

# Changing Magazine Journalism

## *Key Trends in Norwegian Women's Magazines*

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### **Abstract**

This article analyses developments in Norwegian magazine journalism in the last decade, focusing on the broad and varied spectrum of magazines targeting women. The analysis is based on multiple methods and data sources, aiming to connect the production and reception of magazine journalism to the texts of magazines. This article will identify and discuss five key trends: fragmentation, digitalization, Nordic inspiration, redefinition of the political and beautification. The trends are discussed in light of public sphere theory and selected orientations in Nordic journalism research.

**Keywords:** magazines, lifestyle journalism, fragmentation, digitalization, public sphere

### **Introduction**

In the past ten years, a series of technological, financial, political and cultural processes have contributed to profound changes in magazine journalism. Some developments are similar in magazines and other media, while other challenges and opportunities are particular to different forms of journalism on different media platforms. This article analyses changes in magazine journalism, using Norway as a case and relating the discussion to a Nordic context.

The magazine market of the Nordic countries has been described as pan-Nordic (Harrie 2009), and there are particularly close relations between the Scandinavian countries both in terms of ownership and journalistic content. While focusing on Norway, this article will draw on Nordic research literature and point to challenges and transitions that might be relevant in other Nordic countries as well. The main research question is: What are the main developments in magazine journalism in the last decade, and how are these related to broader processes of journalistic change?

What is magazine journalism? Here, the term “magazine journalism” will refer to the editorial contents of *magazines* – the periodical publications of the weekly press.<sup>1</sup> The word ‘magazine’ originally meant ‘storehouse,’ describing something that contains a variety of elements (Gripsrud 1999: 12, Johnson and Prijatelj 2007: 3, Holmes 2007: 516). When in the context of media, the word ‘magazine’ might refer to a mixed broadcast programme or newspaper supplement, but it is most strongly associated with periodical publications.

In Norway, the weekly press is a strikingly gender-divided media channel. Women are strongly overrepresented among magazine readers (Vaage 2007).<sup>2</sup> In industry clas-

sifications, there are currently 17 women's magazines compared to 3 men's magazines (Mediebedriftene 2013). The women's magazine category includes an increasing number of glossy women's magazines, as well as family weeklies such as Norway's top-selling magazine *Hjemmet* (Mediebedriftene 2013). Other growing publication categories – such as interior design magazines – are also mainly composed of magazines that target women.<sup>3</sup> This article will primarily focus on changes in women's magazine journalism, but employ a broad definition that includes *magazines for which women are the only or the main target group*. The analysis will include examples from interior design magazines, parenting magazines, gossip magazines and general interest women's magazines.

Journalistic change can operate and be expressed on several levels. Conditions of production affect the journalistic content of magazines, and audience responses – and editorial interpretations of these – can also explain processes of change. In order to grasp such connections, the spheres of production and reception must be connected to the texts of magazine journalism. This can best be achieved by taking a multi-method approach, and my analysis will be based on several methods and data sources – drawing from research on magazines over several years. The first source of data is *interviews with magazine readers*, conducted in the form of a questionnaire with 125 respondents and in-depth interviews with a smaller group.<sup>4</sup> The second source is *interviews with magazine editors* in key positions in Norwegian magazine publishing.<sup>5</sup> The third source is *qualitative content analysis* of a variety of magazines from 2007 onwards.<sup>6</sup> The fourth source is *market information and statistics* based on annual sales and readership reports, and analysis of media business news concerning the magazine industry.<sup>7</sup> Material from these data sources will be combined in the analysis of changing trends in Norwegian women's magazine journalism.

In order to situate the analysis in the broader field of Nordic journalism research, the analytical framework will take two different starting points. First, a short review of Norwegian and Nordic magazine research will underlie the need for further research on magazine journalism. Secondly, selected orientations from Nordic journalism research will highlight important challenges that concern magazine journalism. Both of these starting points suggest that the *political* dimensions of magazine journalism warrant particular attention. The following analysis will draw on the public sphere theory and its application to journalism research. The analysis will be structured through the identification and discussion of five key trends in Norwegian women's magazines.

