

Reminiscence of Intellectual Battles

Bygone in Communications Research

SVENNIK HØYER

Abstract

Models in communications studies from the 1940s and 1950s depicted mass communication as one-way traffic. Sender and recipient faced each other almost like two individuals, yet unknown to each other, sharing a stream of messages that carried unequivocal contents with detectable consequences. From this meagre beginning, many modifications were added and new theories developed in the ensuing six to seven decades. In the process, 'senders' have become complex organisations embedded in the power system of society, 'messages' have become a part of culture more generally and 'the audience' is situated within multiple cultural and social contexts. Models have become more interactive, but have they changed enough? Perhaps there is still a need for a review of the state of the art: of what we really know about personal and social communications and the white spaces on our maps.

Key Words: humanistic and social science approaches to media theories, linear and structural models of media communications, the two-step hypothesis, content analysis, discourse analysis and rhetoric

Introduction

Ever since Aristotle wrote his 'Rhetoric', communications has been a recurring theme in academic discourse; a theme that has often served as a silent premise within the venerated traditions of the Humanities and the Social Studies. For decades, even centuries, 'communications' remained a subfield within the diverse study of man. The only way up in the hierarchy for nonconformists was to establish a new field of study; and when these former outsiders eventually met at one and the same university department during the 1960s, it created a situation bound for confusion and misunderstanding. It took a long time to agree on terminology, on proper problems and on the basics of theories. Since then, communications studies have been a great success, at least in the number of researchers, tenured professors, and students.

But rapid expansion may have certain unfortunate consequences. When so much is starting up simultaneously, very few have a comprehensive view of what the new discipline contains. We have seen social scientists, psychologists, historians, linguists, humanists and historians as well as people from computer science, art and literary studies recruited to our field. Sometimes these specialists talk professionally together but more often they do not, and as a result parallel studies have often been conducted on

almost the same phenomena, phrased in different terminologies. It is no wonder much research has been duplicated.

This situation is rapidly improving, with an increasing number of conferences, workshops, round tables and scholarly journals for most specialities and sub-disciplines. But despite the rising number of professional channels, Communications and Media Studies has not yet developed its own fully fledged or overarching theory. Specialisation, even fragmentation into small hypotheses, is now an accepted professional stance, while the great questions about how media relates to human nature and society are asked less frequently.

The reflections above partly conform to my own experiences during a long life in media studies from the early 1970s to my present position as Professor Emeritus. In the following pages I shall outline some paradigms I have met. Since the turnover in theories during this period has been rather high, I do not intend to cover all fields in modern communications research.¹

My perspective will remain contemporary. I will avoid writing a history of scientific ideas, even though the positions portrayed are given in a roughly chronological order. My description will be a personal account of hindsight by which ideas, as they appeared to me, will be foregrounded. Even if there are many more positions from which a ubiquitous phenomenon like communications is studied I will claim that most of the positions mentioned have been central to teaching and research in Media and Communications departments, at least in Scandinavia, during the past three to four decades.

Linear Models and the Liberalism of Free Choice

Upon the introduction of the Gallup surveys at the end of the 1920s, two problems were immediately raised: what comprises the audience for newspapers and radio, and what are the effects of being exposed to these media? These two problems totally dominated the research agenda in the beginning. So – when Harold Lasswell (1948)² formulated his paradigmatic question: “Who says what to whom through which channels and with what effects?” – it was the last question about effects to which attention was drawn in the Behavioural Sciences, although Lasswell himself modified the opening statement later in the text (p. 127): “Each agent is a vortex of interacting environmental and predisposition factors. Whoever performs a relay function can be examined in relation to input and output.” But the mysteries of how mediated messages originated, and how they were organised and formulated, was beyond the scope or interest of early media scholars. Systematic studies of the Lasswellian ‘who’ and ‘what’ had to wait until the early 1970s.³ The cardinal problem of how senders and audience interacted during mass communications was not even raised in the beginning of modern communications research. It was taken for granted that senders and recipients did not communicate on normal terms.

