyday life to negotiate and maintain their position.*' In his book *Men and Work*, Hughes developed (an analysis of) a model of professional socialization understood as training (with an ethnological meaning), as culture (in the medical meaning) and as transformation (generating a new identity).

To substantiate his argument, Hughes sketched three stages of professional socialization, looking at how an individual acquires a professional identity. First, the individual immerses himself in a professional culture that goes against the (lay) ideals s/he had. This is fed by a duality between two perspectives, namely between the real and the ideal. In other words, this struggle of progressive identification with the professional role takes place through a voluntary abandonment of the ideal (lay) representations, linked to the four principles on which a

professional identity is based: the contents of the tasks (and skills), the perspective on the role, the career progress and the self-image. In a second phase the duality between the ideal model (or the ideal type) and the reality is acted out in a series of interactions with significant others, determining the profession's self-image, its symbolic value, its ethics but also the 'practical model' which corresponds to the everyday practices. The existence of a referent group within a profession is an essential tool for reducing this duality. The third and last stage is described as a phase of the final conversion – and an ultimate break with the (lay) stereotypes on the profession. Here the professionals adjust themselves to fit within the profession, and to reconcile ideals and realities. These observations allow Hughes (1958: 159) to conclude with a definition of a professional career as the '*total sum of these aptitudes and guidelines which provide the key to the distribution of professionals among the various careers and various kinds of practices.*'

4. The main constitutive elements of the journalistic group identity

Most research projects do not consider professional groups as natural but as constructions. Researchers have attempted to demonstrate the legitimating ways some professions use in order to have a specific legal status. Here I have to remind the reader of the time lap between the legal recognition of professional journalism and that of the *pigistes*. The wage-earners managed to have their claims satisfied, and the *pigistes* had to wait for forty years. Even if the *pigistes* are not different from wage-earners in terms of training, skills and practices, they still have not acquired a legitimate place in the journalistic professional group.

4.1. Ideology as the biographical cement of the journalistic group

Following Marc Deuze, I consider ideology here as the main constitutive element of the journalistic identity, following his definition as '*a system of beliefs and social actions characteristic of (and considered to be characteristic by) a particular group, including — but not limited to — the general process of reproducing meanings and ideas (within that group)*' (Deuze, 2004: 278). As ideology and identity are necessarily instable, the socialization process of journalists can hardly be seen as rigid. We need to analyse the construction of identity and its many modulations based on the notion of 'fluidity' as Boltanski (1982: 473) did when he alluded to '*the dynamic*

effect of the border', in his study of group executives. Professional groups cannot be seen as '*constrained entities*' but need be defined as '*shifting groups*'.

The complexity of the journalistic field suggests that we are dealing with an identity that is ever-changing and fluid. Capturing it thus becomes difficult; delimiting it would also run the risk of missing part of it. A number of authors have for instance attempted to deal with the matter of evolution over time. Authors such as Brin, Charron and De Bonville (2004) have described modern journalism as a rupture with another – more traditional – journalistic model. Others like Mathien and Rieffel (1995) have situated these changes over time in a continuum, seeing them as a historical construction. Given my theoretical starting points, I am of course more sympathetic towards this second approach.

If we then look at the *pigistes*, we see a fluid (sub)group identity, within a fluid environment, which complicates their identity project to a strong degree. Journalism itself has a composite identity, imbued with paradoxes and ideals, always responding to its corporatist history and subjected to intense heterogeneity (see for instance Carpentier, 2005). The identity of *pigiste* group has to cope with this legacy and context, and still deal with the particularities of its status. Of course, the crucial question remains: What form can the identity of the *pigiste* group (still) take nowadays? Is it different or similar from the identity of the referent group? In what it is specific?

4.2. *The corporation effects on journalistic identity*

At the same time, *pigistes* and professional journalists have to work in a specific context, which (co-)determines their identities and the available spaces for identification. Above, I have already mentioned the massive influx of newcomers to the labour market. Because of this influx, the journalistic job market is under serious pressure, and some become excluded. The *pigistes* are often among those being excluded; sometimes they are even marginalized. This partially explains their lack of visibility, recognition and legitimacy within the entire professional group.

Another way to look at the situation of the pigistes, is to use Denis Ruellan's three-level vertical hierarchy: the elite (the audio-visual media and the major newspapers in Paris), the legitimate body (formed by all beneficiaries) and the margins (whose members are not recognized as equals and compose a shapeless subgroup). Between these levels, the influence of corporatism reveals itself by a '*conservatism, sociability and solidarity observed particularly during societal changes in the group experiences*

from the society causing a reform of the gathering of the big family.' (Ruellan, 1997b: 15). We can locate the *pigistes* as oscillating between the second and third level.

This alternation between two levels is justified by what Ruellan designates as 'blurred' journalism. It is the result of the elasticity of the journalistic identity and of its heterogeneity which influences many aspects as the status, the structures of control, the objectives, the training process and the qualifications. This flexibility allows (or limits) each of the professional communities to manoeuvre with its functions and roles within the entire group, but also within the larger social space. In other words, the referent group can itself build an amorphous and unstable identity, and not surprisingly, the *pigistes* group presents itself as the major victim of this changing identity of the referent group.

4.3. The identity strategies of the journalistic group

The journalistic identity is the product of a social negotiation between all the actors involved, and at the same time we need to take the social, cultural, political and economical context into account. In the unstable context in which journalism has evolved since the eighties of the previous century, French journalism has had to adapt to these changes by developing new strategies for survival and consolidation.

The logics of social differentiation start to work when there are no longer any *'virgin spaces'* to embrace competition. Consequently, there is a *'concentration of resources and work, exclusion, marginalization and alienation of some social members'* (Ruellan, 1997b: 6). The professional-journalistic identity became more rigid and strict because of the influx of new journalists, but also because of the changes caused by the introduction of the internet in the French newsrooms. In other words, the professional group of journalists has had to implement strategies to build, sustain and defend its identity within the professional press sector.

This affected the *pigistes* as well. They have probably been in a crisis for nearly ten years now, and this is also a crisis of its representation within the press sector (employers, unions and wage-earners) and within society. And just as the referent group of professional journalists did, the *pigiste* group has asserted and attempted to sustain the specificity of its identity, differentiating it from the professional journalistic mass, which will be addressed in the next part.

5. THE NECESSARY MALLEABILITY OF THE *PIGISTES* GROUP IDENTITY

In this final part, I want to illustrate the identity construction process of the *pigiste* group in the press sector (and to a lesser extent in the whole society), in combination with the coping mechanisms used by the *pigistes*. Ten semi-directive anonymous interviews with carefully selected *pigistes*[8] allow bringing in their voices. This qualitative analysis tries to show the self-representation of the *pigistes* and to figure out the means the *pigistes* use to maintain their position in the journalistic space.

5.1. The torn identity of the pigiste group: the duality between myth and reality

'*This myth hunt, denouncing myths as ungrounded in facts [...]: this is the task of science*' (Elias, 1991: 58). In these lines, Norbert Elias expresses my intention. The idea of professional independence and freedom concerns not only the *pigistes* but journalism as such. This ideological represen-tation is moulded relatively independently from reality. But paradoxi-cally it is also very necessary in order to built social legitimacy. However this myth might persist in the *pigistes*' minds, it is confronted with a completely different reality, which is sometimes recognized:

> There is a gap between the image people have about us and the way you ... so, the way it is really happening. Because I think there is always the cliché of journalist reporter who runs everywhere ... who travels ... who meets a lot of people ... who is always writing. There is still a myth; the myth is still very strong, very alive.[9]

The identity of the *pigistes* is in the heart of the duality between the myth of the free and independent journalist (or the ideal as Hughes would put it) and the social realities of this precarious status. These social realities also become represented and incorporated in the *pigiste* identity. Thus, the respondent *pigistes* perceive their position as '*news labourers*', or as '*a pawn on the chessboard*' or even as '*toilet paper*'. Some respondents even doubt that the referent group (and society) accepts their professionalism at all:

> Question: *How can you qualify your place in the whole press today?*
> P1: *Time after time, well but I think that they perceive us first as precarious workers.*

P2: *The most interesting question for me is to know how the wage-earners consider us.*
Question: *And in society?*
P4: *I'm not sure that society is well aware of the existence of pigistes. In addition, a pigiste has necessarily an image of amateur since there is no permanent employment.*
P5: *When people ask me for my profession, if I say: pigiste journalist, they look at me with pity. If I say: freelancer [they look at me] with admiration! And if I say: independent journalist … with irony!*
P6: *People don't consider us if we say that we are independent.*

5.2. *The adaptive responses as opportunistic identity strategies*

Antonella De Vincenti (2001: 105) argued '*that a huge number of workers in the intangible economy operate in an intermediate zone in the labour market*'. These workers are more heavily subject to uncertainty because of two factors: first the problems related to social welfare (including pensions), and second the discontinuity of revenues, which forces workers to acquire a working capital to protect themselves. So, in order to cope with this unpredictability, these workers can adopt one of three types of behaviour (or a combination): denial ('*living from day to day*'), creative responses ('*use a safety net*'), or adaptive responses. The latter reaction is based on finding ways to cope with economic risks.

Some authors have argued that a 'real' professional journalist must both '*reconcile the necessary technical skills*' and '*human values, human relations, the contextualization of information, knowledge, ethics in the training of journalists ...*' (Badillo, 2005: 8). One way to deal with uncertainty and to establish a position is to excel in one of these areas. An example in this context is the use of the internet as a way to generate recognition for the *pigistes*. These technical skills constitute know-how, which allows the *pigistes* to stand out. The use of ICTs thus becomes inserted in the identity construction and becomes an identity strategy.

With varying degrees of modesty, the majority of the interviewed *pigistes* declare that they master this tool at both the informational (seeking information) and communicative level, and they consider their skills as superior to those of the wage-earners. Among them, many have been trained, often at their own expense. Actually, although the French law provides all individuals the right to training (disregarding the status of these employees), the *pigistes* usually have no access to this (right to) training. Two years of fierce negotiations between employers and unions have still not lead to a solution, and this issue is more topical than ever in

France. But although the law does not yet award the right to (free) training, the *pigistes* have not adopted a wait-and-see attitude. Compared with wage-earners, the *pigistes* take a more responsive attitude:

> P7: *I was the first to use e-mails in my newsroom [...] A recent course on internet information research has helped me to improve my technical skills for documentation research.*
> P8: *We, we pigistes, need to be more active.*

The *pigistes* seem to be located in the above-mentioned 'grey zone' of the journalistic labour market, oscillating between employment and independence. Vulnerable to the incessant changes the press industry has known, the *pigistes* are affected more. This high uncertainty is inherent to its status but it becomes amplified by the environment and its changes. Based on the interviews with the *pigistes*, we can see a preference for one type of behaviour described by Antonella De Vincenti, namely the development of adaptive responses. Here, improving their technical skills is to be understood as a way to affirm and consolidate their professional identity.

6. CONCLUSION

The exploratory interviews have enabled me to support and illustrate my assumptions and to open-up new ways of thinking about the identity construction process of the *pigistes*. The interviews do suggest a collective identity (a 'we'), but at the same time it is torn between wanting-being and social well-being. The identity of the interviewed *pigistes* is also not always that strong and obvious. Indeed, this study shows a combination of fatalism and strong identity demand.

But on the other hand we cannot see identity as fixed and immutable. In the same way, the versatility of media systems and actors strategies does not allow for an analysis which ignores its diversity. The *pigistes* as social actors and as an object of research would not respond to a univocal appraisal of a fixed identity. The *pigistes* do construct a proper identity, for instance through their specific knowledges and skills (at the level of ICT), but this identity is always influenced (or even infected) by the dominance of the referent group identity.

In conclusion: It remains essential to emphasize that the identity issue applied to this object of study requires more research, and that information and communication sciences has a key role to play in questioning

media practices, and debating the societal issues in which these practices are embedded.

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NOTES

[1]   All citations are translated from French by the author, with the exception of the citations of Deuze and Hughes.

[2]   The expression of 'real' professional refers to the journalistic ethics and responsibilities that unions have used to claim the recognition of the professional status of journalists in the forties. More specifically, they used the expression '*journalist who are worthy of that name*' ('*Un journaliste digne de ce nom*' in French).

[3]   SNJ is the *Syndicat National des Journalistes* – the National Union of Journalists.

[4]   In the nineteenth century, the *pige* was the quantity of work done by a typographer in a limited time for a certain remuneration. Nowadays the word *pige* refers to remuneration of journalists regarding the number of words used. That is the reason why these journalists are called the *pigistes*. We can consider that the *pige*-remuneration is a piece-rate system, where people are paid per article. So their legal status is specific in terms of their pay and their labour contract. In France, the vast majority of the freelancers that practice journalism fall within this particular *pigiste* category.

[5]   In France, according to the commission that provides the journalists' professional cards, the number of journalists has been multiplied by five since 1940. There are two periods

where this number strongly increased, namely in 1960 and 1980, but the media sector's economic crisis at the beginning of the 1990s slowed it down.

[6]   *Le vivier* in French.

[7]   This law was promulgated in 1974 and determined the status of the *pigistes* as a professional status with the same rights and responsibilities that professional journalists enjoy. This law followed and 'completed' the Brachard law (1935), which implied the recognition of professional journalism.

[8]   The selection of the respondents was made starting from twenty freelancers who answered a request made on the specialised internet forums in combination with a snowball method. The selected respondents had to meet the following criteria:

- Practicing the '*pige*' permanently (which in practice means for a period of more than five years). The '*pige*' as an exclusive way of work and pay returns to the distinction between the involuntary and the voluntary *pigiste* status. These criteria focussing on the voluntary status. Long-term involvement also ensured that the respondent knew the changes in the media sector.
- Working in (written) press (specialized or not). The written press still plays a crucial role in journalism's identity claims.
- Possessing the professional press card and being unionized. Indeed, the possession of the press card and the syndication show the willingness for professional recognition and legitimacy. By distinguishing the amateur journalist from the '*journalist who is worthy of this name*', the press card '*has an unexpected value when it allows a category of individuals to set themselves apart from their peers.*' (Ruellan, 1993 : 90)

[9]   'Agnès', anonymous journalist interviewed by G. Balbastre in Accardo et al. (1998: 339).

Peace and the professional ethics of journalists[1]

Kaarle Nordenstreng

1. INTRODUCTION

Peace is not the first thing that comes to mind with journalists and the total sum of their work, journalism. Given the widely criticized role of media in the contemporary world, journalism and journalists are typically viewed to serve misunderstanding and hatred rather than understanding and confidence between individuals, groups and nations. Of course there are exceptions, but in general it is safe to say that peace on earth prevails despite – not because of – media and journalism.

This statement is substantiated by all those studies on media content which show how mainstream journalism strengthens prejudices and stereotypes, instead of insight and empathy. There is a lot of evidence to this effect, but unfortunately this evidence regarding our cultural environment is not systematically collated and summarized in the same manner as are trends about the physical and socio-economic environment in the *State of the World* reports of the Worldwatch Institute. (For initiatives of global media monitoring, see Nordenstreng 2003; Ramonet 2003.)

Individual journalists do not normally advocate or admit such biases; they typically believe that they are just engaged in honest and objective reporting about the world. Yet journalists come to serve as instruments in a machinery that typically has a negative impact on peaceful relations between people and nations. Here we shall not address the eternal question to what extent media have influence in society – the above general position is taken for granted. However, it is understood that journalists are not totally determined by structural conditions and that they do have some room for making a difference also in matters of war and peace. This leads us to ask what are the ethical values which direct

the gatekeepers – what is the mindset of the journalists and how has it been formed?

2. CODES OF ETHICS

Journalists like other professions have canonized their proper conduct in codes of ethics, which typically are adopted by national associations of journalists after thorough discussion in search of consensus. These codes can be taken as a fairly representative reading of the prevailing professional values and thinking – the doctrine of professional ethics in a country. Admittedly, the codes represent only the professional ideology and do not tell how journalism is, in actual fact, practised. The latter aspect of austere practice in contrast to ideal thinking is covered by innumerable case studies as well as the self-regulatory institutions of press councils, which monitor to what extent professional standards are honoured by the profession. Yet the codes of ethics as standard-setting instruments for the profession are a valuable resource for research about values behind journalistic practice.

I began to examine these professional codes of journalism ethics in the 1970s when being involved in UNESCO's standard-setting projects such as the Mass Media Declaration and the MacBride Report (Nordenstreng, 1984). My special interest was focused on what the codes prescribed regarding international relations (Nordenstreng and Alanen, 1981), while I also supervised students to make comparative inventories about the whole spectrum of topics contained in the codes (see Cooper, 1989; Laitila, 1995). Additional boost to this research activity came from my role as president of the International Organization of Journalists (IOJ), which gave me special access to both the history of the profession and contemporary codes in countries and languages which were not normally available, leading to different books on the topic (Bruun, 1979; Kubka and Nordenstreng, 1986–1988; Nordenstreng and Topuz, 1989).

In 1995 my academic base in Tampere became the site of a databank of all the codes of journalism ethics which we had accumulated in the European region from the Atlantic to the Urals, translated in English (http://ethicnet.uta.fi/). This EthicNet databank was updated in late 2007 and it now includes 50 codes from 46 countries – from Albania to the UK (the latter with two codes). Thus EthicNet provides handy material for an overview of the contemporary thinking among main-stream journalists in the region. (For a worldwide database of 'media accountability systems' including press councils and ethical codes,

although not currently updated, see http://www.media-accountability.org/.)

A content analysis of this collection shows that truth as a professional maxim figures as the most common standard in European professional ethics, present in each of the 50 contemporary codes. Almost all codes forbid discrimination on grounds of race, sex or religion. Also high on the list are demands to use fair means in gathering information and to be clear about the nature of information – to separate facts from opinions and editorial material from advertisements. Compared to the situation in 1995, when the collection included 31 codes, the standards have remained more or less the same. Accordingly, there is a well-established and solid ideal for journalistic ethics in Europe.

The question remains, what is the status of peace in the European codes? The answer is simple: It is minimal. Only one code out of fifty mentions the word 'peace' as something that journalists should promote. The code of ethics adopted by the Latvian Union of Journalists in 1992 has the following paragraph in its last section 6 entitled '*Journalists and Society*':

> *A journalist should stand up for human values – peace, democracy, human rights, people's rights to self-determination.*

Six other codes – by journalists' associations in Albania, Armenia, Montenegro, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia – include indirect reference to peace by condemning propagation of wars or conflicts between nationalities. For example, the code of ethics adopted by the Slovak Syndicate of Journalists in 1990 ends with the following paragraph under the title '*The Journalist and the Public Interest*':

> *The journalist must not promote aggressive wars, violence and aggressive-ness as the means of international conflicts solution, political, civic, racial, national, religious and other sorts of intolerance. The journalists shows due respect to other states, nations, to their democratic traditions and institutions, to their culture and morals.*

In the early 1980s also the Union of Journalists in Finland adopted the following paragraph in the introduction of its code called '*Guidelines for good journalistic practice*':

> *The professional ethics of a journalist involves the respecting of basic human values, like human rights, democracy, peace and international understanding.*

However, this paragraph was deleted from the Finnish code in its latest revision in 2005. Consequently, Finland can no longer be listed next to Latvia as a country where the word 'peace' appears in its codes of ethics. Moreover, Finland can no longer be displayed as a country in which professional ethics incorporates broader values beyond strictly journalistic issues related to truth, fairness, etc. In other words, the Finnish concept of journalistic ethics can now be characterized as technocratic – free from elements of universal idealism.

The Finnish move should not be taken as symptomatic of a wider movement towards technocratic professionalism in Europe. As described above, journalistic values seem to be fairly stable throughout Europe, and there is no evidence of a fundamental change – except in Russia where journalists seem to become increasingly PR instruments (Pasti, 2007). As far as the perspective of peace and war is concerned, it has always been a marginal phenomenon in mainstream journalistic ethics.

3. RICH LEGACY

Although peace and war remain low on the agenda of journalistic ethics, this particular perspective figured quite high in the global media debate around UNESCO and the so-called New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) in the 1970s and 1980s (see Gerbner, Mowlana and Nordenstreng, 1993; Vincent, Nordenstreng and Traber, 1999). It is instructive to contrast the contemporary reality as reflected in the codes of ethics with documents such as the Mass Media Declaration of UNESCO (1978), the MacBride Report (1980) and the International Principles of Professional Ethics in Journalism (1983).

The Mass Media Declaration, adopted by acclamation by UNESCO's General Conference in 1978, highlighted peace and war already in its title: 'Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racialism, Apartheid and Incitement to War'. This document, together with the MacBride Report, signalled in its time a turning point in international media policy from confrontation to consensus (Mansell and Nordenstreng, 2006: 22). Nevertheless, it is hardly remembered today even by experts in the field. UNESCO itself has done nothing to keep it alive; it has been wiped off the agenda by the political hurdles which replaced a Third World NWICO perspective by a Western emphasis on press freedom (Nordenstreng, 2007). Yet the UNESCO Declaration of

1978 is worth recalling, since it contains a lot of material which is relevant to contemporary debates – for example Article VIII:

> *Professional organizations, and people who participate in the professional training of journalists and other agents of the mass media and who assist them in performing their functions in a responsible manner should attach special importance to the principles of this Declaration when drawing up and ensuring application of their codes of ethics.*

The MacBride Report (1980) also included several passages which are worth recalling and revisiting today, although this landmark document has also been largely forgotten – even actively played down by UNESCO (Nordenstreng, 2007: 20–25). Among its 82 recommendations many are still topical proposals under headings such as '*Responsibility of journalists*', '*Towards improved international reporting*', and '*Towards international understanding*' (MacBride, 1980: 261–271). And one of the seven issues requiring further study was '*International standards and instruments*' including the following (MacBride, 1980: 274):

> *6. Studies should be undertaken to identify, if possible, principles generally recognised by the profession of journalism and which take into account the public interest. This could also encompass further consideration, by journalists' organisations themselves, of the concept of an international code of ethics. Some fundamental elements for this code might be found in the UNESCO Declaration on the mass media, as well as in provisions common to the majority of existing national and regional codes.*

The International Principles (1983) did exactly what the MacBride Report proposed here (Nordenstreng, 1989: 279). Actually this document contains a lot of food for thought for contemporary journalism, but it is likewise practically forgotten (although still easy to find online). It was issued on behalf of eight international and regional associations of journalists[2], which since 1978 held consultative meetings under the auspices of UNESCO. The coalition represented altogether 400,000 working journalists in about 100 countries, i.e. a majority of the organized profession in the world. Thus the document was already historical because of its mere existence: It was the first joint statement of principles which the international movement of journalists was able to make since it was divided by the Cold War in the late 1940s. The document was a unique attempt by the journalistic profession to define parameters for global ethics. It was not called a code because the debates around the MacBride Report and NWICO had made journalists wary of strict rules

which would be applied everywhere. Yet there was a widely shared understanding of certain common ethical standards and therefore a search for universal values was not considered taboo but a vital project among journalists' organizations coming from different geopolitical regions.

Let us take two from its ten principles into a closer scrutiny:

> *Principle VIII: Respect for Universal Values and Diversity of Cultures*
> *A true journalist stands for the universal values of humanism, above all peace, democracy, human rights, social progress and national liberation, while respecting the distinctive character, value and dignity of each culture, as well as the right of each people freely to choose and develop its political, social, economic and cultural systems. Thus the journalist participates actively in the social transformation towards democratic betterment of society and contributes through dialogue to a climate of confidence in international relations conducive to peace and justice everywhere, to détente, disarmament and national development. It belongs to the ethics of the profession that the journalist be aware of relevant provisions contained in international conventions, declarations and resolutions.*
>
> *Principle IX: Elimination of War and Other Great Evils Confronting Humanity*
> *The ethical commitment to the universal values of humanism calls for the journalist to abstain from any justification for, or incitement to, wars of aggression, and the arms race, especially in nuclear weapons, and all other forms of violence, hatred or discrimination, especially racialism and apartheid, oppression by tyrannical regimes, colonialism and neo-colonialism, as well as other great evils which afflict humanity, such as poverty, malnutrition and diseases. By so doing, the journalist can help eliminate ignorance and misunderstanding among peoples, make nationals of a country sensitive to the needs and desires of others, ensure respect for the rights and dignity of all nations, all peoples.*

Today, 25 years later, we may ask whether these principles are still tenable. One concept can be seen to be outdated: Apartheid was abolished as a state system in South Africa in 1994 and in this respect also the UNESCO Declaration is outdated – fortunately. Also the last Principle X on promotion of NWICO refers to a global discourse that is forgone, although the issues involved remain relevant (Padovani and Nordenstreng, 2005). But all other aspects, both positive values and socio-political evils, are currant in the contemporary world. For example, the above quoted Principle IX, with the commitment of the journalist to

poverty, etc., is in perfect accord with the UN Millennium Declaration's resolution '*to ensure the freedom of the media to perform their essential role … '* (Nordenstreng, 2007: 26–27).

The last sentence of Principle VIII above concerning international conventions, declarations and resolutions is of particular importance. It determines that a truly professional journalist knows and understands the framework of international law, and therefore this subject should belong to the basic toolkit of a serious journalist. This is not a call for adhering to universal values of humanism as done in the preceding two sentences, but simply a call to have a roadmap for navigating the delicate landscape of the conflict-ridden yet globalized world. This sounds reasonable, but looking around the community of journalists and their educators shows that this task has been largely neglected.

4. COMMITTED JOURNALISM

The International Principles of 1983 deserve to be examined more closely as an authoritative – although by now forgotten – manifestation which prescribes journalism as a socially committed profession. The commitment originates from the people's right to acquire a truthful picture of reality, on the one hand, and from the universal values of humanism on the other. The commitment to truth is, in principle, the same as that held within the libertarian mainstream of journalism, although there are obvious differences between traditions as to how truth is understood. But the commitment to the universal values as established by the international community means a significant departure from the typical Western tradition and a move toward the notion of professionalism as it was generally understood in the socialist and developing countries of the time.

Accordingly, '*a true journalist*', as defined by the Document, is not neutral with regard to the universal values of '*peace, democracy, human rights, social progress and national liberation*' (Principle VIII). Neither is a journalist neutral with regard to violations of humanity such as '*justification for, or incitement to, wars of aggression, and the arms race, especially in nuclear weapons, and all other forms of violence, hatred or discrimination, especially racialism and apartheid, oppression by tyrannical regimes, colonialism and neocolonialism*' (Principle IX).

In fact, such an ethics of journalism implies two significant steps beyond what is typically held by the technocratic tradition with its passion to remain free from any socio-political obligations other than the

pursuit of truth. First, there is an invitation for a journalist – as a proper citizen – to support a number of universally recognized ideals and to fight corresponding evils. This is a general social commitment, applying to all citizens in the same way. Beyond this, however, it calls for a particular professional commitment whereby the universal values in question are understood as vital constituents of journalism, along with the commitment to truth and other conventional characteristics of professionalism (integrity, and so on.). Thus it becomes the professional responsibility of all journalists to pursue, not only truth in general, but the universal values of humanism as well. In other words, the definition of professionalism takes a great leap forward from the libertarian notion of a journalist whose task is to transmit facts and opinions by remaining independent and neutral with regard to various socio-political interests and values.

Obviously, not all journalists had really made the two-step social commitment an integral part of their professional ethics. For many, what was involved is no doubt as much for show only as a fundamental reorientation, especially with regard to the second type of commitment, which brings universal values to the core of professionalism. Yet it is obvious that a new, socially committed professional ethics was emerging at the time. Accordingly, while the Document did not suggest that all of the 400,000 professionals represented by the organizations concerned would have fully stood for the ten principles, it was an indication of a trend among professional journalists that was taking place along with the movement toward a new information order.

Those professionals who, under the influence of a libertarian way of thinking, were suspicious or afraid of committing themselves to the socio-political values in question, were referred to readings in international law and politics to find out that the journalist is not expected to follow haphazard political values, but that there is a specific set of ethical values that have gradually evolved in the international community. The advocates of the Document such as me emphasized that there was little ground for fear or reluctance, once a person had realized that, instead of being 'politicized' in an unspecified way, he or she is invited to a commitment only to those values that have a legitimate status in international law and politics.

Given this awareness, one was supposed to see that the concepts of peace and war, democracy and tyranny, national liberation and colonialism, and the like are not simply political slogans subject to arbitrary interpretation according to tactical interests. Most of these concepts have a specific meaning under international law, and in cases

such as war propaganda there are extensive applications to journalism. Naturally, there is room for interpretation and political disagreement around these universal values and principles, but so is the case with any concepts that embrace human nature and behaviour. Skepticism regarding the validity of universal values typically is based on ignorance of the issues involved.

In this perspective, the new 'committed' professional ethics appears to be a less remarkable leap forward than was suggested above. After all, the journalist does no more than become openly committed to the values that constitute the foundation of international law and order. If this seems to be a radical step, it shows only how poorly the universal values have been recognized, often because of the dominance of parochial values which stand in opposition to those held by the international community. For example, if commitment to peace is perceived as a politically radical position, it exposes a poor knowledge of the concept of peace rather than a politically biased approach.

Thus committed journalism did not bring any particular 'politicization' into the field of media and journalism; it only provided a safeguard protecting values of peace, democracy, and so forth. It goes without saying that journalism is and will continue to be a highly political field – both overtly and covertly. In such a situation, any choice of professional ethics – old and new alike – represents a direct or indirect political position. The question is not which is political and which is apolitical; the question is what is the political orientation being advocated. In this respect, the new professional ethics of committed journalism had as 'impartial' a foundation as can be imagined: the universal values of the international community – something that could be called '*United Nations ideology*'.

Committed journalism seems to have gained considerable support in the professional ethics of journalism around the world, and it has been boosted since the 1980s also by environmental issues such as global warming. Accordingly, the Finnish code got in its 1983 revision a reference to environment, next to peace etc. quoted above. However, also this commitment was removed from the 2005 revision of the Finnish code, making it to an instrument for conventional libertarian version of journalism. As a Finnish journalism educator I am naturally sorry, even ashamed, to admit that my own professional association has turned away from a progressive line towards a technocratic notion of professional ethics. However, as noted above, the Finnish case should be taken as an exception of broader universal development. While the Finnish turn can be seen as temporary departure from an intellectual vanguard, it

presents a challenge for me and my colleagues in journalism education to try harder in cultivating journalists.

Admittedly, the overall trend toward committed journalism is far from clear and contains many contradictory tendencies. This is a challenge for all to get involved in cultivating journalists – for ethical quality in general and peace in particular. And there is a lot of material to support meeting this challenge – not only legacy of the past but also recent contributions from academic as well as professional camps.

5. FRESH MATERIAL

Regarding journalism on topics of peace and war, a whole new academic specialization has emerged during the past few years, bringing along books (e.g. Nohrstedt and Ottosen, 2000) and journals (e.g. *Media, War & Conflict*, http://mwc.sagepub.com/). Also institutions for training programmes have been established, including *'Transcend Peace University'*, an online centre for peace studies founded by Johan Galtung (http://tpu.transcend.org/), a network of European, American and African centres *('Institute for War and Peace Reporting' – http://www.iwpr.net/#)* as well as an Australian *'Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies'* (http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/centres/cpacs/). These provide a lot of case studies and general perspectives for the study of journalism and peace.

Particularly valuable material is included in the electronic journal *Conflict & communication online* (http://www.cco.regener-online.de/) theme issues of 'peace journalism' (2006 Vol. 5, No. 2 and 2007 Vol. 6, Nos. 1–2). There, both the advocates of this concept, such as Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick (2005), and its critics from both journalistic practice (BBC TV journalist David Lyon) and academic research (German media scholar Thomas Hanitzsch) present well informed and most thoughtful interventions in the eternal debate about what is good journalism with a view to objectivity, responsibility, etc. With the editor's synthesis *'Peace journalism: A tightrope walk between advocacy journalism and constructive conflict coverage'* (Kempf, 2007), this package is a unique contribution not only to the peace journalism controversy but to journalism studies in general.

In addition to these academic developments, peace and journalism meet also among professional journalists – not only in their routine work in covering conflict areas around the world but also as more general reflections and initiatives regarding the quality of journalism. The most

significant of these professional activities is the worldwide Ethical Journalism Initiative (2008) created by the IFJ as *'a campaign and programme of activity developed by journalists and media professionals to restore values and mission to their profession … in a period of global turbulence, marked by war in the Middle East, fears over international terrorism and a resurgence of multicultural tension'*. With a serious rationale about developments in the world in general and media landscape in particular it *'raises awareness of how informed, accurate journalism and reporting in context helps create mutual understanding in the face of division, whether defined by language, culture, ethnicity or religious belief, and strengthens democracy'*. The Initiative includes a programme of activities (prepared jointly with European broadcasters and publishers), a set of core values and principles, and some concrete of guidelines for media. The core values, with focus on truth, independence and professional social responsibility, are another version of international principles like the 1983 document.

In short, there is a rich legacy of ideas and a lot of concrete material for cultivating journalists for peace. By the same token we must admit that this topic is neglected in professional ethics of journalism as well as in the education of journalists. The question is the classic: What is to be done?

6. ACTION LINES

There are two main directions where action can realistically be taken: professional associations and academic institutions.

National associations of journalists should maintain continuous debate among their members on the values and practices of professional ethics – both in general and regarding peace in particular. A concrete and engaging way to do this is to critically examine the national codes of ethics and to periodically revise them. If properly conducted, such activities would probably result in better codes of ethics with peace occupying more than a marginal position.

Likewise, professional associations should be actively involved in monitoring and criticizing the media performance. It would be unwise to let media criticism become the privilege of only political and intellectual groups outside the media; this would only turn journalists on the defensive and strengthen an unhealthy tendency of media people to create a fortress culture around them. Professionals should be in the forefront of constructive criticism of the media.

These national activities are supported by international professional associations with projects such as the exemplary Ethical Journalism Initiative of the IFJ. And although intergovernmental organizations have no formal role in the business of free journalism, they should provide platforms for professionals to promote journalism for peace and other universal ideals of the UN. In 2008, 60 years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is high time for UNESCO to return to the ideas of the MacBride Report which it has kept effectively frozen since the early 1990s.

Academic institutions, for their part, should do more both conceptual and empirical research on issues of peace as an element of ethics and professionalism. A particular challenge is to introduce elements of international law to professional ethics. This aspect is badly neglected in journalism education and there is a burning need to produce textbook material on the topic. Questions of international conflict are more and more recognized due to cases such as the Mohammed cartoons, but they have not been properly established in the curricula of journalism education as demonstrated in the UNESCO-sponsored *Model Curricula* (2007).

Studies of media performance are a natural part of academic institutions. These studies should not be carried out in isolation of the media practitioners but there should be a close cooperation between the two camps. Monitoring and assessment of media performance jointly by academics and practitioners is also a stimulating way to promote media criticism – again both in general and regarding issues of peace in particular.

Furthermore, academic institutions have a challenge to promote media literacy and media education in schools. This is no longer addressed to journalists as such but rather to their future readers, listeners, viewers – and partners in tomorrow's blogosphere.

Some of these action lines are only remotely related to issues of peace and war. However, peace is not a particularistic topic but an integral part of social and international relations. Accordingly, cultivation of journalists for peace should not be seen as a separate item but as an aspect of promoting universal values and international law – global ethics or, as named above, '*United Nations ideology*'.

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NOTES

[1] This chapter is based on my contribution to for WACC's forthcoming book on media and peace.

[2] These associations are: International Organization of Journalists (IOJ), International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), International Catholic Union of the Press (UCIP), Latin American Federation of Journalists (FELAP), Latin American Federation of Press Workers (FELATRAP), Federation of Arab Journalists (FAJ), Union of African Journalists (UAJ), and Confederation of Asian Journalists (CAJ).

Section two:
Media, publics and active audiences

Visit to the Estonian National Broadcaster

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Mediated publics and rhetorical fragmentation

Jens E. Kjeldsen

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important objectives of rhetorical studies – probably the most important – is to give us insight in the general conditions for human communication and symbolic influencing. As Aristotle notes in his *Rhetoric,* none of the arts theorize about individual cases, because individual cases are so infinitely various that no systematic knowledge of them is possible (Aristotle and Kennedy, 2007, 1.2.11.). But, as researchers we should – sometimes through individual cases – seek to understand the general.

The better we understand the general conditions for public rhetoric, the better we are able to lay the groundwork for securing every citizen the possibility of active participation in society – both as receivers and producers of communication. In this way, understanding rhetorical circumstances is an important basis for developing the rhetorical ability of individuals and groups to influence their environment. This means that if we wish to understand communication in our time, we first have to understand the circumstances for the public rhetorical situation.

2. FRAGMENTATION AND COMPLEXITY

Traditionally rhetoricians have conceived the communication situation as a discrete and very concrete situation with the speaker being physically present in front of the audience (cf. Bitzer, 1968, 1980). However, in a world becoming more mediated and complex (Qvortrup, 2003; Urry, 2003, 2005) we now encounter much more complicated, changing and incalculable communication situations.

While political speaking in past times was almost exclusively a product of an individual's personal thinking and ability to express himself, the speaker of today seems to be transformed into a number of consultants and speech writers. Both politically and rhetorically the speech has become a polyphonic – often complicated – compromise. At the same time modern media have added situational complexity by turning the public sphere into a rhetorical arena of multi-mediated communication, obscuring the traditional sense of communicator and audience. Globalisation, convergence, multifarious media, and techno-logical transformations (cf. Brummett, 1991, 2006; Urry, 2005) have made the rhetorical situation different from both the conception held by antique rhetoricians and the theory Lloyd F. Bitzer (1968; 1980) created in 1968. Mass media and new media have created a plurality of situations, wherein speakers at the same time address many different groups of audiences and situational exigencies. More than ever before do public speakers find themselves in several rhetorical situations at the same time.

This became obvious in the cartoon crisis of 2005 and 2006, when the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published cartoons of the prophet Mohammed (November 30th, 2005) (see also Langer's chapter in this volume). The editors meant to initiate a local Danish discussion on freedom of speech, but in a globalised and hypermediated world, such manifestations quickly gain a life of their own – completely independent of the intentions of the communicator.

The cartoon crisis is an example out of the ordinary, but everyday politics are confronted with similar challenges. Think for example of communication to, from and about the EU. The organisation itself is very complex, so are its texts and treatises, marked by legal and technical language. And when for instance a Prime Minister such as Tony Blair is doing a speech for the EU-parliament (as he did on June 23rd, 2005), he is forced to – as other EU-politicians – relate to the double complexity constituted respectively by the complicated character of the issues discussed and the fragmentation of the audience in groups that are different in space, time, interest, and attitudes to the speaker and the issue. Words that would be welcomed in the EU-parliament could be treasonous in the UK.

Communicators – especially political speakers – are victims of jour-nalistic frames and the mediated fragmentation of their utterances. The traditional political speech is not given much space or time. It has been replaced by forms of dialogue such as the interview, the debate, or press conferences. These forms of communication are constrained by the management of journalists and editors, limiting the orators' influence on

what she is saying and on the mediated journeys of her words. Journalists, observers and commentators use quotations out of context, and they frame, prime and set their own agendas (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007). When the words have been disseminated, new players throw themselves into debates, and the uses of decontextualised utterances set their agendas.

Utterances, conducts, everything that can be represented through words, sounds, and pictures get a life of their own in a fragmented, uncontrollable public. Utterances are dispersed to audiences outside the initial communication situation, to people which were not intended to be their receivers. This creates new rhetorical situations reacting for the speaker, demanding new responses to different groups of audiences. All this produces rhetoric which is not discrete or intentional in the traditional sense, but is a mosaic marked by a continuous flow, bricolage and intertextuality (Kjeldsen, 2006: chapter 3).

Not only have communication situations become more fragmented and complicated. Political issues and institutions have also become more complex. An institution such as the EU has a significant influence on politics, legislation and social conditions in the whole of Europe, but only a few citizens know how the EU actually works and affects legislation in their own country. But for instance global warming is a serious problem world-wide. However, ordinary citizens and politicians can neither see and understand nor deal with this challenge without the help of experts. The rhetorician G. Thomas Goodnight has argued that argument practices arising from the technical sphere '*presently substitute the semblance of deliberative discourse for actual deliberation, thereby diminishing public life*' (Goodnight, 1999: 257). He fears that '*audiences disappear into socially fragmented groups*', and '*issues of significant public consequence [...] disappear into the government technocracy or private hands*' (Goodnight, 1999: 259). The result is that '*the realm of public knowledge, identified by Dewey and later addressed by Bitzer, may be disappearing*'. (Goodnight, 1999: 259)

3. THE RHETORICAL SITUATION

If public and political questions really are becoming incomprehensible for most ordinary people, it not only means that public life is being diminished, distorted and undermined. It also means that it is time to rethink scholarly assumptions and theories about rhetoric.

Increasing complexity, fragmentation, and technocratisation of situations and issues make it difficult to grasp and understand the rhetoric of our time using traditional theories of the rhetorical situation. If we are to understand the post-modern public as a place or condition for rhetoric, we have to revise these theories. Instead of considering every situation as a discrete, isolated event, we should try to understand rhetoric as part of a general structural system of changeable situationality.

Even though Lloyd F. Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation (Bitzer, 1968, 1980) describes a rather discrete situation, it is still is a good starting point; because it also expounds key circumstances for the origin and characteristics of rhetorical communication. Bitzer claims that some situations present '*an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence*' (Bitzer, 1968: 6).

If a potential speaker recognize the *exigence* – which is an imperfection marked by urgency – and wish to solve or modify it, he will create a rhetorical utterance addressing the *rhetorical audience*. In order to be a rhetorical audience, the addressed must be '*capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change*' (Bitzer, 1968: 8), in order to solve or modify the exigence. Every rhetorical situation contains at set of 'constraints *made up of persons, events, objects and relations which are part of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence*' (Bitzer, 1968: 8 – emphasis in original).

These are the three constitutive elements of a rhetoric situation: exigence, audience and constraints. If the speaker has recognized and treated the exigence in the way the situation prescribes he will have given a *fitting response* and the exigence will be modified. In his article Bitzer describes some important characteristics of rhetoric and rhetorical situations (Bitzer, 1968: 9–11):

1/ '*Rhetorical discourse is called into existence by situation*'.
2/ '*Although rhetorical situation invites response, it obviously does not invite just any rhetorical response.*' The response must be fitting.
3/ '*If it makes sense to say that situation invites a 'fitting' responses, then the situation must somehow prescribe the response which fits*'.
4/ '*The exigence and the complex of persons, objects events and relations which generate rhetorical discourse are located in reality, are objective and publicly observable historic facts in the world we experience.*'

5/ '*Rhetorical situations exhibit structures which are simple or complex, and more or less organized*'.

Bitzer's definitions of the rhetorical situation was well received by most researchers, but also got some critique for being too deterministic on the one hand and to inclusive on the other – making almost every kind of utterance rhetorical (cf. Larson, 1970; Miller, 1972). The most critical response to Bitzer's article came from Richard E. Vatz (1973). When Bitzer claims that rhetoric is situational, Vatz responds that situations are rhetorical; when Bitzer writes that the situation controls the rhetorical response, Vatz answers that rhetoric controls the situational response. The understanding of the rhetorical situation as an objective and actual event with its own intrinsic meaning is a myth, Vatz maintains: '*To the audience, events become meaningful only through their linguistic depiction. [...]. Therefore meaning is not discovered in situations, but* created *by rhetors*' (Vatz, 1973: 157 – emphasis in original). Speakers have to choose which events or parts of the world they want to communicate, and they have to translate the chosen information into a communicable meaning. For Vatz it was not so much, as claimed by Bitzer, the killing of Kennedy in itself, that created fear in the people, it was rather the rhetoric surrounding the incident.

Contrary to Bitzer, Vatz holds a more relativistic, classical sophistic – and perhaps postmodernist – world view. A crucial viewpoint in this – not all together homogeneous – tradition is that meaning is unclear, indeterminate and only exists in the way it is symbolically created (cf. e.g. Biesecker, 1989, 1997).

After Vatz, Scott Consigny has agreed with Bitzer that situation is determining rhetoric. However, he also reminds us that a speaker normally will find '*himself 'thrown' into an indeterminate existential situation, in which he must make the best of the 'facticities' he encounters*' (Consigny, 1974: 177). The situations of reality are not discrete and do not prescribe certain fitting responses. On the contrary, they are incoherent and indeterminate – and thus we will always have different definitions, demarcations and competing statements: '*The rhetorical situation is an indeterminate context marked by troublesome disorder which the rhetor must structure so as to disclose and formulate problems; hence Bitzer errs in construing the situation as determinate and predetermining a 'fitting' response*' (Consigny, 1974: 178). On the other side, Consigny believes that Vatz errs

> in construing the rhetor as completely free to create his own exigences at will
> and select his subject matter in a manner of 'pure arbitration' [...]. The rhetor

> *who finds himself thrown into a rhetorical situation must transform the indeterminacies into a determinate and coherent structure; and in this activity he is constrained by the recalcitrant particularities of the situation which bear on his disclosure and resolution of the issue* (Consigny, 1974: 178).

Consigny writes about 'indeterminate situations', 'new rhetorical situations' and 'new contexts'. He states that some or all of the 'particularities' in the situation are always changing. However, he does not, I think, considers the full consequence of this insight. On the one hand, he appreciates that rhetorical situations are constantly changing and new situations arise and disappear. On the other hand, he still seems to believe that the speaker can delimit and determinate the situation through his rhetorical intervention. Consequently he asserts that '*the real question for rhetorical theory will become not whether the rhetor or situation is dominant, but how, in each case, the rhetor can become engaged in the novel and indeterminate situation and yet have a means of making sense of it*' (Consigny, 1974: 179). The question, thus, is how the rhetor in each case can be '*receptive and responsive to the particularities of novel contexts*' (Consigny, 1974: 180). This is done through the art of topics, which is the rhetorical art of discovering arguments and disclosure phenomena.

Even though this view seems reasonable from the point of the speaker, it is probably not enough to give us an understanding of rhetoric in a more general public perspective. It does not teach us very much about the indeterminate, incoherent situation. In comparison, Bitzer's approach seems more appropriate for creating a structural account of public rhetoric, than does Consigny's; because Bitzer describes the circumstances that create rhetoric and rhetoricians, while Consigny describes the art – ars rhetorica – that educates rhetors.

Bitzer thus gives a broader understanding of rhetoric as a public phenomenon. Even though he also takes a speaker's perspective, he describes something that is larger than the communicator. With a social science vocabulary we might say that while Vatz and Consigny primarily give an agency-perspective, Bitzer gives a structure-perspective.

4. FRAGMENTATION OF SITUATION, TEXT AND CONTEXT

Whereas Vatz rejects the deterministic character of the rhetorical situation, and Consigny makes it the task of the speaker to determinate the indeterminate, Barbara Biesecker (1989) questions our whole understanding of influence. She believes that the traditional understanding of

the rhetorical situation first of all ties us to a naïve, deterministic view of influence and limits what we are able to say about communication that seeks to persuade.

While Vatz seeks to inverse Bitzer's causal relationship between situation and speaker, making the speaker creator of rhetorical situations, Biesecker challenges the whole notion of causality. If simultaneously speech can lead to situation and situation to speech, how then can we determine and explain the origins of rhetoric?

Biesecker proposes that we, instead of thinking causally, consider rhetorical communication from a post-structuralist position, proceeding from within Jacques Derrida's thematic of *difference*. Like many other Derrida-influenced studies, the argumentation is somewhat obscure. Nonetheless, it still calls attention to the important point that meaning is always continuously in the making. This applies not only to texts, but also to speakers and audiences, who are not fixed entities, but identities which are perpetually constituted and (re)negotiated through communication. Instead of conceiving the audience in the traditional way, as 'a sovereign, rational subject' and 'fixed essences', Biesecker regards the rhetorical situation as a field continuously creating and recreating identities and social relations.

In this way Biesecker challenges both the speakers' and the situations' presumed authority over the production of communication and constitution of audiences. She invites the researcher to perceive rhetorical communication not as the result of a chronological causality, a historical situation or an interpreting subject (the speaker), but instead as an unstable and perpetually shifting constitution of meaning. The rhetorical situation is '*an event not structured by a logic of influence but by a logic of articulation*' (Biesecker, 1989: 126). This not only questions our understanding of influence and situation but also our conceptions of text and audience.

From a somewhat different starting point Michael McGee (1990) takes a similar view. In his account of the fragmentation of contemporary culture, he dissolves the traditional understanding of the concept of text. Because what does really constitute – he asks – a text and its context? Not even texts like Martin Luther King's 'I have a Dream' or Leni Riefenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will' are whole texts. They are rather ''*in between' elided parts that will make them whole*' (McGee, 1990: 279). These utterances should not be understood as discrete texts, but as parts of larger contexts. Theoretically we can easily determine a discrete text. However, in the real world, in the public, texts are never alone. On the contrary, they are always part of much larger mosaics of meaning.

McGee even believes that we neither can nor should separate text from context. Thus he theoretically dissolves the divide between the two, unites them and names this union a 'fragment'. As he writes:

> *Discourse ceases to be what it is whenever parts of it are taken 'out of context.' Failing to account for 'context' or reducing 'context' to one or two of its parts, means quite simply that one is no longer dealing with discourse as it appears in the world … the elements of 'context' are so important to the 'text' that one cannot discover, or even discuss, the* meaning *of 'text' without reference to them.* (McGee, 1990: 283 – emphasis in original)

This calls our attention to at least two things: Firstly, more than anything a rhetorical perspective is situational and contextual. We cannot understand what actually influences people and why this is the case without understanding the context. But at the same time, secondly, it calls attention to the fact that it is not easy to determine and delimit text and context. The rhetorical, contextual perspective – the critical approach where one goes hermeneutically forth and back between text and context – is facing special challenges in a fragmented and mediated era such as ours.

If we are to consider text and context in unison, as fragments, how then, do we determine which fragments we should study? How do we go forth and back between text and context if these are the same – or at least united? Even if we theoretically can separate text from context, we still face the challenge of determining which context is the right or proper one. The limits for an actual and physical text can relatively easily be determined, but contexts are countless, infinite and boundless. So what is the proper context?

Traditionally, as I have already suggested, rhetoricians have turned towards the rhetorical situations and – in some way – tried to determine the exigence, the constraints and the audience (however not necessarily using Bitzer's theory). Such a construction of situation, or context, takes its starting point in the perspective of the speaker: What is it that she or he regards as the exigence and wants to change or modify? However, this approach risks obscuring the fact that there are as many situations as there are rhetors, attitudes and audiences. As Vatz (1973: 156) points out:

> *… one never runs out of context. One never runs out of facts to describe a situation. What was the 'situation' during the Vietnam conflict? What was the situation of the 1972 elections? What is any historical situation? The facts or events communicated to us are choices, by our sources of information.*

For Michael McGee (1990) the solution is to look for *formations of text*, rather than look for *a text* – the text itself. Texts in a traditional sense do really not exist in our contemporary world:

> *We have instead fragments of 'information' that constitute our context. The unity and structural integrity we used to put in our texts as the faithfully represented nature is now presumed to be in us ourselves [...] The only way to 'say it all' in our fractured culture is to provide readers/audiences with dense, truncated fragments which cue them to produce a finished discourse in their minds. In short, text construction is now something done more by the consumers than by the producers of discourse.* (McGee, 1990: 288)

The importance of the audience is part of what I have described as the fragmented, complex and hypermediated situation – which McGee describes as the post-modern condition. This condition means that we cannot just take a text and study it. Instead our '*job as professional consumers of discourse is* inventing a text suitable for criticism' (McGee, 1990: 288 – emphasis in original).

So then, how should we understand the relation between rhetorical communication, situation, text, context, fragmentation and the public sphere? What kind of consequences does the increasing fragmentation and complexity have for our possibility to grasp and understand the rhetorical public? Answering this is a bigger task than it is possible to perform here, however let me try to give a few tentative suggestions.

First of all, we have to bear in mind the views of the mentioned theorists. From Bitzer we have the idea of the rhetorical situation as a particular structure with certain constitutive elements. The situational perspective seeks to '*discover the fundamental conditions of rhetoric – of pragmatic communication – in the interaction of man with environment*' (Bitzer, 1980: 22). Even though Bitzer has a speaker's perspective, he still describes something more extensive. He seeks the grounding conditions for rhetoric and place importance on structural relations. While Consigny is concerned with the art of training rhetors, and Vatz with the creative force of the speaker, Bitzer is more concerned with the circumstances creating rhetoric and rhetors.

Taken together, Vatz, Consigny and Bisecker teach us that rhetorical situations are indeterminate and unlimited and that it is not always possible to find an obvious causality between speaker and situation. Rhetors are continuously thrown into indeterminate situations. In attempts to make the incomprehensible comprehensible, rhetors participate in creating new situations. Out of this continuous coalescence of

meaning, new contexts and situations arises. In order to obtain a general understanding of what a rhetorical public is and how it works, we have to acknowledge the indeterminate, fragmentary and constantly changeable character of rhetorical situations.

McGee reminds us that not only a situation is hard to determine, but so are text and context. Every time we face a rhetorical discourse, we have to be aware that this is only a fragment referring to – representing – contexts and meanings which are not directly present, but nonetheless constitutes the discourse.[1] Since the audience always does the same, and thus becomes co-creators of the rhetorical discourse, we also have to be aware of the importance of audiences in the creation of rhetoric.

Secondly, we have to find a way to methodically examine rhetorical situationality in a fragmented world. It is both common and rhetorical knowledge that in order to understand a rhetorical discourse, we have to know something about the situation it occurs in. Therefore, the first demand of rhetorical criticism has always been to analyse the situation. This can be done by examining the different levels of context. One possibility is the following list of five:

1/ The rhetorical discourse
2/ The physical context (e.g. the placement of an ad in a newspaper)
3/ The rhetorical situation
4/ The present social and political situation
5/ The historical and cultural situation

Even though this illustrates a certain complexity, the situation is still relatively determined and can be described relatively clearly. We could, for instance, illustrate these five contexts like this:

Figure 1: Five contexts of rhetorical discourses

1. The Rhetorical Discourse
2. The Physical Context (co-text)
3. The Rhetorical Situation
4. The Present Social and Political Situation
5. The Historical and Cultural Situation
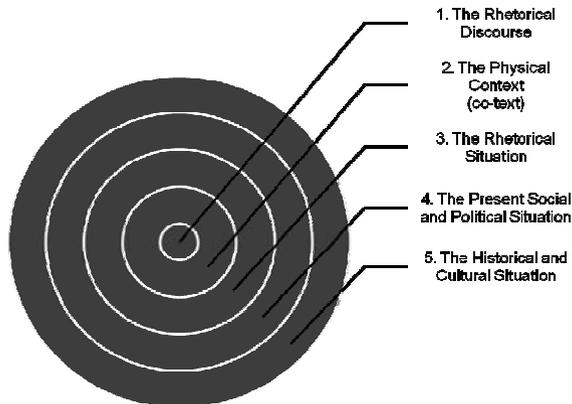
The viewpoint is the speaker's, and with this viewpoint we can carry out a situational analysis with two purposes. Firstly as a tool for the speaker who wishes to examine the constraints he has to relate in order to create a rhetorical discourse. Secondly, the analysis can function as a tool for the researcher who seeks to examine how a speaker has acted in a certain situation – for instance how ethical or effective his speech was.

However in its simplicity this model does not manifest the fragmented and mediated situationality of contemporary culture. This changeable sea of previous, present and coming situations would be more like this illustration:

Figure 2: A situational-contextual model
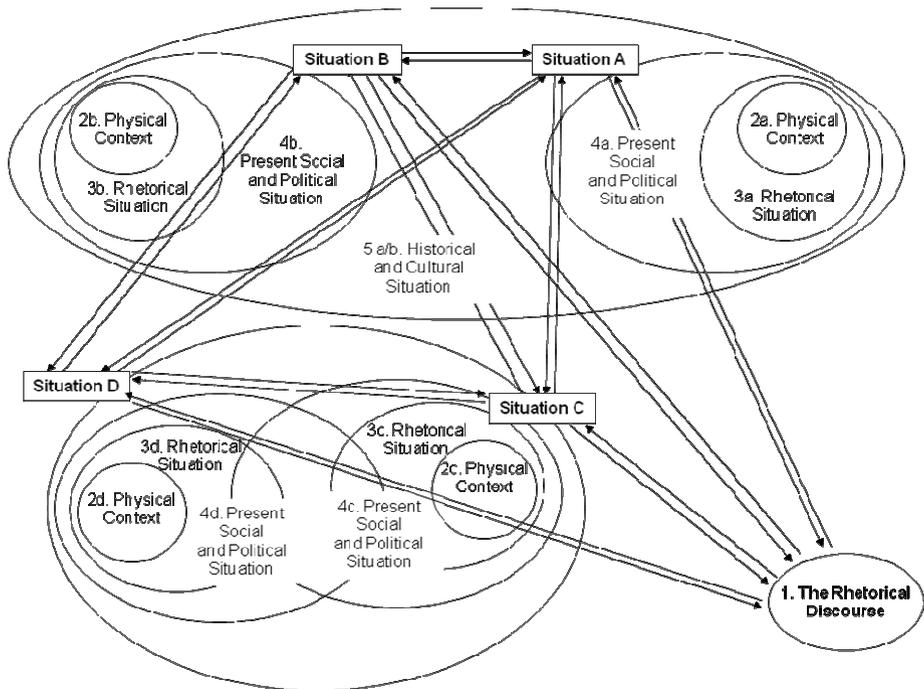
This in many ways resembles Bitzer's remarks that situations '*can become weakened in structure due to complexity or disconnectedness*' (Bitzer, 1968: 12). Such weakening, he continues, can have several reasons:
    1/ a single situation may involve numerous exigences
    2/ exigences in the same situation may be incompatible

3/ two or more simultaneous situations can compete for our attention
4/ at a given moment persons comprising the audience of situation A may also be the audience of situations B, C, and D
5/ the rhetorical audience may be scattered, uneducated regarding its duties and powers or may it may dissipate
6/ constraints may be limited in number and force, and they may be incompatible.

All these circumstances are typical characteristics of the contemporary public sphere. However, the challenge for Bitzer's theory – and even for figure two – is that it is still a relatively static description of a reality that is dynamic and ever-changing.

In order to grasp and understand the circumstances and constraints for rhetoric in such a society, I believe that three ways of rhetorical research may prove fruitful. Firstly, we should try to explore and map the floating and changeable situationality of our time. Secondly, we should move our attention from *rhetor-text* to *text-audience*. While relatively common in media studies, audience research is not often used in rhetorical studies (Benoit and Smythe, 2003). However, we have to – or at least rhetoricians have to – examine situations of reception and study conditions and circumstances for the journeys rhetorical discourses make (cf. Hariman and Lucaites, 2007; Kjeldsen, 2007; Vågnes, 2007). Which part of a speech gets its own life? Where and how do rhetorical fragments travel, and how are they used and re-used? Thirdly, rhetorical studies have to take a sociological turn, using insights from the social sciences. The issues at stake in the Bitzer-Vatz debate, for example, are in many ways parallel to the discussions in sociology about structure and agency. Thus, it might be prove useful to apply Anthony Giddens' structuration theory (cf. Giddens, 1979, 1984; Stones, 2005) in examining rhetoric in a complex, fragmented and hypermediated world.

So, rhetorical research focused on fragmented and dynamic situationality, rhetorical reception and journeys of discourse, plus sociological structuration, I believe, can help us understand the institutional and communicative circumstances of rhetorical discourse in our time. How exactly to do this, we will, however, have to discuss another day.

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NOTES

[1] Cf. I. A. Richards' theory of meaning in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, where he states that '*what a word means is the missing parts of the contexts from which it draws its delegated efficacy*' (Richards, 1965 (1936): 35).

What is news?
Young media consumers' perspectives

Ebba Sundin

1. INTRODUCTION

For a long time, local newspapers have played a prominent role in providing people with their daily news. In many countries, governments have recognized the importance of newspapers for democracy, providing them with subsidies in attempts to balance the market mechanisms. Nevertheless, we talk about newspapers as 'paper papers' but we also need to add technological solutions like online editions and news provided to cell phones. Some newspapers have met the challenge and invested in new technologies, while other papers are waiting and see what will happen.

No matter how the news is brought to the consumer (evidently TV and radio must also be taken into consideration), they have an important role in the orientation of everyday life. Earlier studies have shown that newspapers could be seen as tools for their readers (cf. Park, 1926; Berelson, 1949; Kimball, 1959; Wright, 1964). This may be applied to all new media devices, as they become more integrated and able to carry content belonging to what has been referred as interpersonal and mass communication.

In this chapter the traditional interpretation of news (as playing an important role in everyday life) will be followed but the focus will be on how news content applies to pre-teen children, both in the way they describe news and how they tell about news stories read in newspapers. The aim of the chapter is two-fold; the first part will focus on theories and previous research within this field, while the second part will focus on empirical findings on Swedish and Canadian children's own ways of describing and re-telling news stories. This part will also highlight some general issues like choice of methods, theoretical considerations and the

problem of looking beyond or away from the data in the attempt to generalise the conclusions.

2. THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN SOCIALIZATION

Theories of socialization are part of the social sciences and mostly refer to the interpretations of how a child becomes a part of his/her society. Traditionally, the process of socialization starts within the family. During the child's growth, the process becomes more complicated. The mass media were not initially recognized as an agent of socialization. On the contrary, the mass media were seen as a threat to a child's socialization process mainly through parents and school (McQuail, 2005). In this perspective, the mass media discussed were usually TV, film and video. Newspapers have not been blamed for undermining the process of socialization. Instead they have been used in schools to support textbooks for a variety of subjects to give pupils examples from real life. But this 'good' side of socialization has not aroused much interest among media researchers. Instead the focus on media and children has been on the negative effects and on other mass media than newspapers. Therefore, newspaper studies in this field are quite rare and only little theory building has been derived from this particular research area.