## **Norwegian and Nordic Magazine Research**

Magazines are under-researched in Norwegian media research. The weekly press is not included in histories of the press (Dahl et al. 2010, Ottosen et al. 2002), and no comprehensive work on magazine history exists. However, a brief but informative introduction is found in a report about the cultural and societal significance of magazines, where Jostein Gripsrud (1999) traces the history of Norwegian magazines from 1814 to 1999:

In every way, the weekly press is closely connected to main developments in the social and cultural-historical development since 1814. By virtue of being widely read, and by the broad spectrum of information and experiences it has passed on, it is obvious that the weekly press has been very important for everyday culture

and for the conceptions substantial groups of people have about themselves and the world around them (1999: 52, my translation).

The report draws on previous magazine research, some of which was carried out in Nordic literary studies in the 1970s (Dahl 1973, Dahl 1979, Nordland 1973, Tvinnereim 1979). There are some quantitative content analyses investigating how magazines portrayed values and social change (Torsvik 1973) as well as a few reception studies (Rosvoll 1970, Heggli 1993). Most of these works originated from the humanities, and magazine *journalism* as such was not the main object of analysis. A rare example of a study analysing magazines as journalistic media is Johann Roppen's reports (1998a, 1998b) on differences between genres and topics in newspapers and magazines. More recently, a content analysis of seven popular Norwegian magazines explores how representations of Norwegian nationality and 'otherness' are constructed in magazine journalism (Fonn et al. 2012).

While established scholars in Norwegian media and journalism research have displayed little interest in magazines, students in various disciplines have made significant contributions (e.g. Gudjonsson 2008, Måseide 2005, Overvoll 2005, Sørensen 2003, Sørensen 2005, Rødland 2007). Most of these works analyse representations of gender in historical or contemporary magazine texts. On a doctoral level, there are three dissertations about Norwegian magazines: a sociological thesis on gender roles in magazine advertisements (Flick 1994), a history thesis on representations of girlhood in the young women's magazine *Det Nye* (Sarroma 2011) and – in media studies – my doctoral dissertation (Ytre-Arne 2012).

In other Nordic countries, more magazine research has been carried out (Hirdman 2001, Holgersson 2005, Juncker 1976, Larsson 1989, Lövgren 2009, Povlsen 1986, Sköld 1998). Textual and historical analysis is important in these works, and they share an interest in how gender is constructed and represented in magazines. Some studies combine such perspectives with a focus on magazine journalism – such as the work of Finnish scholar Laura Saarenmaa on portrait interviews with female top politicians (2011) and the transformation of the public sphere as expressed in magazine journalism (2010). Occasionally, magazine journalism is also included in analyses of the journalistic field (Djerf-Pierre 2007) or the role of media in society in relation to particular events (Kivikuru 2009). A strong environment for Nordic magazine research is the Media Concept Research Group at Aalto University in Finland, emphasising developments in magazine design, journalism and technology.<sup>8</sup> Yet, Nordic magazine research remains a small field compared to newspaper research, for instance.

A striking tendency in Nordic magazine research is that the societal relevance of magazines is underlined. Magazines are presumed to represent relations between genders, classes or age groups – to serve as mirrors of history and to reflect norms and cultural values. Assuming that the *representative* power of magazines is substantial, one relevant research orientation is to examine changing political dimensions in magazine journalism. While many core topics in magazine journalism pertain to people's private lives (e.g. home, family, relationships, health), journalism on such topics also conveys political dimensions. In magazines, this material is combined with journalism that more directly tackles political issues, and this balance is a potential cause of tension. These findings point to the potential relevance of public sphere theory in the analysis of magazine journalism.

## **Selected Orientations in Nordic Journalism Research**

While magazines are rarely studied in journalism research, research on *journalism* – as a phenomenon, institution or practice – addresses questions that affect magazines. A few research orientations stand out as particularly relevant.