The Lasswell question more than suggested a direct link between the messages in mass media and its effects on the attitudes of receivers. There was little room left for misunderstanding of messages of a systematic kind, culturally bounded decoding or double meanings and reading between lines. The narrow focus on isolated and measurable audience effects was later ridiculed as a linear transportation model of communication.⁴

But when you take a closer look behind each part of the Lasswell question you can see, as Lasswell hinted at, more than the simple transfer of messages; you also discover a system of interacting and negotiating forces, all with an influence on the content pro-

duction. Take the role of senders and their journalism (the ‘who’ and ‘what’ in Lasswell’s question). Both components contain a great deal of regularity, which may be investigated at many levels of society, for example: how content is influenced by the relationship between senders and sources of information – as Jeremy Tunstall studied it⁵; how media themselves are organised and restricted by the technology of production and dissemination, as well as by political intervention, as Philip Schlesinger observed in the BBC.⁶ In between, we will find effects on the structure of media systems from the economy of scale in production and the skewed distribution of income between competing media of income from advertisers.⁷

The reason for calling Lasswell’s model ‘liberal’ was motivated not only by the capitalistic nature of most media, which inspired audience studies, but also partly by an additional reference to the Anglo-American ideas of democracy by which the sovereignty of individuals looms high; an idea that also inspired studies of the role of media in early election research. Some of the better-known studies of media behaviour during the 1940s and 1950s were part of the early election research in which the key phenomena looked for consisted of patterns of aggregate individual behaviour.⁸

– Who says what to whom
 – through which channel and with what effect?
Harold Lasswell 1948

MICRO	Sender Gate keeper	Channel Technological Restrains on Message	Message News criteria for a Single article	Recipient Anonymous individual	A SINGLE EVENT
MESO	Medium Organisation Firm or syndicat	Technology Market – potentialities	Mediated communication Content template	Audience Size and Composition	CHANGES OVER TIME
MACRO & MESO	Media system Number of Channels. Political control & censorship.	Volume of texts Frequency & distribution between channels of news reporting.	Genres and style Genres & style Textual norms.	Circulation & audience ratings Revenues from advertisers	CHANGES OVER TIME
MACRO	Media as a Social Institution Profession- alisation.	Media economy Media-market as % of GNP	Flow of mediated information Allocation of Public attention	Public sphere Allocation of Public means	SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

In classical democratic theory, public opinion – to be valid in political decision-making – must rest on the integrity of individual voters. Accordingly, the early models of ‘mass society’ applied in election and media studies presumed that individuals acted alone and without any reference to a community. Some years of systematic studies of effects, however, revealed a generally low level of attention by individuals to unfamiliar and conflicting messages. There was little balancing of pro- and contra-arguments in the minds of recipients concerning what they heard or read in the media. People mainly looked for confirmation. This avoidance of contradiction was termed ‘selective perception’, a kind of psychological shield people use to keep their values and prejudices intact.

The inattentive audience could be interpreted as a proof of the independent voter, unaffected by political propaganda. More extremely this was called an ‘atomistic model of human behaviour’: Individuals act from basic psychological instincts, as part of human nature, rather than on social impulses. From these premises behaviourists looked

for universally valid regularities of individual behaviour, which were subsumed into aggregate public opinions.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, social psychologists like George Homans⁹ explored the human group and group dynamics. In their Elmira study, Lazarsfeld et al. (Op. Cit.) found that much of public inattention to media was based on group loyalties and personal pragmatism. People took advice rather from people they knew than from the media. The rediscovery of the primary group, as it was called, or the *two-step hypothesis*, opened eyes to the strong influence of social networks, which intervened and often redirected the intended effects of media. It turned out that informal discussions in these close milieus of family, friends, neighbours or colleagues, etc. had more influence in forming attitudes on social issues than did any mass media. Media served mainly as an agenda setter for group discussions of public affairs.¹⁰

The ‘use and gratification’ studies, which later broadened the premises behind the two-step hypothesis, linked the problems and opportunities in recipients’ immediate environment to their information-seeking behaviour. This turned the arrows of causality around; it was the interests of recipients that mainly governed their attention to the content of media. And people know what they are looking for.

Having found a set of intervening factors in the primary groups, researchers soon found many more in secondary groups: national organisational networks, political parties, local communities, social sub-cultures, etc. Ethnic or cultural studies, as they were called, focused on special codes and norms in these environments that coloured the perception of both media and their content. However, this fragmentation of the ‘mass audience’ did not answer the larger question of how media interacted with society in general.

