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The Finns Party: Euroscepticism, Euro Crisis, Populism and the Media

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Abstract
In many European countries, populist right-wing parties have been most noticeable representatives of Euroscepticism. In Finland, the Finns Party (Perussuomalaiset) has been a constant promoter of organisational Euroscepticism through its leader, Timo Soini. The party broke through in Finland's 'big bang elections' of 2011, when the most debated issue was the European economic crisis, which was dominated by Eurosceptic Soini. Research concerning the relationship between the media, populism and Euroscepticism usually focus on national or European Parliament elections. This study analyses the media portrayal of the Eurosceptic Finns Party during times other than elections, focusing on the Finland's overall Euro crisis press coverage in 2010–2012. The analysis shows that the populist Finns Party has been a minor player in that coverage, which was dominated by the Euro positive political and economic elites. Differences between newspapers indicate that journalistic routines and political context direct media coverage toward particular framings, even when the media proclaims itself politically independent and neutral.

Issue
This article is part of a multidisciplinary issue of *Media and Communication*, edited by Epp Lauk (University of Jyväskylä, Finland) and Raul Reis (Emerson College, USA).

1. Introduction

Opposition to immigration and ethnic minorities can be described as the main themes unifying extreme right movements, however, populist right-wing parties have also promoted Euroscepticism (Caiani & Conti, 2014; Mudde, 2007; Pirro, 2014). Hooghe, Marks and Wilson (2002) conclude this is because European integration combines several supposed threats—immigrants; external political and cultural influences; and European laws—which populist right-wing parties perceive as undermining national sovereignty (pp. 976–977). Thus, the European Union (EU) and its institutions constitute a symbolic enemy to right-wing populist movements (Caiani & Conti, 2014, pp. 186–188).

Taggart and Szczerbiak (2002, p. 31) noted that Eurosceptic parties are generally small and gain relatively low shares in national elections, making their political influence marginal. This might have been true at the beginning of the new millennium. However, since the expan-

sion of the international financial crisis into a European debt and currency crisis in year 2008, Eurosceptic sentiment in many European countries has increased (Pew Research, 2013). The simultaneous increase in internal and external migrants in the EU has helped populist parties strengthen their political influence, allowing them into government in many countries.

Since the political and economic establishment has generally promoted the benefits of European integration, populist parties have been the most eager representatives of Euroscepticism in their domestic arenas. This is true for the Finns Party (Perussuomalaiset [PS], previously True Finns), a constant promoter of organisational Euroscepticism through its leader, Timo Soini. Even if there have been some exceptions depending on their government-opposition status of the moment, in general Finnish mainstream parties are favourable to European integration in comparison to their rank and file (Raunio, 2011, p. 204). Hence, PS's consistent Euroscepticism has been a defining image of the party.

The Nordic party system has been identified as 'enduring' (Sundberg, 1999), but the Euro currency crisis has challenged it in Finland. The crisis is purported to be a main reason behind the 'big bang election' of 2011 (Arter, 2012), in which PS gained 19.1 percent of the vote, becoming the third largest party in the Finnish parliament (see Borg, 2012). According to the research, the European economic crisis became the most important topic in election campaign debates (Railo & Välimäki, 2012a) and PS and Soini challenged the more established candidates, dominating agenda setting during the election campaigns (Pernaa, 2012, pp. 35-38; Railo & Välimäki, 2012b, pp. 120–135).

However, the election campaign was a specific period in the relationship between Finland's political parties and the media. Similar specific periods have been found throughout Europe because research into Eurosceptics has concentrated on electoral campaigns (Schuck et al., 2011; Silke & Maier, 2011; Strömbäck et al., 2011; Van Spanje & De Vreese, 2014), and therefore PS studies have focused precisely on the 'big bang election' of 2011 (Arter, 2012; Borg, 2012; Rahkonen, 2011; Wiberg, 2011). Additionally, PS gained success in the 2015 parliamentary elections, gaining 17.7 percent of the vote and entering into government for the first time.

EU issues are especially prominent during election campaigns in countries with Eurosceptic parties (see Silke & Maier, 2011), although media analysis of the Euro crisis coverage reveals the portrayal of the crisis is dominated by elites in favour of the Euro rather than Eurosceptics (Picard, 2015). To redress that focus on election periods, this study examines the role of PS's media coverage outside of electoral periods, namely the Euro crisis. Secondly, most studies indicate that media elites are generally more favourable to mainstream political parties upholding the political status quo, whereas the tabloid media is more 'populist' and promotes divisive politics (Leconte, 2010, p. 195; Mazzoleni, 2003, p. 8). Thus, it is worth exploring if there is difference between the quality and the tabloid media's portrayal of PS when referring to the Euro crisis.

The research questions (RQ) of the study are as follows:

RQ1. How has the Finns Party (PS) been portrayed in the Finnish press coverage of the Euro crisis?

RQ2. How does the portrayal differ compared to the coverage of the 'big bang elections' of 2011?

RQ3. What does the portrayal reveal about the relationship between the press and populist movements in general?

The data for the study has been collected as part of the large international research project that compared the press coverage of the Euro crisis in ten EU countries (Picard, 2015). The sample consists of 11 two-week periods

between the years 2010 and 2012 and contains articles from the leading quality newspaper, the leading popular paper, the leading financial paper, and the most prominent regional paper in Northern Finland. The main study method is quantitative and qualitative frame analysis.

2. Euroscepticism and the Media

Even if Leconte (2010) has demonstrated in her book *Understanding Euroscepticism* that 'the perceptions of the EU are largely influenced by issues apparently unrelated to European integration, such as citizens' perception of national democracy, immigration, multiculturalism and so on' (pp. 246–247), Euroscepticism has most often been linked to doubts or distrust of the EU and its bodies and regulative power. The central position of the EU in Euroscepticism is because EU institutions and regulation are central to the debate over national sovereignty and European integration since the 1990s (Caiani & Conti, 2014, pp. 186–187). Populist radical right-wing movements have adopted Euroscepticism to critique globalisation (Mudde, 2007).

It is possible to classify different levels or dimensions of Euroscepticism (e.g. Leconte, 2010, pp. 43–67). If we accept the definition of Euroscepticism as being the distrust of the EU, Euroscepticism can become organised by political parties or movements critical of the EU, or it may appear as general dissatisfaction among EU citizens. Euroscepticism can also be either strong and principled—opposing EU membership or the union itself, or it can refer to weaker (soft) resistance on specific questions in which the interests of some member states conflict with EU regulation (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002).

Euroscepticism has been strong, for example, in the UK. Taylor (2008) has crystallised a common EU theme found in British discussions: EU is far too expensive, 'Eurocratic' and self-serving, which prevents a reasonable agricultural policy; meddles with subjects it should not, such as domestic employment, health and security policies; and increases undesired immigration, resulting in social tensions in member states (pp. 34–35). In general, British Euroscepticism has mostly been focused on European Monetary Union (EMU) (Lubbers & Scheepers, 2005, p. 228) and on immigration (Luedtke, 2005). Similar arguments have been presented in other EU countries too (Caiani & Conti, 2014), but in the UK attitudes against the EU led to Brexit in the July of 2016.

Therefore, Euroscepticism varies between countries (Leconte, 2010, p. 99). Whereas Euroscepticism has been strong in the UK both among citizens and policy-makers, France has traditionally been a 'Europhilic' country representing a positive attitude towards European integration. Euroscepticism has been strong in the Nordic countries, albeit weaker in Finland than in Sweden, Norway and Denmark—countries not in the EMU (Ekman, 2010, pp. 108–119). In addition to Eurosceptic and Europhile extremes, it is also possible to define 'critical Europeanist' countries such as the Netherlands in which the attitude

towards European integration has been generally positive, although the attitude towards EU institutions is negative (Koopmans, Erbe, & Meyer, 2010, pp. 91–92).

According to various surveys, Euroscepticism among EU citizens has increased during the last twenty years (Eurobarometer, 2015; Leconte, 2010, p. 161; Pew Research, 2013). Support for the EU was highest in the early 1990s, but by the beginning of the new millennium support had declined remarkably, for example, in the Netherlands, France and Italy, where the attitude towards European integration had been very positive (Caiani & Conti, 2014, p. 184; Taylor, 2008, pp. 26–27). In many countries, distrust has confronted the attitudes of the establishment and ruling parties, which have generally promoted European integration. This, in turn, has created space for populist political parties that apply Eurosceptic rhetoric (Caiani & Conti, 2014, p. 184; Ekman, 2010, p. 92).

Taggart and Szczerbiak (2002) claim that Eurosceptic parties will likely succeed in countries with multi-polar competition between the parties than in countries with bi-polar competition because, in multi-polar systems, peripheral parties can benefit from second-order issues, such as European integration, when differentiating themselves from more established parties (pp. 34–35). In addition, Paloheimo (2012) emphasises that populist parties have been especially successful in countries traditionally reliant on consensus in policy-making because the establishment is easily labelled a 'corrupt elite' by populists (p. 329).

Finnish EU policy has been based on consensus among established political parties, even if conflicts within parties on EU questions have appeared (Raunio, 2011, p. 198). This has opened a door through which the populist PS can act as a Eurosceptic voice, seducing voters. In addition to the structural transformation of industries and scandals concerning election campaign funding in Finland, Euroscepticism, containing distrust of and protest sentiment against established parties, has been shown to be one of the main reasons for PS's success in the 'big bang elections' of 2011 (e.g. Borg, 2012; Grönlund & Westinen, 2012; Rahkonen, 2011).

Studies of the European Parliament (EP) elections of 2009 indicated that there is a correlation between the media portrayal of the EU and the election results: in countries with strong Eurosceptic parties, the negative portrayal of the EU has been more common than in other countries (Silke & Maier, 2011; Van Spanje & De Vreese, 2014). However, there were significant differences between the countries. In the 2009 EP election, the pro-EU frame dominated, for example, Italian, German and Finnish media coverage, whereas the anti-EU frame was strong in the Czech, Danish and UK media (Strömbäck et al., 2011, p. 171). In general, a negative tone on EU issues was more common than positive (Schuck et al., 2011, p. 177)—also in Finland and other Nordic countries (Schuck et al., 2011, p. 184). However, the EU was framed as beneficial in all other countries, except the UK, Austria and Czech Republic—the most prominent

representatives of Euroscepticism (Schuck et al., 2011, pp. 186–187).

Thus, media coverage commonly portrays the EU as beneficial for the member states but regards EU institutions as reducing individual member state's democracy and sovereignty (Schuck et al., 2011, p. 193). This reflects discussions on the EU's 'democratic deficit', deriving from the disparity between Europe's institutional development and national public spheres as core arenas of political debate (Koopmans, 2007, p. 183; Leconte, 2010, p. 209; Schuck et al., 2011, p. 175). The European Commission has responded to the challenge with a strategic increase in transparency and public discussion (De Beus, 2010, p. 26; Heikkilä, 2007). However, as Hix (2008) reminds us, publicity strategies cannot bridge the gap between the European elites and European citizens if there are no real possibilities to challenge predominant policy-making at the EU level (p. 64).

The problem from the media's perspective has been that the mainstream European media have made the Euro elites their main source when discussing EU questions and issues, whereas the Eurosceptic views of those who have less political power have been marginalised (Koopmans, 2007). In Finland, journalists, on the whole, supported joining the EU more than the average citizen (Mörä, 1999). However, Finland has been an EU member state for over 20 years and the Euro crisis has seriously challenged the country's economy since 2012. Thus, the opinions and attitudes of journalists may have changed. In the coverage of the 2009 EP election the tone towards the EU was generally more positive in newer member states than in older ones, indicating that there is a 'honeymoon period' (Schuck et al., 2011, p. 185).

Trenz (2007) has demonstrated that the quality press has, in general, promoted European integration and been EU positive. However, soft versions of Euroscepticism are quite common also in the quality press (Leconte, 2010, pp. 197, 218). Several studies indicate that the tabloid media adopts a Eurosceptic discourse more eagerly than the quality media and repeats the so-called 'Euro myths', especially in countries as the UK and Austria, which are known from their strong Eurosceptic sentiment (Leconte, 2010, pp. 195, 203–204). It is also worth acknowledging that Web-based communication and social media play significant roles in today's Eurosceptic mobilisation (Leconte, 2010, pp. 206–208). This is especially true with right-wing populist movements, whose supporters eagerly link the mainstream media to the liberal and corrupt elites and therefore strengthen their group identities via their own social media sites (Herkman, 2016).

3. Materials and Methods

The data here derive from a large comparative research project 'The Euro Crisis, Media Coverage, and Perceptions of Europe within the EU' organised by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of

Oxford (see Picard, 2015). The newspaper materials of the project were collected from ten EU countries: the UK, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece, Netherlands, Belgium, Poland and Finland. The sample consists of articles that discuss the Euro crisis. The articles were gathered from four newspapers from each country during 11 two-week periods during 2010 to 2012. The selected newspapers included the leading liberal and conservative quality dailies, business or financial papers and tabloid or popular papers. The sampling periods were built around the 'key moments' of the crisis, including the EU summits in 2010, 2011 and 2012 as well as the Eurozone members' and the International Monetary Fund's agreement for the 100 billion euro loan for Greece on 2 May 2010 (Picard, 2015, pp. 269–273).

The sample included all journalistic articles such as news stories, editorials, interviews, feature stories, columns and commentaries published during the sample periods. However, letters to the editors were excluded from the sample. The coding book contained variables that considered the basic data of the articles, e.g., the size of the story, genre, author; the main topics and sources used in the articles; the main causes; responses; actors, winners and losers of the crisis—if there were any—as well as the geopolitical frame and portrayal of the EU institutions presented in the articles (Picard, 2015, pp. 273–293). In total, 10,492 articles were coded and analysed in the project.

In Finland, as in other Nordic countries, it is difficult to define newspapers according to the liberal/conservative axis since there is no such kind of political orientation in the Nordic newspaper field. Thus, Finnish dailies chosen for the sampling were the leading newspaper of the country *Helsingin Sanomat*, traditionally sympathetic towards European integration and Europhilic elites; the leading regional paper of northern Finland *Kaleva*, traditionally more critical towards EU and the Europhilic metropolitan elites; the leading business paper *Kauppalehti*; and the most popular tabloid *Ilta-Sanomat*. The Finnish sample contained 971 articles discussing the Euro crisis (see Harjuniemi & Herkman, 2013, p. 15). The coding of the sample was carried out by two trained research assistants, whose inter-coder reliability was 0.78 according to the Holsti formula.

The coding book was supplemented for this study by variables exploring how much and in what way PS was portrayed in Euro crisis articles (Harjuniemi & Herkman, 2013, p. 83). Only 61 Euro crisis articles, meaning six percent of the Finnish sample, mentioned PS. Two of the 61 articles did not actually discuss the expected topic and were thus excluded from the materials. Therefore, 59 articles remained from the larger sample of the Finnish Euro crisis coverage and were taken for qualitative frame analysis; 20 from *Kaleva*, 18 from *Helsingin Sanomat*, 15 from *Ilta-Sanomat* and only six from *Kauppalehti*.

The roots of frame analysis lay in Goffman's (1974) ideas on social experience, but since the 1980s the frame analysis has been applied by media studies and become one of the most popular methods of journalism studies (Borah, 2011). The definition of the 'frame' varies depending on the study, but usually it refers to the possible framings restricting or directing interpretations (Van Spanje & De Vreese, 2014, p. 327). In journalism studies, framing refers to the processes in which the media emphasises some parts of reality and hides others by putting certain views to the fore of an article, thereby endorsing a particular interpretation (Entman, 1993, p. 53).

The frame analysis separates media frames from audience frames. The former is framing that the media carries out in portraying various topics, actors and phenomena, whereas the latter is the way audiences receive and interpret media texts (De Vreese, Jochen, & Holli, 2001, p. 107). In political studies, the frame analysis is also used to comprehend the construction of political ideas and identities (e.g. Caiani & Conti, 2014, p. 185). In this study, the focus is solely on media frames that are studied with reference to how the Finnish press framed PS in the Euro crisis articles. The main frames are found by sifting through sentences in which PS or its representatives are mentioned and by reflecting on how PS was presented in comparison with the context of the whole article.

4. Finns Party and Coverage of the Euro Crisis

According to election studies, the economic crisis in the EU region became the most popular topic of television debates and newspaper articles during the campaigns of Finnish elections in 2011, a debate led by the Eurosceptic PS (Railo & Välimäki, 2012a, pp. 36, 53–57). However, debates on the Euro crisis appear to have had two phases. In the first phase, the media were highly critical of the EU institutions' and Finland's official policy during the crisis. However, after Portugal's government fell on 23 March 2011 because of the crisis, the Finnish media started to support Finland's official EU policy and sought a new economic consensus (Railo, 2012, p. 258–261). Thus, the significance of Euroscepticism faded during the campaigns once the crisis worsened.

The period of the 'big bang elections' and the collapse of Portugal's government are not included in the sample of this study. The sample contains the period before the spring of 2011, during which the EU Contract was changed on 16 December 2010, and the period after spring 2011, when the European Central Bank asked Italy for more austerity measures on 5 August 2011 (Picard, 2015, pp. 269–272). Therefore, the material here focuses on the coverage of the Euro crisis specifically from the point of view of the crisis not from the Finnish elections.

As mentioned, only six percent of the Euro crisis articles mentioned PS and not all of those articles promoted a Eurosceptic approach. Thus, it seems that PS gained only modest publicity at times other than elections. In contrast, the media coverage of the crisis was dominated by domestic and European political leaders, with economists often representing EU positive 'Euro elites' (Harjuniemi, Herkman, & Ojala, 2015; Herkman &

Harjuniemi, 2015). The leader of PS, Timo Soini, was often quoted in Finnish Euro crisis articles, but less than the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance or the EU's Financial Commissioner, Olli Rehn, and economists and other EU officials (Harjuniemi & Herkman, 2013, pp. 21–29). Therefore, it is clear that PS did not define the Finnish media agenda during the Euro crisis.

However, since the 'big bang elections' made PS a legitimate debater on the Euro crisis, almost all the Euro crisis articles that mention PS were published after the 2011 elections. In fact, only six articles were published before the elections. Thus, PS's higher proportional share of media attention came after the election period. Furthermore, as the economic recession has become more topical since then, the continuing media spotlight on Euroscepticism has slightly strengthened (Harjuniemi & Herkman, 2013, p. 19).

The Finnish press discussed the Euro crisis mostly as an economic issue to be covered by the business or financial sections of the papers (Harjuniemi & Herkman, 2013, p. 24). This also explains why PS was mentioned so infrequently and mostly in a negative light by the business paper *Kauppalehti* (see Table 1). *Kauppalehti* approached the crisis as an economic issue and mostly used economists and bankers for its sources. The other papers mentioned PS three times more often in their Euro crisis articles than *Kauppalehti* because they discussed the political dimensions of the crisis. The leading daily, *Helsingin Sanomat*, mentioned PS in six percent of its Euro crisis articles and generally gave more visibility to PS than *Kauppalehti*. *Helsingin Sanomat* also approached PS quite neutrally in its news journalism.

As a percentage of all Euro crisis stories, PS was most often mentioned in *Ilta-Sanomat*, in which 12 percent of all Euro crisis stories discussed the party or Soini. In addition, *Ilta-Sanomat* was most positive in its portrayal of PS, since only two of its articles clearly criticised the party. This indicates that *Ilta-Sanomat* adopted the most visible Eurosceptic approach. The paper also gave increased visibility to PS by publishing impressive images of Soini. *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Kaleva* published fewer images of him. In many ways, *Kaleva* was the antithesis of *Ilta-Sanomat* in its portrayal of PS; even though *Kaleva* mentioned PS quite frequently, the party was repeatedly discussed in a negative light and even downplayed.

Different assessments can be partly explained by the article types. In *Kaleva* and *Kauppalehti* PS was mentioned quite often in editorials and commentaries—article types in which critical statements are common—whereas in *Helsingin Sanomat* and in *Ilta-Sanomat* PS was more often discussed in news stories that emphasise the more objective and neutral tone of factual reporting. However, political and ideological grounds can also be found, especially for *Kaleva*'s critical portrayal of PS.

Since PS was portrayed so infrequently in Finnish Euro crisis articles, it is not possible to make any statistically reliable conclusions about the subject. However, a few recurring frames was possible to identify from the data. The material found in 59 articles introduced ten frames in which the interpretations of PS were delimited by the media. Some of these frames were very specific concerning, for example, Soini's candidacy for the 2012 presidential elections. When these kinds of specialties and overlaps between the frames were eliminated, three main frames could be defined, namely: (1) PS as a representative of the opposition, (2) PS as a representative of populism, and (3) PS as a representative of Euroscepticism (see Table 2).

A single article might employ several frames, but usually one frame dominated the portrayal of PS. The most common primary frame was that of 'opposition'. The 'populism' frame was the second most popular, and 'Euroscepticism' came third. However, 'Euroscepticism' was evidently most common as a secondary frame. Thus, one can argue that PS was usually presented as a representative of opposition or populist politics, although these presentations were frequently accompanied by the Euroscepticism frame. The opposition frame was complemented by the Euroscepticism frame especially in news stories, whereas editorials and commentaries favoured a populist frame with a critical assessment of PS. Each frame will be next introduced in more detail.

Opposition Frame. This frame emphasized PS as a representative of domestic opposition politics. In opposition frame PS was seen typically as a contender or challenge to government rather than as a proponent of its own

Table 1. Finns Party (PS) in Euro crisis articles (n = 971).

Newspaper	PS in articles (total amount of articles)	Share from all articles (%)	Visibility of PS in articles	Assessment of PS in articles
Kauppalehti (business paper)	6 (309)	2%	Minor	Negative
Helsingin Sanomat (leading daily, capital area)	18 (312)	6%	Modest	Neutral
Kaleva (regional daily, Northern Finland)	20 (228)	9%	Minor/modest	Negative
Ilta-Sanomat (popular paper)	15 (122)	12%	Sizeable	Positive

agenda. The party was thus defined by what it is not (i.e. a government participant). In consensus democracies such as Finland government/opposition division is one of the most important dimensions structuring the party field and, therefore, it is not a surprise that this frame was most common and used by all newspapers included to the study, because PS was an opposition party during all sample periods of 2010–2012.

Opposition frame was most common in news stories published by dailies. Especially *Helsingin Sanomat* favoured this framing that was used also in such story headlines as 'Opposition accuses the government for increasing the charges of Finland' (3 August 2011) or 'Opposition scolded the Prime Minister Katainen' (3 July 2012). Opposition frame appeared several times in *Helsingin Sanomat* news stories as neutral mentions of PS (e.g. 8 May 2010; 3 August 2011).