2.1. The recognition of mass media

Mass media as an agent in the process of socialization started to be recognized during the 1970s and the interest has increased especially within theories of consumer socialization (Gunter and Fernham, 1998) and political socialization (Buckingham, 2000). Studies in these areas include mass media in general. The view of children and the length of childhood have also changed. It is more common to give children more credit as competent individuals (cf. Qvortrup, 1994; James, Jenks and Prout, 1998; Olesen, 1999; Lindstrom, 2003; Christensen and Prout, 2005). Christensen and James (2000) state that there has been a paradigm shift repositioning children as subjects instead of as research objects. But there are also complications in contemporary childhood, shaping the young generation. Lindstrom describes younger children as

> … the first generation born with a mouse in their hands, and a computer screen as their window on the world. [...] It is a truly interactive generation, and one that's only known instant gratification. The term 'information

overload' is irrelevant to them. [...] The two main features of this generation is that they require their lives to be interactive and instant (Lindstrom, 2003: 24).

He continues to refer to the children as the '24/7-generation', meaning that they have an awareness of what is going on around them and if they need to make a decision they want to do it instantly. It is not only the new media environment that has shaped them. According to Lindstrom, children grow up more exposed than earlier generations to anxiety and lack of trust. They grow up faster and therefore are more demanding as consumers than previous generations. Consumer behaviour in relation to media use is one of the focuses within the research field of children and media. Another focus is political socialization with more emphasis on news media. According to Buckingham (2000), for some researchers of political socialization, television has played a pre-eminent role in the political understanding of young people. In his own research of news programmes for young people, he concludes that young people are not apathetic and ignorant of politics but they have been positively excluded from the domain because young people are not defined in society as political subjects. Therefore, he claims '*news has particular* educational *responsibilities, which could and should be fulfilled much more effectively than they are at present.*' (Buckingham, 2000: 218 – emphasis in original).

A more traditional path in the research of children and media are the effect studies, especially in terms of media violence. In the 1970s and 1980s, an overt fear became widespread regarding of the effects on children exposed to media content. Winn (1977) described children as TV abusers, Postman (1982) talked about the disappearance of childhood, and Meyrowitz (1985: 237) about the blurring of childhood and adulthood 'at home in television land'. The TV and video generation was replaced two decades later by the net generation. The research focus shifted from TV to new technology, especially computer games and the internet. Today, the media landscape is even more complex with challenges for both media researchers and media producers. Jenkins (2006: 16) talks about '*an era where media will be everywhere*'. This convergence culture, starting with popular culture, will have an impact on education and democratic citizenship, and ' … *in the ways we think about our relations to media [...] how we learn, work, participate in the political process, and connect with other people around the world*' (Jenkins, 2006: 22–23). How far away this future is and how global it will be, are questions still to be discussed. It is also important to keep in mind that even if the distinction between different media is harder to define, research

focussing on a specific mass medium is still in fashion, for example television exposure and eating disorders among children (Moriarty and Harrison, 2008).

2.2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON CHILDREN AND NEWS

As already pointed out, the research of children and news does not play a major part in studies within the field of children and media. Even so, it is impossible to paint the whole picture on a few pages. Most important is to recognize the different areas found within the research of children and news.

Firstly, there do of course exist studies of children's media use and some of these also reveal information on children's news consumption. Newspaper publishers have also been especially interested to collect data on children and adolescents' interest in reading news. During the last decade the interest in children's media use has grown because of the interest in studying new patterns in media use. For example, 12 European countries participated in the project *Young People, New Media* conducted at the turn of the millennium (Livingstone and Bovill 2001; Livingstone, 2002). Another, and a slightly more recent, example is the Canadian project *Young Canadians in a Wired World*, initiated by the interest group Media Awareness Network (2005). The Swedish governmental committee, Media Council (Medierådet, 2006) made a similar study in 2006.

There are also some Norwegian and Swedish studies of children's media use concerning news content (Wale, 1982, 2001; Sande, 1991; Sundin, 1999, 2004). Few studies focus on children especially regarding consuming news media; it is more common to study media use among children overall. For example, in Sweden statistics are published annually on media usage among people of different ages. From this we can learn that in 2007, 36 per cent of children aged 9 to 14 read the newspaper on a daily basis and that they spend on average 14 minutes reading it (Mediebarometer, 2008).

Secondly, there are studies about children's sense-making and interpretation of the news content. Already in the late 1940s, Schramm emphasized this when he wrote:

> *When a child starts to read a newspaper, he usually begins with the comics and the pictures. He proceeds to the sport news, the human interest stories, and sensational stories of crime and disaster, all before he makes much use of*

public affairs news. Perhaps he has an experience in which he is able to make not-too-long-delayed use of something he has read in the paper. Perhaps it helps him to answer a question at school, or to take his raincoat and avoid a soaking, or to avoid a street which is closed for repairs – in other words, to avoid trouble by being informed (Schramm, 1949: 262).

This article in *Journalism Quarterly* was concerned with the nature of news in general and Schramm's main interest was to present a theory based on the rewards of reading news. This can be seen as an early development of the uses and gratifications model later presented by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974). Schramm continued to have an interest in children's newspaper reading and showed with Lyle and Parker (1960) that over time both boys and girls had an increased interest for local news. Wale (1982) had an early interest in studying both reading habits and attitudes towards newspapers among Norwegian children. Studies of children's interest in and interpretations of news have also been conducted in Sweden (Sundin, 2004). Most of the studies have concerned children and newspapers, but there are of course also studies about children and news using other perspectives. The issue of children's fear of news has been covered by for example, Cantor and Nathanson (1996) and Walma van der Molen, Valkenburg, and Peeters (2002) among others.

A third approach is to look at the content, namely how children are portrayed by mass media and what kind of special materials media produce for children. During the 1990s several studies of the portrayal of children were conducted in different countries like the U.S., Great Britain, Norway and Sweden (cf. Children Now, 1999, 2001; Children's Express, 1999; Sande, 1993; Sundin, 1998; Söderlind and Engwall, 2005). The initiatives behind some of the studies were taken by organizations concerned with children's issues, and Kunkel and Smith (1999) claimed that the interest in how children were portrayed in the media was surprisingly low among media researchers. Many of the studies were conducted on the initiative of organizations. For example the World Association of Newspapers, WAN, published a global report on children in newspapers in 2003 (Raundalen and Steen, 2003). This report was based on previous NIE reports in the Nordic countries 2002 and the United States 1996. Also, data was drawn from four longitudinal studies in Sweden and Norway (Raundalen and Steen, 1994, 1996, 1998 and 2000). The longitudinal studies are surveys with children expressing their attitudes to the portrayal of children in the newspapers' news coverage. Such studies form a combination of the second and third

approaches to the research field. Another focus is the special material newspapers produce for young readers. One early study is from Greenland by Kleivan (1979) on the children's page in the *Atuagagdliutit*, a newspaper that had published children's material since 1932. In Norway and Sweden, there are also some studies describing the distribution of children's material in newspapers (Sundfjord, 1999; Sundin, 2004).

Fourthly, and finally, media literacy is a field of its own, combining research from various disciplines like media and communications, education, pedagogy and psychology with a focus on education in media issues and media use, in order to understand the role of media in society and their impact on individuals. The focus is not only on children or adolescents: Research projects within media literacy can also apply to adults. In this literature overview, studies on children using newspapers in school are chosen. In many cases these studies have been conducted based on the initiative of newspaper organizations. For example WAN conducted five world surveys to map the countries participating in NiE programs between 1989 and 2001. In the last survey, Steen (2001) shows that 52 countries were participating in some NiE programs. Often studies of NiE projects focus on the effects of using newspapers at school. This is a common request from the newspaper organizations to find out if children exposed to newspapers in schools will turn out to be readers. Most researchers would agree that this long-term effect cannot be studied in isolation from other factors forming the habits of a young person. Some studies have focused on short-term effects, stating that children do read the paper more frequently after NiE projects (cf. Christensen, 1996; Meijeraan, 1996; van de Put and den Boer, 1997; Yamamoto, 1997).

Research on children and media has traditionally been focused on the effects of mediated violence. In particular the TV medium has generated interest among researchers. With the arrival of the contemporary generation of new technologies in most families, the concern shifted towards computers and violent computer games. Later, the research expanded to include the internet. Not all research within these areas has its focus on the negative issues of media use. What can be concluded (when it comes to research interest in children and news) is that some attention has been spent on the relationship between children and newspapers. In this short presentation, four different approaches have been suggested. As can be seen from the examples, some of the approaches originate from an interest from outside academia, from interest organizations like the Canadian Media Awareness Network,

governmental committees like the Swedish Media Council, and news-paper publishers associations, including the world organization WAN and a series of national associations of newspaper publishers.

3. CHILDREN'S NEWS PERSPECTIVES

The empirical findings presented in this chapter come from two different studies. The first was conducted in Sweden in 2001 with 719 children in two middle-sized cities in the southern part of the country. The second study was conducted in Canada in 2006 with 149 children in various areas of Toronto. The aims of the studies were different, but they were conducted in a similar way with a questionnaire given to children in classrooms. The age group was also the same, spanning from 9 to 13. Some of the questions were identical and for the purpose of this chapter, four of them have been chosen. The first three questions deal with the concept of news. The children were asked to define news in their own words and also to say where news comes from. They also were asked if they thought news was important. The third question was about re-telling a news story read in a newspaper. The questionnaire had both structured and unstructured questions. The aim was that the children were given the chance to answer largely in their own words. The children spent about 40 minutes answering the entire questionnaire unaided by teachers. The task was not a part of any particular lessons and all the children were explained the objectives of the studies. In this comparison between the answers from the Swedish and Canadian children, the data has been treated qualitatively to find patterns in the answers among the children. The choice of the methodologies has its links to phenomenography, namely the search for structural aspects between an individual and a phenomenon (Marton, 1988). But even if phenomenography usually aims to find differences in conceptions in order to explain and understand why there are different learning outcomes, the basic ideas will work well in studying similarities and differences among individuals and groups. One of the fundamental starting points of this research tradition is to look into how individuals comprehend phenomena around them, and this is very much the case in analyzing children's reflections on news. The data presented here can provide some categories of how they understand and conceptualize news.

3.1. Children describing news

The individual answers from the children show patterns of how they understand the definition of news. The most common pattern is that children describe news as events that have happened or that will happen. Children used key words like 'events' and 'what's going on'. A more abstract definition given by a minority of children is 'information'. It either tells us that these children do not know how to define news or that they conceptualize a more abstract way of explaining as in the first example given below. Additionally, a small group of children sees news as something 'unknown'.

The following quotations show two different approaches to answering the question. The first answer is more abstract, the second shows how a child exemplifies the answer in an attempt to explain the meaning of news:

> *News is what goes on and what catches our opinion – it is a way of informing you what goes on that you don't know about* (Boy, 12 years old, Canada)

> *For example, letters with anthrax, mailed to the King, he is now in the hospital* (Girl, 12 years old, Sweden)

Another dimension can be traced in the answers. Children have two approaches when it comes to defining the time frame of news. It is either short or not significant at all. The overall impression of the answers from both countries is that most children do define news as nearby in time.

Where does news come from? Two types of answers stand out. News comes either from sources or producers. The two categories show that children either think of news as something derived from a place or people or as something that is produced by media. 'Everywhere, anywhere, around the world, everyday life, people' are examples of how children describe news coming from sources. This is the most common way to describe the origin of news. A smaller group of the children are more oriented towards the production of news, describing media or journalists as the origins of news. Some children also give a combination of the two categories in their explanations:

> *News comes from everybody. It starts somewhere like a country and people just spread it, e.g. newspapers, television, radio* (Boy, 11 years old, Canada)

> *It must be people creating news when something is happening and then the reporter will take care of the rest* (Boy, 11 years old, Sweden)

It seems that it is a common view among children to see news as something that has its origins far away. Very often the answers will include remote places such as foreign countries or the world. Very few emphasize that news comes from their own local environment.

The majority of the children in this study claim that news is important because they and all others need to know what is going on. Why it is important to know what is going on has the same explanations among Swedish and Canadian children. In some cases the children also take an active role in knowing:

> *If we know what is going on then we can make better choices* (Girl, 12 years old, Canada)

> *It is good to know in case they warn about icy roads so I can tell mom and dad* (Girl, 12 years old, Sweden)

These examples imply that there is a certain group of children viewing news as important for their own actions and as an aid in their (or other people's) everyday life decisions. It is interesting to note that children here see news as something local which in a way contradicts the answers to the previous question.

3.2. Re-telling news stories

The children were also asked to recount a story they remembered reading in a newspaper. In total, 369 children wrote short stories. Most of these stories are local news about sport, crime and accidents. There are no differences between children in Sweden and Canada when it comes to the choice of what to recount. Crimes and accidents occurring in their own 'neighbourhood' are the most retold. For example, in one of the Swedish groups, the news about a big fire in the centre of the city (including a popular candy store) was frequently chosen by both boys and girls. But some children also give examples of odd stories, like the following two:

> *Once I read a story about a man that was working on a house, he was using a nail gun to put on roof tiles, the next day he went to the doctor saying he had a toothache. It turns out that he's got a nail on the root of his mouth. OUCH!*

> *He had the nail removed and named 'the luckiest man ever'* (Boy, 12 years old, Canada)

> *It was a truck that was going to a city with hens. But at the roundabout the truck tipped a little so some cages flew out and the birds got loose. The police had to chase the birds at the roundabout …* (Girl, 10 years, Sweden)

The girl also writes that she doesn't know why she thought it was an interesting story, she just thought so. Road accidents, plane crashes, shooting incidents and stabbings are mentioned by many children. When it comes to crime stories, many of those mentioned involve children. In Sweden some girls retold the fascinating story about sand from the Sahara covering cars in their hometown. They experienced it, one girl even told she had kept some sand, and they also read about it in the local paper. And why the story was so interesting was that it felt so unreal that sand could be transported by wind all the way from Africa. When it comes to the crime stories, many children say that they find them scary or terrible. One 12-year-old girl in Canada tells the story of a girl kidnapped and killed, and she writes that she was really overcome with sadness and could not stop thinking of her. Another pattern of choosing news stories among children is to retell from areas of special interests. This may include stories involving certain sports stars or topics like history, economics and animals. No matter what story the children decided to retell, it is obvious that they do not chose the latest story read. In most cases the stories were retold because they had an impact on the readers. This implies that some of the selected news events occurred a long time ago.

4. CONCLUSION

It seems that already in 1949 Schramm had the answer to how children read the news. He based his conclusions on empirical findings among American children, but the same patterns can be seen among Swedish and Canadian children nearly 50 years later.

Both the studies presented in this chapter were mainly conducted in a quantitative mode. Here, some of the data have been re-used and presented in a more qualitative mode. The aim has been to convey some understanding of how children may reflect on news items. But by so doing, a lot of questions and problems have been brought to our attention. Are the children's answers just fragments or do they give some indications of what could be patterns in children's perspectives? Can we

regard the data as empirical findings or should we see its value as the start for developing another research projects with more refined methods in order to gain a better understanding of how children reflect on news in order to explain the similarities and differences. For example, one needs to have a better understanding of how the perspectives have been formed and what has been the role of parents, school, peers, etc. Also, it is impossible to deduce from the answers why most children think that news is important. Have they developed a moralistic attitude, thinking it is the correct answer despite if they have any interest themselves in taking part of news content? This could also be revealed in another research setting where they would be asked to tell more in detail about their own habits in consuming news, no matter what news medium we are talking about.

An analysis will always be dependent on the theoretical framework. The importance of socialization as a process for maintaining democracy is a fundamental assumption for this work. Sweden and Canada are both Western democracies. But is it possible to draw conclusions that Swedish and Canadian children follow the same reflective pattern merely because the answers are so similar? Sometimes we just need to see these patterns of similarities or differences to develop new ideas and create new ways to investigate a phenomenon. The big challenge is to find ways to move away from the concept of traditional news media and discuss children's perspectives on news in relation to new technologies that might also shed light on future demands from news consumers of all ages.

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The internet user as producer[1]

Beybin Kejanlioğlu

1. INTRODUCTION

This essay is an anarchistic 'thought experiment' on authorship and experience in the age of electronic networking through a reading of Walter Benjamin's 1934 address to the Parisian Institute for the Study of Fascism, 'The Author as Producer', along with other related essays. The choice of presenting the problem via quotations below is deliberate, based on Benjamin's use of quotations as a key feature of his work. For him, the function of quotations is not the verification and documentation of views. Acting like '*robbers by the roadside who make an armed attack and relieve an idler of his convictions*' (quoted in Arendt, 1992: 43) quotations have a destructive power, tearing fragments out of their context and rearranging them in a way to influence each other.

Even though the first part of the essay is more descriptive and the quotations used are more documenting in nature, this first part can still be considered as consisting of 'thought fragments', an incomplete set of elements, pushing, pulling and changing each other, none being 'essential' or 'primary'. Quotations in the second part of the essay flow from and are interrupted by such distinct fields as intellectual history, political theory, journalism studies, literary criticism, the internet and digital arts. All quotations were used in creative way by the workshop participants of the 2008 European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School in Tartu, in order to collectively produce a series of textual collages.

2. GAMBLING WITH THE BENJAMIN'S THEORY OF EXPERIENCE

Walter Benjamin's complex theory of experience shows his ambivalent attitude toward the modern era. Especially when he draws our attention to the horrors of the first world war, he talks about the decline of the

'*communicable experience*' or the '*poverty of experience*', which in turn gives way to a new kind of barbarism, even to the exhaustion of culture (Jay, 2005: 330). The most explicit expression of his lament for lost experience can be found in his 1936 essay, 'The Storyteller', in which the rise of the novel and the replacement of narration by information are held responsible for the decay of experience and 'aura' (Benjamin, 1992a: 87–88; 1992b: 155).

Benjamin also sees a new opportunity in the crisis and/or poverty of experience: It can lead to something new, which may be outliving culture as it is known today. Technologically reproduced art that brings art to the masses, photographs and films that violate auratic distance, and even the incoherent information in the newspapers may prepare the way for salvation (Benjamin, 1992c: 211–244 and 1999a: 741; Jay, 2005: 333). Complicating his theory of experience is Benjamin's distinction between sensory experience (*Erlebnis*) and experience proper (*Erfahrung*). If for all its atrophy and decay, some *Erfahrung* were still possible, it would involve the allegoric translation of traces of the past into the present, a method that acknowledges the shocks of our modern life and saves them for a future realization of experience (Jay, 2005).

2.1. 'Information' as a source of lamentation for the loss of experience

Benjamin's two essays, 'The Storyteller' and 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' are taken here as examples about his lament for the decline of 'storytelling', 'tradition' and 'experience'. The most telling cause of the loss of experience was the development of 'information' as a new form of communication. Yet before that, the novel and the printed word had already impoverished it:

> *The earliest symptom of a process whose end is the decline of storytelling is the rise of the novel at the beginning of modern times. What distinguishes the novel from the story (and from the epic in the narrower sense) is its essential dependence on the book. The dissemination of the novel became possible only with the invention of printing …* (Benjamin, 1992a: 87).

For Benjamin, the notion that differentiates the storyteller from the novelist is collective experience:

> *The storyteller takes what he tells from experience –his own or that reported by others. And he in turn makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale. The novelist has isolated himself. The birthplace of the novel is the solitary individual, who is no longer able to express himself by giving*

examples of his most important concerns, is himself uncounselled, and cannot counsel others (Benjamin, 1992a: 87).

Information confronted storytelling in a more menacing way than the novel did:

> *… we recognize that with the full control of the middle class those elements which has the press as one of its most important instruments in fully developed capitalism, there emerges a form of communication which, no matter how far back its origin may lie, never before influenced the epic form in a decisive way. But now it does exert such an influence … This new form of communication is information ...* (Benjamin, 1992a: 88).

For Benjamin, information is incompatible with storytelling:

> *The intelligence that came from afar-whether the spatial kind from foreign countries or the temporal kind of tradition-possessed an authority which gave it validity, even when it was not subject to verification. Information, however, lays claim to prompt verifiability. The prime requirement is that it appears 'understandable in itself.' Often it is no more exact than the intelligence of earlier centuries was. But while the latter was inclined to borrow from the miraculous, it is indispensable for information to sound plausible. Because of this it proves incompatible with the spirit of storytelling* (Benjamin, 1992a: 88).

In 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire', the same theme is repeated in the context of the loss of experience. Along with the principles of information, the technical characteristics of newspapers are also mentioned as contributing to this loss:

> *If it were the intention of the press to have the reader assimilate the information it supplies as part of his own experience, it would not achieve its purpose. But its intention is just the opposite, and it is achieved: to isolate what happens from the realm in which it could affect the experience of the reader. The principles of journalistic information (freshness of the news, brevity, comprehensibility, and, above all, lack of connection between the individual news items) contribute as much to this as does the make-up of pages and the paper's style … Another reason for the isolation of information from experience is that the former does not enter 'tradition.' Newspapers appear in large editions. Few readers can boast of any information which another reader may require of him* (Benjamin, 1992b: 155).

Benjamin, in his historical narrative of the changing modes of communication, locates the story as one of the oldest forms of narrative. He places it in sharp contrast with both the novel and information that competed with and eventually replaced the novel. In 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' he also mentions the replacement of information by sensation. The rise of information, then of sensation, for him, reflects the increasing atrophy of experience. Whereas the purpose of information is to convey a happening *per se*, the story embeds the happening '*in the life of the storyteller in order to pass it on as experience to those listening*' (Benjamin, 1992b: 155–156). For him:

> *Every morning brings us the news of the globe, and yet we are poor in noteworthy stories. This is because no event any longer comes to us without already being shot through with explanation. … Actually, it is half the art of storytelling to keep a story free from explanation as one reproduces it. … The most extraordinary things, marvellous things, are related with the greatest accuracy, but the psychological connection of the events is not forced on the reader. It is left up to him to interpret things the way he understands them, and thus the narrative achieves an amplitude that information lacks* (Benjamin, 1992a: 89).

2.2. The 'operating writer's journalism and the newspaper as a source of bliss?

Benjamin, in his 1934 essays like 'The Newspaper' or 'The Author as Producer' in which he cites 'The Newspaper' essay (compare 1999a: 741–742 with 1999b: 771–772), and in 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' emphasizes a Brechtian motif: The reader as ready to become a writer.

In 'The Author as Producer', starting from a discussion of the relation between content and form, politics and literature, Benjamin (1999b: 769–770) deliberately points at Sergei Tretiakov, a journalist and a propagandist, as an 'operating writer':

> *The correct political tendency of a work … includes its literary quality because it includes its literary tendency. … Rather than asking, 'What is the attitude of a work to the relations of production of its time?' I would like to ask, 'What is its position in them?' This question … is concerned … directly with the literary technique of works. … the concept of technique provides the dialectical starting point from which the unfruitful antithesis of form and content can be surpassed. … Sergei Tretiakov … this operating writer provides the most tangible example of the functional interdependence that*

> *always, and under all conditions, exists between the correct political tendency and progressive literary technique. …*

Benjamin (1999b: 770) follows Tretiakov in his distinction between the operating writer and the informing writer. The operating writer struggles and intervenes actively rather than just reporting and playing the spectator. Tretiakov's activities in the 'Communist Lighthouse' commune, such as calling for mass meetings, creating wall newspapers, editing and reporting for newspapers, introducing radio and mobile movie houses, in short all the propagandistic activities to promote collective farms and agriculture are cited as examples of the mission of the operating writer.

Actually, Benjamin's deliberate choice of Tretiakov allows him to question the conceptions of literary forms or genres in his age, and the influence of technical factors. Those technical factors bring us to the newspaper as the scene of 'literary confusion':

> *In our writing, opposites that in happier ages fertilized one another have become insoluble antinomies. Thus, science and belles letters, criticism and literary production, education and politics, fall apart in disorder and lose all connection with one another. The scene of this literary confusion is the newspaper; its content, 'subject matter' that denies itself any other form of organization than that imposed on it by readers' impatience* (Benjamin, 1999b. 771; see also 1999a: 741).

For him, the publishers constantly inaugurate new columns to address the reader's opinions and questions to exploit the impatience of people who think they have the right to see their own interests expressed. In this exploitation, however, lies a dialectical moment for Benjamin:

> *the decline of writing in this press turns out to be the formula for its restoration in a different one. For since writing gains in breadth what it loses in depth, the conventional distinction between author and public that the press has maintained is disappearing in a socially desirable way* (1999a: 741; 1999b: 771).

This social desirability rests on the idea that '*the reader is at all times ready to become a writer –that is, a describer or even a prescriber. As an expert … he gains access to authorship*' (1999a: 741; 1999b: 771). Writing so, he questions the journalistic expertise: '*Literary competence is no longer founded on specialized training but is now based on polytechnical education, and thus becomes public property*' (1999a: 742; 1992c: 225).

The atrophy of experience seems to become repaired by the plurality and the confusion of forms and by the active collaboration of the ordinary people as reading public. This is actually what Bertolt Brecht supported in his writings on epic theatre and radio. Brecht says in his 'The Radio as an Apparatus of Communication' (1932): '*radio is one-sided when it should be two*' and he makes the following suggestion: '*change this apparatus over from distribution to communication*'. For him, '*the radio should step out of the supply business and organize its listeners as suppliers*'.

Terry Eagleton (1976: 60) claims that Benjamin and Brecht ground their views on the principle that '*art is first of all a social practice*', and he continues:

> *the truly revolutionary artist … is never concerned with the art-object alone, but with the means of its production. 'Commitment' is more than just a matter of presenting correct political opinions in one's art; it reveals itself in how far the artist reconstructs the artistic forms at his disposal, turning authors, readers and spectators into collaborators* (Eagleton, 1976:62).

Yet, not all of Benjamin's writings takes side with Brecht, and Benjamin's use of epic theatre is only added to the conditions of technology and to other artistic currents (Dadaism, and mainly, Surrealism) to reveal shock experiences in modern times, intensifying the ambivalence in Benjamin's oeuvre.

2.3. '*Shock' as modern experience*

For Susan Buck-Morss (2000:104) '*Benjamin's understanding of modern experience was neurological*' and he considered the battlefield experience of shock in the World War I as '*the norm' in modern life: 'Perceptions that once occasioned conscious reflection were now the source of shock impulses which consciousness must parry*' (Buck-Morss, 2000:104). From workers in the factory to the film audience and to the dwellers of modern urban life, almost all the activities were 'sealed off from experience'. Conditioned response replaced memory.

> *The human sensorium changes from a mode of being 'in touch' with reality into a means of blocking out reality. Aesthetics – sensory perception-becomes anaesthetics, a numbing of the senses' cognitive capacity that destroys the human organism's power to respond politically even when self-preservation is at stake* (Buck-Morss, 2000: 104).

For Terry Eagleton (1976: 63), too, '*shock*' is '*a central category in Benjamin's aesthetics*'. Yet Eagleton is more optimistic:

> *Watching a film, moving in a city crowd, working at a machine are all 'shock' experiences which strip objects and experience of their 'aura'; and the artistic equivalent of this is the technique of 'montage'. Montage – the connecting of dissimilars to shock an audience into sight-becomes for Benjamin a major principle of artistic production in a technological age* (Eagleton, 1976: 63).

These quotations above are not simply different interpretations of Benjamin; they are what Benjamin's 'Janus-face' shows us. Benjamin seems to ask us to put forward his contradictory statements one by one without asking for their reconciliation. He does not ask for a smooth flow of ideas and images, something which can only be illusionary in modern times. Epic theatre, film, radio, literature, photography – all take up the procedure of montage, the disruption, the interruption – which in Adorno's philosophy turns into a 'logic of disintegration'.

3. Montage

The question for the second part of the essay is how we can politically reflect on Benjamin's ambivalent concept of experience today? How can his evaluation of information, the newspaper, artistic/literary forms and authorship make sense in the electronic networking age? And how can we link them to the new media, journalism and art?

3.1. The author as digital producer/engineer/hacker

Geoff Cox and Joasia Krysa (2005: 7–8)[2] evaluate Benjamin's statements in 'The Author as Producer' about the intervention of the author into the production process in the context of global networks served by information technologies. They consider this act of intervention as the work of an engineer. An 'engineer' for them performs both technical and cultural activities, applies knowledge productively and for the public good. In an age of flexible, decentralized networks, they ask whether Benjamin's insights are still viable.

> *The continued significance of 'The Author as Producer' essay lies in requiring the author or cultural producer to act as an active agent, to intervene in the production process and property relations; to transform the apparatus.*

This is the 'organising function' that Benjamin proposes, demanding the author reflect upon the production process –setting the laboratory in opposition to the finished work of art (or commodity form) (Cox and Krysa, 2005: 10–11).

Undoubtedly critical work on the nature of digital culture requires continual upgrade – proposing 'technical innovation and revolutionary use-value over mere modishness' as Benjamin puts it – in contrast to the 'naïve optimism' of much media practice. He further stresses that it is simply not enough for a producer to have political commitment, however radical it may seem, 'without at the same time being able to think through in a really revolutionary way the question of their own work, its relationship to the means production and its technique' (Cox and Krysa, 2005: 11–12).

3.1.1. Hacking

An activity like hacking perhaps offers some hope and, at least in potential, allows for the synthesis of commitment and quality that Benjamin proposes (Cox and Krysa, 2005: 24).

The activity of hacking (is) 'the production of production'. (A Hacker's Manifesto, 2004, quoted in Cox and Krysa, 2005: 24).

Free Software/Open Source and hacker ethics can add much to the reflections on the democratization of our technological universe. Hackers offer considerable alternatives to property rights and commodification of information. We need new modes of experience which are immanent to the hackers' practices in the network society (Taş, 2007: 341).

3.1.2. Wiki

Wiki is a piece of server software that allows users to freely create and edit Web page content using any Web browser. Wiki supports hyperlinks and has simple text syntax for creating new pages and crosslinks between internal pages on the fly.
    Wiki is unusual among group communication mechanisms in that it allows the organization of contributions to be edited in addition to the content itself.
    Like many simple concepts, 'open editing' has some profound and subtle effects on Wiki usage. Allowing everyday users to create and edit any page in a Web site is exciting in that it encourages democratic use of the Web and promotes content composition by nontechnical users (Wikipedia, 2008).

Many … (people) use 'Wikis': a collaborative authoring system for hyperlinked documents on the web … User modifications reveal some of the cultural contradictions, in as much as they appear to undermine the intended consumer and producer distinction and at the same time emphasise the speed and sophistication of recuperation. The Wiki, both in terms of form and content is offered for continual update and will eventually inform a series of proposed workshops. As Benjamin notes, cultural production requires a pedagogic function. It must have the function of a model, turning consumers and readers alike into collaborators (Cox and Krysa, 2005: 22).

3.1.3. Istanbul Indymedia[3]

In the alternative media models that explicitly foreground participation, heavy critique on the hegemonic articulation of the professional identity can be found. In contrast, two-way communication and the right to communicate figure prominently in these models … These alternative models support … the democratization of communication, in which the receiver is seen as point of departure and in which is pleaded for increasing participation and for making media more accessible to non-professionals from different positions and backgrounds (Carpentier, 2007: 154).

The Istanbul Indymedia is a non-commercial, democratic collective of Istanbul independent media makers and media outlets, and serves as the local organizing unit of the global Indymedia network. (Istanbul Indymedia, 2008)

İstanbul Indymedia involves volunteer participants and allied collectives organized along anti-authoritarian principles of open and transparent decision-making processes, including open public meetings; a form of modified consensus; and the elimination of hierarchies. (Istanbul Indymedia, 2008)

Among its missions are:
- *To encourage a world where globalization is not about homogeneity and exploitation, but rather, about diversity and cooperation.*
- *To provide edited audio, video, and print stories of the above on the internet for independent media outlets and the general public.*
- *To offer community classes for training in internet and media skills.*
- *To encourage, facilitate, and support the creation of independent news gathering and organizations.*
  Get Involved
  This is your independent media center. As an all-volunteer organization, we need you to get involved! (Istanbul Indymedia, 2008)

3.2. Art and electronic mutability

> *Examining the Free Software Movement and Net Art, Josephine Berry Slater in 'Bare Code' … cites the award of a prize to the GNU / Linux operating system at the Art Electronica festival in 1999, and sees this as not only the 'Duchampian gesture of nominating a tool of production as a work of art', but also a classic example of the analogy between avant-garde art and free software in challenging myths concerning creative production. These issues relate to the collective nature of free software production but also to the breakdown of firm distinctions between producers and consumers … For Berry Slater, the overt reference to Benjamin's 'The Author as Producer' essay confirms an engagement with code as material and the relations of production that are expressed in the shared production of free software in the context of the informational economy. This allows her to question that if: 'net artists use proprietary software to produce their work, to what extent can they be said to be transforming the apparatus of production?' Not very much of course. Accordingly, she concludes:*
>
> *'A radical realization of art, then, would be the deposition of the sovereign producer and a return of the shared wealth of creativity to its true owners: the multitude. For this reason, a reappropriation and transformation of the artistic means of production comes to the fore –an opening up of cultural source codes to an undetermined end'.*
>
> *The opening up of source code and the apparatus in general allows new forms of practice to emerge. Benjamin's example of this regenerative process is the newspaper, as it throws into question a number of established separations – of academic and popular modes, of descriptive and creative writing, but perhaps most particularly the separation between writer and reader* (Cox and Krysa, 2005: 20–21).

Krzysztof Ziarek (2005: 219–223) thinks that in Web or Net art the relationship between the artwork and the audience is determined by a novel situation:

> *From October twentieth, 1995, Seiko MIKAMI has been showing her work 'Molecular Clinic 1.0' at ArtLab, in Tokyo. This is a work in which participants manipulate the atoms of a virtual spider that lives in the ArtLab server. The theme of this exhibition is 'molecular structures', and is a reference to the molecular biological paradigm that any biological liquid or solid can be artificially reconstructed through altering the molecular strings which compose it … The sum of interventions naturally affects the spider's living environment in unpredictable ways. In this context of unlimited transferability, innumerable combinations are possible, all woven together by the heartbeat of the computer's clock.*

… This project is both a test of bioinformatics processes, and a look at the unpredictable nature of both biology and virtuality. The very process of exhibiting this first on the internet is part of the artwork itself. The differences between users' experiences, prejudices and preferences, parameters are all part of this art work (Ziarek, 2005: 209).

With contemporary Web or Net art, art's relation to its audience finds itself determined by a novel situation, which might be described in a word as interactivity. The idea of participating in the mutation of bacteria or in the virtual 'genetic' evolution of a Web-based spider program introduce a new configuration of the relation between artworks and their 'audience' just in this sense that it becomes increasingly hard to describe the experience of art's audience as either passive or active. In fact, it seems inappropriate to speak in this case of an audience, and more fitting to describe the participants in such works as interactors (Ziarek, 2005: 219–220).

This, in turn leads us to question the notion of collectivity as the inter-actors do not know each other, and as they intervene in different tempo-ralities and from multiple and different locations.

This virtual network of interactions and its 'genetic' map reflect an important change in the mode of existence evidence by Web art. Such works are no longer just reproducible; they exist as virtual, and as such, remain intrinsically open to temporal interactions and interventions. If Benjamin chose to describe the then new phenomenon of film in terms of reproducibility and collective absorption, contemporary Web-base art would have to be characterized through features such as mutability and interactivity. … such work is not only intrinsically open to change through interaction but its very existence and success are predicated on the 'audience'-influenced mutation (Ziarek, 2005: 220).

For Ziarek, Web art exists virtually, and is open to fluid, temporal interactions and interventions. Today, we can talk about an art event, but not about an art object. Events are open to modalities, they are futural.

The preoccupation of twentieth-century art with art as a live 'event' has to do precisely with the reconfiguration of the artwork as an event, and of the constant tension between the object and the event dimensions of the artwork, which characterizes post-aesthetic art (Ziarek, 2005: 221).

Producing art outside of the aesthetic parameters, the avant-garde engages … with the technicization of experience. What emerges from this encounter is the poetic force of the event …

For Benjamin, the crucial distinction in understanding the changes in art's function was the one between manipulation of the audience and politicization. In the epoch of globalization, which seems to operate on the principle of shifting multiple and global interlinking, the question of art (and technology) might be posed in terms of the mode of relation instantiated in artworks: relations of power and manipulation, reflective of the world structured on the principle of domination, to recall Adorno, or relations that … undermine the idea of dominion. … Rather than being measured in terms of availability and information, relations in the artwork are given a non-manipulative momentum, and allowed to keep open the space of emancipation from power. … The mutability which comes into the foreground in recent art can be seen as underscoring precisely a transformation in the power momentum of relations. One could say that in the artwork power 'mutates', and comes to desist from its own manipulative and productionist drive, thereby becoming non-power, a silent mark of art's event. It is perhaps as such a mutation in power that art's politicization needs to be thought today (Ziarek, 2005: 224–225).

4. AN INCONCLUSIVE ENDING, OR THE QUESTIONS THAT PERSIST

Can Benjamin's insights now be considered as appropriate for describing the attributes of many internet users who are not only readers and viewers but also writers, producers, expressing and sharing their views, displaying their images? Can the internet be considered as democratically structured (at least for the internet-literate)? In other words, does a dialectical moment lie concealed in the use of military-and-market-based technology such as internet? Still in other words, does a focus on the user-producer already cover structural constraints and possibilities? Again in other words, does the democratization of the readership or its turn to authorship need more exploration to think through political processes and ethics? Is the factuality of science and the 'news' of the 'objective world' viable in a world of interactors? Does the 'subjectivity of art' turn into 'inter-subjectivity'? Do the aesthetic expressions of the subjective world turn into the ethical/political interactivity in the social world? Is collective experience disappearing? Can Benjamin's insights be taken together with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of rhizome (1987) and Hardt and Negri's (2004: 12–13; 2002: 311) reflections on the organisation of the internet, and of the multitude?

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NOTES

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[2]   I thank İnan Özdemir for directing my attention to this source.

[3]   I thank Güneş Can Acar for helping me to have an access to alternative news websites.

'Feeling the pain of others': Exploring cosmopolitan empathy in relation to distant suffering

Maria Kyriakidou

1. INTRODUCTION

Images of disasters and scenes of human suffering have become a regular feature of media experience. Events such as 9/11 and the Southeast Asian Tsunami have monopolised media attention for quite some time in the recent past. They have become part of a series of tragedies that the world has come to witness through their global coverage, such as the Ethiopian famine in the 1980s or the Gulf War in 1990–91. More recently, the Sichuan Earthquake in China in May 2008 has attracted worldwide attention due to its destructive force and devastating death toll. *'To watch television in our culture is'*, in the words of Robins (1994: 457), *'to be exposed to violence, suffering and death.'* Albeit an obvious overstatement, this argument points to a morbid truth, namely that a great part of the way *'the globe appears on the world's screens'* (Silverstone, 2007: 10) is through scenes of tragedy and catastrophe. The mediated images of distant strangers are often images of vulnerability and suffering. As such, the media are potentially instrumental in a *'global discourse of compassion'* (Höijer, 2004), which frames political and commonsense discourses on global crises and disasters.

This discourse of global compassion is becoming central in recently revived academic debates on the concept of cosmopolitanism and its significance for social experience in the context of globalisation. It is this discussion that constitutes the framework for the present chapter, which aims at introducing an empirical dimension to what has so far been a largely theoretical debate. Taking as a theoretical starting point the concept of cosmopolitanism and in particular of cosmopolitan empathy, as elaborated in the work of Ulrich Beck and the literature on distant

suffering, the discussion will be based on a study of Greek audiences with regard to distant disasters. Far from attempting to make a broader theoretical argument about the relation between cosmopolitanism and the media or about charitable action at-a-distance, this chapter will focus on the concept of empathy towards distant suffering others. Through illustrations based on audience responses, the aim of the chapter is to explore the expressions and limitations of empathy and ultimately its relation to the concept of cosmopolitanism.

2. COSMOPOLITANISM

The concept of cosmopolitanism has attracted revived interest within the social sciences and humanities over the last decades. Invigorated by concerns over humanitarian crises and an emerging interest in multi-culturalism within the broader context of globalisation, the debate over cosmopolitanism as an empirical possibility or even a necessity has taken a variety of forms within the academic disciplines that have addressed it. Cosmopolitanism has been conceptualised by political philosophers as the morally necessary commitment to humanity as a whole, sharply distinguished from its regressive opposite patriotism and its embedded dangers (Nussbaum, 1996). More recently, it has been approached as a political project of global forms of governance, connecting citizens around the world at different institutional levels (Held, 1995; Habermas, 2001). Such approaches have been vulnerable to the arsenal of criticisms the concept of cosmopolitanism has attracted since its inception. The majority of them focus on the idealistic and normative nature of the concept, which seems to deprive it from any practical and empirical value. Cosmopolitanism appears to adopt too thin a conception of identity in a context where national, local, religious and other forms of particularistic solidarities constitute and frame social conduct, not only as impediments but most often as positive sources of meaning (Calhoun, 1997). Furthermore, the assumed close connection between cosmo-politanism and physical mobility has often rendered the former, according to its critics, an elite perspective of the world, the *'class consciousness of frequent travellers'* (Calhoun, 2002).

In response to such criticisms and to the need to defend cosmo-politanism as a socio-cultural condition, sociological approaches have attempted to locate *'actually existing'* (Robbins, 1998) or *'realistic cosmo-politanism'* (Beck, 2004: 430). In its sociological conceptualisations cosmo-politanism has been distinguished from philosophical and universalistic

connotations. It aims at addressing empirical questions posed by the increasing presence of globalisation effects within societies of late modernity, namely how the latter are to handle *'otherness'* and *'boundaries'* during the present crisis of global interdependency (Beck, 2004: 430). Cosmopolitanism, according to Beck, refers to the internalisation of difference within national societies in a way that renders traditional boundaries and distinctions obsolete: *'cosmopolitanism, again, means a recognition of otherness, both external and internal to any society: in a cosmopolitan ordering of society, differences are neither ranged in a hierarchy nor dissolved into universality, but are accepted'* (Beck, 2004: 438). Cosmopolitanism, therefore, does not negate national and local attachments but coexists with them and even presupposes them; *'instead of an ideal of detachment'*, cosmopolitanism *'is a reality of (re)attachment, multiple attachment, or attachment at a distance'* (Robbins, 1998: 3). As such, cosmopolitanism is *'rooted'* (Beck, 2002: 19) in that it rejects the opposition between cosmopolitans and locals; on the contrary, it describes the infiltration of people's everyday local experiences and moral life-worlds with emotionally engaging values that orient them towards the global and geographically distant others (Beck, 2002: 17; Beck and Sznaider, 2006).

3. Cosmopolitan empathy and the media

In his work on *The Cosmopolitan Vision,* Beck includes the concept of *'cosmopolitan empathy'* as one of the constitutive principles of modern cosmopolitan experience (Beck, 2006: 7). This *'globalisation of emotions'* (Beck, 2006: 5) has been rendered possible through images of distant suffering and disasters. *'The spaces of our emotional imagination have expanded in a transnational sense'*, Beck argues (Beck, 2006: 6). This has resulted in the increased capacity and willingness to take the perspective of the other, to put oneself into the position of the suffering victims (Beck, 2006: 6).

Although Beck himself, despite this short reference, generally neglects the role of the media in his work on cosmopolitanism, the latter is a largely mediated condition. For most of the people most of the times the global is experienced through the consumption of global media images. It is mainly through the *'informational and experiential mobility made possible by global networked infrastructures'* (Hier, 2008: 42) that the recognition of global interconnections and dependencies and, thus, the perception of the world as a whole is taking place.

Expanding Anderson's argument on the role of media in the naturalisation of national belonging through the construction of national 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1989), Appadurai has argued that through their global distribution and their collective reading, criticism and pleasure, media forms become part of a global collective imagery. Thus, solidarities are formed and communities are imagined beyond the framework of the national society, around experiences of taste, pleasure or politics; they are based on *'communities of sentiment'* (Appadurai, 1996: 8). The media provide a symbolic bridge with the world; they provide a *'sense of there being an elsewhere; a sense of that elsewhere being in some way relevant to me; a sense of my being there'* (Silverstone, 2007: 10). For the majority of people around the world, this is the essence of their 'cosmopolitan' experience.

Exposure to images of the global, however, and in particular of distant suffering does not in itself guarantee emotional engagement from the perspective of the audience. Empathy and compassion cannot be automatic responses to media consumption. A large amount of academic literature has been dedicated to the possibility of construction of emotional bonds between audiences and suffering others, mostly polarised among optimistic (Thompson, 1995; Ellis, 2000) and pessimistic accounts (Bauman, 1993; Robins, 1994; Moeller, 1999). More recently, authors such as Boltanski (1999), Chouliaraki (2006) and Silverstone (2007) have addressed this debate under the light of cosmopolitan action and politics, by focusing on the preconditions of the latter and the challenges they pose for media practices. These approaches, taking the process of mediation as a starting point, fundamentally argue that it is through the media, as institutions and as representations, that the categories of distance and proximity with the scene of the suffering are negotiated and the possibilities of emotional connectivity and action are established. However, the discussion still lacks a strong empirical underpinning, remaining largely at a theoretical level or focusing exclusively on media texts. As well as offering an empirical footing for the broader debate, the present chapter provides an audience perspective to illustrate the concept of cosmopolitan empathy.

4. GREEK AUDIENCES WATCH DISTANT DISASTERS

In the following sections of the chapter, the discussion will be based on an empirical study of Greek audiences and their reactions to distant disasters. The study comprised of eighteen focus group discussions

conducted over the course of a year, between the summer of 2006 and that of 2007. The groups were homogeneous, comprised of participants differing in age, gender, education and income. The eighteen focus groups that were conducted included seventy one participants. The discussions focused on three major disasters, namely the Southeast Asian Tsunami of 2004, Hurricane Katrina and the Kashmir Earthquake of 2005, events chosen on the basis of their relatively recent occurrence, their destructive force and the great media coverage they attracted, as well as because they were deemed to be interesting cases for comparison among themselves. Although the discussions addressed broader issues such as people's perceptions of the disasters, of charity, and of the media, the focus here will be on the specific theme of empathy towards the suffering others presented on the screens.

5. 'FEELING' THE PAIN OF OTHERS

Expressions of empathy towards the suffering victims of the disasters were commonplace among audience discussions, especially when the latter would focus on particular news stories that participants could recall in relation to the disasters. At the centre of such narratives were personalised stories, which highlights the significance of the singularisation and personalisation of suffering for the latter to be rendered imaginable by its spectators (Boltanski, 1999: 11):

> *The image of a girl that was crying non-stop, when she found out that her parents were dead, and then she runs to call her little brother … Well, that was it! I was shocked at that point, I started crying on the spot! ... When you see people on the screen … When you see their emotions … How can you do otherwise?* (Male, 26, middle-class, FG9)

For respondents of the older generations imaging the pain of the suffering others was allegedly easier, on the basis of relevant personal and mostly family experiences of suffering through wars, disasters, displacements:

> *People feel for one another … Especially in our area it's more intense, cos our parents were refugees, our grandparents were refugees, our families went through wars … We have so many similar personal stories* (female, 52, working-class, FG2).

Social status was also an apparently common ground for empathy with the suffering victims, especially among groups of lower income and social status, who would claim to *'identify more with the poor, with the wretched … because, unfortunately, this is who we are as well'* (female, 43, working-class, FG2). Interestingly, status and, for some, lifestyle, a basis for emotional connectivity with the foreign others, were often mentioned as anti-empathetic factors for fellow Greeks, who were in Southeast Asia at the time of the Tsunami. Most respondents would claim to have been annoyed by the focus of national media to the stories of Greek tourists and were critical of the fact that the latter had left the country for *'Christmas sunbathing'* (female, 40, middle-class, FG4)[1].

In general, empathy was experienced among members of the audience as they were trying to take the perspective of the suffering other, *'since by now everyone can be in each other's shoes'* (male, 25, working-class, FG12). As one of the respondents put it,

> *I don't think you need to experience it to grasp the significance and the scale of a natural disaster. You simply put yourself into the position of those people. And when I say their position, I mean you put yourself into their position based on your own givens, your current situation, which country you are in and what kind of risks you can encounter* (male, 28, middle-class, FG9).

6. THE BANALITY OF COSMOPOLITAN EMPATHY

Characteristic in the above cases is the claimed ability (and certainly willingness) of respondents to attempt to imagine the pain of others, despite the geographic and cultural distance among them. As such, they fit Beck's concept of cosmopolitan empathy as *'perspective-taking'* (Beck, 2006: 7). As interesting as these perspectives are, however, in their own right, empathy was not always expressed in similarly reflective ways. Participants' discourses were often dominated by commonplaces and clichés, such as *'people always empathise with each other'* (female, 48, working-class, FG2) or *'how can you not get moved by other people's pain?'* (female, 27, middle-class, FG10). Apart from the use of such platitudes, when discussions would turn to the significance of such events and whether those disasters would make participants think about broader issues the reply was more than often negative. *'We watch, we say 'what a shame' but then somebody calls you to go for coffee … life goes on!'* (female, 25, middle-class, FG3) was a typical response, especially among the younger participants. In this context, empathy seems to be commonplace, an

automatic response to the spectacle of suffering, as if sympathy is instantaneous on the grounds of a common human norm. As such, cosmopolitan empathy is rendered 'banal', an unreflective, taken-for-granted sentiment.

Beck distinguishes cosmopolitanism in its *'latent … unconscious … passive'* form from *'the awareness of it, its self-conscious political affirmation, its reflection and recognition'* (Beck, 2006: 21). He names the former *'cosmopolitanisation'* and defines it as the *'passive cosmopolitanism which shapes reality as side effects of global trade or global threats such as climate change, terrorism or financial crises'* (Beck, 2006: 19) and the latter *'the cosmopolitan outlook'* (Beck, 2006: 21). Reflexivity is the key distinctive feature among the two. It is in the transformation of the mundane cosmopolitanisation of reality to a conscious awareness that cosmopolitanism becomes politically effective (Beck, 2004). Beck assumes that cosmopolitan empathy is one of the main principles of the cosmopolitan outlook (Beck, 2006: 7). However, empathy, it seems, is not always reflective. Its presence is prominent in audience discourses about distant suffering, which points to the pervasiveness of the discourse of global compassion. Nevertheless, the unreflective adoption of such a discourse points to the banality of cosmopolitan empathy rather than to its centrality in the cosmopolitan outlook.

7. THE LIMITATIONS OF COSMOPOLITAN EMPATHY

Its banality aside, the concept of empathy, as illustrated through the audience discussions, seems to be also distorted by inherent limitations, which render it a rather thin concept to be put at the centre of a cosmopolitan perspective. This section will focus on two of these restrictions, which, although closely interlinked, are analytically separated here for the purposes of descriptive illustration.

The first limitation has to do with the problem of distance. Respondents would often admit that the geographical distance separating them from the scene of suffering would render it hard to empathise with the people on the screen, left feeling *'mere spectators'* of their pain. The issue of distance has preoccupied extensively the relevant literature, which has focused on the inability of the medium of television to establish connectivity between the scene of suffering and the context of media consumption (Chouliaraki, 2006: 24–25). It was a common claim among respondents that:

> *We live in a country that has not faced disasters of such scale … And this makes it different. Let's say, I do comprehend all these, I do watch them on television etcetera, but I would empathise more, let's say, I would experience them with more intense pain and sorrow, if I had gone through the same things myself* (male, 28, middle-class, FG9).

What the above shows, however, is the significance of not only the geographical distance but of the emotional distance created by the lack of similar experience, which renders it hard to imagine the suffering of others. According to Boltanski, the problem of distance is not a technical consequence of the mass media but is inherent in the politics of pity, which presupposes a distinction between the suffering others and their spectators (Boltanski, 1999: 12–13). As such, suffering is always distant. And, thus, empathy is always limited. The imagination needed to overcome this distance and *'be in each other's shoes'* needs work, which not all members of the audience are willing to undertake.

The second inherent limitation of the concept of empathy has to do with the difficulties of generalizing the suffering from the person appearing on the screen to the masses of suffering others represented by her. As mentioned above, specific human stories had the power to mobilize empathetic responses from audiences. When discussion would turn to the whole of the victims, however, empathetic connections would not have the same emotional intensity.

There are two diametrically oppositional observations to be made here. The first, has to do with the general *victimization* of the suffering others, the focus on their suffering to the degree that their status would only be recognized on the account of their pain. As such, sufferers were reduced to the status of the victim, with no control over their situation but rather a fatalistic dependency on other people's actions. They would be referred to during all discussions as *'the wretched'*, *'the hungry'*, people who *'would even eat the expired products'* (female, 23, working-class, FG5) sent to them by charity organizations, the *'dead bodies'* or the *'damned'*. Empathy towards a single victim thus becomes a generalized pity, which, however, misses the essence of perspective-taking. The people on the screen are victims lacking free will and agency; therefore, they cannot be like us and we cannot imagine how it can feel being them.

If victimization and the concomitant dehumanization of the sufferers was one main implication of the generalization of the suffering, the attribution of political agency to other sufferers seemed to have the same anti-empathetic results. This was evident in discussions about US-related events, namely Hurricane Katrina and 9/11. The latter, although not the

focus of the discussions, would come up in all of them, as a characteristic example of a memorable global disaster. Again, although stories of particular victims would arouse respondents' emotional imagination (*'Imagine those people falling from the windows … reaching your limits and being so desperate'* (female, 37, working-class, FG6), *'I was thinking of those people, spending their lives studying and finding such good jobs, and one day, they go to work only to get killed'* (female, 54, middle-class, FG4)), when discussions would take a general turn, Americans were not considered as worthy of pity and sympathy. A typical quote of such expressions, common among all groups and usually starting with the disclaimer *'Not that I did not feel sorry for the people, but … '*, is the following:

> *I have to admit that in the specific disaster I wasn't that moved from the … in the sense of human pain … In the sense that 'Oh, God, so many people have died' … Of course, I was upset by it. But there was all this background behind it … how terrorism started being represented, how this was a reaction … No, really, during the Twin Towers disaster, I was fully desensitized!* (female, 25, middle-class, FG1)

Such responses indicate that in the audiences' imagination and due to the strong anti-American culture in Greece, ordinary people suffering would be identified with American politics, and, therefore, being denied empathetic connections on the grounds of their attributed status as political subjects. The infiltration of discussions with elements of such a political discourse would mean a retreat to the national and, in particular, national stereotypes, for the participants. What both processes, victimization and politicization, point to is the fact that empathy finds it hard to be generalized to something broader than meets the eye on the screen.

8. CONCLUSION

Cosmopolitan empathy, as the willingness to take the perspective of the geographically distant, nationally foreign other, finds expressions among global publics in relation to globally broadcasted disasters. As such, it is a mediated condition, in the sense that the media provide both the platform of visibility for the scenes of suffering and the framing of their emotional evaluations and empathetic connections. Such expressions of distanciated emotional connectivity challenge the exclusivity of the nation as the core of the moral community and render the global as a space for moral concern.

Nevertheless, as the discussion of audience responses in this chapter has suggested, empathy seems to be also an elusive and fragile condition. It is often banal in its expressions, indicating the existence of unreflexive normative assumptions from the part of the audience rather than a conscious engagement with the distant other. It is also limited in its application, rendered difficult by the obstacle of distance and the need for its generalisation. Cosmopolitan empathy can hardly be an all-encompassing concept. It is contingent on media representational practices, and on political and cultural prejudices and stereotypes.

There are two directions that such an exploratory discussion of the concept of cosmopolitan empathy seems to point to. On the one hand, it opens up the debate on the relationship between media representations and the preconditions of action at a distance vis-à-vis the suffering of others. On the other hand, it challenges assumptions about the possibility of global empathy at the centre of the new cosmopolitan vision. Both of these debates, on mediated suffering and cosmo-politanism, inextricably interlinked, pose significant questions that are yet to be explored.

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NOTES

[1] There were no Greek victims in the Tsunami disaster, which, to an extent, can justify the lack of interest in news stories of Greek tourists from the part of the audience.

Digital stratification: A closer look at the included and excluded in the digital Estonia

Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt

1. ICTs for inclusion

As Lievrouw (2000) argues, the whole notion of an information society is based upon the ideological belief in the positive and socially integrating power of technology alongside a prevailing ethic of instrumental rationality and strategically practiced self-interest towards accruing such benefits. The literature discussing democratic potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) ranges from information society theories and concepts (e.g. Castells, 2007; Pinter, 2008) to specific cases of e-democracy (e.g. Hague and Loader, 1999; Chadwick, 2006). Mostly the democratic potential is seen as a form of overcoming social exclusion through means of digital technologies. Ideally, equal access to ICTs is seen as a way to balance social inequalities that stem from differences in education, income and social class: '*Resources, such as IT can function as ladders with which people can exit poverty*' (Sevron, 2002: 20). However, the relevant literature shows that such hopes are often unfounded and as such the term digital divide is often used to indicate the division between those who have access to and/or are able to use the internet and those who do not (for an extended discussion on digital divide discourses see Carpentier, 2003). Similarly to the term social exclusion, digital exclusion or divide refers to multiple dimensions and multiple deprivations related to variety of factors (Cammaerts, et al., 2003; Mancinelli, 2008). Thus in this chapter, instead of exclusion or divide, the notion of digital stratification is used instead.

Digital stratification indicates that there are structural and individual differences that determine the use and adoption of the internet and at the same time, there are also different outcomes and gratifications of the

internet use for different individuals. Let us first explore the different variables that condition the use and adoption of the internet, subsequently the results of a nation-wide survey to illustrate the different uses of the internet will be discussed. In the fourth section, the focus is on the contacts and perceptions that Estonian small-scale internet users and non-users have about the internet and the fifth section assesses the variety of barriers people experience in becoming skilled internet users. The conclusion will link back to the discussion of digital stratification and its implications on the democratic potentialities the internet might have.

2. DIGITAL STRATIFICATION

The research was focused on the abilities and motivation of Estonian inhabitants in terms of using various ICTs, also looking at the extent to which they could use the technologies so as to improve their overall quality of life. It is important to understand that the internet is adopted in the institutional and social context of individuals, places of employment, friendships, etc. The relevance of ICTs in individual lives depends on a variety of factors (Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, 2006). Figure 1 shows an overview of contexts within which the internet is adopted, distinguishing between institutional and personal aspects. The individual at the centre of this scheme is protected by the skills that are necessary to position him or her on the digital stratification ladder. Skills related to the use of ICTs can be divided into three categories – structural skills (the ability to understand online content), instrumental skills (the ability to use the relevant technology), and strategic skills (the ability to understand the relevance of the technology).

Figure 1: The circle of adoption of the internet or its applications (adopted from Lievrouw, 2001)
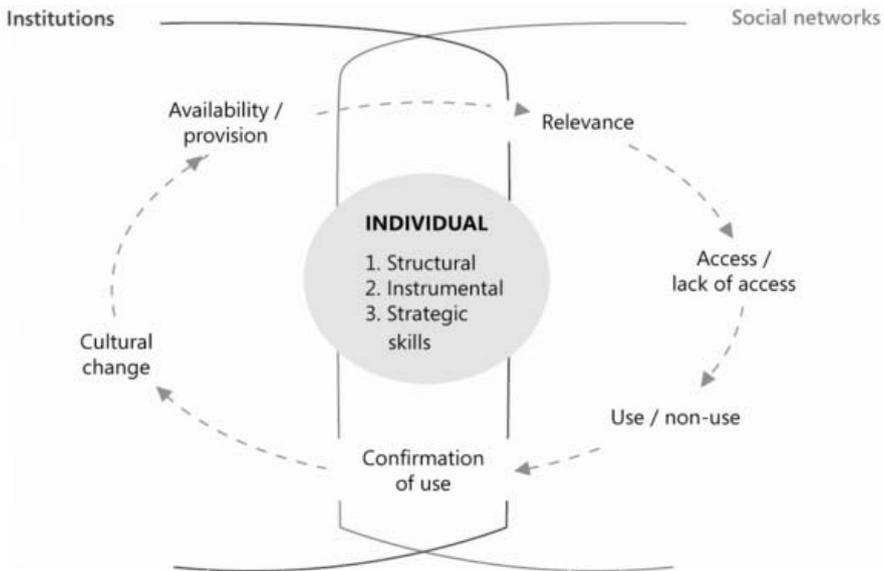
The adoption of ICTs and the relevant applications involves six basic stages. These are presented in a linear way in this paper, but in real life, the process may be less straightforward. The cycle can easily be interrupted, and the different stages are not always clearly distinguishable. In the context of users and non-users of the internet, however, it is important to understand that each new ICT-application requires passing through the stages at least once and sometimes even a new design can force a new process of adoption. In the case of simpler and more straightforward applications, the adoption process may consist of one-time use, so that the person does not have to acknowledge the process at all. In other cases, the process can be complex and long lasting. The BA thesis of Talv (2008) illustrates this with an example in which the adoption of a new online banking environment has forced older users to adopt the process in a way which is described as being similar to 'learning a new poem.'

2.1. The stages of internet adoption

As can be seen in Figure 1, the adoption process has six important stages. Let us start with the institutional framework, where two stages –

'availability' and 'cultural change' – are situated. 'Availability' can be related to technologies (internet-connected computers) or online content or services. 'Cultural change' emerges when sufficient numbers of people (or relatively influential people) enforce cultural change, e.g., an understanding that some services or applications are taken for granted. This change supports public understanding and perception of availability.

The next stage is 'relevance' – whether people see the internet or the services offered online as being sufficiently relevant to their everyday lives. Relevance does not have to be rational or conscious; it can be the result of outside pressure from social networks of relatives or colleagues; public perception or labour market demands. Overcoming the motivational barrier occurs thanks to strategic skills. The level of such skills, therefore, dictates the ability to take decisions about the relevance of each individual application in the individual's personal context.

After the recognition of relevance, the next stage is 'seeking access'. In Estonia, theoretically everyone has access to the internet thanks to online Public Access Points. Still, availability depends on many factors: Is the public centre open at a time when the user can go there, does the user know where it is, etc. Seeking access can also mean seeking access to services on the internet. People often have limited skills in finding the necessary information, and this can result in limited use of technologies even if physical access to the tools is there.

Once access is found, there is an attempt to 'use' the service or information. Instrumental and structural skills play an important role here, as does the usability of the service. People unconsciously compare the difficulty of learning about the service with the benefits that accrue from it. How accessible and usable are other channels for the service or information? Once successful use of a service has taken place, the next stage is confirmation of the use. Even if the first experience has been successful, that does not necessarily mean that the individual will become a long-time user. Not everything may be learned through the first use, and not everything will be remembered. Many respondents mentioned that the Look@World project (Ehandi, 2001) provided them with initial usage experience and that they had accessed specific information or an application at that time, but that they did not continue using the internet, because the confirmation stage was not possible. In other words, these individuals were not able (or did not want) to practice their newly acquired skills. Thus the sixth stage can lead to 'confirmation', but also to a 'rejection' of the use.