First, research on popular journalism challenges conceptions about the role of journalism in democracy. Studies of tabloid journalism (Dahlgren and Sparks 1992) or health, lifestyle and service journalism (Eide and Hernes 1987, Mølster 2009, Kristensen and From 2012) join in with a broad research tradition on popular media in discussing alternative ways of understanding the role of media in the public sphere. An important theoretical framework is public sphere theory (Habermas [1962]1989, Calhoun 1992), which might indicate emphasis on media as providers of information and arenas for public deliberation. However, analyses responding to such theories also highlight the possibility for broader understandings – for instance through the concept of cultural citizenship or the discussion of cultural public spheres (Herkman 2010, Gripsrud and Weibull 2010, Winsvold 2013). Some central ideas include the notion that popular journalism might convey cultural and social representations, create feelings of belonging or community, contribute to constructions of identity, and be relevant to people's understandings of themselves and the society they live in.

Secondly, journalism's encounter with the internet is a necessary research orientation for contemporary journalism research (Eide et al. 2012, Erdal 2008). Research on newspapers undergoing digital transition (Ottosen and Krumsvik 2012, Karlsson 2006, Kammer 2013) addresses issues that are of great concern to magazines, although the differences between newspapers and magazines implies that they will face digitalization differently. Even more fundamentally, research on media use in the digital age (Gentikow 2010, Schröder 2011, Bjur et al. 2013) illustrates that both newspapers and magazines are parts of an increasingly complex media landscape where different media technologies compete for audiences' time and attention. While research on the digitalization of journalism could take many theoretical directions, this orientation connects to the mentioned perspectives from public sphere theory – as digitalization might challenge the positions and functions of journalism in the public sphere.

Drawing from key concerns in the small field of Nordic magazine research, and selected orientations in the large field of Nordic journalism research, some dimensions appear particularly relevant to a discussion of changing magazine journalism. One such dimension concerns technological, structural and financial change, while other dimensions concern the changing political aspects of magazine journalism. As the analysis will show, there are several potential points of connection between these dimensions.

## **Analysis and Discussion:**

### **Five Key Trends in Changing Magazine Journalism**

The analysis will highlight processes of journalistic change that appear particularly relevant within this framework, and do so through the identification and discussion of five key trends: 1) fragmentation, 2) digitalization, 3) Nordic inspiration, 4) redefinition of the political and 5) beautification. The trends were identified through an analytical approach, drawing on the combination of several methods and data sources. *Market statistics* for the last decade suggest patterns of change in sales, readership and publication

structures; *interviews with readers and editors* might, from different angles, contribute to explain the changes; and *content analysis* of magazines might illuminate how structural change is reflected in the texts of magazine journalism.<sup>9</sup>

### *Trend 1: Fragmentation*

A striking tendency in the Norwegian magazine market is *fragmentation*. In 1991, the overall circulation for Norwegian magazines was 2,328,000, and the number of titles published was 27. In 2012, the overall circulation was 2,539,000, but the number of titles had increased to 92.<sup>10</sup> These figures imply that a growing number of magazines compete for a relatively stable number of readers. Moreover, the overall circulation has decreased slightly in the last five years, suggesting that the number of readers is declining. Fragmentation has several journalistic implications.

One implication is that magazine journalism remains gendered. The new titles are mainly specialized lifestyle magazines, general interest women's magazines or crossovers between these genres (e.g. in the form of interior design magazines targeting women). Fragmentation implies that competition has moved from an overall market into a series of specialized niches. One example is the 40+-niche: Three rather similar magazines for women over 40 were launched in 2005. *Tara* eventually "won" the niche, and the competitors were cancelled before new 40+-publications again challenged *Tara* a few years later. Similar cycles of launches and cancellations can be observed in other niches. This development could potentially result in a rich variety of specialized magazines; but instead, similarities between the new titles indicate that fragmentation does not equal diversity.