Behaviourism was strongly attacked during the 1970s and 1980s for ignoring the fundamental cultural basis for all human communications. Our impression of the environment – the arguments went – especially our mentality in social relations, even our scientific ideas of reality, depends heavily on ideas, images and concepts embedded in our cultural heritage. More seriously, behaviourists were said to be blind to the impact of the established power system closely linked to the media industry. The long-term effect of these conditions restricted the range of ideas to which the audience was allowed to attend. Recipients became unaware of the alternatives to the hegemonic ideas furnished them by media.

Criticism of Behaviourism rose from many quarters, but especially from literature and linguistics and critical studies in sociology. Arguments emphasising the impact of the media structure on the output of mass communications and the influence on public opinion were maintained within *The Frankfurter School*, as within the *political economy* studies and in cultural studies of mass communications. Cultural studies were popular in Great Britain, with the best-known analyses coming from the *Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies*. Authors attached to the centre, such as Stuart Hall, approached media as ideological and hegemonic institutions.¹¹ In the following I shall treat the structural viewpoints as one position and the humanistic hermeneutical critique as another.

Structural Reproduction of Media Output

Structural critique has often been inspired by Marxism, which in turn is based on allegations of irrevocable historical laws by which the influence of individual actors disappears. Jürgen Habermas is a prominent representative of this kind of thinking in media history. In his *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (1962) his aim, he recollected 27 years

later, was to derive an ideal public sphere from various historical contexts.¹² Habermas found his “golden age” of free discussions – of all matters including political ones – in London’s coffee houses at the end of the 18th century. In doing so he also anticipated some inherent mechanisms of decay. Changes in the press, he pointed out, ran through different irreversible stages. Open discussion between equals, with ‘communicative reason’ – or common sense and mutual respect – as their guiding rule, was replaced by frozen postures in journals of opinions and party newspapers, or by political opportunism in the commercialised press. Unrestrained deliberations were replaced by inflexible ideological debates; insincerity had infected public life.¹³

During the 1970s and 1980s, the political economists pointed out that the media represented an ideological superstructure governed by publishers and advertisers, both prominent representatives of the capitalistic system. The result was ideological reproduction of often-subdued reality descriptions, which supported the status quo and the free market system. As a rule, alternative realities were neglected or denied outright. Marxists also rejected the existence of a journalistic autonomy; they claimed that all media production was standardised ideologically in form and underlying messages, and as a result produced a false consciousness that kept the repressed audience inactive and unaware of their true interests. Therefore, despite their superficial diversity in content, etc., media basically served the same hegemonic interests.

The critical sociological and Marxist views both pointed to an apparent weakness in the linear models of communications: their lack of attention to the media industry and to the impact of macro systems. Researchers were not interested in how news and media content was selectively retrieved, restricted and edited by general ideas of what was proper news. In literature and critical studies, news was deconstructed to reveal the underlying true intentions. The weakness of this critique, however, was the lack of empirical support for most of the far-reaching generalisations derived from Marxism. As in the venerated tradition of philology, Marxists mainly studied canonical texts and explained how their terminology applied to current affairs. Interpretations and the true understanding of texts were and are the beginning, aim, and results of their study.

Empirical studies of senders in mass communications did not come from Marxist scholars, but appeared in Anglo-American sociology and anthropology during the early 1970s and later. These scholars looked behind the semantics of media messages to their pragmatics and to their production in an institutional setting at the meso level of society. Sociologists were concerned with the professional, social and political preconditions for the production of mass communications.

Studies of newsroom operations were preoccupied with text norms of ‘objectivity’ and ‘news criteria’ and how they functioned within newsrooms, and in this context doubled as strategies¹⁴ towards sources of information¹⁵. Researchers became preoccupied with the paradoxes of the journalistic profession¹⁶, how the economy of programming intervened with journalistic priorities¹⁷ and, most recently beginning in the 1990s, cross-national comparisons of media systems in which national differences apparently are determined more by the complexities of national histories and cultural traditions than by any universal regularities in journalism.¹⁸