However, quite often the opposition/government division was dramatized by using metaphors known from sports and conflict narratives (cf. Joris, Puustinen, Sobieraj, & d'Haenens, 2015). This was common also in *Helsingin Sanomat*, in which the opposition was 'furious' with the schedule of parliamentary processing of collateral agreement with Spain (19 July 2012) or when the Prime Minister Katainen had to time after time 'deny allegations' (3 August 2011). Dramatization was even more typical in other papers, in which 'the government and the opposition clashed' (*Kauppalehti* 18 June 2012) or the leader of PS Soini 'attacked the government very hard' (*Kaleva* 9 November 2011). Usually attacker was the opposition and the government was defender (e.g. *Ilta-Sanomat* 7 October 2011).

Even if the opposition frame was most common in the news stories, it was also used in other story types highlighting the differences between the papers. Whereas popular paper *Ilta-Sanomat* presented PS and its leader Soini quite often positively as the representatives of the opposition, regional paper *Kaleva* made usually completely different evaluations. This can be explained by the fact that even if *Kaleva* is announced to be politically independent the strong position of the Centre Party in the region *Kaleva* is distributed has implications to the alignments of the paper. In *Ilta-Sanomat* PS was a snappy opposition party, whose leader's Eurosceptic blog writings were repeated almost as they were (28 November 2011), but in *Kaleva* PS was just a secondary opposition party 'accompanying Centre Party in its EU criticism' (3 August 2011). Thus, according to *Kaleva* the Centre Party was the primary opposition party (10 Au-

gust 2011), and PS was often portrayed in negative or critical light (e.g. 21 July 2012).

Populism Frame. Populism as such is a slippery concept. Populism has been historically linked to very different left- and right-wing movements, totalitarian and democratic systems as well as nationalist and liberalist approaches (see Taggart, 2000). In many political cultures and languages the term 'populism' carries rather negative connotations (cf. Canovan, 2005, p. 75), even though the etymological background of the word, deriving from the Latin noun 'populus' meaning 'the people', gives it an emancipative or empowering signification (cf. Williams, 1988, p. 66). Pejorative meanings of 'empty talk' are common in accusations of someone being a 'populist', but other kinds of usages with more positive connotations of democracy have also been connected to populism (e.g. Canovan, 1999).

Mostly negative meanings of populism appeared in populism frame of PS. Surprisingly, the positive meanings of populism and PS representing 'the people' were also sometimes used in newspapers that generally were critical against the party. For example, in a commentary writing of *Kauppalehti*, PS was presented as fresh air in EU politics between the people and the elites (17 August 2011), and also dailies noted Soini as a defender of democracy when the Finnish government rushed the parliamentary decision of EU loan programme for Spain during parliament's recess period (*Kaleva* 19 July 2012; *Helsingin Sanomat* 19 July 2012).

However, positive approaches of populism frame were most common in *Ilta-Sanomat* that quite often presented Eurosceptic PS as a representative of 'the real people' opposing Europhilic political and economic elites. *Ilta-Sanomat*, for example, published a web survey asking if the support Finland pays for Greece is too much or not (3 May 2010). It was not a surprise that 94 percent of over 50,000 respondents thought that the amount of money was too much. In addition to the survey results, Soini promoted his Eurosceptic views in the article. Positive framing of populism was used also in other articles of *Ilta-Sanomat* presenting PS as a mediator of 'the people' and challenger of the Euro elites (e.g. 7 November 2011). Contradiction compared to *Helsingin Sanomat* was striking: the leading quality paper of the country almost avoided using the populism frame.

The reason why populism frame was used so rarely in *Helsingin Sanomat* derives from the most popular meanings of the term in Finnish language. The term is used often pejoratively, combining the meanings of populist

Table 2. Main frames of Finns Party (PS) in Euro crisis articles (n = 59).

Frame	As a primary frame	As a secondary frame	Total
Opposition frame	24	5	29
Populism frame	16	7	23
Euroscepticism frame	10	24	34
Total	50	36	86

rhetoric or style to ideological emptiness. To someone a 'populist' has been a negative statement in Finnish political discourse. This kind of pejorative use of populism frame was popular in editorials and commentaries of *Kaleva* and *Kauppalehti*, in which PS was most often discussed as a troublemaker on the Finnish political field. Especially *Kaleva* seemed to accuse PS of 'populist' Euro policies in its editorials and commentaries (4 and 17 August 2011; 13 November 2011; 26 June 2012; 21 July 2012). *Kauppalehti* also promoted this kind of approach to PS (18 August 2011; 31 October 2011; 18 June 2012).

Also in the 'big bang election' media coverage especially editorials and commentaries presented PS as a protest channel through which the voters could project their disappointments. However, EU policy and anti-immigration strategies of PS were criticized in these articles as 'populist rhetoric' (Hatakka, 2012, pp. 297–301), and some writers thought that PS might even threat the very functionality of Finnish political system (Hatakka, 2012, p. 317). In Euro crisis coverage these kinds of evaluations were common especially on editorials and commentaries published by *Kaleva* and *Kauppalehti* in 2010–2012.

Euroscepticism Frame. Euroscepticism frame goes naturally hand in hand with PS because, as mentioned earlier, the party has represented most consistently Eurosceptic approach in Finnish political field during the twenty-first century (Raunio, 2011). Therefore, in Euroscepticism frame media echoed the self-definitions of PS. Again, popular paper *Ilta-Sanomat* applied most commonly the positive approach to Euroscepticism and PS—the stance indicated by an opinion poll asking if joining to EMU had been a mistake or not (1 June 2012). According to the poll, only the supporters of PS thought that Finland should not have been joined the EMU. Soini was commenting the result in a story so that he was glad if PS was the one and only Eurosceptic party in Finland.

Euroscepticism as a primary frame was most popular in *Ilta-Sanomat*, which gave in all most positive and notable publicity to PS (cf. Harjuniemi & Herkman, 2013, p. 59). Thus, PS and its leader Soini promoted in Ilta-Sanomat directly their political agenda, which was not oppressed by opposition or populism frames. Soini argued in *Ilta-Sanomat* that he had been right all the time when warning about the support of the European banks (30 June 2012) or when the 'Europhilic government' had to explain away their EU policies (11 August 2011; 12 July 2012). The paper also quoted some other Eurosceptic commentators, such as economist Stefan Törnqvist from Ålandsbanken, who predicted the breakdown of the Eurozone.

In other newspapers the Euroscepticism frame was approached usually more neutrally than in *Ilta-Sanomat*. In *Helsingin Sanomat* news stories, for example, also other PS representatives than Soini, such as MP Vesa-Matti Saarakkala (28 October 2011) and MEP Sampo Terho (29 September 2011), criticised the government's EU policies. However, majority of Euroscepticism framings were secondary to the opposition frame that was the primary frame of PS in *Helsingin Sanomat*. Thus, first and foremost PS was presented as an opposition party which criticises the government about its EU policies.

The use of Euroscepticism frame commonly as a secondary frame in *Helsingin Sanomat* and in some news stories of *Kaleva* also can be explained partly by the sampling. The sample focusing solely on articles discussing Euro crisis emphasizes Euroscepticism as central topic of PS' opposition politics. In articles discussing PS outside the Euro crisis, other topics would have probably dominated. Critique of the campaign financing of the more established parties, but also immigration, were common issues in 'big bang election' coverages and promoted especially by PS and its leader Soini (Railo & Välimäki, 2012a). These typical topics with a populist movement did not come out so much in media coverage of the Euro crisis.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

To answer RQ1, the role of the Eurosceptic PS turned out to be rather modest in determining media coverage of the 2010–2012 Euro crisis: only six percent of the Euro crisis articles mentioned PS or its representatives. In those articles, PS was primarily framed as a representative of the opposition or populism meaning a negative or neutral tone accompanied its portrayal. However, Euroscepticism was a common secondary frame and especially accompanied the opposition frame, indicating the significance of PS as a public representative of Finnish Euroscepticism.

The differences between the framings demonstrate differences between newspaper types. The business paper did not grant much attention to PS because it mostly discussed the Euro crisis as an economic issue, thus favouring economists and bankers as news sources (cf. Arrese & Vara, 2015). In its rare articles that mentioned PS, the party was usually presented as a populist troublemaker. In daily newspapers, PS was given more visibility and discussed in a more neutral manner, even if the amount of articles was not very substantial and PS was portrayed negatively, especially in *Kaleva*.

The most significant difference between the newspaper types was that between the quality newspapers and the tabloid, which was the only newspaper to portray PS positively and adopt a Eurosceptic approach. The visibility given to PS was also remarkably greater in the tabloid than in other papers: PS was mentioned in 12 percent of all Euro crisis articles and often portrayed through flamboyant images of the party leader, Soini. Therefore, this study supports previous studies indicating that the tabloid media serves populist and Eurosceptic audiences more eagerly than quality newspapers (Jungar, 2010, pp. 215–216; Leconte, 2010, pp. 203–204; Mazzoleni, 2003, p. 8).

Compared to the media coverage of the big bang elections 2011 (RQ2), the attention given to PS appeared completely different: PS and Timo Soini were visible in election campaigns in defining the media agenda (Railo & Välimäki,

2012a), but the agenda setting power of the party turned out to be rather modest during the Euro crisis issue, although the visibility of PS seemed to increase slightly after the elections. Generally, the Euro crisis coverage was dominated by Euro-positive political leaders, the government and economists, whereas representatives of civil society were seldom mentioned or used as story sources (Harjuniemi & Herkman, 2013, pp. 21–29). This accords with other studies of actors who 'inhabit the European public sphere' (Koopmans, 2007, pp. 203–206).

The sample period of this study ends in 2012. The consequences of the Euro crisis have since that struck Finland extremely hard. Thus, the archive of *Helsingin Sanomat* indicates that there might be more room for Euroscepticism in Finnish media coverage after 2013. Keynesian approaches and other alternatives to austerity have been discussed more often than during the sample period—when the Euro elite dominated debates. However, there is no evidence that PS would have gained more attention in those debates either. Since that PS has been profiled rather by its public criticism of immigration and by scandals that some of their representatives have faced.

Therefore, the study implies that the relationship between the populist movement and the media (RQ3), depends on many other variables than thematic issues such as Euroscepticism, which seems to be still quite marginal in Finnish mainstream media (cf. Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002). The most important factor in this relationship is the position of the populist party in a domestic political field. Thus, it is necessary to consider if the party is marginal or not in the political arena, whether it is in opposition or in government, in its insurgent phase or established—all these factors impact heavily on the overall media attention given to it (see Herkman, 2015). Therefore, it is probable that the dominant frames of opposition and populism have changed when PS became established and joined the government after the 2015 elections.

The media factor itself is another major variable defining the relationship between the populist party and the media. Obviously, the tabloid media adopts Eurosceptic sentiment more eagerly than quality media. Criticism for and against Euroscepticism is also more common in commentaries, editorials and columns than in news stories that tend to be more neutral. However, political affiliations between the media and domestic political parties appear to direct media coverage toward particular framings, even if the news media proclaims to be politically independent. For instance, the commitment to the Centre Party in *Kaleva*'s editorials and commentaries indicates the strong impact of the party in the region in which the paper is published. Hence, the audience addressed by the particular media organisation may also greatly explain media frames regarding Euroscepticism and populism.

However, even more important media factor derives from journalistic routines. Several studies in Finland and elsewhere have indicated that the media attention emphasizes leading politicians, such as key Ministers, explaining why PS was not a prominent agent in Euro crisis coverage during its opposition period (see Bos, Van der Brug, & De Vreese, 2011; Suikkanen, Holma, & Raittila, 2012). More specifically, as Bennett's (1990) 'indexing hypothesis' supposes, the mainstream media organizations usually adopt the hegemonic views of government debate, and challenging viewpoints are therefore introduced merely insomuch as they are emerged in these 'official circles' (p. 106). This is especially true in such countries as Finland whose media can even today be called 'politics friendly' (cf. Van Dalen, 2012).

The explicit difference between the Euro crisis coverages during the election campaign and times other also support the indexing hypothesis, which is intended to apply the everyday news accounts rather than coverage of such specific events as elections 'that may have a normative-ritual order of their own' (Bennett, 1990, p. 107). Thus, during the election campaign, the conflict frame enabled PS to challenge the established Euro-positive political elites that in other times dominated the everyday news stream. Therefore, it seems that to become a prominent point of view in the news media, Euroscepticism has to be promoted by established government politicians who either challenge the other decision-making elites by this view or adopt Euroscepticism as their hegemonic idea on European issues. For the moment, this does not seem to be a probable option in Finnish public discourse.

Acknowledgements

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

The New Visual Testimonial: Narrative, Authenticity, and Subjectivity in Emerging Commercial Photographic Practice

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Abstract

By studying the cultural and aesthetic impact of increasingly pervasive digital technologies and mass amateurization, this paper examines the ramifications of the networked information economy on professional photographic practice and considers the concomitant implications for the photographic classroom. Using the framework of convergence culture as per the writings of Yochai Benkler, Henry Jenkins, Mark Deuze, and Axel Bruns, the impact of accessible and instantaneous image creation and dispersal are explored. Given the rise of consumer engagement in brand co-creation on social media platforms, we can observe massive changes to professional practice in areas such as aesthetics, and the erosion of previous sustainable business models. Indeed, as traditional notions of "expertise" shift from technological prowess to narrative and disseminative abilities, the effects on commercial practice and photographic education need to be addressed. This paper argues that there are three emerging priorities for commercial image use: narrative ability, authenticity, and subjectivity and suggests initial steps in their pedagogical application. By acknowledging these transformations, this paper explores the idea that students need to harness technique, social media influence, adaptability, subjectivity, and storytelling power in order to better serve emerging image-based needs in commercial spaces.

Issue

1. Introduction

In the summer of 2010, Domino's Pizza launched an advertising campaign called *Show Us Your Pizza* in which they pledged to forego the traditional tools and tricks of commercial food photography and would instead "shoot their pizzas just the way they come out of the oven" (Lincoln, 2013). This was part of a larger "Turnaround" campaign in which Domino's acknowledged (and indeed showcased) consumer dissatisfaction with their product and subsequently revamped the recipe. In order to engage the consumer in this rebranding strategy, Domino's encouraged customers to photograph their own pizza exactly as it arrived at their door and upload the photos to a dedicated URL. These images populated a cu-

rated, but not manipulated, website of user generated pizza pictures.

This aspect of the *Show Us Your Pizza* campaign was part of a bigger strategy that integrated online and mass-market motion spots, online games, and a social media strategy. The goal was to get the consumer engaged with the improved Domino's pizza in what could be perceived as an experiential and authentic way. The campaign resulted in a 14% increased market share, a slew of press coverage, and various coveted marketing awards (Lincoln, 2013; Litz, 2010). For Domino's, *Show Us Your Pizza* heralded the beginning of what would be a continued commitment to consumer engagement through a number of marketing channels and has resulted in consistent growth for the brand; increasing their market share most

recently from 9 to 12.3% between 2014 and 2016 (Derousseau, 2016; He, Zha, & Li, 2013).

Although by no means unique in this respect, the *Show Us Your Pizza* campaign represents the culmination of the possibilities for consumer engagement and the threat to established protocols and priorities in the networked information economy. Acting as an unwitting harbinger, a Domino's chef insists: "We know that [the consumer is] the *authentic* source for great Domino's pizza pictures [emphasis added]" (Litz, 2010).

This essay considers the effects on the commercial photography industry endemic to the massive changes in the way culture is now created and consumed. As this paper will show, the framework of convergence culture has lead to a climate in which previous barriers to entry have been negated, lines delineating professional and amateur engagement with photography have been blurred, and new opportunities for consumer involvement have been introduced. As such, new priorities have emerged which privilege authenticity, subjectivity, and narrative ability. This essay will explore these three key attributes that are increasingly integral to image use in commercial contexts, and will consider appropriate opportunities for their integration in post secondary commercially focused photography programs.

To fully appreciate the cultural changes of the last two decades, it is necessary to understand the framework in which the public is consuming (and producing) media in the networked information economy. Though the theorists I reference are preoccupied with a variety of content creation (from citizen journalism to Wikipedia to Flickr and gaming), their prosumption critiques can also be applied singularly to the sphere of commercial media.

2. Consumer Engagement and Convergence Culture

The related concepts of produsage, the prosumer, and convergence culture have attracted attention from a range of theorists working from a political economy and critical perspective. Not surprisingly, this scholarship has also garnered interest from marketing industry strategists, who are eager to adopt new models of consumer engagement. This shifting interest, which has resulted in the widespread inclusion of non-professionals in content creation, has serious ramifications on heretofore predictable and sustainable photography-based careers. It is important therefore to understand the consumptive and productive atmosphere as identified in the writings of Bruns, Benkler, Jenkins, and Deuze after starting with Alvin Toffler to provide a bit of early and prescient context to our current state of commercial image use.

The prosumer was first named by Toffler and described in his book *The Third Wave* published in 1980. Toffler suggests that in the next stage of human innovation, culture would be typified by, among other things, a demassification of the media (p. 165) and the rise of the prosumer. The name prosumer describes the phe-

nomenon in which we are increasingly active in the production of things that we then consume (p. 265). In a produsage paradigm, not only should marketing be tailored to the consumer's interests but she should also have agency in creating the things with which she is surrounded (if not creating the actual marketing itself as per user generated content in general and the Domino's example in particular). Due to the advent of digital technology and the concomitant rise of instant, targeted communication, these desires can be accomplished to an increasingly satisfactory degree. Axel Bruns' 2008 book *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life, and Beyond: From Production to Produsage*, elaborates on Toffler's thesis by outlining the major characteristics of produsage as "the collaborative, iterative, and user-led production of content by participants in a hybrid user-producer, or produser role" (p. 1). In a review of the book, David Karpf (2009) outlines the four main tenets of produsage as: "(a) open participation, communal evaluation, (b) fluid heterarchy, ad hoc meritocracy, (c) unfinished artefacts, continuing process, and (d) common property, individual rewards" (p. 81). That the characteristics of produsage themselves are anathema to a "professional" practice should be obvious but it will be discussed further below.

Yochai Benkler is optimistic about the potential for change inherent in this new approach to content creation. In his book *The Wealth of Networks* (2006), he situates our current media landscape in its historical context and suggests that we might consider mass culture as having been democratized because its creative potential is now in the hands of the individual. He writes: "The networked information economy also allows for the emergence of a more critical and self-reflective culture" (p. 15) and this has "made human creativity and the economics of information itself the core structuring facts in the new networked information economy" (p. 4).

In an editorial written by Henry Jenkins and Mark Deuze (2008) on the idea of convergence culture, they consider Benkler's theory of hybrid media ecology which acts in a transformative way on all content producers including those working in commercial, political, activism, and journalism contexts (p. 5). Taking it a step further, Jenkins and Deuze (2008) claim that individuated content is less important than the actual collaborative experience of building the content in shared spaces. They suggest the pre-eminence of this "socialized media" of which the photo sharing site Flickr is named as an example (p. 5). So again, we see that collaboration and creativity is crucial to our engagement with culture.

In his earlier essay *The Cultural Logic of Media Convergence*, Henry Jenkins (2004) catalogues the myriad of ways the consumer is engaged with established and remixed media across multiple channels. He hints at the overall effect of these shifting relationships, explaining convergence culture as "a reconfiguration of media power and a reshaping of media aesthetics and economics" (p. 35). Note the care he takes to name aesthetics as an area worthy of consideration. To put it another

way, Jenkins and Deuze (2008) explain, "the flow of media content is shaped as much by the decisions made in teenagers' bedrooms as it is by decisions made in corporate boardrooms" (p. 7).

Clearly there are some common themes across these theoretical frameworks which are useful in identifying the key attributes of convergence culture: a desire to be creative, a desire for customized content, a desire to collaborate with others, and a desire for shared spaces in which collaboration might take place. Turning back for a moment to the Domino's example used at the beginning of this essay, we can see that *Show Us Your Pizza* successfully harnesses and fulfills these desires while simultaneously eroding the prospects for professional photographers.

Certainly an analysis of contemporary marketing priorities illustrates the increasing value of collaborative spaces and user generated content (UGC). Not surprisingly, the corollary is also true; traditional marketing approaches are experiencing a retraction in their use and value, and a concomitant reallocation of their media budgets (Banet-Weiser, 2011; Gotter, 2016; Lyngsfeldt, 2015; Moore, 2015). In an aggregate analysis of 2014 and 2015 marketing data, London agency Freely cites a study which suggests that by 2019, mobile advertising will represent 72% of all US digital ad spending (Moore, 2015). Quoting the *Social Media Examiner*, the analysis includes this finding: "Figuring out how to best connect with people remains high on the list of questions marketers want answered (89%). As more businesses become social, those that best engage will stand out" (Moore, 2015).

UGC consistently outperforms traditional media in areas of "trust" and "helpfulness" (Gotter, 2016) so much so that in a directed analysis on attitudes towards visual-based UGC, Olapic found that consumers trusted user generated visual content almost twice as much as professional images created by brands (Olapic, 2016) and more than half of those surveyed said that they "were more likely to click on an ad employing UGC than one using stock photography" (Leggatt, 2016).

Hence, as a result of the technical, aesthetic, and disseminative abilities of the networked information economy expressed in the bundling of the camera phone, social media, and the internet, we find a systematic erosion of traditional sustainable photographic practice. The accompanying democratizing shifts in aesthetic ambitions and access, coupled with an engagement hungry public vis a vis convergence culture, may have led to a schism between what we teach and the image-making skills required in commercial spaces. This essay will illuminate what brands want from their imagery, and consider how we can deliver industry ready practitioners given these findings.

3. "Professional" as a Questionable Distinction

To begin it is important to understand the erosion of traditional and long-standing notions of what consti-

tutes professional practice. According to the membership guidelines found on the website of the American Society of Media Photographers (ASMP), professional membership is reserved for photographers working in either still or motion who have been "actively and consistently engaged in professional practice for at least 3 years" (ASMP, 2016). This definition is considerably more vague than the stipulations found on the website in 2013 which used concrete achievements to signal professionalism, prioritized publication, and required its members to be earning at least 50% of their primary income from licensing their photography (ASMP, 2013). This shift away from a quantitative approach is telling. The Professional Photographers of Canada (PPoC) uses similarly vague language, welcoming "photographers of all genres", and suggesting that membership will help attain accreditation as a "professional", without ever specifying what that entails (PPoC, 2016). In the case of the Canadian Association of Professional Image Creators (CAPIC), the eligibility for membership requires meeting several criteria, and puts emphasis on having an appropriate portfolio and business documentation in addition to proof of publication (CAPIC, 2016).

Despite the ambiguities, there remains a loose collection of characteristics which seem to constitute professionalism from an industry standard perspective: a sustained record of successful jobs (having been published), the use of professional business documents (which may indicate whether the prospective member considers maintaining a sustainable fee structure important), that there is an existing body of work which corresponds to some agreed upon presentation standards (the portfolio), and that the majority of income is made from photography.