When journalistic products are developed in order to win particular niches in a fragmented market, the scope of single publications is narrowed. This has implications for the role of magazine journalism in the public sphere, as it relates to broader discussions of the fragmentation of journalism's audiences – and of the common perspectives and arenas that journalism offers. In a historical perspective, the notion of differentiated target groups is a contrast to a previous ambition of reaching *general* audiences, and this was particularly important for Norwegian magazines established to inform and entertain the public (Gripsrud 1999). Early attempts at establishing magazines specifically for women were unsuccessful in Norway, and gendered distinctions in magazine journalism were not prominent until after the Second World War (Gripsrud 1999: 18). Even then, popular genres, such as family weeklies, were designed to target broad audiences even though women were the primary readers.

Today, the decline of the general magazine audience particularly affects the giants in magazine journalism. The controversial weekly *Se og Hør* defines its target group as "the whole Norwegian population" and is marketed as the biggest weekly in the Nordic countries.<sup>11</sup> But circulation has declined for years, and *Se og Hør* has been surpassed by *Hjemmet* as Norway's top-selling magazine.<sup>12</sup> Many will claim that this is no loss to Norwegian journalism, as *Se og Hør* has been criticised for being trivial, sensational and unethical (see Rødland 2007). On the other hand, *Se og Hør* is closer to the news genre than most other magazines, and news stories originating in *Se og Hør* have provoked intense public debate.<sup>13</sup> Editorials in *Se og Hør* have been connected to the political success of Fremskrittspartiet (Roppen 2003, Gripsrud 1999). More surprisingly, a recent study argues that *Se og Hør*'s popular journalism has made a positive contribution to the

struggle for acceptance and equal rights for gays and lesbians (Johnsen 2011). While disliked by many, this weekly appears as a relevant alternative voice in Norwegian tabloid journalism, and has had a greater impact in the Norwegian public sphere than the growing number of small interior design magazines that navigate the fragmented market.

### *Trend 2: Digitalization*

Like other “old” media, magazines are affected by *digitalization* on several levels. Print media faces some common challenges in the digital age, but there are significant differences between magazines and newspapers in the digital transformation. Magazines have longer production cycles and do not commit to delivering news on a day-to-day basis, and this affects the interaction between print and digital platforms. While many magazines have launched websites at some point, these are without substantial free online content and not equivalents to online newspapers. Another crucial difference between newspapers and magazines lies in their respective relationships with readers. My interviews with women’s magazine readers showed that they continued to prefer print even when they became aware of free digital alternatives (Ytre-Arne 2012). Magazines were read in relaxed and leisurely settings, and the interfaces of print magazines were experienced as particularly suited to these situations.

Different magazine publishers have chosen different internet strategies. Egmont Hjemmet Mortensen created the portal *klikk.no*, which combines lifestyle journalism from various magazines with online discussion forums and other services. The portal *klikk.no* also supplies lifestyle journalism to *Dagbladet*’s online newspaper, which channels traffic back to the portal. Bonnier has attempted similar models in Sweden (Harrie 2009: 148). Aller Media has chosen a different strategy and established magazine brand websites as well as being involved in portals. In 2012, Aller launched *StyleMag* – a magazine concept that represented new forms of integration between print and web. On the *StyleMag* website, editorial content is mixed with fashion blogs and webshop portals. This shortens the distance between seeing an outfit in a magazine and actually buying the same clothes. *StyleMag* is also available as a print magazine, and editor Celine Aagaard has a popular fashion blog. *StyleMag* can best be described as network where boundaries between journalism, blogs, advertising and retail are blurred – and so are the boundaries between the online and offline worlds.

When the iPad was introduced, magazine publishers sought to explore tablet technology as the magazine platform of the future. Tablets appear suited to magazine aesthetics and to the leisurely situations in which magazines are read. In Norway, the interior design magazine *Bonytt* produced interactive kitchen and bathroom specials for tablets, and these became early top-selling Norwegian apps.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, by 2013, no long-lasting success stories have emerged in Norwegian magazine journalism for tablets. Print is resilient to competition with digital alternatives and continues to be the dominant platform for magazine journalism. Nevertheless, print magazines appear to be losing the overall competition for audiences’ attention in the digitalized media landscape. This tendency works with the tendency of fragmentation in terms of narrowing magazine audiences.