The empirically oriented studies have left us much necessary and basic knowledge of how mass media works; they have also left a variety of sometimes confusing and contradictory conclusions but few, if any, grand theses. Pursued in many scholarly traditions, these studies have no overarching theory and few methods in common, although some organising themes have emerged. In media history, for example, the long-term

development of media into a separate and partly autonomous social institution has been a major theme¹⁹, as well as the development of the newspaper industry from monopolies to atomistic competition, to oligopoly and back to local monopolies in a multi-media market, which gave ownership more control over journalism but, paradoxically, also gave journalists more power in their encounters with elite sources.²⁰

Most media scholars still seem to agree that mass communications basically remains a unidirectional process; at the same time, they observe a certain amount of autonomy in both editors and journalists, as well as in the audience in its choice of messages and interpretation of those messages. This implies that much in the production phase of media content is inaccessible for common people. There is no necessary direct interaction between senders and their audiences. The editorial processes are insensitive to input from common people, except indirectly in circulation figures and viewer ratings, which provide data for the calculations of advertisers and media proprietors. Editors and journalists have taken command over the agenda setting in public life in the short run and are joined by ownership control, setting the priorities in journalism for the longer run, at the expense of the access of politicians, intellectuals and independent writers.

However, some theoretically oriented perspectives seem to have come out of empirical studies, especially at the meso or organisational level of society: Despite many local variations, the media product seems to be a function of how journalism is organised and controlled, which in turn is influenced by social mores and the political systems within which media operate. Another basic frame for journalism is of course the economy and the technological capacity of the individual media. At a more abstract level, this may be taken as the proof of mutual influences between the media system and society. The higher we move towards the macro-level of society and the wider we move into cross-national comparisons, the more dilemmas and contradictory views we will discover about the social and cultural functions of journalism and mass media from a comparative perspective.²¹

A modern image of organised communications proposes a stochastic view. It is a vision of loosely connected and semi-autonomous parts in a hierarchical order of communications channels within a broader media system. The many diverse elements of a media system change in various tempi but still contain standard procedures, choices, news values and narrative options. Message production may be influenced by three interlinked systems: 1) that of matching roles as journalists, sub-editors, editors, publishers, etc., within the editorial department; 2) the economic character of media operating as firms, competing with rival media within a market; and 3) media being a social institution within society in general, partly as an object of legal regulation from political authorities and partly as an autonomous institution by its own codes of professional conduct and acquired authority.

The Cultural Origin of Human Communications

We use culture as much as our senses when we communicate. Furthermore, we depend on communications facilities, social networks and a community to survive. It is also a truism that as we learn to communicate we become integrated into a community. On the other hand, when we are *not* able to communicate we lose the human touch and deteriorate psychologically. Many observations support this proposition, from newborn children connecting with their mothers through sounds, smells and body language, to

people living in isolation, deprived of normal sensory input and human contact, slowly deteriorating physically and psychologically.

The most essential part of communication is language, and language in turn is based on collective experiences and conventions as well as on received ideas and customs. Both language and communications are culturally embedded; our ability to communicate and *what* we usually communicate, rests on a geographically bounded culture, or on a special agreed-on terminology within an interpretive community.

Both humanists and social scientists agree on these basic premises, but while humanists are prone to find the sender as an innate part of the text, social scientists address themselves to contexts and journalistic working routines. As we have seen, 'sender strategies' is an important idea in these studies. By 'strategy', we mean the tendency of senders to follow certain text norms and routines in given situations, resulting in certain categories and forms of text. Forms of presentation and genres in turn serve as guidelines for the audience concerning how to interpret programmes and messages. This, of course, is the general proposition to be investigated in many contexts. In other words, social scientists tend to deal in categories of text and senders, whereas humanists work with identifiable and individual authors and texts. The two traditions have easily collided over the issue of whether or not *content analysis* is a valid method. Content analysis was introduced in the 1950s by social scientists as an objective method of *quantifying meanings* in texts.²²

Content analysis consists of two seemingly opposite mental operations. First certain features and meanings in the selected texts, relevant to the research problem, are isolated and named in a set of 'categories'. Then rules of equivalence are created regarding how to interpret and identify different expressions in the text under investigation and then sort them into the constructed analytical categories. When two different expressions are said to be *equivalent* they are treated as similar in the analysis. Content analyses rest on summaries of content or on analytical judgements by investigators, in short on individual or subjective ideas of commonness, which consciously ignores nuances in the text. This method of sacrificing variety for simplicity, however, rests on disciplined and systematic judgments, which can be repeated by different coders.