As mentioned before, 'cultural change' can be based on the positive experience of individuals, but also on the opinions or attitudes of influential persons. The positive or negative experience of an institution's director, for instance, can influence the attitudes which employees take toward new technologies.

It is important to understand here that each new ICT-application, as well as the appearance of that application, will require a new adoption process. Although most internet services are theoretically equally accessible to everyone, there can be great differences in terms of how people understand their needs, skills, lifestyles and possibilities. There can also be different experiences among users and varying degrees of confirmation of those experiences. The bottom line, then, is that the use of the relevant services will also differ. This inevitably leads to differentiation in terms of types of internet users.

3. THE TYPOLOGY OF USERS AND NON-USERS

It is hard to find anyone in Estonia who does not know what the internet is or has never had anything to do with it. 70% of Estonian inhabitants use the internet, according to the latest statistics from TNS EMOR, and among them, 61% have done so in the last seven days. In general, one can distinguish six types of internet users (see Figure 2). There has been relative consistency in this regard over the course of the years, and the types of practices have also remained similar (Runnel, et al., submitted).

Figure 2: Internet users and non-users among Estonian speakers in 2007 (N=803)
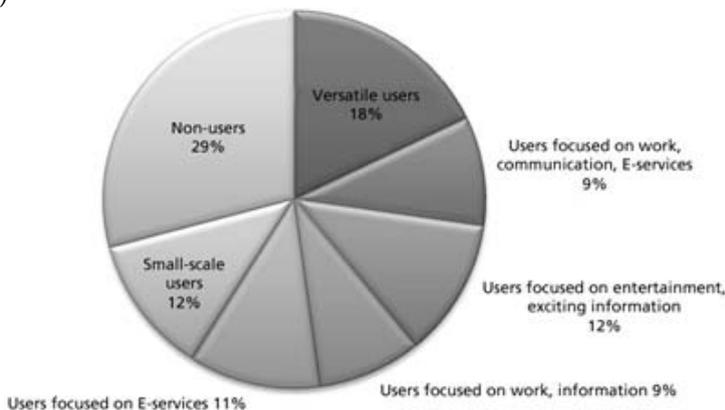
Source: University of Tartu, Institute of Journalism and Communication

The types of internet users and non-users in Figure 2 have following characteristics: A 'versatile internet user' is someone who is an active participant in the listed activities and takes part in a versatile way. These are mostly younger people aged 18 to 44, and people with higher levels of income are clearly more likely to be in this group than others.

Those who focus on 'work, communication and E-services' are also comparatively active internet users. This type of users claim that their use mostly involves communication with friends and family, searches for work-related information, the use of E-services, and the solicitation of advice and assistance. Least characteristic in this group is online participation and the search for existing information. This is a pragmatic group of which some 70% are female, and among them, one-third is aged between 25 and 34.

Those who seek 'entertainment and excitement' on the internet are the least likely to be looking for state-, Intranet and/or internet services. They tend to be younger users. In contrast, the users whose attention is centred on 'work and information' is positive about using the internet to search for information from the state, as well as information related to work and studies. These are people who use internet services; they use the Net to seek out practical information, and for reading online journalism. They are less likely to seek out entertainment and to take part in forums. These are internet users who are mostly between 35 and 64 years of age, with a higher than average level of education. These respondents also have an average or above average income.

Users whose interest is in 'E-services' make use of services such as banking, tax-related services, and other services which involve filling out forms. These are fairly passive internet users who could also be described as 'single-service users' (Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Kalvet, 2008). In Estonia, this mostly refers to e-banking and also use of some state-provided financial services, e.g. tax-refund. These users are some-what more likely than the average user to seek information from the state or to look for a job through the internet. They are far less likely to take part in forums, seek out entertainment, or seek advice or assistance. One-third of internet users of this 'E-services' type are aged 45–54, and nearly half of them have a high level of education.

'Small-scale' users are not characterised by any of the aforementioned activities, and they are the most passive group. Asked about internet services, they most often talk about E-banking, tax services and filling out of forms, but they engage in such activities far less often than other internet users do. This is the most elderly group of users, with nearly one-quarter of respondents aged 55 and over.

Then there are those who can be described as non-users – they are respondents who claim not to have used the internet or who did not list any characteristic activities, leaving all of the possibilities blank. The average Estonian internet non-user is older, female, Russian speaking, not working or a manual worker, and a rural resident. This concurs with earlier findings about internet non-users in 2002, which established that non-users were mostly 'blue collar' workers and people who were retired (Kalkun and Kalvet, 2002a, 2002b). Based on literature (Wyatt, 1999), these non-users can be divided up into four groups:

1/ Those who do not use the internet and do not want to use it
2/ Those who do not use the internet but wish to do so
3/ Those who used to use the internet but no longer do so as a matter of choice
4/ Those who used to use the internet but no longer do so as a matter of outside factors.

4. CONTACTS WITH AND PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE INTERNET

The 2007 survey (EMOR, 2007) outlines the key reasons for non-use. These include the cost of computers and internet services, as well as a lack of skills. Less important in this regard is a lack of motivation or interest. In focus group interviews, we investigated all of these factors in greater depth, and we found that in many cases the straightforward explanations were interrelated in a more complex way. For instance, many of our respondents did not know how much a computer costs, and when they guessed, they over-estimated the actual cost.

In our focus-groups, most non-users had experienced some of the internet's benefits. This indicates that there is another category of non-users – those who do not use the internet themselves, but benefit from others around them who use it on their behalf. These mediators or proxies can be described as 'soft experts' (Wyatt, 2001), and they are mediators in terms of knowledge from the internet. These experts mediate experience and provide a good source of initial training.

Non-users usually are fairly well informed about the internet despite the fact that they do not use it. They relate internet services to communication, information, news and banking. Computers with an internet connection are seen as a way of saving time by finding information quickly. Most respondents have positive associations, while older people mostly consider the internet as one of many media, not the one medium

that has the potential to replace other channels of information, which can sometimes be seen to be the case among younger generations.

Some non-users did benefit from internet-use through the involvement of the aforementioned soft experts. They have tried out applications such as MSN and Skype to communicate with family members or friends, or they used online banking services with the assistance of others. Nevertheless, they still consider themselves to be non-users, because someone else did the actual handling of the technology. Information about transportation services was seen among respondents as one of the best time-savers. Many parents and grandparents also liked E-school, even if they did not have direct user experience with it.

It is commonly assumed that once a household has an internet connection, everyone in that household becomes an internet user, but we found quite a few people in our focus-groups who had internet connections at home that were used not by themselves, but by other family members. In other words, the statement that 'computers are becoming personal items' was supported both by non-users, as well as users.

Those who only recently began using the internet not only mentioned communication and information, but also use of services related to hobbies, health, learning, holidays and the public sector. When it comes to perceptions about the internet and knowledge about the services and applications that are available, non-users are not much different from small-scale users. They also are often people who use just one service – banking, for instance. Perhaps they also look at news, weather reports or transport information, but minimally. The distinction between users and non-users is thus increasingly becoming very blurred, and this trend is very likely to persist in the future.

If the internet is used on a small scale or has been adopted only recently, then internet use tends to be mostly pragmatic. Services and applications that help the individual to save time and money are considered to be the most important ones. When asked what other services they find to be interesting, many respondents spoke of applications which are already available – health information, information related to their hobbies, good advice about family and relationship issues, etc. The key resource that is lacking here is the skill to find such information.

5. VARIOUS BARRIERS TO INTERNET ACCESS

In comparison to the findings of other studies (especially Kalkun and Kalvet, 2002a; 2002b), it seems that the importance of a lack of access as an important barrier to internet use is diminishing. It is still most often cited as the reason for non-use in the quantitative study, but more in-depth interviews and focus groups show that the real problem is actually the lack of skills in accessing and using the internet. The lack of skills also often affects people in their understanding as to how much internet access costs for instance. The comparison between 2002 and 2007 also shows that the importance of motivational skills as a barrier is declining. When asked why it is important to deal with internet adoption issues, the key answer given by respondents who do not use the internet is that they would like to do so in future. Good general knowledge about the internet can be seen as something which helps to support the adoption processes.

In terms of the functionality of the internet, in addition to seeking out information and handling banking services, respondents acknowledge a wider range of applications – newspapers, transport information and communications (particularly MSN and Skype) compared to 2002. According to the participants in the focus groups, the importance of internet use has expanded into other areas of life, and computers are generally seen as tools to change lives for the better. The internet and computers are perceived to be necessary 'for everyone who wants them, is interested in them and can use them.'

Non-users consider the skills barrier to be the most important one, but skills were also a barrier for internet users who wanted to expand their internet use. For non-users, the lack of skills also meant that there was no perceived need to seek access to the technologies. It was expected that the skills should come first and only then the purchase of the tools will be considered. The general attitude towards additional training was very positive, and people expected more training opportunities both at the professional and at the individual level. One of the potential sources for the individual level training are the aforementioned soft experts. They are often mostly younger people helping older ones to use computers, but they can also sometimes become barriers to use. Belittling attitudes toward the learning abilities of the elderly and a lack of patience in providing the same instructions over and over again can often lead people to do things for the elderly, as opposed to teaching them to do those things themselves. This obviously hinders the learning process. Overall, there are fairly strong social fears about studying in groups or

using the internet in public – people are afraid of being left behind or appearing unskilled. They are also afraid to slow down the group because of their inability to grasp things quickly. This could be overcome with better-trained instructors able to work on an individual basis and to repeat activities when necessary.

The economic barrier remains important, however, particularly among those with lower levels of income, as well as elderly people who live alone. At the same time, there is also some degree of misinformation about how much computers and internet services really cost. Giving away old computers to those who are less secure financially, including from children to grandparent is becoming increasingly popular and also expected. Some people are afraid to visit a computer store, believing that are unable to ask the computer salesman what they want and appear ignorant.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This research project has been in many cases an important eye-opener for the people involved in it. The enthusiasm and interest in internet use and belief in the encompassing potentialities of the internet on the one hand and lack of basic skills to use the internet and seek out information on the other hand, have been most overwhelming. Once having experienced using the internet, it is difficult to grasp the complexities of the adoption process many people face when learning new aspects of the online technologies. While a new user interface can be a minor nuisance for some, it may prove a most staggering access barrier for others.

While it is important to accept that in many cases, access and use of specific internet services is a matter of lifestyle choice, providing basic education to those interested, should still remain a vital aspect of the policies related to ICTs. At the same time, it is important not to forget the individual agency of the choice for technology here. As Krotz (2006) stresses, the current understanding of the digital divide is too much focussed on the individual acquiring the skills, and the technology and on the economically driven developments that demand this divide to be bridged. At the same time, our project indicates that the learning focus should not merely be on the use of particular services, but rather on the skills to search information and on empowerment through self-learning and experimenting.

In the discussion of different aspects of the digital divide, Norris (2001) and Mossberg et al. (2003) draw our attention to the notion of the

'democratic divide'. In the light of the internet user types outlined above, only 'Versatile internet users' and users focused on 'Work and information' as well as on 'Work, communication and E-services' have the skills and experience to use the internet for political engagement, and democratic activities (see also Runnel, et al., submitted). The skills needed are both the ability to use the technology, but also the ability to understand democracy. Elsewhere in this book Miegel and Olsson also discuss how users focused on 'Entertainment and exiting information' can become actively engaged in traditional party politics if their individual rights are being challenged or violated. However, for many other groups, the democratic potential of the ICTs will remain unavailable as they lack the basic skills to seek out existing opportunities.

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Section three:
Media and becoming political

Visit to the Puppet Museum at the Estonian National Broadcaster
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Television and popular civic cultures: Public sphere perspectives[1]

Peter Dahlgren

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I want to examine television in terms of its popularity and contribution to citizens' involvement with politics. I will relate these concerns to the traditional notion of the public sphere, updating my earlier perspectives on that theme (Dahlgren, 1995), as well as from the angle of civic cultures, that I have developed more recently (Dahlgren, 2008). Moreover, I will also be looking at a number of recent contributions to these discussions.

The concept of the public sphere remains a central analytic construct in our ongoing efforts to understand the relationship between democracy and the media. And television remains the dominant medium for most people in Western democracies, despite the profound communication revolution associated with the internet. Yet the conceptual premises of the public sphere become all the more problematic, as the media, with television in the vanguard, seemingly drift ever further in the direction of entertainment and consumption. How do we orient ourselves in this regard via the concept of the public sphere? How does the popular quality of television resonate with notions of public spheres and civic cultures?

The discussion consists of three parts. First, with a focus on television, I take up the more general debates around the relationship between popular culture and politics. In particular I find John Ellis' (2000) notion of television as a socio-cultural and political 'working through' to be a handy reference point. In the second section, I examine and draw together several different contributions and arguments, stressing that the traditional bifurcation between politics on the one hand, and popular culture and entertainment on the other, leads us into a dead-end. At the same time, we do ourselves an analytic disservice if we ignore the real

tensions between them. The final section strives to frame this viewpoint in terms of the several dimensions of the civic cultures perspective.

2. PROCESSING THE PROTO-POLITICAL

I find that Ellis' (2000) view of contemporary television provides a useful frame in regard to the issues at hand. It realistically incorporates the basic attributes of the medium, takes seriously its public functions, is sociologically well anchored, and avoids the pitfalls of the extreme conceptual positions. While allying himself with the idea of television's potential for extending the public sphere, as illustrated by Scannell, he is also fully aware of the critiques. Ellis talks of television as a 'working through', of television not providing any ultimate or definitive point of view, but rather offering its viewers vast amounts of transitory glimpses, preliminary meanings, multiple frameworks, explanations, and narrative structures for processing basic private as well as public concerns, many times touching upon topics that are, if not fully political, at least insipient, or proto-political. These may or may not at times coalesce as concrete political issues; often they remain at the level of perceptions and values.

Television is largely oriented to the present moment, to the experiential rather than the analytic, to the personal rather than the structural. Also, though Ellis does not make a big point of it, his approach avoids the unproductive polarization of the rational and the affective. In our everyday lives we make sense of our experiences, ourselves, and the world around us largely using a combination of our head and our heart. There is no reason why we should – or even could – function any differently when we find ourselves connected to public spheres.

As he puts it, '*Television attempts definitions, tries out explanations, creates narratives, talks over, makes intelligible, harnesses speculation, tries to make fit, and, very occasionally, anthematizes*' (Ellis, 2000: 79). In the meanings that television offers viewers, uncertainty prevails over certainty; there is a perennial tentativeness in the voice of television. One can grasp this in the broad debates and many positions around programs such as *The Sopranos* and *Sex and the City* – which in my view echoes some of Fiske's (1988) arguments about the importance of polysemy for popularity, i.e., that the popularity of popular culture resides to some extent in its many meanings, which evokes different interpretations from different groups.

This working through operates via all genres and their hybrids, but is predicated on viewer familiarity with generic formulas as a key vehicle for the communication of meaning (Johansson (2006) finds that readers of British tabloid press use these newspapers in ways very similar to what Ellis describes). Such a view does not preclude mechanisms of mainstreaming; the working through of television largely takes place within broadly hegemonic boundaries, as critics have long argued. Thus, 'working through' does not deny the hegemonic character of television, but recognizes that such hegemony is loose, leaky and always at risk.

Television's working through can take intensely politicized turns, as it has done in the post 9/11 era in the U.S. Yet the point of the working through perspective is that much of the meanings offered up are anchored in a transitory present; new issues and angles will emerge, there will always be a bit more cacophony than coherence –at least on the surface level that is most immediately relevant for opinions, attitudes and practices. The more deeply rooted ideological dimensions are less transitory in character, and can be mobilized in new contexts, as new issues arise. However, even political rhetoric based on deep ideological dimensions can diminish in their impact: For example, the grip that the Bush administration's patriotic post 9/11 rhetoric had on the U.S. political climate has loosened somewhat over the years.

We can briefly contrast Ellis' view with that of Scheuer (2001), who makes the argument that there is a conservative, right-wing bias in television's modes of representation. In this analysis the tendency toward personalizing, dichotomizing, putting style over substance, the emotional and physical over the intellectual and the moral, and the general aversion towards complexity, all serve to support social and political conservatism. While it is true, for instance, that the medium tends not to promote analytic response, and that personification and psychologism may work against perspectives of collective well-being and responsibility, it strikes me that this type of reading founders precisely in its adherence to a traditional textual rationality.

One can certainly appreciate Scheuer's sense of exasperation with television, and it cannot be denied that the modes of representation he criticizes often indeed carry a deeply conservative import (one need only look at Fox News). However, I see no deterministic imperative that in principle precludes using such modes for progressive messages (in the border zone between journalism and comedy, *The Daily Show* does just this). Rather, I would here refer to the external social forces that impact on the contemporary output of television to explain its ideological slant – political power arrangements and economic mechanisms. His call for

better 'media literacy' to enhance 'critical viewing' – to be taught in the schools and elsewhere – would no doubt lead to more media-critical audiences. Yet, this appeal to education misses something essential about television's cultural power, and its capacity to engage at the affective level.

At a fundamental level, what is at stake in the public sphere perspective is the question of where the political resides – where social conflict is articulated and processed – and how it is positioned against that which is deemed non-political. As I have noted, the traditional view from both public sphere theory and political communication has been to maintain a strict boundary between the rational and the affective, and by extension, between serious current affairs information and entertainment. Yet, in the notion of television serving to work through various issues via its entertainment programming, providing a daily environment where topics are raised, become contested, and take on the character of the political or at least the proto-political, this boundary begins to loosen up. Thus, the ongoing televisual treatment of value conflicts having to do with premarital sex, sexual preference, abortion, gene manipulation, inter-ethnic relations, etc. in such diverse genres as dramatic series, soap opera, reality TV, talk shows, situation comedies, and comic monologues, all are indicative of television's blurring of this basic dichotomy.

It would of course be difficult to calibrate television's exact impact here, not least because of the flowing, meandering character of themes and issues across time, yet to belittle its significance seems simply erroneous. In the case of certain identity politics, for instance, seen in the long-term of the working through perspective, many of the issues raised and positions taken by various groups found their way into television and achieved visibility and enhanced legitimacy, not least via entertainment programs. For example, the sitcom *All in the Family* from the 1970s, with its main character the working class bigot Archie Bunker, through its humour and irony challenged discriminatory views on gay people and racial prejudice, as well as problematizing the traditional view on women's social position. (I realize that critics pointed to a certain polysemy here – that viewers who agreed with Archie could get their prejudices validated – but I would argue that in the long run the program served to undermine those positions).

At the time, the controversies the program touched upon could reverberate with considerable electricity. More than three decades on, the visibility and legitimacy of, for example, gay men and lesbian women on television has been enormously enhanced. This is not to say

that social discrimination or oppression of homosexual people is a thing of the past, but in terms of television's representations in these areas, the public sphere has been transformed, and the centre of normative gravity has certainly shifted in society at large. The underlying assumptions that might frame specific issues relating to homosexuality today (for example in regard to the right to adopt children) depart from a different set of societal dispositions that television helped engender at the popular level.

3. POPULAR ENGAGEMENT

We thus have to take seriously television's popularity, and consider how in its largely un-Habermasian modes it can promote – as well as constrict – public spheres. What has been emerging in this chapter is the importance of popular horizons, especially as mediated via television, in the life of democracy. The culturalist view underscores the importance of looking beyond news and other forms of traditional political communication, in a sense to treat the realm of popular culture as bearing relevance for democratic life. Simons expresses the view cogently: ' … *there is a structural and necessary relation between the popularisation of culture and the democratisation of politics … '* (Simons, 2003: 186–7). How far should be extend this perspective? What is at stake in our understanding of the relationship between popular culture and political processes?

4. POLITICS AND POPULAR CULTURE: BORDER-CROSSINGS

The boundary between them has long been well defended since it has been assumed that letting popular culture 'leak into' politics will just subvert the whole enterprise of democracy and citizenship. Certainly feminists have long made the point that the private realm is not a priori devoid of political issues. In recent years, scholars working in media research and cultural studies have been recasting the relationship between politics popular culture, trying to probe and clarify this link in new ways. Some studies in this area highlight the analytic trajectories that are now in motion. Several contributions in the collection by Corner and Pels (2003), for example, reject the firm division between these two domains, stressing the significance of the aesthetics of political image, style and performance, with much of it being borrowed from popular culture and orchestrated by spin and PR. Thus, for example, politicians can take on an aura of 'celebrity', equivalent to the stars of popular culture. In the shift away from emphasizing party ideology, the political

style of the individual politician becomes central to how audiences experience them and evaluate their performance, authenticity, and political capabilities.

More broadly, Street (1997: 4) suggests in a manner similar to Ellis that '*Popular culture neither manipulates us nor mirrors us; instead we live through it and with it … .our lives are bound up with it*'. This posits what we might call an undeniable base relevance of popular culture for political life: moral judgments are operative in culture; cultural values have relevance for politics; identities emerge within both domains. Popular culture offers images and symbols that express and evoke emotion, that we use not least in shaping our individual and collective identities, our sense of who we are, what is right, important, and so forth. These can certainly be pertinent for how politics operate and what political views emerge. Modern politics, in turn, often makes use of, is expressed via, forms and languages of popular culture.

There is a fundamental logic linking the two spheres, having to do with '*the way in which notions of representation, the people, popularity, and identity are shared between them*' (Street, 1997: 21). In this linkage, passion and pleasure are always present, mobilized and manifested often in very similar ways. Street structures the argument clearly: On the one hand popular culture feeds into politics, on the other hand politics often takes the form of popular culture. In the first case, he provides many examples of how popular culture takes on political character, and impacts on the political imagination: rock music at times expressing political resistance, or galvanizing public opinion for aid relief; movies addressing political themes; television programs doing exactly what Ellis (2001) says they do in working through important social issues; individual icons of popular culture taking a political stance; audiences making use of popular culture in developing particular identity positions in regard to, for example, gender or ethnicity. He stresses not least how popular culture can contribute to the redefinition of what constitutes politics, often extending notions of the political into the private sphere of personal relations and group contexts (today the docu-soaps can serve as a telling illustration).

In the second case, looking in the other direction, Street (1997) shows how politics takes on the forms of popular culture, as politicians and party machines resort to the same kinds of advertising strategies used to market commodities, as well as the image management associated with celebrities. Political leaders associate themselves in various ways with stars from popular culture (e.g. Bono), appear together with them, and even use popular culture formats at times in communicating with citizens, such as appearing on entertainment shows. There is of course an

established school of thought that reacts vehemently to all such forms of political packaging, and while acknowledging the ever-potential problems, he avoids simple, blanket condemnation. He invites us to instead look at these developments in the larger contexts of modern culture, mediated politics, and the options available for communicating to large audiences. In particular he asserts that it is important to distinguish the political substance from the forms of packaging, and concludes the book by emphasizing the continual need to make judgments – in politics and popular culture. And he reminds us that such judgments are always political …

5. Politics as engaging entertainment?

Extending these lines of argument, van Zoonen (2005) further opens the gates by suggesting that politics can be made more accessible – and in a sense more democratic – by linking up with popular culture, by putting pleasure more in the forefront. van Zoonen argues that it is particularly via personalization and dramatization (via key dramaturgical frames as the quest, bureaucracy, conspiracy and soap) that popular culture can serve as a resource for political citizenship; these dimensions not only can help convey politics but also offer tools for reflecting on what citizenship can and should mean, as well as providing mechanisms for the enactment of politics by citizens. Thus, popular culture can process and communicate collective experience, emotion, even knowledge; it offers opportunities for negotiating views and opinions on contested values as well as explicit political issues. It can therefore serve as a form of what we might call 'meta-deliberation', adding (but certainly not replacing) different forms of expression, different registers, different emotional spectra to the more traditional forms of news and political communication. Lunt and Spenner's (2005) analysis of the *Jerry Spring Show* as an 'emotional public sphere' neatly illustrates this line of thinking.

    Further she underscores the close similarities between political engagement and pop cultural fandom (see also Gray (2007)). Fans invest avid emotional involvement and symbolic valence into the objects of their attention, deriving great pleasure from it and not seldom also taking a playful stance towards this object, be it a person/icon, a television series, or whatever. van Zoonen relates these traits to citizenship, noting the structural similarities between fan cultures and publics, each with their shared sense of values and willingness to engage in

collective actions. In highlighting the similarities, she does not suggest a complete equivalence, nor does she mean that fan cultures should or could replace political constituencies. Rather, her point is that by using the model of fan cultures, we can better understand some of the major mechanisms at work in politics, such as fantasy, imagination, and emotional intensity (the latter being very visible, at for example, political rallies).

Variants of the 'working through' perspective thus not need to be per se restricted to just television but could be attributed to all kinds of mediated popular culture. Yet, it is in television programming where political life is perhaps most often explicitly interpreted by entertainment – i.e. 'politicotainment'. The collection by Reigert (2007) offers a number of analyses of such programs, but also analyses of how the changing character of television's political economy, the growth of participatory technologies, and various forms of 'voting' in popular programming continue to develop. An analysis of *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* is also included (while a longer treatment of that show and other new forms of political comedy by the same author is found in Jones (2005)). The humour, not least the parodies of established forms of political communication that strip away artifice, highlight inconsistencies, and generally challenge the authority of official political discourse, offers pleasurable ports of entry to current political topics, as it contributes to the evolution of mediated political culture.

Another very suggestive angle on engagement in popular culture and its political relevance, with a focus on young people, is found in Stephen Coleman's (2006; 2007a; 2007b) research on *Big Brother* in the UK. Based on his studies of young fans of this reality TV series, he concludes first that we need to understand present disengagement from traditional party politics less as a question of them abandoning the political system but instead consider how the system has abandoned and/or excluded them. The way parliamentarian politics is represented – especially on television – clearly contributes to disengaging many young citizens.

Secondly, and still more provocative from the standpoint of traditional political communication, he argues that forms of popular entertainment are also offering topics that engage young viewers in ways that must be understood as political, thereby redefining what 'politics' is. His young viewers did have the capability to follow the news, critically reflect on politics, and participate in elections. Many in fact did so, '*but they often felt themselves to be outsiders in someone else's story*' (Coleman, 2006: 27). They felt they had little political efficacy. Instead, they found on *Big Brother* (and in many other media spaces) a large range of topics

that engaged them, such as '*debates about asylum seekers, inequality, cheating, bullying, anarchism, sexual identity, religious fundamentalism, and war … .*' (Coleman, 2006: 26).

For Coleman, this indicates the '*hopelessly narrow conception of politics*' that still prevails, one that ignores the concerns people have in their daily lives, such as ethics, identity, justice, taboos, social power relations, and an endless range of topics about the world beyond face-to-face settings. The problem in part has to do with the establishment's political agenda: Politicians seem unable to take up many issues that engage the young, while the issues they offer do not resonate deeply with such audiences. But it is also a problem of communication, of modes of representation and expression. Coleman suggests that much traditional political communication is out of step with the new generations and their media cultures. He thus argues for the need for enhanced double transparency: to make established politics more visible, compelling and accessible to the young, while at the same time politicians need to know about, be better anchored in, the realities of young people. Such developments would involve a further decentralization of political communication – and no doubt of political power as well.

These kinds of challenging ideas receive a sort of overarching frame in the notion of cultural citizenship as recently developed by Hermes (2005). In noting that 'popular culture' is much more popular than 'politics' – with 'popular' meaning basically of and for the people – she probes the civic qualities of popular culture and highlights a number of key attributes in this regard. Cultural citizenship as a perspective underscores the democratic potential of popular culture, while allowing that it often may not always be realized. This potential lies largely in its capacity to join us together: Popular culture makes us feel welcome and offers us a sense of belonging. It sets up few barriers, and thus can permit easy engagement. Also, it invites us to fantasize about the ideals and hopes we have for society, as well as to process things that we fear. That is, as in Ellis' approach, cultural citizenship sees popular culture as having relevance for identity construction, ideology, and norms, aiding us to work through important contemporary ideas and issues.

Popular culture also provides guidelines for the interpretation and evaluation of actions and experiences, while also offering sites for an extensive range of emotional and mental states – while offering lots of pleasure. In short: '*Cultural citizenship is the process of bonding and community building, and reflection on that bonding, that is implied in partaking of the text-related practices of reading, consuming, celebrating and criticising offered in the realm of (popular) culture*' (Hermes, 2005: 10).

6. TELEVISION, POPULAR CULTURE, AND CIVIC CULTURES

Television news in its traditional guise contributes to the public sphere in complex ways, while at the same manifesting a number of significant limitations, not least that it offers very few entry points for civic identity and agency (which in turn both derives from and reflects the dilemmas of power relations in contemporary democracy). As we move beyond news programs and look at television in broader terms, and at popular culture more generally, we find degrees of political relevance emerging in ways quite at variance with conventional conceptions of political communication. The recent interventions into the relationship between politics and popular culture that I have touched upon a number of important points in this regard, and I would summarize them as follows:

- In the contemporary media world, popular culture and politics cannot be fully separated. They are discursively structured in many similar ways, and they inform each other, feed off each other.
- Both domains mobilize rational as well as affective response.
- The blurring and hybridization of program genres further brings them together.
- Popular culture offers a sense of easy access to symbolic communities, a world of belonging beyond oneself.
- This can at times be seen as preparatory for civic engagement, prefiguring involvement beyond one's one private domain, by offering 'cultural citizenship' in the media world.
- As a further step, popular culture invites us to engage – with both our hearts and minds – in many questions having to do with how we should live (and how we should live together), what kind of society we want. It allows us to process, to work through positions having to do with conflicting values, norms, and identities in a turbulent late modern socio-cultural milieu.
- Moreover, many of the themes taken up by popular culture may seem more important and more personally relevant than the agendas on offer from mainstream politics.
- Finally, popular culture can serve to foster alternative conceptions of what actually constitutes politics and the political, generating reflections and engagement over other kinds of concerns and issues.

7. DEMOCRACY: EXPANSIONS, NOT CONTRACTIONS

Taken together, these points strongly accentuate the porous character of the boundary, and offer us insights into how television and other forms of popular culture can play a role in civic engagement. Can we, should we, go further than this in our understanding of the relationship between them? No doubt we can and will go further as both our sense of the 'political' and media logics continue to evolve. However, here it can be useful to keep in mind a few distinctions.

The perspective on television and popular culture that I have been sketching suggests that the field of democracy is in the process of addition, not subtraction. That is to say, in our expanding notion of the political – the inclusion of more personally relevant political questions, identity issues, the single issue groups with their respective agendas, the various kinds of alternative or life politics, etc. – we are basically *adding* to the realm of what is potentially political. And that is a crucial development. However, while many citizens understandably find conventional party politics uninviting, many of the key issues addressed in that context are decidedly not trivial. They have to do with such things as how taxes are set, how public funding is spent, i.e. how wealth is distributed in society. Such politics concern a whole range of questions, large and small, local, national, and global, that profoundly affect the life circumstances of people.

These questions must not disappear from the public sphere – though democracy would often certainly benefit if they were framed differently. These kinds of issues can be – and certainly have been – defined and added to the formal political agenda via extra-parliamentarian contexts, which is also an important development. Yet, what is at stake here not the particular site of politics, but the continual importance of certain categories of issues: They may not always be subjectively engaging (or 'interesting'), but they remain objectively significant (i.e., 'important').

Likewise, the forms of political communication are also expanding and evolving. While it would be conceptually confusing to a priori label most of popular culture as 'political communication', in the light of the discussion above we should at least acknowledge its potentially political relevance, recognizing its 'proto-political' character for stimulating civic talk. Yet, as we move into the newer forms of factual television, in particular where the traditional conventions of documentary have become loosened, can we simply assume that audiences unproble-matically follow along? Have their foundational assumptions about factuality and truth claims simply evolved with the newer programs?

How are their coordinates of social and political reality affected by the hybridization of genres, and how do they perceive such programming?

It is important to maintain sociological contact with real, live citizens and their experiences of the changes going on – to have some grasp of how they perceive, for example, the turbulence within factual television programming. We have some important evidence of this from the comparative studies conducted by Hill (2007) in the UK and Sweden. Focusing on viewer strategies, how they engage with and interpret the various genres, she interviewed viewers to find out how they make their way through the chaotic mix of new and rescrambled genres, where the fictive and non-fictive have become entwined.

What she finds is a strong tendency for viewers to hold on to established conceptions of an external, objective reality and notions of documentary truth claims. Viewers are fully aware of the contemporary restyling of factual television and other genre developments; they can identify documentary as an overarching genre and can classify many different versions of documentary as sub-genres. While there is an acceptance of the newer forms of factual television, as well as a tendency to continue to underscore a baseline conception of reality, there is a clear tendency to rank the spectacle of reality entertainment lower than more serious genres (unlike Coleman, 2005, who interviewed fans of *Big Brother*, Hill is working with representative viewer samples). For both British and Swedish viewers, the distinction between public issues and popular culture remains a compelling framework for evaluating genres of factual television.

The UK and Sweden are of course societies with a strong public service tradition in television, as Hill emphasizes, and this no doubt impacts on how viewers responded. For example, they tended strongly to rank factual public service programs higher than other kinds of programs. Yet, the results are still of relevance for societies like the US that lack a strong public service tradition. The genre developments in the UK and Sweden, similar, though not identical, have had a disruptive impact on fundamental orientations having to do with representation of knowledge, fairness, and truth claims. This has forced audiences to come to reflect on – and come to terms with – these changes. Thus, for example, 'reality TV', which Hill calls in this context a 'feral genre', has become reclassified in viewers' minds as 'reality entertainment', reminding us of the cultural tenacity of core conceptions having to do with how we orient ourselves to the 'real world', and the media we use in doing so.

Finally, we can engage in some speculation that the modes of engagement and participation facilitated by popular culture may have

significance for future democratic involvement. Mediated popular culture, as found on the internet and on the growing net-based forms of interaction prevalent on television, are contributing to the emergence of new horizons of expectation concerning communicative practices. In chatting and voting on issues around reality programs, in joining online fan cultures, making use of fanzines, blogging about popular topics, utilizing such tools as Photoshop, portraying oneself online on such sites as MySpace and Facebook, people – especially younger ones – are developing strong patterns of mediated engagement and participation. The perennial question as to where the political resides follows along with these developments, but we can certainly assume that the boundary with popular culture will continue to be permeable. We must conclude that a new, very talkative mediated culture is emerging, with this 'convergence culture, as Jenkins (2006) calls it, enabling many new forms of participation and collaboration. If we recall the kind of 'working through' that broadcast television has facilitated over the past decades, one can only begin to speculate what can be done online in much shorter time frames.

8. Popular civic cultures?

The public sphere perspective and political communication have both traditionally zeroed in on television journalism; the remaining programming, and popular culture more broadly, has been dismissed as at best irrelevant for concerns about democracy, at worst outright harmful. The above discussion, and the culturalist literature on which it draws, hopefully serve to offer a more nuanced view. I conclude this chapter below with some summary reflections on television as a space for civic culture, looking at the five dimensions of civic culture in regard to the links between politics and television. As will be apparent, it is not the case that we arrive at many easy closures in these matters.

8.1. Knowledge

While conveying detailed information in a cognitive manner has never been television's forte, it does well at evoking discussion on an endless array of themes and topics, thereby contributing to a talkative citizenry. Whether the topics should be seen as political or not can be discussed in each case, but certainly the accessible character of television, as a prominent institution of cultural citizenship, is important in fore-

grounding political talk. The popularity of the medium is bound up with the pleasures that it offers, even in knowledge acquisition. While there are obvious limits as to what it can reasonably provide in terms of traditional notions of knowledge, Glynn (2000) makes the point that television offers different regimes of knowing, that speak, in different ways, to different groups, in particular those with less social power. It is precisely the 'popularity' of television that makes it so important both as a purveyor of potentially relevant political knowledge and as a space in which viewers are free to select and define what is important to them and what indeed is political.

8.2. Values

Television offers a mixed bag in regard to values. Much of program-ming's concerns with values of course pertain to private life, private solutions, individual choice-making, consumption, and market relations. This reminds us of the hegemonic boundaries of much of television's working through. Yet, television's working through of values central to people's lives over the years would suggest that it can become a space for contestation, often with a proto-political resonance, and thus of significance for civic cultures. Also, television discourses still reiterate many of the basic values and virtues of democracy, such individual rights and respect for the law. Such values become a baseline for generating scandal, and representations of moral deviation are often amplified through compelling dramaturgy. The portrayals of scandal may well become less convincing when scandal becomes routinized: skepticism and cynicism take root. Yet, if scandal and indignation are one kind of response, laughter is another. Jones (2005), in analyzing the new political comedy programs from a civic cultures perspective, concludes that the much of the humour builds on a values-centred way of looking at politics, and is driven by the comic appeals to return to basic democratic values that we all hold in common.

8.3. Trust

Television tends to show very few examples – in fiction or non-fiction – of the 'thin trust' that typifies civic social bonds or co-operation that makes a political impact. The social bonds displayed lean toward romance, male bonding such as sports or action/military, social friend-ships, etc. (A large-scale content analysis of this theme might yield inte-resting results …). Television is also known to promote fear and

suspicion in some audience groups via its emphasis on crime, linking danger with public space and thereby contributing to the uncivic retreat into the private domain. On the other hand, its continual processes of making visible a wider and wider array of social sectors, life styles, and generally unconventional personalities may be more significance than normally recognized. One might well hypothesise that the medium does an important job in both factual and fictive programming of rendering as familiar particular elements of society that many people would otherwise never encounter. That established politics and politicians tend to have low trust, returns us to the fundamental issues of contemporary civic disengagement and mainstream media's role in this regard.

8.4. Practices

One of the key practices of civic culture is discussion, a cornerstone of the public sphere perspective and civic republicanism. Different kinds of programming situate the viewing subject differently; in some cases viewers are very much invited to respond actively, take positions, even to argue, as we see in some talk shows and reality TV programs. Other programming leans more toward positioning the viewer as a non-dialogic receiver of information from on high (e.g., traditional news programs). What real viewers actually do is of course an empirical question. Some viewers will be left speechless by a sensationalist talk show, while others will be provoked into argumentative response by a serious documentary.

In the American context, Lembo (2000) identifies a typology of television use: 'discrete' use is selective and focused; viewing has a cohesion and coherence in relation to people's social location and to their sense of accomplishment. 'Undirected' and 'continuous' use are diffuse, less the product of conscious decision. Moreover, Lembo links discrete use with a solid, modernist sense of self-formation; it is action- and productivity-oriented, and correlates with higher social power. Undirected and continuous use has less consistency and coherence; the viewing is characterised by more context-free involvement with imagery where normative frameworks are weak. This type of engagement with television's image world generates disjuncture, where fleeting meaning does not cumulatively add up to much. The flows, eruptions and interruptions of the viewing experience situate viewers squarely in the domain corporate commodity culture, according to Lembo.

Even if this analysis is in part a replay of the differences in class-based cultural capital, it suggestively invites attention to the issue of watching

as a practice that relates to individual autonomy, personal development, and empowerment. Set in relation to civic culture, we might say that the issue is not between watching television or not, but rather where the locus of control and definitional power lie – i.e., who's in charge, so to speak. We could conclude from Lembo's study that the way we relate to television in our everyday lives correlates with the civic horizons we may develop and the sense of empowerment we may experience.

Beyond the engagement in the viewing, we should reiterate the theme of weak public connections to political practice emphasized by Couldry, Livingstone and Markham (2007): That exposure to mainstream news mostly does not lead to political participation, because of the perceived limited access afforded by the political system itself. Together with the findings of Lewis, Inthorn, and Wahl-Jorgensen (2005) that stress the lack of enabling images of citizens on television news, we must keep in mind that the immediate civic practices and sense of empowerment to be derived from television news as such are limited.

8.5. Identities

Traditionally, it has been said that the mass media are weak in fostering identities of citizenship among its audiences. Where do we find the sense of civic 'we-ness' in contemporary television? As we move from the journalism of high modernity to the late modern realms of subjective experience, it becomes quite thin. Increasingly, television and the rest of the media milieu position us as consumers: It is in the domain of consumption where we are to be empowered, where we make choices, where we create ourselves. To be sure, being a citizen and a consumer are not always antithetical: Citizens need to consume, and consumption at times can be politically framed. Yet there is a fundamental distinction between consumption, which is predicated on the fluctuations of the market, and the principles of universality embedded in the notion of the citizen.

However, this perspective is being modified by arguments from another angle, that television, as a major institution of popular culture, offers us opportunities to fantasize, and speculate about ourselves, our lives, our identities. Moreover, from the literature on identity in late modernity, it may be that it is more productive to see how elements of civic identities infuse other domains of our selves, how the political can enter into many areas of our lives, rather than to conceptualize a bounded 'civic identity module' that we activate in limited, yet already explicitly delineated political contexts. Certainly popular culture offers

us resources for exploring the political links between public and private spheres, and thus extending and multiplying our civic identities.

Television's contribution to civic cultures remains equivocal, though the picture becomes more optimistic as we shift towards the online linkages of the newer television environment. It may be that mainstream television offers largely shrivelled, voting-oriented versions of civic identities. On the other hand, it provides a continuous flood of topics that touch people in various ways. Some of these topics can, especially if processed by discussion, resonate with core values, suggest practices, mobilize identities, and generate engagement in the public sphere. They can evoke contestation, and further develop the terrain of the political, thereby pumping blood into the body of democracy. Or not: We can no doubt just as easily find evidence for negative spirals. The point is not that we should try to arrive at some ultimate, once-and-for-all evaluation, but rather, to be alert for how television – despite all its familiar limitations – may at times help move us beyond narrow definitions of politics and the public sphere, and connect to civic cultures in subtle, surprising, and unintended ways.

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NOTES

[1]   This text will appear, in a slightly different form, in my forthcoming book *Media and Civic Engagement*, from Cambridge University Press, New York, 2008.

From pirates to politicians:
The story of the Swedish file sharers
who became a political party

Fredrik Miegel and Tobias Olsson

1. INTRODUCTION

In the general election in Sweden in September 2006, *Piratpartiet* (The Pirate Party) gained 34 918 votes. The result made them number three among the parties not qualifying for *Riksdagen* (the Swedish parliament) with 0,68% of the total votes, a turn out that might not seem too impressive. However, considering some of the circumstances it is a remarkable result, as the party was established only nine months prior to the elections, and it actually came out stronger than *Junilistan*, a party already represented in the European parliament.

But the history of *Piratpartiet* actually started earlier. It is part of a Swedish movement in the field of file sharing and anti-copyright activism. By the end of 2003, the anti-copyright organization *Piratbyrån* (the Bureau of Piracy) launched the website The Pirate Bay, which by now is the world's largest bittorent-tracker.

The present chapter is a first attempt to provide a basic, essentially descriptive analysis of the development of what we can call an emerging Swedish pirate movement and its political significance. It starts from close descriptions of three websites affiliated with the movement, *http://thepiratebay.org*, *http://piratbyran.org* and *http://www.piratpartiet.se.* Website descriptions are a rather obvious point of departure in analyzing this movement, since the internet is its most natural habitat. The descriptions will also blend into an overview of the movement's ideology and ways of conducting political action. This section is followed by a description and analysis of the file sharing movement's transformation into a political party, drawing on – among other sources – on an interview with *Piratpartiet's* vice-chairman, Christian Engström.

Finally, we will offer some reflections from the perspective of democratic theory on the Swedish file sharing movement.

2. THREE WEBSITES FROM THE SWEDISH FILE SHARING MOVEMENT

2.1. *http://thepiratebay.org*

The Pirate Bay is basically a file sharing site. It is the world's largest bittorrent tracker according to the site itself. Bittorrent is a file sharing protocol enabling fast and effective transfer of big data files. The primary purpose of the site is, thus, to supply torrent files. It does so in 27 languages.

The structure of the site is very simple. Its main page consists principally of The Pirate Bay's logotype – a pirate ship – and a number of links with different options for how one wants to use the site.

Figure 1: The Pirate Bay website: http://thepiratebay.org

At the bottom of the main page are links to different sections of the website, such as 'About', 'Legal threats', 'Blog', 'Usage policy', 'Forum', 'Court blog' (reporting specifically from the currently ongoing court case against The Pirate Bay) etc. Among these links are a few of particular interest.

Following the link 'About', one can read that the people behind The Pirate Bay maintain that they have no juridical responsibility whatsoever for what the users of the site do with the content being spread via the bittorent tracker. The section also informs the reader about how The Pirate Bay proceeds with persons and organisations considering their rights violated by the website:

> *Any complaints from copyright and/or lobby organizations will be ridiculed and published at the site* (http://thepiratebay.org 2007-11-28).

Another important piece of information supplied in this section is that The Pirate Bay was started by the Swedish anti-copyright organization *Piratbyrån* (the Bureau of Piracy) in 2003, but it is since October 2004 run separately from this organization. However, both sites of course have easily available hyperlinks leading from the one to the other.

Even though most of the actual political debates on file sharing issues is the responsibility of either *Piratbyrån* or *Piratpartiet* (see below), also The Pirate Bay takes active part in the legal and political debate on file sharing and copyright questions, but in its own sometimes peculiar ways. This participation is especially located in four sections of the site. On the 'Forum' there is one section dedicated to 'serious discussion & debate', where the members can discuss political and juridical issues of file sharing, copyright laws and related topics. The section called 'The Court Blog', is a blog about what happens with the ongoing trial against The Pirate Bay and some of its representatives, but also about other issues related to the file sharing question on a global scale.

Under the heading 'Legal threats', The Pirate Bay publishes the complaints they get from individuals and organizations that find their rights violated by its activities. They publish the complaints together with their often rude and sarcastic answers to them. A typical and illustrative example is this correspondence with Apple:

> **Apple:** *We demand that you immediately disable the torrent and/or tracker and prevent further distribution of Apple's trade secret and copyrighted material.*
>
> **TPB:** *We demand that you provide us with entertainment by sending more legal threats. Please?*
>
> **Apple:** *Apple further demands that you provide us with all information relating to the posting of torrents enabling the distribution of Mac OS X Tiger, Build 8A428, including all log files and tracker files associated with*

such torrents. Apple also demands all information related to the identity of the persons who created such torrent files and/or who uploaded the software referenced by those torrent files, as well as the identities of all individuals who participated in the uploading and downloading of Apple's software. If you fail to maintain the evidence of this illegal activity, you will be subject to severe sanctions. In particular, if you destroy or hide any evidence, you will be subject to civil and criminal penalties. Please produce all requested information by the end of the day, Friday, April 22, 2005.

TPB: *Even if we had that information, which we don't, do you really think we would provide it to you?*

Apple: *Builds of unreleased Apple software are distributed under strict confidentiality agreements. Your torrent site appears to be engaged in a practice of soliciting and disseminating Apple trade secrets. This practice is grounds for both civil and criminal liability. To avoid further liability, you must refrain from inducing the breach of any Apple confidentiality agreements, soliciting Apple trade secrets, and distributing Apple trade secrets on your site.*

TPB: *... Or what? You and Hans Brix will send us angry letters? Fortunately for you, we don't keep sharks as pets.*

Apple*: Apple is prepared to take further actions to stop the sites' illegal activities, and Apple expressly reserves its rights. I am available to discuss this matter at any time. If you are represented by counsel in this matter, please provide me with the identity of that counsel.*

TPB: *Instead of simply recommending that you sodomize yourself with a retractable baton, let me recommend a specific model – the ASP 21'. The previous lawyers tried to use a cheaper brand, but it broke during the action.*

In addition to the 'debates' carried out in relation to the legal correspondence the website also contains a blog-section where file sharing, copyright laws and related issues are discussed by the people behind the website. A common topic discussed on the blog is the various legal trials that The Pirate Bay is involved in.

2.2. http://piratbyran.org

The Pirate Bay's close affinities with *Piratbyrån* clearly imply an active political standpoint regarding the questions on file sharing, immaterial property and copyright. Contrary to The Pirate Bay, *Piratbyrån* is

explicitly political and can best be described as a lobbying organization regarding copyright issues. They state their purpose in the following way on their website:

> Piratbyrån *(The Bureau of Piracy) is not an organization, at least not primarily. First and foremost,* Piratbyrån *is since its beginning in 2003 an ongoing conversation. We are reflect[ing] over questions regarding copying, information infrastructure and digital culture. Within the group, using our own different experiences and skills, as in our daily encounters with other people. These conversations often bring about different kinds of activities.* (http://piratbyran.org/?view=articles&cat=8, 2008-04-14).

Figure 2: The *Piratbyrån* website: http://piratbyran.org

Briefly describing the website, its main page contains mainly of a number of short news reports regarding on the one hand activities that *Piratbyrån* recently has been engaged in, and on the other hand brief news items on issues related to pirate copying and the legislation surrounding it, both nationally and internationally. On the particular day of the screenshot above (April 14, 2008), the site gives an overview of a survey conducted among 100 Swedish musicians regarding their attitudes towards file sharing; a report of a visit of some delegates from *Piratbyrån* to a festival in Belgrade; a short article on the decision of

Yahoo to censure The Pirate Bay; and an article about three active law-proposals from the EU to limit pirate copying on the internet. There is also a link to a PDF-document for downloading, which contains reports of all the activities of Piratbyrån during 2007 (http://piratbyran.org/ PBverksamhet2007/PB%20activities%202007.pdf).

The latter document gives a good idea of how *Piratbyrån* carries out its political activities. The internet itself is obviously an important channel for the bureau's political work, but it does also have offline activities. Among the numerous activities they list are: 1/meetings with net activists from other countries; 2/lectures that representatives of *Piratbyrån* have held for students in different universities in Sweden and at conferences both in Sweden and abroad; 3/conferences and meetings they have taken part in; 4/ campaigns and events they have initiated and conducted; 5/ demonstrations and so on.

To put it briefly, *Piratbyrån* is a significant and active voice in the ongoing debate in Sweden on file sharing, immaterial rights and copy-right laws, and in order to understand the political and civic importance of The Pirate Bay, one must not forget its close relation to *Piratbyrån*. The two sites have a common origin and work in different ways to achieve the same political goal, that is: the free and unrestricted ability to supply and share music, film, texts, computer software and other digital material on the internet.

2.3. http://www.piratpartiet.se

To further underscore the increasing political impact of the file sharing issue, a new political party was established to run for the general election in Sweden in 2006. The party's name is *Piratpartiet* (The Pirate Party). The establishment of *Piratpartiet* in December 2005 was a direct effect of the escalating and increasingly heated public debate on the immaterial rights and copyrights and a protest against a change of the Swedish copyright laws which would make the downloading of copyrighted material via the internet illegal. The party's homepage was originally started by its current chairman Rickard Falkvinge, as a way to get people to sign an online petition for the abolishment of the existing immaterial right laws and to protest against the new copyright laws. The interest immediately turned out to be so big that enough people signed the petition that it was possible for Falkvinge to register a political party. The political aims of *Piratpartiet* have since then developed and matured as has its webpage, which is now a professionally designed resource for the party's members and supporters.

Figure 3: The *Piratpartiet* website: http://www.piratpartiet.se

A brief description of the website shows that the main page goes straight to the essentials. Immediately below the banner with the party's name and logo are four links; 'Politics', 'The Party', 'Act'', and 'International'. The first of these leads to the platform and principles of the party, the second link leads to a description of its history and information about its board and member service. 'Act!' goes to the member registration page, a page for donating money to the party, a chat, and, most importantly, the forum. The heading 'International' leads to a selection of seven languages in which the site is available.

Under these links, there are three big boxes, each handling one of the main questions of the party's political platform: 'Shared culture', 'Free knowledge', and 'Protection of privacy'. These are the party's three cornerstones.

Below this section there is a welcoming message containing a summary of the aims of the party:

> The Pirate Party wants to fundamentally reform copyright law, get rid of the patent system, and ensure that citizens' rights to privacy are respected. With this agenda, and only this, we are making a bid for representation in the European and Swedish parliaments
> (http://www2.piratpartiet.se/international/english, 2008-04-14).

The largest part of the main page consists of a section of brief news on current issues of relevance to the party and its aims. The page also contains links to blogs, local sections of the party and statistics on membership numbers and development. The statistics show that the party is growing and already outnumbering many of the established parties and their youth organizations. The statistics also shows that well over 90% of the members are men.

The politically most interesting sections of the website, however, are the one containing the platform and the principles of the party, and the forum.

The short overview of the *Pirate Party Declaration of Principles 3.1*, as the current version of the party's political platform is called, rests on three legs which constitute the core beliefs of the party (http://www2.piratpartiet.se/international/english):

1/ *The reformation of copyright laws*, so that all non commercial copying, file sharing and use should be made legal, and be encouraged rather than criminalized. Their argument for this position is basically that free and unrestricted distribution of culture and knowledge promotes equality among people which makes society more democratic. *Piratpartiet* is in other words advocates of an expanded concept of people's free and unrestricted right to culture, knowledge and information.

2/ *The abolishment of the patent system*. This standpoint is motivated, among other things, by their view that technological and pharmaceutical patents hamper essential research on diseases and other areas with low potential for profit and that it prevents the production of cheap medications and equipment that could save numerous lives and raise the standards of living in especially less affluent parts of the world. Having access to such medication and technology is a right according to *Piratpartiet*.

3/ *Respect for the right to privacy*, that is, a standpoint opposing what they see as an increasing level of surveillance and control over the citizens. They argue for this position by referring to the risk of creating a totalitarian society reminiscent of the ones existing in Europe before the fall of the iron curtain. The individual's right to autonomy is, thus, a significant aspect of *Piratpartiet's* ideology.

To sum up, one can say that The Pirate Bay together with *Piratbyrån* and *Piratpartiet* has created a strong and influential anti-copyright movement in Sweden, engaging especially young people who consider these issues of high democratic and political importance. So, why has file sharing,

immaterial rights and laws become such an infected political issue in recent years?

3. From pirates to politicians

There are of course several different possible explanations as to why young people's increasing activity of file sharing has evolved into a significant political question. One reason is the severe difficulties of the established political parties in handling the question, which become obvious when considering the attempts that have been made to implement new laws in order to regulate and in effect criminalize all downloading of copyrighted material on the internet (http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c6/01/22/48/9f11cab7.pdf).

The file sharing and copyright controversy culminated in 2006 when the Swedish police made a raid against the web hosting company hosting Pirate Bay's and *Piratbyrån's* servers and confiscated over one hundred servers and detained three persons connected to The Pirate Bay for interrogation. The police raid was controversial for various reasons. Several servers belonging to organizations and corporations without any connection to The Pirate Bay or *Piratbyrån* were confiscated. There are rumours circulating that imply that the raid was carried out after pressure from major American movie companies and the US government. There were also suspicions that the Swedish government was involved in initiating the police raid, which, if true, would mean ministerial rule and hence a violation of the Swedish instrument of government (http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/ index.aspx?nid=10&dok_id=GTA1869).

The outcome of the trial resulting from the police raid is yet to be seen, but one immediate outcome of the raid was that in just two days the Pirate party got 2000 new members and increased their membership number by more than 50%.

The raid against The Pirate Bay was made possible when the former Swedish Social-Democratic government founded a new copyright law that made all downloading of copyrighted material on the internet illegal. As an effect of this they virtually turned a whole generation of young people into criminals over night. The government in essence poked a stick in a hornet's nest by trying to rob a significant part of the young generation of an important part of their lifestyle by making an activity in which many of them engaged in almost on a daily basis, illegal. Contrary

to many of the traditional questions of established party politics, this one touched directly upon many young people's real lives, beliefs and values.

As citizenship is often defined in terms of the acknowledgment of a set of common, fundamental norms and values (cf. Habermas, 1996; Benhabib, 1996), this value conflict may well spur the emergence of a new field of political contestation. In this connection, therefore, it becomes relevant to pose the question of what happens to the young Swedes' views of the legitimacy of the traditional political system and its representatives when important circumstances of their everyday lives come into conflict with the demands of established political institutions and discourses. Such a clash of values may obviously affect the legitimacy of the current order of things, and if the crack becomes deep enough the legitimacy of the prevailing system may become fundamentally questioned. And this may well be one important explanation of the rapid success of *Piratpartiet*. It is basically a bottom-up movement, starting from young people's actual behavior and circumstances, and it became politically significant for them when those interests clashed with the established norms and rules of society.

Understanding the clash between the file sharers and the proponents of the upholding of the existing – or even strengthened – copyright law as fundamentally a value controversy, means that the issue concerns not only file sharing and copyright laws as such, but rather touches upon a more fundamental value conflict. In consistently ignoring the copyright laws, the file sharers also effectively challenge and negotiate the scope and limit of the classic political values such as property right, democracy, freedom of speech, integrity, and equality. In this way, the file sharing issue develops more and more into a new field of political conflict, increasingly difficult for the established parties, ideologies, arguments, terminology and institutions to adequately cope with. In an interview with *Piratpartiet's* vice-chairman, Christian Engström says that:

> *The party emerged as an answer to the possibilities of the new technology to revitalize the political life, just as the invention of the printing press once did. Traditional politics is ill-suited to the new technology and its possibilities ... All of the questions the party works for have to do with the possibilities of the new technology, both the positive and the negative ones* (Interview with Engström 2008-04-01).

In essence, the main argument of *Piratpartiet* is that neither law nor politics has managed to keep pace with technological development. This inability of society's fundamental power institutions to adapt to the

times has negative consequences for their legitimacy among a growing number of young people who are used to use the new technology to obtain and distribute entertainment, knowledge and information. The attempts to regulate the circulation of culture, knowledge and information are seen by *Piratpartiet* as ways of counteracting the development and diffusion of democracy instead of promoting it.

This kind of reasoning clearly resembles John B. Thompson's (1996) argument that one of the most influential dynamics of the political development of society has to do with which societal institutions that are in power of and control over knowledge and information during a given historical era (see also Slevin, 2000). The major power holders changed over time, from the religious institutions (the church) via the pedagogic institutions (universities, schools and science) to the institution of the mass media in modern society, where each of these transitions has been paralleled and was dependent on some major innovation (most notably the printing press) or technological development. And it is exactly the power and control of the latter institution, in the shape of the big and mighty media conglomerates and the global entertainment industry that *Piratpartiet* and their file sharing supporters now are challenging, and whose interests in their understanding the legislators and politicians serve. Just as Thompson (1996) ties the power shifts over knowledge and information to fundamental technological innovations, *Piratpartiet* argues that the internet and the new media and communications technologies of today constitute an even more groundbreaking development than the printing press once did, through its potential to empower people by making all culture, knowledge and information available to everyone, everywhere.

Hence, Engström's and *Piratpartiet's* picking up of classical political values of democracy, freedom of speech, right to information, equality, justice and so forth, can be analyzed as an attempt to revitalize them and adopt them to a society and political context they see as fundamentally different from the ones in which these political key values and the laws serving to uphold and protect them were once developed:

> *The problem is that the existing legislation is adapted to the 18th and 19th centuries and therefore an obstacle to the promotion of the possibilities of the new technology, especially the patent and copyright laws, which aims to reserve knowledge and information for the privileged and the strong on resources, instead of promoting a society in which everyone has access to all information* (Interview with Engström 2008-04-01).

As previously mentioned, *Piratpartiet* was established as a consequence of the success of a petition against the introduction of a new law, which by the initiator and those who signed the petition perceived as an intrusion in their personal autonomy and an illegitimate obstruction of an activity they consider to be a right. In this respect the establishment of *Piratpartiet*, and the pirate movement more generally, can be seen as collective response to individual interests.

According to the French historian and political theorist Pierre Rosanvallon (2006) democracy is a function of time, and the fields of the political must therefore be constantly re-evaluated. Today this is particularly important when it comes to the relationship between personal independence and social power, as the modern individual is both more autonomous and more dependent on social interaction than ever before, according to Rosanvallon. The social therefore has to be understood as a process in which collective recognition and individual differentiation is fundamentally intertwined.

One of the consequences of this development is the emergence of a new understanding of democracy in terms of its simultaneous de-institutionalization and expansion. Democracy can no longer be solely seen as the practicing of its institutional forms nor as something belonging exclusively to the political sphere. And those who could be designated political actors increase in numbers and diversity, he argues (Rosanvallon, 2006). By establishing a political party and running for the general elections, *Piratpartiet* certainly makes use of the traditional political institutions and democratic procedures to promote their goals. But it is hardly a traditional political party, and its representatives are not traditional politicians. They combine their involvement in the established political procedures with what they claim to be a more contemporary use of the political value terms, and with a way of working as a party that makes full use of modern technology and which lets everybody interested be involved on equal terms. *Piratpartiet*, thus, sits well with Rosanvillon's (2006) analyses, with its emphasis on individual autonomy and rights combined with its supporters' and members' communicatively based collective engagement.

> *The heart and soul is in the forums where all decisions are made, where the annual meetings are held, and where the political platform is formulated. The entire political platform is the result of forum discussions* (Interview with Engström 2008-04-01).

So regardless of what one thinks about file sharing, copyright and surveillance laws, *Piratpartiet,* can be interpreted as questioning the traditional contents of many fundamental democratic values, inviting the established political actors and power holders to negotiate the scope and meaning of these values. According to such an analysis, the Pirate movement represents a new generation of voters and politicians, claiming to reform the classic political and democratic agenda, and its issues and values by adapting them to a society built on a new technology and around individual lifestyles tied to the actual use of the technologies' potentials.

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Decision-making online and offline: The case of the 'movement for alternative globalization'

Anastasia Kavada

1. Participatory democracy and social movements

Driven by a critique of dominant democratic institutions, social movements often constitute laboratories of alternative democratic practices. In a reaction against the perceived ailments of Western representative democracy, the 'movement for alternative globalization' and the social forum process, on which this chapter will be focusing, subscribe to a participatory or deliberative model of democracy.