*Trend 3: Nordic Inspiration*

*Nordic inspiration* is a tendency of journalistic exchange across borders, particularly between the Scandinavian countries. Norway's largest magazine publisher is Egmont Hjemmet Mortensen, owned by the Danish media group Egmont. A different Danish corporation owns the second largest publishing house, Aller Media AS. Since 2004, the Swedish Bonnier Group has fully entered the Norwegian market<sup>15</sup>, and magazines published by these three actors completely dominate (Methlie 2005, Eiken 2006). Bonnier is the biggest magazine publisher in Sweden followed by Aller and Egmont. These three houses control most of the market in Denmark (Carlsson and Facht 2010:182, Harrie 2009). Iceland and Finland have different publishing structures dominated by domestic corporations (Aikakausmedia 2013, Harrie 2009).

This ownership structure affects journalistic content, and the most notable expression is export of magazine brands. Nordic inspiration is not a new tendency. In Norway, it started when family weeklies were introduced in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century through the appropriation of the Danish magazines *Allers* and *Hjemmet* (which remain amongst Norway's most popular magazines). In recent years, the old notion of Nordic inspiration has accelerated and increased the pan-Nordic character of the market (see Harrie 2009). Bonnier's rise in Norwegian magazine publishing has been made possible through the appropriation of Swedish and Danish concepts such as *Woman*, *Costume* and *Bo Bedre*. The export and import of magazine brands is an international phenomenon reaching outside the Nordic countries (Holmes 2007). But while the Norwegian version of American *Cosmopolitan* has been cancelled, Swedish and Danish magazine concepts continue to be highly successful in Norway.

The tendency of Nordic inspiration reflects the importance of ownership structures for journalistic content, and it illustrates the importance of cultural connections and close neighbouring relations. However, it can also be read as an expression of historical power relations: Swedish and Danish media corporations own the biggest Norwegian magazine publishers, and Swedish and Danish concepts are exported to Norway – not the other way around. While domestic publishers dominate the magazine market in Iceland, there are examples of adaptations of concepts from other Nordic countries, and these play a part in market fragmentation (Karlsson 2003, Harrie 2009).

In Norway, the most successful of the recent Nordic adaptations is *Tara*. The popular Norwegian version was inspired by the 40+ publication established by the Swedish magazine maker Amelia Adamo. *Tara* presents quality feature and lifestyle journalism and has, for instance, made contributions on issues such as women's health and mental illness (Madsen and Ytre-Arne 2012). Yet, while *Tara* presents journalism with distinct societal relevance, it also represents a development in which journalism is directed only at particular demographics rather than the general public. This implies that the ambitions for magazine journalism in the public sphere have been redefined.

*Trend 4: Redefinition of the Political*

In Norway, *redefinition of the political* in magazine journalism is most clearly expressed within the general interest women's magazines – as these publications have a history of portraying society through feature journalism. Political orientations might be even more prominent in women's magazines in, for instance, Finland (Saarenmaa 2010),

but political dimensions have been important in Norway as well. In the early 1900s, periodicals such as *Urd* covered the struggle for women's suffrage (Ytre-Arne 2013), and long-lasting magazines such as *KK* and *Det Nye* have followed women's liberation over decades. Women's magazines have made important contributions to Norwegian journalism by emphasising how various political issues affect women. However, in the past five years, the thematic focus of women's magazines has been redefined – radically changing the amount and form of political magazine journalism. The changes are most evident in established general interest women's magazines such as *Henne* and *KK*.

*Henne* was launched by Aller Media in 1994. Editor Ellen Arnstad (who remained in charge until 2011 and is now editor of *Se og Hør*) was given great liberties when developing *Henne* as a hybrid between high-quality feature and fashion journalism. She included regular features on social issues and portraits of historical and contemporary women pioneers, and devoted special issues to topics such as violence against women or climate change. *Henne* attracted considerable advertising revenue from the start, but this situation changed drastically when Norwegian newspapers introduced weekend supplements in a magazine format. Gunnar Bleness (who worked for the newspaper *Dagbladet* before moving to magazine publishing) confirmed in a research interview that *Dagbladet Magasinet* was developed in order to capture ad revenues from the weekly press. Both Bleness and Arnstad said that the introduction of newspaper weekend supplements changed the 'division of labour' between magazines and newspapers. Arnstad described this development as dramatic:

*Henne* was in the marketplace for years without any true competition. Then came *Dagbladet Magasinet* in 1999, five years later. And the effect was instant. It affected our circulation, in both *KK* and *Henne*, and it affected us in terms of ads.