Content analyses concentrate on certain aspects of each text in order to increase the number of sampled texts. The result of these 'superficial' interpretations are then quantified and treated statistically, the idea being that the various frequencies of textual fragments will demonstrate how various categories of senders differ, e.g. in what topics are reported and what spaces are given to them, or the analysis will reveal the kind of opinions given, the way opinions are expressed, etc. The idea is often to disclose something of the sender's stratagems, and of the impact certain historical or social situations have on these strategies.

Humanists, on the other hand, claim that the true meaning of any part of a text must be interpreted with reference to the whole story. In order to reveal an intended or accidental meaning in one part of the text, all parts must be taken into consideration as the parts more or less explicitly refer to each other within the framework of the whole text. In addition, the literary scholar detects intertextual links to stories previously told.

The main study objects in literary studies are books in the national or international canon of carefully selected works. By contrast, media scientists are more often interested in trivial texts by the thousand in popular culture and news, texts that are both ephemeral and non-canonical. Nevertheless, it is maintained that a sample of such trivialities

may provide evidence of everyday ideas that linger in the public attention since trivial messages are written and edited under repetitious routines and genres, also serving as reader guidelines for the preferred way of reading a message. This makes a great difference in how texts are perceived and treated by researchers: social scientists look at media content as collective products by journalists or television producers, while humanists often look for the unique genius of an individual author.

A central tenet in literary analysis is that texts express a multidimensional complex of meanings. Scholars look for underlying codes that represent immanent systems of signs and meanings, almost as objective qualities of the texts. Metonyms and metaphors point to hidden messages and double meanings that invite reading between lines. Content analysis, by contrast, deals mainly with what is clearly expressed ‘on the line’.

Codes are systems of signs, symbols and references that do not belong to grammar but are also not an entirely personal way of expression as they belong to an informal and intuitive part of culture. Asking for the origins of codes and, for that matter, also those of journalistic genres, is almost as useless as asking for the origin of languages, they can most fruitfully be studied concerning how and in what contexts changes occur. Representatives of empirical science also claim that meanings may be found in the form in which messages are given.²³ The concept of ‘mediation of content’, for example, refers to how messages are shaped to fit the mould of limitations and expressive possibilities in each media template.

There are very few objections to these ideas now, but there is still almost a cultural chasm between disciplines regarding how to evaluate the reliability and validity of findings. Humanists have some difficulties in distinguishing between analysis and methods; “My concepts are my method”, they seem to claim. Humanists aim at an understanding of different texts, while social scientists opt for an explanation. But without common methods, social scientists retort, findings cannot be accumulated. Without a description of how results are found and of how this procedure can be repeated by others, findings remain subjective and cannot be included in the archive of valid findings.

Rhetoric Reborn?

At most Scandinavian universities, rhetoric had almost disappeared as an independent teaching subject. Not any more. Classical rhetoric has been reintroduced at many universities along with various modern forms of discourse analysis, textual linguistics, aesthetics and related topics. One reason for the popularity of these themes is clearly the expansion of public affairs reporting in most democracies. Being a good communicator has become the most important qualification for a politician. This interest in forms of delivery rather than content, however, may be seen as a regression into essentialism, grammar and textual studies. But the picture is more varied. For instance, in discourse analysis the public and more generally the social context is active in both shaping the messages as well as giving direct feedback. These studies at the micro level work on the premise that there exists some kind of interaction between senders and audience, with turn taking and alternation of roles, which explains the communicative energies and shifting directions in the discourse.

By contrast, much in rhetorical analysis is based on postulates of predetermined meanings and effects, independent of context. It is often claimed that the rules of Classical Rhetoric are an immanent part of the text. But no evidence is given that the send-

ers and their audience share even an intuitive understanding of these rules. In effect, researchers themselves often take the position of the audience in deciding what is evident or unclear in a text. Thus, the epistemological status of Classical Rhetoric in contemporary environments becomes unclear.