These defining features stand in contrast to the trends of mass amateurization which problematize the traditional distinction between professional photographer and everyone else with a camera. Further to the collaborative, creative and consumptive desires of convergence culture, non-professional image makers are eager to participate in the creation of mass marketing campaigns like *Show Us Your Pizza*, so much so that one 2016 consumer trend study claims that over 50% of respondents actually want more opportunities and direction from brands on what content to create (Gotter, 2016). Likewise, the platforms that are so heavily foundational to convergence culture (Instagram, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat) facilitate the process by which advertisers can utilize the branded work being done by the public to their own promotional and disseminative ends. This newly "commercial" work includes everything from UGC, to sponsored hashtags, to working with "influencers" (Kolm, 2015). This illuminates the false distinction between professional and non (Duffy, 2010; San Cornelio & Gomez Cruz, 2014; Schroeder, 2013) and nullifies the need for proof of professional practice. Referencing Prahalad and Ramaswamy, Banks and Deuze (2009) state that in fact "value is increasingly *co-created* by both the firm and the consumer. Today, media consumers, fans

and audiences are redefined as 'the drivers of wealth production within the new digital economy'" (p. 420), resulting in diminished opportunities for professional creative practitioners overall.

In the end, non-professionals want to create work for brands, they have the ability to do so and to spread this work around, and brands are happy to receive and use this work on their own disseminative media platforms. In addition, the technical and aesthetic barriers to entry have been dismantled: camera technology has gained precision and image capture has advanced to include ever-larger digital sensors, having the gradual effect that images taken with smaller cameras can more accurately retain their integrity when reproduced at bigger sizes (the recent *Shot on an iPhone* campaign is a relevant example). Plus, aesthetic banality delivers its own branding benefits as will be shown below.

Thus there is an emerging strata of non-professional image-makers who are engaging with brands for a variety of reasons that sit outside of the typical sustainability goals of professional practice. Instead, they report that their participation delivers the following: an increase in social capital, pleasure in being part of brand co-creation, a creative challenge, an outlet for self-expression, and a sense of empowerment. (Brabham, 2008; Duffy, 2010; Marcus Reker, 2016; Nava, Blake, MacRury, & Richards, 2013; San Cornelio & Gomez Cruz, 2014). Certainly in these emerging marketing contexts, there is no inherent need for a "professional" approach as defined by the ASMP, PPoC and CAPIC above: business documents and portfolios don't apply and proof of prior paid remuneration is beside the point. Furthermore, as we will see below, the authenticity aspect of these ads also leaves any aesthetic or technical professionalism out of the picture by necessity.

Certainly, our presumptions about photographic "work" need to change. Speaking recently at the *Image Truth/Story Truth* symposium, conference panelists Stephen Mayes and Fred Ritchin reject the hand-wringing fixation on recompense, suggesting that in fact there are numerous emerging revenue streams for photographers, many of them non-traditional and some necessitating collaboration with non-professionals (Tow Centre, 2015). Ritchin goes further to call for a change in the way professionalism is defined, arguing for example, that the citizen journalist may be better equipped (mostly from an access perspective) to provide the most appropriate images from a conflict (Tow Centre, 2015). Similarly, referencing the quote used above from Jenkins and Deuze (2008), one could certainly argue that the proverbial teenager in the bedroom is indeed a more appropriate mediator of visual identity for many brands eager to engage with exactly that demographic.

Without a doubt, given the erosion of traditionally stable revenue streams, commercial photographic education at the post secondary level has a responsibility to ensure that our students become fully cognizant of the field in which they are entering—one that is crowded with powerfully engaged, connected, and able consumers and one that is susceptible to influence from the aesthetic approach that these consumers bring.

4. New Priorities: Storytelling, Subjectivity, and Authenticity

This essay identifies three key emerging priorities that are critical components of contemporary commercial image culture as:

    A. Storytelling or narrative abilities;
    B. The importance of authenticity;
    C. Expressions of subjectivity.

As this essay will show, these priorities can give direction to emerging image creators and should prompt educators in commercially focused programs to ensure that our pedagogical approach enables our students to understand, and execute along these shifting priorities.

5. The Persistence of Storytelling

Though convergence culture encourages the micro and diverse participation of consumers in brand co-creation, the sophistication of a marketing strategy considered as a whole also requires rich storytelling which can engage the audience at an emotional and experiential level (Olapic, 2016; Scoblete, 2015). When brands pursue UGC, this can take the form of co-created narratives (Deuze, 2005) enabled by accessible and transformative technology (Harper, 2016). However, there is also an increasing need for intentional affect, which triggers emotional responses using implicit associations.

In her case analysis of the Instagram presence of Nike and Starbucks, Chia Yu Chang (2014) contrasts hard and soft sell tactics, finding that in the case of the latter: "These appeals tend to be subtle and indirect; an image or atmosphere may be conveyed through a beautiful scene or the development of an emotional story" (pp. 21–22). In Chang's analysis, she characterizes UGC as most often simple and direct, and explicit in its support for the brand. On the other hand, the intentional posts generated by Nike and Starbucks worked at the implicit level, leveraging visual messages designed to "delight and inspire" (p. 37). Arguably this ability to tell a complex story and seed an emotional experience in a single image is a challenge which requires skill beyond the ease of the snap/filter/hashtag/post/repeat cycle. Iterative and reflective practice is appropriate and necessary to this goal.

Though Eric T. Meyer's (2015) study considers the pedagogical ramifications in a motion context, his assessment of the use of iPad's in a filmmaking classroom is related and applicable for our purposes. He finds that "the expertise being taught is no longer necessarily in the technical areas of manipulating filming equipment and editing suites, but in the area of storytelling and teaching

students collaborative and creative working techniques" (p. 311). Note the shift away from technical concerns in favour of collaborative and narrative development as an area of differentiation vis a vis non professional image makers. Though this is in some ways a false dichotomy, the perceived valuation shift is noteworthy. Certainly in low-resolution, social media spaces, technical skill isn't privileged nor is it even differentiated (San Cornelio & Gomez Cruz, 2104). In fact, in Lawrence, Fournier, and Brunel's (2013) study of the effectiveness of consumer generated advertising, they found that "authenticity and creativity judgments figure prominently in people's attitudes towards consumer generated advertising and that executional quality may be traded off for these benefits" (p. 297). This isn't to suggest that technical prowess and "quality" are not important parts of commercial photographic education but rather that they shouldn't be of singular focus.

Given the above, I would argue that this prioritizing of narrative abilities must be addressed explicitly and persistently in the curriculum throughout the post-secondary education experience. Emphasis must be placed on understanding the relationship between semiotics, composition, and rhetorical emotional cues. As per Chang's point, this is a subtle and ephemeral expectation, but rich in conceptual opportunity. Undoubtedly this is already part of most commercial photographic curricula but I would argue that we need to integrate narrative goals into even the most technical and/or foundational assignments. An appropriate question to ask our students might be "How is the brand illuminated figuratively as well as literally through each particular lighting choice?

This also requires an understanding of the brand story in and of itself in order to provide an application of technique that fits the brand (rather then a dependence on default rules of product lighting for example). Studying the stories that brands tell about themselves and understanding the subtleties between differentiating identities of competitors in crowded sectors is crucial in order to anticipate the look and feel that might be most appropriate. There is value then in an historic understanding of the complexities of visual messaging changes and their progression through time. Lessons in the history of the use of photography in commercial contexts helps enmesh this understanding as a crucial part of brand partnerships on the part of working photographers. As an author of such a course, I find it is useful to track the changes in our collective approach to the use of applied visuals throughout the last century and to acknowledge that advertising "works on us" in different ways over time. As a result of this study, students begin to appreciate the impact of larger socio-economic trends on commercial expression and can start to anticipate the ways in which aspects of current culture and values are being articulated in the type of imagery we use and how we use it. Through specific case studies, they begin to understand how brands variously deal with growing product parity, product diversification, and in-

creasing media differentiation and dispersion. Students are thusly enabled to apply a critical framework to speculative, future work, and emerging areas of image use.

There is value too in participating in social media spaces and experimenting with the inherent and differentiated narrative attributes which these spaces provide (certainly as opposed to only lamenting the loss of traditional media). Plus, social media platforms are being constantly innovated by artists wanting to use these new mediums to tell stories in unique ways. Two foundational examples are Rachel Hulin's Instagram novel *Hey Henry Hey Matilda* (Dewey, 2015) and Amalia Ulman's 2104 Instagram Art Project (Sooke, 2016). An awareness of innovation and experimentation in various realms of image use is crucial and informative, and will well situate our students for future innovations.

Indeed, this might also be a matter of clearly deconstructing a perceived and sometimes entrenched separation between "types" of photography within the structure and rhetoric of our programs. I would argue that keeping documentary, fine art, and advertising photography siloed (never mind the problematic division between moving and still images), is not appropriate given the increasing porousness of these areas and our need to pull from the persuasive approaches of each. This is echoed in the marketplace; newly formed agencies like NAMARA Reps and Getty's Verbatim agency (Laurent, 2016) are catering to the interest corporations have in telling authentic stories using narrative techniques inherent to the professional practice of photojournalists. Speaking about a recent project, Jane Mackie, Vice President of the Fairmont Hotel Brand mused: "Working with NAMARA has given us an opportunity to capture some of [our employee's] incredible stories and showcase them in a way that is authentic and meaningful" (Marketwired, 2016). Developments like these represent new opportunities for innovative image-makers who are willing to look beyond traditional professional barriers and reject the biases contained therein.

6. Authenticity and Aesthetic Creep

The desire for authenticity as voiced in the quote above from Fairmont Hotels is reminiscent of the Domino's chef's insistence that the consumer is really the best source of authentic photographs. Considered together, the underlying assumption is clear: the polish of a traditional commercial image is misleading and untrustworthy. This distrust has important but not unprecedented aesthetic consequences.

A vernacular photographic style began to appear in advertising in the 1990's due in part to the influence of the visual tropes of post-modernism (Schroeder, 2013). This had the effect of privileging real, authentic, snapshot-type images in mass-market contexts as more truthful to a marketing-weary and skeptical public (Berger, 2011; Schroeder, 2008). At the time, these "snapshots" were produced by professional commercial photogra-

phers like Terry Richardson, who reported preferring small, compact, point-and-shoot cameras for their ability to capture spontaneity and realness (Schroeder, 2008, pp. 284–285). In these cases, photographers were adopting and recreating the aesthetic qualities of the vernacular (to varying degrees: skewed composition, directional and harsh lighting, unflattering poses, image grain, over or underexposure, etc.) while still engaging multiple production elements and intentionally applied technical skill.

Meanwhile, in the early 2000's the rise of participation in online image sharing spaces begins to reinforce a similar vernacular aesthetic. These platforms privileged the mundane and the everyday experiences of life (Chang, 2014; Frey, 2012; Hjorth, 2008; Wagner, 2011). As a result, the banal visual tropes that were endemic to this type of diaristic image-making became associated with inherently authentic and real, in-between moments (Hjorth, 2008; Schroeder, 2013). As the desires of convergence culture became doubly encouraged and fulfilled by this online visual engagement and expression, marketers began to participate. By harnessing content created in these spaces, brands are able to borrow authenticity from the presumed aesthetic neutrality of these types of images. Indeed, authenticity is seen increasingly as a competitive advantage (Frey, 2012; Scoblete, 2015) and gives the brand more credibility in the marketplace (Deuze, 2005; Duffy, 2010; Lyngsfeldt, 2015; Uzunoğlu, 2011). As such, user generated ads are proving to be more successful than brand initiated campaigns by several metrics (Gotter, 2016; Lawrence et al., 2013; Lyngsfeldt, 2015; Olapic, 2016). As Schroeder (2013) explains: "This imagery serves to distance the brand from corporate control, associating it instead with consumer co-creation". Uzunoğlu (2011) elaborates: "as [it] is peer-created, it may have higher credibility and trustworthiness than company provided messages" (p. 148). And in Schroeder's (2013) research, he found "Thus, from the point of view of the brand manager, snapshot aesthetics offers a way into a *participatory* (consumer generated images), *sincere* and *less directive* (more ambiguous and flexible, perhaps) strategic style".

However, the rise of Instagram and the wide use of filters on that platform belie the snapshot aspect of these images. Indeed, the filters act to mediate these "banal" moments and as such, it is important to acknowledge the creeping aesthetic engagement of consumers in online image sharing spaces. Frey (2012) emphasizes the communicative usefulness of these capabilities and hints at the challenge for aspiring "professional" photographers: "These image processing features further enable the extension of photographic practice by reducing the threshold of competence required to produce appealing images with what were hitherto expensive professional, and difficult to master effects" (p. 27). In many cases then, there is a consistent effort to improve technique, develop a personal style and to engage in a practice that is more deliberate (Zappavigna, 2016, p. 3).

With this in mind, it is important to note that broad amateur photo expression has a duality: it is both banal and tries to look professional. Likewise for aspiring image-makers, desired visual expressions on social media are authentic but mediated, and participate in a mutually reinforcing loop of influence. More research is warranted in parsing the figurative layers and trade-offs contained in these images; analyzing, among other things, aesthetic engagement, access to brands and products, and the influence of dispersive communities.

Regardless, established photographers are competing with actual brand users whose visual testimonials are mostly unquestioned as authentically (more) pure, freely given, and shot without artifice. Plus, they are happening in real time in a way that can be organized and reconstituted through hashtags, likes, and reposts by the brand or others. From a photographic education perspective then, a brand approach that is "less directive" has some serious ramifications. Indeed, if brand-heavy mass-market communication is waning in favour of interactive social media and experiential based campaigns (Moore, 2015) there might be less opportunity for stylized, technique-rich imagery. Arguably, technical "mastery" as a singular or primary focus has been devalued. Having said this, there will always be a need for well-crafted lighting, considered tone and mood, and innovative aesthetic approaches on some marketing platforms (and certainly in terms of narrative ability as discussed above) but the prevailing trend towards "authenticity" has unquestionably empowered non professional image-makers who are already active in many brand enabled spaces. Is it necessary then to shift our learning outcomes to consider the possibility that technical skill is not the ultimate differentiator anymore?

Indeed, it is instructive to consider which aesthetic qualities can signal authenticity and understand how and when they might be engaged. Though technical skill and mastery is important in theory, students need to be taught to parse the particular client needs as they might align with context: where will this image appear, how long will it last, what is the experience it is designed to provoke? And after mastery is achieved, students need to be able to understand the importance of occasionally and thoughtfully "breaking the rules" of commercial lighting and composition and that "bad" photography delivers its own set of connotations which may be useful in certain marketing scenarios (as an example: Viviane Sassen's 2013 campaign for Carven in which the focus lies in the deep background landscape, leaving the foregrounded dress and model, presumably the point of the ad, very soft, the details of the dress having been completely obscured. KesselsKramer's long running work for the Hans Brinker Budget Hotel is another notable example). Also, it is important to review the visual tropes of the vernacular and their value from an historic perspective in order to appreciate the legacy of our ambiguous relationship with reality and fantasy in commercial imagery. How does a brand's shifting interest or en-

gagement in "reality" challenge our assumptions about proper commercial work?

Furthermore, can instructed image-makers also participate in authentic brand experiences and reflect that back in non-traditional advertising spaces? This again suggests that there is value in understanding what the central brand qualities are in order to then capture and reflect those attributes. I would argue that our students need to go beyond the cliché "shoot in the style of your favourite brand" assignment and parse the platforms that pair with a particular visual approach for a specific client. They should be able to defend their aesthetic choices based on their understanding of the medium as well as the brand guidelines. In fact, there may well be untapped opportunity here. There is reason to believe that marketers are struggling to keep up with the demands of content hungry, multi-channel platforms. Considering advertorials in particular, a Photo District News article asserts "The hard part for agencies may be getting their heads around the type of content that best reflects their clients" (Ahearn, 2013). It will be to their advantage if our students can add value by applying an understanding of the medium coupled with an ability to execute across various narrative needs.

Similarly, the image-maker's own brand needs to be perceived as authentic as well. As we will see below, expressions of subjectivity can help deliver this message of authenticity; social media provides an ideal promotional space for this exploration and it can be harnessed to showcase all manner of image-based work, personal relationships, preferences, and experiences. As per a report from a 2015 PhotoPlus panel on this topic: "the route to success in social media doesn't follow a neat script and has far less to do with a given tactic and far more to do with honesty, positivity and having something of value to share with the world" (Scoblete, 2015).

7. Subjectivity and the Visual Testimonial

Imbedded in the attributes and desires of convergent culture is a preoccupation with subjectivity; processes of self-creation, re-inventing and performance have been encouraged and indulged by mobile media and the cameraphone (Gómez Cruz & Meyer, 2012). At the same time, social media platforms which allow individuated and targeted messaging, are becoming more central to brand communications as outlined above. As a result, brands are able to engage in value co-creation with their consumers, in part by highlighting their customer's subjective experiences with their products (Chang, 2014; Schroeder, 2013). This can in turn influence the brand's own visual approach (Gillett, 2014), exacerbating the divide between mass marketing, top-down approaches and organic, subjective and spontaneous expressions of brand engagement. In addition, consumers are also exploring their own identities in online spaces with reference to the established narratives of products, brands and corporate messages (Frey, 2012).

In her consideration of the use of Instagram, Zappavigna (2016) characterizes the personal expressions of subjectivity therein as an "unfolding construal of identity" (p. 3). In this way, subjectivity, authenticity and aesthetic choices are co-dependent. When brands pursue UGC, they engage the desires of convergence culture to have one's subjectivity indulged and included in brand performance, and one's individuated experience shared (Deuze, 2005; Keep, 2014). For this reason, the subjective (in the case of peer to peer marketing) message is more personally resonant. In essence, Instagram posts act as visual testimonials for the brand delivered instantaneously from trusted sources via social networks.

Of course there is both an acceptance and celebration of the aesthetic ramification of this subjectivity. Further to the discussion of the patina of authenticity delivered by non-professional image creation, Jonathan Schroeder (2013) explains: "Snapshot aesthetics signal a step away from corporate control and staging, expanding consumers' role to become both subjects and producers of strategic imagery" and Aaron Frey (2012) finds expression of self-hood and subjectivity in social media as a cycle of remaking, in part as a reaction to "packaged narratives and identities of a globalized consumer culture" (p. 8). In addition, we have seen a rising skepticism of the widespread use of photoshop which has come to be considered a misleading market tool (Leggatt, 2016; Olapic, 2016). This has hastened the preference for user generated imagery which can show, for example, an article of clothing on a real person who may more closely resemble the prospective buyer than an undoubtedly photoshopped model. So again we encounter a distrust and disavowal of mediated imagery as symptomatic of a brand's disinterest in a relationship with eager consumer partners.

How might students engage with this proclivity towards subjectivity? As was discussed above, this can nudge an aesthetic approach towards the everyday or the banal, but this could also work in a very different way, influencing the development and expression of the photographer's own brand. In a business or marketing context, it is increasingly important for students to explore expressions of self, personality, opinion, and personal perspective and understand the ways in which those can be executed in social media spaces. An understanding of the place of the "influencer" in the contemporary media landscape is one area of knowledge that would benefit our students and indeed a study and familiarity with social media as a promotional and expressive tool should be a requirement of any contemporary curriculum.

In another way, though the open and participatory nature of subjective engagement with brands in social media spaces might sidestep aesthetic ambitions or barriers to entry, there might also be an opportunity to exploit this preference for subjective experience by exploring deeply particular stylistic choices. Certainly it might allow expression for one's own particular photographic perspective when engaging with brands in social me-

dia, especially knowing that marketers are paying attention and willing to be influenced aesthetically themselves (Gillett, 2014). Without a doubt, individual consumer testimonials are compelling regardless of their aesthetic make up but there are clues that subjective experience can be considered, mediated, and even stylized. This is another rich area for study and application by our students in the context of understanding the opportunities inherent in new platforms.

8. Conclusion

This paper has attempted to chronicle the massive shifts in contemporary commercial image use and has named three main areas of emerging interest: narrative ability, authenticity, and subjectivity. With these three qualities in mind, this paper seeks to begin a discussion on how post secondary commercial photographic education might meet these needs and rewrite inappropriate and outdated "professional" ambitions for our students. My research suggests that we should focus on the experiential, affective and emotional power of not only a subjective and authentic photographic approach but also within the narrative strength of the image. I have made several suggestions as to how commercial programs might reorganize our priorities to meet the emerging challenges and opportunities posed by the technological and cultural shifts of convergent culture. There are clearly some ambiguities contained herein regarding the juxtaposition of technical skill in storytelling and the authenticity inherent to a seemingly snapshot approach. These ambiguities might pose the most vexing challenge, the answer to which can only be a deep commitment to understanding these new spaces of commercial engagement and experimenting with the tools these spaces provide.

In terms of the limits of this paper, this seeks to be an illumination of important trends and an introduction to the path forward. More research is required to find models of pedagogical approaches that are already addressing these shifts; there are undoubtedly educators who are engaged in a responsive practice with their students. Furthermore, though beyond the scope of this paper, there are opportunities for platform development work—helping brands capture user contributions and creating networks for citizen collaboration in brand initiatives (both commercial and within a mandate of social responsibility). Broadening the scope of what we teach our students to reach into the realms of programming, app development, and technical partnerships will undoubtedly be fruitful.

Without question, there are many interesting avenues of exploration for those committed to a sustained photographic practice. Though the consumer-generated content of which the Domino's campaign was typical seven years ago is still prevalent, there are signs that social media is also creating more space for deliberate image creation and use. Speaking about Instagram's lat-

est Snapchat-like feature "Stories", Hugh Pile, L'Oréal's Chief Marketing Officer for Western Europe, explains that the appeal of this new approach comes from a duality: "Within the same platform now we've got this lovely juxtaposition that allows you to tell a richer story, but maybe [providing] a more authentic, or more earthy experience alongside the more polished core visuals" (Handley, 2016). It is crucial then to unlock the possibilities in our students to find these opportunities on platforms that will continue to engage the consumer as brand co-creators.

Acknowledgements

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

The Market Value of Who We Are: The Flow of Personal Data and Its Regulation in China

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Abstract

This article focuses on market-driven collection of personal data and its regulation in China. It argues that there is a growing demand for personal data from China's advertising, marketing, and credit reporting businesses. Meanwhile, the rapid development of the Internet, notably social media and e-commerce, has generated very large pools of personal data on digital platforms. These two factors contribute to the fast growth of both legitimate and illegitimate collection and exploitation of personal information. Chinese laws and regulations lag behind the market and are not ready to regulate personal data as a key economic resource. They scatter in a wide array of economic and social sectors and lack a coherent structure and effective enforcement mechanism. Unspecified overarching rationale, ambivalent market regulation, inadequate enforcement, as well as safety risks of governmental databases are problems that hinder the protection of personal data in China. The role and implications of the new Internet Security Law, entering into force in June 2017, remain to be seen.