The financial crisis of 2009 was also difficult for *Henne*. Arnstad admitted that market conditions and changing expectations from readers entailed a shift in *Henne*'s journalism. *Henne* continued to provide high-quality feature journalism on fashion, lifestyle and social issues – but the explicitly political and international focus was dropped. Rather than printing long features on climate change, the magazine would advocate eco-fashion and green lifestyle choices, thereby integrating political perspectives into lifestyle journalism. While such journalism has considerable potential for public relevance, the change implies that an original voice in Norwegian journalism became more similar to other fashion and lifestyle magazines.

Similar changes have taken place in *KK*, which is Norway's oldest women's magazine still in publication.<sup>16</sup> It is a flagship of Aller Media, and the only glossy women's magazine that is published weekly. Fragmentation has been particularly challenging to *KK*, as the magazine had to adjust from a unique position to competition on several fronts. *KK*'s circulation dropped dramatically, and decreased 20 percent only from 2007 to 2008. The downward spiral ceased in 2009 after a change of editors, and in 2010 circulation was again rising. In this process, the political dimensions of the magazine were redefined.

The previous editor, Bente Engesland, had strengthened *KK*'s tradition of combining political features with lifestyle journalism and human interest. In 2007 through 2008, *KK* regularly included articles on social and political problems in Norway (e.g. discrimination of immigrants, problems in the child welfare system, wage gaps, etc.) and in the rest of the world (e.g. eradication of rain forests, school shootings in the USA, abortion bans



in South America, etc.). My interviews with *KK* readers revealed ambivalent attitudes to this journalism. Some wanted a mixture of “light and heavy” in magazines; others felt that stories of war and violence ruined the pleasure associated with magazine reading.

In 2008, Engesland resigned due to disagreements with the publisher about the direction *KK* should take.<sup>17</sup> Gjyri Helén Werp was hired to be *KK*’s new editor. She was editor of *Kamille*, a ‘feel-good’ magazine that had grown to be one of *KK*’s main competitors. In an interview in 2010, Werp described her strategy when taking over *KK*:

What I have done in *KK* is to turn up the feel-good factor [...] But *KK* should be feel-good with meaning. We must have substance. [...]. As for “sickness and death”, I have put that on timeout, even though *KK* will go deeper than mere feel-good and superficialities. We will find new angles to topics close to us. Our profile is turned from “current” to “relevant for the reader, here and now”. Foreign affairs are therefore removed, and our journalism will emphasize the everyday lives of Norwegian women we can identify with.

The changes Werp described were evident in *KK*’s journalism. International perspectives disappeared, as did most topics that could ruin the idea of pleasurable reading. The overarching theme continued to concern the everyday life of a Norwegian woman that combines work and family, and this was a common denominator for reportage journalism and a presumption for lifestyle journalism. But how should such journalism – on women’s everyday life experiences – be situated in relation to the political? The answer will depend on conceptualizations of the role of journalism in the public sphere. Such journalism can be viewed as important – for instance, when viewed through the framework of cultural citizenship (Herkman 2010, Hermes 2005). If more traditional understandings of media as providers of information and arenas for public debate is emphasised, however, the perspectives that have been left behind are a loss to the societal relevance of magazine journalism. Meanwhile, the pervasiveness of lifestyle journalism genres and human interest offers a *redefinition* of the political. Identifying politics, personal stories and lifestyle choices are connected to values and global responsibilities (e.g. through the notion of green consumerism). Magazine journalism continues to cover big and small life decisions. But, within this framework of apparent continuity, the redefinition of the political constitutes a radical change.