Drawing on several scholars of deliberative democracy, including Dryzek, Cohen, Habermas and Young, della Porta (2005a: 75) provides the following definition of the form: *'we have deliberative democracy when, under conditions of equality, inclusiveness, and transparency, a communicative process based on reason (the strength of the argument) transforms individual preferences into consensual decision making oriented to the public good'.* Therefore, deliberative democracy consists of seven elements that can be classified into conditions, means and ends. The conditions are: a) *equality*, meaning that participants have equal access to public deliberation, equal capacity to deliberate and equal respect and recognition accorded to their contribution; b) *inclusiveness*, meaning that anyone who has a stake in the decision (i.e. is affected by the same problem) is included in the process; c) *transparency*, signifying that deliberation occurs in public. The means refer to a communicative process that is founded on *reason* and where the best argument wins. Deliberation is inclusive, interactive and based on reciprocal listening and horizontal flows of communication (Habermas cited in della Porta, 2005a: 74). The outcome is the *formation and transformation of individual preferences* rather than the aggregation of preferences created externally from the system. Decisions are *consensual*

based on unanimous agreement rather than voting. The resulting decisions are also *oriented to the public good* rather than driven by the participants' self-interest.

Where theorists seem to disagree is on the extent and the conditions under which consensus is possible. While Habermas is hopeful that rational-critical debate under conditions of transparency, inclusiveness and equality can lead to consensus, other scholars point to the difficulties of reaching a unanimous decision when there are divergent interests, values or norms (see for instance Dryzek, 1994; Mansbridge, 1980; Mouffe, 2005; Polletta, 2002). In such cases, the process of reaching a decision can be slow and time-consuming, with participants locked in endless discussions about the issues at stake. These problems explain the gradual abandonment of the form after its boom in the student movement of the 1960s (Polletta, 2002: 7).

However, recent shifts in the political environment have led to a resurgence of participatory democracy. These include the professionalization and bureaucratization of politics in Western representative democracies (della Porta, 2005b: 192), as well as the crisis of governance in world politics where the control over economic decisions is less in the hands of national governments and more in those of the 'market' or major private players (Rucht, 2002: 10). In addition, the process of globalization has heightened the perception that current risks and problems are increasingly complex and global (Tomlinson, 2001: 52). They should thus be solved through the cooperation of a wide range of participants since complex problems have '*multiple facets, each of a particular concern to a specific group of people*' (Dryzek, 1994: 69).

Against this backdrop, deliberative democracy is seen as a way to revive the 'polis' by handing decisions back to citizens and to breathe new life to a citizenry that is disenchanted with representative institutions (della Porta, 2005b: 191). It is also considered as a better system for resolving complex problems as it allows multiple lines of input and communication, facilitating experimentation. Participatory democracy further aids the development of citizens' skills and political efficacy as it trains people in argumentation and negotiation (Polletta, 2002: 10).

On a more practical level, the current rise of the form can also be attributed to the availability of digital communication tools that facilitate its practice. Yet, this is an aspect that is rarely addressed in the relevant literature. Writings on participatory democracy are characterized by a general disregard of mediated communication, as most studies focus on the deliberation taking place in face-to-face meetings (see for instance Mansbridge, 1980; Polletta, 2002). Instead, research examining the

potential of the internet to constitute an ideal-type public sphere currently represents the most robust field exploring the role of the internet in deliberative democracy.

2. THE PUBLIC SPHERE MODEL AND THE STUDY OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Examining whether online deliberation fulfils the normative conditions of the public sphere, research in this line of enquiry has focused on the communicative affordances of the internet for critical-rational discourse. In that respect, online communication is interactive, anonymous, and essentially global (Sparks, 2001: 80). It is also mainly text-based, while '*[t]he searchable architecture of the system makes it easy to distribute and organize the information necessary to reach informed decisions on any matter*' (Sparks, 2001: 80). In addition, online anonymity '*serves to disguise many of those social markers [...] that in practice serve to either validate or disqualify the opinions of speakers in direct social interaction*' (Sparks, 2001: 80). Nevertheless, studies on the subject have rendered a sobering view, showing that the internet is limited in providing an ideal public sphere. Its limitations include the digital divide, the fragmentation of political discourse, the differences in new media literacy, the practice of 'flaming' in online discussions, as well as the increasing commercialization of online content (Dahlberg, 2001; Papacharissi, 2002; Sparks, 2001).

However, despite its popularity, the public sphere model can be a rather restrictive theory when it is applied to the study of decision-making within social movements. The reasons for this can be traced to the way Habermas has envisioned the place of the public sphere within the political system. For Habermas, the lifeworld constitutes the proper home of communicative rationality, while the responsibility for strategizing, administration and problem-solving belongs to the 'system' (Dryzek, 1994: 20). However, within the decision-making process of a social movement the opinion formation and administrative functions are not always distinct from one another. This is because the same activists who take decisions are the ones who will then implement and held accountable for them. Thus, by focusing on opinion formation and deliberation, the public sphere pays less attention to mechanisms of accountability which form a vital component of the decision-making system. In turn, this is reflected on the study of the internet, as research tends to explore its communicative affordances for deliberation rather than accountability. It therefore emphasizes the potential of the internet

for interactivity and anonymity, while its record-storing capacity, which is crucial for accountability, is assigned to the background.

What is more, studies of the internet and participatory democracy tend to focus solely on the online realm ignoring the other media and forms of communication used within the process. When these are taken into account, it is mostly in order to draw comparisons between online and face-to-face deliberation, rather than explore their complementarities and continuities[1].

3. THE CASE STUDY

This chapter aims to address this gap by examining the role of email and email lists within the decision-making process of the 'movement for alternative globalization'. Appearing in the 'Battle of Seattle' in late 1999, the 'alter-globalization movement' is thought to possess a distinct combination of characteristics: It is global in scale, ideologically diverse and organized in a decentralized way that favours direct participation.

Since Seattle, the movement has organized numerous protests during the meetings of large international institutions, such the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund. However, in recent years demonstrations have been overtaken by another type of event, the social forums, which have become the main points of convergence for 'alter-globalization' activists (Juris, 2005: 255). According to its Charter of Principles, the World Social Forum (WSF) operates as

> *an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences, and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism* (World Social Forum Organizing Committee, 2001).

The 'open space' idea emphasizes the role of the WSF as a 'public square' and not as a political actor that claims to represent its participants (Whitaker, 2004: 113). The success of the first WSF, which took place in Porto Allegre in 2001, has led to the establishment of various regional and local social forums. The European Social Forum (ESF), on which this chapter will be focusing, was first held in Florence in 2002, while subsequent ESFs took place in Paris (2003), in London (2004) and in Athens (2006).

The coordination of these events is undertaken by lightweight and temporary structures with no visible leadership. This mode of organi-

zing is accompanied by a belief in deliberative methods of decision-making based on consensus rather than on majority voting, and emphasizing inclusiveness and equality. In fact, the social forum process seems to have adopted the practice of deliberative democracy on a grander scale than movements of the past.

Drawing on in-depth interviews with twenty-four organizers of the London 2004 ESF, as well as participant observation of the main meetings and email lists and an analysis of the documents and minutes generated by the London 2004 preparatory process, this chapter explores the role of email lists in installing and sustaining this model of deliberative democracy. The discussion focuses on the affordances and limitations of email lists for the conditions and outcomes of deliberative democracy, as well as for the system of accountability.

4. EMAIL LISTS AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY IN THE LONDON 2004 ESF

4.1. Internal structure and flexible organizing

The preparatory process of the London 2004 ESF unfolded in a series of face-to-face meetings and online spaces. Its highest decision-making body was the European Preparatory Assembly (EPA), an open European-level meeting of delegates and representatives of any organization wishing to take part in the preparation of the ESF. Three major working groups – Programme, Practicalities and Culture – assumed responsibility for specific areas of organizing, while other working groups – Memory and Systematization, Office and Outreach – were added later on to the structure. The day-to-day coordination of the event was undertaken by activists in the host country who also held regular face-to-face meetings. Apart from the working groups, the two main decision-making bodies of the British process were the Organizing Committee and the Coordinating Committee. The former was an open assembly of the British movement taking place every one to two months, while the latter consisted of one delegate from each organization affiliated to the process and which met weekly at City Hall in London.

In-between these face-to-face meetings, activists communicated on the various email lists devoted to the organizing of the ESF. There was one list operating on the European level, several on a national one, while each working group and thematic network operated its own email space. Hence, the lists ensured the continuity of the process, constructing a

series of stable but dispersed spaces where activists could contact each other at any point in time.

They also helped to identify the participants of the movement without the need for official membership lists. Instead, activists could become affiliated to the movement by simply subscribing to one of the email lists as the lists were open to any activist or organization who agreed with the WSF Charter of Principles. They thus facilitated a flexible process of affiliation, allowing the membership of the movement to shift and change with no central authority regulating this process. This is in contrast to past movements where affiliation depended on activists successfully proving their commitment to the movement's mission. Instead, within the ESF process, commitment was built after the activists' affiliation and depended on their willingness to participate in the process, to assume responsibilities and to build relationships. In turn, this provided a degree of autonomy to individual activists since they could regulate their involvement in the movement according to their time and resources. In addition, with no official membership lists, no ability to formally regulate affiliation to the movement and an increasing difficulty to keep a tab on the new organizing units that were being added to the structure, it was impossible to establish a central control of the process. Therefore, the email lists served as a crucial component of a flexible and decentralized system of organizing, allowing the flexible definition of new organizing units and preventing leadership from becoming centralized.

4.2. Inclusiveness and consensus decision-making

Within the organizing process of the ESF, the main decisions were taken in face-to-face meetings both on the European level and on that of the host country. This is because, as most of my interviewees noted, physical meetings allow quicker and more complex negotiations among numerous parties. In addition, activists tend to be less confrontational face-to-face as they are more obliged to attend to the feelings of others when they share the same physical space. Face-to-face meetings also give rise to a sense of unity and togetherness, which flourishes more easily within a context of physical proximity. Thus, for most of my interviewees email lists could only be used to make decisions for minor issues.

It is worth noting though that activists with a greater degree of technical expertise or experience of online decision-making were more appreciative of its benefits. An interviewee from Indymedia, for instance, noted the value of chat for holding online meetings among participants

located in different countries (Interviewee 7, 10 June 2004). Others remarked that the suitability of the internet for decision-making varies between different applications, with those allowing synchronous communication better facilitating such tasks.

However, the real value of the ESF email lists becomes more apparent once we consider the complementarities of online and offline communication, instead of simply comparing these two realms. In that respect, most of my interviewees thought that the ESF lists were instrumental for preparing the face-to-face meetings. Hence, the email lists played a central role in the maintenance of a consensus-based decision-making system on a European scale.

Requiring for all parties to agree on a decision, the consensus method is commonly employed by relatively small and homogenous groups. Hence, in the case of the EPA meetings, attended by numerous activists[2] from various countries, speaking different languages and coming from diverse political contexts and traditions, the practice of consensus would be extremely ineffective, if the ground for discussion was not prepared online. The email lists operated as the main spaces for circulating and debating the agenda and minutes of meetings, as well as proposals and statements, allowing participants to focus the discussion on the core issues when they met face-to-face. The lists also helped to regulate the discussion in the physical meetings according to the principles of consensus decision-making. They were used for the selection of chairs, as well as for recording abuses of power and laying out the code of conduct that should be followed face-to-face.

The ESF email lists further served the inclusiveness of the process, by opening up the offline meetings to the participation of a variety of actors. Activists used them to organize transport and accommodation to the EPAs, thus lowering the costs of participation. They also aided in putting together and distributing the solidarity fund, created to cover the costs of transport for activists with low resources. What is more, the email lists facilitated the timely announcement of meetings and allowed activists to deliberate on the time and place that would ensure broad participation.

They also gave more power to the 'periphery', to those who were unable to attend the physical meetings and could follow the process solely online. In that respect, the email lists helped to install an informal system of delegation where activists participating in the meetings acted as the unofficial delegates of their absent counterparts. Activists from the periphery could use the lists to become informed about the agenda of meetings and the proposals that were going to be discussed and consult with those aiming to attend in order to make their opinions heard. They

could also contribute to online consultations, as well as to the writing and circulation of statements that would be presented in the physical meetings. They could finally read the official minutes of meetings, as well as unofficial reports and use them to contest the decisions of the assemblies.

Therefore, the email lists aided in distributing power more equally among activists attending the meetings and those unable to do so. However, by facilitating those who were being represented not to feel entirely excluded from the process, the lists also helped to obscure the fact that it was always the same actors, those with the requisite time and resources, who could attend the meetings and take decisions. In turn, this reduced demands to institute formal mechanisms for enlarging participation in the offline meetings and for ensuring that the ideas and opinions of those who were being represented were indeed taken into account by their representatives. In other words, this informal system of delegation may have actually helped not only to conceal, but also to consolidate, exclusions and inequalities within the ESF process.

4.3. Transparency and accountability

Email has the potential to increase the transparency of the decision-making system as it leaves a written record of the interaction that can be distributed widely and at no extra cost. It also has the tendency to blur the border between the private and the public, as a message that might be intended for and received by only one person, constituting a private interaction, can then be forwarded by the initial receiver to multiple users, being thus transformed into a public multicast. Therefore, email can be the carrier of an unintended transparency, increasing the likelihood for sensitive information to be disclosed by accident.

Within the London 2004 process, there were several instances where activists inadvertently exposed secret negotiations taking place within their factions or organizations. In one particular case, a report of a European meeting written by the Italian delegation for the national movement was lifted from the Italian email list, translated in English and circulated widely to all the ESF lists. The report, which included some harsh criticisms of British delegates to the meeting, created much furore within the ESF process, prompting the Italian movement to apologize for '*the fact that an internal report became public*' (The Italian Working Group Towards the London ESF, 16 June 2004).

However, activists also used email in ways that inhibited transparency. From my interviews with British activists, it emerged that two

different factions of the London ESF process had established secret lists in order to debate strategies in private. Still, mistakes and transgressions were unavoidable, particularly for activists who '*were very casual with hitting the 'reply all' button*' (Interviewee 19, 21 July 2004). This further shows that it is not only the communicative affordances of a medium, but also the culture and experience of the people using it that determines its effect on transparency.

Transparency is a vital component of the system of accountability, as those responsible cannot be held to account for abuses of power, if information about these abuses is not publicly available. Still, a well-functioning process of accountability also necessitates a clear and shared understanding of who should be held accountable, for what and to whom. It further entails a set of shared standards by which to evaluate the performance of those in power, as well as a system of sanctions to be imposed in the case of abuses and transgressions.

Email lists affected the system of accountability in divergent ways. While they were crucial for creating an account of the process, their information overload resulted in a rather chaotic and contradictory record. This is because the email lists document both the official and the unofficial discussions rendering a more comprehensive but fragmentary view of the process. It was thus difficult for activists to keep up with all the information generated by the decision-making system and to come to a shared understanding about what constituted abuse of power. This was exacerbated by the flexible and decentralized system of allocating responsibilities that made it difficult to identify which activists should be held to account for which task.

In addition, the internal plurality of the ESF process meant that its participants often operated on different standards for judging the conduct of those in power. Some focused more on the efficiency of organizing, viewing the ESF as an event that should attract as many participants as possible. Others emphasized the process of organizing, noting how it should conform to the principles of participatory democracy. Thus, the system of accountability was lacking a set of common standards for evaluating mistakes and abuses.

Furthermore, the decision-making process did not comprise any official sanctions, as within such an informal system, activists cannot be fined or expelled from the movement. Instead, sanctions belonged mainly to the peer mechanism (Grant and Keohane, 2005: 36) and entailed the loss of network ties and the damaging of reputations. However, with no shared understanding of what had occurred, of who was responsible and of which standards should be used to judge the

behaviour of power wielders, influential actors were freer to control the process of accountability. Since the loss of their trust constituted a graver sanction, it was their interpretations of the situation, their standards and their evaluations that tended to carry more weight. This means that by accelerating the documenting and circulation of information in an uncontrollable way, email lists may have actually helped to consolidate inequalities within the ESF process.

5. CONCLUSION

Reacting against the established political order, social movements can serve as the sources of alternative democratic practices. The 'alter-globalization movement' is one such case where activists are attempting to reclaim the polis betrayed by political parties and international institutions by installing a system of participatory democracy (della Porta, 2005b: 191) on a scale that has scarcely been seen before.

This process was facilitated and afforded by a wide range of email lists devoted to the organizing of the ESF. Although not used for online decision-making, the lists constituted an integral component to this democratic system. They helped to increase its inclusiveness and equality of access by facilitating practical arrangements and by confer-ring more power to the periphery. Operating as the main spaces for the circulation on minutes, agendas and proposals, the email lists gave the opportunity to participants unable to attend the meetings to become informed about the process. Activists from the periphery could also participate in consultations, co-write proposals, and contact those aiming to attend in order to make their opinions heard. The email lists further increased the transparency of the decision-making system, often acting as the conduits of an 'unintended' and 'unwanted' transparency. They were also crucial for the achievement of consensus in the physical meetings as the preparation and negotiation taking place online accelerated the process of decision making face-to-face.

However, the ESF lists also contributed to the maintenance of an informal system of delegation, with those attending the meetings acting as the unofficial delegates of their absent counterparts. Yet, by strengthening the influence of the periphery, email lists also lessened demands to institute formal rules for enlarging participation through a systematic effort of outreach. In addition, information overload and the proliferation of official and unofficial reports contributed to the

preservation of inequalities within the movement by complicating the process of accountability.

Concealed by the informality, flexibility and information overload of the system, these inequalities and exclusions were difficult to be directly addressed and dealt with. Obviously, no system is perfect, so this critical view is not to suggest the abandonment of the form. In fact, and as shown earlier, for the 'alter-globalization movement' the practice of participatory democracy constitutes a valid response to challenges in its political environment and an integral part of its identity. Yet, becoming aware of these problems and understanding the at once positive and negative role of communication technologies is a first crucial step in any effort to improve the democratic character of the process.

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NOTES

[1]   There are of course notable exceptions, see for instance Cammaerts (2007).

[2]   Although official information concerning the number of activists attending the EPAs is not publicly available, my own observation of these meetings suggests that the EPAs routinely attract more than one hundred activists.

Citizen action groups and online communication – how resource mobilisation theory can help to understand the appropriation of enhanced repertoires of action

Marco Bräuer

1. INTRODUCTION

The diffusion of new information and communication technologies influences the choice of tactics as well as the organisational structure of current social movements. In the past, well-structured and specialised organisations were required to gain mass media coverage. Today, it is the case that even lightweight and less structured organisations are able to get media attention (della Porta and Diani, 1999: 152). The internet in particular is said to have reduced coordination costs and to be now offering enhanced possibilities for information, communication, and mobilisation. Hence, it is not surprising that small and resource-weak citizen groups were among the first to use the internet (Myers, 1994; Brunsting and Postmes, 2002: 525f; Brainard and Siplon, 2002: 141f.). With the emergence of new forms of communication tools such as email newsletters, websites, and online petitions it is claimed that the classical repertoires of action traditionally comprising direct interaction (demonstrations, boycotts) and media (e.g. leaflets and brochures) are being enhanced. In short, the internet seems to provide current social movements with new opportunities for restructuring their internal communication activities as well as their external media use in order to enhance their strategic potential. As social movements and their associated organisations and groups have no constitutionally reserved direct influence on political decisions, they need the political public sphere in order to communicate their aims to a broader public. As a result they

create pressure on the political sphere, mobilise adherents in an attempt to shape and frame the political agenda. On the other hand threats can also be identified as the traditional opponents of social movements (e.g. governments, administrations, political parties, corporations) that are also operating online and have increasingly developed their own strategies to use the internet in order to defend their own interests and disseminate their specific claims and discourses. It seems that the rather technology-deterministic assumption that resource-weak social move-ment organisations in particular would profit from the diffusion of the internet is becoming increasingly outdated.

The speed of the emergence of new information and communication technologies challenges social research on this topic. Furthermore, there is a lack of research concerning the use of the internet, especially by small and informal citizen groups. Important questions, as to whether citizen action groups and other grassroots-organisations can maintain their position by using the internet and whether online-communication strengthens or rather weakens them, call for a theoretical clarification and require more empirical research.

This chapter attempts to elaborate a theoretical perspective on the use of the internet by citizen action groups. The resource mobilisation approach of social movements serves as point of departure (Zald and Ash, 1966; McCarthy and Zald, 1977; 2003). After introducing resource mobilisation theory and elaborating on the limitations of this theory, a preliminary theoretical conceptual framework will be presented, which enhances resource mobilisation theory with further concepts drawn from the field of social movement research. It will be suggested that the appropriation of online-communication by citizen action groups can be better studied based on a theoretical model that moves beyond tra-ditional resource mobilisation approaches. As a first step, however, the phenomenon of citizen action groups and the academic research on them will be introduced, with a special focus on the German situation.

2. CITIZEN ACTION GROUPS – DEFINITION AND DIRECTIONS OF RESEARCH

Generally speaking, social movements (e.g. the environmental move-ment, the globalisation critical movement) play an important role in social science research as well as in broader societal debates (Russel, 2001/2005; Kahn and Kellner, 2004) as they are key indicators of social change. Social theorists as diverse as Niklas Luhmann or Jürgen

Habermas emphasise the importance of social movements (Habermas, 1997; Luhmann, 1996). Citizen action groups are one form of social movement organisation and can be characterised as:

> *… spontaneous, organisationally loose and temporally limited networks of citizens, outside traditional institutions and forms of participation of representative democracies. Mostly they begin their actions in order to address a specific issue by utilising self-help means by participating in public discourse or by applying political pressure* (Guggenberger, 1980: 18f.).

Citizen action groups mostly address local or regional problems and thus connect important societal topics with the everyday lives of citizens and the local with the broader social sphere (e.g. environmental issues, social imbalances). The pragmatic organisation, the mostly non-violent civil disobedience repertoire of action and the decentralised and flexible structures of German citizen action groups still seem to have an enormous appeal: A recent survey conducted by the German Bertelsmann Foundation revealed that 21 percent of respondents (n=1241) were or had been active in a citizen activist group (Bertelsmann Foundation, 2004). Unfortunately, the scholarly interest concerning citizen activist groups, especially amongst German academics, is quite low (Roth, 1999) and most of the publications were written in the 1970s and 1980s (see Mayer-Tasch, 1977; Matthöfer, 1977; Guggenberger and Kempf, 1978; Guggenberger, 1980; Karl, 1980; Hauff, 1980; Schenk, 1981; 1982; Guggenberger and Kempf, 1984).

Academic debate on citizen action groups in Germany can be summarised as having three main concerns: (1) Whether citizen action groups contribute to a transformation of societies towards socialism, (2) whether citizen action groups contribute to the democratisation of societies, and (3) whether they simply stabilise social conditions (Nowack, 1988: 7). Such questions are mostly debated on a macro-theoretical level. However, the actual decision-making processes, struggles, successes and failures of groups, that is to say, the empirical reality has as yet only been marginally tackled. So far, German research on citizen action groups (known as Bürgerinitiativen in German) has insufficiently connected its research with the field of social movements in empirical research activities.

3. RESOURCE MOBILISATION THEORY

When looking for an appropriate approach to study citizen action groups as a field of research in its own right, the resource mobilisation (RM) theory (Zald and Ash, 1966; McCarthy and Zald, 1977) offers a good point of departure. Resource mobilisation focuses on the organisations of social movements, claiming that the success of a particular social movement organisation (e.g. a citizen action group) depends on the effective use of resources such as money, material, work, technical and organisational expertise.

RM theory defines social movements as '*a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society*' (McCarthy and Zald, 2003: 172). In addition, a 'countermovement' is defined as a set of opinions and beliefs opposed to a social movement. In contrast with this very broad definition, RM theory offers a precise definition of the organisations involved in social movements:

> *A social movement organisation [SMO] is a complex, or formal, organisation which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a countermovement and attempts to implement those goals* (McCarthy and Zald, 2003: 173).

The sum of organisations sharing the goals of a specific social movement builds a social movement industry (SMI). In the case of the environmental movement the particular movement industry would consist of all organisations as diverse as Greenpeace and local action groups addressing environmental pollution. If we consider a specific social movement organisation (for example a local citizen action group against anti-Semitism), the targets of this organisation link it with a particular social movement and a social movement industry. It is not always possible to link a certain social movement organisation only to one social movement industry (a local action group may be part of the environmental movement and also part of the anti-globalisation movement). Hence, McCarthy and Zald conceptualise the social movement sector as the sum of all social movement industries.

Whatever the goal of a social movement organisation is, it must possess resources (McCarthy and Zald, 2003: 174). Most citizen action groups depend on volunteer labour and are what is usually known as 'resource-weak', in comparison with other political actors such as parties,

governments and administrations – a fact that the basic model of resource mobilisation fails to account for.

A social movement organisation has adherents (individuals and organisations believing in the goals of the movement) and constituents (those who provide resources to a social movement). In order to gain more resources it is essential to convert adherents to constituents and to maintain constituent involvement. For the recruitment of new constituents public discourse is essential, because the mobilisation of adherents is mostly achieved by public discourse. Public discourse is constituted by the own activities of citizen activist groups (e.g. public meetings and movement media). Achieving a profile in the mass media is important for most of the groups, if not essential (Crossley, 2002: 88f; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993: 116) and can be regarded as a key resource for the recruitment of adherents (Schmitt-Beck, 1998). In order to maintain the involvement of constituents, protest actions are essential, as protest actions serve (besides external functions such as recruiting adherents and gaining media coverage) a number of internal functions. Social movements' organisational members create and maintain their collective identities and strengthen their solidarity via protest action (della Porta and Diani, 2006: 179).

In order to organise protest activities, social movement organisations need to mobilise internal resources and create internal structures. This demands instrumental activities, as well as the coordination of tasks (McAdam and Scott, 2005: 4; Hensmans, 2003). Organisational structure is a crucial question when it comes to studying social movements. Strategic organisational choices depend on internal and external resources (della Porta and Diani, 1999: 139). Hence, the choice of an organisational structure can be understood as a strategic option determined by the presence of mobilisable resources and is constrained by the limits to their rational use such as values, previous experience, reference groups, expectations and relationships to target groups (della Porta and Diani, 1999: 153). For example, social movements may imitate powerful opponents by creating similar formal structures. On the other hand, alternative organisational structures might emerge as an answer to strong bureaucratic organisations, and even open political opportunity structures may provoke highly centralised social movement organisations in order to resist co-option.

Another important aspect of RM theory is the emphasis on the role of leaders. These social movement entrepreneurs interpret the given situation (Schmitt-Beck, 1998), know how to mobilise and deliver

resources, and are experienced in political contention (Hara and Estrada, 2005: 504).

3.1. Limitations of resource mobilisation theory

The previous section has provided a short summary of resource mobilisation theory. The focus on how social movement organisations allocate resources in order to reach their goals is the crucial advantage of this approach. However, there are several weaknesses and limitations associated with RM:

1/ RM theory does not take into account the reasons that may predict the rise of a social movement since RM theory focuses primarily on pre-existing and successful organisations. Furthermore, deprivation and grievances as reasons for the outbreak of protests and riots are rejected as reasons for the emergence of a social movement or a social movement organisation.

2/ RM theory fails to explain the ways in which decision-making works within a social movement organisation when it comes to developing strategies and tactics. Internal struggles in social movement organisations are not well accounted for in RM as the rational actor model behind the theory cannot handle such aspects.

3/ As the authors themselves state, RM theory is foremost based on US cases and hence has the social structure as well as the mass communication structure of the US as its blind spot. Furthermore, the resource mobilisation approach has been derived mainly from organisations on the political left (McCarthy and Zald, 2003: 169), though there can be religious, ethnic and many more social movements which might work in a different manner.

4/ Another limitation of resource mobilisation theory is its prime focus on formal organisational structures. This overlooks the fact that there are a lot of grassroots organisations resisting bureaucratic formal structures.

This weakness becomes evident when resource mobilisation theory is applied to study smaller social movement organisations. The definition of a social movement organisation as 'complex' or 'formal' is misleading in this respect.

3.2. Enhancing resource mobilisation theory

RM theory has been presented as a 'partial' theory by its authors. One way to overcome the limitations of the RM approach may be the integration of additional concepts from the field of social movement research under the umbrella of RM theory. In this section a very tentative attempt to enrich RM theory is presented, but it calls for further elaboration and clarification:

1/ McCarthy and Zald argue that the potential of a SMO depends on and is affected by authorities and agents of social control. This offers the possibility of enhancing resource mobilisation with the concept of 'political opportunity structures', defined as the estimation of how open political institutions are to the needs of citizen groups. The estimation of opportunity structures leads to the choice of strategies and influences the course of a social movement as della Porta and Diani have illustrated in their comparison of the development of student movements in Italy and Germany in the 1970s. Whereas in Italy the closure of the political system forced the movement to apply heavy structures, the social-democratic-liberal coalition in the 1970s in Germany was institutionally more open and encouraged citizen action groups (della Porta and Diani, 1999: 155).

2/ A second aspect that might be considered are the actions performed by movements in order to reach their goals. Usually, citizen action groups have no direct influence on the political decision-making process. For this reason they need to apply strategies to communicate their concerns beyond the like-minded. These activities are: public relations, mobilisation of activists, mobilisation through networks, and direct contact with political opponents e.g. administrations, political decision makers, corporations (Schenk, 1982). In order to better conceptualise those activities, the notion of 'repertoire of action' as conceptualised by Tilly (1978) is very relevant. The repertoire comprises institutional tactics as well as concrete forms of protest such as boycotts. It is to be expected that the diffusion of the internet has enhanced the repertoire, for example, with online petitions, online mailing, email campaigns, etc. (Earl, 2006). The repertoire of forms of protest is restricted in a given country at a given time. It can be expanded by appropriating forms of protest developed in other countries. However, as della Porta and Diani (1999: 157) argue, such adaptations are slow and not self-evident.

3/ The difficulties of being able to deal with internal struggles in social movement organisations can be reduced by integrating the notion of 'collective action frames'. Such collective action frames provide a shared interpretation of the problem and help to build a collective identity. This collective identity is a resource for the group itself. Collective action frames are represented through metaphors or symbols. Groups try to convey their collective action frames to the public in order to influence the public opinion in their sense (Schmitt-Beck, 1998) and recruit new constituents (in the language of RM theory).

To summarise, the choice of strategies and the use of a particular repertoire of action in a specific social movement organisation could be conceptualised as the result of a collective decision-making process shaped by the goals of the group, the available resources (time, money, skills, experiences, social movement entrepreneurs), the collective action frames, and the evaluation of the given political opportunity structures (see Figure 1). The repertoire may change significantly over time as a result of a change of the collective perceptions and action frameworks.

Figure 1: The preliminary conceptual model
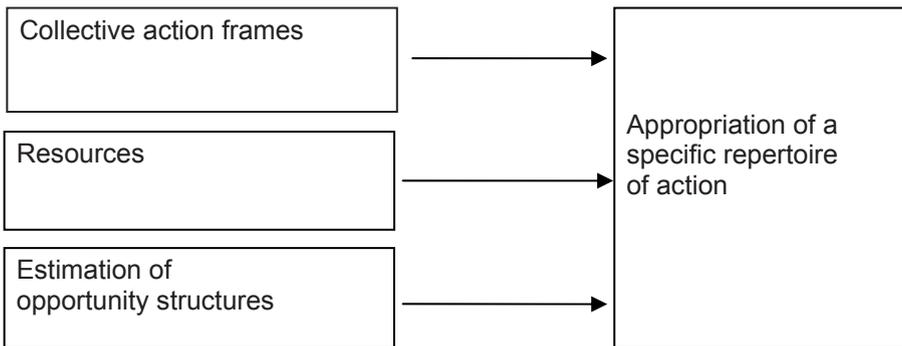
3.4. Resource mobilisation as perspective to study citizen action groups

The previous section has provided a preliminary sketch of how to integrate other approaches from the field of social movements into RM theory. Furthermore, when using RM theory to make sense of citizen action groups, the following points are of importance:

First, the definitions of a social movement and a countermovement make it possible to build a comprehensive typology of citizen action groups. However, the definition of a social movement organisation has to be reformulated: Social movement organisations are not necessarily 'formal' or 'complex'. They can be quite decentralised, inclusive and participatory. A citizen action group fighting against the deportation of persons seeking political asylum could be regarded as part of the human rights movement, whereas a citizen action group founded in order to protest against the building of a mosque in their neighbourhood would represent a countermovement organisation.

Second, the notion of the social movement industry (SMI) is helpful with regard to acknowledging that social movement organisations are in competition among themselves, with other political actors (political parties, governments, etc.), and for public attention.

Finally, when it comes to studying the appropriation of the internet by citizen action groups, the hypothesis of resource-weak groups benefiting from online-communication loses its theoretical justification when merely approaching this from a RM perspective as resource-rich political parties. Other actors might benefit more from the potentials of the internet than small citizen action groups. However, with an enhanced RM model as tentatively presented above, it could be asked what factors can explain how, to which extent, and with which success citizen action groups use the internet as a tool that provides opportunities for the communication of their goals.

This theoretical question can easily be translated in a research design allowing the comparison of appropriation patterns of different citizen action groups in order to find out under which conditions (operationalised as resources, estimation of opportunity structures and collective action frames) online-communication becomes part of the repertoire of action.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter, citizen action groups were considered to be social movement organisations. Social movement organisations have specific goals and they need resources in order to apply strategies and come up with their own repertoire of action. Besides direct communication activities (direct actions such as demonstrations and boycotts), media play an important role for the contention of social movements. While the diffusion of the internet has created enormous potential for enhancing

information, communication and mobilisation, other political actors are using the internet in order to communicate their interests as well. Citizen action groups are thus facing competition. The chapter presented a preliminary conceptual model, enhancing the traditional RM theory, and aiming to arrive at a better understanding of the appropriation of online communication by citizen action groups. The further development of this theoretical model is intended to stimulate concrete empirical research and to revitalise the academic debate on citizen action groups.

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SECTION FOUR:
MEDIA AND SPACE

Visit to the Technology Museum of the Estonian National Broadcaster
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A politics of visibility in the blogosphere: A space in-between private and public

Jeong Hee Kim

1. INTRODUCTION

> *Self-Censorship. Writing on a blog seems to be more difficult than I thought it would be. For the last few days, I wrote something, deleted it, re-wrote it, wrote a new one, then deleted it again. … Every time I write a word, or a sentence (on my blog, I come to think), 'this is too private', 'this will receive bad comments …'. It is not easy to click on the save button (after finishing writing an entry).* (Blog entry, Jane [1]: 05:22, 10 August 2006)

In recent years, there has been talk of the potential of the weblog, e.g., blog journalism (Wall, 2005), and its democratic potential in relation to the Habermasian public sphere (Kim, 2005). There is another stream of blog research concerning user gratification (Park and Cho, 2004) and social networking (Kim and Yun, 2007) in the form of personal diaries serving the purpose of personal expression of opinion to readers (Papacharissi, 2006). Considering its popular format as a personal diary that is publicly visible and accessible to virtually anyone on the internet, defining the space of a blog as private or public is ambiguous (Lovink, 2008). This chapter explores how the conditions of visibility, or a politics of visibility[2], play a role as new constraints on the expression of opinion. As part of a larger research project that has been underway since December 2005, the discussion is based on a case study of *Yoko* at the *Ohmynews* blog service.

2. A POLITICS OF VISIBILITY IN THE BLOGOSPHERE

The difficulty in making a distinction between private and public is not limited to blog research, since private and public are loose concepts, encompassing various meanings, and are entwined with other terms in such expressions as *public sphere*, *public opinion*, or the right to *privacy*. The following four models summarise the complexity:

- Liberal-economist model: the distinction between the state and economy
- Civic republican model: the public as political community and the private as citizenship
- Cultural and social historian model: the public realm as a sphere of sociability/theatrical self-representation and the domains of intimacy
- Feminist model: the distinction between the larger economic order and the domestic (Weintraub quoted in Robbins, 1993: xiii)

With the tendency to compare the blogosphere with the public sphere (Kim, 2005), the four models are constantly open to contestation and negotiation. '*Being visible is essentially a passive stance while being public 'entitles the individual to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship*" (Bronski quoted in Walters, 2001: 299). In this chapter, the cultural and social historian model, which focuses on sociality and visibility, is used in order to develop a working model for conceptualising the blogosphere, as allowing '*the private domain to become public and privatize a portion of the public sphere*' (Papacharissi, 2006: 35) with self-representational writing in the form of a personal diary, but public in its nature (Qian and Scott, 2007).

The reasons for the focus on visibility for conceptualising private and public are threefold. Firstly, the blog makes it possible to expand the personal sphere of visibility – that is, a social process of being seen before the gaze of others – by technically allowing what was once private to increasingly move into the public domain. As private opinion becomes publicly expressed opinion and social action in the blogosphere, visibility is one of the underlying conditions of interaction. Secondly, being visible – to the self, to family and friends, and especially to anonymous publics – can be paradoxical online and/or offline. It is paradoxical in that increasing socio-political visibility is easily considered as an opportunity for having one's voice heard with an implication in cultural and/or political empowerment in the public sphere(s), while the increased visibility can also create new constraints on self-expression and

interaction with others. With the emphasis on the visibility for its function of representation, e.g., in identity politics and the public sphere, the new constraints are often neglected in cultural studies and political communication. Lastly, considering the role of readers in shaping online interactivity between blog authors and readers, such neglect delimits the sociological significance and understanding of invisibility, which has important implications in various issues/kinds of democratic practices (e.g., between instrumental and expressive, and between consensual and pluralist deliberation). Central to this issue is that '*we might be able to invisibilize those we disagree with or dislike. Of course, many people are already invisibilized*' in cyberspace (Bell, 2007: 25). It resembles the spiral of silence, which focuses on the process[3] rather than conditions of the formation of public opinion as social control (Noelle-Neumann, 1984).

On visibility, Thompson (2005: 31) argues that '*previously hidden practices and events had been given an entirely new status as public and, indeed, politically explosive events; the invisible had been made visible for all to see*' through the media. Thompson sheds light on how different forms of media have distinctive properties of interactivity with relation to the (new) forms of visibility that are no longer localised or dialogical. As the emerging significance of individually managed media, such as blogs, has allowed individual management of one-to-one and/or many-to-many, synchronous or asynchronous communications, the changed situation adds more complexities to *the new visibility* by making it decentralised, multiplied and dialogical. Thompson fails to offer the kinds of distinctive socio-cultural meanings of such properties for individuals other than the political significance for those who are in *power*, e.g., political leaders. However, Thompson's (2005) interactional theory helps to explore how the blog technically increases the public visibility of the self and a symbolic display of psychological intimacy through blogging, while there is also public invisibility in the vast sea of blogs.

One central property of blogging is the limited controllability of visibility for ordinary individuals, which may become the source of new and distinctive kinds of struggle: the struggles for and struggles by visibility, or the politics of visibility. The politics of visibility refers to the need and desire to achieve the capacity to be seen, and the socio-political and cultural consequences of the newly afforded visibility with limits of control in the interactivity of the blogosphere. In media-saturated societies, says Thompson (1995),

> to achieve visibility through the media is to gain a kind of presence or recognition in the public space. ... But equally, the inability to achieve

> *visibility through the media can confine one to obscurity – and . . . lead to a kind of death by neglect.* (38)

Likewise, the struggles for visibility are of the essence in the world of blogging where ''*0 comments' is an ambiguous statistic that means absolutely nobody cares*' (Lovink, 2008: ix), since a successful measure of recognition is interconnected links and page views (Schmidt, 2007), although not all bloggers are vying for attention.

The very visibility simultaneously can serve as a condition of social control. Drawing on a role of visibility vis-à-vis control, for Foucault (1977), the isolation of prisoners imposed by permanent visibility reversed the visibility of power into a disciplinary society in which the few see the many. Thompson (1995; 2005) criticises the fact that Foucault did not take into account the role of the (mass) media in shaping the relation between visibility and power; however, Thompson also neglects the role of interactive media. Mathiesen (1997) develops panopticism and argues for a viewer society, or synopticon. As the electronic media publicise the details of actions of the powerful few, the many have become able to watch and judge the few through the eyes of television. Topologically, Munro (2000) argues against the notion of panoptic networks by pointing out the difference between a panoptic diagram and a network diagram. For Munro, lateral communications are cut off between subjects in panoptic systems, whereas a series of interconnected nodes in an open-ended system of networks allows virtually any node to communicate with any other. However, Munro's understanding of the topological panopticon of an electronic network risks undermining the complexity of visibility across networks without considering bloggers and/or readers as communicative subjects by treating them as the object of information.

Bloggers are not left without means to manage or resist the politics of visibility, for instance, by employing electronic '*anonymity as a cloak of protection*' from identification and personalisation (Qian and Scott, 2007: online) rather modifying the systems of visibility. Despite one's intention or expectation, the expected degree of anonymity may not be met, as partial identities of blog authors can be revealed through another disparity between visual and discursive anonymity: the availability of personal photos and e-mail address (Qian and Scott, 2007). Thus, when simultaneously deploying visibility and anonymity, the issue at stake is the gap between feeling and being anonymous (Kennedy, 2006). On the use of blogs and social networking sites by teens, Boyd (2006: online) writes, '*the personal panopticon they live in … is far more menacing, far more*

direct, and far more traumatic'. Although the panoptic and synoptic conditions of social visibility reinforce each other in the way that the many watch the many (Lyon, 2006), the argument is not that the blog reinforces surveillance, but that it technically and culturally legitimises self-exposure and intrusive watching, combined with the cultural conception and practice that allow the uninhibited scrutiny of others.

Many are aware of their public visibility, both literally and symbolically, since readership is one of the reasons for blogging (Park and Cho, 2004). Nonetheless, the public gaze is heightened beyond personal awareness, as the culture of confession in and through the media, e.g., *Big Brother*, invites individuals to see an extended range of one's intimate inner worlds (Couldry, 2003). There is a difference, however, in how the condition of self-presentation is fulfilled. In reality shows the distance between observers and the observed with their near-celebrity status is maintained with centralised mediation by the producers. For blogging, an inherent difficulty lies in controlling the impression one gives and the interpretative conditions in which the audience encounters the content. Expressing opinions that are not commonly shared may become a new source of risk in the form of immediate humiliation, and even permanent loss of reputation on- and offline. Evidence supports such a tendency, as blog authors are cautious about engaging in self-expression due to concerns about the potentially negative consequences of self-exposure to the indefinite and indeterminate readers (Qian and Scott, 2007) and the loss of autonomy in their interpretation of blog entries (Reed, 2005).

In sum, when private space becomes public space, without replacing one space with another, what is needed is to try to combine the possibilities and limitations of voicing oneself in the blurred space of private and public, especially with relation to the flows of opinions and information. To use Mouffe's (2005) expression, the struggles by visibility in the case of publicly expressing one's political view can be more significant in an *antagonistic* environment with the formation of a *we* as opposed to a *they*. The significance is that bloggers come to a blogosphere from different positions of power in society and that such social positions are often re-produced in online context. Thus, the politics of visibility is closely linked to how a private opinion can be made visible, maintained and/or lost within and by the public in the blogosphere.

The struggles by visibility, which are reciprocal to the struggles for visibility, can come into play in the forms of asocial isolation, threats of public attention, and/or social control on bloggers, for instance not necessarily by coercive violence, but by silencing (or invisiblising)

dissenting voices (cf. Noelle-Neumann, 1984). The struggles are heightened by the socio-technical conditions of self-disclosure and social monitoring, especially for those whose self-expression is not collectively shared by others in the fragmentation of publics online (Dahlberg, 2007) into like-minded deliberative enclaves (Sunstein, 2001) without hearing each other's voice (Albrecht, 2006), even in the blogosphere (Park, 2007). In practice, evidence suggests that the number of visitors and comments are considered the degree of approval from readers (Park and Cho, 2004), with internally emerged social norms for Korean bloggers (Kim and Yun, 2007). On the one hand, the struggles concerning visibility do not necessarily always come with explicit or visible consequences. On the other hand, the struggles are often sufficiently real rather than being limited to the virtuality of the blogosphere. In the remaining part of the chapter, an attempt is made to link the politics of visibility and constraints on the expression of opinion through the case study of *Yoko* whose struggles by visibility are rather extreme, but explicit on- and offline.

3. BEYOND VISIBILITY: A CASE OF *YOKO*

Yoko[4], who claims herself as anti-capitalist, is a student at a university located in Seoul, South Korea. She has written blog entries on various issues from politics to personal love stories since 1 May 2007 at the *Ohmynews* blog service. On 14 December 2007, Yoko posted a blog entry of her opinion on an online discussion group. The group has about 15,500 members, aiming to legalise a policy to deport *unqualified* English instructors from Korea, and politically opposes a website where information on available jobs in Korea (and elsewhere in Asia) are posted for foreign English teachers and recruiters. On 28 December 2007, I interviewed *Yoko* offline in Seoul with seven follow-up e-mails and occasional SMS exchanges.

On the first page of the discussion group website, a mission statement with abstract – but antagonistic – terms calls for collective action in response to an unspecified incident in which certain foreign English-language instructors allegedly (sexually) mistreated Korean women:

> *Until the incident where* Korean women *were degraded on the website [to which we are opposed] occurred, we were passive citizens. On the day when I read the article that devalued* Korean women*, there was rage and shame I could hardly control. With our conscience for action, we gathered here. …* We *realize that going to a war with a gun in hand is not the only way to love*

> *your country. … We are here to fight those* unqualified English teachers
> *who disgrace* our women *and those who harm English education in this*
> *country. … Join* us *in making a* better society *and* Korea. (translation and
> added emphasis by author)

After having visited the discussion group, *Yoko* posted her opinion on
her blog:

> *The point of the group is nothing. They do not like to see unqualified 'white'*
> *male English teachers dating Korean women. But, their tone of voice is too*
> *racist and sexist for their arguments on legitimizing legal requirements for*
> *foreign teachers to provide their criminal and medical records before coming*
> *to Korea.* (Blog entry, 14/12/2007)

Later, the webmaster of the discussion group posted a comment
requesting an apology for mis-representing them on her blog and asking
for proof for her claim:

> ▪ *First, I suspect that 'you' refers to our group. As you recognize this, it*
>   *seems to be problematic.*
> ▪ *Despite my request for an apology, you closed options to settle the issue;*
>   *thus, it seems to be appropriate to take a legal action, if I do not see any*
>   *progress.* (Comment, 14/12/2007)

While acknowledging the shifts in the meaning of *we*, which is used
exclusively to include broadly Korean citizens, but to exclude her, *Yoko*
replied to the comment posted:

> *Hello, I clearly saw your efforts for the national interest. There are three*
> *points I would like to make:*
> 1/ *It was a criticism given in an open space, and one that was written on my*
>   *personal blog.*
> 2/ *I did not insult anyone.*
> 3/ *You are right in that I referred to 'you' as racists (since you used the term*
>   *we) [collectively].* (Comment, 14/12/2007)

Despite a request for the deletion of relevant entries and for an apology
for alleged libelling, she initially publicly expresses her cynicism, and
leaves a way to communicate with readers. However, the more she
responded to comments, the more her responses paradoxically provided
grounds for the members to revisit the blog for collective scrutiny. On
the same day, bloggers who had previously been interacting with *Yoko*
posted a thread of 11 comments to help her defend her position, whereas

a thread of 46 comments from the discussion group members was posted on their website.

Although *Yoko* initially did not shut down her blog, all the previous entries were made inaccessible, thus invisible. However, on 29 December 2007, *Yoko* posted an entry:

> *I initially started my blog to kill time, but I am closing it, as some one says s/he is going to sue me. For legal advice, or more talking crap on me, click on 'send e-mail'. I may not check it though. A happy new year, everyone :)*

When asked for a reason for shutting down her blog, *Yoko* reported that she wanted to be left alone from the unwanted gaze, and that this rather than fear of legal complications was her motivation. What is noteworthy is *Yoko*'s response during the face-to-face interview[5] before it became a legal matter. When asked for reasons for having publicly posted the entry on her blog by tagging[6] it to the discussion group, she replied:

> *I wanted to go public (laugh). I, I did not care if they are going to read it, actually, when I wrote that article, I mean that post. Yeah, they can read it, but I don't care. It is my personal blog, and personal opinion.* (Offline interview: 28/12/2007)

With her desire to publicise her entry, the decision to hyper-textually link her entry to a keyword associated with the discussion group through a tag increased the visibility of her blog. '*Cross-posting between the communities someone belongs to can bring different communities into textual contact with one another. While this can be a productive cross-fertilization process, it can sometimes have antagonistic outcomes*' (Bell, 2001: 110). Furthermore, *Yoko* considered herself anonymous with her selective posting of old pictures of herself on the blog, in the hopes that this would make it difficult to recognise her. '*While anonymity promotes freedom of expression under certain circumstances, it changes the expectation of communication by making speaker and audiences not only indefinite but also indeterminate in its many-to-many form*' (Bohman, 2004: 138). The non-reciprocal anonymity between *Yoko* and the group members heightened the condition beyond her reach, in fact, as the members of the discussion group anonymously posted threads of comments to discuss about how to legally act on the situation, including suggestions to collect *evidence* against her from her own blog. Their collective reaction reflects bloggers' vulnerability to control of personal information/opinion once it is made public.

Yoko's experience is irreducible to the technical connectivity and visibility the blog offers. As the discussion group portrays women, more specifically *Korean women*, as the object for protection by *Korean men* from *foreign English teachers* who are *unqualified*, the blogosphere is not independent of larger socio-political discourses and cultural currents, e.g., racism and patriarchal culture, within which such blog uses are culturally embedded. Despite continuous debates on the issue until late December 2007, *Yoko* eventually apologised to the webmaster in person along with her parents, and the lawsuit was dropped before it could come to the court.

4. Conclusion

Qualitative exploration of visibility by relying on *Yoko*'s subjective and situated account may distort drawing a bigger picture of the blogosphere, as a relatively small proportion of bloggers and internet users may engage in social control online. Acknowledging this limitation, this chapter explored how the politics of visibility functions as one of the underlying conditions for interaction and, paradoxically, also as new constraints on the interactivity of opinion in the blogosphere, as summarised in Table 1. Visibility is a contested condition which requires the management of revelation in specific socio-technical contexts, despite the difficulty of this task.

Table 1: A Politics of Visibility in the Blogosphere

Struggles for visibility	Struggles by visibility
Centrifugal visibility	Centripetal visibility
Internal desire/need (private)	External pressure/constraints (public)
Social	Asocial
Empowering	Disempowering

Yoko's desire to expand the visibility of her blog paradoxically functioned as the constraints, involving the rather extreme example of a lawsuit, on the expression of opinion. Despite efforts to manage the vulnerability over flows of information and to act upon the constraints by adopting invisibility, *Yoko*'s decision to *hide* previous entries from her *own blog* reflects a struggle which can be interpreted as disempowering social-silencing on *Yoko*, in the local context of the private space of blogging. The technological freedom of one-to-many communication and

opportunities to be seen through blogging bring about many-to-one synoptic pressure. Without knowing who they were, and how many of them there were, except where they were coming from (at least in cyberspace), constant observation by those who filed the lawsuit on *Yoko* reflects the synoptic condition of visibility.

The blogosphere is not a domain of unrestricted communication. In the blogosphere, the politics of visibility, which is closely linked to the blurred boundaries of private and public, does not operate on its own, but is reinforced by the changing political culture, the technologies of communication/surveillance, and the social conditions of private action (Lyon, 2006). Cyberspace is '*the invocation of community, but not the production of a society ... not an alternative society, but an alternative to society*' (Robins, 1995: 150). Likewise, a classical rigid isolation of the blogosphere from the larger cyberspace, as well as the separation of the technical from the socio-cultural conditions, need to be avoided when conceptualising the blogosphere for future research.

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NOTES

[1]   Pseudonyms are used for all bloggers in this article to protect their confidentiality and privacy; for the same reason, the name or web address of the online discussion group is withheld.

[2]   The term *the politics of visibility* is also used in studies on gender and sexuality, such as homosexuality in relation to representation, identity and power, and in surveillance studies. In order to avoid conflict with the terminology already in use, *a* politics of visibility is used. See Lyon (2006) and Walters (2001).

[3]   The process of the spiral of invisibility as an altered mode of silence in the blogosphere is explored by the author as part of his PhD project.

[4]   Although her blog is now available again, the blog is not currently in use, and the entries concerning the lawsuit are deleted. With kind permission from *Yoko*, selected excerpts from her previous entries that were archived are reproduced in this article.

[5]   The interview was conducted in English at a local café in Seoul.

[6]   Tag refers to a keyword associated with a piece of information, allowing keyword-based classification and search of information on the web.

Fandom without the trimmings? EURO 2008, public viewing and new kinds of audiences

Maren Hartmann

1. INTRODUCTION

There are several different ways of engagement in life. One of them is an engagement with the city and can be called *flanerie*. Another engagement is with sports, football in particular, and has been labelled *fandom*. The two are not usually regarded in the same field of research, they do not have the same theoretical grounds or anything else in common. Nonetheless, there is a possible relation between them. This relationship – to be explored in more detail below – shall serve as the framework for this chapter. It has been labelled by Hans-Jürgen Schulke (2006), the inventor of the connection, as the '*faneur*' or '*flan*'. This figure of thought shall serve to frame the following engagement with *public viewing*.

Public viewing is a form of shared public engagement with mediated displays of sports or other cultural events. While public viewing is an English-language term, it has primarily been used within German-speaking contexts thus far. It describes the gathering of a number of people in a public place watching an event presented live on a large screen. The most common kind of public viewing features football (see later remarks on other forms). Especially within the German context, public viewing as a phenomenon has increased immensely in the last couple of years, both as an actual phenomenon as well as in terms of the attention focussed on it.

This relatively new social phenomenon brings with it questions about audiences and forms of participation. Next to the explanation concerning the faneur (or flan), explorations below include public viewing more generally, including a brief reference to its history. The focus then will be on audiences. Brief references to a recent research project on the subject

will conclude the chapter. The faneur will remain the guiding figure of the chapter in the sense that it helps to explore the question of what kind of audience can be found at such events and how far this challenges traditional notions of audiencehood.

2. FAN & FLANEUR

> *In the symbiosis (of the faneur – MH) the grimness of the passion of the sports stadion fan and the individualised arrogance of the idleness of the flaneur is lost* (Schulke, 2006: 32 – own translation).

Schulke, on the one hand a sports studies scholar, on the other hand a co-initiator and -organiser of the fan-parties (public viewing events) during the FIFA World Cup in 2006, developed the figure of the faneur or flan to point to what he considers a new kind of audience. These faneurs combine the best of both worlds: the passion for sports (football) with the world-citizen atmosphere of the bourgeois flaneur. The idea behind this is that the faneur actually comes into existence, because the public viewing environment allows him to. In contrast to people watching football in the stadium, the audience for the public viewing events finds itself in the heart of the city, being able to walk in and out of the public viewing area, leisurely walking and at the same time observing the environment.[1]

Next to potentially challenging existing concepts of audiences, the city is also gaining new attention within this idea of the faneur. It is not simply the link to the city being the environment that many public viewing events take place in (and visibly refer to the city, e.g. in the display of landmarks), but also the idea of public spaces and their relationships to notions of public spheres and democratic participation. In a more problematic reference to the public sphere concept, a reduced public sphere notion to be found in public viewing would consist of the desire for shared experiences in public spaces and common topics to communicate about. It is easy to romanticise such events. What we have found in the research project, however, is not necessarily an answer to this lack, but rather an expression that first of all there is indeed a gap to be filled. For this summer, this has partially been filled by public viewing events. This might not be enough in the long run. The origin of public viewing is seemingly more 'banal' though: It lies in the limitations of football stadiums to provide enough tickets for everyone. This led to public viewing being invented.

3. PUBLIC VIEWING: THE ORIGINS

Within the German context the whole idea (and practice) of public viewing took off during the FIFA World Cup in 2006. When it became clear that the number of desired tickets totally outnumbered the number of available seats in the stadiums, a solution was being looked for (cf. Schulke, 2006). Public viewing eventually emerged as the answer, despite reservations within the organisational team as to the security of such events and to the economic structure. Once the decision had been made, the related events were divided into A-, B- and C-events. The term A-event referred to the actual games within the stadiums, while the B-event label was used to name the official FIFA-organised fan-parties. C-events, on the other hand, was the name for the rest of the events. The B-events were held in those twelve cities that were also hosting the games in the stadiums. The organisers were made to include cultural programmes into these events. Overall, a '*new World Cup culture*' was supposed to emerge (Schulke, 2006). The C-events ranged from extremely small public viewing events in the local pub to up to 12,000 people in larger commercial public viewing events. All of this was partly possible, because the TV signal was provided for free. On the other hand, the FIFA regulations for the official fan parties were very strict (only the brands of the sponsors were to be sold, FIFA ads had to be displayed, etc.). In the end, more than 40 million viewers were said to have been at the public viewing events – in contrast to only 3.2 million in the stadiums.

Throughout the planning phase, one tension that had to be resolved was between those who feared the fans would enter the city centres and those who saw the wandering tourists gaining a new point of attraction (Schulke, 2006). In the end, the latter prevailed and it turned out to be a huge success (with only one major problematic incident). In the end, the word 'Fanmeile' ('fan mile', the official name for the fan party in Berlin) was actually voted as the word of the year in December 2006. All of this led to plans to extend the success – albeit in a different form – to the European Football Championship in 2008.

4. THE EUROPEAN FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2008

In the summer of 2008 the European Football Championship took place in Austria and Switzerland. For three weeks (between the 7th and the 29th of June 2008) the officially called UEFA Euro 2008 dominated the television screens and other media within Europe and also beyond. As a

widely regarded sports championship quite a few people 'participated' both in the stadiums, but also in front of many screens. The European Football Championship is hosted by UEFA, the Union of European Football Associations. The championship is the main competition of the European men's football teams that are governed by UEFA. The championship is held every four years in the even-numbered years (it started in 1960, originally called the Nations Cup). Since its inception, the European Football Championship and the FIFA Football World Cup have nicely intertwined, i.e. there is a major international championship every two years.

The biggest 'change' in 2008 was the normalisation of public viewing. While only officially used for the second time, it has already become part of the norm, of the expectation. A football championship with public viewing does not seem feasible any more. Instead, the championships have moved from the stadium and the TV set at home to a larger 'every-where' and 'everyone' reception – and bring with them new audiences.

5. AUDIENCES

Audiences have been debated in several directions over the years. Not surprisingly there is a whole strand within media and communication studies that is called 'audience studies' (often coupled with reception). We have moved from a mass audience to simply audience, from effects to uses and gratifications and beyond. The active audience was introduced through cultural studies, while film studies concentrated more on spectatorship. Fan audiences, gendered audiences, young vs. old audiences, transnational audiences – all of these have been studied and theorised (cf. Brooker, 2002). Often, the exact nature that constitutes the audience does not need to be defined – it is implied part of the particularity of the approach one takes. However, this taken-for-grantedness has been lost and the audience concept has again been challenged widely in recent years. Does the internet still have an audience or are these several different audiences? And/or what kind of traits of audiences can be found across different media? How does individualisation relate to forms of audiences?

Public viewing picks up on these debates on several levels, since it is multiply orchestrated and offers several kinds of engagement. Hence we still have an audience in the stadium. This is generally not regarded as a media audience, despite the growing number of media (especially screens) involved. It does play an important role in the overall idea of the

game, but also in terms of the visual material it provides for the audience in front of the screen. This provides the next kind of audience: in front of the television at home or at some public viewing event. While they see the same media content, their settings differ fundamentally. Images of the game are nowadays framed by images from major public viewing events – and this is fed back to public audiences elsewhere.

If we now take a brief look at existing research concerning the motivation of different kinds of sports audiences, we can see several shared aspects. Thus people go to (live) sports events because they regard it as a social event, i.e. they often go in a group or as a family or within similar structures. At the same time they immerse themselves in the sociality provided by the environment. Aesthetics provide one motivation for going, but the more prominent ones refer to the tension in the game and hence to escape and entertainment. This is also where the peers come in again: The 'letting go', of sharing emotions is often closely related to ideas of companionability or similar shared group notions. This often is closely related to an increase in self-value. On top of that, fandom is obviously an often quoted reason for attending live sports events, but even a learning dimension (learning more about the game, etc.) has been developed as a possible reason behind the attendance (Wenner and Gantz, 1998: 236–237).

The reasons given for the attendance of mediated public sports events do show similar tendencies, even if the categories have been named differently. So we find identification again as well as the presentation of self. Mood-regulation is another driver – which can be seen to closely relate to notions of letting go. People generally feel that they are allowed to let all those emotions out that are otherwise not allowed, stated sports sociologist Otmar Weiß (quoted in Malle, 2008: 8). This is one thing that closely connects mediated and non-mediated sports events and their audiences.

Fans are more particular audiences, as was hinted at above. They have been researched increasingly in recent years, albeit more often as popular culture fans rather than sports fan. But research on the latter is also growing. One approach therein is by Rosse and Schäfer (2006), who pose the fans as a kind of participatory audience. In their involvement with the games and the collective engagement that accompanies this, they actively participate in the creation of the event. Participation concepts from the political sphere, however, can only partially be applied (Rosse and Schäfer, 2006). The faneur – as a mixture of the traditional fan and someone much more removed – does only partly share the fan attributes. This maybe explains why the football experts tend to remain

at home or in smaller circles than to join the general trend for public viewing events – at least for the important games (cf. Marr, 2008). The light-hearted attempts at fandom and the mixture of many 'ignorant' viewers does seem to be only partially attractive to the real experts. Rather than on the level of expertise, the appropriation of the faneur seems to take place more on a level of 'being there' and the related communicative appropriation.

6. PUBLIC VIEWING AUDIENCES

Not much public viewing research has been conducted thus far (in Germany), but it is a growing field both within media and sports studies as well as related fields. One aspect that has continued to be of interest is the motivation behind the attendance of public viewing events.

The sports studies scholar Hans Stollenwerk (quoted in Helbig, 2008) has detected that – within the public viewing audience itself – the audience is indeed rather heterogeneous, but that one can differentiate two major groups: on the one hand those that are looking for an experience similar to that in the stadium, looking for the community of fans. On the other hand you find those who are only there for the party, who have no relationship to the game whatsoever. It has become a fashion and this leads to a wide range of people within the audience. So this kind of audience does potentially have little to do with reception and more with a performance of publicness, of participation in the event. This outcome would differentiate the idea of the faneur, since only part of the audience does not fall into the fan structure, despite the public viewing environment.