1. Introduction

The protection of personal data is a serious problem in China, especially on the Internet. About 70 percent of Chinese Internet users have had their personal information leaked, including names, phone numbers, home addresses, ID card numbers, and workplace information (Ni, 2004; Z. Yang, 2016). Students preparing for exams receive phone calls and text messages that try to sell them preparation materials and books (Han Li, 2014). Credit card holders' information were sold online for prices as low as 2,000 *yuan* (US$290) for one hundred thousand records (Lin Wang, 2015). In a national survey that collected more than one million responses, 81 percent surveyed have received phone calls from unfamiliar numbers appearing to know their personal information (Sohu.com, 2016). Illegal collection and sale of personal data have become an underground industry (Dong, 2012; J. Wang et al., 2016). In the first quarter of 2015, more

than one billion personal data records were illegally disclosed (Lin Wang, 2015). In 2016, an investigative news story found that 700 *yuan* (US$100) can buy information on the whereabouts of just any person, including the exact time that she/he checked into a hotel room (J. Wang et al., 2016).

This article examines the growing market of personal data in China and its regulation by law. The protection of personal data is generally considered a privacy issue. In Nissenbaum's (2010) theoretical framework of contextual integrity, privacy is about the flow of personal information, defined as "information about an identifiable person" (p. 4). To address the problem of data privacy is not "simply *restricting* the flow of information but ensuring that it flows *appropriately*" (Nissenbaum, 2010, p. 2, emphasis original), and the regulation of personal data is in essence to adjudicate on the legitimacy of "novel flows of information" (p. 232) in specific contexts. Drawing on her arguments, matters of personal data in present-day

China need to be examined first and foremost as growing and transforming flows of individual-related information. The key questions are how to contextualize the growth of such flows, how to conceptualize the generation, collection, usage, transfer, and disposal of personal data, and how current law and regulations intervene and address privacy-related controversies.

Situating data flows in market and economic contexts, this article argues that personal data in China are commodified information produced and circulated to serve the need of businesses including advertising, marketing, personal lending, and credit reporting. Data acquisition, processing, and transfer are market activities centering on the control and trading of personal information as an important economic resource. Therefore, the regulation of personal data is essentially market regulation that governs a key profit-generating resource, and must be assessed and evaluated as such. China's laws and regulations lag behind the market, lack a coherent structure, and are not properly enforced. By recognizing the key role of the market in fostering personal data flow in present-day China, this research provides a contextualized analysis of legal development and highlights an often-neglected economic aspect of Chinese laws and regulations.

The following first examines the market and industry of personal data and documents the explosive growth of data flows as part of China's economic and Internet development. The next section overviews the transformation of the law and identifies key components in the regulatory framework. The Discussion section addresses a number of problems in China's personal data laws and regulations, including unspecified overarching rationale, ambivalent market regulation, inadequate enforcement, as well as safety risks of governmental databases. The Conclusion recaps the main points and briefly considers topics for future research.

2. The Market and Industry of Personal Data

While market-oriented personal data collection is not new to China, the rapid development of the Internet has brought about profound changes. On the one hand, the explosive growth of advertising, marketing, personal lending, and credit reporting businesses, often integrated with digital technologies and the Internet, has generated tremendous demand for personal data. On the other hand, social media, e-commerce sites, and other new media applications have put together large pools of individual information. The gathering, processing, and trading of personal data have become a huge market as well as a hotbed for unethical and illegal activities.

2.1. Growing Market Demand for Personal Data

China's advertising industry has had impressive growth since the turn of the century, and Internet-based advertising and marketing have been at the forefront of the growth. Slowing down from 35 percent annual growth in the early 2000s (Lee, 2012), China's advertising industry is expected to maintain two-digit growth through the late 2010s with Internet advertising as the fastest growing sub-sector (Efnchina.com, 2014). From 2002 to 2005, Internet advertising revenue increased at an annual rate of 79 percent, significantly exceeding those in television and newspapers sectors at 15 percent and 11 percent, respectively (Meyer, Michael, & Nettesheim, 2009). Between 2006 and 2015, Internet advertising maintained two-digit annual growth (China Industry & Commerce News, 2015; H. Yang, 2013; X. Yang, 2014; Zhang, 2011), sometimes as high as 75.4 percent (Zhang, 2011). In 2014, Internet advertising total reached 157 billion *yuan* (US$23 billion) (China Industry & Commerce News, 2015), nearly eight times that of 2009's 20.7 billion *yuan* (US$3.1 billion) (Zhang, 2011). It is expected to reach 400 billion *yuan* (US$58 billion) in 2018 and to take up 40 percent of the advertising industrial total (Efnchina.com, 2014). Shifting away from mass marketing toward more precise, targeted models in the digital environment (Hongmei Li, 2016), advertising in China has resulted in ever-increasing market demand for information on potential customers not as faceless consumers but as individuals with different preferences and needs.

The fast-growing personal loan industry is also hungry for information on customers. China's housing reform over the past two decades, which moved away from state-provided housing and encouraged home ownership, has created a huge market for housing as well as personal mortgage. The rapidly expanding home loan market has pushed traditional loan operations, based on the experience and judgment of mortgage personnel, to its limits and calls for a standard credit risk management tool to efficiently measure every potential borrower's creditworthiness (Gan, Li, Wang, & Kao, 2012). Meanwhile, as part of the Chinese state's policy to encourage consumer spending to boost economic growth, consumer loans have been quickly on the rise (Gough, 2016; Y. Wang, 2016). In 2016, there are 630 banks, about 2,500 peer-to-peer lending platforms, 9,000 small loan companies as well as a number of large consumer financial services and Internet-based businesses competing in the personal loan industry (Hu, 2016). Online lending "boomed" in the early 2010s and outstanding loans of peer-to-peer lending increased fourteen times from the start of 2014 to the end of 2015, reaching 440 billion *yuan* (US$66.8 billion) (Fung & Magnier, 2016). In 2015, the consumer financing market exceeded nine trillion *yuan* (US$1.3 trillion), and consumer loan total is expected to reach 37 trillion *yuan* (US$5.4 trillion) in 2019 (Hu, 2016). Meanwhile, however, credit risk management has been a serious problem, and bad loans take up 13 to 17 percent of online lending (Hu, 2016). China's credit reporting system, as discussed below, cannot meet the demand of the loan industry. Lenders eager to issue loans to people with little or none financial his-

tory, which is not uncommon in China, have been found to use all sorts of means to guarantee returns, including asking for women's nude selfies as loan collaterals (Y. Wang, 2016). The industry is in dire need for something that can help to understand their potential customers' financial profiles better.

2.2. Data Pools of Personal Information on the Internet

The growth of social media, e-commerce, and Internet-based financial activities in China has created a very large stock of personal data. While the number of microblog users has stabilized in the past few years with a slight decrease from 274 million (June 2012) to 242 million (June 2016) (China Internet Network Information Center [CNNIC], 2012b, 2016), China's messaging applications, like WeChat and QQ, have accumulated huge numbers of users (760 million and 860 million, respectively) (Heine, 2016). Although Chinese Internet users tend to be on guard against explicit data collecting activities (Z. Wang & Yu, 2015), they are more likely (compared with their US counterparts) to share their experience and information on social media platforms, even with strangers (Nemati, Wall, & Chow, 2014). A CNNIC social media report in 2012 shows that 62 percent users trust social media sites' protection of their personal data, and over 70 percent do not mind their information being used for commercial purposes, as long as it is not leaked (CNNIC, 2012a, pp. 28–29). Given widespread leakage of personal data on the Chinese Internet, such trust is less about how well personal data are protected but more about Chinese users' insensitivity toward risks associated with social media postings (CNNIC, 2012a). As a matter of fact, China's social media sites provide such "a mountain of mobile data" that "advertising players are nearly salivating at the opportunities" (Heine, 2016).

In addition to social media, China's e-commerce sites also contribute significantly to the "mountain" of personal data. While industrial observers in 2009 still maintained that "[e]-commerce in China is years behind the West" (Meyer et al., 2009, p. 25), the early 2010s saw a massive growth. Online shopping in China kept an annual growth rate of 71 percent from 2009 to 2012 (S. Wang & Pfanner, 2013). In 2012, Chinese consumers ordered US$210 billion worth of goods online and Alibaba alone processed US$170 billion, more than the US's eBay and Amazon combined (China Economic Review, 2013). Mobile commerce (or m-commerce), retail through mobile devices like smart phones, almost tripled between 2011 and 2012 (China Economic Review, 2013). By June 2016, China had 448 million online shoppers, out of which 401 million shopped through their mobile phones, and 455 million people had used some form of online payment (CNNIC, 2016). On November 11, 2016, the so-called Single's Day (a newly invented one-day sales event), Alibaba posted nearly US$18 billion in sales in 24 hours (The Economist, 2016a). Huge numbers of individuals shopping for goods and services online create a very large data pool that contains information on their names, addresses, bank accounts, credit cards, financial profiles, shopping preferences, and sometime personal life situations.

2.3. Market-Driven Exploitation of Personal Data

Market-driven exploitation of personal data in China started decades earlier than the Internet, yet digital technology has brought about profound changes to the collection, processing, and transfer of personal and private information. This sub-section first overviews a more "traditional" form of personal data collection, and then examines new dynamics in the digital environment.

Credit reporting, which involves collection of individual's banking and credit records to assess one's creditworthiness, has had a long history in contemporary China and with significant involvement of leading transnational companies. Dunn & Bradstreet Corp had been on the Chinese market since the 1980s (People's Bank of China, 2013). In 1999, China's first personal credit reporting company started business in Shanghai (People's Bank of China, 2013). In January 2006, the People's Bank of China's (China's central bank) personal credit information database started operation (People's Bank of China, 2013). By the end of 2015, the database had grown to cover 880 million people, 380 million of which had credit histories (Hu, 2016). Over the past decade, the central bank's personal credit information database has played an important role to assist banks to assess individual customer's creditworthiness in loan decisions.

However, the inadequacies of the central bank's database are dramatically amplified when market need for personal data rocketed and when Internet growth generated huge amounts of consumer information. As a matter of fact, the database has never been sufficiently large. It relies on banking and credit information from banks across the country, but only 79 percent of Chinese people above the age of 15 have bank accounts, and only 10 percent have borrowed from banks (Gough, 2016). It is estimated that the database only effectively covers 35 percent of the population (Hu, 2016), and can only fulfill a quarter of market need for personal credit reporting (Weiland, 2015). In addition, consumer information on e-commerce platforms and social media sites, priceless resources for market players, are not part of the bank's database. It thus cannot fully meet the demand of the market in the fast-growing economy.

Filling in the gap are numerous large and small businesses fervently working to create individual consumer profiles out of personal data available on the Internet. In "probably the largest untapped consumer finance market globally" (Gough, 2016), credit reporting in China is potentially a 100 billion *yuan* (US$14.5 billion) business (Weiland, 2015). Chinese Internet giants have all created credit rating subsidiaries to make full use of their user bases. For example, Alibaba's Ant Financial Services gathers data from more than 300 million real-name regis-

tered users, transaction records on Taobao and Tmall, payment histories on Alipay (similar to Paypal) and investment activities on Yu'e Bao (an online money market fund with 150 million users), all of which part of Alibaba's gigantic corporate complex (Gough, 2015). Meanwhile, Tencent's credit rating subsidiary, Tencent Credit Bureau, uses massive data on social media like QQ as well as from Tencent's Internet security applications (Chen, 2015) and has discovered that social media data can significantly help with credit risk analysis (Lin, 2015).

In this nascent and fast-growing industry, new credit rating businesses use all kinds of "non-traditional" methods to collect and process personal data, many of which borders on privacy infringement. In addition to off-line investigations that look into court records, restaurant files, transportation data, "number of toothbrushes or towels" in bathrooms, and "dirty dishes in the kitchen" (Gough, 2016; Y. Wang, 2016), credit rating companies track one's digital footprint to look for anything that may inform them of a potential borrower's likelihood of default. Information deemed useful include "social-network connections, web-browsing habits, how they fill out online forms and their online purchases" (Lohr, 2015), search histories and online chatting records (Gough, 2016; Y. Wang, 2016), as well as one's social circles and friends' creditworthiness (Clover, 2016). Some cell phone applications collect "hundreds of details" from a potential borrower (Gough, 2016) so as to "provide a 360 degree portrait of the borrowers' personal lives" (Y. Wang, 2016).

Advertisers and marketers, in addition to credit rating and reporting businesses, are after the opportunities of targeted marketing offered by vast volumes of personal data. On the one hand, social media have become the virtual "town square" for advertising and marketing, and China is catching up on using big data to manage customer relationship. Major brands including Burberry, Mercedes-Benz, Michael Kors, Yves Saint Laurent, Kate Spade, and Montblanc have all been utilizing data generated from messaging applications like WeChat (Heine, 2016). On the other hand, large amounts of personal information from dubious sources are sold to marketers and advertisers, sometimes at very low prices (Han Li, 2014). Chinese consumers are bombarded by marketing calls, messages, and emails, which appear to know exactly what they need at the moment (Han Li, 2014; Qiu, 2014). Illegal acquisition and transfer of personal data are not confined to underground organizations. In 2013, a Dunn & Bradstreet Corp's subsidiary in Shanghai was fined one million *yuan* (US$145,000) and four executives were jailed for illegally purchasing large volumes of personal data and selling them to advertisers (Chu, 2013; Dong, 2012). In spite of repeated lawmaking and policing efforts, the trading of illegally obtained personal data persists, partly because the market demand for such data is very strong (Ni, 2014).

Apart from legitimate businesses, personal data also have other buyers. Documented public sale of personal data can be traced back to 2006, when a website claimed to have personal information, including phone numbers, addresses, marital status, etc., on 90 million people and offered to sell to anyone with a cell phone (Zhu, 2006). In the 2010s and with astronomical amounts of personal data flowing on the Internet, personal information becomes the target of rampant criminal activities. In the words of a researcher, cases of fraud, blackmail, rape, and kidnapping that can be attributed to personal information leakage "are not even news" in present-day China (Han Li, 2014). In 2016 alone, Chinese police cracked more than 1,800 criminal cases involving illegal acquisition and trading of personal data (Xinhua News Agency, 2016). Among other crimes, personal data and information are used widely in various fraudulent activities. In 2016, a fraudulent phone call won the trust of an 18-year-old because it knew all the details of her application for financial aid for college. Having lost the family's years of savings for her college expenses, Xv Yuyu had a heart attack and died (X. Wang, 2016). Personal data in China call for effective regulation, to which the next section will turn.

3. The Development and Transformation of Laws and Regulations

China has a large number of laws and regulations that pertain to personal data protection. A researcher working at the Ministry of Industry and Information Technologies (MIIT) counts about 40 laws (enacted by the National People's Congress [NPC], the supreme legislature), 30 regulations (promulgated by the State Council, the cabinet-style central government), and 200 lower-level rules that protect personal information (Guo & Wu, 2012). These laws and regulations scatter in a number of industrial and social sectors without a coherent structure, creating problems for law enforcement, the industry, as well as individuals seeking protection.

A key issue is the growth of privacy law in China. In the Chinese context, privacy is "a sweeping term encompassing everything from the quest for personal dignity and safety to the growing sense of political participation" (Yuan, Feng, & Danowski, 2013, p. 1029). Privacy-related clauses in Chinese Constitutions and laws have a long history. As early as 1954, the first Constitution of the People's Republic of China explicitly protected individual's residence and mail's security in Article 90. Starting the 1980s, laws, regulations, and the Supreme People's Court's (SPC, the supreme judicial organ) opinions gradually built up China's privacy law. The Tort Liability Law of 2009 formally recognizes the right to privacy, and an SPC Judicial Interpretation in 2014 (Rules Concerning Several Issues in the Adjudication of Civil Cases of Infringement on Personal Rights through Information Networks) defines the scope of private information in the digital setting as well as exemptions of privacy infringement. As part of contemporary Chinese law that "has developed perhaps faster than any legal system in history" (Lieb-

man, 2011, p. 167), privacy law in China has had dramatic growth in a short amount of time.

However, a large part of privacy law has little to do with personal data. Significant attention in privacy law development is devoted to line-drawing between private information that a person rightfully expects to keep undisclosed, and other information that one does not mind sharing. For example, an individual's medical history is protected under privacy law, but the same rules may not work to keep her/his shopping preferences secret, since the two types of information are very different. An important case in Internet privacy, *Wang Fei v. Zhang Leyi* (2008), is about whether and how details of one's personal life can be published on the Internet. Yet its rules do not apply to a case in which telemarketers learn about one's need for baby clothes, since having a newborn in the family is not information unwilling to share. As Nissenbaum (2010) points out, "the private/public dichotomy" and "the attempt to define a category of sensitive information" (p. 232) are largely irrelevant in matters of data privacy. In relation to Chinese law, Liming Wang (2012) argues that there are four significant differences between privacy and personal data protection. Notably, privacy is about preventing disclosure of certain facts, but personal data protection is about the control and exploitation of information that may or may not be private. While they do share much in common, the protection of privacy "may fare far better" than personal data protection under Chinese law, since they rely on different mechanisms (de Hert & Papakonstantinou, 2015, p. 14). The law of personal data protection in China has distinctive features and structure of its own.

Among the two hundred plus laws, regulations, and rules on personal data protection before November 2016, five laws/regulations are noteworthy. In December 2012, the Standing Committee of the NPC passed the Decision on Strengthening Network Information Protection (2012 Decision). Enacted by the permanent body of the supreme legislature, 2012 Decision sets forth a preliminary framework for personal data protection on the Internet. It recognizes that there are two types of personal data: those that lead to identification of individuals and those pertinent to individual privacy. It stipulates that the collection of personal data must be "legal, legitimate, and necessary (*hefa*, *zhengdang*, *biyao*)", and that the methods of data collection and utilization must be open and published. It also requires Internet service providers and governmental employees to ensure that personal data under their control be kept secure.

In 2013, an amendment to the Consumer Rights Protection Law created protection for consumer data and information. It incorporates the NPC's 2012 Decision and spells out a number of principles of personal data protection (Gao & O'Sullivan-Gavin, 2015). Its Article 14 stipulates that the protection of consumers' personal information is on a par with the protection of "human dignity (*renge zunyan*)". Article 29 stipulates that the collection of personal information must be "legal, legitimate,

and necessary" (principles from the 2012 Decision), must obtain prior consent, and must take security measures to prevent leakage. In addition, Article 56 treats the infringement of personal data security the same as a number of fraudulent and deceptive commercial activities, which are subject to administrative penalties including fines and forced shutdowns.

The MIIT's Information Security Technology—Guidelines for Personal Information Protection Within Information System for Public and Commercial Services (2013 Guidelines), effective in 2013, is another noteworthy rule-making effort. It aims to create a systematic framework of personal data protection in computer and information networks. 2013 Guidelines draws a line between "personal sensitive information" and "personal general information", the former referring to information that "would have an adverse impact on the subject of personal information if disclosed or altered" including one's ID card number (similar to social security number in the US), biometric information, etc. It sets forth eight "basic principles", including personal consent, public notification, and minimum sufficiency, that govern the whole process of personal data collection and processing. Overall, the 2013 Guidelines has a "very careful structure and considerable detail", suggesting that "China is moving away from having a patchwork of largely unrelated sectoral data privacy laws (somewhat like the US) toward a more coherent structure" (Greenleaf & Tian, 2013, p. 6). However, it is not backed by law enforcement but asks for voluntary industrial cooperation. Issued in November 2012 as a voluntary compliance guide with a GB/Z serial number, it was required by law to go through reevaluation in three years, which did not happen on its expiration date in 2015 and rendered its legal status uncertain.

The Administrative Regulations of the Credit Information Industry of 2013, promulgated by the State Council, is an important but often-neglected legal instrument that governs personal data collection. Its definition of "credit information activities (*zhengxin yewu*)" in Article 2 includes the collection, compiling, storing, processing, and reporting of individual credit information, and its Article 3 expressly prohibits infringement on privacy. It has a full chapter, Chapter 3, which contains comprehensive provisions on the handling of personal data as well as individual rights including access and rectification. Its authority covers the rapidly growing industry of credit analysis and reporting, in which private businesses rely heavily on data mining that often verge on privacy infringement. Given the ascending role of credit analysis businesses in the flow of personal data in China, the Administrative Regulations is not merely a sectoral legislation but has a significant role in data privacy regulation as a whole.

Another important personal data protection law is China's Criminal Law, which has two amendments over the past decade that address personal data security. In 2009, the Seventh Amendment to the Criminal Law crim-

inalized both "illegal sale and provision of personal information" and "illegal acquisition of personal information". In 2015, the Ninth Amendment to the Criminal Law combined the two into "infringement on personal information" and raised the maximum penalty from three years to seven years in jail. In the early 2010s, news coverage of police crackdown on illegal acquisition and trading of personal data abounds (see Ni, 2014; X. Wang, 2016; Xinhua News Agency, 2016). However, convictions of personal data-related crimes tend to be inconsistent and too lenient to be effectively deterrent (Y. Li, 2016). Statics suggest that personal data leakage has continued to grow. While the second half of 2013 witnessed 19.63 billion *yuan* (US$2.8 billion) of economic loss caused by personal information leakage (Qiu, 2014), that figure more than doubled and jumped to 91.5 billion *yuan* (US$13.3 billion) during the one-year span from mid-2015 to mid-2016 (Y. Li, 2016).

In November 2016, the NPC passed the Internet Security Law, which will enter into force in June 2017. The law has a full chapter, Chapter 4, devoted to personal data security. It inherits principles from the 2012 Decision and significantly elaborates on a number of fronts. While "the basics of international data protection are not unequivocally in place" in pre-2015 Chinese law (de Hert & Papakonstantinou, 2015, p. 6), the Internet Security Law "systematically defines personal data protection" and is "highly in line with (*gaodu jiegui*) international best practices and other countries' laws and regulations on personal information protection" (Deloitte, n.d.). By comparing the law with the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Privacy Framework, consultancy Deloitte (n.d.) argues that all nine principles of the APEC Framework, including "preventing harm", "notice", and "collection limitations", are fully realized in Chinese law. As a newly minted statute not yet enforced, its role and implications in China's digital data protection system remain to be seen.

4. Discussion

Personal data protection in China is a legal issue as well as a market issue. It is about individual's life tranquility as well as a bulging industrial sector that increasingly see personal data and information as key economic resources. In the words of Ant Financial Services' chief technology officer, users' personal information, including family, career, online shopping and payment history, are "oil and gold of the future (*weilai de shiyou huangjin*)" (Xie, 2015). The regulation of personal data is, among other things, market regulation of a key economic resource and needs to be assessed accordingly.

To define and to protect personal data is to draw a line between acceptable commercial practices and individual control over information on her/his life. From the perspective of market forces seeking to utilize personal data, less control by individuals means fewer restrictions on their business practices. Thus, lawmaking is

not a context-free process but a balancing act between two conflicting interests. Between these two, market-oriented interests have ample support from the Chinese state, which has persistently pushed for economic growth in Internet-related sectors. Moreover, China has recently called for intensified integration of digital technology in the economy through the so-called "Internet Plus" strategy, unveiled in Premier Li Keqiang's Governmental Work Report in 2015 and with emphases on big data, e-commerce, and Internet finance. In contrast, the ideological and policy basis for protecting individual control over her/his life details is not well-articulated. While the basis of EU's personal data regime is human rights protection (de Hert & Papakonstantinou, 2015), China seems speechless on why individuals can control information on who they are and what they do. Major laws and regulations, including the Internet Security Law, 2012 Decision, and 2013 Guidelines, shun away from articulating their *raison d'être*. An interesting exception is the Consumer Rights Protection Law, which claims to protect consumers' "human dignity" but does not elaborate. In the face of aggressive, market-oriented exploitation of personal data, it remains to be seen how the lack of a well-articulated ideological basis for data protection may impact future law and policy-making.