### *Trend 5: Beautification*

Hand-in-hand with the redefinition of the political, Norwegian magazine journalism has been through a process of *beautification*. This concerns the aesthetic elements of magazines, and these should be considered as integrated parts of the journalistic text. Layouts, pictures, colours and paper quality are closely interwoven with the other dimensions of magazine journalism, and it is important to ask how aesthetic change interacts with other journalistic trends.

First, the beautification of magazine journalism is expressed through the increasing variety of magazines *about* beauty. Magazines for young women have downplayed teen culture and youth issues, while fashion and beauty are more important than ever before. A wave of new interior design magazines represents a similar tendency. All areas of modern living are subjected to aesthetic beautification through the vast amount of lifestyle journalism in every niche of the magazine market.

Secondly, Norwegian magazines in various genres are glossier than ever before. Many have appropriated a particular form of commercial feminine aesthetic that also affect journalistic representations of their topics. One of the first transitions Gjyri Helén Werp made in *KK* was to make it more glamorous, expressing a distance to newspapers. A different example is the parenting magazine *Foreldre & Barn*, a cornerstone in Egmont Hjemmet Mortensen's media directed at parents. My reader research confirmed that *Foreldre & Barn* has an extraordinarily high credibility as a guide to family lifestyle and consumer choices. But new magazines targeting mothers have challenged *Foreldre & Barn*, and one response to this situation is aesthetic change. While the title remains gender-neutral, the aesthetic profile had a makeover in 2013 – resulting in a soft and distinctly feminine look. It is too early yet to tell if the thematic focus will also change. Simultaneously, a sister-publication went through a similar process and changed its name from the informative *Gravid* (Pregnant) to the more elusive *BabyDrøm* (BabyDream).

Thirdly, the beautification of traditional magazine journalism plays a part in some recent success stories in the magazine market. Historically and today, the most popular Norwegian magazines are the family weeklies. While retaining impressive circulation figures, these magazines are the antitheses to modern sophisticated magazine aesthetics. However, new magazines have attempted to create beautified versions of family weeklies for younger generations. *Kamille* joins family weeklies in emphasising home life and affordable fashion and interior design, but does so in a lively and youthful layout – drawing inspiration from scrapbooking and social media. Editor Kjersti Mo confirmed that *Kamille* was partly intended to function as a form of family weekly for 30-somethings:

Family weeklies are huge, right? But they are primarily for the generation above us. This is partly about providing something similar for women in their 30s, who don't want to feel like their mothers!

A different example is *Tara*, which editor Torunn Pettersen described as a positive and modern magazine for a new generation of grown women:

The cover is glossy, but the inside material can sometimes resemble what you will find in family weeklies. But our angles are much more positive. We try to be where we feel that a lot of women over 40 are. We feel that something has changed for a substantial group of women; they do not necessarily relate to the family weeklies any more [...]. A lot of women start over, in a way. [...] Maybe you think that this is my chance. And that is the wave we want to surf, saying that yes, this is your chance!

*Tara* appears as a high-quality magazine with a neutral look, targeting women who might not identify with the “messy” aesthetics of the family weeklies. As the statements from editors indicate, magazine aesthetics are closely interwoven with the feelings that magazines aim to awake in readers. The contents and meanings of magazine journalism aim to speak to readers' personal experiences and sense of identities, and magazine aesthetics is part of that appeal.

## Conclusion

Together, the five trends that have been discussed here can be understood as a cultivation of certain journalistic dimensions at the expense of others. Political redefinition and aesthetic beautification have implications for the ambitions of magazine journalism in the public sphere. Magazine journalism has removed itself further from traditional journalistic ideals about providing information and contributing to public debate, and instead cultivates the idea of giving guidance and inspiration on big and small decisions in modern everyday life. While lifestyle journalism has long been a key component of magazines, it is now the only foundation for many publications. While relevance to readers' everyday lives has long been important, immediate points of connection are now cultivated at the expense of orientations towards the rest of the world. While women have long been an important audience, different segments of women are now targeted more precisely, leaving out the possibility of broader audiences in the process.