A student research group found out that escapism, but also parasocial interaction, a certain tension as well as a feeling of community and even nationalism drive people to attend the events (the research was conducted during the World Cup 2006). An interesting gap was found in this project in the sense that their research points to the feeling of participation in an imagined community (in the sense of the nation), but not a community feeling in the actual place. There was, however, a difference between the B- and the C-events. They had conducted research in both environments and found much more of a community feeling within more 'private' public viewing events (HISpoJo-Forschungsgruppe and Horky, 2007). While not surprising, this points to the fact that the discourses about community that surround any kind of public viewing need to be much more differentiated.

More general is Schulke's already mentioned research on the success of public viewing in 2006 as well of the related emergence of the faneur (Schulke, 2006: 11). Seemingly banal factors played an important role in the success. Good weather, for example, is a crucial factor therein. A successful national team also plays a major role, although more research would need to be done in this regard (how far do people also support other teams?). Schulke also points to the fact that central places within cities and a good infrastructure are important preconditions for public viewing to emerge as well as to become a success. The return of sports to the heart of the city is what Schulke calls it, underlining how much easier is it to market such a place than a stadium that looks the same as others and hence placeless. Hence city marketing profits well from these new developments. Innovations in terms of the transmission technology are also not to be neglected. But most of all, the fascination that football offers and the related 'community' and friendship experience give people the feeling of leaving their everyday life behind.

This point is also stressed by Max Ferdinand Cybulska (2007), who identifies public viewing as a ritualised media event, which creates an orchestrated feeling of belonging. He also stresses that it is a semi-media-event, i.e. one that is to a great extent dominated by what takes place outside or rather in front of the screen (Cybulska, 2007). This is an important point to follow up, which connects well to the idea of different levels of audiencehood, because the sports event and the media event get combined in a third event – an event with media elements.

All this can be seen to be part of a mediatisation process (Krotz, 2007). This concept has been used in one of the earliest research projects into public viewing, albeit in a rather moderate form. The 'public viewing' introduced and researched by Friedrich Krotz relates to the consumption of television in public places. It differs quite a lot from the current public viewing phenomenon, especially in terms of the collective nature of current forms. Nonetheless, the earlier research is useful exactly in pointing to the longer tradition of such kinds of public viewing – plus it offers a theoretical content with which to question current developments and their potential longer term consequences.

7. THE PROJECT

All of the above-mentioned approaches were used as a framework for research conducted as a small-scale study in the summer of 2008. It was conducted by students at the University of the Arts in Berlin in a seminar

on public viewing. The primary methods used were observations and interviews. Some other methods were used in addition, but they were not the major sources of information. The project was meant to be explorative and therefore qualitative, because, as stated above, not much can be found on public viewing as yet. The seminar followed the usual pattern of a theoretical introduction, which was followed by brief period of engagement with methods as well as the development of guiding topics and questions for both the observations as well as the interviews (different for both).[2] The student group was split into different sub-groups who all chose their own sub-topic within the overarching themes. We therefore kept the research question at a rather broad and general level and asked what the specificity of the experience of the social within public viewing events is and what role the media plays therein. The wider question is whether audiences are currently changing in nature and – if yes – in which way.[3] What is presented in the following paragraphs then is not the final analysis of all the material gathered in the project, but rather just a first reading and preliminary impression of some of the interviews and observations.

8. SOME BRIEF INITIAL OUTCOMES

(Media) event
'*Especially today the event character gets on my nerves.*' With this sentence the interviewee underlined an impression that was widely shared: That the attraction partly lay in the constructed nature of the event. It was seen as different from watching television at home (although the media text could be seen to be the same). This reinforced the notion that this event was removed from everyday life. Or, as one other interviewee summarised: '*summer, friends, going out, event character.*' Additionally, someone else claimed to have felt '*well-entertained*' despite the game that went badly for the team he was supporting. Nonetheless, this 'generosity' concerning the quality of the game was not shared by everyone. Instead, the quality of the game (and its outcome) was definitely seen to be important for the overall success of such events. Another aspect that probably plays a role, but which was not mentioned in the interviews is the fact that the game is so easy to follow. Hence while some aspects are transferable to other sports or cultural events, some others are specific to football.

Place & technology

The places for public viewing were not taken for granted: '*We want to test different places*' was a statement made by one interviewee. In order to pass the test, so to say, the places had to fulfil several criteria. One of these was the quality of the image and the size of the screen. But the differences in furniture and ambience were also mentioned as important criteria. This could also mean that an outside area was desired (the weather was rather good during the three weeks). Overall, the environment is seen to be important for the experience as a while: '*obviously the environment always has an impact.*' Another point that was explicitly mentioned was the audience that one could expect to attend specific places. As one woman said: '*the audience is not stupid here.*' She was hinting at the fact that in her eyes football fans can sometimes be embarrassing, which was not so easily the case in her chosen public viewing location. This underlines not only the importance of the social but the general difference to traditional football fans and related groups. Public viewing can be done amongst other kinds of peers.

The social

The most important aspect of the public viewing appears to be – not surprisingly so – the social aspects. Answers are manifold in this respect and range from '*at home I would have been even more bored*' to '*it's the European Cup – you have to watch it in places like this. It's boring at home.*' So entertainment seems closely related to the environment where the game is shared with others. The comparison to home (as boring) was frequently used, because there is simply more action at the event. Additionally, the event is used to build up emotions in the group. These group dynamics emerge from the being and watching with other people, the meeting of friends and the overall conviviality. For all of this to emerge, the atmosphere is the most often mentioned reason for attendance. So one answer to the question '*What would your ideal public viewing event look like?*' was '*at best the atmosphere of the 'fanmile' in a room with aircon.*' The group dynamics of the largest public viewing event are ideally combined with the comfort of a good bar. All of this leads to the notion of 'being a part – being there' that was often mentioned. The idea of not wanting to miss out is driving many people. Taken together with the idea of the hype of 2006, the further expansion and normalisation becomes less of a certainty. Instead, the idea that it is a social 'must' needs to continue for a while – or maybe move on to similar events of a related nature.

Discrepancy

The 'must' is also a concept that came up in a wider discussion around the material in question. While the observations were at first sight slightly disappointing (many people were not only rather stable in their positions, but also sometimes engaged very little with either other viewers or the game (in fact they often looked bored), the related interviews (many interviews were conducted with those people that were observed) revealed a different story. So even those who looked disengaged were praising public viewing as important and engaging. There seemed to be a discrepancy between actions and statements. This discrepancy is not new in social research, but here it appears useful to go beyond ideas of social desirability in interview situations and relate this instead to the picture emerging overall. This seems to point to a new 'must-do' event (which might soon normalise to a 'can-do'). In order to feel part of social life, public viewing was inescapable this summer. So the idea that people who are usually not to be seen at football games (both in real life and at television viewings) have now entered the sphere is underlined in a different way. Not only were many people more interested in the event than in the games, they even felt that it was a social requirement (even if this was not necessarily a conscious move). Only research over a longer period of time, however, can show how far that remains the case.

9. THE PUBLIC VIEWER?

Once again, a close relationship between participation and media consumption seems to emerge as a result – as does a reinforcement of the centrality of the follow-up-communication to media reception (as a part of the appropriation process). The follow-up-communication takes place both throughout media consumption processes as well as at other times after the actual event (and/or leading up to others). A pre-condition for follow-up-communication is a somewhat shared media consumption agenda – one that has been claimed to get lost in the process of social and media fragmentation. Events such as the football championship increase follow-up-communication possibilities – and public viewing even more so. These follow-up-communication processes have also been described as important aspects of media competence (cf. Groeben and Hurrelmann, 2002). Does this then justify any thinking concerning a new version of audience? Or does this point to the many similarities with other kinds of audiences and reception and viewing?

What is different is that the follow-up-communication tends to only partially refer to the media content, i.e. the actual game and show seen. Often, instead, it builds on the surrounding event itself, i.e. on the public viewing. Hence Cybulska's above mentioned description of public viewing as a semi-media-event (Cybulska, 2007) is useful here. How important the non-media-part is, depends to some extent on the particularity of the place in question. There is not one kind of public viewing. Instead, we get the *fanmile* (as a reference to larger public viewing events), there is *public screening* (as a reference to smaller, but nonetheless still anonymous public viewing events) and there is something like *communal viewing*, i.e. rather intimate settings. The latter allows an identification with others (even strangers) in the place, while the fanmile does not seem to allow this. Again, this points in the same direction as the above explored research project concerning different kinds of environments in 2006 (HISpoJo-Forschungsgruppe and Horky, 2007).

So the faneur only appears in those larger events – and does continue the flaneur approach of social distance there. The smaller events, on the other hand, seem to allow more of new kind of fandom to appear, a kind of community fandom. Another way of framing this would be to name the different versions the flaneur-faneur, the flan and the fan-faneur (or flan-fan). While this might appear slightly stretching the terminology, it is trying to widen the concept to a possible typology of media consumption within public viewing. One could thereby combine different places with different forms of engagement and potentially present the range that there appears to be in a more differentiated way. This could be counter-checked with a larger – and longer-term – study. Additionally, it would also be interesting to trace public viewing in different countries – both the traditions as well the perception seems to differ widely[4]. Because after the last game is before the next ...

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NOTES

[1]   One important limitation concerning references to the faneur is the necessary concentration of one kind of public viewing only: the so-called fanmile. An explanation will follow below.

[2]   I would like to thank all the students involved and the critical enthusiasm that they maintained throughout. Despite quite a few pressures in the setting, it was a very rewarding experience overall.

[3]   Other sub-questions included the difference between public viewing vs. home viewing as well as between different public viewing places. Additionally, some students were interested in the question of how this particular (media) event relates to the emotions being created. Another question was whether there are specific social arrangements and typical behaviours that are beginning to be established.

[4]   I have been told both of Norway and Italy where this is much more part of the norm that it had been in Germany until recently – in interesting mixtures with other social events as well.

Viewing globalization in transnational, Mexican-American spaces:
Focus on the micro or macro?

Gabriel Moreno

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter centres on a question that has puzzled many researchers, but which could be simplified as follows: In his or her study should a researcher focus on the findings or on their implications? Another way of putting this would be: What is more important, the micro or the macro? In my conclusion I will propose that one needs to find an answer to this question at the beginning of one's study programme. It is, namely, helpful to be clear whether one's 'original contribution to knowledge' is going to be methodological or theoretical in scope, thereby clearing the way for a more efficient writing process. In order to clarify this issue, I will briefly outline a research project analysing the viewing behaviour of members of Mexican households living in Los Angeles, in particular how their viewing of television news sheds light on contemporary trans-national experiences. I will then proceed to develop some thoughts on the 'findings or implications' disjuncture.

The title of this research project is 'Viewing Globalization in Mexican-American Transnational Social Spaces'. It employs a range of research methods (see Chart 1 in the Appendix) exploring the reception of television news by Mexican immigrants and their families in Los Angeles, with the purpose of finding the role that these programmes played in the experiences of the Mexican diaspora in the U.S. The analysis of the empirical data has yielded two central hypotheses, one more practical (of a methodological nature), and another more abstract (of a theoretical nature). These in turn are linked to a number of debates involving globalization and international migration. These hypotheses are the

result of data analysis that focused, on the one hand, on the context of television news reception and, on the other, on the meanings that informants take from the news. These could be summed up as follows:

> **Premise 1**: Transnational families and households have undergone the transformation of hierarchical structures which impinge upon the nature of media reception.

> **Premise 2**: Viewers' reception of television news reveals ther interplay between the local and the global.

While it may not be perfectly obvious, both propositions are interrelated, for they are grounded in methodological approaches adopted by cultural studies and reception analysis, focussing on the households of informants. This approach, as James Lull has observed, is useful for probing how '*television is integrated into family routines*' that '*reflect on broader cultural themes of the society*' (Lull, 1988: 240). In other words the exploration of domestic, 'naturalistic' settings helps to reveal how audiences articulate between the private and the public, thereby allowing for inferences to be drawn about the way in which they experience social reality (cf. Silverstone, 1991: 136; Williams, 1974: 19–20).

This claim is grounded in the notion of television as primarily a domestic technology that unites the personal and the familiar with the social and the public. Clearly, television sets have become a pervasive aspect of public space (McCarthy, 2001), but in people's homes they continue to mirror the interaction of ordinary (indoors) activities with the screened representations of (public) social space. Some light is shed on this by McCarthy (2001: 121) when he writes that the '*public/private division ... allows us to specify, with a great deal of precision, how the visual and bodily constitution of the subject as a citizen, or a consumer, or a trespasser occurs in quantum ways within the spaces of everyday life*'.

Definitions of 'private' and 'public' have long been problematic (Arendt, 1958), but in the context of this project one can restrict this discussion to a somewhat basic level where the former refers to an individual or small group space, that remains closed and where certain bodily needs are met. This is in contrast to the '*space of appearance*' (Arendt, quoted by Canovan, 1994: 180) where social life is enacted. Having said this, the reception analysis of television news by Mexicans in their domestic U.S. contexts reveals a reconfiguration of the 'private/public' binary whereby the given 'Westphalian' impenetrability

(cf. Fraser, 2007) of such a binary split is permeated by transnational connections (Hannerz, 1996).

In the fieldwork this expanded understanding of the link between the private and the public has emerged in a multiplicity of ways. Families' dynamics were both penetrated by the experience of living in the U.S. but also by the presence of people, objects and symbols from Mexico, where visitors, pictures of relatives, telephone calls, trips and even television programmes, connected the domestic to a transnational reality. In this regard, one can speak of novel articulations of private settings. Generally adverse contexts of migrant reception and increased economic uncertainties, for instance, lead household decision makers to sublet rooms to members of a second immigrant family. There are also cases where a long-term friendship goes in hand with life at work. For example, partnerships as subcontractors in the construction sector are common, allowing the bread winners from two different households to combine their financial resources in order to buy a property that they can modify to suit the needs of their respective families. In other words, the residential spaces that develop as part of migrants' experiences create dynamics where activities such as cooking, eating, sleeping, having a discussion, intimate contact, etcetera, can become entangled with the privacy of other groups and individuals.

At the same time, there are increased possibilities for participating in the public realm. For a Mexican living in the U.S. one of the more obvious examples is going to any outlet where an individual can make a money transfer to relatives back at home, or even to pay for a pizza in Mexican pesos (PR Newswire, 2007); there is then the case of the ordinary Mexican citizen who obtains an identification card issued by a representative of the Mexican government in the U.S., which the former can use to open a bank account in New York or as proof of address to buy a property in their Mexican hometowns (Nevaer, 2007). From an idealised, Habermasian viewpoint, acting within public space could mean the fleeting but verifiable opportunity to protest against anti-immigrant legislation in the U.S., as hundreds of thousands of Mexican born people did in cities across the U.S. in early May 2006 (Flaccus, 2006). In any case, these instances of social public experience provide a basic example of the sort of experiences with 'the public' in which trans-national individuals may engage. Having clarified this point, it is convenient to reflect on the premise that the reception of television news hints towards shifts in the hierarchical structures of transnational families.

'Family' can be a complex concept in modern multi-ethnic societies (Lull, 1988: 10), but in the context of this chapter it refers especially to households formed by a heterosexual couple living alone or with their offspring. Transnational families should be understood as those formed by individuals who have experienced international migration and who, in physical or mediated ways, lead lives and indulge in activities that span two or more national territories. It is known that the Mexican transnational family living in the U.S. has undergone important changes, including lower fertility rates and a shift in the balance of power that females have *vis-à-vis* their male partners (Hirsch, 2003: 232). These transformations have been a salient feature of family television viewing in my fieldwork, and they are clearly set apart from earlier findings. Instead of males imposing the rules of family television viewing (Morley, 1986; Yarto and Lozano, 2005), the contexts of transnational living rooms are characterized by wives who have become wage-earners and therefore have gained economic independence from their husbands; or by daughters, who are normally better educated and have incomes higher than those of their progenitors.

With women having attained a more solid standing, traditional hierarchies are subverted, as female members of the household who once would have been in a subaltern position to that of a male head of family now challenge the attitudes and opinions of males (e.g. the father) on a daily basis. At the same time, the idea that television programming is gendered (e.g. women watch soap operas while men keep up with the news; see Gray, 1992; Hobson, 1982; Radway, 1984), is in need of reconsideration. A daughter whose preference for English language TV news is connected to her professional interests and who only watches Spanish language news programmes in order to spend some 'quality time' with her father, for instance, would suggest that family life, as traditionally understood by media studies, is in need of reassessment.

2. WHAT ABOUT THE RECEPTION OF NEWS?

At this point, the focus on 'the domestic' as the site for conducting fieldwork becomes problematic, because, while it enables one to observe the relationships of family members at the point of media reception, it simultaneously brings the risk of ignoring what audiences do with the media they consume. As Herman Bausinger (1984: 347) has written, '*the obvious danger [of the cultural studies approach] is that the playful encircling of the object becomes infatuated with its own motion, and so loses sight of it*'.

Clearly, the observation that females are gaining a stronger position in transnational families may be a valuable discovery in itself, but it does not answer the primary research question which aims to find out what role television news plays in the lives of the Mexican diaspora. This is one important reason why, in my view, the first premise may fall short from representing 'the original contribution to knowledge' that could possibly be expected from my PhD research.

However, the 'domestic' enters the equation once more because (next to shedding light on the family interactions and other daily life activities that go on while television news is being consumed) it also creates a fruitful space where individuals open up their lives to the researcher, and where they become highly reflexive about their own media consumption. At stake here is the two-edged nature of the methodologies that derive from cultural studies and reception analysis. There is the risk, as mentioned before, of missing out on the actual media reception of audiences, that is, of becoming obsessed by the micro without ever finding what it says about the macro. One still has the opportunity, however, of capturing in more detail the moment at which viewers enter into contact with the media, within the very contexts of their life histories, which should in turn yield valuable empirical data. Sonia Livingstone has made this point when suggesting that audience reception focuses on '*interpretative processes*' located '*within the context of domestic, cultural, discursive and motivational processes which both precede and follow viewing*' (Livingstone, 1998: 174).

In other words, reception analysis should work with the meanings that audiences derive from media texts, and only then should these meanings be grounded in the life histories of the investigated subjects. In this case, the domestic, as the researcher's observation platform, should be used as a starting point for the analysis of empirical material. Thus while being present in peoples' homes allowed me to recognize some contextual elements of 'the transnational family', it was indeed the moment of the reception of television news which most strikingly revealed the nature of the private/public duality as a transnational, rather than a national phenomena. This is where the micro perspective, of what goes on in households in relationship to the use of media, becomes meaningful and connected to phenomena on a macro scale. This opens the way for a discussion of the second premise claiming that the viewers' reception of television news reveals their interplay between the local and the global.

3. A SHIFT IN PARADIGM:
BEYOND ASSIMILATIONIST AUDIENCE RESEARCH

There were signs that the domestic spaces of the participants were connected to a transnational reality. The meanings informants took from television news further reinforced this notion. They followed traffic and weather reports for Los Angeles; news about crime, violence, and ethnic tensions between Hispanics and blacks; and human interest items about the U.S.-Mexican border. They also kept up avidly with stories about politics, natural disasters and Mexico's economy. It was also significant that news about the war in Iraq and armed conflict in other parts of the Middle East powerfully captured their imagination.

There is however something distinctive about the way informants made sense of the news. Rather than being particularly oriented towards stories in Mexico or in the U.S., they constantly found that news developments had the potential to affect them personally. Consider the following discussion with three members of a Los Angeles based family – a husband, his wife and the latter's sister – after viewing a TV news programme containing stories about an Israeli bombing campaign in Lebanon, high gasoline prices and a political standoff in Mexico's 2006 presidential election. Asked to identify the story that in their opinion was the most relevant, each one of the respondents came up with the following:

> *I1: The two most important stories were the ones about Mexico and the Middle East. You know, what is happening in Mexico may disrupt peace and lead to, more migrants coming here, that's why it needs a solution. The other is the same, should peace continue to be fractured in Lebanon,, that may lead to international unrest. Lack of peace becomes a disease that grows till it reaches you, no matter where we are. That is why I'm interested in these two stories.* (Male, 53, newspaper delivery)

> *I2: I agree with my husband. Too many innocent people are suffering [as a result of the bombings in Lebanon]. In Mexico, as my husband said, one wishes for a quick end to the conflict, even though the death toll is not as high, it's our country. I'm also concerned with [the war in] Iraq, too many soldiers are dying and at the same time it's putting pressure on the price of petrol. The prices are always on the rise but not our incomes. It's because of the war; President Bush does nothing but give orders the consequences of which we suffer. Sometimes I think we won't have enough to eat, I think we're reaching that point.* (Female, 43, baby-sitter)

> *I3: I worry about the bombing, this new war has repercussions for us Latinos, here and there, it's all connected.* (Female, 29, housewife)

Given the nature of informants' responses I argue that transnational audiences find themselves almost inevitably involved in the unfurling of news developments, as their presence – real or imagined – in different spatial layers, is frequently traversed by the trajectories and outcomes followed by news stories. Take, for example, the statement of the male respondent. For him, a disruption of peace may arise in the form of political strife in Mexico or as an Israeli bombing campaign in Lebanon. In both cases, he conveys the idea that disruption of peace affects his living conditions, meaning 'more migration' or referring to an expanding disease that 'reaches you, no matter where we are'. Through the concept of peace, this person brought together different dynamics reported in the news – political strife, war and migration – which he saw as having an influence upon his living conditions, despite their not so obvious geographical proximity.

There is not enough space to discuss more evidence here, but after conducting a textual analysis of data containing the viewers' responses to news stories, it is clear that they consistently see the dynamics of 'time and space compression' at work as an inherent feature of news stories. In other words, television news reception leads to the reproduction of verbal constructs, where viewers identity with different external agents and phenomena that link distant localities in chains of cause and effect, locating themselves constantly at the receiving end of such a process. Hence premise 2.

In general, most contributors followed the newscasts of Univision and Telemundo, the two largest Spanish language broadcasters in the U.S., but one got used to hearing that individuals who were not fluent in English would tune in to the news programmes of ABC or CBS to practise their language, or even just to watch footage of news items such as high-speed police pursuits. The idea is that while some aspects of television news suggest the existence of various 'uses and gratifications' (some of which are aimed at adapting to the host society) it can be claimed that transnational audiences are very similar to most other media publics. And if they are any different, it is because they have experienced international migration, which means they frequently have family, economic and other kinds of links with more than one country. This makes transnational groups highly viable research subjects to explore what Giddens calls the '*dialectical process of the local and the global*'

(1991: 32; see also Featherstone and Lash, 1995; Robertson, 1995; Wilson and Dissanayake, 1996).

The relationship global/local gains salience in late-modern societies where affordable travel and satellite communications make people highly mobile, opening for them the possibility of frequent travel to the homeland as well as the transmission of images, speech and characters. This has brought about the '*intensification of worldwide social relations*' (Giddens, 1990: 64) between distant localities, also seen as the establishment of '*supraterritorial relations*' between people (Scholte, 2005: 61), and as the dynamics involving '*distant proximities*' (Rosenau, 2003). For transnational communities, this separation of time from space enables individuals to engage in social activity with distant others, thus transforming the nature of the migration experience, which for most of the twentieth century was understood as implying an outright transplantation from one societal order to a different one. In his reflections about what could be summed up as the 'Mexicanization' of Southwest United States, for instance, historian David Gutiérrez concludes that '*Mexicans can now live in the United States as if it were simply a more prosperous extension of Mexico*' (1998: 322). Similarly, anthropologist Roger Rouse has documented the way in which Mexicans from the state of Michoacán, residing in Redwood California (1996[1991]: 253) '*find that their most important kin and friends are as likely to be living hundreds or thousands of miles away as immediately around them.*'

The reason why the television news reception puts the interplay between the local and the global into perspective is, however, not linked with the argument that they can 'experience the homeland through television news', but to the fact that they verbalize the news in terms of 'time-space compression' that links their personal interests, whether in the U.S. or in Mexico, to developments occurring in faraway places. This finding puts the paradigm used by many audience researchers, that ethnic minorities are essentially different from the rest of the television publics, into perspective. The point is that transnational audiences are not simply caught in-between the 'here' and 'there' of homeland and host land. Generally, accounts of audience research in migrant communities suggest that their television viewing is not at all framed in these terms. One side of this debate would indicate, for instance, that an immigrant who watches television in his native language is trying to maintain her/his cultural identity, while when s/he is watching television in the language of the receiving society, s/he is trying to assimilate.

This one-dimensional implication is frequently made in accounts of the 'dual nature' of 'ethnic' media (e.g. Constantakis, 1993), as well as in reports that transnational audiences use 'particularistic' media (Dayan, 1998) to reduce the cultural separation provoked by their diasporic condition (cf. Robins and Aksoy, 2005; 2006; Tsagarousianou, 2001). Instead it could be said that transnational audiences '*make use of communication media in … dialectical processes*'. (Cunningham and Sinclair, 2001: 4). Abandoning '*the dichotomy of 'home' and 'host'*" (Cunningham and Sinclair, 2001: 4) would represent a strategic move against the marginalization of this sector of the media public, given that traditional approaches consistently highlight the fact that it is formed by '*alien others*', as embodiment of the normally undesired presence of individuals who refuse to stay where they belong (cf. Wimmer and Glick-Schiller, 2002: 311) – this is, in their countries of origin.

4. CONCLUSION

This chapter addresses the correlation between practical and theoretical aspects that makes the nature of a research project problematic, and the question of whether it is in its micro or macro characteristics where an eventual original contribution to knowledge may lie. It is probably evident that I consider the second premise to be more relevant than the first one. At stake is not simply a choice, but the fact that each of the premises entails, in my view, taking a different approach towards processes including the analysis of data, the construction of central arguments, and even the organization of chapters and of the text as a whole. The question of whether to focus on the micro or macro is important, for an answer helps to narrow down the scope of one's arguments. How could one claim, for instance, that transnational audiences should be approached with the same procedures as are followed in the study of audiences in national contexts, without leaving several practical and theoretical loose ends? Certainly, this argument is not self-evident, because too frequently many of the individuals who form an audience have to struggle with the hardships of undocumented migration. In exploring the consumption of news, the legal status (in the U.S.) arises as an important filter that informs peoples' understandings of the headlines.

The contention that transnational audiences are just like the rest of the media publics has, accordingly, to touch upon developments such as the military, economic and cultural interpenetration of centres and

peripheries developed by world systems theory, as part of the course leading to the argument that international migration flows are the creation of capitalism itself. In this regard, the definition of the transnational audience should *a priori* acknowledge that its presence in a country other than the homeland requires an awareness of a global economy. This understanding opens the way for dealing with diasporic communities via alternative paradigms that approach the subject of immigration not simply as a response to poverty but, for instance, as a form of agency that taps into the margins of the global economy as a strategy for personal and collective development (cf. Portes, 1997).

The question or doubt at the heart of this text – should I focus on the findings or on their implications? – deepened after I came across another research project which concluded that Mexican female immigrants reaffirm their cultural identities by watching soap operas. The literature review of this research, for instance, was divided in three sections, one which addressed the body of literacy about 'soaps' as a programming genre, another that discussed academic work about Mexicans as an 'imagined community', and a third one which dealt with the subject of reception analysis. The rest of the work developed the idea that Mexicans in the U.S. 're-imagine' Mexico through *telenovelas*, an idea that was advanced by drawing on findings from interviews and viewing sessions completed in focus groups made up primarily of females born in Mexico (see Uribe Alvarado, 2003). In the context of the micro/macro relationship, it appears that the researcher opted to concentrate on the small picture without questioning the paradigms on which the arguments were based. By suggesting, for instance, that Mexicans use soap operas to enact their 'Mexicaness', it is implied that they use the media to remain culturally distinct, not dealing with the link of this implication to audience research in the U.S., which has in the last two decades used the same argument to stress the distinctiveness of 'ethnic' audiences. From the macro point of view, this approach leaves the 'big picture' practically unchallenged. From my viewpoint, the decision to privilege findings at the expense of their implications seemed here, however, pragmatic; for in not incorporating the rough edges of the 'minority audiences' paradigm the author apparently managed to face up to the challenge of writing a PhD thesis. Maybe, if I had made clear at the planning stage of my project whether I was going to concentrate on the micro or macro, I would now be finding it much easier to complete the writing process.

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APPENDIX: CHART 1: FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

The fieldwork*:*

University of **Westminster**

METHODOLOGY:

Qualitative

- 55 news diaries
- television-news viewing sessions (25 families and households)
- semi-structured interviews (25 families and households)
- 8 structured interviews about news consumption in Mexico's consular office in L.A.

Quantitative

- 106 questionnaire survey of media use and migration experience
- 100 screening survey of media use and technologies in the household

WHAT:

- Audience research

WHO:

- Mexican immigrants, Second generation Mexican-Americans

WHERE:

- Specially Los Angeles County

WHEN:

- 28 June – 29 September 2006

WHY:

- Fill in the gap

The demise of 'virtuality': A case study of weblogs in Lebanon and Syria

Maha Taki

1. INTRODUCTION

The advent of the internet and new forms of communication have given rise to a rhetoric that the internet was the epitome of our post-modern world. Literature focused on the idea of a disembodied, multiple, fluid, performative identity. The accounts, initially, often began with utopian visions of a virtual world separate from the offline world, where actors could roam and interact freely, globally and anonymously. Most agreed that, because of the internet's structure and the new opportunities it brings (anonymity, many-to many communication, transversing of geographic boundaries) it was essentially empowering (Turkle, 1995, Poster, 1990, Rheingold, 1993, Stone, 1996). Others proposed that, because of the lack of physical-visual cues to judge each other through online communication, such as allusions to race and gender, it has fostered a new egalitarianism (Poster, 1990; Shaw, 1997). This literature, which for the writers was indicative of the world we live in, was well argued, convincing and perhaps relevant to the type of contemporary computer-mediated communication (CMC). Yet its usefulness for new forms of CMC seems to be in demise. My research strongly suggests that most users of modern user-generated communication such as weblogs, do not regard their online activities as a separate social activity from those of their offline world. For the most part, they strive for representations online that are very similar to their offline selves. Indeed, the literature that focuses on anonymity overwhelmingly views internet activity as a new social domain separate from the offline world and thus overlooks the importance of context; culture, economy and power structures that influence, encourage or hinder people's access to computer-mediated communication. I argue that this account of technology – one

that is presumed to bring about social and psychological changes, irrespective of the ways in which it is used – is overly deterministic.

This chapter, informed by a study conducted in March 2008 on the Lebanese and Syrian blogosphere, demonstrates how blogging for actors in Syria and Lebanon was very much related to and intertwined with very practical 'offline' issues that have guided the way that the former have chosen to use blogs and appropriated them into their lives. It calls for a move away from viewing online experiences as disembodied virtual ones. It reveals that blogging is a social activity that often develops into other forms of communication such as the telephone, email and sometimes face-to-face meetings. It demonstrates how anonymity has been utilized for very real practical reasons rather than for fantasy or escapism.

The reflections are drawn from an empirical study that is ethnographic in intent. The fieldwork consisted of face-to-face interviews with bloggers, online participant observation and face-to-face interviews with internet Service Providers (ISPs) and others involved in providing internet access. Miscellaneous fieldwork activities included visiting several internet cafes in Damascus and different areas of Lebanon, going out for coffee and lunch with bloggers as well as exchanging informal emails with bloggers abroad.

For the sake of brevity, I have chosen to illustrate my discussion by referring to the work of two bloggers– a Lebanese and a Syrian. This is in no way an attempt to make generalising statements about the whole blogosphere – if that were possible. By choosing only two bloggers, I am attempting to give more context to their accounts of the blogging experience. I will, however, also refer to more general findings that I have come up with during my fieldwork in Lebanon and Syria. Both the chosen bloggers are anonymous online in order to exemplify how and why anonymity is used in each of these two countries. I have translated the extracts from the interviews into English myself and in referring to them I have used the name of their blogs to preserve their confidentiality.

2. CONTEXT OF BLOGGING IN LEBANON AND SYRIA

In Syria, internet access was granted to the public in 2000 under the Presidency of Bashar al-Assad, making it the last country in the Middle East to allow online access to its public. Most people connect to the internet through a dial up on pre-paid scratch cards. While the price of accessing the internet for the average middle class family in the city is

relatively affordable, for the rest of the population it is still expensive. Five hours of connection costs approximately 100 Syrian Liras [1.33 Euros] and dial up phone charges per hour are 10 liras [0.13 Euros]. Yet the internet is debilitatingly slow; many websites are blocked and there is little content on the World Wide Web in Arabic.

According to an internet café owner, *'Dial up is very available but it is so slow that you end up hating the internet'*. This is especially the case with new websites that come with flash animations for their intros and require the downloading of high data packets, making the browsing process in Syria a very sluggish one. The Syrian government has been very ambiguous in its dealings with the internet. It has initiated a number of projects to grant remote areas access to the internet, yet it continues to block sites at random, with no explanation, as well as to intimidate – and in a few cases imprison – those who deviate from what they deem acceptable[1]. There is a thin line between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, especially with regard to user generated content[2]. This has created the belief that those who are actively using these sites are doing so to fulfil transgressive missions and to further their own politicized ulterior motives[3]. Believing the digital divide can be overcome with a distributive solution that simply reallocates computing resources is problematic, as it is a-historical, a-contextual and technologically deterministic (Kvasny, 2005: 2).

The national project director for the Strategic ICT Programme for Social and Economic Development (a joint UNDP and government project), said in an interview that:

> *The internet does not flow like water in Syria, the development projects that are bringing internet access to remote areas in Syria are bringing in an alien technology and casting it on a community. There has to be a wider investment in it and a regulatory framework, this in turn will create demand. For the time being, internet is seen here as a luxury rather than a necessity.*

As such, blogging in Syria remains very limited. The number of bloggers is estimated to be around 2000, but correct figures are not available and many of those who blog are Syrian expats.

Internet use in Lebanon, *while estimated to be much higher than Syria, remains limited. The* main problem is the political/economic environment. The managing director of one of the main ISPs in Lebanon[4] said that approximately 60% of internet users in Lebanon are still using dial up connections. Mostly because either their area of residence does not have access to ADSL, or because wireless broadband is expensive (Wireless

broadband costs around \$35–45/month [23– 30 Euros] and to pay for the modem and setting up costs around \$200 [136 Euros]). Dial up as such is more affordable as subscribers are charged approximately 6.7 Euros for 5 hours, with phone costs amounting to an average of 19,000 L.L [8.5 Euros] for anything from 1 min to 25 hours a month.

The main reason for the low internet penetration has to do with the lack of a developed of infrastructure, which has been put on hold for political and economic reasons[5]. ADSL was introduced in Lebanon in 2007. It was the last Arab state to use it. According to one ISP manager, government-owned central telephone offices first implemented ADSL 5 years ago, but for various political and economic reasons, the initiation process was delayed until 2007, irrespective of the fact that ADSL had been around since 1998. Moreover, ADSL is provided for areas not just according to need but also based on sectarian equilibrium. Rather than political and moral censorship, Lebanon's internet users suffer from economic corruption which has created a situation where it has one of the most expensive phone and internet access costs and has one of the weakest internet infrastructures in the Arab world[6]. Moreover, similar to Syria, there have been no attempts to educate people about effective internet use. As the ISP manager told me in Lebanon during an interview: *'People are afraid of the internet. People are afraid of the internet for their children's sake. They think there is bad, wasteful content that they will spend all their time on it, chatting etc'*, rather than seeing the internet as providing a wealth of information from which their children can learn.

3. FREEMEN AND ANA-MIN-BEIRUT

Much of the early work on computer-mediated communication, as out-lined in the introduction, has focused on the disembodied, global aspects of the internet. Online communication was hailed because of the oppor-tunities it allowed for: anonymity and the erasure of geographic boundaries. Anonymity, as the literature makes clear, liberated the person behind the screen and allowed its users to escape from the realities of the physical body. In that way, it was democratising, because the physical-visual cues which we use to judge each other, can be con-cealed online. It also made geographical borders irrelevant with the consequence that people from all over the world were able to extend their social relations without the need to travel. Much of the literature suggests that people utilize the internet as a way of experimenting with their identity, as well as escaping from it. They can assume multiple

personas in numerous virtual venues. The most often cited sources are Turkle's (1995) *Life on the screen*, Rheingold's (1993) *The virtual community* and Stone's (1996) *The war of desire and technology at the close of the mechanical age*.

Much recent empirical work on online communication has concluded that people, in general, strive to create an online representation that is very similar to their offline persona and call for the bridging of the online/offline, real/virtual dichotomies (Miller and Slater, 2000; Hine, 2002; Valentine and Holloway, 2002; Lievrouw and Livingstone, 2002) These earlier accounts that focused on MUD's (multi-user domains) and newsgroups, as Wynn and Katz (1997: 297) demonstrate, tend to have a *'journalistic appeal based on futurism and radical scenarios'* and have also been seen as representative of all online communication.

With the advent of new forms of CMC, the way that actors use the internet has changed. Through my case study of two bloggers from Lebanon and Syria, I will demonstrate the importance of the locality and offline context of the bloggers that has guided the way that they have chosen to use blogs and appropriate them into their lives. My evidence suggests that communication online for bloggers in Lebanon and Syria is very much integrated into ordinary social communication and that the same anonymity that has allowed for the playful expression of identity and escapism, as the earlier literature proposed, is now being utilized for very real practical reasons.

Freemen[7] is a Syrian blogger who began his blog in June 2007, when he had been online allegedly researching a topic he was working on. He eventually came across a well-versed blog on the same subject. While he had earlier visited a few blogs, they were, according to him *'banal pieces of writings about everyday life'* which were of little interest to him. Yet, upon discovering these particular blogs from Egypt and Syria, he was captivated by the content, and inspired to start a blog himself. Freemen had always had ideas he wanted to share and found blogging to be a good outlet.

> *When I read, I write notes so I have ideas which are just for me. They used to be scattered everywhere, some here on paper, some on the compute. So to organise them better, I thought of opening the blog, This way I could put all my notes into posts and they would be organized so they are more coherent for the audience. Another issue is that I would usually keep these thoughts and notes to myself, but to express an idea and have people read it and comment on it, I thought, could really help me.*

Freemen studied telecommunications and has a job working in the field, but also has a strong passion for philosophy and the social sciences. Due to financial constraints, he opted to pursue his interests through more practical means. He was also well aware that poets, philosophers and teachers, due to the lack of opportunity and support for following such a vocation in the Middle East, have wound up impoverished and as outcasts of society. Freemen concludes:

> [My blog] started when I began to reject the current situation in all its details. Why are we like this, why are we backward, why are we a third world? So it started off with why and I began to read philosophy on my own. I have a faith that if we want change then we can change. We have a problem and we can change it, so what is the solution? My blog is to help me think about these issues with other people here.

Ana-min-Beirut [8] has two blogs. One is Ana-min-Beirut [9] [I'm from Beirut] and the other is Ana-min-Beirut-bil-Arabi [I'm from Beirut in Arabic]. As is made evident from the titles, one blog is published in English and the other one in Arabic, as he re-iterates that '*they have the same spirit but different content*'. Ana-min-Beirut began his blog during the 5th week of the July 2006 war on Lebanon. As most citizens of his background and age group, his career was put on hold during the war, as most of the projects he was involved in were based in South Lebanon which was where most of the hostilities occurred, causing mass-evacuation throughout the war. He had also been going through a divorce during the war. Having been forced back into bachelorhood and house arrest during this critical period, he had plenty of time to himself. He had always had issues he wanted to write about, concerning music, society and general day-to-day issues and blogging was a great platform to voice these opinions on. His blog quickly began to pick up momentum and to attract readers, encouraging him to stick to his resolve to blog.

The name of his blog, 'Ana min Beirut', is a result of the war '*because Beirut was stigmatized. We were getting a lot of rhetoric about Beirut being a shithole etc, so I wanted to show the world what people from Beirut could come up with … '*. His Arabic blog mainly features voice recordings touching on social issues. He insists that, while many people see his blog as political, he sees it as social satire and embedded within popular culture. He says:

> My last piece was on the concept of kiss ikhta [an Arabic swearword]. It is based on Mozart's music piece, Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star. He made 12 variations of it and I did the same thing with the concept of' kiss Ikhta. My

> *next audio piece will be about sectarianism and how we approach it. I want to give my spin on it, how having friends from different sects affects me and my view of a multi-confessional Lebanon.*

Freemen and Ana-min-Beirut both created their blogs in order to write about issues relevant to their everyday lives. The accounts they touch on, their online posts and conversation threads, pictures and links are explicit and implicit references to their own identities and their experiences. They portray what it is like to be someone from that place and at that time, whether it be vis-à-vis the posting of photos, poetry, illustrations or confessional writing.

The notion of the online world as something separate and remote from our offline would suggests that participants are abstracted and distanced from local and embodied social relations (Miller and Slater, 2000). Yet, bloggers from Lebanon and Syria interact mostly with others from their own country or region and use social slang and idioms that only insiders can understand. Lebanon and Syria both have country web forums that include blogs from each country[10]. One of the most striking features when one browses through the names of blogs on the country aggregator's forums, is the stress on the locality from which they emerge. Names such as 'Damascene blog', 'Allepo post', 'a Syrian dude', 'Beirutius', 'Beirut under siege', 'Angry Arab' crop up consistently in the titles of the blogs.

As Miller and Slater (2000: 85) encountered in Trinidad, the global aspect of the internet has emphasized the local by having people situate themselves in contrast to the other where they *'held on to older senses of self and place in their encounter with a sudden immediate incursion of the 'the global''*. This is not a new phenomenon; studies of old media have made evident the localising effect of telecommunications. A number of studies have sought to show that the integration of the telephone in the US did not end up bringing distant people nearer but on the contrary went on to strengthen local ties (Matei and Ball-Rokeach, 2002: 409).

Bloggers start blogs to pursue objectives, whether it be thinking out loud through writing, wanting to influence and change society venting frustration or archiving thoughts. All blogs strive for recognition of their blogging activity on the part of their audiences. Friendships are formed and blog discussions continued in other forms of media such as email, instant messenger, telephone and in face to face encounters. They know that their online activities have consequences and possibilities that are very real. Therefore to presume new identities or pose and experiment with one's own identity, as much online communication literature

suggests is the case, would be counterproductive and deviate from the unwritten rules of blogging. Such play would limit the real associations people may strike up with each other. This is especially the case with Lebanese and Syrian bloggers who constitute a small group of people that meet face to face to form these blogs. Some of the meetings are announced on the country forums and others through other CMC such as Facebook and email.

Ana-min-Beirut for example has met many bloggers. He said he knows most of those blogging, *'The Lebanese bloggers used to call for meetings on a regular basis that's how I know a lot of them'*. Some of them he has met face-to-face through the blog meetings that the Lebanese bloggers organize and others he has communicated with in different ways. He describes the bloggers with whom he has links in the following terms, even referring to them as good friends

> *Razan is a good friend of mine. I never met her but we chatted [through instant messenger] a lot … Lulu for example I never met in real life, she hasn't come to any of the meetings because she lives in Dubai but we exchange comments so we became friends …*

Indeed all the bloggers interviewed have met other bloggers. One Syrian blogger told me that she would set up face-to-face meetings with bloggers but before that *'we would start chatting, emailing and face-booking so we got to know each other a bit better'*.

It is evident that bloggers do not attempt to hide aspects of their identities – even if they are anonymous or go under a pseudonym. In Lebanon and Syria anonymity was used for very different but practical reasons. The respondents I interviewed had met other bloggers and before the meeting had had some kind of other communication that required less anonymity. Freemen chose to be anonymous in order to escape persecution. He says:

> *I'm a married man and about to have a child. I wouldn't want anything to jeopardise that … I have a project and I don't want to get in trouble at the moment. Maybe one day I might be able to write my name.*

Freeman would rather not be anonymous and is almost apologetic about this, but anonymity has granted him more control. He shares his blog with friends and family and takes pride in knowing that those close to him are an audience. Their feedback is vital as it allows him to further his argument through first-hand encounters. Freemen has also met many bloggers offline. However, he does not meet just anyone. He re-iterates

that *'there has to be a minimum level of understanding for us to meet, the most basic level and that we all in some way reject and are critical of the current situation'*.

On the other hand, Ana-min-Beirut says he remains anonymous in order to *'escape his immediate surroundings, as well as his friends and family'*. He only shares his blog with the blogging world. He meets a lot of officials in his line of work and the blog is where he can '*make fun of them*', and enjoys freedom of speech without suffering the consequences. While Ana-min-Beirut does not share his blog with his immediate surroundings, he is a very active blogger who attends most of the meetings and has created a wide network of friendships with a number of other bloggers. He describes the Lebanese blogosphere as *'they are more on the intellectual side of the spectrum of society and blogging gives them a medium to show off on … '*

As Baym (2006: 43) suggests in her chapter on 'Interpersonal Life Online', perspectives on CMC that focus on disembodiment raise doubts about the possibility of forming genuine relationships through mediated means. Anonymity, in this case is more of an obstacle or a hindrance, yet it allows them to achieve certain ends. As such, they are able to enjoy more control over their virtual personas by disclosing their identities as to whom they choose to be. Anonymity in this context is used to control certain variables that are present in the context of the bloggers' life, and for very practical reasons.

4. CONCLUSION

We should be wary not to go overboard with celebratory accounts of anonymity and identity-play based on the idea that visual cues are able to conceal certain aspects of our identities. Several race theorists have shown through their studies that although visual cues that people judge each other by may be concealed within these online interactions, there are other indicators used to categorise people, such as language and education, that cannot disappear online (Shmitz, 1997; Kolko 2000). Indeed, identities are not just physically visible or consciously constructed. They are very ingrained and internalized in our sense of being and we bring that with us into the online world. How we perceive, think and feel is shaped by sedimented traces of our past experiences which we remain largely unaware of – that is, our habitus in Bourdieu's lexion (Crossley, 2005:105). Therefore, while we may be able to inflate, deflate, reveal, or hide certain aspects of ourselves in some forms of

CMCs, it is a product of our offline world and our sense of being bounded by our habitus (Bourdieu, 1992).

The presumption that certain features of the internet will have the same effects on society regardless of the context in which they are used, is essentially deterministic. As illustrated in the case study, anonymity and virtual-ity do not necessarily lead actors to attempt to create an unrelated online self or experiment with their identities. This does not mean that technology is benign in its impact, or that a socially deterministic path that overlooks power structures is to be followed. It appears that bloggers strive for recognition and they are social in nature, therefore a play on identity is not relevant or convenient for them.

Nevertheless, bloggers are still narrating aspects of their identity online and because of the structure of the internet and the features it allows for, this identity may not be identical to the offline identities. Yet it is necessarily situated in the offline context. Therefore, we need to look at how users are appropriating these technologies in different contexts by taking into account the larger macro variables such as access, institutions and power, and micro variables specific to each user, if we are to understand how users utilize virtuality and represent their 'selves' online.

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NOTES

[1]   The Open Net Initiative website and its national reports has the most comprehensive details concerning the practices and policies of internet content filtering, surveillance, and information warfare in Syria (http://opennet.net/). See also Zarwan (2005).

[2]   A number of press articles have reported on the Syrian government's policies against user generated content websites. See for example: Oweis (2007), Ibrahim (2007), Malaysia Sun (2007), and Ya Libnan (2007).

[3]   Several Syrian bloggers have re-iterated in interviews that the term blog has become synonymous with 'opposition' or 'politics' in Syria. The government's blocking of Blogger.com and more recently YouTube and Facebook and the intensive focus in the international and Arab press on government censorship and on political blogs with a secular, liberal outlook has allowed such discourses to emerge.

[4]   Information from interview with the managing director of a main ISP provider in Lebanon who wished to remain anonymous, recorded myself on March 15, 2008. Beirut, Lebanon.

[5]   Ibid.

[6]   Ibid.

[7]   http://thefreemen.wordpress.com/2007/06/

[8]   http://anaminbeirut.blogspot.com/

[9]   http://minbeirutbilarabeh.blogspot.com/

[10]   Lebanon's web forum: http://www.lebanonheartblogs.blogspot.com, Syria's web forum: http://www.syplanet.com/.

Section five:
Media, ideology and society

Visit to the Estonian History Museum featuring Nico Carpentier
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Cult and ideology: Serial narratives in communist television.
The case of the Czechoslovak television serial production of 1959–1989[1]

Irena Reifová

1. SYMPTOMS OF THE CULT

The genre of the television serial narrative has always occupied a special position in both production strategies and audience viewing habits in the Czechoslovak television environment. The first serial *Rodina Blahova* (Blaha Family) was aired in 1959, only seven years after television broadcasting had commenced (Smetana, 2000). Czechoslovak television aired 279 serials between 1959–1989. 54% (150 items) of them were premiere screenings, 46% (129 items) were re-runs (Table 1). The total transmission time is more than 2000 hours – one would need to organize an 85-day viewing marathon to watch the total amount of television serials produced by Czechoslovak communist television. It is also interesting that contemporary television programming still relies heavily on items produced in the former (and very different) political and media system. In recent years about half (or more) of aired serial re-runs were produced before 1990[2].

Table 1: Premiere screenings and re-runs in 1959–2005

		Premieres	Re-runs	Total
Before 1990	Number	150 (53,8%)	129 (46,2%)	279 (100%)
	Time	62092 min	61707 min	
After 1990	Number	89 (22,3%)	311 (77,8%)	400 (100%)
	Time	63274 min	166755 min	
Total number		239	440	679

This chapter claims that the serial genre has occupied a cult position in the structures used by the producers and of the audience tastes in Czechoslovakia. At least three distinctive features of seriality – which make it an unusually formatted genre – in the television culture of those days can be isolated: 1) an undifferentiated terminology, 2) the privileged screening times, and 3) the rule of thirteen (Reifová, 2001: 161–164).

Unlike international discourses on seriality, Czechoslovak television culture has never recognized the subtle genre and narrative specificities embodied in its differentiated terminology. In the language of both television professionals and audiences there has only been one label for items of television seriality. Any episodic narrative was (and frequently still is) classified as a 'seriál'. The label 'seriál' was used regardless of the type of the episodes' ending, the number of episodes or the narrative setting. Concomitantly, the production diversity was low and the 'seriál'– a chain of approximately 13 episodes with open endings, screened in prime-time, created by one celebrity writer and director – prevailed. Television studies knowledge on seriality provides a much wider variety of sub-genres; it is difficult, indeed, to deploy it when describing seriality in Czechoslovak communist television. Television genre theory discriminates between many serial (sub)genres, often ignoring Czechoslovakian production and not often recognizing the typical Czechoslovak cultist 'seriál'. Glen Creeber's classification is helpful in this perspective, as Creeber provides one of the most complete typologies by differentiating single play, television film, soap opera, anthology series, serial and miniseries (Creeber, 2004: 8) [3]. But at the same time, the use of compact terminology can be understood as a symptom of cult. This way genre is treated as untouchable and might be turned into a mythical monolith.

Similarly, there is also a lack of discrimination in screening times. The daytime and prime-time dichotomy was not used, every new 'seriál' (except for children's television) was destined for the prime-time zone after the evening newscast of 7.30 p.m. The cultist Czechoslovak 'seriál' can be said to have occupied privileged screening times. Out of 150 premiere screenings from 1959–1989, almost 60% of the first episodes were aired between 7.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m.

The 'Rule of thirteen' (read: the rule of the 13 episodes) contributed to the extraordinary position of the serial genre as well. In the years of so-called 'Normalization', [4] the practice of 13 episodes per 'seriál' (or at least the approximation of 13 episodes) became popular because it resulted in about 4 serial items per calendar year. Out of 150 premiere domestic

serials, more than one third had between 10 and 14 episodes[5]. Thanks to 'rule of thirteen' producers could always have precisely one domestic serial on the screens. No doubts, full audience attention concentrated on a single serial, at a given time, providing it with monumentality and a societal dimension.

We can only speculate about the reasons why seriality in television became such a respected narrative type. These reasons can be found in both the realm of the politically determined production and the viewers' preferences. As Allen puts it, the implementation of serial narratives brings about the regularization of the audience (Allen, 1985: 47). Therefore, it can be suggested that producers in Czechoslovak television (in close connection with the communist party apparatus) liked the idea of distributing the basic ideological narrative patterns to roughly an homogeneous audience, seen as a massive block. On the other hand, the typical Czechoslovak 'seriál' oscillated between politics and soap; it included many soap-like narrative features coming from the areas of family relationships, love affairs, personal victories and defeats on the everyday plane. It could easily be used for escapist purposes by its audiences and we could even claim that its immense popularity[6] was a symptom of so-called inner immigration.[7]

There was also a significant difference between the basic patterns of the serial narrative and the rhythm of everyday life during the Normalization period. Changes, development and progress (for instance in the resolution of conflict) are essential for any serial. This contrasted strongly to the everyday reality in the Normalization period, which was static, planned and predictable. The Czechoslovak 'seriál' potentially became one of very few spaces of change and surprise in these years of boredom and apathy.

2. Defining ideology: No help for the East

Frequently, the ideological nature of the cultural production of communist systems is taken for granted. The ideology definition 'quest' in Cultural and Media Studies in the 1990s brought about an undecipherable web of concepts derived from Marx, Gramsci, Althusser and Hall; turning ideology into a blind alley (e.g. Eagleton, 1991; Larrain, 1996; Thompson, 1984; Thompson, 1990; van Dijk, 2000). Therefore, a retrospective view on ideology might not seem the most sensible suggestion. (Un)fortunately, from the perspective of developing Cultural Studies in Central and Eastern Europe, such a retrospective view is very

much needed. At the same time restraint is needed, as one can even argue that the more variations of the ideology concept were created by the Western Cultural Studies, the less useful they became for the ideological analysis of cultural production in Soviet-type communist systems. One can feel quite desperate when studying communist television serial narratives, trying to identify the 'proper' definition of ideology to support this analysis. Obviously, there is the self-evident and common-sense-based version of ideology: Cultural production is then seen as pure ideology, or as soaked in ideology … But these kinds of definitions can hardly support academic analyses. Regretfully, the members of the old cultural 'ideology club' will not help either, as Cultural Studies paid remarkably little attention to relating their definitions of ideology to authoritarian societies including those in the former Soviet satellites. Consequently, any analyst of communist tele-vision seriality has to become partly a self-made-(wo)man in specifying ideology.

2.1. Role of political capital

In this renewal of the ideology definition, any Marxist foundation is excluded in advance. The ideological dimension of the system cannot be explained by referring to ownership of the means of production, legitimating class inequalities. The regime declared the state to be the total owner and social classes lost their antagonistic qualifications. The irony is that we still need the concept of ideology for the system that situated ideology only in capitalist societies. Van Dijk is also aware of the irony.

> *For many in the West – laypersons, politicians and scholars alike – communism was (based on) such an ideology. The legacy of Marx and Engels, to whom this negative, critical concept of ideology is usually attributed, is thus posthumously discredited by the very notion they introduced themselves* (van Dijk, 2000: 2).

It is clear that communist leaders and party ideologists were not involved in legitimizing the ownership of economic capital; this was clearly not part of the official ideological rhetoric. They did not own any (considerable) economic capital, so an ideological effect to defend it was not needed. The question then becomes: What did they own? What was the 'property' that had to be legitimized, interpreted and defended by the ideological discourse of communist politics? Interestingly enough,

the question is not far removed from the one that Pierre Bourdieu posed himself in his lecture in Eastern Berlin on October 25, 1989. Bourdieu's proposal was that they had owned political capital (Bourdieu, 1998: 23). Access to cultural capital is seen by Bourdieu as one of most important structural distinctions between classes in capitalist societies. During this lecture, he examined whether the cultural capital concept could also explain the hierarchies in the former East-Germany. He came to the conclusion that economic capital is totally excluded and even the concepts of cultural and symbolic capital will not allow explaining all class differences (Bourdieu, 1998: 23).

2.2. Informal and formal ideologies

We are persuaded that this terminological innovation – political capital – is a useful instrument for grasping the nature of ideology in the former Soviet satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe. It helps us to distinguish between two main ideological realities: formal ideologies (which are formally institutionalized in the state legislation of authoritarian societies) and informal ideologies (which are informally dispersed in hegemonic practices of otherwise – formally – democratic societies). Through this dichotomy we can also see the gap in the contemporary cultural conceptions of ideology. Corner (2001: 527) is right to express his satisfaction that Cultural Studies 'start letting go of the idea that it [ideology] is a historically specific 'bad thing' … ' The problem is that this resulted in the theoretical marginalization of ideologies that were really historically-specific 'bad things' …

Most of the frequently cited cultural definitions of ideology perfectly suit the free, liberal, democratic and capitalist societies. These informal ideologies are legitimating hierarchies that grew out of two conditions: 1) Dominant elites have privileged access to economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital; 2) Dominant elites do not have guaranteed access to political capital due to the existence of free elections and the plurality of political parties. When analyzing the specificities of the status-quo that is legitimating authoritarian, communist societies, the situation is different. Here dominant elites did not have privileged access to economic, cultural, social or symbolic capital (as these were more or less defamed). But on the other hand they had guaranteed access to political capital. In conclusion, we can say that ideology in authoritarian societies of the former Soviet bloc can be defined as the sum of discursive units contributing to the preservation of access to political capital.

For instance in Czechoslovakia, the exclusive political capital of communist *apparatchiks* was derived from the Constitution itself, more precisely from its fourth article implementing the so-called leading role of communist party. Therefore, for the purpose of the analysis of ideological elements in television serial narratives in 1959–1989, we can assume that any discursive unit (contributing to) legitimating the leading role of the communist party in Czechoslovak society should be taken as an ideological element.

3. CZECHOSLOVAK 'SERIÁL': TYPES AND LINES

Hundreds of serial narratives screened by Czechoslovak television can be divided into groups or periods, defined by typical subjects or ideas of what the serial should cover. According to Corner (2003: 277): '*Grouping of development (social, institutional, generic, aesthetic) into significant phases aids clarity of analysis and coherence of account.*' Corner warns for mechanically identifying phases of television history and decades. However, following the development of the Czechoslovak television seriality, we have to deal with decades, because the media system corresponded to the political transformations of this authoritarian society.

3.1. Serial narratives before 1968

The first attempts to produce domestic television serial are situated in the beginning of 1960s (from 1959 onwards). Coincidently, it was the period of soft liberalization after years of communist political terror in the 1950s. Ironically, the first serials produced by Czechoslovak television[8] were quite free from political engagement or from communist ideology preservation or fortification[9]. All three serials of the 1960s were set in a community environment, in families and their wider environment. Characters were not involved in any ideological or repressive institutions and conflict-resolution patterns were organized around relationships. *Rodina Blahova* covers the cohabitation of children and parents, *Tri chlapi v chalupe* deals with bachelorship and *Eliska a jeji rod* presents a story of a waitress in a plebeian pub. The 'seriál' as a space of intensive propaganda (as happened in the 1970s and 1980s) started as communal satire with a humanistic-optimistic message about the inner spirits of ordinary people, and still had little ideological contribution.

3.2. Serial narratives after 1968

After the Prague Spring debacle in 1969 and the introduction of the process of Normalization, the role of television seriality in Czechoslovak society dramatically changed. The principles of cooperation between Czechoslovak television and the Central committee of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia (UV KSC) were established[10]. A severe combination of censorship, self-censorship and supervision over shows that were still in their production phase resulted in three different approaches to the television serial production.

Shortly after 1969 some television serials returned to history – this approach is represented mainly by the serial *F.L. Vek* (1971). The show became a paradigm for using historical metaphors as far as it covered the so-called 'dark period' of the nation's history – clearly an analogy to post-Soviet invasion times. The retreat into history was a kind of by-passing the sore spot in television production. Usually these serials were produced with no clear collaboration nor with an open conflict with the communist policy driven management.

The second distinctive group of serial narratives was based on explicitly propagandist goals connected with the celebration of specific people or institutions: e.g. socialist agriculture (*Nejmladsi z rodu Hamru*, The youngest son of Hamr's, 1975), the police force (*30 pripadu majora Zemana*, 30 cases of major Zeman, 1976), the national front (*Muz na radnici*, The Mayor, 1976), lower communist secretaries (*Okres na severu*, The north district, 1981); the communist president Klement Gottwald (*Gottwald*, 1986), the army (*Chlapci a chlapi*, Boys and men, 1988) etc. Propagandist serial shows sometimes referred to reality and attempted to legitimate concrete persons, organizations or specific projects. For instance *Muz na radnici* (1976) explicitly interpreted the central tendency towards the eradication of old town houses in city centres and their replacement with housing estates called 'sidliste'. But the most legendary example is *30 pripadu majora Zemana*, which is based on the life story of a fictive police officer in communist service. Each episode is devoted to the re-interpretation of a particular (authentic) historical event so that communist supremacy seems inevitable and a fully justified political fact.

The third group of Normalization television serial narratives is most ambivalent. We could call them serial shows of escapist normativity. Unlike propagandist serial items, escapist-normative serials do not include the direct celebration or the preservation of communist party rule. Stories and plots are contemporary, and the everyday dimension of relationships is the basic frame. In these days, television writers and

directors were renowned for their level of professional mastery so that these shows were indeed quite immersive or escapist. Characters were for instance not difficult to identify with. Still, these programs contained a normative appeal to conformism and took the conditions of the socialist society for granted, without objections or comments. The settings were significant narrative elements of these shows, as they were always located in the working environment of the main characters. Along conventional settings such as for instance hospitals, farms or schools, there were also quite unusual settings: a socialist hypermarket, a first-aid control room, a horse-breeding farm or a hydroelectric power station. These variations in settings (often used only once) can be interpreted as an attempt to apply desirable norms of conformism to representations of as many societal sectors as possible.

4. CASE-MINISTUDY: REPRESENTATIONS OF WORK AND WEALTH

In the case of Normalization television serial shows, images of work proved to be a rich source of ideological signification and narrative elements. A short review of related research can be presented as an example of ideological analysis (White in Allen, 1995: 161–197).