As a matter of fact, on-going commercial experiments on personal data in China are already beyond what would be tolerated under the laws of major Western countries. Social media companies in the West have long been eyeing the possibilities of mining user data for credit analysis. For example, Mark Zuckerberg, chairman and CEO of Facebook, holds a patent that "allows lenders to assess creditworthiness based on the credit ratings of people in a borrower's network" (Demos & Seetharaman, 2016). It was regulatory concerns, notably a report by the Federal Trade Commission, that put a halt to the emerging business practice (Demos & Seetharaman, 2016). Meanwhile, however, business models that would "fail miserably" under US law are thriving in China (Kapron, 2016). One of the pioneer players in big data-based credit analysis, ZestFinance, has founded a joint-venture with a leading Chinese online retailer, JD.com, to offer credit-analysis service to lenders all over China (Lohr, 2015). It seems that the Chinese government recently became aware of the situation. Having asked eight private non-banking businesses to prepare for credit reporting operations in early 2015, the People's Bank of China has not issued any license under the Administrative Regulations of the Credit Information Industry as expected. Instead, the central bank issued a regulatory guidance in late 2015 out of data privacy concerns (Mei & Liu, 2015). Among other things, the guidance requires a credit reporting business, once licensed, to make a security deposit of at least five million *yuan* (US$725,000) for possible damages and liabilities to privacy-infringed individuals (Mei & Liu, 2015). Nevertheless, no specific market policies have been formulated to draw a line between what can and cannot be done, while private busi-

nesses including Alibaba and Tencent are moving fast on their experimentations.

Current Chinese law and enforcement do not seem ready to regulate the collection and trading of personal data as a key economic resource. For "oil and gold" of the future, the regulatory *status quo* seriously lacks strength and effectiveness. Scattered in a number of laws and regulations, personal data protection does not have a centralized enforcement mechanism (Greenleaf, 2014, pp. 191–226). It is only through a reading of a multitude of legal instruments that one can find a "cumulative effect" of data protection in the absence of an overarching framework (de Hert & Papakonstantinou, 2015, p. 22). The enforcement of existing laws and regulations, including the Criminal Law, does not offer sufficient protection or show much deterrent power, as the court tends to be very lenient with personal data-related crimes. In spite of rampant data security problems, the number of criminal convictions between 2010 and 2015 was very small (Lin Wang, 2015). While an amendment to the Criminal Law in 2015 increased maximum jail time from three years to seven years, the most severe conviction between 2015 and 2016 only handed down a two-year sentence with a two-year probation (Y. Li, 2016), which means the perpetrator will not be jailed unless she/he commits another crime during the probationary period. As a senior official at the Ministry of Public Security points out, the "costs" of such crimes are very low (Ni, 2014).

Another problem is the security of databases under the control of governmental agencies and public institutions. Chinese laws and regulations on personal data tend to target private enterprises, and seldom impose similar restrictions on the government (de Hert & Papakonstantinou, 2015). The legitimacy of governmental collection of personal data is often taken for granted (Wu, 2014). Moreover, the law often expressly requires Internet service providers to hand data over to the government in broadly defined scenarios. China's governmental agencies and public institutions (e.g., universities and schools) have compiled tremendous volumes of personal information with minimum constraints from law or through self-regulation. While 72.5 percent of commercial websites in China have some kind of privacy disclosure notice (Stanaland & Lwin, 2013), Chinese governmental sites generally do not have privacy policies or notices (Shan, 2008). These databases are often vulnerable in the face of profit-driven activities. In spite of a number of laws, including the Criminal Law, that prohibit governmental and public employees from disclosing personal information under their control, many data-related crimes rely on "insiders (*neigui*)" working in schools, state-owned banks and telecommunication companies, and the police (X. Wang, 2016). Another key threat comes from hacking and various theft techniques widely employed in China's Internet-based underground economy (Zhuge, Gu, Duan, & Roberts, 2015), since a large portion of personal data crimes start with hacking online databases (X. Wang, 2016; Xinhua News Agency, 2016).

5. Conclusion

In China, growing market demand for personal information and the availability of large data pools on digital platforms give rise to both legitimate and illegitimate data collection activities. The current legal framework, with some uncertainties from the new Internet Security Law, is inadequate for the regulation of personal data as a critical economic resource.

This research focuses on the law of personal data as market regulation. A future research project can explore more on the ideological and political aspects. In addition to surveillance issues (Clover, 2016; Fry, 2015; The Economist, 2016b), it will be interesting to see when and how China, moving towards a centralized and more coherent regulatory structure (Gao & O'Sullivan-Gavin, 2015; Greenleaf, 2014, pp. 191–226), may come up with an overarching rationale for personal data protection. As de Hert and Papakonstantinou (2015) point out, current laws tend to treat individuals as consumers and subject data protection to e-commerce growth. The new Internet Security Law, however, places personal data under a broadly defined notion of "security", which covers infrastructure security, network sovereignty, and national security. It remains to be seen how this new approach may contribute to the shaping of an overarching framework. Another noteworthy topic is data privacy and China's anti-corruption campaign. The Chinese government devoted significant attention to the drafting of the Personal Data Protection Law during the 2000s, but the bill never entered the legislative pipeline partly due to resistance from some members of the bureaucracy. Some argue that a comprehensive personal data legislation must incorporate a definition of privacy that treats private persons and public figures differently (Hou, 2016; Lv, 2010), which was sternly opposed by governmental officials unwilling to disclose their property and financial information (C. Li, 2010; Lv, 2010). The Internet Security Law, focusing on data security and leakage prevention, does not address the issue. Whether a standalone personal data law will be enacted in the future, how it will define personal data and privacy, and how China's anti-corruption endeavors may impact legal development, will worth scholarly attention.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Under the Influence: Advertisers' Impact on the Content of Swiss Free Newspapers

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Abstract
The study focuses on whether and to what extent advertisers influence the editorial content of free newspapers in the German part of Switzerland. The contribution analyzes, grounded on an historic approach, the most competitive period in Switzerland, 2008, when not less than five freesheets were competing for advertisers and public attention. By using Altmeppen's (2006) organizational theory, the paper offers a theoretical frame able to describe the vanishing co-orientation between the media management and the newsroom, a trend that aggravates commercialization processes in news organizations. In a situation of economic turmoil, so the hypothesis, newsrooms are more inclined to positively adapt the valence of their coverage about their main advertisers in order to keep them in the portfolio. Using a content analysis, the author examined the editorial coverage of six among the most important advertisers of Swiss free newspapers, carrying out an aggregated statistical analysis based on logistic regression. The study revealed that free newspapers with a strong market orientation display a higher chance to publish positive facts and evaluations about advertisers with a high advertising expenditure.

1. Introduction

Newspapers are confronted with massive financial problems due to their business model still mostly grounded on advertising, which in the present context seems no longer viable. Several scholars argue in fact that newspaper organizations have experienced "severe difficulties because of their historical dependence on advertising notably classified ads as a source of revenue" (Siles & Boczkowski, 2012, p. 1379; see also Meyer, 2009). The intensifying pressures on media enterprises lead to the assumption that decisions concerning the publication of editorial content are much more frequently taken under the influence of economic principles and not under the perspective of journalistic news values (Esser & Brüggemann, 2010)—with the risk that media firms may orientate their strategic decisions, also with regard to the se-

lection of the editorial content, more on the needs and requests of the advertising industry rather than leave them to journalists. These economic pressures may well tear down the "Chinese Wall" that usually separates the editorial from the commercial part (Schudson, 1978).

This dysfunctional trend is reflected by the increasing use of hybrid advertising formats in newspapers such as advertorials, brand journalism, sponsored content, promotional news and other terms used to describe different marketing tools (Siegert & Brecheis, 2005). The current issues with regard to hybrid advertising formats are aggravated by the increased use of native advertising in digital news outlets (Porlezza, 2017). However, the redefinition of the rising advertising-editorial divide (Carlson, 2015) is not limited to hybrid forms of advertising. The commercial influence goes well beyond formal aspects and visuals. This leads to what McChesney (2004)

has labeled as "hyper-commercialization", that is the specific impact of advertisers' pressures and interests onto the journalistic production process in terms of coverage and tone. Although there are some case studies, mostly based on anecdotal evidence, quantitative data on specific markets such as freesheets are rare.

This study aims to go beyond the predominant discourse about hybrid advertising. It wants to shed light on whether and to what extent advertisers influence the editorial content by focusing on free newspapers in the German part of Switzerland. The contribution analyzes, grounded on an historic approach, the most competitive period in the Swiss print media market, 2008, when not less than five free newspapers were competing for advertisers and public attention. This was an exceptional and unique era in the history of the Swiss media market, also because today, only two free newspapers are left. At the time, the enormous economic difficulties due to the financial crisis led not only to a massive decline of advertising revenues, it also increased the competition for advertising between the main media conglomerates.

In this grieve economic situation, so the main hypothesis, newsrooms are more inclined to positively adapt the tone of their coverage about their main advertisers in order to keep them in their portfolio, with dysfunctional consequences for their independence, the transparency as well as the quality of their journalistic content. As a result, the traditional separation between editorial and commercial content is abolished, leading to a biased coverage. Using a quantitative content analysis, the author examined the editorial coverage of six among the most important advertisers (in terms of advertising expenditures) of the free newspapers, carrying out an aggregated statistical analysis based on logistic regression. The study revealed that free newspapers with a strong market orientation display a higher chance to publish positive facts and evaluations about advertisers with a higher advertising expenditure. This phenomenon constitutes a serious challenge for the future of (free) newspapers, because it undermines their credibility and threatens journalistic autonomy in general. The shrinking financial resources that favor the trend to tear down the "Chinese Wall" needs a close scrutiny as well as a critical stance in terms of journalistic norm construction and the development of accountability practices in order to allow journalists to operate independently of commercial pressures and to avoid market-driven information.

2. The Impact of Advertising on Journalism

Although in the 1920s scholars like Max Weber and Karl Bücher already condemned the risk of commercialization of the press due to advertising (Kiefer, 2005, p. 20ff.), the discussion about the crumbling "Chinese Wall" was launched in the Anglo–American world between the 1980s and early 1990s by critical scholars such as Herman and Chomsky (1988), Underwood (1993) or McManus (1994), all of whom referred to different forms of market-driven journalism. However, particularly during the 2000s, researchers such as McChesney (2004) and Croteau and Hoynes criticized the newspaper industry for having followed an economic oriented approach, which "certainly challenges the belief that the unregulated marketplace adequately responds to the public's needs" (2006, p. 30).

The increasing commercialization of the news media is also reflected by a continuous shift in the organizational structures of the news media that favor the implementation of an economic logic in the newsroom. Particularly useful in this regard is the theory presented by Altmeppen (2006), which shows how the partnership between the media management and the newsroom becomes increasingly unbalanced. Ever more often, the management applies pressure on the newsroom by adopting threats such as budget cuts in order to influence the editorial content. This way, the co-orientation between the management and the newsroom becomes uneven, which is why the economic logic of the management overlaps the normative orientation of journalists towards the public interest. Advertising income becomes therefore a dominant factor, as the media management passes on the requests from the advertisers to the newsroom.

Although most empirical research on the interweaving of journalism and advertising concentrates on hybrid advertising formats (see e.g. Bærug & Harro-Loit, 2012; Carlson, 2015; Eckman & Lindlof, 2003; Erjavec, 2004; Ferrer Conill, 2016; Harro-Loit & Saks, 2006; Lewis, Williams, & Franklin, 2008) or on their effects on consumers (see e.g. Austin & Newman, 2015; Howe & Teufel, 2014), a few empirical studies confirm in fact that advertisers' demands are passed on to the newsrooms. Hays and Reisner (1990) discovered that journalists are regularly exposed to the pressure of advertisers. Soley and Craig (1992) endorsed these findings since about 90% of the surveyed journalists reported that some pressure had been applied to them. In addition, most editors said that the pressure was not coming from the advertisers but directly from within their newspapers, which reflects also Altmeppen's theoretical model presented above. An and Bergen (2007) as well as Nyilasy and Reid (2011) both confirm this impression, demonstrating that advertising directors "are willing to appease their advertisers, and are also willing to positively respond to advertisers requests" (An & Bergen, 2007, p. 118). This occurs more frequently at smaller, chain owned newspapers than in big and independent papers.

Other studies show that advertising pressure can also cause different forms of complacent journalism. Reuter and Zitzewitz (2006), looking at fund recommendations in financial publications, reveal that they are in fact correlated with advertising expenditures. Rinallo and Basuroy (2009) discover similar relationships, demonstrating that advertising spending influences the media coverage of advertisers. They examined the coverage of 291 Italian fashion companies in 123 publications from Italy, France,

Germany, the UK and the US. The two authors found that advertising has a strong positive influence on coverage and that publishers, which depend more on a specific industry for their advertising revenues, are susceptible to a higher degree of influence from their corporate advertisers. Gambaro and Puglisi (2009) draw similar conclusions in a study on the daily coverage of listed companies in the Italian press. The two researchers illustrate that newspaper coverage of a given company is positively correlated to the amount of ads purchased by that company.

When it comes to the impact of advertisers on the coverage about them, research is often limited to case studies, frequently based on indirect evidence due to methods such as interviews or surveys (see e.g. Siegert & Eberle, 2004; or Fassihi, 2008). In addition, results are not always consistent among the different studies, bearing either contradicting findings or small effects. Andresen (2008), analyzing the German magazine *Der Spiegel* and the newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, investigated whether the amount of ad spending was correlated to a more favorable coverage of four advertisers and their products. He found only weak correlations between the two variables. Kolb and Woelke (2010) carried out a study on two Swiss free newspapers and their coverage of a Swiss bank, which advertised only in one of the two papers. The results show that the newspaper without any ads reported more often about the bank and the tenor was far more critical. Based on the previous two analyses, Lagetar and Mühlbauer (2012) did a similar case study scrutinizing the coverage of German and Austrian news outlets about a supermarket chain. In their case, however, the findings were inconsistent, as there were no clear-cut differences between the coverage of those newspapers with and those without advertising from the supermarket.

Based on these reflections, this study poses the following general research question:

> RQ: What kind of impact does the ad volume exert on the editorial coverage of advertisers?

Two different premises are related to this question: the higher the advertising volume of an advertising company, the greater the likelihood that they will be able to control the reporting thanks to the interventions of the media management. Large advertising customers are central to the survival of a free newspaper. For this reason, it can be assumed that the newspapers report more positively about important advertisers. On the other hand, print media, in which a company buys little to no advertising, pay less attention to their interests and report more critically, which means that:

> H1: The larger the ad volume of an advertiser, the greater the chance of a positive coverage with regard to the presented facts.

Likewise, it is possible that the coverage yields positive effects on the judgments made by journalists (and on the selection of quotes from other actors), which may ultimately help to establish a positive frame around advertisers:

> H2: The larger the ad volume of an advertiser, the greater the probability of positive judgments by journalists and other actors in the articles.

3. The Swiss Media Market in 2008: The Climax of the Free Newspapers War

After a very positive decade in the 1980s in terms of profits, in the 1990s in the Swiss press market the number of titles started to shrink dramatically. About a third of all independent newspaper titles disappeared (Fög, 2010). At the same time, the mergers between media companies started to increase. The concentration processes in the print media market continued unimpeded after the turn of the millennium, with the result that the competition between the larger publishing houses grew steadily. In 2001 and particularly in 2002, the economic crisis led to a collapse in display prices, in addition to falling circulation figures, which added up to the pressure on newspapers.

On December 13, 1999, the Norwegian publisher Schibsted launched the first free newspaper, *20 Minuten*, in Zurich. For the first time, a free newspaper offered also journalistic content, aiming at the "unproductive" time of commuters between their home and the workplace. While there had already been free newspapers, their structure as well as the news they offered corresponded more to an official house gazette. The launch of daily free newspapers thus marked the beginning of new era in the Swiss press market.

On January 31, 2000, only four weeks after the start of *20 Minuten*, the Swedish company Metro International launched *Metropol*. However, the ill-designed project was doomed to a quick end, and shortly after its second anniversary, the newspaper ceased its publication in 2002. In the meantime, the most important Swiss publisher, Tamedia, acquired *20 Minuten* from Schibsted. Over the next three years, *20 Minuten* further strengthened its market position. Tamedia also expanded the website and launched a weekend edition of *20 Minuten*.

In 2006, another important publishing house, Ringier, entered the free newspaper market, but with a differed concept: *Heute*[1] was launched as an evening paper, intended to attract commuters on their way home—avoiding direct competition with Tamedia's *20 Minuten*, which was published early in the morning. Parallel to this project, Ringier launched a free special interest newspaper in 2006, *Cash Daily*, which was oriented at finance and business reporting. However, the distribution was organized differently, because *Cash Daily* was available at newsstands only, while *20 Minuten* and *Heute/Blick am Abend* had their own newspaper boxes in the streets.

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[1] In 2007 Ringier wanted to relaunch *Heute* to strengthen the brand of their main tabloid newspaper *Blick*. At the end of May 2008, just before the start of the European Football Championship, Ringier published *Heute* under its new name *Blick am Abend*.

In September 2007, the competition in the free-market market was even further intensified when an independent PR consultant launched another free newspaper called *.ch*. The new competitor provoked reactions especially at Tamedia. The publisher immediately increased the circulation of *20 Minuten*. Shortly thereafter, in December 2007, Tamedia launched another free newspaper called *NEWS*, which should be distributed in the same areas as *.ch*. Although *NEWS* appeared as a sober journalistic product, it was clearly a product used to assure the dominance of Tamedia in the free commuter newspaper market. 2008 was therefore the culmination point of the free newspaper competition in the Swiss print media market.

Although *.ch* underwent a re-launch in October 2008, the financial problems of the title did not cease. Hence, the project was abandoned after only one and a half years of existence in May 2009. Seven months later, in December 2009, Tamedia withdrew *NEWS* from the market. A couple of months before, in March, they had already closed down *Cash Daily* following a steady decline in advertisement income. This marked the end of a long and hard competition for the free newspaper market in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, which consolidated the image of Switzerland as a stronghold for freesheets. It was by far one of the fiercest battles for market shares on the Swiss print media market and characterized a unique era. Today, with *20 Minuten* and *Blick am Abend*, only two free newspapers survived. By sharing the commuter streams in the morning and during the evening, they do not get in the way of each other, which allows for an apparent peaceful cohabitation. After the free newspaper war ended nearly ten years ago, the print media markets in urban areas such as Zurich continued to be consolidated, also because *20 Minuten* and *Blick am Abend* have become cash cows for the two publishing companies, given that they absorb a considerable amount of advertising within the press market.[2]

4. Method

The research design to determine an advertiser influence on the journalistic coverage included a two-step methodological process on a sample of five freesheets (*20 Minuten, Heute*, *Cash Daily*, *.ch* and *NEWS*) and, as an object of comparison, one paid-for newspaper (*Tages-Anzeiger*): (1) a content analysis that was necessary to determine the advertising volume for each advertiser, (2) another content analysis in order to investigate the journalistic coverage of selected advertisers in terms of the valence.

Since it was not possible to obtain specific advertising data for each newspaper it was necessary to carry out a content analysis to establish the advertising vol-

ume of each major advertiser. The analysis included three natural weeks between February 18, 2008 and March 7, 2008. The analysis included advertisements out of the five most ad-intensive markets with regard to the newspaper sector: retailers, car/automotive business, banks/insurances, telecommunication/mobile and electronics/IT.[3] Besides that, four more sub-markets were included, where the hybridization between the editorial and commercial content was expected to be strong: cosmetics, jewelry/watches/accessories, clothing, tourism, and public transport. The study included a total of 912 advertisements.

In order to avoid distortions due to the different page sizes of the newspapers, the study converted the aggregated advertising area into an index, so that the advertising volumes are directly comparable. This advertising index (*AI*) is calculated as follows:

$$AI = \Sigma\, F_A / F_{PS}$$

$\Sigma\, F_A$ designates the total surface of a company's advertising, while F_{PS} indicates the page size of a newspaper. This is calculated from the height and width of the printable surface. By dividing the entire advertising surface of a company through the page size, one gets an advertising index *AI*. This index served not only as a basis for comparisons in terms of advertising volumes between the newspapers, but also as a starting point for the calculations regarding the influence of advertisers.

The second content analysis focused on a different unit of analysis: articles about selected advertisers. All kinds of editorial contributions such as news reports, comments or features were included, but not letters from the readers or other contributions from third parties. The analysis focused on the valence, which was assessed on the basis of a five-step scale ranging from 1 (unrestricted negative) to 5 (unrestricted positive). The intermediate expression (= 3) stands for a balanced, but also for an ambivalent reporting, in which both negative and positive arguments occur in the same way. According to the method of Kolb and Woelke (2010), balanced or ambivalent articles were omitted for the statistical calculations. Only articles that do express either a positive or a negative valence are included. The evaluative aspects play a decisive role not only in the overall assessment of the companies. They are also relevant when it comes to the specific statistical analysis of logistic regression, which requires a dichotomous dependent variable such as positive and negative facts or evaluations.

The period of analysis corresponds to the three weeks from the first content analysis. In order to include reporting that preceded as well as succeeded the advertising campaigns recorded during the period of observation, the analysis of the editorial coverage added another week before and one after the period of the advertising

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[2] *20 Minuten*, with a circulation of 442,994, is the most read newspaper in Switzerland, *Blick am Abend* with a circulation of 270,894 is ranked number two (Schweizer Medien, 2016).

[3] The selection of the different industries was made on the grounds of Nielsen Media/Media Focus that publishes data about the most important advertising industries in Switzerland.

analysis. This means that the period of investigation for the second content analysis covers five weeks and ranges from February 11, 2008, to March 14, 2008. The reason to use natural weeks instead of artificial weeks is relevant, because it allows a continuous observation of advertising campaigns as well as the reporting. This might result in an overrepresentation of certain companies in the coverage due to specific events, but the synchronous analysis of different news outlets allows to control for biases in the coverage, since all newspapers are confronted with the same events (Andresen, 2006).

The second content analysis included companies from the following sectors only: retailers, banks, the telecommunications and mobile industry as well as public transport. The selection was made on the data collected in the first study. The selected companies were the ones with the highest advertising volumes. Table 1 shows the specific companies.

It has to be said that the chosen method does not allow to make any statements as to whether the presumed influence from the advertisers occurs directly or indirectly. The results only show whether there is an influence, not how it comes about. Consequently, the results cannot serve as a response to the question of whether there are any collusions between the management and the journalistic staff regarding the overall reporting strategy.