Importantly, these developments do not imply that Norwegian magazine journalism is of a lower quality than before, or that the forms of journalism that are provided are unimportant. Rather, the significance of lifestyle journalism in modern society is the focus of increased scholarly attention (Hanusch 2012, Kristensen 2012). Norwegian women's magazines aim to provide journalism that is relevant to readers' everyday lives, and there are no necessary contradictions between creating journalism that is relevant to women's everyday lives *and* that is relevant to the public sphere. But the changes are important in terms of defining how magazine journalism relates to the public sphere through its address to the audience—and in terms of deciding the position of magazine journalism in relation to other forms of journalism.

## Notes

1. Weekly press publications are not necessarily published weekly, but *regularly* and less frequently than *daily*. The weekly press is also distinguished from for instance trade magazines and scholarly/ literary journals.
2. These differences can be observed in annual reports on media use, but are particularly evident in larger analyses such as Vaage 2007.
3. This is observed in descriptions of these magazines on publisher's websites, e.g. <http://www.egmonthm.no/publikasjoner/bolig/bonytt/>. Likewise, a series of magazines on cars, hunting or sports target men, but publications in these categories tend to have lower sales than women's magazines.
4. The questionnaire was conducted in 2008-2009 and the interviews in 2009. Fourteen respondents to the questionnaire participated in individual in-depth interviews. The respondents were women who subscribed to the weekly *KK* and read a variety of other magazines in different genres as well (Ytre-Arne 2012).
5. These interviews were conducted in 2010. Five editors were interviewed: Gjyri Helén Werp (*KK*, previously *Kamille* and *Red*), Ellen Arnstad (previously *Henne*, publishing editor in Aller Media, now *Se og Hør*), Torunn Pettersen (*Tara*, previously *Norsk ukeblad*), Kjersti Mo (*Kamille*) and Gunnar Bleness (editorial responsibility for various magazines in Egmont Hjemmet Mortensen).
6. The sample included all issues of *KK* and *Henne* from September 2007 to December 2010, random issues of various women's magazines from the same period, and random issues of a broad range of magazines from 2010 to 2013. See Ytre-Arne (2012) for details.
7. Annual sales and readership numbers are published by the Media Businesses Association at <http://www.mediebedriftene.no/Tall--Fakta1/>. Readership statistics can also be found in Statistic Norway's annual reports on media use: <http://www.ssb.no/medie>. Various magazine statistics are gathered by MediaNorway: <http://medienorge.uib.no/?cat=statistikk&page=ukepresse>. The media news site *kampanje.com* regularly publishes news concerning magazine publishing.
8. <http://www.mediaconceptsrg.net/mcrg-information-2>
9. For details on methods please see previous notes.

10. MediaNorway: <http://medienorge.uib.no/?cat=statistikk&medium=ukepresse&queryID=254>
11. Presentation on the publisher's website: [http://www.aller.no/Se+og+H%C3%B8r.hTL99TVVp2Z--231D7A\\_xENi9zmNdVPL28nMhPLZB9MtlY05hRjUXd.ips](http://www.aller.no/Se+og+H%C3%B8r.hTL99TVVp2Z--231D7A_xENi9zmNdVPL28nMhPLZB9MtlY05hRjUXd.ips)
12. Different ways of counting circulation has implications for whether *Se og Hør* or *Hjemmet* should be named Norway's top-selling magazine. See <http://www.kampanje.com/medier/article6509401.ece>
13. An example is the news of the so-called "angel school" established by Princess Märtha Louise.
14. <http://www.journalisten.no/node/35882>
15. Bonnier was a minor actor in the Norwegian market before 2004, when the Danish branch Bonnier Publications AS published some magazines in the lifestyle and hobby categories (Methlie 2005: 11).
16. *Nordisk Mønster-Tidende* was first published in 1874 and re-launched as *Kvinner og Klær* as parts of the first generation of modern women's magazines in the 1940s and 1950s. The name was changed to *KK* in 1970, but *Kvinner og Klær* remains a household name.
17. <http://www.kampanje.com/medier/article5246815.ece>

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