4.1. Work without wealth

In our mini-analysis, the television serial *Synove a dcery Jakuba sklare* (SDJS) stands for a serial with a dominant narrative position of work. SDJS is a historical saga combining a fictive story with the reconstruction of real events of the first half of the 20th century in Czechoslovakia through film historiography (Rosen, 2001: xi). Relevant parts of the television text were determined by the use of textual orientators [11]. Textual orientators are signifying and narrative elements that: 1) guarantee the reference to historical events being reconstructed and b) guarantee the reference to dominant ideology at the moment of production (Hall, 2000: 168). They orient the historicizing text towards the reconstructed history and also to the period of its production.

Among many types of work, special relevance is ascribed to manual work in the factory. In the first episode the wandering pilgrim Jakub is taken out of the unstructured spaces of his past and elementary ties with place, family and factory are created. His move from the margin to the centre of society is identical to his 'meeting' the factory (Wright, 1998:

120– 134). As far as this episode is located in 1899, the 20th century is explicitly represented as a century of modernity, with its essential institutions: the family in the private sphere and the factory in the public sphere.

The manual worker's labour is romanticized and estheticized through the means of television language. The serial repeatedly provides long close-ups showing the blowpipe creating fragile and poetic glass products. Working skills are represented as the aspect that goes hand in hand with the moral dimension of the characters. The manual labour of the workers in factory is presented as a source of joy and pleasure and is dissociated from utilitarian economic goals. This representation is placed in a binary opposition with the work of farmers. The farm in the serial show is a gloomy and depressing place and the inhabitants of the farm have bitter attitudes toward their work, which dirtiness is exaggerated by the scenes of floundering through the mud. Factory work is freed from its economic context – it is not presented as a means for earning a living nor as a site of exploitation of the proletariat. Work is seen as an emotional phenomenon, giving meaning to life. As a source of pleasure, work is in this serial a final and irreducible category.

4.2. Wealth without work

If we compare the example of the representation of work discussed above with the images of work in television serial shows after 1989, significant differences arise. A pilot study with a thematic analysis of eight Czech television serials (1996–2006) indicates that in these new 'capitalist' narratives the phenomenon of work is suppressed. The absence of images of work is significant. Mainly physical manual work is remarkably absent. Television serials from 1990s derive their plots entirely from gaining wealth without any work – they are based on miraculous or fairy-tale like events, like heritage or restitution. Sometimes these fairy-tale like moments are even reflected in the titles – *Zivot na zamku* (Life in the Castle) or *Sipkova Ruzenka* (Sleeping Beauty) … In contrast, television serials after 2000 depict characters who work and often have exhausting high-level positions. But the process of work however remains absent and invisible. The representation of work rests upon a metonymy: Otherwise invisible work is made present only through its effects: wealth and social status. In other words, the characters are living their luxurious, expensive life styles, but the activity of work remains unrepresented.

5. A brief conclusion

In communist television serial narratives, work was presented as an autonomous value – the effects of work were excluded from representation and considered not important. In the post communist television serials, mainly the effects of work enter the representation of work, while the images of work itself stay out. The representation of work proved to be a substantial area of ideological meaning generation in television serials produced in the two socio-political systems, and for that reason can be considered a crucial entry point for ideological analysis, at both the formal and informal level.

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NOTES

[1] 1959 was the year of the introduction of seriality into Czech television broadcasting; 1989 was the end of communist regime.

[2] In 2003 the ratio was 16 re-runs produced before 1990 to 9 re-runs produced after 1990. In 2004 the ratio was 15:18, in 2005 the ratio was 17:10.

[3] Clearly, sitcom (e.g. Langford, 2005: 15–23) and docusoap (e.g. Bignell, 2003: 198) are missing even here.

[4] Normalization is a name commonly given to the period from 1969 to about 1985 (than *perestroika* followed) or 1989. It was characterized by the restoration of the conditions prevailing before the reform period led by Alexander Dubček (which culminated in *Prague spring*) and the subsequent preservation of this 'new' status quo.

[5] In the 1970s and 1980s only one weekly episode was screened. Four serials of 13 episodes covered all 52 weeks of a year. Understandably, there were diversions from the 'rule of thirteen'. In these cases, all 52 weeks were not covered. However, 23 serial items were composed of exactly 13 episodes.

[6] Ratings of prime-time shows in television systems with no competition were incredibly high. It was normal that ratings of a 'seriál' was more than 80%.

[7] Public sphere engagement was not attractive, and the majority of people preferred to stay isolated within the space(s) of their private lives, a process which was called 'inner immigration'.

[8] *Rodina Blahova* (The Blaha family) 1959; *Tri chlapi v chalupe* (Three men under the roof) 1962; *Eliska a jeji rod* (Eliska and her kin) 1966.

[9] Given that ideology is defined as discussed above.

[10] For instance General-Director Jan Zelenka (who was inaugurated in 1969) was himself a member of the UV KSC. Consultations between the television management and the Department of Mass Media of the UV KSC took place on a daily basis. The UV KSC, especially the Dept. of Mass Media and the Ideological Commission, was a parallel control centre of Czechoslovak television. Communist bureaucrats supervised and (co-)decided on everything, from human resour-

ces management to hiring actors and the content of television shows (Reifová, 2007: 46–49).

[11] In analogy with textual shifters employed by Woollacott and Bennett in their Bond study (Woollacott and Bennett, 1987, cited in Turner, 1996: 117).

Are Information and Communication Sciences a specific scientific discipline in the analysis of the societal role of the producers in media information? Remarks on the public debates about nanotechnologies

Bertrand Cabedoche

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. *The dedication of Information and Communication Sciences to interdisciplinarity*

Although it is impossible to determine the temporal start of any scientific discipline, in 2008 academia in France celebrated the 30th anniversary of Information and Communication Sciences (ICS) education and research. ICS is sufficiently young that educators and researchers took the anniversary as an opportunity to reflect on a number of issues that underpin the discipline. What, for example, are the connections with the older disciplines of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH); are the paradigms, concepts and methodologies common to both ICS and SSH and are there any differences; and last but not least can ICS be considered a specific discipline?

The division of academia in scientific disciplines is important, as specific concepts, methodologies and types of explanation offer their own bases of validation of knowledge. But the study of SSH naturally imposes interdisciplinarity because research into SSH is not wholly external to the human being, but is involved via the '*symbolisation*' of this research. Dedication to interdisciplinarity can neither be purely declarative nor completely fortuitous. The example of the ICS research group, colloquially known as the 'cluster 14 Rhônes-Alpes' in France is a

significant grouping. Since 2005 two of the cluster's research institutes – *Communication, Culture et Société* (C2SO) and *Groupe de Recherche sur les Enjeux de la Communication* (GRESEC) – have worked together on common research themes related to political sciences, linguistics, sociology and ICS. A priority, in 2006, was C2SO and GRESEC's[1] analysis of the series of public debates on nanotechnologies, which La Metro[2] trialled in Grenoble that year.

What about nanotechnologies?

Nanotechnologies are a prodigious scientific revolution (Drexler, 1986). Nanotechnologies contain all the techniques allowing the manipulation and elaboration of materials on the scale of the nanometre (10^{-9} meter). The potential applications are numerous and varied: nanosciences, nanostructures, nanotubes and nanotransistors which will benefit almost every major business sector, the space industry, medicine, biology, computing, car manufacturing, aviation, office automation using objects at the molecular, even atomic level. Nanotechnologies open the possibility of multiple applications in more and more domains and represent an enormous global market. The figures are dizzying. It is estimated that products stemming from nanotechnologies could potentially generate a market of over 2.8 trillion dollars before 2015 (equivalent to 20% of the USA's GDP in 2006)[3]. Whether or not this market value is realised, the nanotechnology industry will have experienced the fastest development of any industry in history.

Nanotechnologies also bestow a political choice which detractors denounce as a project of subjection of the human being. On an ethical level, opponents speak of eugenics and the artificialisation of life (Joy, 2000). Consequently investments in nanotechnologies often give rise to heated demonstrations (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Grenoble, June 2006. Demonstrators demand the immediate closure of the Minatec site during the inauguration ceremony

The societal implications of nanotechnologies are of great concern to civil society. UNESCO quickly took initiatives to map the ethical dimensions of nanotechnologies from a global perspective (UNESCO, 2007). But in 2006, the debates between the experts no longer had a calming effect on popular fears. The need for open debates was led by the deepening reflection of the general public.

The question that arises here is whether journalism could be an effective mediator for such public debates. This is a legitimate question for professional journalists. Their mediation roles require legitimacy, which the code of deontology provides on the condition that they maintain their self-respect, i.e. they must not receive remuneration from any of the mediation-interested societal groups (*Charte des devoirs professionnels des journalistes français*, July 1918, revised in 1938). The mediating role of journalists and the nanotechnology debates in Grenoble can be seen as an effective opportunity to reveal the specificity of ICS.

Economic decision-makers realise that a potential obstacle for an uninformed public in accepting nanotechnologies is the difficulty in understanding such a complicated field without any mediation. The problem is more acute when the public perception is that a lack of transparency infers that that mediation is being manipulated. So media

could have acted as a mediator in the public debates. Radical opponents of nanotechnologies know that the media are public areas where mediating power is increasingly played out in terms of the construction of discourses and their symbolic dimensions. These radical opponents for instance published a pastiche newspaper, in Grenoble, which satirised nanotechnologies and disqualified the notion of public debates on the basis that political decisions always take precedent. The pastiche caught the attention of the national, Paris-based newspapers *Le Monde* and *Libération* which brought the nanotechnology discourse in Grenoble into the national public domain. Local Grenoblois political decision-makers wanted to institute a year-long framework to prolong the process of the six public debates throughout 2006. Last but not least, local journalism could be the ideal actor in the role of the *'third man'* (Moles and Oulif, 1967) since ICS analyses journalism as a societal actor (Université Laval, 1996).

Journalism is a democratic activity according to Article 11 of the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* (Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen)[4]. Journalism is also looking for new opportunities to express its own superiority in news production, in the era of the digital revolution and the profusion of competitors. More specifically, local journalism offers geographical *proximity*, since the local is frequently presented as the 'cornerstone of democracy'. The coincidence that a requirement for public debates into nanotechnologies should occur just when local journalism was using the slogan 'what is infinitely small could bring to light the majesty of the world' to promote the justification of its superiority, was extraordinary.

La Metro's experiment of public debates on nanotechnologies was also relevant because they provided the opportunity to use ICS' specificity for mediation on two counts. First, the responsibility for implementing the debates was given to the personnel of a non-governmental organisation (NGO), Vivagora[5], who were ex-journalists and therefore can supposed to be sensitive about the need for mediation. Secondly, within the context of providing mediation for the people of Grenoble, it could be expected that Vivagora would invite local news-papers to act as mediators. However, despite the journalistic background of Vivagora's personnel, there was no attempt during the planning, implementing and reviewing process of the public debates to invite local journalism to act as a mediator. The official argument was that there was no need for a 'third man' to act as a screen between the experts and the public. The basis for this argument was established during the pre-

paratory stages of the process in that uninformed citizens are able to grasp a topic when a debate arises that concerns them.

The absence of an invited 'third man' meant that using ICS' specificity of mediation was not valid in this context. The issue that required solving was whether studying journalism, reduced to textual commentary, is just a matter of media content analysis? In this chapter it is argued that, on the one hand, analysing texts using the methodologies of other SSH disciplines, such as linguistics or political science, would demonstrate the transdisciplinary dimension of ICS. On the other hand, ICS is beginning to be more specific, for example by focusing on mediation or on the activities of societal actors.

1.2. A 'multidisciplinary heritage' based hypothesis

Since the Allerton House Conference in 1955, the contributions of linguistic and political science have enabled us to distinguish scientific information from mediatised information. The referential function is the basis of scientific information (Jakobson, 1960) while an expressive function, a mix of every other language function, is the basis of mediatised information (Reboul, 1980). This simplistic model was inspirational in our decision to analyse all the nanotechnology-related articles published in the main local Grenoble newspaper *Le Dauphiné Libéré* (*Le Dauphiné)* throughout 2006 because the newspaper did enter the nanotechnology discourse and covered the public debates extensively (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Le Dauphiné Libéré

Le Dauphiné constructed news about nanotechnologies using the refe-rential function as the main tool. We can analyse this either as 'copy-pasting' from copyrighted scientific information, or as a type of factual journalism fed by a positivistic conception of the world. We could also expect laconic articles to remain faithful to scientific sources. The news-paper also used an *expressive* function in the same articles which we can analyse as the classical way of presenting an ideal society when a new technology is discovered. The use of the *expressive* function was syste-matic at the dawn of the Information Technology and Communication era (Mattelart, 1995). And the norm of referring to nanotechnologies is that of a magical promise, using the language of science-fiction (Catellin, 2006).

The analysis of the articles in *Le Dauphiné* discussing nanotechno-logies during the first half of 2006 shows that the paper was presenting nanotechnologies as fairy tale promises. The promises were guaranteed as imperative, linear, diffusionist and technical. 'Born from nothing', the progressive development of nanotechnologies must and will benefit everyone. On a cognitive level, knowledge will be limitless; on economic and social levels, there will not be unemployment; on a medical level, every sick person will be cured; on a humanitarian level, international aid agencies will not be required; on an eco-environmental level, new energies will be promoted; on a military level, terrorism will be defeated, etc.

At this stage, media analysis works in much the same way as functional analysis of mass communication research (Lasswell, 1948) in assigning three roles to media: to maintain a 'watch-dog' role over the values of the social environment (among others democracy); to provide adapted and alternative responses to social and political challenges by making contact between social actors within a community of newspaper readers; and to pass on social heritage.

But working within the transdiscplinarity of ICS requires us to consider another inherited SSH discipline, that of the critical theory and more specifically the Frankfurter School.

2. A DISCIPLINE FOCUSED ON THE SOCIAL FIELD

The Frankfurter School argues that society is rationally built by science and technology, but as Benjamin (1978) explained, a new system of domination is leading towards an increasingly oppressive society.

This argument appeared in one of the public debates in Grenoble. One point raised was that the editorial independence of *Le Dauphiné* did not exist due to a conflict of interest. *Le Dauphiné* is part of Est Bourgogne Rhône Alpes (EBRA) Presse Groupe, a vast communication consortium owned by a bank which is directly concerned with the benefits and profits derived from the development of nanotechnologies. Other points debated were local journalism's traditional dependence on institutional sources, i.e. the feudal misery of the provincial press (Descamps, 1996) and the unilaterality of discourses in non-specialised media to which Baudrillard (1972) referred.

The theory about the uniformity of media content is commonly debated in ICS. The analysis of the Grenoble debates concurs with these theoretical insights. By the middle of 2006, although fictionalisation still pervaded, the language of *Le Dauphiné* and its the content was becoming contradictory. The promises of the benefits were still present but the metaphors were shifting from fantasy towards reality (i.e. from the fairy tale promise that everyone would benefit to the real world of sportsmen and self-improvement). At the same time, the critical discourse in the newspaper, which was also using fictionalised language, was revealed within the local public space as a result of the hostile demonstrations that occurred during the inauguration of the *Minatec* building[6]. On a theoretical level, this contradictory reportage confirms the alignment of ICS with Henri Lefèbvre's (1967) assertion that mediated information is not a monolithic uniform system. As such, we must return to social realities, instead of seeing structures as dominant and fixed, outside time and space, as Althusser tended to do.

A similar evolution of the representation of nanotechnologies in *Le Monde* was already apparent (Catellin, 2006). In April 2000, *Le Monde* had modified its speech, trying to evaluate the risks and benefits from 'real science' because Billy Joy, co-founder and Chief Scientist of Sun Microsystems, had just alerted the public to the risks of nanotechnologies (Joy, 2000). Furthermore, as Beck (2001) argues, a new relationship was developing between the general public and science due to the public awareness of living in a 'risk society'.

So, researchers need to go beyond purely textual analyses and take the social context into account. Linguistic approaches suggest media information is the result of the construction by the editorial staff of their target audience and their concerns. The editorial line is not only determined by the ethical standards and economic requirements appropriate for the media authority but also by the exploitable technical

devices and the socially acceptable discursive options present and accepted within the public sphere (Charaudeau, 1997).

A comparison of media contents, between *Le Monde* and *Le Dauphiné*, based on Charaudeau (1997) reveals the same social evolution in both papers. We were able to recognise five regular stages common to both newspapers: 1 – Support: unconditionally for nanotechnologies using fantasy promises; 2 – Criticism: a radical reserve towards nano-technologies but maintaining an atmosphere of fantasy; 3 – Contra-dictory debate: between the benefits and the risks; 4 – Ethical demand: complaining about (the lack of) an ethical charter; 5 – Annualised Debate: acceptance of nanotechnologies, conditional on a long-lasting public debate.

Figure 3: Five stages, five successive paradigms?

Orientation	Theoretical issues
Support	A standardisation of the media and proclamation of the *'communication society'*, of which nanomedia would contribute an extension
Criticism	The advent of the *'risk society'* and post-modernist rehabilitation of the human being
Contradictory debate	Moving smoothly away from a problem of *'translation'* to a problem of *'communication of the scientific and technical information'*
Ethical demand	A break with *'technological determinism'*
Annualised debate	New avenues in the *'process of legitimisation'* for a political decision

To understand the development of this media process, we must consider the contribution of ICS, as a specific discipline with an inheritance from other SSH disciplines.

2.1. A specificity of ICS inherited from other SSH disciplines: The situational analysis of the actor's games.

ICS cannot be reduced to just speech analysis. The analysis of media content allows us only to reveal reference universes, as a modality for the construction of public opinion, and in the shape of appropriation of what

is unknown. In other words, meaning is constructed in connection with other indicators. ICS speaks of the *informationalisation* of modern societies, which means that information is increasingly produced in relation to the *communication strategies* of a variety of societal actors. Consequently we must consider a great many transactional options with media. Furthermore, we must no longer reduce those societal actors to the dissocialised status of just an anonymous '*source*'.

So, in our case study, we have to consider that the concordances between the media are not systematically the result of '*an invisible script*' (Bourdieu, 1973). Bourdieu spoke of journalism as '*un champ*' (a field); i.e. we must consider a space where media actors evolve according to specific regularities, but without losing their ties to society. So, even if their progress is identical (see Figure 4), an '*invisible script*' urging *Le Monde* and *Le Dauphiné* to show the same progress in their presentation of nanotechnologies did not exist. We have to consider that the newspapers' *situational contexts* are the key explanatory factors.

Figure 4: Media relationship to nanotechnology development

	Le Monde*	*Le Dauphiné Libéré***
Stage 1 **Media support nano-technologies**	1980s Reproduces the prediction of a magnificent world, based on the work of the scientist Eric Drexler (1986), which has just been published in France.	2006 (January to May) As a non-specialist in the field of nanotechnology, the local journalist intends to be recognised as a credible actor by scientific authorities who were themselves acting as a '*primary definer*' and a promoter of nanotechnologies.
Stage 2 **Media Critical of nano-technologies**	2000 Reproduces the prediction of a nanotechnological nightmare, based on the work of Billy Joy (2000), which has just been published in France.	2006 (May) The local journalist, concerned about regaining some credibility and authority in a local space to which he was not invited, publishes the arguments of the anti-public debates activists (since the political decision was already taken), and the anti-nanotechnology activists who have joined forces to make their opposition more visible.

	Le Monde*	Le Dauphiné Libéré**
Stage 3 **Media request public debate**	2000 Participates directly in the debate, welcoming both those who approve Billy Joy's stigmatisation of the nanotechnological fantasy, and those who blame him for projecting the equally fictionalised nightmarish prediction.	2006 (June) Begins to edge away from nanotechnology opponents whose neo-luddite initiative shows disdain for dialogue with any organisation that is symbolically viewed as nanotechnologies' promoters, the media included.
Stage 4 **Media request ethical reflection**	2000 Publishes the writings of the *techno-prophets*, who make every effort not to demonise nanotechnology. At the same time technologists begin reflecting on ethical issues.	2006 (Summer) Rejects the radicalism, the verbal and physical violence of the associated opponents displayed at the Minatec demonstration by calling on *common sense*, which finally is translated into a call for a real public debate on the ethical issues.
Stage 5 **Media accept nano-technologies and request annualised reflection**	2006 Torn between the need to provide critical attentiveness to the awareness of the ethical problems, and the ecological and societal risks, and the techno-propheticism to redefine the 'fantasy' aspect in the reality of nanotechnologies: '*the cyber athlete is no longer science fiction*'.	2006 (to end of year) Without the lyricism of the first articles, renewed support of nanotechnologies; accepting that they are a necessary socio-economic feature in the landscape of Grenoble. Simultaneously invokes the need to annualise nanotechnologies which in reflecting public concern could help the paper regain the role of a leading social actor.

* National quality referent newspaper; ** Local newspaper

3. TO CONCLUDE: A REAL CONTRIBUTION OF ICS

The discipline of ICS suggests measuring the impact, rather than the relevance of the device of public debates. We need to go beyond the frames and institutional controls of the public debates, beyond the

contents and opinions voiced freely in the debates, and the analysis and assigned follows-ups. The discipline allows us to see how such a frame can provoke the tensions between the societal actors outside the debates in an *autonomous public sphere*.

The interest in using the *autonomous public sphere* concept is that the idea leads to the consideration that an institutional device, like public debates, can question the balance of power and the hegemonies already established between societal actors. So, the emergence of new actors in the production or in the mediation of information urges the institutional media to take a position in which all information is exchanged, in order to reduce the competitive threat. The consideration of this joint effort, revealed by ICS, constitutes a promising way forward from the specificity of every context rather than the exclusive search for variants and factors of determination which attract exaggerated attention in the processes of communication that are not tied to society.

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NOTES

[1]   The author is in charge of the international development of GRESEC, consequently 'we' and 'our' in this article refers GRESEC as well as C2SO

[2]   La Metro is the urban conglomeration of 26 municpalities that make up the Grenoble community.

[3]   Market projections of nanotechnologies for 2015 are debatable, see http://www.nanowerk.com/spotlight/spotid=1792.php for details.

[4]   An English translation of Article 11: *The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may, accordingly, speak, write, and print with freedom, but shall be responsible for such abuses of this freedom as shall be defined by law.* http://www.constitution.org/fr/fr_drm.htm.

[5]   Vivagora is a Paris-based NGO tasked with organising public debates on science-society issues

[6]   Minatec, the micro- and nanotechnologies innovation cluster, was founded by the Grenoble Institute of Technology and CEA Grenoble on January 18, 2002, with support from State and local government authorities. It works to bring together major organisations in the Grenoble area working on micro- and nanotechnology development. From June 2006 onwards, the five buildings owned by the cluster will host 1,000 students, 120 research and teaching fellows, 1,200 public researchers and one thousand other employees in a 45,000 m² space (http://www.grenoble-inp.fr/1121068315437/1/fiche___article/).

Political implications of the UNESCO convention on cultural diversity

Manuel Parés i Maicas

1. INTRODUCTION

First, I must express my satisfaction that UNESCO's member states approved The Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions, of 20 October 2005. The initiative is excellent and needed. So, my first reaction must be welcoming.

However, I have, after considerable analysis about the meaning and content of the concept of cultural diversity, arrived at the conclusion that UNESCO has considered this controversial subject in a rather limited way. The use of the phrase 'cultural expressions' testifies to this fact, when cultural diversity has inevitably conflictive and political implications.

So, I shall try to disclose the origins of this concept, the different interpretations and the institutions that need to be considered. First, however, a short comment of the most striking articles of the Convention that have a political outcome is paramount.

2. ORIGINS

It is indispensable to trace the development of the conception on cultural diversity over the years. The contribution of Armand Mattelart (2006: 133, and 141ff) in this regard is especially pertinent. Mattelart asserts that this process began as a result of the first oil crisis in 1973 and the failure of the global strategy of modernization and development. Consecutively he presents the diverse steps of the concept's evolution. In this chapter I want to present the principal contributions of UNESCO to the historic development of cultural diversity as a concept and as a reality.

At the United Nations Conference of Stockholm, in 1972, delegates associated cultural diversity with biodiversity and the uneven model of Western development driven by the excessive consumption of natural resources and cultural goods (UN, 1972). The Conference of Rio de Janeiro in 1992 proposed linking cultural diversity with sustainable development (UN, 1992). The World Bank's Annual Report in 2000 (World Bank, 2000) included culture among its objectives for achieving sustainable development.

An assessment of the role UNESCO played in conceptualising cultural diversity needs to take the following stages into account:

1/ In 1995, UNESCO asserted the need of a new world ethics as background for the necessary solution of the problems of social exclusion (UNESCO, 1995)

2/ The Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm in 1998) considered political cultures as one of the bases of endogenous and durable development (UNESCO, 1998).

3/ In 1999 UNESCO focussed on cultural diversity, conflicts and pluralism as the threefold complexity originating from globalization in the definition of cultural pluralism. UNESCO underlined: a) the tensions between migrants and autochthonous citizenship; b) the strong feeling of identities claims; and c) the increasing risk of xenophobia[1].

4/ UNESCO announced preparing a binding convention concerning the defence of cultural diversity, despite the avowed abstention of, among others, the USA.

5/ UNESCO's 2004 Conference approved the preliminary draft of the International Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions. The UNESCO member states approved the Convention in 2005. Canada, and in particular the government of Quebec, and France played a remarkable role in supporting the approval debate[2].

The sensitizing campaigns set-up by a large number of civil society organizations in Montreal, Seoul, Paris and Madrid, should be remembered as well. These campaigns defended cultural diversity as a basic element of the international legal system, which guarantees the rights of the citizens to create, to promote and to have an access to cultural goods and services. Furthermore, these protest campaigns emphasised that protection should not harm other cultures.

Briefly outlined, these are the different stages of UNESCO's thinking on the concept of cultural diversity. I must unfortunately point out that

the application of the Convention was less straightforward, as shall be outlined below.

3. Principal elements to be taken into account in understanding the development of cultural diversity

1/ Concept of cultural diversity

Article 4 of the Convention is solely concerned with defining the various phrases inherent to the concept of cultural diversity, stating:

> *'Cultural diversity' refers to the manifold ways in which the culture of groups and societies find expression. These expressions are passed on within and among groups and societies.*
>   *Cultural diversity is made manifest not only through the varied ways in which the cultural heritage of humanity is expressed, augmented and transmitted through the variety of cultural expressions, but also through diverse modes of artistic creation, production, dissemination, distribution and enjoyment, whatever the means and technologies used.* (UNESCO, 2005, para.1)

Concerning the analysis and content of this definition, I shall endeavour to place the reality of cultural diversity in its sociological and political context. In this regard, it is relevant to emphasize that 'democracy' is absent from the wording of the Articles of the Convention[3]. Given very different political theories, it of course remains difficult to reach an agreement over the idea of democracy and its definitions. However, I think that a concept of democracy, sustained by and linked to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, is an unavoidable point of reference.

Undoubtedly, my experience of being Catalan in a historically mixed community, characterized by inward migrations, will be my concrete point of reference. Additionally, in the last decade, an additional wave of inward migration of more than a million people has settled in Catalonia. These new migrants come from both the developing and developed world. This sustained migration gives a secondary point of reference to discuss the social and political implications of our present day cultural diversity.

Article 4 of the Convention continues with a further seven definitions:

> Paragraph 2 *'Cultural content' refers to symbolic meaning, artistic dimension and cultural values that originate from or express cultural* identity.
>
> Paragraph 3 *'Cultural expressions' are those expressions that result from the* creativity of individuals, groups and societies, *and that have cultural content.*
>
> Paragraph 4 *'Cultural activities, goods and services' refers to those activities, goods and services, which at the time they are considered as a specific attribute, use or purpose,* embody or convey cultural *expressions irrespective of the commercial value they have. Cultural activities may be an end in themselves or they may contribute to the production of cultural goods and services.*
>
> Paragraph 5 *'Cultural industries' refers to industries producing and distributing cultural goods of services as defined in the paragraph 4 above.*
>
> Paragraph 6 *'Cultural policies and measures' refers to those policies and measures relating to culture, whether at the* local, national, regional or international level, *that are either focused on culture as such or are designed to have direct effect on cultural expressions of individuals, groups or societies, including on the creation, production, dissemination, distribution or access to cultural activities, goods or services.*
>
> Paragraph 7 *'Protection' means the adoption of measures aimed at the* preservation, safeguarding and enhancement *of the diversity of cultural expressions. 'Protect' means to adopt such measures.*
>
> Paragraph 8 '*Interculturality' refers to the* existence and equitable interaction *of diverse cultures and the possibility of* generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect. (UNESCO, 2005 – emphasis by the author)

The use of the term 'regional' in Paragraph 6, as an intermediate unit between national and international is of particular interest since the political science literature and administrative law consider the term 'state' to be an intermediate term.

When considering these definitions from the political science approach, only the definition of 'cultural diversity' requires serious consideration because of the absence of any reference to democracy. The other definitions may be considered to be operationalisations of cultural diversity, and centred essentially on the qualitative phrasing of expressions, industries, activities and so on.

The Objectives and Guiding Principles formulated in the Convention (Ibid., Articles 1 and 2), some of which I have paraphrased, are as follows:

OBJECTIVES (Article 1)

1/ *To* protect and to promote *diversity of cultural expressions.*

2/ *To* create the conditions *for cultures* to flourish *and* to freely interact *in a mutually beneficial manner.*

3/ *To encourage* dialogue *among cultures with a view to ensuring wider and more balanced cultural exchanges in the world, in favour of intercultural respect and a culture of peace.*

4/ *To foster* interculturality *in order to develop cultural interaction in the spirit of building bridges between peoples.*

5/ *To promote respect for the diversity of* cultural expressions, *and raise awareness of its* value *at the local, national and international levels.*

6/ *To reaffirm the importance of the link between* culture and development for all countries, *particularly for developing countries.*

7/ *To give recognition to the distinctive* nature of cultural activities, goods and services as vehicles of identities, values and meaning.

8/ *To reaffirm the sovereign rights of states to maintain, adopt and implement measures that they deem appropriate for the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions in their territory.*

9/ *To strengthen international cooperation and solidarity in a spirit of partnership with a view to enlarging the capacities of* developing countries.

Theoretically speaking these objectives are all fundamental and necessary in any democratic society but the main issue is whether the member states, in reality, respect and apply these principles and how and in which 'political' conditions.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES (in Article 2)

1/ *Respect for* human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of expression, information and communication

2/ *Sovereignty*

3/ *Equal* dignity *and respect for all cultures*

4/ *International solidarity and cooperation*

5/ *Complementarity of the economic and cultural aspects of development*

6/ Sustainable *development*

7/ Equitable *access*

8/ *Open approach and balance*

4. Critical considerations

As mentioned earlier, I welcome the publication of this Convention and hope that it will achieve it aims. The global nature of this need, shared by

many institutions, groups and people of different origin, mentality and culture, is evident in the 80 States[4] that have already formally adhered to it.

Every society has to address the concepts and reality of power, ideology, religion and conflicts, which are all directly related to cultural diversity. As a result, I feel empowered to formulate a certain number of analytical critiques concerning the effective application of the Convention. I deal schematically with the most salient factors.

As explained above, the definition of cultural diversity in Article 4.1 does not refer explicitly to the concept of democracy, which is, in my opinion, indispensable. I am aware that, unfortunately, this term is interpreted and applied in multiple ways, sometimes ignoring both its ideological and historical origins. If we do not consider democracy as a precondition, the validity of the term cultural diversity may, to a certain extent, be void of content.

How may we mention the different modalities of the terms of human rights and their ethical values? In my opinion, the best solution would have been, in spite of the inherent difficulties, to express a definition sufficiently broad to be acceptable to the member states signing the Convention. Otherwise, we are entitled to ask how these Objectives and Guiding Principles in Articles 2 and 3 need to be understood and applied.

We should recognise that cultural diversity entails a multiplicity of ethnicities, ideologies, cultures, mentalities, religions, languages, as well as economic and social conditions. Inevitably, we have to also take into account the complexity of the relationship between capitalism and cultural diversity. As such, an awareness that capitalism – despite its flaws – is the only prevailing ideological, social and economic system, needs to be acknowledged. Unfortunately, there is – at present – no other socio-economic system as a counterpart or alternative.

States throughout the world interpret and apply the principles of capitalism in different ways leading to a variety of experiences. The differences that are a result of this, not only lie in continental divides but also in religious, historical and social schisms. The question is, which do we judge more acceptable?

In the Western world, capitalism is reasonably compatible with the idea of the welfare state, linked to the concept of public service in some areas, such as education, health, worker's rights, pensions, social benefits, as well as (tele-)communication and public service broadcasting. However, again, I would like to stress that the gap between the ideological or dogmatic formulation and the perceived reality always exists. I note, with sadness, that the evolution of a common European market towards

a Europe Union is, increasingly becoming a right-wing, neo-liberal pro-
ject. The consequences of this are that the underlying principles are
sometimes neglected and even ignored. Recent policy changes relating to
immigrants or work conditions confirm these fears.

The subsequent question that emerges is whether cultural diversity
and all its requirements can be compatible with the context I have just
depicted.

From a sociological perspective, which has great relevance in this
regard, the notion of conflict is inherent to the evolution of any complex
society. Identities, singular or plural, are generally confronted with the
fact that every population is diverse and not homogenous. In this sense
autochthonous and immigrant populations of different origins and
categories live, more or less together in many of Europe's cities. Ho-
wever, they often co-exist or live in ghettos[5], according to their socio-
economic circumstances, and behaving according to their respective
identities.

The idea of inward migrations, external (country to country) and
internal (national region to region), is very broad. Immigrants are
usually associated with poverty and underdevelopment. They can
belong to multiples nationalities. People are immigrants for a variety of
reasons. Some can be categorised as push factors: i) economic and wel-
fare needs are not met; ii) discriminative persecution on the basis of
creed/beliefs or race; iii) political persecution. The 'pull' factors are those
that encourage financially independent people to move to another
country. Here the main reasons are: iv) the perception of a better climate,
life-style and cost of living or; v) the international aspect of the global
labour market and vi) the requirement by multinational corporations to
work abroad. People responding to the 'pull' factors should not be
considered as immigrants because their economic conditions do not
equate to those who have responded to the 'push' factors.

Immigrants may, due to attitude, culture, religion, ideology, and
interests, feel different from their host nation's citizens, who can
consequently originate from varying situations of conflict. In this
potentially conflictive aspect of immigration, the need of interculturality,
as the basic tool of maintaining good relationships between different
ethnic and cultural communities, is vital. From a cultural diversity
perspective, this is a fundamental element.

Immigrants now represent a significant percentage of the global
population that cannot be ignored[6]. Nevertheless, under many consti-
tutional systems immigrants do not have the same political citizenship
rights as the citizens of their host nation, even as tax-payers. An excep-

tion, for instance, are often local elections in Europe in which 'legal' immigrants may participate as both electorate and elected. The real issue of contention lies with those immigrants who, for reasons of either legality or discriminatory policies, do not enjoy this right. In some instances they comprise sizeable populations; the Turkish 'guest workers' in Germany in the 1960s and 1970s were a prime 20th century European example; the current status of Filipino contract workers in the oil rich Gulf States are a contemporary 21st century example.

An aspect worthy of emphasis, from legal and political points of view, is that the political systems of states with immigration issues are as likely to be democracies as dictatorships, or unified as well as federal states. Furthermore within states, there are frequently minority communities with significant historical and cultural backgrounds that are different to the ethnic majority. These so-called 'nations' of peoples with their own identity claim to be 'nations-without-a-state', a principle which frequently infers the political objective of becoming an independent state. These tense situations in which the ideas of citizenship and sovereignty confront one another, frequently cause cultural, linguistic or political conflicts of national scope for example the French speaking population in Quebec; the Tamils in Sri Lanka; the Albanians in Serbia's Kosovo province, the Sami in Finland, Sweden and Norway and the Basques and the Catalans in Spain.

All political systems have institutions, which assume within their respective area of competency the development of public policies and governance. These are the Executive, the Legislative and the Judiciary. In the democratic system we also have to consider the political parties, especially marginal parties, and their increasing role in connection with the proportional representation (PR) version of democratic elections, which invariably favour coalition governments and controversial marginal policies. In this respect the role of pressure and interest groups with either national or global perspectives can be taken out of all proportion to either their size or representative status. There are furthermore the major national and international agencies whose activities can determine government policy; social movements (e.g. Right to Life in the USA), non-governmental organizations (WWF and Greenpeace, both global), privately funded foundations (the UK's Cadbury, and the USA's Rockerfeller) and think tanks (Freedom House and the Carter Centre, both global). They are factors, which in the context of cultural diversity, must be considered.

Linked to the role of pressure groups is nationalism, which exists in many interpretations (for instance ideological, political, race, religion,

economic, etc.) and two basic formats: the overtly open and the insidiously covert (the latter being infinitely more dangerous to society).

The common aspect for all the situations depicted in the previous two sections is their relationship with cultural identity. There is the possibility that in the case of the 'nation without a state', a new independent state may become a reality. In the case of nationalism, the issue is more acute. Contrary to what some authors claim, the role of nationalism is today extremely important. In some cases, nationalism is embedded in all private, public and societal relationships, which can put the normal and fruitful development of peaceful cultural diversity at risk. Nationalists inherently view and condemn the cultural diversity of the 'other' as a danger.

The roles of education, socialization, and consequently of identity, need to be considered especially in political terms because political socialisation and political culture are the basic factors underpinning the behaviour of citizens. Education means gaining respect for cultural diversity, which is a phenomenon in any society irrespective of its nature and development. Unfortunately, the political culture of citizens and their personal associations with their ideology, identity and degree of nationalism, are factors that greatly influence, often in a negative way, their views on cultural diversity.

The role of mediated communication is closely linked to education and socialisation. Mass media, today, are principally powerful groups of media organisations, which control a large segment of the information received by citizens. The Convention does not acknowledge the mass media role in defending and promoting cultural diversity. Unfortunately, we have to accept that the concepts of public service media and of the social responsibility of journalists are in serious crisis, which consequently means that democracy is at risk. Media today have an overwhelming influence in all segments of social life, with limited cultural content but with a predominance of entertainment values. Leisure is becoming the principal subject. Where in this content are cultural diversity and cultural expressions?

Free market economics and information communication technologies (ICTs) dominate public communication policies. As a result, the environment of the cultural industries is the same, controlled by the communication multinationals, with their constantly increasing power and influence. The survival of cultural cosmopolitanism, fundamental to cultural diversity, is consequently also at risk.

Finally, we need to approach cultural diversity from the *ethical* perspective (see for example Fleischacker, 1999). I believe that this is an

essential parameter, which for an excellent reason the Convention did not consider. The intrinsic difficulty of using culture specific ethics to view another culture's ethics is a daunting task; the global diversity of cultures beyond those based on nationality, beliefs, politics and economics is astonishing. Nevertheless, the alternative is the acceptance of a poorer diversity of cultures.

5. POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE CONVENTION TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

I will focus on those themes and Articles that should primarily be taken into account in this context.

Article 6 sets out the '*Rights of parties at the national level*' in adopting '*measures aimed at protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions within its territory.*' I would like to start this section with a specific reference to Paragraph 2.h) '*measures aimed at enhancing diversity of the media, including through public service broadcasting*'. It would have been relevant to have considered a more detailed reference to the complex and evolving media system – public and private, emphasising the role of multimedia groups, and the increasing political impact of ICTs.

Article 8, titled '*Measures to protect cultural expressions*' explains that '*a Party may determine the existence of special situations where cultural expressions in its territory are at risk of extinction, under serious threat or otherwise in need of urgent safeguarding.*' Unfortunately, as I have indicated on different occasions, such situations frequently exist and with unyielding effects and consequences.

Article 11, emphasises the '*fundamental role of civil society in protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions. Parties shall encourage the active participation of civil society in their efforts to achieve the objectives of the Convention*'. Unfortunately recent analytical studies have not focussed on the relationships between civil society and cultural diversity, with the exception of Koopmans et al. (2005) who focused on immigration[7]. In the past, several humanities disciplines referred to the role of the civil society without either defining the phrase or expressing its scope. I assume that the issue is very complex because of the difficulties in defining a theme relevant within multiple approaches (see e.g. Howard, 2003, who devotes an entire chapter to defining 'civil society' within the context of democracy). Although Article 11 quotes uniquely 'cultural expressions', I believe that the issue is much larger and more compli-

cated. Evidently, there are political implications of a different nature, not only the cultural ones.

Article 27, on 'Accession' expresses in Paragraph 2 that '*The Convention shall also be open to accession by territories which enjoy full internal – self-Government recognized as such by the United Nations, but which have not obtained full independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and which have competence over the matters governed by the Convention, including the competence to enter into treaties in respect of such matters*'. This disposition is interesting for 'nations-without-a-state' such as Quebec, Scotland, Catalonia or the Basque Country, that are conceived as historical and cultural communities with specific rights, but whose acceptance as 'independent states' depends on the attitude of the State to which they belong. For instance, the situation of Quebec (one of the promoters of the Convention, together with Canada) in relation to Canada is not entirely similar to that of Catalonia with Spain. The main difference, in my opinion, is that Canada is a federal state, whereas Spain, according its constitution, is an autonomous state. In any case the degree of competencies of each community is different, and broader in the case of Quebec. This issue is important in the context of the Convention, but it overshadows the role cultural diversity plays in the stateless nations, which as in Catalonia may be very acute.

6. CONCLUSION

I have attempted to analyse the wording of the Convention from a profoundly sympathetic viewpoint based on global needs while simultaneously emphasising its drawbacks. My approach has been particularly political and sociological. One positive outcome is that a substantial bibliography (see below) devoted to this issue already exists. I mention only those books that I know to deal with this subject. I do invite scholars to pursue this necessary research.

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Notes

[1]   See for example UNESCO's web-page titled 'Reflections on Cultural Diversity'. Date Accessed 24.07.2008, http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=35258&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[2]   See for example: Culture Montreal Newsletter, June 15 2005. Date Accessed 24.07.2008, http://www.culturemontreal.ca/lettreinfo/050615_newsletter.htm

[3]   Preceding the Articles of the Convention there are 19 'notices'. The 4th notice states: '*Recalling* that cultural diversity, flourishing within a framework of democracy, tolerance, social justice and mutual respect between peoples and cultures, is indispensable for peace and security at the local, national and international levels.'

[4]   This is the figure at the time of writing – June 2008.

[5]   I use this word in the modern definition '*portion of a city in which members of a minority group live especially because of social, legal, or economic pressure*' cf. Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary.

[6]   See http://www.nationmaster.com for details.

[7]   They were quite common in the 1990s, see for example: Hall, 1996; Schlesinger, 1993; Turner, 1997.

Section six:
Doing research

The Poster Workshop

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The multiple social meanings of digital games.[1] What the first-person shooter case study reveals us about the prerequisites for research

Jeffrey Wimmer

1. INTRODUCTION

In the face of an increasing convergence of communication and media, digital games by far extend media and genre boundaries. It has to be stressed that digital games can be generally understood as a complex communication phenomenon. Hence, although digital games can be researched as a case sui generis, they also need to be understood as part of a massive process of change. This process leads to changing media and communication forms (or better known as the processes of mediatization and individualization of society).

The specific aim of this chapter is therefore to critically discuss the potential of several methods and previous research projects to analyse the social meanings of digital games – a good case study for this task is the heated public dispute about the effects of violence in digital games.

2. CASE STUDY 'KILLER-GAMES' – DIGITAL GAMES AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM?

Certain key events have repeatedly brought the question about the effects of digital games containing violence into focus of mass media coverage – and therewith also onto the political agenda. Such events were for example the violent acts at the Columbine High School in Littleton (USA) in April 1999 or at a secondary school in Emsdetten

(Germany) last November, when an 18-year-old former pupil severely injured five people. This immensely heightened public attention can be traced back to the alleged fact that all these juvenile offenders were supposed to be enthusiastic players of first-person shooters like *Doom*, *Quake* or *Counterstrike*. The usage of such games is supposed to have triggered the violent acts. Consequently, some politicians call for a ban of the so-called killer games. Psychologists warn against the 'social neglect through digital games' especially of male, poorly educated youths, which often leads into a 'playing habit comparable to an addiction', according to warnings. In court, brain researchers advocate diminished responsibility of offenders in case of having played excessively brutal video games before committing a criminal offence. Hence, digital games containing violence have implicitly been attributed immensely higher negative effects than other violent media contents.

From the perspective of media and communication studies, the question of the *effect* of digital games containing violence does not indicate a simple causal relationship but rather a *complex* – and therefore rather *ambivalent – process of interaction*. This *process of interaction* develops between the contents of the games being different in each case and within the everyday life of the players. Taking into account the rapid technical progress and the complexity of the interaction process between game and player, easy answers cannot be anticipated. Thus, more complex explanations and research designs than usually applied are necessary. Moreover, in the public debate and sometimes also in research, games containing violence and their negative effects on problematic social groups are over-, while other game genres and positive effects are underemphasized. However, digital games and their usage are far too diverse for such a simplification. Accordingly, other developments show the enormous social potential of digital games for the forming of communities: for example, the multitude of children's and educational games that encourage network thinking (which has been shown by media pedagogic/educational studies), the online-game-world *Second Life* or the game-console *Wii*.

3. THE COMPLEXITY OF EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE IN DIGITAL GAMES

As shown above, the impact of digital games cannot be reduced to singular aspects of their effects or usage and thus be mono-causally

explained by these. They rather touch on different analytical dimensions, of which the three most important are:

1/ *Game content*: In order to ameliorate the understanding of the impact, it has to be very clearly defined what actually can be considered representations of violence in digital games. Some authors argue that 'violence' in digital games is presented extremely simplified or as a grotesquely overdrawn comic. In these cases the recipients do not perceive it as damage. An example would be the game *Mohrhuhn* (http://www.mohrhuhn.de), which has been extremely popular in Germany some years ago but can rightly be classified as a first-person shooter. Such representations of violence have to be distinguished from photorealistic games that re-enact war scenes or other acts of violence. These should be called adult games or digital war games (e.g. *Call of Duty*, *Medal of Honor*). Especially for the latter game genre, an efficient social distribution control does not exist. On the contrary, a lot of the bestselling digital games cannot manage without the explicit display of violence and its diverse manifestation (like shooting, agony, victims etc.) anymore. On top of that, the aesthetics of digital games – often combined with a high potential of aggression – has long since found its way into the mainstream media culture (as for example in Hollywood movies or game shows). The fact that the developers target broader social groups also reveals that digital games are socially and media-culturally embedded. The postulated negative effect of digital games containing violence is therefore not only a media pedagogic or legal question but also a cultural and moral problem; not only because digital games can in return be a reflection of social norms and values.

The term display of violence as well as the term digital game suggest, superficially viewed, a monolithic medium. However, a multitude of genres and game forms are concealed behind these terms. Games are not only developed for PCs as terminals but also for arcades, handhelds, consoles etc. For most teenagers and children, digital games have meanwhile become an integral part of their lives. Linked with that is the fact that they do not only predominantly play digital games by themselves – negatively quasi-connoted as egomaniacs – but also increasingly as social games, e.g. as online-games, mobile games or LAN-parties – quasi as digital versions of analogue parlour games.

2/ *Complex communication and interaction process*: Describing the effect of digital games as a kind of transfer between the virtual world of digital games and the real world of the players seems plausible (Fritz, 1997). Whether the sensations gained by playing become important factors for the behaviour depends, among other things, on the competence of the players and on the potential for identification with the digital game characters. Therefore, the holism of this interaction process can only be represented in a complex theory. However, the majority of the previous studies only covers one field in a satisfying manner: the field that contains short-time effects of the display of violence. The ideal type for this is the media-psychological diagnosis that violence can for a short time and under certain conditions lead to increased inner excitement and aggressive behaviour (cf. Sherry, 2001). Finally, the current state of research can be summarized with the conclusion that mono-causality does not exist (e.g. Vorderer and Bryant, 2006).

3/ *Context factors*: This complexity of the media effects leads to the probably most important question in this context: the question about the factors that influence the interaction process between the specific contents of the games and its players with their highly different characteristics and needs. Playing itself has always been part of social life and fulfils certain (ambivalent) functions. The context of playing has become more important as digital devices and digital games contain different qualities than traditional media. Especially the feature of interactivity qualifies the digital (and digital games) as a new form of communication, which has a strong influence on everyday life and on identification processes (Krotz, 2008). Hence, a lot of studies are able to point out the normality and creativity of digital gaming (see for example the case studies in Quandt et al., 2007). The opinion leaders of our society have yet to accept these findings as they often lack the access to digital games.

It can be assumed that the majority of children and teenagers actively turn to those games that satisfy their current needs. Therefore, digital games can be highly meaningful and can bring about relationships. The inconsistency of the results concerning the effects of violence is not really astonishing. It only shows that the individual differences of the recipients concerning their needs and motives for digital gaming play a decisive role in the emergence of violence. However, not only the motives for turning to gaming play a role within the actual extent of

violence (and its effect), but the appropriation of the games' contents does so, too. This also includes the modality of how the players integrate those first-person shooters, which are sometimes only designed around 'callous acting' (Fritz, 1997), into their everyday life and up to what extent they perceive them as brutal. These roughly outlined findings lead to the conclusion that the analysis of the effects of so-called violence games can only make sense if the whole social environment of the players is taken into account. This also comprises the integration of digital games into their everyday lives and is not limited to the singular gaming situation and their specific playing habits.

4. DIGITAL GAMES AS COMMUNICATIVE SPHERES – A FRAMEWORK FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

What can we learn from this specific case study for further research? In my opinion digital games are the focal point of social and media related change. Digital games are entertainment applications of digital media that compromise specific qualities – above all their outstanding characteristics of interactivity and simulation. If we understand digital games as a specific process of communication, we do not only have to pay attention to the game related dimensions but also increasingly to the real contexts (e.g. as a result of advanced possibilities concerning online gaming). Gaming encompasses an object (medium) as well as a form of computer-mediated communication that includes different levels of public and private communication (extending from interpersonal to mass media communication). Game and gaming together can be understood as *communicative spheres* for interaction and communication. These activities are connected to various teaching and learning experiences as well as to processes of development and socialization (referring to key processes of communication like meaning, influence, interpretation, persuasion, relationship, institutionalization, identity and so on). Thus it is more productive to ask *how* instead of *if* social interaction and forms of living together are being changed in the long term by digital games and gaming (see groundbreaking Silverstone, 1994).

Heuristically there are different levels of complexity concerning digital gaming. These could be arranged on a continuum between game and society, from the micro- to the macro-level without implying a certain hierarchy or special determinism (see figure 1). Empirical research should consider the different dimensions as well as their different and multiple relations.

Figure 1: Selected levels of analysis

media product/content (= game attributes)
- genres, rules, gaming aims, narrative context etc.
- game aesthetics
- modalities and technology (e.g. interface, time, augmented reality)
- etc.

communicator/user (= gamer)
- attitudes, motives, knowledge, emotions etc.
- immersion, flow etc.
- appropriation/domestication
- player types
- etc.

Digital games/gaming as communicative spheres

- game industry (production, sales etc.)
- public opinion/discourse
- ethic principles, communication policies
- lifestyle
- consuming behaviour
- etc.

social & economic embedding (= game system)

- virtual (game) communities (clans etc.)
- events (LAN parties etc.)
- fandom
- youth cultures
- special media
- creative play (modders etc.)
- etc.

communication context (= game culture)

Of course the boundaries between the levels of complexity are not fixed (as each form of public communication does not have fixed borders). Thus, when analyzing the social and cultural implications of digital gaming, the various dimensions of this specific communication process (production, representation and appropriation) have simultaneously to be considered (e.g. Mäyrä, 2008; Scherer, 2007). In this context, determining how far digital games are integrated into everyday life and what social network structures and participative actions they create is crucial. These issues are gaining importance rapidly, because of the above mentioned new internet applications and online games and their potential for connectivity, interactivity and collaboration as well as their rights of use (principles of open source and open publishing) at least for some games (e.g. *Counterstrike*).

The scope of this chapter only allows naming selected relations between the different dimensions of digital games. In this area research has only just begun and is very promising – as for example:

- digital fan networks (Taylor, 2006),
- the phenomenon of 'supergaming' (McGonigal, 2005),
- growing social context of (online) gaming (Jansz and Martens, 2005),
- mobile (Quandt and Wimmer, 2006) and pervasive gaming (Kampmann, 2006),
- merger of online games and communities (Ducheneaut et al., 2007), or
- different forms of creative play as, for example, the modders (Simon, 2007) etc.

Generally speaking, digital games belong to those media with and through which we are living in our society. Specifically, this also means that digital games have become serious socialization factors for the personality development. This social and medial-cultural integration of digital games has to be taken into account not only in the public debate but also in the media and communication studies when dealing with the question about the effects of digital games. Taking into consideration the analytical points I have described, digital games amount to far more than just the next iteration in a long sequence of media and communication forms. Additionally, digital games cannot simply be reduced to childish or popular play. Of course the critique of media effects and culture industries of gaming must continue. From the perspective of communication and media studies the purpose of game studies, however, lies in identifying – *theoretically and empirically* – the meaning of emergent social aspects while at the same time paying attention '*to the cultural and material conditions that constitute these ambivalent, dynamic, and yet promising forms of digital life*' (Simon, 2006: 67).

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NOTES

[1]   The term 'digital games' refers to all kinds of electronic or computer games as for example arcade games, console games, PC games and mobile games.

Paths to discourse analysis of a sensitive research topic: The case of the Danish cartoon crisis

Roy Langer

1. INTRODUCTION

Originating from the ivory towers of linguistic research, discourse analysis has gone from a marginal perspective to a wide range of epistemological thoughts and methodologies in the humanities and social sciences. Discourse analysis has been applied by many social scientists over the past decades, including for instance previous contributors to the European Media and Communication Summer School (e.g. Philips, 2007).

Discourse analysis can be defined as a broad '*set of methods and theories for investigating language in use and language in social contexts'* (Wetherell et al., 2001: i). As Philips (2007: 285) notes, discourse analysis represents a heterogeneous field with a number of approaches and schools of thought. Despite of sharing some ontological and epistemological assumptions based in social constructivism, these different approaches diverge from one another in many respects; it can be difficult to navigate in-between them.

One of the most common challenges in empirical research is not the methodology itself, but to identify what methodology that appears to be best equipped to find specific answers to particular research questions, addressed to a specific type and amount of empirical information. This challenge motivates a *first type of questions* addressed by this chapter: Which approach to qualitative/discourse/textual analysis shall one choose? What are the strengths and shortcomings of different approaches? What results can be expected when applying a particular type of analysis? What are the pitfalls and dangers?

Another common challenge in (particularly qualitative) research regards the research topic itself, the data foundation for empirical analysis, and research ethics when doing research on a sensitive research topic. While previous contributors to the European Media and Communication Summer School (e.g. Jankowski and van Selm, 2007; see also Langer and Beckmann, 2005) addressed research ethics in the virtual world, this issue is certainly also relevant for other types of research. A sensitive topic can be defined as a topic: *'that potentially poses for those involved a substantial threat, the emergence of which renders problematic for the researcher and/or the researched the collection, holding, and/or dissemination of research data'* (Lee and Renzetti, 1993: 5).

This challenge motivates a *second type of questions* to be addressed in this chapter: What type of research topics shall one choose? Which type of empirical information shall one produce and how shall one select among myriads of bites of empirical information? How much empirical information is needed in order to do a proper analysis and to answer research questions? How shall one handle ethical challenges when doing discourse analysis on sensitive research topics?

Raising these two sets of questions, I seek to discuss some of the challenges for empirical research. Hence, the aim of this chapter is twofold, namely to discuss 1) how to find the right (discourse) method to analyze a particular set of empirical information, and to discuss 2) the data foundation and research topic in qualitative empirical research. In order to illustrate these challenges, I have chosen a discursive event that should be well-known for all participants: the Danish cartoon crisis. I have been thinking about and working on an analysis of the media coverage of this event for a couple of years, and I am still struggling with a number of challenges with regard to research design and research ethics. I will not present a full discourse analysis, not even indicative results, as this is still very much work in progress. But the case appears to be well-suited in order to illustrate and discuss the abovementioned challenges.

My own background for the discussion is many years of intensive discourse research when examining the images of Germany and Germans in Danish media (Langer, 2000; Langer, 2003) and other sensitive research topics (Langer and Beckmann, 2005). But instead of providing definite and 'right answers', like most research papers, this chapter is written specifically in order to raise the 'right questions'. Sometimes, raising questions rather than providing answers better enables us to reflect upon our own practice and to make us think. By doing so, I hope

to be able to help readers in navigating in the mine field of choosing an analytical design for their research.

2. A CASE: THE DANISH CARTOON-CRISIS

On September 17th 2005 the Danish newspaper *Politiken* published an article under the headline *'Profound anxiety about criticism of Islam'*, which reported difficulties encountered by the Danish writer Kåre Bluitgen in finding an illustrator for a children book he had written about *'The Qur'an and the life of the prophet Muhammad'*. This report started much debate in Denmark about self-censorship conducted by potential illustrators and others in order not to offend Muslims. On September 30th 2005, the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published twelve editorial cartoons commissioned by the newspaper, most of which depicted the Islamic prophet Muhammad. The newspaper announced that the publication was an attempt to contribute to the debate regarding criticism of Islam and self-censorship.

In response to the publication of the cartoons, about 5.000 people gathered at a peaceful demonstration outside the Copenhagen office of *Jyllands-Posten* on October 15th 2005, and prominent Danish Imams sent a petition to ambassadors from Muslim-majority countries. Eleven of these ambassadors asked for a meeting with Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen on October 12th 2005 in order discuss what they perceived as an *'on-going smearing campaign in Danish public circles and media against Islam and Muslims'*. In his answer on October 19th, Rasmussen refused to meet and talk with the ambassadors, on the grounds that he cannot infringe on the freedom of the press. In the meantime, on October 17th, Egyptian newspaper *El Fagr* had published six of the cartoons during Ramadan with an article criticising them.

By the end of October, a number of Muslim organizations filed a complaint with the Danish police claiming that the publication of the cartoons was a criminal offence according to Danish law. The investigation following the complaint was discontinued in early January 2006. In November 2005 not much happened, but in early December 2005 at the summit of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), with many heads of state and a delegation of Danish Imams in attendance, the Egyptian foreign minister handed around a dossier from the Danish Imams, in which they claim to document racist and religious intolerance in Danish media and politics. As a result, an official communiqué was issued by the OIC demanding that the United Nations impose inter-

national sanctions on Denmark. At the same time, in Pakistan began labour strikes in response to the cartoons.

By the end of December 2005 protests had been directed to the Danish government from 22 former Danish ambassadors, from The Council of Europe and from the Arab League. In December 2005 and January 2006 several newspapers in Germany, Slovenia, Sweden and Norway printed some or all of the 12 cartoons. At the same time, several countries, such as Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria and Libya, condemned the cartoons. By the end of January 2006 Middle Eastern consumers started boycotting Danish products, and the peak period of the crisis began, resulting in what Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen on February 15th 2006 called *'Denmark's worst international crisis since World War II'*. This crisis resulted in several death threats against those responsible for the cartoons, at least 147 people killed in riots, protests and terror bombings related to the cartoons, burning embassies of Denmark and Norway in Syria and of Denmark in Lebanon and Iran, a consumer boycott of Danish products in many Middle East countries at a cost to Danish businesses of around 134 million Euro.

But Denmark also experienced support: other media reprinted the cartoons in support and civic groups, primarily in the Western world, endorsed mediated *'Buy Danish'* campaigns. In protesting against death threats against one of the cartoonists many Danish newspapers decided in February 2008 to reprint the cartoons. The Danish cartoon crisis has not finished yet, as the latest culmination was the bombing of the Danish embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, on June 2nd 2008. Eight people died because of that bomb.

The Danish cartoon crisis was about a media publication and its development and consequences would be unthinkable without media coverage and mediated communication. Media communication was and is probably the most important aspect of the crisis: It all started with the Danish media debate about Islam-critical self-censorship and the publication of the cartoons in *Jyllands-Posten*. It continued with the reprint of the cartoons in other media and media reports about the protests against the cartoons. It continued further with mediated statements from many governments, organizations, and individuals issuing their stance on the cartoons or the protests. Both the boycott of Danish products in the Middle East and the *'Buy Danish'*-campaigns in Western countries relied heavily on mediated communication – both mass media reports and the use of digital media, such as sms, the internet and cell phones. Hence, the Danish cartoon crisis is of particular interest for media and communication research, both with regard to the discussion about press

freedom and freedom of speech, and with regard to the role of the media in the development of the crisis.

Despite of the fact that the Danish cartoon crisis is such a relevant topic for media and communication research, conducting research appears to be a huge challenge. In particular, when addressing the core question of (potential limits and responsibilities) of press freedom and freedom of speech, researchers quickly might be drawn into juridical, political, ideological and religious struggles. But also when analysing the media coverage and potential effects of the crisis researchers are challenged with regard to research methodology, empirical foundation, and research ethics. Based on this case, the following sections will address general dilemmas and challenges in qualitative research and discuss the analytical potential of different discourse approaches.

3. GENERAL DILEMMAS AND CHALLENGES

There are several general and practical dilemmas when planning a media discourse analysis of the Danish cartoon crisis. The *first dilemma* is the cartoons as such. As the conflict departs in whether or not the Islamic prophet Muhammad should be depicted in editorial cartoons and in *Jyllands-Postens*'s decision to publish cartoons depicting the prophet, a discourse researcher faces the dilemma whether to include the cartoons into the empirical foundation of the analysis or not. From a research perspective, an analysis of the cartoons would be most essential and necessary; and from a discourse analysis perspective it would be most relevant, for instance, to analyze the cartoons by applying the discourse approach developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996). But it would be difficult, if not impossible, to analyze these cartoons without seeing and showing them. But if doing so, the researcher herself has taken a stance in and becomes a part in the conflict, as seeing, showing and analyzing in itself might offend religious feelings of others'. Hence, *the first general challenge* can be summarized as follows: How shall researchers deal with empirical information that might be considered as sensitive or provocative by some people and when the research leads to disclosure, revelation and exposure of information that might hurt others' beliefs or feelings?