5. Results

The data set of the content analysis with regard to the coverage of the advertisers includes a total of 889 articles. In the five weeks under review, 227 articles belong to the *Tages-Anzeiger*, 193 to *Cash Daily*, 152 to *NEWS*, 120 to *20 Minuten*, 105 to *Heute* and 92 to *.ch*. The differences in the number of articles are mainly due to three factors. First, the *Tages-Anzeiger* has a larger page size than the freesheets and offers therefore room for more contributions. In addition, it also offers the highest num-

ber of pages, which makes it possible to report more extensively about a company. The second reason is related to *Cash Daily*: as a newspaper specialized in financial and business news, the paper focuses more often on the companies in the sample, particularly on the two banks, and reports more frequently about events that do not end up in the other newspapers. A third reason is related to the different market orientation of the newspapers: Particularly *20 Minuten* and *Heute* apply a tabloid style of journalism, which emphasizes subjects like entertainment, sports, style, fashion, celebrities and gossip. The clear focus on soft news rather than on traditional journalistic themes like politics and economy lets both paper appear as more market-driven compared to the other papers in the sample. Moreover, *20 Minuten* did not produce its own business section at that particular time, but they got the content from and external agency.

Table 2 shows that the newspapers often reported on the two banks UBS (282 articles) and Credit Suisse (165). The high number of articles on the two Swiss banks is related to the banking and economic crisis at that time. At the beginning of 2008, both banks were under public scrutiny due to the turmoil on the American mortgage market.

In order to analyze the relationship between the ad volume and the valence of the coverage about certain advertisers, logistic regression was chosen as a means of statistical analysis. Unlike linear regression, it does not provide estimates of expected values, but attempts to determine the probability of a specific outcome (Backhaus, Erichson, Plinke, & Weiber, 2003; Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000). The logistic regression considers therefore the so-called odds. These reflect the probability for an event to happen, relative to the probability that the event does not occur. With regard to the presented study, the logistic regression considers the probability of a positive coverage compared to a negative outcome. The interpretation of the data is based on the odds ratio, which

Table 1. Sample of most important advertisers.

Retail	Banks	Telecommunications	Public transport
Migros	UBS	Swisscom	SBB
Coop	Credit Suisse		

Table 2. Number of articles about the selected advertisers.

	Migros	Coop	UBS	CS	Swisscom	SBB	Total
20 Minuten	7	9	46	20	9	29	120
Heute	16	13	17	13	22	24	105
.ch	10	3	29	21	5	24	92
Cash Daily	16	16	71	51	21	18	193
NEWS	11	10	57	28	6	40	152
Tages-Anzeiger	37	21	62	32	13	62	227
Total	97	72	282	165	76	197	889

Notes: Basis: February 11, 2008–March 14, 2008, n = 889.

indicates how much more likely a particular event occurs based on the degree of the independent variable. In other words: the odds ratio in this particular study indicates the chance of a positive coverage to the extent to which the advertising pages are increased by one unit. Obviously, this is only true if all other variables are kept constant. The study also controls for potentially interfering variables, such as the revenue of the advertiser or the penetration of the news outlet.

5.1. The Influence of Advertisers on Presented Facts

The central hypothesis of the study states that advertisers with a high advertising volume influence the reporting on their companies in a positive way. In other words, the higher the advertising expenditure of an advertiser, the greater the chance that the coverage will be positive. The analysis of the reporting took place on the grounds of two different dimensions: presented facts and evaluations from journalists and other actors.

The first dimension focuses on the valence of the presented facts. The coding is based on the presented facts only, not the judgements, allowing thus for a general assessment of the reporting. The balance between the number of positive and the negative facts determines how the general factual situation in the article is to be coded. For example, if an article contains the information that a bank has lost money due to an erroneous investment strategy, the element is coded as a negative fact. If an article contains for instance one positive fact and three negative facts, the article will be coded as overall negative. Table 3 shows the aggregated analysis for all free newspapers, for the two market-oriented papers *20 Minuten* and *Heute*, and for the paid-for newspaper *Tages-Anzeiger*.

In the aggregated analysis the results reveal that there is a small but nonetheless significant chance that free newspapers in general, and the two market-oriented papers in particular, offer more positive facts if the ad volume grows. However, there is basically no difference between the aggregated free newspapers and the two

market-oriented newspapers, which might imply that the two free newspapers that offer more soft news are having a specific effect on the aggregated analysis. The paid-for newspaper does not show any significant relation between the ad volume and the valence of the coverage about the advertisers. Neither the revenue of the advertisers nor the penetration of the newspapers have an impact on the presented facts.

When it comes to the analysis of the individual titles, there are clear differences (see Table 4): particularly *Heute* with an odds ratio of 2.16 and *20 Minuten* with 1.08 show a higher chance of a positive coverage of their main advertisers. In other words: advertisers in *Heute* have more than twice the chance of getting related to positive facts if they increase their ad volume by one page. No other free paper shows significant results. This actually confirms the above mentioned thesis that the probability to get a positive coverage is so high for *Heute*—and to a lesser degree for *20 Minuten*—that the two market-oriented papers alone determine the aggregated analysis for all free newspapers.

5.2. The Influence of Advertisers on Journalists' Evaluations

The second dimension is based on the statements and evaluations of journalists and other actors mentioned in the articles about the companies in the sample. This dimension is used in order to shed light on how journalists personally—and through quotes of other people—assess the events. The coding process is carried out the exact same way as for the first dimension of the presented facts. While the selection of the presented facts may be more strongly influenced by the actual event, for instance due to a chronological narration of the different events that happened up to that particular moment, the judgements made by journalists and other people allow for a clearer account of the journalistic production process in relation to an advertiser.

The aggregated analysis of the evaluations made by journalists reveals that free newspapers in general, and

Table 3. Aggregated model for presented facts.

Predictor	All free newspapers			Market oriented newspapers 20 Minuten & Heute			Paid-for newspaper Tages-Anzeiger		
	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B
Ad volume	0.11**	0.01	1.11	0.10**	0.03	1.11	0.01	0.01	1.11
News media (penetration)	0.00	0.00	1.00	−0.01**	0.00	0.99	−0.12	0.15	0.89
Advertiser (revenue)	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
Constant	−0.41	0.28		0.56	0.49		55.21	71.71	
Nagelkerke R^2		0.07			0.22			0.16	
n		372			133			115	
% correct predicted cases		68.8			69.9			73.9	

Notes: B = Regression coefficient, $SE\ B$ = Standard error, e^B = Odds Ratio (95% confidence interval), Nagelkerke R^2 = explained variance, ** $p < .01$.

Table 4. Individual model with regard to the presented facts.

Predictor	20 Minuten			Heute			.ch			Cash Daily			NEWS		
	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B
Ad volume	0.08**	0.04	1.08	0.77**	0.63	2.16	−2.37	1.46	0.09	−0.67	0.37	0.51	−0.31	0.26	0.74
Advertiser (revenue)	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
Constant	−0.29	0.58		−2.01	2.06		1.28	1.65		0.72	0.65		−0.49	0.91	
Nagelkerke R^2	0.17			0.29			0.09			0.07			0.03		
n	74			59			49			98			92		
% correct predicted cases	71.6			69.0			79.6			65.3			72.8		

Notes: B = Regression coefficient, $SE\ B$ = Standard error, e^B = Odds Ratio (95% confidence interval), Nagelkerke R^2 = explained variance, ** $p < .01$. The penetration is missing because in the individual analysis it becomes a constant.

market-oriented freesheets in particular, show a significant chance to offer more favorable judgements about advertisers with higher ad volumes (see Table 5). On the other hand, the revenue of the advertiser, which is an indicator of its absolute market power, exerts no influence on the probability of a positive evaluation. However, the results with regard to the paid-for newspaper *Tages-Anzeiger* are surprising: the penetration seems to be a significant determining factor of the reporting. An odds ratio of 0.62 means that with a higher penetration of the newspaper, the likelihood of positive evaluations decreases. Accordingly, the probability of a positive evaluation of a company decreases by 38%, per thousand readers. This result—which is in line with what Reimann and Kreibe (2012) found out in a similar case study— could be explained by the fact that newspapers with a different business model based on advertising *and* subscriptions, are more resistant to pressures from the advertisers. Although the relation is flagged as significant, the result has to be interpreted with caution, since the standard error with respect to the parameter estimate is very large.

The individual media analysis shows one clear result: that chance to be positively judged by journalists in *Heute* is more than three times higher for an additional ad page ($e^B = 3.43$) than in any other newspaper (see Table 6). The likelihood of a positive assessment is so high that it influences the aggregated analysis for the two market-oriented newspapers ($e^B = 1.79$). However, in the case of journalistic evaluations, there are no other factors that might significantly influence the chances to improve the evaluations.

Overall it can be said that additional ad pages for free newspapers increase the chance for a positive rating. However, this effect is limited to freesheets like *20 Minuten* and *Heute* with a strong market-orientation and with a tabloid style of journalism that strongly focuses on topics of human interest such as entertainment, sports, celebrities and gossip. In the paid-for newspaper, no effect could be observed, which means that the advertising volume in news outlets such as the *Tages-Anzeiger* does not seem to have any impact on the journalistic production process at all. Due to the fact that both analyses display a significant influence of the advertising vol-

Table 5. Aggregated model for journalists' evaluations.

Predictor	All free newspapers			Market oriented newspapers 20 Minuten & Heute			Paid-for newspaper Tages-Anzeiger		
	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B
Ad volume	0.24**	0.10	1.27	0.58**	0.31	1.79	−0.01	0.19	0.99
News media (penetration)	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.99	−0.48*	0.21	0.62
Advertiser (revenue)	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
Constant	−1.49	0.46		−2.34	1.38		231.88	102.96	
Nagelkerke R^2	0.08			0.27			0.53		
n	220			67			75		
s% correct predicted cases	71.8			71.6			89.3		

Notes: B = Regression coefficient, $SE\ B$ = Standard error, e^B = Odds Ratio (95% confidence interval), Nagelkerke R^2 = explained variance, ** $p < .01$.

Table 6. Individual model with regard to journalists' and quoted evaluations.

Predictor	20 Minuten			Heute			.ch			Cash Daily			NEWS		
	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B	B	$SE\ B$	e^B
Ad volume	0.05	0.05	1.05	1.23*	1.00	3.43	−8.43	7.58	0.00	0.35	0.46	1.42	−0.27	0.50	0.77
Advertiser (revenue)	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
Constant	−0.75	0.87		−4.66	3.55		8.67	9.90		−1.05	0.80		−1.56	1.98	
Nagelkerke R^2		0.04			0.33			0.31			0.01			0.05	
n		40			28			33			69			51	
% correct predicted cases		70.0			67.9			84.8			65.2			80.4	

Notes: $SE\ B$ = Standard error, e^B = Odds Ratio (95% confidence interval), Nagelkerke R^2 = explained variance, ** $p < .05$. The penetration is missing because in the individual analysis it becomes a constant.

ume on the chance of a positive reporting in terms of facts and evaluations, both hypotheses H1 and H2 are—at least in relation to market-oriented freesheets such as *20 Minuten* and *Heute*—partially confirmed.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

The trend towards profitability and efficiency is related to a wide-ranging commercialization process in the media. As a result, there is a growing tension between economic and journalistic interests. Market relations exert a greater pressure on media firms, in particular the advertising industry, as it remains the main financial source for most news outlets—especially for freesheets. The study's central finding is therefore sobering: market-oriented free newspapers, financed exclusively by advertising, display a higher chance to positively report about advertisers if their ad volume increases.

The increasing focus on the interests of advertisers and the hybridization between advertising and editorial content are additional signs of commercialization, because they show that business-related factors rule over journalistic autonomy. If free newspapers—like in Switzerland—belong to larger media conglomerates that publish traditional paid-for newspapers as well, the two papers must be positioned in different market segments in order to reduce the risk of cannibalization. This means, that (the remaining) free newspapers may evolve even further into journals that favor topics of human interest. Newspaper content, especially in free sheets, is designed to appeal to specific target groups—young commuters—whose attention can be sold to advertisers. This leads not only to a homogenization of the content, but it favors a continuous hybridization between advertising and editorial content—not surprisingly *Blick am Abend* was the first newspaper outlet to offer native advertising on its webpage. The co-orientation between journalists and the management described by Altmeppen (2006) becomes therefore increasingly undermined, with consequences that point directly to the heart of journalis-

tic professionalism: younger journalists working in Swiss free newspapers are not primarily interested in the public interest, but in the economic wellbeing of the news outlet they are working for (Keel, 2011, p. 242).

Despite all the indicators, which point to a certain impact of the advertising expenditures, there are clear limits to it. The results of the individual analyses underscore this conclusion, since there is no general effect on newspapers. News outlets, which are committed to quality journalism, such as .ch or the *Tages-Anzeiger*, show no signs of influence. However, the prerequisite for such a result is an ongoing discourse on topics related to journalistic standards and professionalism within the news organization (both in the newsroom and the management). This might well increase the awareness of the positive effects of self-regulatory practices such as codes of ethics, guidelines or ombudsmen (Eberwein & Porlezza, 2016). The association of private Swiss media companies, Swiss Media, together with different associations from the advertising industry, have thus established a Code of Conduct, declaring that all actors—editors, publishers and advertisers—abide to the principle of transparency. All actors have to make it clear what kind of content is paid for (Swiss Media, 2016).

However, setting up self-regulating practices guaranteeing transparency is not enough. While (self-) regulatory practices may be able to uphold the "Chinese Wall" between editorial and commercial contents on a formal or visual basis, it becomes difficult to oppose economic influences that permeate the journalistic production process as presented in this study: "what strength do the judicial and self-regulatory systems have to maintain journalism as independent and as controller of both political and economic power?" (Svensson, 2016, p. 116). It takes both journalists and the media management to establish a new culture of accountability within the newsrooms. This is essential, as newsrooms are the main place where accountability and self-regulatory measures do have an impact, especially in countries where journalists' unions are not as strong as in Central and Northern Eu-

rope: "If media managers actively implemented accountability and transparency mechanisms, they could clearly demonstrate that they care for media accountability…." (Fengler, Eberwein, Mazzoleni, Porlezza, & Russ-Mohl, 2014, p. 268). By doing so, news organizations would also show that they actually care about their credibility, particularly in times when public trust in the media is waning in the wake of fake news and alternative news media outlets popping up everywhere.

This study helps to establish a broader approach to assessing the advertising pressure on (free) newspapers and expanding the scope of inquiry beyond a single case study and the discourse of hybrid advertising. However, this study also presents some limitations, which in turn are opportunities for further research. First, the content analysis was carried out in relation to a very specific moment in the history of the Swiss print media market. It would be interesting to see whether the impact of the advertisers, with only the two market-oriented free newspapers still on the market, is still intact. Over the last nearly ten years, the structure of the media system has changed and the market has become even more concentrated. Second, a follow-up study could focus on the question whether there are any differences between free sheets and traditional newspapers. Future research should also include other countries. Third, advertising expenditures had to be calculated by way of advertising space, as media organizations did not provide the relevant data.

In conclusion, more is at stake than the credibility of the media. As economic pressures become stronger and shape media content, will journalism still be capable of holding the powerful to account if the public service mission is no longer a central notion of journalism? Is journalism still able to legitimize its own work if journalists' professional role-conception shifts towards commercial interests, producing continuously ethical issues? If the answer is no, it will be rather difficult for journalism to rethink itself (see Peters & Broersma, 2016) bearing in mind the massive economic and digital challenges awaiting to be tackled.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Subjective Evaluation of Media Content as a Moderator of Media Effects on European Identity: Mere Exposure and the Hostile Media Phenomenon

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Abstract

This paper posits that the concept of European identity is an important indicator of the legitimacy of the European Union (EU). It further assumes that the exposure to EU related media content can influence the feeling of European identity. In order to verify this assumption, we combined the mere-exposure-theory and the hostile media phenomenon. We assume that these theoretical concepts could help to understand the influence of media on people's levels of attachment to the EU. Regression analyses are performed on secondary data that were collected in a Eurobarometer survey in 2013. Our findings revealed that media exposure affected the respondents' identification with Europe, as well as the modifications of this effect based on their assessments of EU media coverage. The results of the current study not only validate assumptions about the mere-exposure effects on identity but also confirm the theoretical assumption that perceived hostility reduces such effects, whereas exposure to information that is perceived as neutral promotes the effects of media exposure on the feeling of European identity.

Keywords

collective identity; European identity; hostile media; mere-exposure effect

Issue

1. Introduction

The idea that European polity requires a collective identity of the European citizens in order to support the process of European integration is not new. Already in 1973 a normative concept of identity was introduced into the European political discourse during the Copenhagen European Commission Summit (European Commission, 1973). Today, it is often argued by scholars that developing and strengthening European identity is necessary to bolster the achievements of the integration process (De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006; Triga & Vadratsikas, 2016) and that it might even help to legitimize further European integration (Bruter, 2005). This assumed capac-

ity of European identity prompted many political scholars to investigate the relationship of identity with several key political concepts such as democracy and citizenship (Habermas & Derrida, 2005), Europeanisation (Harmsen & Wilson, 2000; Risse, 2010), European Union (EU) foreign policy (Manners, 2002), Euroscepticism (Hooghe & Marks, 2005; Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2008), and migration (Favell & Recchi, 2009).

Despite being rigorously investigated, a unanimous definition of European identity is still not available, because the concept is used in varied contexts and for different purposes. That is why the term European identity is described in various ways such as "flexible" (Walkenhorst, 2008, p. 4), "abstract" (Stråth, 2002) and "hybrid"

(Maier & Risse, 2003, p. 29). Studying and researching European identity is particularly problematic because as an idea, European identity leaves open a myriad of options for interpretation. In parts of the literature, European identity is interpreted as a necessary precondition, for political integration, because at citizen's level it promises to foster solidarity and active participation (Walkenhorst, 2009). On the other hand, it is also considered vital because it promotes legitimacy and increase effectiveness of the political system (Kaina & Karolewski, 2013). Contrary to the positive connotation of identity, the literature also highlights the contested characteristics of identity (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 1; Gandemer, 2014), and such contestation does not only exist in the interpretation of the concept, but it is also present in the debate of how it can be developed (Stone Sweet, Sandholtz, & Fligstein, 2001; Wendt, 1999) along with its complementary (Agirdag, Phalet, & Van Houtte, 2016; Delanty, 2014) or tense relationship with national identity (Carey, 2002).

Regardless the divergent interpretations of European identity, it remains a key-concept for the investigation of the future of EU. That is why researchers from diverse fields continue to investigate the topic and reveal its varied manifestations. Besides political and social scientists, also communication scholars are involved in investigations related to European identity. Because citizens become involved in European politics mainly through the media, it is reasonable to expect that European identity— understood as a political concept—is influenced by the exposure to EU-related media coverage. The "Brexit" might be considered as a recent example of the influence media may have on identity. At least it was intensely debated in the media whether the coverage on "Brexit" was biased (Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2016) and cultivated national boundaries rather than a common European identity (Corbett, 2016). In spite of the widespread assumption that media impact identity, the research on the effects of media on European identity is still rare, with view exceptions (for overviews see, Bruter, 2005; De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006; De Vreese, Boomgaarden, & Semetko, 2011; Olausson, 2010; Staehelin, 2016; Triga & Vadratsikas, 2016). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to broaden this field of research.

In the light of above arguments, the main goal of this study is to clarify the influence of the exposure to European political news on identification with the EU. Consequently, we first define the concept of European identity and then examine the current research that explores the effects of media on European identity. In addition, we highlight the research gaps in the field. In the subsequent section, we focus on two theoretical concepts— mere exposure and hostile media perceptions—both of which have not been employed within the context of European identity. Based on these theoretical approaches, we develop hypotheses concerning the effects of media exposure on identity and the intervening effects of media perception and tested them with the help of a sec-

ondary data analysis. The results of this analysis reveal a connection between mere-exposure effects and hostile media perceptions with regard to European identity. In the final section, the results are discussed, the limitations of the research are considered, and recommendations for future research are specified.

2. Conceptualizing European Collective Identity

Collective identity is a broad concept and not restricted to any particular aspect. Among others gender, culture, ethnicity, religion, and nationality have been considered as basis of people's identity (Irimie, 2014). With regard to the origins of such collective identities, different theoretical arguments offer contested views. One theoretical standpoint argues that identity is essentially primordial, i.e. it is constructed from kinship, cultural or historical ties that are enshrined in the collective memory of the culture (Smith, 1992). In addition, there are postmodernist scholars who posited that individuals perceive that they have something in common on the basis of which they form an "imagined ommunity". For these scholars cultural and geographical constraints do not really matter (Anderson, 1991). Contrary to the aforementioned understandings, a third theoretical approach draws inspiration from modernist school of thought which argues that European identity is an elusive, socially constructed and negotiated reality, something that has a different meaning for each individual and does not really rely on common past (Gellner, 1983).

Within the context of this paper, European identity is considered as a form of socially constructed collective identity of the Europeans. This sense of collective identity is not developed separately within each individual, but is socially constructed, which means it emerges as the intentional or unintentional consequence of social interactions (Fligstein, Polyakova, & Sandholtz, 2012, p. 108). European identity is based on the subjective feeling and sense of belonging together as Europeans. However, this paper is focused only on the political nature of European collective identity.

In the political science literature, Easton (1965, p. 185) termed collective identity as the "we-feeling" and regarded it as a necessary condition for individuals who want to cooperate politically and authorize certain representatives to act and rule on their behalf. Hence, identity is the primary source of the legitimization of any political community and structure. Thus, in the context of this paper, it can be argued that Europeans are required to have such sense of community and belonging to EU, which consequently foster European collective identity.

Without such an attachment, any governmental regime could be considered illegitimate. In a similar vein, John Stuart Mill (1861, p. 391) argued that collective identity is a necessary aspect of democratic decision-making. Consequently, the legitimacy of a new political structure depends on an explicit and implicit agreement that links the political community to its citizens and gives

it fundamental institutional acceptability (Bruter, 2003). In this context it is of high importance to understand that different forms of collective identities do not have to be in a conflictual relationship (for overviews see Delanty & Rumford, 2005, p. 51; Risse, 2003; Ruiz, et al., 2004, p. 2). For example, it is possible to have a very strong national identity and at the same time to be strongly attached to Europe (e.g. Ruiz et al., 2004, p. 8). This fact is taken into account by various models of the relationship among national and European identities, e.g. models of nested identities, concentric circles, layer cake, crosscutting identities or marble cake (Risse, 2010).

Despite these divergent views, scholars neither concede that collective identity is not significant. Consequently, researchers are interested in the factors influencing the development of collective identities. The following section of the paper narrows the scope and outlines the impact of media on European identity.

2.1. The Nature and Impact of EU Media Coverage

In the debate on the development of European identity, it is imperative to understand the role of media, because primarily media serve at the heart of (re)construction process of European identity (Schneeberger, 2009). Due to the lack of first-hand experiences of politics, whether domestic, European, or international, citizens depend heavily on the mass media to obtain information about political matters (Ball-Rokeach & Defleur, 1976), which in turn affects their political attitudes (Rittberger & Maier, 2008).