Modern empirical analyses of rhetoric, on the other hand, examine how rules of rhetoric are adapted to different situations concerning receivers' expectations. Genres and presentation methods are hidden contracts between senders and their public regarding how to read a message; they cannot be changed by chance. These underlying rules of journalism can be detected but are only partly known today. Much remains of systematic studies of both textual genres and how the audience understands these norms in the production of texts. The debate over what the characteristics of newsworthy events are reveals a widespread disagreement among researchers and illustrates this lack of systematic knowledge.

Some media researchers have placed rhetoric upside down, starting with what people easily understand and are able to remember. They also concentrate on presentation factors. Through experimentation with manipulated news stories – adding or subtracting elements in the story – they have been able to identify a number of rules concerning the kind of information; form of delivery etc. news stories must contain to be easily understood by most of the audience. These rules have been adopted as textual norms by many television news departments.²⁴

Hindsight and Foresight

During most of the 20th century, one-way mass communications dominated the idea of how media functioned in society. What is basically wrong with this idea is that most people are described as customers only, not as inventors in their respective communicative environments. Despite systematic research spanning more than half a century, we know far too little about how people create, form and sustain their personal and collective networks from their communicative potential.

With the support of computers and communications technology, new kinds of social networks are formed, and pseudo-communities are easily shaped independent of distance and geographical borders. People are writing e-mails and making phone calls, seemingly without end. If conversations were not destroyed by mass media, they have re-emerged with a vengeance. In the torrents of information released by the Internet, an increasing number of people are also acting as journalists on new platforms (web logs and wikis, net news and citizen reporting), creating new forms of public spheres. The threshold for private expression to be available in the public domain has been lowered, and an amazing number people are entering this space.

Throughout these immense changes, however, *the communicative man* remains intact, only the means of making social contacts shift, not the urge to make contacts. This old idea also suggests new frames of reference for understanding the current revolution in communications. 'Mass society' has simply disappeared, and as a side effect an increasing number of communications phenomena in the 21st century are falling outside our current theories in media studies. Perhaps it is time for another assessment of our present 'state of the art' and to evaluate what we can safely discard, as well as what ideas, concepts and tools we should keep for the future.