A *second dilemma* regards the researcher's relation to the research topic – is the researcher a Christian, a Muslim, an Atheist, or else? What is the nationality of the researcher? Are there any other aspects that determine that the researcher herself is a potential part in the conflict? What about

just being a 'Westerner' or being a researcher from the Middle East? I.e., is it at all possible to be personally detached from personal interest in and attitudes towards the event? If not, how valid are the research results, even if the researcher explicitly accounts for her biased stance? Hence, *the second general challenge* can be summarized as follows: How much can researchers have a stance towards or even be involved in their research topic without making their research results loose legitimacy and validity?

However, in-depth knowledge about the pre-history and context of the Danish cartoon crisis might be essential when interpreting it. This creates a *third dilemma* with regard to how much context knowledge is needed in order to understand a particular media discourse. Would we be able to fully understand the outrage in the Middle East about the publication of the cartoons without having historical knowledge about the 9/11-attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York, or without knowing about the Iraq-invasion? Please, note my wording: Can a researcher avoid expressing her own stance – no matter whether the researcher chooses the terms like *'Iraq-invasion'*, *'Iraq-war'* or *'War on Terror'*? Can a researcher fully understand the controversy about the cartoons, *Jyllands-Posten*'s motivation to publish the cartoons, or the reaction of the Danish Imams, without having an in-depth-knowledge of Danish language, history, culture, immigration laws and debate? But how should a researcher gain such in-depth-knowledge without almost being (or becoming) a part of this national community? Hence, *the third general challenge* can be summarized as follows: How far away from and how little involved in their research topic can researchers be without losing the ability to gain in-depth-insights through qualitative research?

These three general challenges – with the Danish cartoon crisis here just serving as an illustrative case – need to be addressed and reflected upon by *any* researcher, no matter which research topic is addressed. Obviously, answers to these challenges have consequences for the type and amount of empirical information selected, gathered and analyzed. But it is a particular dilemma for qualitative researchers, as interpretations always will be guided by the knowledge and attitudes of the researcher. Too little knowledge and involvement and too much detachment can create lack of insight and weaken the quality of the research results. Too much knowledge and involvement/attachment can likewise weaken the quality of analysis and the validity of the research results.

I do not think that there are any universal answers to such dilemmas and challenges, as the answers – much in line with the thinking in

discourse analysis – must depend on the specific research topic and situation. However, qualitative researchers cannot escape from explicating their own knowledge foundation and attitudes. This is one of the most fundamental insights of hermeneutic philosophy, as described by Gadamer in his concept of pre-understanding, *vorverstehen* (Gadamer, 1960).

4. DOING MEDIA DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: SOME PATHS

Michel Foucault's works on discourse analysis – in particular his two major conceptual texts *L' archéologie du savoir* (1969) and *L' ordre du discourse* (1971) – provide the researcher with key thoughts and terms that are relevant for doing discourse analysis. As discourse analysis is concerned with the rules which make a certain statement possible to occur and others not at particular times, places and institutional locations (Foucault, 1969: 20), the very *raison d'être* for the Danish cartoon crisis can be discussed with reference to Foucault: First, the publication of the cartoons itself was motivated by the fact that Danish illustrators practiced self-censorship and were afraid of violent reactions from Muslims, when offending them. This indicates a discursive practice and a social climate that seems repressive with regard to the freedom of speech due to particular power relations in Danish society. Second, the protests against the cartoons seem to support the existence of such a climate and the (at least perceived) existence of religious taboos.

However, the researcher might even get a deeper insight with Foucault's help. Including intertextuality and interdiscursivity into the analysis might help to explain the particular order of discourse and discursive formation, which make certain statements impossible. According to Foucault, discourses are expressions of power relations and refer to all that can be thought, written or said about a particular topic or thing. They draw on historically prior texts and are generated by combinations of other discourses and texts (interdiscursivity and intertextuality). Here, the researcher would have to look at previous discursive struggles between the Danish ethnic majority and ethnic immigrants – including an analysis of restrictive Danish immigration laws and previous Danish debates about immigration policy. In an even broader perspective, the researcher might analyse co- and contextual aspects such as theories about *The Clash of Civilization* (Huntington, 1993; Huntington, 1996a; Huntington, 1996b), *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Eriksen, 1993), *Banal Nationalism* (Billig, 1995), and events like 9/11, attacks by Al-Queida, and

the (Danish participation) in the Western invasion of Iraq. However, and as Foucault did not provide the researcher with tools for a specific research methodology, it would be relevant to draw on other approaches to discourse analysis in order to systematically illuminate intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Also, it would be relevant to explore and understand which arguments the different parties use in their discursive struggles pro and con the publication of visual images of Muhammad.

Quantitative content analysis (Krippendorf, 1980) might help the researcher to produce representative research results about which arguments are expressed, how often, by whom, in which media, and thus enabling the researcher to identify the relative presence or absence of particular voices and arguments in discourse and in different media. More refined, van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach to discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1988a; van Dijk, 1988b; van Dijk, 1991; van Dijk, 1993) might help the researcher to understand the cognitive schemes and role perceptions behind the arguments identified in media discourse. Such an analysis could focus on an investigation of how Islam, the Muslim World and Danish immigrants are portrayed in Danish media, including which topics, actor roles, stylistic, thematic, narrative and argumentative structures that are routinely applied in such portrays.

Both quantitative content analysis and the socio-cognitive approach to discourse analysis can, by relying on systematic coding of larger quantities of texts, produce representative results. But, as stated in Langer (1998: 6), both approaches also fail to include and explain the co- and context of the texts analyzed and depend largely on the appropriateness of the units and categories defined for the coding process. Other approaches to critical discourse analysis have that in common that they seek to integrate the co- and contexts of texts in the analytical design. In what follows, I will briefly discuss three such approaches to critical discourse analysis with reference to the Danish case, and their main points of convergence and divergence.

According to Fairclough (1995: 132), critical discourse analysis aims at *'systematically [...] explor[ing] often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes'*. It seeks to show how changes in the use of language can be seen as a sign of general social and cultural changes in society, which again indicate changes in power relations. But contrary to quantitative content analysis and the socio-cognitive approach, the application of Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis seems badly equipped to the study of larger amounts of texts. Even though Fairclough takes a non-dogmatic stance with regard

to formalism in the application of his approach, a systematic analysis of vocabulary, grammar, cohesion and textual structures just on the textual level of discourse can in practice usually only be produced on a rather limited amount of texts. On the other hand, Fairclough's approach also includes an analysis of the discursive order, i.e. of intertextuality, interdiscursivity and the situational, institutional, social and cultural context. Hence, Fairclough's approach is aware of mechanisms of repression, such as racism. However – and as due for most empirical applications of Fairclough's approach – there is great risk (or chance) that the analyst will exactly find those imbalances of power and ideological constraints that are programmatic for Fairclough's Neo-Marxist version of critical discourse analysis.

The same is true for the discourse approach by Jäger (2004) and the Duisburg School. However – and although claiming that the division into quantity and quality is abolished in discourses – the design to discourse analysis developed by the Duisburg School enables the researcher to analyze larger amounts of texts. In fact, Jäger (2007) analyzed the coverage of the Danish cartoon crisis in German media and described islamophobic and racist discourse in media reports. Not surprisingly, he concludes that the cartoon controversy in German media draws on racist immigration discourses and contributes to the construction of Islam as an enemy that creates fear and terror.

While the approach of Jäger primarily analyzes media texts, the discourse-historical approach draws on all kind of talks, texts and images when reconstructing the historical origins of discourses. The discourse-historical approach shares with Fairclough's and Jäger's approach an interest in making ideologically distorted forms for use of power, of political control and manipulation as well as the use of discriminating – e.g. sexist or racist – strategies of suppression and exclusion in the use of language apparent. As such, a critical interpretation of the construction of Islam and Muslims in public discourses can also be expected when applying the discourse-historical approach in CDA.

5. PITFALLS IN DOING DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

One of the most common pitfalls in many discourse analyses – also for experienced scholars – is a lack of rigour, disciplined and systematic application of discourse analytical designs. For instance, in recent years I have been reading too many studies that claim to apply a Fairclough

approach to discourse analysis on a text corpus of even hundreds of texts, and where the boundaries between analysis and interpretation are blurred to insufficient. Even prominent discourse analysts have called for more detailed analysis, documentation of the analysis, and examples, when reviewing recent contributions from likewise prominent colleagues (such as Wodak (2008) in a review of Jäger's analysis of the cartoon controversy in German media).

Such critique is not necessarily an expression of methodological dogmatism or formalistic fundamentalism. It does not deny that there will always be potentially different interpretations of talks, texts and images and is not blind to practical documentation space problems, in particular when analyzing a large text corpus. But I am – along with others – sometimes concerned with the quality of discourse work, where apparently 'anything goes'. Without clear documentation and without detailed analysis the validity of research results based on discourse analysis might be questioned (cf. Widdowson, 1995; Widdowson, 1996; Fairclough, 1996; Toolan, 1997).

In a remarkable article headlined 'Discourse analysis means doing analysis: a critique of six analytic shortcomings' (Antaki *et al.*, 2003), members of the Discourse and Rhetoric Group at Loughborough University discuss some of the most common shortcomings when treating talks, texts and images in discourse analysis:

> *A number of ways of treating talk and textual data are identified which fall short of discourse analysis. They are: (1) under-analysis through summary; (2) under-analysis through taking sides; (3) under-analysis through over-quotation or through isolated quotation; (4) the circular identification of discourses and mental constructs; (5) false survey; and (6) analysis that consists in simply spotting features* (Antaki et al., 2003: 1).

As these six shortcomings are almost self-explanatory and I have not more space, I will conclude this paper with another quote from the above article, as this cannot be said any better: *'Those using discourse analysis must take analysis seriously for there are basic requirements for analysis, regardless of the particular type of analysis one undertakes'* (Antaki *et al.*, 2003: 3).

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Disseminating research

François Heinderyckx

1. INTRODUCTION

Every single academic research undertaking is as unique as a fingerprint. The scientist or the team conducting the research is driven by a schizophrenic urge to innovate (bring something new, different, unheard of) while at the same time taking every precaution to remain within the boundaries of an accepted theoretical framework and of well-tried methodology. The challenge consists in being innovative, but within existing frames that can, at best, be carefully bent or stretched. The researcher, and the young researcher in particular, is torn between the concern for reproducing canonical approaches and thereby gaining credibility and the urge to step sideways and question or challenge the existing ways so as to prove his might and expertise.

But just why do we do research? What is driving us? Introspection would probably lead most of us to emphasize curiosity, thirst for answers or a passion for intellectual challenges. But beyond motivational factors at the level of career choices, research is formatted and researchers are driven and guided essentially by very concrete, structural and operational constraints. Academic research takes a variety of forms that usually fall within a limited number of scenarios (contractual research, grant, doctoral research) and approaches (empirical, conceptual, reflexive). Whatever the format, the research process will often be preceded, punctuated and most certainly completed with efforts to communicate, explain, present the project, its progress and results. In many cases, these communication moments become milestones and objectives of their own. In other words, we might state that, in essence, we do research to communicate about it and, as a result, research activities are carried out in such a way that they can yield substantial dissemination material, which becomes an end in itself (e.g. the 'deliverables' contractually required at the end of so many research projects).

Dissemination only takes a limited number of rather formalised and rigid formats: reports, books, book chapters, articles, doctoral dissertations, conference papers, oral presentations, workshops and any combination thereof. Dissemination is crucial: it is what remains of the entire research process. It is often the sole materialization of the investigation, the memory of the research, its lasting mark on the academic field. One must explain and convince before, while and after conducting research. Therefore, *communicating research* should be taken very seriously.

Dissemination is not the place for unrestrained creativity as it is usually framed by a number of rather strict and stern constraints applying to *volume* (number of words, pages, minutes, surface), *form* (text, visual material, colour or black and white, sound), *tone* and *register of language* (as determined by the audience's skills and expectations), *language* (not necessarily that of the author, leading to perilous language transfer and language correction), not to mention habits, traditions, customs, templates or pre-defined formats.

Whatever the constraints, the author has to recognize them, accept them as a given (with little room to negotiate, bend or circumvent them) and make a number of choices accordingly. Those choices have to be well thought out for they will largely determine how the work is received, understood and considered. Of all the means of dissemination, oral presentations are so common that they are often taken for granted and ill-prepared, if not completely botched up. This chapter will discuss the essential features to be taken into consideration while preparing an oral presentation.

2. ORAL PRESENTATIONS

An oral presentation is usually combined with other, more elaborated dissemination material such as a report or a full article or a publication that it will just present, summarize, emphasize and show to advantage. Yet it should not be considered as mere packaging or a supporting act but, rather, as a stand-alone communication exercise which carries its own set of meanings for those who will not be exposed to the full material and possibly encourage others to follow up and seek the core dissemination kit.

Like any communication undertaking, an oral presentation must be prepared on the basis of clear *objectives* taking into account the information and the messages to be conveyed, the characteristics of the

audience, and the impression to be produced with that audience. In addition to these objectives, the preparation must, from the outset, take in all of the constraints that weigh on the presentation. These include the attention span of the audience, the familiarity of the audience with the subject, the equipment available at the venue, and most importantly, the *duration* or time allotted for the presentation. Regarding this time factor, one must recognize that the scheduled duration is set and known in advance, that it is not a punishment or a disowning, that it does not stretch and that it is non-negotiable (at least not on the spot). Because the duration is agreed upon in advance and because the presentation is prepared beforehand, any significant problem with time management during an oral presentation is likely to be perceived as sloppy if not simply unprofessional and will invariably make everybody very uncomfortable.

Why are so many oral presentations spoilt by poor time management? Many presenters overlook a number of pitfalls. It is first of all essential to calibrate the content adequately. One can only say so much in a given time and any attempt to say more (let alone to say everything), i.e. to say too much, will automatically result in confusion, superficiality and frustration on the side of the audience. A presenter does not look smarter or more skilled by talking faster or using denser language. At best he or she will look agitated and confused. When one prepares a presentation, one should decide on a limited number of aspects, ideas, and perspectives to be the object of the presentation, in such a way that it is convincing, intelligible and engaging.

Secondly, because time is strictly limited, it is essential to show a strong sense of '*economy of words*'. Although all presenters are frustrated by how little time they have, it is puzzling to see so many of them wasting so much of that precious time. To save time, you should limit apologies, compliments, acknowledgements and moving thanks to a strict minimum (no one is really interested). You should also avoid altogether any moaning or complaining about how difficult it is to say so much in so little time, or that talking in the last session before lunch break is so difficult. Also pointless and yet so common: the apologies for the poor language skills because (as is so often the case) you present in a language which is not your own. Either your language is indeed not very good and the audience will have guessed and, most importantly, you then have nothing to apologize for (after all, you are making an enormous effort and should be congratulated rather than forgiven); or your language is quite good in spite of that, and then your apologies will sound like false modesty. You should also avoid insisting on what you

will not cover in your presentation, but wish you could if only you had the time (you are only wasting it and creating further frustration in the audience).

Regarding the form of your presentation, it must be adapted to the circumstances and should always be guided by how it can best serve your message. In academic circles, one should in most cases opt for sobriety, simplicity, clarity and readability. This does not mean that a presentation should be dull and boring. In fact, a presentation is an opportunity to show style and personality, and you should feel encouraged to do just that, as long as it does not impede the message, as long as it does not create a distraction or interference.

Key to preparing a presentation is, of course, determining what to say, what words to use. Because of the time constraints, you must always very carefully prepare and rehearse the presentation. It is tempting, particularly for inexperienced speakers, to prepare a text to be read aloud. Experience shows that this does not produce the most engaging presentations. And yet it can be quite advisable, particularly if the presentation is in a foreign language and/or if the context or the circumstances are very formal and intimidating. But this requires one condition that is generally overlooked (thus producing dull presentations): Quite simply, the text must be written in *oral style*. One does not speak like one writes. Even the most formal, top-level academic discussions are not worded like academic writing. So reading out aloud all or parts of an article or book chapter is not appropriate for an oral presentation unless it undergoes some serious rewriting. The sentences are to be shorter, the level of language slightly lower, the style much more narrative. A captivating oral presentation is often one that tells a story, that takes the audience on a dazzling yet comfortable journey into a topic, an issue, a concept, a line of thinking.

If you choose not to read from a printed text, you must always have a structure, a summary, an outline, a mind map or any kind of organised set of words that will guide you through the sequence of core ideas that you have decided to present. This outline can be more or less elaborate, from keywords to short sentences. It can be printed on cards or on normal paper or take the form of the slides that you decide to project during your presentation (recent versions of slide show software let you display a presenter screen where only you can see notes in addition to the slides projected). If you want to avoid reading a text but fear to be too hesitant or at a loss without one, you can prepare a full text (oral style) and highlight the key words so that you can use the highlighted words as an outline, but can fold back to plain reading if necessary.

Whatever the medium you choose to guide you through the presentation, you will necessarily need to rehearse, and often to rehearse over and over again, if possible with a test audience (one person is enough). This is essential for a number of reasons: Fine-tuning it to make sure the duration fits the requirements, giving your talk adequate fluency, practicing the pronunciation of difficult words, changing the words that make you stumble, finding the right speed, tone and voice control, trying how to establish eye contact and dealing with your body language, gaining confidence to appear more relaxed and make you and your audience more comfortable. Rehearsing a 15-minute presentation only takes … 15 minutes, so there is really no excuse for not doing it. A speaker going overtime is usually one that did not rehearse, or one that did not stick to the plan and did not resist the urge to improvise or digress. Improvisation and digression should be avoided in rigid or formal contexts.

3. SLIDE SHOWS

Projecting slides with a data projector has gradually become the norm for just about any kind of oral presentation from briefings to courses to conferences. As we have all experienced over and over again, some of these slide shows make quite an impression, but often not the impression intended by the author (or so do we hope). Academic small talk is full of anecdotes concerning presentations where the slides were so dreadful that it is the only mark the presentation left among the audience.

Somehow, while preparing a presentation, the simplest and yet most crucial question seems to be increasingly overlooked: *Do you really need slides?* And if you do, what should you show? Answering these questions requires to fully appreciate the role of visual material in an oral presentation. Essentially, slides are a means of enhancing the oral presentation by providing visual aid in the form of the structure of the talk, figures (tables, diagrams or graphs), quotes and other visual material. Most importantly, one should remember what slide shows are *not*. Slides should never be a rival to the talk, nor should it be a mere transcription of the talk (the karaoke syndrome). Slides should not be a microfilm contest. They cannot be an addition or an appendix to the talk where the speaker tries to add some of the things that could not be squeezed into the talk for lack of time. The slides should not be a distraction from the talk and take the attention away from what the speaker says. In short, the slides and the talk should harmoniously

combine in one fitted presentation, not remain two parallel, competing streams of messages.

Slides can be used very punctually where needed: for a table, for a photo, for the outline of the talk, or even simply to display the title of the presentation and the contact details of the presenter. In the case of a fully-fledged slide show, a number of hints are to be considered. It is advisable to limit the number of slides. Having too many slides usually signals a slide show that competes with the talk or that replicates it literally. On average, it is good practice to display 3 to 4 slides per 10 minutes of presentation. Slides should be simple and designed to emphasize meaning. Avoid cryptic page layout. Avoid heaviness, over-load: Do not try to display too much on one slide and do not hesitate to split it in two or more slides. Each slide should display one idea or one group of ideas. A rough rule of thumb is that each slide should display 5 to 6 lines of text, never more than 10 lines. Remember that not everything you say or even everything you talk about must be displayed. Full sentences should be avoided (prefer short groups of words or expressions), except for quotes (it is comfortable for the audience to read along when the presenter reads a quote). If a figure is too complex to be displayed on a slide, then do not use it (instead of apologizing for the fact that it cannot be displayed properly!). Instead, you can consider printing handouts of that particular figure if it can be better displayed on paper (and if it does not disturb the presentation).

The form of the slides themselves requires great care. Clear and sharp slides will soothe the audience and make them more receptive to the presentation. All computer programmes used to prepare slide shows offer templates. It must be emphasized that a number of these templates are not necessarily suitable for your needs. You should probably con-sider preparing your own template from scratch or by modifying an existing template. Your slides should reflect your personality and the nature of your work, but should also remain within the limits of clarity and readability. Each slide, by today's technical standard, consists in a rectangle of 1024 x 768 dots ('pixels'). Although these dots can take an impressive range of colours, the possibilities are greatly restricted by the fact that the slides are projected on a screen and this distorts and impoverishes dramatically the image displayed as compared to what it is on the screen of your computer. To take the full measure of the limitations, consider the white screen on which the slides will be shown *before* the projector is turned on: Although you would call that screen 'white', mind that this shade will be that of the black portions of your slides. Indeed, projectors do not project 'blackness' and since conference

rooms are rarely dark rooms, all images displayed are dramatically lighter than intended. Not to mention colour distortions produced by the lighting of the room. You should therefore make sure that there is sufficient contrast between your text and the background and that your slides can survive severe colour distortion. Yet you should avoid the maximum contrast provided by black text on a white backdrop, which proves to be uncomfortable by being somewhat blinding and tiring to the eye. Some colour combinations are notoriously inappropriate for on-screen display as, for example, blue on red (or red on blue). It is also common practice to use an image or a logo as the slide background. This is often unfortunate because that background image will produce a 'noisy' clutter on the slide and disturb the perception of the text or figure in front. If you do want to use a background image to create an atmosphere or emphasize visual cues, you should make sure your text is displayed in plain or semi-transparent boxes.

The font size is also to be chosen carefully. Unless you are familiar with the venue or your presentation, you should anticipate that the image projected might be smaller than you would have expected. To be on the safe side, the text on the slides should not be smaller than 20 points. On the other hand, text should not be too big (40 points maximum) for it will feel as if your slides are shouting (unless this is what you want to convey). You should use standard fonts to make sure they will be available on the computer used for the presentation (else the font substitution will make a mess of your slides) and prefer 'sans-serif' fonts (e.g. Arial, not Times), as their shapes are simpler and thus have a better rendering on screens.

Avoid fancy special effects for slide transition or to make elements appear or disappear, unless these effects have a meaning and enhance your content. Visual effects will not impress your audience; it will be a source of distraction, of mockery, if not of contempt. In general, remember that there is room for complex visuals, for personified and creative ways to design your slides, but only as long as it serves your purpose and enhances your message and as long as it does not impede your presentation. Just like any narration, an oral presentation must come to an end and so does the supporting slide show. For some reason, a large number of presenters see fit to end their presentation with a 'thank you' slide, often aggravated by a silly picture or clip art. This is meant to signal the audience that the presentation is over and to end on a light note. It is, however, counterproductive. For one thing, coherence would require starting with a 'hello' slide. But more importantly, the last slide is like the last bite of the last dish in a good meal. It determines

largely the lasting impression about the whole meal. It is therefore highly advisable to display a last slide highlighting the key ideas that you wish your audience to remember and to discuss if there is a time for debate.

Oral presentations are usually a stressful experience. Therefore, you should not miss opportunities to reduce stress: prepare, rehearse, but also anticipate the usual suspects such as computer failure, lost paper or USB flash drive. Simple precautions include: have your presentation and slides on a portable medium (USB or CD), in different formats including a PDF export of your slides (you can then do a slide show with any PDF reader in full screen mode), also a paper printout and most importantly, be prepared to make your presentation without any slides if it comes to that!

PART THREE –
STUDENT ABSTRACTS

The Internet user as producer workshop
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WANTED: 'AUTHENTICITY' IN TURKISH MODERNIZATION

Barış Engin Aksoy

Contact: bariseng@yahoo.com

The concept of 'authenticity' has become an important theme for social theory in the recent years. Theodor W. Adorno saw the search for authenticity as one of the latest moral manoeuvres of bourgeois ideology. Just as the reproduction capacity of capitalist development has reached a peak, the desire for 'real' or 'genuine' seems to reach its own heights.

Although this desire is not limited to the specific, so-called 'developing countries', Turkey has a different quality in that the object of desire has usually been codified in terms of Western societies. For Turkey 'authenticity' has various social, political and historical dimensions connected to the modernization project dating back to late 19th century. Accordingly, specific dimensions of Turkish history and society have to be taken into account combining it with the global capitalist development. Within this project the desire for authenticity will be addressed by referring to a notion of Raymond Williams: a 'structure of feeling'. The Turkish modernization process has often been described as a Westernization project. As a result, the West has become a model for Turkish society: a model of Truth. In the struggle to keep up with the model, Turkish society has always had the feeling of being a 'secondary', 'fake', 'derivative' society. The duality of real/fake seems to encourage a desire for genuineness while nourishing a feeling of fakeness.

The observation that a search for authenticity or originality has been a permanent motif in Turkish literary studies became the starting point for this PhD project. However this search is not exclusively limited to the field of literature; a desire for authenticity has become a pervasive theme in almost all areas of social life, including cinema, television, music industry and everyday social practices.

In order to identify the desire for authenticity and analyze its implications in the context of Turkey my primary object of analysis will be a number of selected texts from Turkish literature. The analysis may also be directed towards Turkish movies. This decision will be taken after reviewing the textual and visual materials. In any case the method of this project will be text analysis.

THE MODERN TIME EXPERIENCE THROUGH HISTORIC AVANT-GARDE CINEMA (1919–1933)

María Soliña Barreiro González

Contact: mariasolina.barreiro@upf.edu

My PhD project aims to analyse the time experience through the modern conception of time in the historic avant-garde films produced during the Interwar period.

I have chosen the concept of time, because it is one of the main factors of social perception and it changed the most with the arrival of modernity. The object of my study is the historic avant-garde cinema because it was consumed as a cultural object which reflected the modern society, it was dedicated to think about modern perceptive changes and it allows us to study the modern time experience of the author and its aesthetical expression, and also the public experience mediated by cinema.

Radical changes in the conception of time and space characterized modernity. The new means of transport and the new media, and also the spread of consumption of cultural objects, provoked radical changes in the perception of reality. A number of theorists from different fields (among others philosophers, economists, sociologists) analysed those changes, and all of them had points in common in their analysis: the new fragmentary experiences, the new way of perceiving the environment, the new relations between time and space and the importance of the cultural objects in the process of the perceptive change.

Avant-garde cinema, characterized by its expression of experience and its visual theory through the image, gives us a double-use of 'knowledge theory', with the objective of studying the role of these mediated consumption objects in the creation of mass consciousness: on the one hand, the influence of consumption products and their temporary marks into the art creation; on the other hand, the influence of cultural products into public consciousness.

For this study, I have chosen texts of those philosophers who had analysed modernity and its new temporary regime (e.g. Benjamin, Kracauer, Simmel) and, through these authors, I establish a group of time markers that help us to understand the new modern time experience in historical avant-garde films. Furthermore, the work of modern philosophers contributes to elaborate the framework and the study's methodology.

MEDIATIZATION AND COMMUNICATIVE MOBILITY: EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF AN INCREASINGLY INDIVIDUALIZED AND MOBILE LABOUR MARKET

Matthias Berg

Contact: mberg@uni-bremen.de

Individualization, mobility and mediatisation can be seen as three major factors which, among others, determine today's labour market. In my dissertation project I will analyse the interaction of those conditions on modern living- and career-options with the appropriation of digital media in Germany from a communication studies point of view. The central research question that I am asking is: Which forms and patterns of communication occur in highly mobile jobs or work situations and how do people thereby actively manage their personal communication networks?

The overall aim is to develop an integrative typology of a) modes of labour-mobility and b) patterns/forms of communication characterized by the appropriation of digital media (e.g. mobile phone, chat, social software, e-mail) in situations of work-mobility – for example in jobs that can be perceived as mobile jobs (e.g. corporate consultants or industrial fitters), during periods of long-term commuting or when moving from one place to another due to education/university studies or a job change. With this broad focus on 'digital media' instead of one particular technology I intend to avoid an all too common technology-determinism. In this context, the aim is to have an additional question answered: In how far do certain media technologies play distinct roles in maintaining old as well as developing new ego-centred networks of communication? Frequently, the physical distance between places of living and working mean, that on the one hand personal contacts – like family members, partners, or friends – have to be actively kept up, and on the other hand new networks have to be built up – in institutional (work or education) as well as in private (circle of friends, leisure time) terms. At the same time situations of labour-mobility may create a threefold set of integration-problems; people are confronted with an a) increasing number of communication networks (pluralisation) which they b) are to a certain degree choosing in a context of self-determination (individualization) and which are c) posing very particular demands.

Besides the three main assumptions mentioned at the beginning – individualization, mobilization, and mediatisation – I will apply the approach of 'communicative mobility' – a concept, that offers the potential to theoretically differentiate the manifold interrelations between 'being mobile' and the modes of communication in situations of mobility as well as mobile lifestyles in general.

Finally, this research project wants to increase the understanding of the communicative management of social relations in more and more individualized and translocal labour markets and life circumstances.

FROM IREPORT TO UREPORT: MAJOR BROADCASTERS IN USA PROPOSING CITIZEN JOURNALISM THROUGH THE NET

Ignacio Bergillos

Contact: ibergillos@hotmail.com

The success of many internet-based sites and services like weblogging, social networking and some participation-based websites like YouTube has inspired the creation of new applications within the news websites of the main broadcasting companies worldwide that enable the citizens to actively participate in the production of the news. These applications work at the same time as an information source for the news editors and as a participation tool for the audience. Following the concept introduced by Bowman and Willis (2003), we could argue that indeed, these new websites encourage people to engage in participatory journalism.

Authors like Dan Gillmor (2004) have studied the appearance and success of weblogs, videoblogs and other online applications that have made the theories of Negroponte (1995) or Schudson (1995) come true.

Cases like Ohmynews.com, which has become the most influential news web in South Korea based in news sent in by citizens, have shown the traditional news companies that the success of these new ways of information created by citizen is possible. Lately, many traditional media outlets have included news and content sent by their audience on their websites (Lasica, 2003). For instance, the main American broadcasters have developed online applications that give the opportunity to any citizen in the world to send in videos, photos, news or articles.

The aim of my research is to analyse the applications based on audience collaboration that are offered at the news websites, especially in Europe and USA and their influence not only on the audience, but also on the communication professionals themselves.

The most fundamental question is: Is this the end of traditional journalism? Will everybody be able to work as a journalist? Many authors (Real et al., 2007) have taken up this topic. My approach includes research on the power imbalances, the usages and the practices related to participatory tools, combined with an investigation into the (potentially changing) role of accuracy in the journalistic processes.

MUTATIONS OF SCIENTIFIC SPEECH IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Cyrille Bodin

Contact: cyrillebodin@yahoo.fr

The notion of the public sphere is particularly difficult to manage in the frame of information and communication sciences studies. Often uncritically used and under-defined in the different theoretical approaches, it nevertheless has an important place in political communication research. Moreover, it is a strong ideological tool, used differently according to the social actors' strategies, whether these are aimed at domination or emancipation.

At the same time, the public sphere is going through a transition period, moving from the domination of the mediated and rational public sphere to an area of generalised public relations. We can observe a number of sociological transformations that can be classified by reverting to four different axes: the typology of social actors, the modality of speaking, the technical forms of public communication and the identity frames represented. The public sphere looks like an experimental laboratory of society, oscillating between the participative model and the logic of the institutional actors that are losing legitimacy.

The constitution of the modern public sphere since the 18th century is closely linked with the scientific sphere. This specific social sphere is based on a hierarchical organisation, and grounded in expertise. So, information and communication sciences must ask two linked questions: 1) what kind of influence can the scientific research condition have on the representation of the democratic role of the public sphere?

2) What kind of influence can the potential crisis of representative democracy have on scientific research, on the different forms of public relations and on its legitimacy.

The link between the strategies of the different social actors and science is complex: Its two models ('popularisation' and 'participation') are theoretically based on very different objectives. The aim of the diffusions model is to 'induce' knowledge, on the predicament that science develops citizenship and the democratic life. The participative model is focused on the objective of public deliberation in order to create an agreement, and to engender a political decision. In this way, we need to ask the following question: What are the strategic goals of the different social actors (e.g. states, enterprises, religious groups, civilian associations and organisations, citizens, etc.) to adopt one of these two models, often totally neglecting the other one.

INTERNET NEWS PORTALS AS MASS MEDIA

Tamas Bodoky

Contact: bodoky@gmail.com

In my dissertation, the internet news portal is defined as a type of mass media. I review the development of two Hungarian market leading news portals (*Index.hu* and *[origo]*) that are already competing with the most popular printed newspapers. Business and legal aspects of the operation will be covered and the extremely high growth rate will be demonstrated with statistical data.

I will compare the American and Hungarian models in the evolution of news portals: The main American portals are typically connected to big television broadcasters; the two successful and really significant Hungarian portals do not have traditional media connection.

In the empirical research I will analyze how internet news services changed the news and media consumption of regular internet users. Representative surveys indicate the primary role of television as news and information source, while the internet comes on the second place. At the same time there is a market segment where online news consumption increases at the expense of traditional media (television, radio, print) and already exceeds television. I will identify this market segment among the Hungarian news and media consumers with online survey in

my dissertation. The media consumption habits of these people will be analyzed by statistical techniques and online focus groups.

I will also study the impact of civil content and the diffusion of weblogs on professional news production. Diffusion of user generated content and the change from passive reception to active content production in certain online audience segments will be also part of the analysis. In market economies – also in Hungary – institutional media do not compete with amateurs any more, as civil content is already integral part of the news portals. In the empirical part I will analyse the type and the significance of news content produced and publisher by citizens. A case study will be developed about one of the most popular user generated content types, electronic news and campaign folklore that enter into the news of mass media.

THE ROLE OF STIGMA IN THE INITIAL STAGES
OF HELP-SEEKING FOR PSYCHO-EMOTIONAL CONCERNS

Sarah Boyles

Contact: Boyles-S@ulster.ac.uk

There is an escalating resource of empirical research showing that therapeutic intervention is beneficial for many individuals experiencing common types of psychological concerns. Emerging adulthood is highlighted as a time most sensitive to anxiety and stress; a time liable to generate psychological problems that force some young adults to cope at a level to which they are not equipped to handle. Literature identifies serious consequences for the individuals who fail to manage psycho-emotional concerns, including increased likelihood of substance abuse, behavioural problems and suicide. However, young adulthood is not a monolithic group, as current research highlights that students may experience more stress and distress than non-students of a similar age. A finding that explains significant drop-out rates of first year students, as failure to manage psycho-emotional concerns has been linked to the impairment of social, academic and occupational functioning. Voluntary, public and private sector services responding to the mental health needs of young people may be accessed by some sufferers; however the balance of those needing and those seeking treatment has yet to be found.

Social psychologists have identified 'perceived stigma' as the most dominant factor impacting upon help-seeking for psycho-emotional problems. In response, the overall aim of this investigation is to explore the stigmatic attitudes of students in seeking professional psychological care. This will involve ascertaining students' perceptions of seeking psychological help, and making recommendations to service providers that aim to alter help-seeking behaviours of students.

The sensitive nature of this topic impacted upon sampling procedures and reiterated the ricochet feature of investigating a stigmatised phenomenon. A mixed methodology approach was utilized in the form of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The 498 completed questionnaires enabled observations of a consensus regarding aspects related to attitudes towards mental well-being and seeking professional psychological help. The 30 semi-structured interviews afforded a collection of narrative accounts to explore the dominant attitudes held by participating students. Findings illuminate how social psychological processes encompassing 'the first year experience' cultivate stigmatic perceptions regarding help-seeking for psycho-emotional concerns. Perceived stigma was found to significantly impact upon a student's decision to seek professional care. The study concludes by exploring issues surrounding the implementation of specialist knowledge of obstacles to help-seeking.

CITIZEN ACTION GROUPS AND ONLINE-COMMUNICATION: APPROPRIATION OF ENHANCED REPERTOIRES OF ACTION?

Marco Bräuer

Contact: marco.braeuer@tu-ilmenau.de

The aim of the dissertation project is to study the role of the internet in the action repertoires of citizen action groups in relation to the traditional established repertoire. The literature provides the hypothesis that with the diffusion of the internet, the communicative activities of all political actors are in a process of sustainable change. Resource-weak and small actors from the sphere of the civil society are supposed to be given new scope to restructure their internal communication activities as well as their external media use in order to enhance their strategic potential (e.g. by means of mailing lists, websites, online petitions and

signature collections, discussion forums, and web 2.0). As a result, they would improve their position against administrations, political decision-makers and corporations.

As citizen action groups have no constitutionally reserved direct influence on political decisions, they need the political public sphere in order to communicate their aims. As a result they create pressure on the political sphere, mobilise adherents and may shape and frame the political agenda. However, the role of the internet for traditional citizen action groups has not been extensively researched.

The dissertation is theoretically inspired by theories of (new) social movements. Citizen action groups are regarded as social movement organisations. The main point of reference is the resource mobilisation model. Furthermore, supplementary notions as repertoire, political opportunity structures, collective identities and action frameworks are integrated to arrive at a comprehensive conceptual framework in order to be able to make sense of the importance of the internet for citizen action groups.

The choice of strategies and the appropriation of a particular repertoire of action can be conceptualised as the result of a collective decision making process shaped by the goal of the group, the available resources (time, money, skills, experiences), the collective action frames, and the evaluation of the given political opportunity structure.

The repertoire may change significantly over time as a result of a change of the collective perceptions and action frameworks. Empirically, the dissertation will conduct two case studies of local citizen action groups. The design consists of a variety of methods: semi-structured interviews, standardised questionnaires, observations, group discussions, and content analysis. The social reality of citizen action groups is described as close to the field as possible. Via methodological trian-gulation the data will be compared.

THE USE OF ICTS IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS: CITIZEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION RELYING ON 'NEW' TECHNOLOGIES

Yana Breindl

Contact: ybreindl@ulb.ac.be

Political participation is generally viewed as a central requirement for democracy. While the extent to which citizens participate in the democratic process has to be evaluated by each political system, authors such as Teorell et al. (2007) believe that there is a general trend towards an increased involvement of individuals in the political process.

The rise and adoption of ICTs, and mainly the internet, has triggered new forms of political action in domains such as information retrieval, discussion, deliberation and mobilisation. Indeed, technologies have become increasingly part of the political system as citizens, politicians and journalists rely increasingly on the internet and other technological devices to gather information, communicate and participate in political processes.

If the 1990s have been overwhelmingly marked by a technological deterministic approach (cyber-enthusiasts vs. cyber-pessimists), literature seems to have become more down to earth since the turn of the century.

Technology is indeed not inherently participatory. Its (non-)participative effects depend on cultural practices and political contestations that bring equally along opportunities and threats. However, by disrupting '*elite dominance in the sphere of knowledge production and dissemination*' (Coleman, 2007), technologies such as the internet offer new possibilities for citizen engagement and political participation.

The dialectical relationship between technology and society shapes ICT applications. Based on a pragmatic approach, Coleman (2007) argues that the political use of the internet has to be studied in a comparative way, focusing on the user and her/his interactions with technology. The objective of my research is to explore to what extent and in what way the internet transforms current political participation practices. In order to narrow down this question and understand the challenges rising on the internet, I am using qualitative research methods such as interviews with various political actors (citizens, activists, journalists,

bloggers, politics, lobbyists) who use the internet to weight upon the political process.

The first results lead me to consider that I might focus my further research on lobbyists in Brussels and the way they use ICTs for campaigning and exerting influence upon the political process at various levels (national, European). A comparison with case studies of protest groups seems for me the best way to contribute in a significant way to the emerging and growing field of e-participation.

YOUTH PROTESTS IN FRANCE AND IN THE UNITED STATES: THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN DEFINING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Jill Campaiola

Contact: jillgc@scils.rutgers.edu

In terms of civic engagement, France is in many ways a counter-point to the United States. Although citizens in both countries participated actively in the late 1960s and 1970s – the civil right movements in the U.S. and May 68 in France – new generations of Americans seem to have lost their civic engagement, while new generations in France are increasingly participating in the country's civic life. These differences are partly due to the fact that the American civic scene is dominated by intermediary organizations – which often leave young people out of the equation – while civic engagement in France has often been associated with 'protest' and marked by a long divide between the state and the streets.

But the media also seem to play a key role in defining civic engagement and the levels of participation in both countries. The literature suggests that U.S. media hinder citizens' participation in political protests, as U.S. corporate media tend to marginalize dissenting voices to protect the status quo (Schiller, 1976; 1989; Gitlin, 1980; Schudson, 1995). On the other hand, the less commercial French media are supposed to encourage participation in protests, with more sympathetic coverage of citizen dissent and increased opportunities for democratic political debate and social change (Benson and Hallin, 2007). In my dissertation project, I would like to assess the soundness of this assumption. To what extent are the media in both countries defining levels of participation in the public sphere and providing opportunities for social change?

Content and textual analyses of news about protests have already been the focus of numerous studies in the U.S. and in France. But very few studies have looked at this issue comparatively and cross-nationally. Similarly, these analyses were mainly concerned with the news texts, and did not venture to ask protesters what their relationship to the media was and whether they felt their message was being heard. And while most of these analyses were successful at showing the impact of the media on levels of political participation, they have paid little attention to the outcomes and consequences of these social movements.

I wish to analyze the coverage of these student protests through content and textual analyses of news articles and television reports. I hope to find out whether the media played a role in encouraging participation, and also whether they were successful at initiating a rational-critical debate in the public sphere, eventually empowering young people to make positive changes in society. These analyses will be complemented by interviews of students, who were involved in these protests, and some others, who were not, in order to understand students' protest culture (or lack thereof) in both countries. Also, provided that student protests occur at the time of my dissertation research, I would like to do an ethnographic observation of ongoing demonstrations.

COGNITION, MODELLING AND CULTURE: A SYSTEMS THEORY APPROACH

Sara Cannizzaro

Contact: sblissa@gmail.com

The focus of this PhD project is the study of cultural systems as semiotic systems. The project starts from considering the existing debate in semiotic studies that concerns the nature of language and the role it plays in the formation of culture.

During the past century, the structure of the linguistic system has been the key focus of research works from de Saussure (1983), Barthes (1977), Zaliznjak (1977), Chomsky (1957) and Lotman (2001), who envisaged linguistic structure as the basis of all other systems of signs. Taking his cue from Tartu Semiotics, Sebeok put forward the innovative idea of semiosis taking place, at root, in communication between cells

(1979), a notion which lies at the basis of Biosemiotics (1991) and Modelling Systems Theory (2000). According to MST, cultural systems evolve out of natural language, a primary cognitive system which is present in all living beings. Human cultures therefore would be 'kept together' on a first level by imitative processes of representation (Primary Modelling), on a second level by syntactic rules (Secondary Modelling), and would become established with the formation (and evolution) of tertiary paradigmatic structures (Tertiary Modelling).

The method that I propose in this research project consists in the systematic integration of Sebeok's Modelling Systems Theory into other conceptions of systemic theories, particularly those of Luhmann (1995), Lotman (2001),, and Serres (2007). The aim is to trace the archaeology of common concepts (Deely, 2008, forthcoming) in the attempt to provide the ground for the synthesis of a newly implemented semiotic systems theory. Specifically, starting from the premises that cultural systems can be conceived as systems of communications, this project seeks:

1/ To explore the relationship between semiosis, cognition and communication.
2/ To qualify the role of natural language within a general systems' theory.
3/ To focus on both the relationship between natural language and technology, and between technology and culture in order to understand their contribution to the process of emergence, sustainment and evolution of cultural systems.

Particular attention will need to be given to the problem of translation of fundamental concepts – entropy, work, identity, homogeneity, heterogeneity, harmony, noise etc., from the physical and information sciences to the field of human communication – which entangles the problem of interpretation – and vice versa. In the attempt to bring together the benefits of both reductive and non-reductive approaches to philosophy, system semiotics will be framed as a discipline bridging the gap between the 'hard' and 'soft' sciences.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURES IN AMERICAN DRAMA (2001–2008)

Enrique Canovaca

Contact: cano_garfunkel@hotmail.com

When referring to the second gold age of American TV Shows (from the middle of 1980s to the middle of 1990s) Concepción Cascajosa pointed out: '*the achievements reached in this period of drama's rebirth turns pale faced with the situation of excellence reached today*' (2005: 7). And adds: '*In front of previous rigidity, the open structure that defines nowadays television market has permitted that greater quantity has supposed greater quality*' (2005: 8). In the last fifteen years, the American television market has gone through a number of changes, related to the appearance of cable and the transformation of networks. That translated to greater quantity and variety in TV schedules.

Nevertheless, what is the source of quality that Cascajosa refers to? In his book *Serial Television: Big drama on small screen*, Glen Creeber talks about serialized television and its tendency to generate complex narratives, creating a flexible structure full of great variety. Additionally, he also studies the hybridization of television genres. Confronted with these processes of hybridization and complexity, the audience has responded in a brilliant way. Millions of people wait for the new chapter of Lost or theorize on the internet about how the plot will go on.

In this sense, John Fiske stresses the active position of the audience in television narrative: '*Television viewing is more interactive than either watching cinema or novel reading and consequently its narratives are more open to negotiation*' (1987: 147). To Fiske, television invites the spectator to live an experience of resolving a narrative enigma, without necessarily knowing the previously constructed structure. In other words, television narrative plays with the sensation of actuality.

TV dramas like 24, Lost, Alias, Prison Break or The Sopranos do not have a clear and unique plot. Instead they have a network of little details, implausible plots, weird relationships or secondary aspects. Vincent Canby, a critic of New York Times, has baptized this kind of series mega movies. They are TV Shows with a coherent narrative that develops during the episodes and that ends up being more open or closed. My work investigates what kind of narrative structures American fiction

series use (from 2001 to 2008) and observing the relationship to its success.

THE 'DIGITAL DIVIDE': A CRITICAL REREADING OF TERM, IDEOLOGICAL FRAMING, AND POLICIES

Simone Carlo

Contact: simone.carlo@unicatt.it

In the recent years, the literature about the digital divide has made an important breakthrough: The concept of the digital divide has been very successful, in particular in relation with the relative newness of the term, that was developed only ten years ago (Sartori, 2006). Even more interesting is the 'pliability' of the term: It is seen to be transformed in a kind of discourse (close to Foucault's concept) that acts as a premise for governments, institutions, associations, companies. The flexibility of the term seems to have transformed (and almost emptied out) the concept of the digital divide: If on the one hand the academic reflections are gradually moving away from the term (establishing more complex concepts, Warschauer, 2003), on the other hand the political world still 'uses' the term, disregarding the theoretical debate on the process of changing the meaning of the concept (van Dijk, 2005; Barzilai-Nahon, 2006).

The question then remains: Is it still useful to keep the term 'digital divide' if its meanings have changed, and have been distorted? Only an 'unmasking' or demystification would enable recognizing the true (or, the more efficient, useful, comprehensive) policies of reduction of the digital divide. This builds on the need to combine these policies with broader reflections about (and actions against) the increase of inequality in the global, digital, network society. Without a deep consideration of the structural unequalness of contemporary societies, only the economic dimension of efficiency, progress and development would be emphasized. This kind of utilization of the digital divide term, in a reductive frame of economical policy, could be very dangerous and counterproductive for the establishment of more equitable societies (Feenberg, 2002; van Dijk, 2006).

This thesis, after an overview of the evolution of the concept of the digital divide (Iannone, 2007) gives the overview of the most recent

literature about digital inequality (DiMaggio, Hargittai, Celeste and Shafer, 2004). On the one hand it frames the literature of the digital divide in a broader reflection about economic and social inequality in the contemporary world; and on the other hand it relates this literature to an overview of policies and strategies (both public and private) aimed at the reduction of the digital divide, in particular in the EU (Milner, 2006).

SELF IMAGES IN POSTCOLONIAL WEST- AND CENTRAL AFRICA: AN EXPLORATIVE RESEARCH INTO THE AFRICAN AND EUROPEAN CINEMATOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATIONS IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Matthias De Groof

Contact: matthias.degroof@ua.ac.be

After more than 50 years development of a specific African Cinema, its filmmakers are appropriating their own film tradition which they process and integrate into their own realizations. In this context, the project investigates the self-image of West- and Central Africa as it has been presented in the post-colonial narrative films from 1963 until 2007. It compares these African representations with the European ones from the same period. The comparison also allows for a media cultural critique on Eurocentric representations starting from postcolonial film-studies.

The research project positions itself within the theoretical frame of postcolonial film studies, post-structural anthropology and deconstructionist philosophy. Postcolonial film studies and post-structural anthropology investigate how (e.g. African) identities vs. other (e.g. European) identities are brought into vision. Therefore, postcolonial film studies make use of representation analysis, bringing into account ideological, narrative, thematic and aesthetic aspects. The latter is subject to a cinematographic analysis on the basis of the classic parameters of the cinematic language.

The project is defined in genre, space and time. Its delimitation is the narrative feature film of West- and Central Africa in the post-colonization period, to begin with *Borom Sarret* from Sembène Ousmane. In addition, it studies films which focus on the following themes: 1. the re-appropriation of space, 2. the re-affirmation of the self, 3. the escape of

the imprisoning image and 4. films claiming universality to return the folkloristic gaze.

In a second movement, this corpus is cinematographically compared with West European films of the same period, representing this part of Africa.

In the analysis of the self-image and identity discourses within African cinemas, and by its comparison with the Western representation of Africa in films, the question presents itself how the postcolonial film produces a rupture in the European system of representation. In other words, the project investigates how the decolonization of the (post)colonial imagination is realized (or not) in the specific case of African film.

WHAT ROLE DOES PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAY IN GERMAN COMMUNICATION AGENCIES? – HOW DO THEY UNDERSTAND AND APPLY PUBLIC RELATIONS CONCEPTS?

Martin Duch

Contact: martin.duch@stir.ac.uk

In the course of globalisation (which includes global trade and the quick penetration of new media technologies), the public is increasingly fragmented into various stakeholder groups. In order to meet the communication needs of these groups, an increasing demand of public relation (PR) services can be recognised. Until now the acceptance of the PR field in Germany can still be improved a lot in comparison to other parts of the world where PR is already accepted as an inherent part of the field of communication.

My PhD project will attempt to evaluate – from a practitioners' point of view – how far the general lack of PR acceptance in German society is linked to the historical background of the 20th century.

PR is at the same a field of communication which becomes increasingly important for German communication agencies today. Nowadays global markets are facing stronger competition which forces companies to communicate beyond the classical marketing mix. In a more and more fragmented portfolio of stakeholder groups, companies have to communicate preselected and tailored information to each of these

groups to ensure a balanced as well as high quality level of exchange. Consequently the question arises whether fast-changing communicational environments are influencing the PR field in Germany and whether they have an impact on the daily business of communication agencies. This research will therefore ask if PR services are perceived to be able to serve as a strategic function in order to generate competitive advantages.

In order to study the significance of the field of PR, my PhD project will rely on the analysis of Anglophone as well as German literature in the field of Public Relations/ *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*. This analysis will be combined with a qualitative sample of semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with experts from German communication agencies. The experts interviewed will be representatives of German market-leading communication agencies (mostly in managerial positions). The research will be supplemented by consulting individual academics and practitioners who can provide essential data concerning the structure of the German communication market.

The PhD project will examine whether there are specific communicational and economical parameters which are responsible for the current reputation and position of Public Relations in Germany. The main research question is: How do German communication agencies understand and apply Public Relations concepts?

MEDIA AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION:
THE CASE OF CONTEMPORARY UKRAINE

Valentyna Dymytrova

Contact: valjusik@yahoo.fr

My research focuses on the construction of representations of political identities in the news media. The most relevant context that allows questioning the concept of collective identity is the context of politics, and therefore, the context of public space. It is in the public space that identity appears as symbolic dimension of a form and of a representation rather than of a cause, in the sense that can be the object of interpretation, diffusion or acquisition in the field of communication.

Since its independence, proclaimed in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine began the process of constructing its state and nation accompanied by the emergence and construction of new political

identities. The main identity markers (like belonging to a territory, speaking a language, practising a religion as well as a geopolitical orientation) present important divisions in the case of contemporary Ukraine. The first break in the identity formation was the independence proclamation of Ukraine in 1991, which brought Ukraine onto the international arena and transformed it into a political actor. The second rupture were the presidential elections of 2004, known as the 'orange revolution' which is considered a definitive break with the authoritarian past and a sign of democratisation and the progressive development of civil society. Currently, there are several identity discourses conveyed by different political and social groups in the Ukrainian public space. First, the nationalist discourse refers to a specific national culture legitimized by history. It aims to redress the discrimination suffered during the Soviet period. This discourse promotes the national language, values non-Soviet historical events and encourages integration into the EU. Secondly, there is the European discourse that considers the country's future within the European Union and the NATO. Thirdly, the pro-Russian discourse emphasizes the historical and cultural ties between Ukraine and Russia. It favours a national history imbued with belonging to the Slavic civilisation and promotes the development of Russian culture, primarily through its linguistic component. Fourthly, there is the pro-Soviet discourse which is distinct from the pro-Russian as it focuses on the feeling of nostalgia for the Soviet Union. The fifth discourse is the regionalist discourse. And lastly there is the autonomist discourse that refers to the status of the Crimea and the conflicts between Russian and Tatar population of this peninsula.

This study uses semiotics and discourse analysis to investigate the construction of the Ukrainian political identity, first, within the Ukrainian public space through the confrontation of political identities (political parties and political actors), and secondly in the international and intercultural public space through the confrontation between the Ukrainian political identity with other political identities, including the EU identity and the Russian identity.

THE SPACE BETWEEN:
FINDING A PLACE FOR COMMUNITY RADIO

Lawrie Hallett

Contact: lawrie@terella.com

This research examines the nature of community radio as a form of alternative media, seeking to explore both the role of the medium and how this may, in part, be influenced by the impact of external factors, such as regulatory and technological frameworks. The work is therefore an investigation of both the outputs of community radio, and of the processes by which these may be achieved.

Within the overall history of broadcasting, the community radio sector is a relatively recent development. This is particularly the case in the United Kingdom where a legislative framework for permanent services was only introduced as recently as 2004. Thus, in order to justify their existence (for example in terms of traditional broadcast spectrum allocation or funding support), community radio services must provide some form of additionality in order that they be complimentary to existing public service broadcasters and commercial radio stations.

Such additionality may not, however, always be simply in the form of broadcast outputs. The role of community radio is perhaps a more complex one than those of its more established counterparts, since it typically provides more than simple uni-directional broadcast programming. At the heart of the concept of community radio is interaction and involvement, often best encapsulated in a sense of ownership by the community served. Thus, it may be argued that community radio services act as a community resource and a catalyst for development in its widest sense, facilitating social interaction and enhancing available social capital through democratic structures and participation.

The research focuses primarily on the recent emergence of community radio in the United Kingdom, whilst also drawing on a comparative analysis of the sector in Norway, The Republic of Ireland, and The United States of America. These comparators have been selected not only because of their differing approaches to community radio itself, but also because, more generally, they offer a diverse range of media backgrounds and regulatory approaches. Information will be gathered through the use of semi-structured qualitative interviews, supported by desk-based research.

In terms of operational practice and the nature of external regulation, it is clear that the diversity of the community radio sector is such that any 'one size fits all' approach cannot be effective. However, it is hoped that this research will provide insights into what mechanisms may assist a diverse range of community-based services to strengthen their processes and best achieve their desired outputs.

What Do People Do When They Use the internet? Communication Modes as an Integrated Concept for the Analysis of Media Use in Converging Media Environments

Sascha Hoelig

Contact: sascha.hoelig@uni-hamburg.de

Media developments are basically marked by the phenomenon of convergence on different levels. Hereby, the internet in particular is considered as the ideal realization of these merging and blurring processes. Corresponding to the buzzword of multimedia, different presentation forms are combined and integrated into new types of applications, which allow for a plurality of new usage possibilities as well. Supplemented by the possibilities of digitalization, more efficient data capacities and networks, this combination additionally leads to a merger of media, information technology and telecommunication. These technical conditions dissolve the former rigid roles of sender and receiver, of producer and consumer. Also the once clear distinction between interpersonal, group related and mass communication becomes blurred. One fact becomes obvious: The internet cannot be understood as one particular medium. It must be regarded as an extremely versatile technical infrastructure, which just carries different communication services. This situation then raises the question, what people actually do when they use the internet.

A simple transmission of traditional reception types is not sufficient concerning their significance and differentiation. In a contemporary concept of media usage also new ways of production, expression and reception have to be considered. In order to deal with this challenge, the project proposes the concept of communication modes (by Uwe Hasebrink).

This user-centred concept refers to certain situations of media use: In any particular situation the user defines herself/himself as being in a specific communication mode. This definition includes relevant characteristics of the situation, the benefit this user is seeking and the benefits of the communication service. It is assumes that communication modes are linked to the respective communication services. While a specific communication service cannot determine the communication mode of its users, it defines the range of modes which can be realized by using the respective service.

In order to apply this concept for internet usage research, the following conceptual and empirical steps will be taken: First, a classification of perceived communication services has to be developed. By using classification tasks, test persons are asked to sort different communication services according to the perceived differences and similarities between them. This will help to identify relevant criteria of differentiation and description. Subsequently data are analysed by means of cluster analysis. Secondly, by using think-aloud protocols, the communication modes of users are reconstructed while they deal with different services. As a result this project aims to provide a helpful tool to describe and understand the online activities of media users.

SUSTAINABILITY AND POLITICAL ONLINE COMMUNICATION

Imke Hoppe

Contact: Imke.Hoppe@tu-ilmenau.de

Communication about 'sustainability' is not just to impart values or a finished overall concept. It should help to develop the perception of problems and strategies of action. Therefore one aim of sustainability communication is to involve as much people as possible into the discussion ('aim of popularization'). There is also the aim of enabling people to reflect and to act within their daily life (the 'aim of education and clarification') (Ziemann, 2008).

Because environmental risks are rarely experienced exclusively in a daily life perspective, mediated communication is necessary (Luhmann, 1998; Fuhrer and Kaiser, 2006). At the same time, empirical findings show that, instead of a linear coherence between media coverage about

environmental protection and eco-sensitive behaviour, there is an increased 'pro-environmental protection' attitude (Kuckhartz and Heintze, 2006).

The aim of this PhD project is to develop two communication concepts for online-communication, especially for video blogs/community blogs (e.g. www.green.tv). In order to reach the communicative aim of 'education and clarification' I expect drama theories to be helpful. These theories should support the development of competences to reflect the idea of sustainability and enhance interactions, impacting on their everyday life, especially with regards to micro participation (Schultz, 2007).

These communication concepts should include how to sample, to design and to combine text, picture and video. Furthermore, also interactive web applications and hypertextual elements should be included. The point of departure will be a definition of different levels of interactivity, combined with different levels of micro participation (Van Dijk and de Vos, 2001; Hacker and van Dijk, 2000; Raffaeli, 1997; Carpentier, 2008).

One concept will be based on the classical drama theory of Aristotle, the other one is the epic theatre theory of Brecht. Both theories have assumptions on how to effect audiences' reflection processes. The drama theory of Aristotle uses an emotional, realistic presentation style, which should lead to identification with a 'hero' and to a moral catharsis through a suspense curve. Brecht tried to affect a similar reflection process by using completely different elements of depiction. He used stylistic devices like disaffection and open narrative forms to provoke a distanced, analytic view with the audience.

Both communication concepts will be implemented, staged and published as video blogs / community blogs. After having launched the weblogs a reception analysis focussing on the reflection processes and the daily life behaviour of the users will be conducted.

THE INTERACTION OF IT AND SOCIETY: THE ESTONIAN CASE

Laur Kanger

Contact: salasisalik@hotmail.com

This doctoral thesis will map the growth and development of a large technical system focussed on ICTs in Soviet Estonia during the period of 1960–1990. I will try to determine the interaction of technological and societal factors in every field of ICTs' usage (e.g. in science, in arts etc). Furthermore, the intertwining of different scales (e.g. the contextual factors of Soviet system, the mediating institutional filter or the actions of an inventor etc) will also be taken into account.

ALTERNATIVE IN THE MAINSTREAM? A 'RADICAL' NEWSPAPER OF TURKEY

Tuğba Kanlı

Contact: tugbakanli@yahoo.com

This study attempts to examine the possibilities and the limitations of alternative practices within the structural and discursive boundaries of mainstream media by focusing on the Sunday supplement of a daily newspaper in Turkey, *Radikal İki* (Radical Two).

The Turkish electronic media landscape is dominated by only a few media conglomerates. *Dogan Media Group* (DMG), which is the biggest in scale and effect, not only includes all types of media production – press, broadcasting, news agency, internet, book publishing – but also has a strong position with the consumers. Besides leading newspapers such as *Hurriyet* and *Milliyet*, DMG also owns the newspaper that is analysed in this study, *Radikal*. *Radikal* has claimed to be 'radical' from its inception, in accordance with its title.

Unlike the other rivals' supplements that cover more life style and human interest news on Sundays, *Radikal İki* offers a forum for academics, public intellectuals, politicians, activists, NGOs, university students and citizens. The mostly discussed issues in *Radikal İki*, range

from nationalism, democracy, leftism, feminism, to art, literature and current affairs. The most crucial point for the purpose of my study is that *Radikal İki* is considered to be an alternative medium (by its authors and readers) which circulates in the mainstream media.

In this context, I will investigate the conditions and manifestations of this alternative media practice with a particular emphasis on whether it is possible to have the 'alternative in the mainstream'. Another concern of this study is to argue for the potential of mainstream media as an alternative public sphere.

BALTIC RUSSIANS: PUBLIC SPHERES AND MEDIATED PUBLIC CONNECTION IN THE BALTIC STATES

Anne Kaun

Contact: anne.kaun@sh.se

In April 2007, Tallinn was confronted with cohorts of drunk rampaging young people, demonstrating against the removal of the bronze statue of the Unknown Soldier; a symbol of the fights against Nazi Germany. This issue became a topic of international importance after members of Naschi[1] prohibited access to the Estonian embassy in Moscow.

Whilst discussions about the decline of political engagement and activism dominated the public discourse within Western democratic countries, the events impacted upon the daily existence of those involved in the struggle, particularly the people of Tallinn.

This thesis encompasses a discussion concerning the identities of emerging adults' in relation to what they understand as the political. Employing qualitative methodologies it responds to the following research questions: Are there different perceptions of what public issues actually mean for young people with distinct ethnic backgrounds? Through what media-orientated strategies is public connection developed and possibly deepened? What does a different articulation of mediated public connection mean for the formation of cultural identity and cultural citizenship? And finally, are there differences among the three Baltic States?