Outlining the pre-requisites of identity formation, Thompson (1995, p. 186) argued that "identity requires symbolic material for its maintenance, growth and transformation". In the processes of identity formation, the news media play a relevant role because of their ability to (re)produce symbolically certain perspectives on the world and our place in it (Olausson, 2010). They "have become organised mechanisms of great significance for constructing identities in local, national and transnational contexts within modernity" (Georgiou, 2006, p. 11). A second precondition for European identity to take root is its establishment as a conversational "habit", within general public discourses, and media play a crucial role in this regard (Gripsrud, 2007, p. 490) by continuously placing certain issue on its agenda.

To understand the role of the media for European integration and European identity much research is done on the characteristics of the European media system and on media coverage related to the EU. Results show the absence of an influential pan-European media outlet. This indicates that "the EU as a political structure lacks a corresponding communication system" (Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2007, p. 687). Consequently, the representation of the EU in the media depends on national media outlets, which are not always Brussels' "best friends" (Gerhards, Odfferhaus, & Roose, 2009; Hillje, 2013). This deficiency significantly affects the provided image of the

EU. Kaitatzi-Whitlock (2007) characterized the reportage of EU affairs in national media as scattered, offering only minimal visibility, and having national biases; moreover, the coverage usually has a focus on personalization and "ethno-controversial" issues.

Norris (2000) found that coverage of EU affairs in TV news between 1995 and 1997 was with mostly neutral or negative tone. Similarly, De Vreese (2004) reported findings that EU actors were often not evaluated in the news; but, when they were judged, the tone was negative. Findings from Peter, Semetko and De Vreese (2003) showed that most of the national TV coverage of the EU is neutral. Another analysis on media representation of EU in selected member states reported mixed media coverage (Alarcón, 2010). More positive accounts concerning the evaluation of the EU were obtained by some studies on the quality press (Koopmans & Statham, 2010; Trenz, 2007). Consequently, Schuck et al. (2011) summarized the state of research saying that all in all there is negative bias toward the EU albeit most of the news media coverage is neutral.

But, how this kind of coverage might influence the "we" feeling among Europeans, still remains somehow an open question. On the one hand, there is widespread confirmation of a "crucial role of media for collective identities" (Hillje, 2013, p. 7). On the other hand, it is unclear how this role looks like and what effects might appear. Because of this uncertainty one would expect intense research efforts to clarify the role of the media. But in fact media effects research on public opinion about the EU is still an "embryonic" field of study (De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006, p. 421). Similarly, Rittberger and Maier (2008) stated that the literature on public opinion and EU integration has thus far neglected the role of media effects on attitudes towards feeling European.

In the literature, the few exceptions that investigate the effects of media on European identity and integration primarily focus on agenda setting, priming, and framing effects (see Semetko, 2004) or conduct *elite communication discourse analysis* (see Suszycki, 2006; Wodak, 2004). Elite communication discourse analyses revealed that promoting and constructing a specific identity is a "top-down" affair (Shore, 2000). However, this paradigm has shifted, and scholars now assume that identity formation is not the exclusive task of elites because it also can be constructed from the "bottom up" (Bruter, 2005). Thus, analyses should not be limited to the discourse of the elites, but the broad public also should be considered. Therefore, other methods such as surveys should also be applied in order to study "bottom-up" European identity construction.

Although there is not much research on media effects, one important finding revealed the ability of negative news to have stronger influence on political support, and European integration and identity than positive news (De Vreese et al., 2011). The stronger influence of negative news does not mean that positive news has no effect, "but overall, negative arguments win the

day" (De Vreese et al., 2011, p. 194). Based on the findings of a more negative tendency in the coverage and the stronger effects of negative coverage on people's attitude, it seems plausible to expect that the exposure to media information about the EU would have a negative effect on European identity. In the following chapter we will unfold theoretical considerations that challenge this expectation.

3. Theoretical Reorientation: Mere-Exposure and Hostile Media Effects

The mere-exposure-theory suggests that people tend to develop positive attitudes towards objects merely because of the repeated exposure to these objects. No further elaboration by the individual is required (Zajonc, 2001, p. 225). The mere-exposure effect can occur without any cognitive processing, even if people are not aware that they are exposed to a specific stimulus. Therefore, recipients are not required to feel familiarity with the object (Zajonc, 2001, p. 225). The only condition is that the first experience with that object is not an explicitly negative one. These premises fit the situation of the consumption of news about European issues. Even though the general tendency of the coverage on the EU is negative, the overwhelming majority of media content is neutral. Following this argumentation, the mere-exposure-theory calls into question the prospect of negative effects.

Research on the attitudes towards foreign countries has shown that the mere-exposure effect can be triggered by media use (Perry, 1990). Some evidence also supports the applicability of the idea to European identity. Studies that measured the frequency of appearance of EU topics in various national media demonstrated that the more frequently EU topics appeared the better was the breeding-ground for a sense of community and the development of "Europeanized national public spheres" (e.g., D'Haenens, 2005; De Vreese, 2007). Continuous exposure to news coverage about the EU makes people feel familiar with the EU. According to the mere-exposure effect, this perception of familiarity will lead to a stronger identification with the EU. Furthermore, this effect might be strengthened by the tendency of selected exposure (Slater, 2007).

It is evident that the assumption of a linear relationship oversimplifies the connection between media and identity because it ignores the role of the recipients' perceptions and interpretations of the media content. Studies dealing with the perceptions of news slant or bias showed that recipients, especially partisans, critically assess the news with regard to the issue of interest and claim frequently that the news media are hostile towards their own party. Therefore, a close examination of the mechanism of the perception of media biases is necessary.

The observation that partisans frequently perceive the media coverage on relevant issues as biased against their own position is called the *hostile media phenomenon*. In a seminal experimental study, Vallone, Ross and Lepper (1985) showed that the media coverage of the Beirut massacre in Lebanon was perceived as biased by both, the pro-Israeli group and the pro-Arab group. Moreover, experimental and survey studies have continuously replicated previous findings on hostile media perceptions. Hence, it can be taken for granted that there is a "tendency for individuals with a strong existing attitude on an issue to perceive that ostensibly neutral, even-handed media coverage of the topic is biased against their side and in favor of the antagonist's view" (Perloff, 2015, p. 707). Recently, a meta-analysis of 34 hostile media studies concluded that stronger partisanship leads to higher perceptions of media bias, but even at moderate partisanship levels (low involvement), hostile media perceptions are detectable (Hansen & Kim, 2011).

Studies that investigated the hostile media phenomenon predominantly dealt with the identification of the mechanisms that cause the perception of bias (Giner-Sorolla & Chaiken, 1994; Gunther & Liebhart, 2006; Vallone et al., 1985). Only a few studies have dealt with the potential effects of hostile media perceptions, such as of the support of democracy (Tsfati & Cohen, 2005), the estimation of the opinion climate (Gunther, Christen, Liebhart, & Chih-Yun Chia, 2001), and the willingness to engage in discussions (Hart, Feldman, Leiserowitz, & Maibach, 2015; Hwang, Pan, & Sun, 2008). But none of the studies directly related to hostile media perceptions link effects of media on (political) identity, therefore, the insights contributed by this research provide some inspiring ideas for the research on the effects of media on European identity.

It could be argued that European citizens generally evaluate the performance of the EU with regard to the functioning of its institutions and the outcome of its policies. Consequently, they develop attitudes towards the EU polity. Obviously the concept of "attitudes" is not identical with concept of "partisanship", however they are related. From the body of hostile media research we can conclude that it is likely, that citizens who perceive the overall performance of the EU as (very) good would claim that the representation of the EU by news media is too negative. Furthermore, citizens who perceive the overall performance of the EU as quite negative would blame the news media for portraying the EU in an overly positive light. However, because the evaluation of an object is not the same as partisanship, it is also possible that citizens with a negative attitude towards the performance of the EU could perceive that the media draws an overly negative picture of the EU. Correspondingly, people with a positive image of EU institutions and policies might observe that news media providing an overly positive representation of the EU.

Based on these theoretical elaborations we assume that the evaluation of the performance of the object (EU) in connection with the evaluation of the representation of the object (EU) in the media would probably moder-

ate the strength of the mere-exposure effect. Even if according to the mere-exposure-theory, no further elaboration of the individual is necessary, recipients will always make judgments about the sources of information (e.g. if they perceive the media to be hostile towards an object). We assume that these judgments modify the mere-exposure effect.

4. Research Questions and Hypotheses

Following the foregoing theoretical elaboration, two research questions are posed:

(1) Does the intensity of the exposure to news about the EU have an effect on the development of a European identity?
(2) Is this effect modified by the perception of media hostility?

The *mere-exposure-theory* postulates that the amount of exposure to information about the object (EU) leads to an individual's familiarization with it and hence, supports the creation of identity:

H1: The higher the exposure to news about the EU, the stronger the European identity.

Based on the theoretical assumptions and findings from hostile media research, it might be possible that hostile media perceptions modify the strength of the mere exposure effect on European identity (see Figure 1). Although the mere-exposure effect works subconsciously, it is plausible that the conscious evaluation of the representation of the stimulus could reinforce or attenuate the mere-exposure effect. If persons perceive the media as hostile, it is probable that the mere-exposure effect is weakened thus we hypothesize:

H2: The mere-exposure effect is weaker in persons who perceive the media as hostile, than in persons who perceive the media as not hostile.

Furthermore, we argue that within the group of persons who perceive the media as not hostile, some might be particularly susceptible to the mere-exposure effect. We assume that among those who are not partisans and perceive the media coverage as neutral, the mere-exposure effect is even more present than among all the others without hostile media perceptions:

H3: The mere-exposure effect is strongest in non-partisan persons who perceive the media as objective.

Taken together we assume that the weakest mere-exposure effect appears in persons with hostile media perceptions, while the strongest effect appears in non-partisans who perceive the media as objective. The strength of the mere-exposure effect for the others is in between.

Furthermore, we assume that other factors also influence European identity. First of all, we assume that the evaluation of the performance of the EU has a strong direct effect on identity; those who evaluate the performance of the EU more positively will identify themselves more with Europe as others. Besides that, we will control for several socio-demographic variables like age, education or social status, which might influence identity as well. The complete model is depicted in Figure 1.

5. Method

To test the four hypotheses, a secondary data analysis was conducted on surveys in the Eurobarometer 80.1 series that were carried out in November 2013. The data collection was executed by TNS OPINION (Brussels) as re-
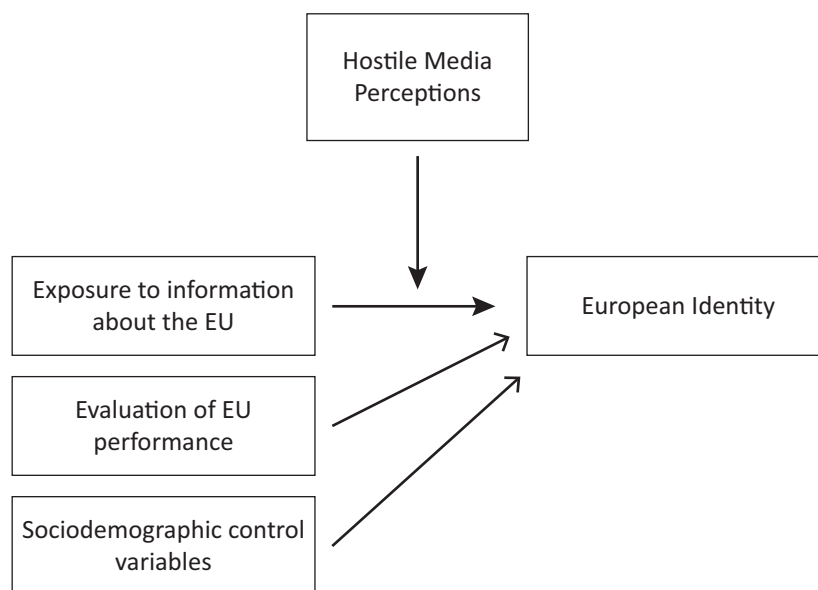

Figure 1. The variable model.

quested by the European Commission. It consists of survey data collected from the 28 member states of the EU. Overall, data gathered from 27,829 persons were analyzed. The data were weighted before the analysis. The weighting factors adjusted the national samples for sex, age, and region according to the share in the total population aged 15 years and older in the EU.

The dependent variable (identity) was operationalized by two indicators: Citizens were asked to answer the following question: "Please tell me how attached you feel to the European Union" by using a scale from 1 (not attached at all) to 4 (very attached). Furthermore, the item "You feel you are a citizen of the EU" was used in index-building. The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which this item corresponded to their own opinion. Possible answers were 1 (no, definitely not), 2 (no, not really), 3 (yes, to some extent), and 4 (yes, definitely). The two items were highly correlated (r = .67), and the scale reliability was good (Alpha = .80). Thus, they were deemed suitable for index-building. Based on this index, the mean level of European identity was about 2.6, which was almost exactly in the middle of the scale (1–4). However, there were some differences in the level of European identity between the countries. The average identity in most countries was somewhere between 2.3 and 2.7. The negative outliers were Greece (2.1), Great Britain (2.2) and Cyprus (2.2) while the positive exceptions were Luxembourg (3.0), Germany (2.8) and Belgium (2.8).

The independent variable was operationalized by a combination of several items: The participants were first asked the following question: "Could you tell me to what extent you…a) watch television on a TV set or via the Internet, b) listen to the radio, c) read the written press d) use the Internet?" Possible answers were: 5 (every day/almost every day), 4 (two or three times a week), 3 (about once a week), 2 (two or three times a month), 1 (less often), 0 (never/no access to this medium). Later they were questioned: "Where do you get most of your news on European political matters? Firstly? And then?" Possible answers were respectively: Television, the Press, Radio, and the Internet. Out of these two measurements a new variable for every medium was calculated indicating if the respective medium was the first source for EU news (2), a less relevant one (1), or if the medium was not a source for EU news at all (0). Afterwards each of the four variables was multiplied with the respective media-use variable. By doing so, four variables (on a scale from 0 to 10) were obtained, each indicating the amount of EU specific input from the respective media (TV, Newspaper, Radio, Internet). Finally, an index out of these four variables was calculated indicating the overall exposure to EU-news.

To operationalize the hostile media perceptions as the intervening variable, two measurements were required. First, the perceived bias in the coverage was registered, and the evaluation of the performance of EU was traced to identify the individual standpoints of the respondents.

The perceived bias was operationalized by three items. The respondents were asked, "Do you think that the [national] television present(s) the EU too positively, objectively, or too negatively?" The same question was repeated regarding the radio and the press. The answers were coded for each variable as 1 (too negatively), 2 (objectively), and 3 (too positively). The three variables were highly correlated (between r = .68 and r = .75), and the scale reliability was also good (Alpha = .88); thus, the items could be used in index building. Therefore, the three variables were summed and afterwards recoded into three groups. The values 3, 4, and 5 were recoded into 1 (too negatively), value 6 was recoded into 2 (objectively), and the values 7, 8, and 9 were recoded into 3 (too positively).

In the operationalization of the individual's evaluation of the performance of EU, two items were applied for index building. The first item operationalized satisfaction "with the way democracy works in in the EU". The responses were measured on a 4-point scale: 1 (not at all satisfied), 2 (not very satisfied), 4 (fairly satisfied), and 5 (very satisfied). The second item referred to the expected future development of the EU: "At the present time, would you say that, in general, things are going in the right direction or in the wrong direction in EU?" The variable consisted of three values: 1 (things are going in the wrong direction), 3 (neither the one nor the other), and 5 (things are going in the right direction). Because the two variables were positively correlated (r = .42), they were combined in an index. On the one hand this variable was introduced in the model as indicator for the "Evaluation of EU Performance" and on the other hand it was used to operationalize hostile media perceptions. Therefore, the index was recoded into three groups: 1 (negative evaluation of the EU; 1.0–2.4), 2 (neutral evaluation of the EU; 2.5–3.5), and 3 (positive evaluation of the EU; 3.6–5.0).

To identify persons with hostile media perceptions, the individual standpoint concerning the evaluation of the performance of the EU must be combined with the perceived media bias. Figure 2 shows several possible combinations of individual standpoints and media-bias perceptions. In the upper part of the figure, the combinations, which indicate a hostile media perception, are illustrated. The two other examples are of biased media perceptions, but they do not indicate the hostile media phenomenon. The evaluation of a hostile media perception requires that the person has a clear standpoint on the issue (i.e., is a partisan) and perceives the media as biased in a direction against his or her own opinion. Both requirements were met in the upper example but not in the other two examples.

Table 1 shows the combinations of the values of the two variables that indicate the different types of hostile and non-hostile media perceptions. The respective numbers of cases of the groups are shown in brackets. As Table 1 shows, the group of persons who have hostile media perceptions consists of roughly 3,900 persons (group 1). The group with a neutral standpoint and an ob-
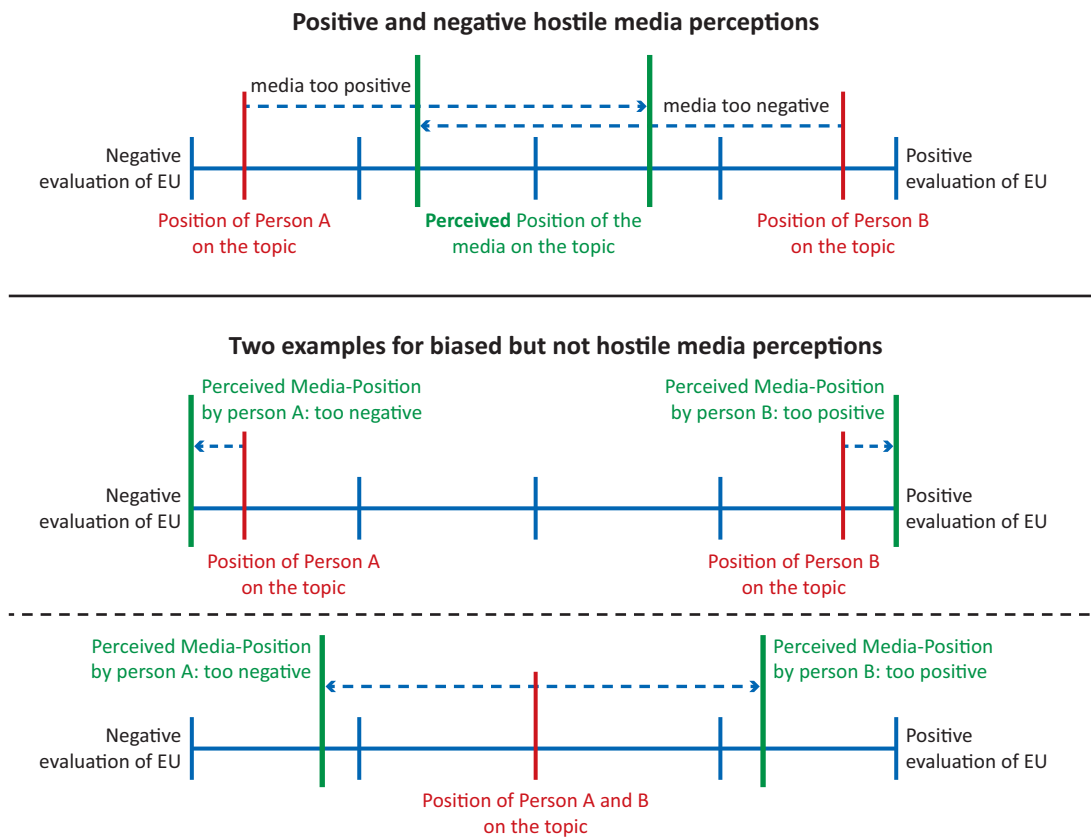
Positive and negative hostile media perceptions

Two examples for biased but not hostile media perceptions

Figure 2. Hostile media perceptions vs. biased media perceptions.

Table 1. Hostile media perception (typology and number of cases).

		Evaluation of EU		
		negative	neutral	positive
Evaluation of the way the national media present the EU	too negatively	2 (n = 2,156)	2 (n = 1,928)	1 (n = 1,099)
	objectively	2 (n = 3,990)	3 (n = 5,163)	2 (n = 3,997)
	too positively	1 (n = 2,810)	2 (n = 1,725)	2 (n = 924)

Note: 1 = hostility perception, 2 = no hostility perception, 3 = objective media perception by non-partisans (neutrality perception).

jective perception (group 3) is somewhat larger (approx. 5,200). Because this group contrasts the groups with hostile media perceptions, their perspective is designated as a neutrality perception.

6. Findings

Regression analyses were conducted to test the three hypotheses. In each analysis European Identity (mean = 2.6; on a scale from 1 = low to 4 = high; SD = 0.8) was the dependent variable and the media use index (mean = 3.4; on a scale from 0 = no to 10 = high; SD = 1.3) was the independent variable. Besides media use the evaluation of the performance of the EU (mean = 2.9 on a scale from 1 = negative to 5 = positive; SD = 1.3), age (mean = 48.9 years; SD = 17.8), sex

(female = 52%), education (mean = 19.3 age, when formal education was finished on a scale from 10 to 40; SD = 4.5), and social level (mean = 5.5 on a scale from 1 = lowest, to 10 = highest; SD =1.6) were introduced as control variables in the model.

In all models, the five control variables: EU-performance, societal level, education, age and sex were controlled, but the effects are not displayed in Table 3.

H1 refers to the general mere-exposure effect: The higher the exposure to news about the EU, the stronger the European identity. The hypothesis was confirmed by the results of the regression analysis (see Table 2). Despite rigorous control of further factors, a small but highly significant positive effect (beta = .12) was observed, indicating that people who have a higher exposure to EU related news have also a stronger EU iden-

Table 2. Regression analysis: Hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis	H1	H2		H3
Sample	Whole Sample	Persons who perceive media as hostile	Persons who perceive media *not* as hostile	*Non Partisans* who perceive media *not* as hostile
n =	20,456	3,384	17,072	4,472
R² =	.20	.28	.16	.05
		beta coefficients		
Exposure to EU-News	.12 ***	.09 ***	.14 ***	.15 ***
EU- performance	.37 ***	.44 ***	.32 ***	.08 ***
Social level	.08 ***	.09 ***	.07 ***	.03 (n.s.)
Education	.08 ***	.10 ***	.09 ***	.11 ***
Age	−.01 (n.s.)	−.04 **	−.01 (n.s.)	.01 (n.s.)
Sex	−.02 **	.02 (n.s.)	−.03 ***	−.05 **

Note: *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$; * = $p < .05$

tity. This positive relationship between media use and identity was observed in all European countries, and in 26 of 28 countries the effect was significant (only in the Netherlands and Hungary it was not). Among the other countries the strength of the effect varied: In Ireland and Estonia, the effects were the lowest (beta = .07/.08) while in Germany and Malta the effects were the highest (beta = .18/.18).