Notes

1. Those versed in French social science and philosophy will find a conspicuous lacuna in the following pages. Some important names and ideas are missing such as Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, Jacques Lacand, Claude Lévi-Strauss etc. My essay is oriented primarily towards Anglo-American empiricism and how this has been discussed and adapted in Scandinavian media research.
2. Lasswell, Harold (1948) 'The Structure and Function of Communications in Society', in Bryson, Lyman (1948) *The Communications of Ideas*, Institute for Religious and Social Studies, New York. Reprinted in Wilbur Schramm (1960) *Mass Communications*, (second edition), Urbana, University of Illinois Press, pp. 117-30 – from which my quotation is taken.
3. See for example Tunstall, Jeremy (1971) *Journalists at work. Specialist correspondents: their news organizations, news sources, & competitor-colleagues*, London, Constable; and Tuchman, Gaye (1978) *Making News. A Study in the Construction of Reality*, New York, The Free Press.
4. Carey, James W. (1989) *Communications as Culture: essays on media and society*, Boston Unwin Hyman.
5. Tunstall (Op Cit.).
6. Schlesinger, Philip (1978) *Putting Reality Together: BBC News*, London, Constable.
7. Furhoff, Lars (1967) *Upplagespiralen [The Spiral of Circulation]* Ekonomisk-historiska studier. Vol 3, Stockholm, Scandinavian University Press.
8. Lazarsfeld, Paul F., Berelson, Bernhard, and Gaudet, Hazel (1944/1948) *The People's Choice*, New York, Columbia University Press.
9. Homans, George C. (1950) *The Human Group*, New York, Harcourt.
10. A special issue of the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 608 (2006) contains a symposium celebrating the 1955 publication of Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld's landmark *Personal Influence* and evaluating the findings and theories behind the Decatur study, which also confirmed the two-step hypothesis, the major finding that came out of the Elmira study. Most of the contributors to the Annals volume were sceptical of the limited focus on 'effects' and of the overgeneralisations of results from a community study. Elihu Katz (2006) himself, however, wrote that the reviewers and critics, now as then, highlighted the concept of individual 'effects' – far beyond the more restricted ideas and conclusions claimed in *Personal Influence*. Reviewers and critics in the same breath ignored earlier published results from the Bureau of Applied Social Research, which clearly pointed to multiple kinds of media influence.
11. Andrew, Edgar and Sedgwick (1999, 43-44) *Cultural Theory. The Key Concepts*, London, Routledge
12. Jürgen Habermas (1989) in his foreword to *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Translated by Burger, T. Cambridge MA, MIT Press.
13. The mechanisms of developments in the press, as depicted in the 'Strukturwandel', may astonish those who mainly know Habermas from his later 'theory of communicative actions', one of the axioms of that rules for communications and conversation form a joint product or the participant's actions within given situations.
14. In her article in the *American Journal of Sociology* (Vol. 77, 1972, pp. 660-79) Gaye Tuchman coined a phrase that has become a catchphrase for a detached and somewhat cynical approach to textual norms and codes of ethics in journalism: 'Objectivity as Strategic Ritual: An Examination of Newspapermen's Notion of Objectivity'. Jeremy Tunstall (1973) in the same spirit titled his article, also in *American Journal of Sociology* (Vol 78, No. 4, pp. 110-31) 'Making News by Doing Work: Routinizing the Unexpected'.
15. Two early British studies of media production are Philip Elliot's (1972) *The Making of a Television Series* and Philip Schlesinger's (1978) *Putting Reality Together: BBC News*. A classic is Gay Tuchman's (1978) *Making News. A Study in the Construction of Reality*, soon followed by Herbert J. Gans' (1979) *Deciding What's News*. What Gaye Tuchman found in more general terms was that journalists used norms of professional ethics strategically as a defence of their autonomy from pressures from outside sources of information or from editors and publishers.
16. Already in 1970 Jeremy Tunstall published his *The Westminster Lobby Correspondents* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul). An early American study, based on telephone interviews with a stratified sample of 1,340 US journalists, is John W.C. Johnstone, Edward J. Slawski and William W. Bowman (1976) *The News People. A Sociological Portrait of American Journalists and Their Work*. Urbana, University of Illinois Press.
17. Philip Elliot's (1972) (Op. Cit.).
18. See e.g. Daniel Hallin and Paolo Manchini (2004), *Comparing Media Systems*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

19. See e.g. Niklas Luhman (1996) *Die Realität der Massenmedien* (in translation *The Reality of Mass Media*, 2000)
20. A classic Scandinavian study of concentration in the newspaper industry is Niels Thomsen's study from 1972: *Dagbladskonkurrensen 1870-1970* [The Newspaper Competition 1870-1970].
21. As many studies demonstrate, there has been and probably still exist marked differences between the Anglo-American and the Continental European tradition in journalism. These varieties may to a great extent be explained by differences in the level and quality of readership and thus in the taste and composition of the respective national audiences. These differences in turn are interpreted as a result of national variations in historical experiences and working conditions for the press, ensuing from variations in censorship and market regulations. Despite these variations, the nations also share many cultural traits with other. Therefore, we may expect the variety in journalism to increase even more as we move out of the European region, e.g. to Africa and Asia. David E Weaver confirms this. He conducted an international project in which journalists in 22 nations were asked about their values and practices, and found enough variety to justify further comparative studies of journalism. In the last chapter Weaver could demonstrate little or no international consensus concerning the role of journalists or the purpose of journalism besides being first with the news. "In short," Weaver concludes, "it seems that no country or territory has a monopoly on professionalism among journalists." Thus, the search for variety and similarities must continue. Weaver, David H. (ed.) (1999, 479), *The Global Journalist. News People Around the World*, Cresskill, Hampton Press.
22. See, e.g. Bernhard Berelson (1952), *Content Analysis in Communications Research*, Glencoe, Ill., The Free Press.
23. See e.g. Kevin G. Barnhurst and John Nerone (2001) *The Form of News*.
24. In Scandinavia, Olle Findahl and Birgitta Höjjer (1984) conducted pioneering work in the comprehension of news reports within the research division of the public Swedish Broadcasting Corporation. See also John P. Robinson and Mark R. Levy et al. (1986), *The Main Source. Learning from Television News*. Beverly Hills, Sage.

Literature

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