Contextualised within the background of the tense situation within the Baltic States, this investigation aims to explore the articulation and

strategies to develop (mediated) public connections among young people with different ethnical backgrounds.

Respondents will be asked to complete diaries across a three-month timescale, which will yield data from lived experiences and allow for the reconstruction of understandings and perceptions of what 'political' and 'public' mean. Therewith I aim to analyse the development of cultural citizenship and civic culture of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Alongside this, a questionnaire responding to the research questions (at a macro level) will be administered online. This is designed to identify and analyse media to uncover the development of mediated public connection within youth culture.

Data will be connected using a triangulated approach. Firstly the synergy of a literature review with insights from expert interviews will inform the creation of country profiles. This initial phase seeks to understand and reconstruct not only the cultural aspects, but especially the media context within the three countries. Secondly, mediated public connections embedded within cultural citizenship and civic culture will be analysed for each country separately. Lastly, the main differences and commonalities will be compared in a cross-country analysis.

Findings are expected to generate an understanding of the formation of two significant factors among young people in the Baltic States: that of cultural identity and civic culture. This study's objective will be fulfilled by moving beyond the titular nationalities or the Russian speaking minority. Thus providing a broader and more integrated picture of mediated public connection, and offering insights into the subjective understanding of what citizenship and civic culture actually means for everyday life of young adults.

THE BLOG AND (IN)VISIBLE SILENCES: THE SPIRAL OF INVISIBILITY IN THE SOUTH KOREAN BLOGOSPHERE

Jeong Kim

Contact: j.kim@lse.ac.uk

The weblog is seen as a one of the most democratic forms of media, particularly in terms of the Habermasian public sphere. In contrast, my research problematizes this view by connecting theories of the Spiral of Silence and the politics of visibility to illustrate the spiral of invisibility in

the blogosphere. Within the socio-cultural terrain of South Korea, the research explores how collective social pressure imposes new constraints on interaction and opinion-exchange in the blogosphere. Using the ethnographic methods of participant observation, interviews and critical discourse analysis, I demonstrate how the politics of visibility – the complexity of technical aspects of 'public' and socio-psychological aspects of 'private' blogging – impacts on self-expression and disclosure. By treating silence as a discourse distinct from Western biases toward the passivity of silence, I conceptualize invisibility as an altered mode of silence in the blogosphere: a consequence of disempowerment by collective pressure, yet a counter-device to social control. My research, then, seeks to address the following questions: In what ways do Korean bloggers, more specifically at the Ohmynews blog service and at Mediamob, negotiate between their needs and desires to be seen by other bloggers, thus reorganizing the boundaries between public and private spheres? What factors hinder bloggers' sociality and interactivity? How and to what extent do bloggers cope with, or act upon, these constraints? These questions address the roles of the politics of visibility and the culture of collectivism reshaping conceptualizations of the blog as a truly 'democratic' space.

THE PHENOMENA OF INTERACTIVE NARRATIVE IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING

Radka Kohutova

Contact: radka_kohut@yahoo.com

Stories are involved in all texts around us. We meet them every day in all media products. We have been taught to understand/decode them since we were born—starting with fairy tales. Here is where we are first introduced to the traditional structure and organization of the storytelling-narrative.

As the rise of new media has enriched our understanding of media in general and offered the audience a more active role while approaching/ using media production, new media has also brought a new form of storytelling: the interactive narrative. The reader is not considered as a passive consumer anymore, but as an active participant in the story. This

can shake up the traditional understanding of authorship as the story is no longer linear and predefined.

Interactive narrative is more than just the digital expression of stories in a binary code (0, 1). It is about the interconnection between medium and text, consisting of several elements: words, static and moving pictures, graphics, sounds, ...

The concept of the interactive narrative has strongly appealed to game designers for the last several decades. The videogame is considered to be the platform where interactive narrative first appeared. Nevertheless, my dissertation focuses on what I call literary interactive narrative (both fiction and non-fiction). The theoretical part of the dissertation discusses questions like: Is digital culture transforming the stories we tell and the mode of their presentations? Does the interactive narrative allow us to tell stories that could hardly be expressed through conventional narratives? Can it be considered an art form, a form of high culture? Who and what is an author/reader/text/story in the interactive narrative?

The empirical sections of my dissertation present examples of current literary interactive narrative. Bearing in mind Dolezel's concept (2000) of the possible worlds, texts and literature can be seen as a complex labyrinth.

Two fundamental aspects can be found in the analytical section: an analysis of the available examples of both fictional and non-fictional interactive narratives, capturing/analyzing these texts as literary games (the research will be based on a comparative, qualitative analysis of several examples, leading to the identification of the significant elements that make the texts an interactive narrative). My other focus seeks to explore the audiences' experiences, examining Czech teenagers and raising questions on if and how they approach the interactive narrative.

MEDIATING COSMOPOLITANISM:
COSMOPOLITAN DISCOURSES AND DISTANT SUFFERING

Maria Kyriakidou

Contact: m.kyriakidou@lse.ac.uk

Cosmopolitanism has gained an increasing interest in social sciences over the last decade. Constituting a claim about global belonging and

solidarity, the concept has attracted as many critics as it has advocates. My PhD research attempts to defend cosmopolitanism as an emerging reality and suggests its exploration in relation to global media and communications. It argues that cosmopolitanism should be thought about and explored as a process 'from below' rather than a project 'from above'. In this process, media constitute a significant force in (re)producing a discourse of global connectivity and responsibility towards distant others. This is especially the case in the coverage of disasters at a global scale, when audiences are faced with the vulnerability of distant others.

Theoretically, my PhD is based on sociological approaches to cosmopolitanism, discourse studies and the increasing literature on media representations of suffering and media ethics. It suggests the study of cosmopolitanism as a discourse partly mediated through the coverage of distant disasters. Empirically, the research is grounded on media analysis and the study of Greek audiences in relation to media coverage of distant disasters, in particular of the Southeast Asian Tsunami in 2004, Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and the Kashmir Earthquake in 2005. Media coverage has so far been limited to newspaper analysis. In terms of audiences, the study has employed focus group discussions with different segments of the population. Both sets of data have been analysed using discourse analysis, with the main focus of the study being placed on the focus group discussions.

It is argued that a cosmopolitan discourse is emerging in relation to the media coverage of distant suffering, in so far as distant disasters are framed as instances of collective global action at-a-distance and construct the globe as a space of reflection and action. Such cosmopolitan discourse(s) should be studied as socially and culturally situated rather than as discourses of detachment from the local and the national. They are also heavily dependent on media representations and practices. They do constitute, however, a significant part of the experience of audiences. As such, far from an abstract and idealist concept, cosmopolitanism is a lived and grounded phenomenon.

HEALTH, PRIVATE AND PUBLIC: RENEGOTIATING GENDERED SUBJECTIVITIES AND CITIZENSHIPS

Anna-Maria Mäki-Kuutti

Contact: anna-maria.maki-kuutti@uta.fi

Vitality and health are often mentioned as the ultimate grounds for differentiating productive citizens from non-productive ones. Particularly females and working classes have been the objects of this kind of assessment by socially powerful actors.

Today's mass media is full of materials concerning medicine, health and wellness. In this study, I am exploring one major question: How does health communication contribute to the construction of gender, identity and subjectivity? Taking into account that subjectivity is in part socially determined I also want to discuss the following themes: How does the gender of health communication relate to power and citizenship? What is the role of health communication and health citizenship in renegotiating the societal gender contract today?

My interest in health-related mass communication emanates from the standpoint(s) of feminist media studies and gender studies. In this study, both health and gender are understood as dynamic categories that are constantly under construction, and not as something essentialist. The mass media play a key role, as the dividing lines between health and illness, public and private, or masculinity and femininity, are discursively redefined within the mass media. Health and gender are political notions to be revealed, explored and watched.

My research focuses on the deconstruction of the complex genealogy between health, communication and gender. My theoretical framework is a mix of social constructionist, performative and some psychoanalytical theories, based on the idea that social reality is to a high degree made and experienced in language. Thus, I stress the Foucauldian interconnectedness between knowledge and power, and the Butlerian theory of gender as an open system performing itself over and over again. Gender is being made in media texts both by cultural stereotypes and also in different or abrupt ways, in 'other' performances. Hence, the objective of this study is to shed light on the ways in which the fluctuating, affective and gendered subject of health communication can act as a political agent or citizen.

New Media – New Journalism? – An Analysis of Blurring Boundaries and Liquid Journalism in Danish Online Newsrooms

Jannie Møller Hartley

Contact: jath@ruc.dk

The theoretical paradigm for my thesis is the concept of the construction of news, particularly online-news. The questions are: What kind of role does the online-news item play in the overall media picture, how is it consumed by the public, which media cycles evolve around the production of online-news, and how does the online-news take part in the production of other news, as more and more media platforms are integrated? This is combined with an institutional approach: How is the production of news organized, and what is the implicit or explicit policy in the online newsrooms?

On the more individual level, the focus is on the daily work on the sites. At this level the journalist is seen as a gatekeeper, which raises questions about the effects of the gender, background, education, etc. of the journalists involved within the production of online-news. Other questions are: What processes makes an event an online story compared to a newspaper story? What explicit criteria lie behind the selection of news and the sources used in the news?

Bourdieu's focus on power contributes to this PhD project, with field theory as the overall structuring framework. Since *On the power of TV and journalism* came out in 1998, the interest in field theory studies within journalism studies has only grown. However it is still work in progress. Other theories and theorists that will be included in the project are Mark Deuze, the Norwegian Martin Engelbrechsen and the classical theories of newsroom production. But in general, this is a new area of study and there is only a limited amount of theory developed specifically within the framework of internet journalism. Contributing to this theoretical debate is also one of the objectives of this PhD project.

The methodology is based on ethnographic observation and interviews. The observations in online newsrooms will take place in 4 different Danish online-news-sites time. The primary sources of data in the first phase of the project are also the texts surrounding the journalistic *doxa*, such as work-descriptions, work-manuals, descriptions of education and a limited number of interviews. Observation has the

advantage of getting past the verbally expressed values, in order to understand the idea of how for example story A is chosen over story B, at the same time this method helps to overcome the gap between journalistic ideals and practices.

VIEWING GLOBALIZATION IN MEXICAN-AMERICAN TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL SPACES

Gabriel Moreno

Contact: gabrielmoren@gmail.com

This doctoral project focuses on the reception of television news by audiences of Mexican origins in the United States. Having completed the data analysis (obtained through fieldwork), the key findings suggest that reception analysis is a productive strategy to visualize the experiences and social practices engaged by migrant, diasporic and transnational communities; that such practices are reproductive of transnational social fields where the global intersects with the local and the diasporic; and that television news may inherently destabilize ideas of ontological security amongst transnational audiences. The project is set to become a meaningful contribution to the academic endeavour in the fields of transnational communication, media studies, and the work concerned with migration, diasporas and their dynamics between sending and receiving societies. This is within the context of what is frequently described as a post-colonial and post-national age. In this context, findings signal that the reception of television news is linked to the production of a mental space, a process that is useful to map out migration in terms of an interaction between physical and symbolic experience, occurring in what I call multi-layered geographic spaces. These realms are composed by the local, the global and the homeland as dimensions of diasporic existence. This development links to concepts regarding the spaces of diaspora and transnational social fields, which aid visualization of migration patterns beyond nation-bound models. This move is a thrust to think outside the 'container' models of assimilation in receiving societies, and away from '*a teleology of origin/ return*' (Clifford, 1994: 306) which has dominated academic thinking about the concept of diaspora. More attention should instead be given to the equally significant '*decentered, lateral connections*' (ibid.) that are bred

along migrant relocations. Building on Rouse's (1991: 248–7) suggestion that a new migrant cartography '*ought to be … discoverable in the details of people's daily lives*', the approach to reception analysis pitched in this doctoral investigation, which is in its stage of completion, is a way to improve understanding of how individuals face globalization in their everyday lives.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND MARKET ECONOMY CHALLENGES OF CZECH PRINT ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS MEDIA, IN A EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Cristina Muntean

Contact: cristina_muntean2001@yahoo.com

The project investigates the economy of contemporary Czech printed economic and business media. It intends to identify patters of managerial strategies and answers given by local managers to the challenges by a market economy for print media. Moreover, it places the Czech patterns in a European context by applying similar research methods on print (economic and business) media in the United Kingdom, France and Romania. The project employs the most recent theories on media economics and combines research methods from several sciences such as philosophy, sociology and economy.

The outcome of this project aims to provide a fresh look on the economy of contemporary Czech media. By identifying current management strategy patterns and offering a wider understanding of their suitability (or not) compared to the major trends in print media economics in Europe, the paper intends to partially compensate the lack of specialized literature in Czech media economics. The thesis aims to become a useful tool but also the start for more research in the economy of Czech print, broadcast and online media. It also wants to generate recommendations for professionals that are interested in comparisons and the different models on how to successfully manage print media today.

WAR, MEDIA AND THE POLITICAL; CONTEMPORARY DISCURSIVE STRUGGLES IN THE WESTERN PUBLIC REALM

Yiannis Mylonas

Contact: yiannis@hum.ku.dk

In this project, my main purpose is to inquire upon the political in the West today, in discourses of the (so-called) war on terror. Understood as primarily a discursive struggle for the hegemonic closure of the social, the political will be empirically inquired in different media of the western public realm. The framing of the political in the era of the war on terror aims to foreground the historical contingency of the social, and to critically demonstrate the construction of identities and chains of equivalence (as well as logics of difference) of the contrasting logics behind the hegemony of war and the opposition towards it. The engagement with the media relates to the acknowledgement of the nodal position the media hold in modern politics.

The empirical focus of this project begins with the study of the universals in the discourse of the war on terror, as manifested by main protagonists of its declaration; I would like to argue that the universalistic declarations of war are organised in two main nodal points: security and development; these discourses can be traced in a series of public speeches, press releases, briefings and official proclamations made by the Bush administration between the years 2001 and 2008.

From there on, the focus will be upon the media; the purpose is to trace the articulation of these discourses of security and development in the mainstream media and in alternative media. Two comparative cases will be studied by deploying indicative media texts as empirical material. The diverse texts deployed for empirical research can be categorised under the broad denominator of 'reality' genres – mainly news and documentary films. Departing from the analysis of the hegemony of war, the study will look at two comparative cases of media representation. The first case will involve discourse analysis on documentary films, focussing on security: a channel 4 documentary film that looks at the attack on the London transportation system on 7/7/2005, and Michael Moore's famous *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

The second case will focus on the discourse of development. This discourse will be empirically grounded in the media representations of the 5 years of the Iraq war. In this case I will focus on television and in

particular on US television performance; despite the hegemonic presence of the US in politics today, and in this war in particular, I am interested in studying US television because alternative TV networks with full program also exist. These alternative TV networks are available to publics through cable television, and have a long and established presence. More specifically, I will compare the representation of Iraq today (2008) in the coverage of the 5 year war conduct on ABC news and in the 'Democracy Now' news network.

THE *PIGISTES* JOURNALISTS GROUP IDENTITY BETWEEN HISTORICAL LEGACY AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

Faïza Naït-Bouda

Contact: nb_faiza@yahoo.fr

Since the expansion of press at the end of the nineteenth century in France, the journalistic profession has known many changes. The profession has been legally established in 1935 by a French law in response to unions' actions. In France, one can distinguish between two types of journalists: the wage-earners and the *pigistes*. The first ones receive a wage and experience regularity in their employment relationship. The *pigistes* are linked to employers by an open-ended contract, as freelance workers are. The latter had to lobby to become legally empowered, forty years after the wage-earners. It seems that the wage-earners, and social and scientific actors denied their professionalism and their legitimacy as journalists. Nowadays, the situation has hardly changed and when the *pigiste* case is raised, it is considered as a symbol of the precariousness of the journalistic profession. The *pigiste* embodies a status which is, most of the time, far removed from the ideal of freedom and independence that appeared in the early twentieth century.

My research project aims to examine the internet's possibilities, especially concerning mediation and communication, for the *pigistes* in France. A *pigiste* works at home, isolated from his peers, without any 'corporate culture', in a low communication environment. The internet could provide him (or her) with an opportunity to create a '*symbolic environment*' (Proulx, 2004), as it allows group communication and network interaction. As a result, ICTs would meet the needs for information and visibility of a professionally and geographically-

dispersed group, seeking social and professional recognition as the *pigistes*. Online, this group can create a fragile social link but efficient enough to satisfy the need for affiliation and security in a destabilizing environment. Thus, the group of *pigistes* could create a collective (online) identity. If these assumptions would be confirmed, the question would then be how the internet fits into the construction process of identity of this group? And with what effects?

My PhD thesis develops an interdisciplinary approach built on various disciplines such as sociology of work, sociology of journalism and media, theories of cultural industries, sociology of technology and its uses. This approach is very necessary because of the multiplicity and variety of elements to appreciate in order to apprehend the full complexity of the current *pigistes* group identity and its evolution.

THE ROLE OF NON-AVATAR CHARACTERS
IN THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE PLAYER AND
THE VIDEOGAME

Víctor Manuel Navarro

Contact: vnavarro@gmail.com

Videogames have been a recurring topic in the academic world for the last decade, and their importance is growing as time goes by. Videogames, as text, have attained a degree of maturity that allows researchers to focus on what they are and how they work.

Since the early days of Game Studies, there have been two main points of view. The first one, lead by the narratologist Janet Murray, portrays videogames as 'new way of storytelling'. The second one, called Ludology, tries to distinguish games from films, claiming that videogames are not storytelling and that they should be analyzed and judged by their own features. Although it is common to perceive the relationship between the two as a debate, they can also be seen as complementary, and they both agree that what makes videogames different is their interaction.

Rouse describes gameplay as '*how the player is able to interact with the game-world and how that game-world reacts to the choices the player makes*'. Huizinga talks about a 'magic circle' that is created during the play of the game, when the player accepts the rules and the fiction of the game.

I consider that videogames could be analyzed as a two-level structure, in which the first one is the core fiction (consisting of traditional game elements, such as goal, repertoire of abilities and outcome) and the second one is the 'extended' fiction (made of traditional narrative elements, as time/place, narrator and characters). The second level is built upon the first, and can add three functions: embellish the videogame, communicate it (explain the rules to the player) and transform it.

Some of these elements have already been studied (as 'time', where Jesper Juul, one of the main ludologists, distinguished between play time and fictional time). Also the characters can be separated into two groups: the avatar (the characters that the player controls, and, to some extent, the representation of the player in the fictional world of the game), and what in gaming world are called non-playable characters (NPCs). (To use a more specific and academic term, I call them non-avatar characters, that is, the ones that the player has no direct control over.) Rune Klevjer made a deep and useful study of the first but, to date, there is no relevant work about the second. Thus the goal of my thesis is to discover the role of the non-avatar characters in the creation of that 'magic circle' that Huizinga talks about.

COMPUTER AND INTERNET APPROPRIATION: USES AND SIGNIFICANCE AMONG YOUNG MEXICAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Gladys Ortiz Henderson

Contact: ogladys@itesm.mx

Nowadays, the use of the computer and the internet among young university students in Mexico is not only necessary but even mandatory, not only because of the academic activities that students must perform – as professors demand them, but also because of the significance conveyed to the young cultural world when they buy a computer or when they learn how to use it.

The computer-internet device is appropriated by young university students as a visible tool which symbolizes tastes, identities and allegiances. Due to the characteristics of this information and communication technology, young university students create spaces of inter-

action (that could be denominated 'virtual culture') sometimes invisible for the adult world, but essential for the condition of 'being young' at the contemporary era.

In this study, I will argue that among young students in Mexico, the use of the computer and the internet constitutes the final part and last redoubt of the rite of passage between the student stage and the labour-market stage, the latter as the stage in which the young is finally considered an adult with all the rights and obligations. Additionally, it will be important to pay special attention to the different meanings of 'youth' and 'university student' due to the fact that they enclose ethnic, social and gender differences.

This study will be about the computer and internet appropriation of young university students in three different levels: a) the computer-internet as a cultural device, b) the computer-internet as a message or as a text, c) the computer-internet as a culture. The questions that have been formulated are: How have young people adapted to and adopted these new technologies? How are they using them in their daily life? How are the computer and the internet being appropriated? What significance do these technologies attain?

THE RHETORIC OF LEFTIST POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN TURKEY IN THE 1970s

Inan Ozdemir

Contact: iozdemir@media.ankara.edu.tr

Leftist political movements faced the repressive state control in Turkey from their early beginning in the Ottoman Empire and in the first years of the new Turkish Republic. The repression reached its peak in the 1950s' political atmosphere of anti-communism supported by the US. In 1961, a new and more democratic constitution was accepted which recognized social and democratic rights. Trade union rights were within the protection of the new constitution; the freedom of speech was recognized fully and it was the first time in Turkish history that a socialist party could legally be established. So, in the 1960s and especially in 1970s, socialists had the opportunity to start and generate a public debate about their organization and deployment problems using plenty of books, journals, newspapers, pamphlets, posters, flags, wall

paintings, slogans, new anthems, etc. They created a language and tradition for the Turkish Left for (and through) the use of such media. Analysing this language and tradition is very important because although left-wing politics is one of the most important components of democracy and plurality, the Left has never got to play an effective role in parliamentary democracy in Turkey.

This PhD project aims to analyze the rhetoric of the leftist political and social movements in the 1970s in Turkey. In the light of the literature on rhetoric of social movements, this project aims to explore the way left-wing political and social movements constructed their public sphere through their rhetoric, containing the particularities of the leftist movement jargon. Specifically, my research project will focus on their ways of addressing people, the tropes with metaphors, ironies, myths, narrations they use, the main characteristics of their radical media use and the relation between their communication problems and rhetoric. The analysis will focus on the rhetoric of specific political parties (the Turkish Workers Party, the Turkish Communist Party etc.) and socialist organisations (the Confederation of Revolutionist Youth, the Confederation of the Revolutionist Way etc.) of that era.

The methods of the different disciplines (sociology, communication studies, and language/literature studies) will be applied. The media materials will be analyzed via the quantitative and qualitative methods of textual analysis. To investigate the struggles over meaning among the leftist parties and organisations, between them and their rivals, the ideographic analysis of Michael C. McGee (1999) and a frame analysis will be used. Finally, in-depth interviews with the leaders of the parties and organisations will also be conducted.

EUROPEAN IDENTITY AND THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION – POLITICAL MARKETING AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND THE (RE)DEFINITION OF EUROPE

Catarina Passos

Contact: catarinapassos@hotmail.com

Recent globalization processes have been generally demanding from identities that they re-position themselves in the face of the 'new' concepts of space and time, and necessarily also towards otherness and towards means of communicative interaction.

The European project's liberal tradition, seen together with the financial help packs introduced in 1992, the enlargement of 2004 and the draft constitutional treaty (now the treaty of Lisbon) suggests that Europe has again been going through a relevant moment of redefinition at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Communication has therefore been an important issue on the European agenda.

I am carrying out a detailed analysis of the precise communication mechanisms by which the above mentioned European discussion occurs: at the official level (initial, intermediate and final institutional documents on the topics) as well at the (cross-) national level (newspapers and blogs from the UK, France and Portugal).

Following a definition of communication that emphasizes its functions of 'increasing the views in common' or 'the sharing of views' between participants through a process of messages sent and received, it seemed interesting to me to analyse if this relation between the European project and the use of the media for divulging it, was relevant for understanding images of unification/fragmentation in Europe.

Studies on the European public sphere indicate that political agents of the European construction have been failing to set their agenda to the peoples of Europe, which would explain a general lack of knowledge and debate about the European Union in general as well as, in part, poor participation in this project. The Commission's new posture suggests it is perhaps the role of national educational systems and national Parliaments to bring dynamics and structure public dialogue about European affairs, mainly when it comes to issues of democracy and citizenship; and it suggests mainly that it is the role of national political agents and traditional national media agents to adequately set in conjunction the

European agenda so that people can identify with it and perhaps identify with some of its aspects more vehemently (accumulating the European identity).

In the current context of national news formats and specific audiences of traditional media as well as journalistic expertise, political agents need to know who they are talking to on each occasion and they need to be prepared to adapt their discourses accordingly. The 'same message to all' model has become obsolete. In this logic, only sound bites and simple, incisive and attractive symbols of identification tend to survive to being shown/quoted in traditional media. In this context also, specialists in communicative strategies and political marketing, like personal media consultants or spin doctors and opinion leaders, have become the central figures used by national politicians to disseminate their perspectives in the mass media.

However, if the news format of traditional mass media does not easily allow for fully-informed incursions on the European project, their digital counterparts provide those who are willing to learn more and to participate in the European construction, with a more adequate platform for a personalized information access and interaction (accumulating a European citizenship).

THE IMPACT OF TV FOOD COMMERCIALS ON CHILDREN'S FOOD CHOICE AND ATTITUDE

Natalia Pueyo Ayhan

Contact: gafitasdepasta@gmail.com

Watching TV has become the third most time-intense activity of the Spanish children. While they spend seven hours sleeping and four and a half hours attending school, in Spain an average child watches two and a half hours of television and is exposed to 100 commercials a day. A study of the OCU (Organisation of Consumers and Users in Spain, 2007) showed that 56% of those commercials are nutritional products as chocolate, candies, sugared milk products and salty appetisers.

The creative strategy behind these food commercials is based on presenting the product in an interactive, artificial and colourful way, instead of stressing its nutritional or health quality (Elliott, 2007). As a result, children associate food with entertainment and assume that eating

is a leisure activity that provides distraction. In this context, increasing overweight, infantile obesity and wrong eating habits among children have become striking social problems.

Research shows that obesity in childhood is increasing and the classic externality theory of obesity (Schacter, 1971) states that children with weight-problems are more responsive to external stimuli. So, TV food advertising might be an indirect influence on children's food choices. Studies have demonstrated a correlation between the duration of TV viewing and the levels of overweight. However, there is still little evidence on the causal relationship between children's exposure to different types of food commercials and their subsequent food choices.

Therefore, the objective of this research proposal is to assess the impact of food advertising exposure on choice among foods. Moreover, the project attempts to determine children's attention towards food advertisements on television in comparison to non-food advertising, as well as to explore whether overweight or obese children are more interested in food adverts than children with a more normal weight.

TRANSNATIONALIZATION OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE: DISPOSITIONS AND RESOURCES OF THE AUDIENCE AS A CONDITION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROPEAN PUBLIC SPHERE (AN EMPIRICAL TYPOLOGY OF ESTONIAN PUBLICS)

Evelin Pullerits

Contact: evelin.pullerits@gmail.com

My PhD topic arises from the common notion that EU-related news is of little or no interest for the wider audiences as well as for media organisations themselves. Numerous empirical studies have demonstrated this lack of interest from the perspective of media coverage. Connected to this is the ongoing theoretical debate on the emerging European public sphere (EPS), which has also been described as an embryonic EPS or an EPS-in-the-making. Much of the theoretical literature is quite cautious if not sceptical regarding the existence of an actual EPS with respect to the absence of several features which constitute the classical Habermasian concept of the public sphere –

common media, common language, common public interest etc. However, the present debate and empirical research has not touched much upon audience research and the actual experience of people in social networks (professional, non-governmental, educational etc) that stretch over the national boundaries. The hypothesis is that these networks are a basis for building a common (European) social imaginary and are changing attitudes and interest towards the EU and EU-related media coverage. The aim is to describe the characteristics of these changes through multi-level empirical research.

INNOVATION THROUGH COOPERATION: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT AND DESIGN FOR OPEN INNOVATION

Celina Raffl

Contact: Celina.Raffl@sbg.ac.at

In my PhD project I will discuss whether open innovation can contribute to the design of inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Living in a society that is highly depending on information, ICTs are often claimed to be the driving force in ensuring prosperity, social welfare and cohesion. These technologies have the power to exclude people in accessing information (digital divides, lacking computer or media literacy, etc.). At the same time ICTs provide tools that are relatively easy to use, to create and to adapt. Social software, social networks or Web 2.0, as well as the increasing impact of open source, demonstrate that common users are able and willing to participate in the creation of code and content.

Inclusive ICTs could contribute to a cooperative Global Sustainable Information Society (Hofkirchner), i.e. to increase fairness, welfare, prosperity, justice and social cohesion. Freedom, openness and transparency, access to information and education, and equality are the basis for such a society to emerge. Participation and cooperation of diverse stakeholders are crucial components of open innovation. Therefore such forms of innovation require open standards, open access and open content. These are the key principles of many open source projects.

ICT assessment and design provide decisive tools for the evaluation and regulation of emerging technologies, to foster their positive potential and to avoid negative side effects and unintended consequences. The assessment of current ICTs is valuable in outlining potential directions for future technological development. Traditional approaches in technology assessment either focus on the origin of technologies, their evolutionary (historical) character or on the systemic aspect. Such a distinction is not sufficient for ICTs, i.e. technologies that change rather quickly. Therefore my main theoretical framework is based on Evolutionary Systems Theory, i.e. social self-organisation, where ICTs are conceived as dynamic techno-social systems.

Criteria that contribute to the design of inclusive ICTs have to be identified and categorised. Enabling and hindering factors of open innovation processes will be analysed. The findings of this analyses and the normative criteria derived from the theoretical framework will be combined and result in a catalogue which will be the basis for assessing a sample of social software and open source projects. Learning from these projects I want to convey policies and recommendations for the design and governance of inclusive ICTs.

CULTURAL POLICIES AND DEVELOPMENT: APPROACHING MEDIA CONSUMPTION BY ETHNIC MINORITIES IN BARCELONA (2008–2009)

Nuria Reguero i Jiménez

Contact: nuria.reguero@uab.cat

Media represents a symbolic and physical social sphere. As many other day-to-day relationships, media responds to certain people's needs and takes a particular form in each social context, which determines its characteristics and the role it plays in people's lives. The significance of the social functions of media continues to increase, among other reasons because of the cultural conflicts in urban space, which often raises concern among governments and other key social actors.

As Néstor Garcia Canclini (1995) states, consumption's essential function is its capacity for giving meaning to the reality: Consumers shape an intelligible universe from the products they choose. Studying the uses and consumption of cultural goods allows understanding part

of the main ingredients in the symbolic universe's construction, which nourishes personal identity and the sense of belonging to a group or a territory.

In this sense, cultural policy, understood as the skill to work with the symbolic world of a community, can improve its diversity and social cohesion. Consequently, this improves also its social and relational capital, being itself a development tool (Rausell, 2007: 41).

This PhD project aims to shed light on this matter departing from ethnic media consumption and uses to focus on cultural, media and development policies in Spain.

I also intend to analyse social functions derived from the cultural consumption (the virtual and physical contact between immigrant and local community; the building of intercultural/multicultural networks; integration/exclusion; the relation with physical spaces, etc.) as well as the stimuli and barriers that are conditioning media consumption (economy, language, gender, education, values, etc.)

Through the description of the migrants' media uses and conditionings, it is also intended to identify local and transnational communicative networks.

Finally, the thesis will explore the role of cultural communication consumption within the framework of the policies of cultural consumption and immigration in Catalonia and Barcelona (2008–2009) within the framework of Spanish national guidelines. Specifically, I will be paying attention to the sensitivities and the ways how communication and cultural policies respond to the communicative phenomena of foreign population groups. It is also intended to understand how new publics are the receivers of communication, culture and development policies and how they can re-appropriate them and make alternative consumption circuits.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE AND ITS DEVELOPMENT: NEW THEORETICAL AND APPLIED PERSPECTIVES

Riitta Saastamoinen

Contact: riitta.saastamoinen@jyu.fi

Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) is a current research interest in several disciplines and one of the main topics in intercultural communication training. ICC refers to knowledges, skills, and attitudes needed to interact effectively and appropriately with people who have different cultural backgrounds.

The increase in multiculturalism and intercultural communication in societies has augmented the need for ICC. To develop it, effective intercultural communication training is needed. However, several scholars have pointed out that the theoretical background of ICC is inadequate for training purposes. Furthermore, only few studies and theories have focused on the process of ICC learning even though that understanding is crucial for promoting the teaching of ICC.

This PhD project aims to clarify, increase, and deepen the knowledge of ICC, particularly on how it is learned and how that that learning could be supported. The theoretical background of this study is inter-disciplinary, including views of Intercultural Communication, Cross-Cultural Psychology, Educational Sciences, and Speech Communication. The study consists of a theoretical sub-study, an empirical sub-study, and a synthesis. Both sub-studies are independent qualitative analyses that will describe ICC and its development. The first study will gather researchers' views and theories on the topic. In the second study, data will consist of conceptions and experiences of members of multicultural groups. In the synthesis, the theoretical and empirical perspectives will be integrated into one multidimensional framework. The framework will be applied to contribute to ICC training and education.

Theoretically, the study aspires to describe and discuss the pheno-menon from currently relevant perspectives. Earlier, ICC has been mainly studied as competences that are needed when going to a foreign country or when communicating with members of specific national cultures. These perspectives are not sufficient to explore all the aspects of ICC that are necessary in the modern multicultural societies. In this study ICC is approached as competence for intercultural interaction

needed: 1/in any culture, also our own; 2/with communicators and in situations that are culturally diverse, i.e. individuals with hybrid cultural identities or situations where several cultural values, rules, etc. are equally present; 3/for creating and negotiating new cultures, common to all participants (3rd cultures, intercultures).

In addition, as the ICC theorizing and research has been criticized of being culturally biased, too Western, and for using researcher-imposed approaches, this study emphasizes to need to discuss ICC as culturally diverse as the interviewees define it.

MUSEUMS IN PANAMA. A SOCIO-HISTORICAL APPROACH WITH A FOCUS ON DIVERSITY, COMPLEMENTED BY AN EXPLORATION OF THE ROLE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Ana Sanchez Laws

Contact: ana.laws@infomedia.uib.no

Museums worldwide face the challenges posed by local needs and contexts, confronted with global trends, homogenization and the complex demands of their increasingly diverse audiences. In this thesis, I will analyze the role museums play in addressing issues of diversity in Panama, a place whose role as passage and destination exposed it (from its early history on) to the challenges of diversity. The country has for a long time received immigrants and fortune seekers: Spanish colonizers during the sixteenth century; Chinese migrants who came to work at the Trans-isthmian Railroad during the 1850s Gold Rush; and labourers from the United States, Europe and the West-Indies who came to work on the Canal construction between the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. Panama also opened its doors to exiles of Latin American dictatorships in the 1970s and 1980s, and in the 1990s to those returning after Panama's own dictatorship ended. Most recently it has encouraged those wishing to escape the high costs of living in North America and Europe to create a real-estate frenzy from 2000 onwards. All of these new residents have become, in one way or another, Panamanians. This history of migrations, permanencies and change, makes of Panama an ideal starting point to inquire into the representations of diversity in museums.

I will focus especially on how Panamanian museums participate in the institutional project of a pluralistic society in Panama. I argue that museums are important instances to help develop a sense of identity and belonging with their diverse audiences, as well as share with these audiences the search for an understanding of the responsibilities that democracy and globalization demand. I investigate how museum representations in Panama participate in the institutional redefinition of ideas such as 'nation' and 'diversity.'

For the analysis of museums and issues of diversity in Panama, I have chosen a series of museums that I claim to be a representative sample of the different types of museums and stakeholders to be found in the country. I look at the history of the emergence of these museums, the current representations and institutional structures, complemented by the analysis of the development of a series of new media products that focus on how (and to what extent) it is possible to include minority voices and debated topics in these museums with the aid of technology.

THE ACCESSION OF TURKEY TO THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE MEDIA: AN ANALYSIS OF THE MEDIA COVERAGE AND PERCEPTION OF THE RECIPIENTS REGARDING THE EUROPEAN-TURKISH DEBATE IN 7 COUNTRIES

Aynur Sarisakaloglu

Contact: aynur.sarisakaloglu2@sbg.ac.at

Turkey's membership in the European Union has been a subject of discussion among politicians and academics in the media for years. None of the present 27 EU member states has had such a lengthy accession process to go through as Turkey, neither have they been engaged into such a political debate and witnessed such a polarized public opinion.

In the debate on a possible EU accession, both in the EU member states as well as in Turkey, controversial views have emerged which are expressed particularly through the media. The assumptions in the debate include the questions of cultural diversity; the geographic and historic position of Turkey; the question of the western value system; whether an Islamic country like Turkey would jeopardise the identity of the EU; or

Turkey being too big and thus a financial burden for the European Union.

This study approaches this topic by a communicator and recipient orientated perspective and describes the relationship between the media and the perspective of the recipients in relation to the European-Turkish debate on EU membership of Turkey.

The main research question is: What topical focus points exhibit the reporting on Turkey in the framework of the EU accession process and to what extent do these reflect the attitudes and opinions of the recipients of these debates?

Regarding the media perspective on the accession of Turkey to the European Union, an analysis of seven countries' media coverage will be conducted based on print media. To analyse the recipients' point of view, a secondary analysis of the Eurobarometer Studies will be conducted. The aim is to see, how the accession of Turkey to the European Union is debated in the newspapers in Austria, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The analysis of the Eurobarometer will help to determine the opinions on the EU membership of Turkey prevailing in the respective countries.

The PhD's theoretical basis will be a literature study about the European-Turkish discussion in public. To answer the research questions, a diversity of approaches and theories of communication and media studies will be combined, including the news value theory and agenda-setting approaches. Furthermore, a comparison of international media systems and the role of mass communication in political processes and in the European public opinion will be of great importance.

The reporting about the accession of Turkey to the European Union in the daily newspapers will be analysed in the framework of a qualitative and quantitative media content analysis. The secondary analysis of the Eurobarometer data will be conducted in order to understand the attitudes and opinions of recipients in EU member states. Through the comparative analysis the results of the primary data collection will be compared with the results of the secondary analysis. In addition, the comparative approaches will attempt to find out country-specific differences and similarities of reporting.

ACCOUNTS OF BIOSCIENCE IN SOCIETY.
US AS SUBJECTS IN SCIENCE JOURNALISM

Vienna Setälä

Contact: vienna.setala@helsinki.fi

In my work I will look into the accounts of science's social status and role of bioscience in the articulation of the subject in science journalism. The thesis will consist of 3–4 case studies/articles in which I will analyse public discussions or defined writings on matters related to the biological human, in the Finnish quality dailies and science magazines. My main research questions are: Which theoretical paradigms of science communication and public understanding of science (PUS) prevail in the public discourse? How do these enacted notions of science in society relate to the subject positions and identities we are offered as readers by the 'bioscience speech', e.g. the popular evolutionary discourses and risk-oriented health promotion?

The academic angle of the thesis is in the critical paradigm of PUS and science communication. The silent theoretical anchor of my work lies within the critical discourse theory by Michel Pêcheux and has a psychoanalytical grasp in its notions of texts and subjectivity. By recognizing the hidden levels of speech, this paradigm provides us with alternative interpretations as well as new perspectives. As my work covers norms and knowledge based on biology, I also built on some Foucauldian concepts. As methods, I apply frame analysis and critical discourse analysis.

In the first part of my project I addressed the broadsheet press fuss aroused by the Finns' supposed low acceptance of evolutionary theory, according to the journal Science. I show that the claims about 'the superstitious Finland' were ambiguous in the light of earlier surveys on scientific literacy. The leading discourse of the debate was based on the canonical deficit model of PUS. I argue that the antagonistic representation of social relations gave the debate resemblance to the Science Wars, and offered a platform for promoting rationalist discourse and evolutionary psychology as legitimate social science. By using evolutionary theory as a metonymy for the scientific world view, the debate over evolution's scientific status was turned into a promotion of science's cultural status.

In my ongoing work, I analyse the recent 'rebellion against fat' campaign by the Finnish main newspaper, with an aim to catch the tacit value commitments regarding expertise and the relation between science and citizenry in this risk fat discourse. In the forthcoming work I will focus on evolutionary topics, to make the best use of my educational background in genetics and evolutionary biology. By calling into question a sloppy, and value-bound usage of biological concepts in social issues, as well as revealing the prevailing rhetorical notions of science communication in the public discourse, I wish to increase the public trust in science in the long term.

MEDIA IDENTITIES AND YOUTH IN LATVIA: MEDIA APPROPRIATION OF LATVIAN AND RUSSIAN SPEAKING YOUTH IN YOUTH CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Laura Suna

Contact: laura.suna@uni-bremen.de

Related to the processes of individualisation and globalization of media communication one can speak about new forms of processes, of *vergesellschaftung* (Weber, 1922; Krotz, 2005), which has an impact on individuals, their relationships, the self-perceptions and orientations, as well as on social and cultural institutions. Andreas Hepp (2004) speaks in this context about *deterritorial* communities, a network of imagined communities, existing across different territories and nations – i.e. transculturally. Some examples of such communities are diasporas, commercial youth cultures and other popular culture groups that emerge in the process of the appropriation of cultural-industrial products in the concrete translocal world.

The main objective of the PhD project is to explore the community and identity formation of Latvian and Russian speaking youth in Latvia from a perspective of media and communication science and youth sociology. Media and communication science (in the tradition of cultural studies) deals with current socio-cultural changes accompanied by the processes of globalisation, mediatisation and individualisation and the media appropriation in ethnically heterogenic societies (Hall, 1990; Gillespie, 1995, 2002; Hepp, 2005, 2007; Krotz, 2001). Youth sociology deals with new forms of identity and community building in the context

of the appropriation of popular culture and media (Vogelgesang, 1999; Hitzler, 2001).

The combination of these two perspectives is useful since media and media communication pervade everyday life, leisure time and interpersonal communication as well as the societal perception of culture, social relationships and identity. Today's youth is growing up in an environment that is to a high degree shaped by the media. Contemporary youth is the first generation who gets to know culture as a media culture (Vogelgesang, 2002).

Young people are playing computer games, watching TV, surfing the internet, generating communities, social relationships and identities in a new cultural sphere. Considering these facts, the PhD project (based on qualitative research) deals with following research questions: How far does popular culture have a potential to mediate transculturally between Latvian and Russian speaking youth in Latvia? Which features demonstrate the group identities developed in the appropriation process of popular culture in youth cultural communities?

The research project deals with young people's articulations of identity not in subcultural youth cultures but more in peer groups and communities with youth cultural characteristics.

BEYOND UTOPIAS AND DYSTOPIAS: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO STUDYING WEBLOG USAGE IN LEBANON AND SYRIA

Maha Taki

Contact: mahataki@gmail.com

The internet and its potential effects on society is a widely debated subject in academic and popular literature. Yet many attempts at studying the internet as a cultural phenomenon have tended to remain within the confines of a virtual world that is perceived as something remote and separate to the offline world. The nature of the impact of this technology will vary according to how government regulations, economic factors and users collectively organize it. Therefore we need to understand the interplay between the offline and online world in order to unfold the way that technology is being appropriated by different societies. Taking into consideration the larger macro-level dynamics of

power and access, affecting each community as well as users' own individual environments and social contexts, provides a richer culturally sensitive approach to studying the internet.

Using the above framework, my PhD dissertation explores and compares the process of blogging and the blogosphere in Lebanon and Syria. Through face-to-face ethnographic interviews with bloggers, online participant observation, a semi-structured questionnaire and face-to-face interviews with internet service providers and others involved in providing internet, I am exploring the structural and cultural variables that have allowed actors to understand and use blogs in a way that is particular to Lebanese and Syrian culture. In these societies that are closed and private, the blogosphere has constituted a complex and contradictory experience of modernity. Since the internet and the frames in which users interact allow for a different kind of communication to occur, how do bloggers negotiate social interactions online? How do they choose to articulate their identities? Why do they choose to blog? Are affiliations in the offline world the same online? How is anonymity used and for which reasons? By understanding the complex environments from which these bloggers emerge as a starting point, the research will contribute to the literature on the uses of the internet in the Arab world and the corresponding blogosphere, the digital divide and online methodologies.

NATIONAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC DEBATE ON CITIZENSHIP AND INTEGRATION IN A MULTICULTURAL EUROPE

Camilla Tønnevold

Contact: camilla.tonnevold@infomedia.uib.no

Through a comparative analysis of the media discourses represented in the national media coverage in Norway, the United Kingdom and Germany, this project will show and discuss the arguments employed in the public debate concerning social and cultural issues of common concern throughout Europe. The project thus focuses on how media discourses partake in a public debate on a European level. The research takes as its starting point the question of the national media's role in contemporary Europe: How the media discourses frame issues of diversity and polity, what is the relationship between media's framing of

the EU and the nation state on the one hand, and their framing of issues related to diversity on the other?

The case used as basis for the analysis of media discourses in this regard, is the coverage of the riots in Paris in October and November 2005. They started out when two teenage boys were electrocuted while trying to escape from the police. The riots had a very violent character, and through the media the riots soon came to be viewed in a broader social and historical context. The French approach to immigration and integration soon came under sharp criticism, and questions were raised of citizenship and identity in light of the French model of liberalism. How did the news media in other European countries cover and discuss these events, and how did they relate to issues of similar character in their own countries, who present different political approaches to the same questions, challenges and problems?

The coverage of the riots in Paris in the aforementioned countries is in this project seen as an example of the debate on a European level, and hence the project takes as a premise the existence of a European public sphere, where the European public sphere is perceived as a '*pluralistic ensemble of issue-oriented publics that exists once the same issues are discussed simultaneously and within a shared frame of reference*' (Lingenberg, 2006: 123). This is, however, debated widely among scholars in Europe. A dominant conclusion in these discussions has been that if such a thing as a European public sphere is going to emerge, then it has to develop from the national media, which also is the starting point for this project.

ASSESSING THE CONDITIONS OF EUROPEANIZATION OF A NATIONAL PUBLIC SPHERE: INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF EU POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN LITHUANIA

Ausra Vinciuniene

Contact: a.vinciuniene@vks.vdu.lt

Democratic problems of the European Union, such as the lack of legitimacy and transparency of European political institutions, the absence of a real basis for public debates, weak citizen participation as well as many other problems, have gained a considerable interest among social scientists and communication researchers from all over Europe. Some scholars argue that, as a result of intensive political and economic

integration in Europe, significant changes in the spaces of political communication can be observed. The broad applicability of the democratic governing model made up of different levels of political institutions (supranational, national as well as regional and local) has challenged communicative relations between national publics and state-centred systems. Alongside shifts in decision-making (from domestic to EU-centred), a broader public engagement in European public affairs and the reorientation of priorities from the purely national to the predominantly transnational (European) is needed.

Research indicates that ordinary citizens treat the European Union as a complex supranational polity which is distant from domestic political realities. For instance, some of the research done in Lithuania confirms a rapidly growing interest in European political affairs among citizens. Nevertheless, the representative Eurobarometer surveys show that only one third of Lithuanians feel that their knowledge about the EU is sufficient and two fifths of respondents claim to have no information about the ways and possibilities of active participation in the EU's political processes. Polls also show that Lithuanians prefer to contact national governments and services on matters decided on the EU level. Despite the different attempts to shed light on the European political communication process, a more concise understanding of different EU communication aspects is lacking. One of such aspects which needs more research, is the performance of national governments and a range of institutions on the national, regional and local levels in EU member states that are indeed responsible for communicating their mandates and policies to the citizens.

The main objective of the PhD thesis is to investigate the conditions for the Europeanization of the public sphere in Lithuania with regard to the role and performance of different political actors (institutions, politicians, communication professionals, NGOs, etc., on EU, national, regional and local levels) and mechanisms of constant interaction of these actors with other counterparts of the EU's political communication process (namely media institutions and organizations, journalists, correspondents and editors, as well as the public).

COMMUNICATING AND MANAGING THE COMPETITIVE COUNTRY IMAGE: THE CASE OF JAPAN AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR OTHER COUNTRIES

Aurelijus Zykas

Contact: zyykai@gmail.com

In the rationally managed image of a country (or a region or a city), communication is nowadays often treated as a panacea to strengthen the common identity, to develop tourism, and to increase the country's exports. Many developed and even underdeveloped countries and regions worldwide are trying to apply its tools and theories, seeking for a miracle.

In the 21th century, place (or nation or country) branding is the main leading approach in the field of country image communication, proposing several qualitatively new shifts in comparison to the 20th century approaches, for instance that of public diplomacy. Some of these shifts are raising attention towards the notions of primary communication and identity politics.

Japan is a country famous for its positive and strong image throughout the world. For instance, according to the Nation Brands Index of 2007, Japan was the only Asian nation to make the top ten, and many cultural terms are associated with this country worldwide. Meanwhile, other East Asian countries do not experience such success in the world of mass perception, in spite of having a long and rich history, and strong cultural traditions.

The country image communication practices, managed by governments, could explain this imbalance. Usually, when talking about a country's image, the economic factors are emphasized, but comparative research shows that Japanese government's investments in its image communication are not very strong, and its secondary communication is not innovative.

Obviously, the reason of the strength of the Japanese image is neither the big amounts of money nor the fancy commercials, but the well-structured and smoothly managed country image communication apparatus, as well as the 'factory of identity', producing the strong cultural symbols, feed by *nihonjinron* (a genre of texts that focus on issues of Japanese national and cultural identity) and the positive cultural nationalism.

Despite the fact that this apparatus, of course, has many components inherited from the local traditions and is specific for Japan, many of its successful aspects and practices can be structurally applied in the other countries, not excluding Europe, which recently is facing identity and common image problems.

The thesis is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the theoretical aspects of country image communication, emphasising the place branding approach, and proposing the country branding triangular model. The second part analyses the case of Japan, analysing the structural apparatus (institutions and strategies) of government-managed communication. The third part raises a question of the possibility to apply some of the practices to other countries, particularly Lithuania.

NOTES

[1]   Naschi is the youth organisation of United Russia, Putin's party.

About the authors

Marco Bräuer is a PhD student at the Department of Empirical Research/Political Communication of the Institute of Media and Communication Science at the Ilmenau University of Technology. He works as a research assistant for the OPAALS NoE. His research interests are in social movements, political communication, organisational communication and electronic democracy.
Contact: marco.braeuer@tu-ilmenau.de

Bertrand Cabedoche is Professor of information and communication at the University of Grenoble III, in charge of the international development of GRESEC, a well-known French research team in the field of information and communication. He has worked on the representations of the European Union in the main member states' newspapers. He has also been working on media discourses on North-South relations since the 1970s. And at the same time, he has been working on the ways society is constructed when it becomes the subject of public (polemic) debates (for instance in the case with energies or nanotechnologies).
Contact: Bertrand.Cabedoche@u-grenoble3.fr

Nico Carpentier is an assistant Professor working at the Communication Studies Department of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB – Free University of Brussels). He is co-director of the VUB research centre CEMESO and a board member of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA – formerly ECCR). His theoretical focus is on discourse theory, his research interests are situated in the relationship between media, journalism, politics and culture, especially towards social domains as war & conflict, ideology, participation and democracy.
Contact: nico.carpentier@vub.ac.be
Webpage: http://homepages.vub.ac.be/~ncarpent/

Peter Dahlgren is Professor of media and communication studies at Lund University, Sweden. He has also taught at Stockholm University, as well as at universities in New York City. He has been an invited visiting scholar at several other universities, and is active in European academic networking. His work focuses on the themes of media, democracy, late modernity, and cultural processes; recent projects have dealt with young citizens and their use of newer media. He is the author of many articles and author or editor of several books, including Young Citizens and New Media (2007) and Media and Political Participation (in press).
Contact: peter.dahlgren@mkv.lu.se

Maren Hartmann is an assistant Professor for communication and media sociology at the University of the Arts (UdK) Berlin. She has worked at several different universities in the past, in the UK, Belgium and Germany, both as a researcher and lecturer. Her fields of interest include – amongst others – cyberculture, media non-use, appropriation concepts. She has published widely in the field. Her most recent book is the co-edited After the Mobile Phone? (Frank and Timme, 2008). Maren is also the Chair of the Digital Communication and Culture section within ECREA as well as a vice-chair of the Media Sociology section within the German Communication Association (DGPuK).
Contact: hartmann@udk-berlin.de

François Heinderyckx is Professor at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (Department of Information and Communication Sciences) where he teaches media sociology, political communication and research methods. His research interests include journalism and news media, electoral campaigns, e-government and information and communication technologies. He is project leader at the Institut des Sciences de la Communication du CNRS (France) and President of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA).
Contact: fheinder@ulb.ac.be

Anastasia Kavada has been employed as a post-doctoral researcher by the Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI) of the University of Westminster since September 2007. She obtained an MA in communication and received her PhD from the same university with a thesis on the 'movement for alternative globalization' and its use of the internet. The thesis focused on the European Social Forum, one of the most important events organised by the movement in Europe, analyzing

the connection between the internet and decision-making, decentralized organizing, and the development of solidarity and a sense of common identity among movement participants. Her research interests refer to the role of the internet in international campaigns and political coalitions, in practices of citizenship and democracy, as well as in the formation of political identities and feelings of belonging to political groups.
Contact: A.Kavada@westminster.ac.uk

Beybin Kejanlıoğlu is an Associate Professor at Ankara University, Faculty of Communication. She got her Master's degrees from METU (political science-1989) and CMCR, Leicester (mass communication – 1991), and her PhD from Ankara University (communications – 1998). Her areas of interest are social theory and media studies, critical theory, political communication, intellectual history and communication research. Her books in Turkish are: Media and Communication in Critical Terms – of the Frankfurt School (2005); Transformation of Media Structures in Turkey (2004); and Media Policies: Dynamics of TV Broadcasting in Turkey (with S. Çelenk and G. Adaklı, 2001). She also published articles and book chapters in Turkish and English on press coverage of EU-Turkey relations, of general elections, of war in Iraq; on the public sphere and the media; on Turkish broadcasting policy; and on the history of communication and media studies.
Contact: Beybin.Kejanlioglu@media.ankara.edu.tr

Jeong Hee Kim is a PhD candidate at the Department of Media and Communications at the London School of Economics. His research interests are the mobile phone and the internet, and the cultural use of them. His PhD project investigates the use of blogs, socio-political interaction and social control in South Korea. His research also focuses on theoretical and methodological issues of de-westernising the public sphere and the role of silence in shaping deliberative processes.
Contact: j.kim@lse.ac.uk

The main interest of **Jens E. Kjeldsen** is rhetoric in public and political communication. He graduated from the Department of Rhetoric at Copenhagen University on a thesis on political television debates. He did a PhD. Degree (dr. art) at the Department of Media Studies in Bergen with a dissertation on visual rhetoric. The dissertation shows how the traditional verbal rhetoric is also a visual discipline and how the visual arts are also rhetorical disciplines. It discusses the power of pictures, states that we can argue with pictures, and illustrates how people

rhetorically use pictures and visual expressions in public communication campaigns and election campaigns. He now works on a project on how we should conceive the traditional concept of the rhetorical situation in our present hyper-mediated and fragmented world.
Contact: Jens.Kjeldsen@infomedia.uib.no

Maria Kyriakidou is a PhD student in the Department of Media and Communications at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her PhD study explores the mediation of cosmopolitan discourses through images of distant suffering. Her research interests include globalisation and cosmopolitanism, television news, media representations of suffering and discourse studies. Her research has been supported by the Greek State Scholarship Foundation.
Contact: M.Kyriakidou@lse.ac.uk

Roy Langer is Professor of corporate communication at Aarhus University, Aarhus School of Business. He obtained his PhD at Copenhagen Business School, has taught at Roskilde University and has been a visiting professor at universities in Germany, the U.K., the U.S., and New Zealand. His prize awarded research and teaching reflect a broad variety of interests and topics within the fields of organizational, corporate and marketing communication, as well as in research methodology. Roy is an editorial board member of international journals such as Management Communication Quarterly, Corporate Reputation Review and Journal of Applied Marketing.
Contact: royl@asb.dk

Denis McQuail is emeritus Professor and honorary Fellow of the School of Communication Research, University of Amsterdam where he held the chair of Mass Communication from 1977 until 1997. He is author of the textbook McQuail's Mass Communication Theory (fifth edition, 2005). Other recent publications are: Media Accountability and Freedom of Publication (OUP, 2003); News of Politics, Politics of News (edited with Doris Graber and Pippa Norris, 2nd edition, CQ Press, 2007). He is an editor of the European Journal of Communication.
Contact: 106233.3000@compuserve.com

Fredrik Miegel is senior Lecturer at the department of Media and Communication Studies at Lund University, Sweden. He has a PhD in sociology and his previous research has been primarily within the fields of youth and popular culture, sociological theory and the philosophy of

social science. Since September 2006 (until September 2009) he is a researcher within the European research project Young People, the internet and Civic Participation (European Union's 6th FP).
Contact: fredrik.Miegel@mkj.lu.se

Gabriel Moreno is a PhD candidate at the Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI), University of Westminster. He completed in 2004 the MA programme in Transnational Communication and Global Media at Goldsmiths College, University of London. His professional background is in journalism, which he practiced for 13 years in different news outlets in Mexico, including Reuters' news bureau in Mexico City. As a journalist, he was designated as electoral observer by the U.S. State Department during the presidential elections held in 2000. He is a recipient of such well-known awards as British Council's Chevening Scholarship, CAMRI's doctoral scholarship and the Freedom Forum's Journalist-in-Residence fellowship in the United States.
Contact: gabrielmoren@gmail.com

Faïza Naït-Bouda is a PhD student at the Department of Information and Communication Sciences of Stendhal University in Grenoble, France. Her research focuses on journalistic identities with the pigistes group identity (French freelancers) as an exemplary case. Her study focuses on the French journalists' identity construction process through professional discourses, taking into account the actors' identity strategies within the journalistic sphere and the social logics from a socio-economical perspective.
Contact: nb_faiza@yahoo.fr

Kaarle Nordenstreng is Professor of journalism and mass communication at the University of Tampere, Finland, Scandinavia's oldest institution for journalism education. He has served in various committees in media and higher education and directed several projects under the Academy of Finland. Internationally he has been consultant to Unesco (1969–82), Vice-President of IAMCR (1972–88) and President of IOJ (1976–90). He has published 30 books, including Television Traffic – A One-way Street? (with Varis, 1974), Beyond National Sovereignty (Ed. with Schiller, 1993) and Russian Media Challenge (Ed. with Vartanova and Zassoursky, 2001), as well as 400 articles in mostly international platforms (see http://www.uta.fi/jour/laitos/nordenstrengpubl.html).
Contact: Kaarle.Nordenstreng@uta.fi

Tobias Olsson is senior Lecturer and associate Professor in media and communication studies at Växjö University, Sweden. He is also a researcher at Lund University. Since September 2006 (until September 2009) he is a researcher within the European research project Young People, the internet and Civic Participation (European Union's 6th FP). Tobias Olsson has published a number of texts on issues of new media and citizenship, most recently in journals as for instance New Media and Society, Javnost – The Public, and Information, Communication & Society. He has also contributed to several edited volumes, such as Sonia Livingstone and Kirsten Drotner's International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture (2008).
Contact: tobias.olsson@vxu.se or tobias.olsson@mkj.lu.se

Manuel Parés i Maicas is emeritus Professor of the Facultat de Ciències de la Comunicació, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, principally in the field of political communication and ethics of communication. He is one of the founders of the European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School, and was its coordinator for 10 years. Manuel Parés i Maicas is honorary president of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (president 1998–2002), coordinator of the Unesco chair of Communication of the University, member of the Scientific Council of the Maison de Sciences de l'Homme, Paris 13, member of the Consell de la Informació de Catalunya (Catalan Information Council) and of the Federación de Asociaciones de la Prensa de España (Spanish Federation of Press Associations). He has published a considerable number of books and attended many international conferences.
Contact: Manuel.Pares@uab.cat

Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt works as a media studies researcher in the Institute of Journalism and Communication at University of Tartu. Her research interests have been focused on the users and uses of the ICTs and are moving to the domains of application of these concepts to understanding political communication, participation in the online environments, and museum communication, with the new online technologies. Her interest in museums brought her to collaborate with the Estonian National Museum on museum communication and digitalisation projects. She has published articles in several international journals like The information Society and Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace, and edited volumes, such as J. Berleur,

M. Nurminen and J. Impagliazzo's Social Informatics: An information society for all? (2006) looking at the social aspects of ICTs use and users.
Contact: pille.vengerfeldt@ut.ee

Irena Reifová, PhD, is a Lecturer and researcher at Charles University in Prague (the Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Media Studies). She teaches courses on critical media theories, cultural studies and media audiences. Her major scholar interests are in television popular culture; she writes especially about the cult of Czechoslovak and Czech serial television narratives. She is a co-author of a student book on quantitative content analysis, editor of the Dictionary of Media Communication, and translates media studies works from English. She is a member of the editorial board of the Czech and Slovak journal of media studies Mediální studia.
Contact: Reifova@seznam.cz

Ebba Sundin is assistant Professor in media and communications studies at the School of Education and Communication, Jönköping University, Sweden. Her research interests include media and children with a special focus on children and news. She has studied children and newspaper reading in Sweden (Cartoon Characters and Terror War) and in Canada (Brand New Planet, a Canadian Newspaper Project for Children). At present, she is engaged in the international project internet appropriation among university students, a comparative study between Sweden, France, Mexico and Canada. She teaches courses in journalism, research methods and media theory and is responsible for the master programme in international communication.
Contact: Ebba.Sundin@hlk.hj.se
Webpage: http://www.hlk.hj.se/doc/6868

Maha Taki began her PhD in 2006 at the University of Westminster in London where she was awarded a three-year doctoral scholarship by the Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI). Her current research explores and compares how the internet in general and weblogs in particular are being used in Lebanon and Syria. She is looking at the structural and cultural variables that determine how actors appropriate technologies in their everyday life. Her research interests include: digital divide, new media research methods, virtual ethnography, comparative ethnography, technologies for development.
Contact: mahataki@gmail.com

Jeffrey Wimmer, *1972, is currently a Lecturer and postdoctoral research Fellow at the Institute of Media, Communication & Information (IMKI), University of Bremen (Germany). Since 2005 he is a member of the network Integrative Theories in Communication Science supported by the German research foundation (DFG). In 1999 he gained a diploma in social sciences (University Erlangen-Nuernberg) on the topic of the social change of Indian cities and its relationship with the computer industry in India. In 2006 he gained his PhD (University Munich) on the topic of modern counter-public and public spheres. His primary research interests are: sociology of media communication, digital games, theories of public and counter-public spheres, international communication. He has several English and German publications on public and counter-public spheres, digital games, and international communication.
Contact: wimmer@uni-bremen.de