H2 introduces the perceived hostility as an intervening variable: The mere-exposure effect is weaker in persons who perceive the media as hostile, than in persons who perceive the media as not hostile. To test this hypothesis, the sample was divided into two parts, and the same regression was conducted in both subsamples. The first subsample consisted of those who perceived the media as hostile (group 1 in Table 1); the other groups (2 and 3) constituted the comparison sample. H2 was also supported by the results (see Table 2). The beta coefficient in the group of those who perceived the media as hostile was smaller (beta = .09) than in the comparison group (beta = .14).

H3 considers differential effects within the group of people without hostile media perception, positing that the mere-exposure effect is stronger in non-partisans who perceive the media as objective as in non-partisans who perceive the media as biased. To test H3, the sample

of people without hostile media perception was divided into two parts and the regression analysis was conducted just for group 3 (see table 1 the group in the center). H3 was also supported by the results. The results show that the mere-exposure effect on non-partisans who perceived the media as objective (neutrality media perception) was (at least slightly) stronger than on all other groups (beta = .15).

To verify whether these results could be replicated in all parts of Europe, the sample was divided into three parts: seven countries with citizens having a low European identity were merged in the first group (n = 8,094); 14 countries with a medium level of European identity were pooled in the second group (n = 6,994); the remaining seven countries, with citizens having the highest European identity, were combined in the third group (n = 8,704). The regression analyses (including the five control variables) were repeated in these three country groups. The findings show that the general structure of the results remained the same. Table 3 depicts the relevant effects of the exposure to EU news (beta coefficients). In each subsample the effects were lowest in the hostile subgroup, while the non-partisan group, whose members perceive the media as objective, showed the strongest effect. This finding was consistent in all subsamples. On the other hand, the effect-strengths var-

Table 3. Mere-exposure effects modified by hostile media perceptions. Replications in different national subsamples.

	Countries with low European identity	Countries with medium European identity	Countries with high European identity
n =	1,388/4,329/1,097	1,004/3,798/1,323	990/4,470/2,050
		beta coefficients	
Hostility	.04 (n.s.)	.08 **	.12 ***
Non-Hostility	.08 ***	.12 ***	.15 ***
Neutrality Perception	.09 **	.13 ***	.16 ***

Note: *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$; * = $p < .05$

ied noticeably between the three country groups. The mere-exposure effect is much lower in countries where the citizens showed lower European identity while it is much more noticeable in countries with high European identity.

7. Discussion

Based on the results of several content analyses (De Vreese et al., 2011; Peter et al., 2003) of media coverage about the EU, one might expect that higher exposure to media content about EU affairs might lead to a lower European identity. However, the results obtained in this study consistently showed the opposite. In almost all subsamples, we found (at least slight) significant positive effects. These findings support our theoretical assumption, that frequent contact with predominantly neutral information provokes mere-exposure effects, which promote the feeling of European identity. Even the unintended, casual contact with news on the EU provided by the media fostered European identity. These findings illustrate the importance of a continuous coverage on EU topics by the mass media for the development of a common European identity.

The results obtained also support our theoretical assumptions based on the hostile media theory, confirming both hypotheses. Nevertheless, it must be considered that the differences in effect-strength were just moderate. Particularly in countries in which the citizens had a higher European identity, the discrepancies were slight. If the citizens of a certain country predominantly felt attached to Europe (at least somewhat), the mere-exposure effect was always relatively high, regardless of whether they perceived the media as hostile or not. This result was not obtained in countries where the majority of the citizens felt a low attachment to Europe. In these societies, the mere-exposure effect was just existent in people *without* hostile media perceptions. The effect disappeared in citizens who perceived the media as hostile. This finding points to the important role of media perception in media effects on European identity. Therefore, if European institutions aim to foster a common identity in countries with low levels of European identity, it is not enough that the citizens feel motivated to use the news about European issues provided by the media. It is even more important that media are perceived as neutral.

Finally, the results of the study also offer some room to speculate about the effects of media coverage on European identity, particularly in times of crisis. In the light of the results it can be reasoned that it is not necessary that a disintegrating event such as the Brexit or the Eurozone financial crisis immediately garner negative feelings about EU despite the excessive on-going negative media coverage. The reason for such an attribute is that identities are not constructed in a short period of time, rather it is a long term process (Cinpoes, 2008). Thus, a crisis that either remains in the media or lasts for short time may not affect people's feelings of attachment with the respective political system. Much more important seems to be how the media coverage is evaluated by the people in the respective countries. If people lose faith in the neutrality of media this could also affect the identification with the political collective. Thus, recent attacks from populists on the media´s independency in many European countries might be an even more serious threat to European democracy than any critical comment of journalists about the performance of the EU.

7.1. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

In the present study, a secondary data analysis was applied, which has its own typical problems. The most significant limitation was that the analyses were confined within the boundaries of variables that could be deemed too imperfect to measure identity. Additionally, the available indicators of media use combined with the perceived relevance of these sources for news on the EU might be considered of questionable appropriateness in measuring the amount of contact with European issues. It might be argued that the respondents were not aware from which media they obtained news about EU affairs. Thus, the indicator did not measure an EU specific media use but instead indicated the general use of news on public affairs. If the available indicators did not measure EU-specific media use but political media use in general, it is arguable that the observed variable relationships could be interpreted as mere-exposure effects. Thus, to address this potential limitation, the dependent variable (EU identity) was replaced by indicators of national and local identity. The findings showed that in both cases, the effects almost disappeared. The beta-coefficients of the media use variable on national identity and local identity were quite small (beta = .04) respectively. Thus, it is reasonable to state that we observed a mere-exposure effect.

To operationalize media hostility, this study dealt with the evaluation of the performance of the EU. However, the evaluation of the EU is not necessarily the best indicator of partisanship. Better indicators of partisanship towards the EU would be highly desirable, such as political party (pro-Europe or Euroskeptic) affiliations of respondents, but they were not available in the Eurobarometer data. Furthermore, the hostility of the media towards the EU was measured by using only one indicator (the overall estimation of bias). In general, the hostile media research applies a fine-grained measurement of media hostility, including, for example, the individual estimation of the percentage of favorable or non-favorable references to one's position or the perception of the personal views of the journalists.

Despite this critique, the presented results show the relevance of media coverage on European issues for European identity even for those who are not intentionally searching for information and news on the EU. But the results also highlight which problems the EU will face if peoples´ reliance on a neutral coverage of the media erodes or even disappears.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Political Participation and Power Relations in Egypt: The Scope of Newspapers and Social Network Sites

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Abstract
The political use of media in Egypt post-2011 revolution brought about drastic transformations in political activism and power structures. In the context of communication power theory, this article investigates the effects of newspapers and social network sites on political participation and political power relations. The research employed a mixed methodology, comprised of a survey of 527 Egyptian youth and semi-structured interviews of 12 political activists and journalists. The results showed a significant relationship between reading newspapers and youth's political participation, but not between using social network sites and political participation. In addition, newspapers and social network sites were platforms for a series of conflicts and coalitions that emerged between pro- and anti-revolution actors. Despite the importance of social network sites as key tools for informing and mobilizing the public, they eventually failed to empower new political actors, and this was because old actors, supported by newspapers and other mainstream media, managed to obstruct the new actors' progress.

Issue
This article is part of a multidisciplinary issue of *Media and Communication*, edited by Epp Lauk (University of Jyväskylä, Finland) and Raul Reis (Emerson College, USA).

1. Introduction

The authoritarian nature of Mubarak's rule in Egypt substantially obstructed Egyptian youth's political participation (PP) for decades. In the last two parliamentary elections under his rule (held in 2005 and 2010), voter turnout did not exceed 23% and 15% respectively (Sika, 2012, p. 138). In contrast, youth protest activities considerably increased in the final years of his reign, culminating in the January 2011 revolution (25J) that managed to topple him on February 11th of the same year. In the wake of the revolution, Egyptians started to actively participate in politics in different respects. For example, voter turnout in the 2011 referendum and parliamentary election comprised 41% and 60% respectively (Abd Al-samad, 2014, paras. 2–4). However, PP was once again obstructed when the army seized power after ousting the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) affiliated president Mohamed Morsi on July 3rd, 2013. This obstruction was

characterized mainly by repression of the revolution's advocates, in return for reinforcing its opponents (Khalifa, 2015, p. 216).

In addition to the rapid transformation of PP post-25J, the Egyptian political scene also witnessed a related transformation in the power structure of political actors. The fall of Mubarak's National Democratic Party in the wake of the revolution allowed for the emergence and rise of pro-revolution actors, such as revolutionary youth and the MB (Mason, 2013; Meier, 2011). Since that time, these actors have mostly collided with anti-revolution actors such as the army and remnants of the Mubarak regime. Consequently, a series of conflicts and coalitions have emerged between all these actors, and these have thwarted chances for a democratic transition.

In the midst of post-revolution political changes, Egyptian newspapers (both offline and online) and social network sites (SNS) have played a significant role in effecting changes in PP and power structures. On the

one hand, the overall attitudes of newspapers toward the revolution's outcomes have substantially fluctuated (AlMaskati, 2012; Hamdy & Gomaa, 2012). In general, it can be said that newspapers, which have mostly been controlled by anti-revolution actors, have opposed the 25J, especially since July 3rd, 2013 (El-Adawy, 2014; Roll, 2014). On the other hand, SNS have largely been used by pro-revolution actors, both during and after 25J, as key mobilization platforms (Khamis, Gold, & Vaughn, 2012). For this reason, several scholars have considered SNS influential tools for changing societies (e.g. Aouragh, 2012; Aouragh & Alexander, 2012; ElNawawy & Khamis, 2012). In order not to overestimate their political effect, we can initially say that SNS have represented alternative platforms that have disclosed what traditional media have concealed (Abdulla, 2014, p. 1).

This article raises the question of how newspapers and SNS might have affected youth's PP and empowered revolutionary youth (as an emerging political actor) amidst other political actors following 25J. The first part of this two-sided question is addressed quantitatively, based on the definition of PP as the "activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action—either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies" (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 2002, p. 38). In this respect, PP is examined through the various kinds of political activities in which youth participated, such as voting, protesting, volunteering, and donating.

The second part of the research question, which focuses on the role of media in the power relations of political actors, is addressed qualitatively in the context of the theory of communication power. Conceptually, Manuel Castells (2009) defines power as: "the relational capacity that enables a social actor to influence asymmetrically the decisions of other social actor(s) in ways that favor the empowered actor's will, interests, and values" (p. 10). He also theorizes the relation between media and power by arguing that "power is primarily exercised by the construction of meaning in the human mind through processes of communication enacted in global/local multimedia networks of mass communication, including mass self-communication" (Castells, 2009, p. 416). In this context, this article investigates the nature of political relations between major political actors and the potential effects of newspapers and SNS in that regard. Hence, I argue that SNS cannot, in the long run, empower new political actor(s) especially if newspapers and other mainstream media are under the control of old actor(s).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Newspapers and Political Participation

The Egyptian newspaper landscape includes three major types: government-owned newspapers, which are loyal to the government; partisan newspapers, which enjoy some freedom in their handling of the government; and private newspapers, which are more free and professional (Allam, 2010, paras. 5–8). However, it is important to mention that the freedom of each type, which improved in the wake of the 25J, has considerably declined since July 3rd, 2013. Since this date, all newspapers have adopted and adhered to the country's official ideology (Abdulla, 2014, pp. 11–27).

The literature of PP has largely investigated whether reading newspapers relates to youth's PP. In this context, some studies have found no significant relationship between these variables (e.g. Gorsche, 2002; Wang, 2002; Wright-Phillips, 2010), while others have found a significant relationship between them (e.g. Bakker & De Vreese, 2011; Fawzy, 2008; Moeller, De Vreese, Esser, & Kunz, 2014; Shehata, 2010). Unexpectedly, findings of a relationship between newspapers and PP prove that newspapers are still able to affect youth, although youth have primarily become more interested in using SNS. Linking these results to the Egyptian case in the current study, we should expect the opposite results, as a large proportion of Egyptians have lost confidence in newspapers, which have become biased and loyal to the government.

With respect to newspapers' coverage of PP activities, a number of studies have found that Egyptian newspapers, in general, adopt negative attitudes toward protestors and participation (e.g. AlMaskati, 2012; Hamdy & Gomaa, 2012; Ibrahim, 2012; Youssef, 2012). The main exception to this is provided by Khamis (2011, pp. 1161–1162), who found that private newspapers kept people informed about negativities and protest activities, both before and during 25J. In general, the policies of Egyptian newspapers have changed several times, perhaps as a result of the four power transitions that have occurred over the last six years. In order to holistically understand the conditions of these changes, this article highlights the relationship between newspapers and political actors, which is expected to be a significant factor behind such changes.

2.2. Social Network Sites and Political Participation

Overall, SNS have provided Egyptian youth with a real opportunity to express themselves politically. SNS have also compensated for youth's absence from mainstream media, which have been inaccessible to them (Howard & Hussain, 2013, pp. 4–5). However, the political role of SNS in Egypt has been affected by government censorship, especially in the last three years. As SNS are no longer free in Egypt (as they were previously, in the wake of Mubarak's ouster), it is important to investigate the impacts of SNS censorship on PP and revolutionary youth's power.

With respect to the relationship between using SNS and PP, the literature has produced three different findings: (1) SNS play a key role in PP forms (e.g. Holt, Shehata, Strömbäck, & Ljungberg, 2013; Kamel, 2014;

Khamis & Vaughn, 2011; Meier, 2011; Rice, Moffett, & Madupalli, 2012; Schuster, 2013; Valenzuela, 2013); (2) the relationship is contingent upon a number of intervening variables, such as social and cultural background (Groshek, 2008), old media consumption (Budak, 2010), face-to-face communication (Vissers, Hooghe, Stolle, & Mahéo, 2012), membership in interest organizations (Gustafsson, 2012), dissatisfaction with the government (Harrebye & Ejrnæs, 2015), and socioeconomic status (Oser, Hooghe, & Marien, 2013); and (3) the relationship is doubtful (Dimitrova & Bystrom, 2013; Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2010).

As a result of the Arab Spring (AS) and similar movements in other countries, assessment of the effects of SNS on PP and power structures in the last years has been very optimistic. However, some very recent writings (e.g. Fenton, 2016) on this subject have re-assessed the effects of SNS in the light of the obstacles of the democratic transition in AS countries. Accordingly, in this article, SNS are handled as neither a main reason for PP nor a main source of empowerment for political actors. Rather, they are handled as platforms for participation and power relations, and the doubts raised about their effects are also considered.

2.3. Power Relations and Network Society

In his theory of communication power, Castells (2009) describes mass communication and Internet-based communication as processes through which power can be practiced, and he considers power, itself, as relations between different actors. In this context, Howard (2010, p. 12) claimed that technology can provide political actors new capacities and restrictions, but it cannot achieve political change. This claim was empirically supported by Meier (2011), who found that communication technology threatened the political regime in Egypt and shifted the balance of power in favor of civil society. However, it should be noted that the rise of civil society (including revolutionary youth) in Egypt did not last beyond June 2013; since that time, old actors have resurged. This article will further explain the conditions of this setback and the effects of newspapers and SNS in that regard.

The landscape of political actors in Egypt post-25J has diversified, according to El-Adawy (2014), into three major categories: formal institutions, informal societal actors, and executive authority. The latter has depended, as described by Roll (2014), upon three further main actors: Arab Gulf countries, the army, and the country's business figures. Among these actors, three major political coalitions were, as noted by El-Dine (2014), formed post-25J: (1) the army and the MB; (2) the army and the National Salvation Front, which were formed against the MB; and (3) the army, the business elite, the Salafist Nour party (the Light), and secular forces. In my opinion, a separation of formal institutions, executive authority, and the army, as suggested by El-Adawy (2014) and Roll (2014), does not apply to the Egyptian case, because the army has had the upper hand over all other institutions, including the government. Thus, in this article, the army will be handled as a major actor alongside the MB and revolutionary youth.

With respect to the relationship between the media and political actors, El-Adawy (2014) and Roll (2014) found that media outlets joined political forces to encourage people to demonstrate on June 30th, 2013 against the ousted president Morsi. In a similar context, Khamis et al. (2012) found that political activists used online and offline activism in their conflict with the post-Mubarak regime, which used both state-owned and social media. These results prove Castells' claim about the importance of communication networks for political power and counter-power (Castells, 2011, p. 783). They also raise the issue, which this article discusses, of the difference between the effects produced by traditional media versus those produced by new media on political actors, and the limitations of these effects.

3. Methodology

The empirical data of this study were collected through a mixed-method approach combining survey and semi-structured interviews using a convergent parallel design. Based on this approach, first, quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently to complement each other; later, the data were separately analyzed; and finally, points of analysis were synthesized to achieve the purpose of the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, pp. 77–81).

3.1. Survey

The survey was based on a face-to-face questionnaire (Foreman, 1991; Wimmer & Dominick, 2011) that was conducted in September and October 2015. The sample included 527 Egyptians aged 18 to 35. Only 400 questionnaires were used for a statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences, version 23 for Macintosh. The sample size was calculated by two methods described by Israel (1992, pp. 3–4), based on which the number of respondents was determined.

The respondents were chosen deliberately after using a proportional allocation considering gender (51% male and 49% female) and place of residence (57.75% from Cairo, 24.50% from Menoufia and 17.75% from Beni Suef). These governorates were specifically selected to represent three geographical and cultural aspects in Egypt. While Cairo is the capital and includes more urban and culturally modern inhabitants, Menoufia represents the northern part of the country, which is slightly culturally conservative, and Beni Suef represents the southern part of the country, which is more conservative. It is also noteworthy that a pre-test was applied in order to enhance the validity and relevance of the questionnaire.

In addition, the quantitative phase of this article developed three scales: newspaper readership, SNS expo-

sure, and political participation. The first scale, newspaper readership, was modified from the scale described by Williams (2008, p. 163), which included two items: online and offline reading of eight of the most common Egyptian newspapers. In both items, each newspaper was rated on a four-point response format, where $0 =$ do not read it, $0.25 =$ read it a few times a year, $0.5 =$ once a month, $1 =$ a few times a month, $2 =$ once a week, $3 =$ a few times a week, and $4 =$ daily or approximately daily. Thus, the range of the total score was from 0.25 to 72. Respondents were classified into three categories on the basis of their scores (s): low reading ($s < 6$), moderate reading ($6 \leq s \leq 11$), and high reading ($s > 11$). Cronbach's α coefficient, which was adopted to test the internal consistency of the scale, was 0.727.

The second scale, SNS exposure, was modified from the commonly used scale of Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2007, p. 1150), and included three items. (1) The time consumed using three SNS (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube): this item was rated on a three-point response format for each website, where $0 =$ no time at all, $1 =$ less than 30 minutes, $1.5 =$ 30–59 minutes, $2 =$ 1 hour up to 2 hours, $2.5 =$ more than 2 hours up to 3 hours, and $3 =$ more than 3 hours. (2) The number of friends, followings and subscriptions: this item was also rated on a three-point response format for each website, where $0 =$ do not use it, $1 =$ fewer than 50, $1.5 =$ 50–149, $2 =$ 150–299, $2.5 =$ 300–449, and $3 =$ 450 or more. And (3) attitudinal relation to SNS: this item, which was examined by six sentences, was likewise rated on a three-point response format for each sentence, where $1 =$ strongly disagree, $1.5 =$ disagree, $2 =$ neutral, $2.5 =$ agree, and $3 =$ strongly agree. Before the overall score of this scale was calculated, the three items were statistically standardized, because they used different measurement units. Based on this process, the three items were converted to a z score, then a composite of z scores was computed (Anglim, 2009), and finally the composite score was converted to a scaled score (Richard, 2010, pp. 1439–1440). Accordingly, the range of the total score of this scale was from 1 to 19, based on which exposure to SNS was classified into three categories: low exposure ($s < 8,48$); moderate exposure ($8.48 \leq s \leq 11.44$); and high exposure ($s > 11.44$). In addition, Cronbach's α coefficient, based on the standardized items, was 0.791.

The third scale, political participation, consisted of three different sub-scales. (1) PP aspects, which was guided by Verba et al. (2002, pp. 544–545) and included the following eight political activities in which respondents might have participated in the two years preceding the survey (June 2013–June 2015):

- Voting in the last presidential or parliamentary elections;
- working in electoral campaigns in the last presidential or parliamentary elections;
- contacting government officials within the past year;

- taking part in protests, strikes or sit-ins within the past two years;
- working informally with others to solve community problems within the past year;
- being politically active through a voluntary association within the past two years;
- serving voluntarily in a local governmental board regularly within the past two years; and
- being a member of, or donating to, a political organization within the past year.

Each item was rated on a one-point format, where $0 =$ no and $1 =$ yes. (2) Interest in local politics and affairs. And (3) interest in national politics and affairs. These latter two sub-scales, which were also guided by Verba et al. (2002, p. 553), were rated on a three-point response format, where $3 =$ very interested, $2 =$ fairly interested, $1 =$ not very interested, and $0 =$ not at all interested. The score of each sub-scale was standardized using the same procedures that were described for the previous scale. Consequently, the range of the total score of this scale was from 1 to 19, based on which the levels of PP were classified into three categories: low participation ($s < 8, 5$); moderate participation ($8.5 \leq s \leq 11$); and high participation ($s > 11$). Cronbach's α coefficient, based on the standardized items, was 0.574.

3.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

Initially, three online pilot interviews were conducted to develop an interview protocol guide. Following this, 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted in person in October 2015. The interviewees included four political activists and eight political journalists (two of whom could also be considered activists to a lesser degree). The categories of journalists and activists were particularly selected as those that were related to and informed about media and politics. The selection of interviewees drew mainly on a snowball sampling method, wherein early interviewees were asked to provide referrals to other relevant respondents (Blernackl & Waldorf, 1981, p. 141). This method facilitated reaching respondents especially political activists who had likely been placed under security surveillance.

The interview protocol guide included questions that were planned in advance to cover major points, such as PP developments post-25J, newspapers/SNS and PP, and the power relations of political actors. In addition, many further questions that emerged during the interviews were asked as well. It is noteworthy that a few number of newspaper clippings and SNS posts were shown to interviewees in order to enrich discussion of the study topic.

All interviews, which were conducted in Arabic, were transcribed and translated into English using NVivo software, version 11, for Macintosh. Following this, a grounded theory method was used for the analysis. This method did not aim to generate a theory, but to identify the key concepts and categories of the transcripts and to

investigate the relationships between them. In this context, the method aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of the relationship between newspapers/SNS with PP and power relations over the previous six years. The results were used to complement and interpret the results of the quantitative phase of this study.

Data analysis was carried out in a three-step coding process. First, open coding was conducted line by line on all transcripts, in order to determine general points and themes. Second, axial coding was used to combine sets of codes in categories and sub-categories. This process was repeated until no new categories emerged. At this stage, all categories were constructed after their codes and concepts were read many times and it was certain that every category contained homogenous components. Third, selective coding was conducted to develop the categories and to identify core category(ies) (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, pp. 12–15; see also Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp. 105–107; Strauss & Corbin, 1998, pp. 101–161). Alongside and after the coding process, many ideas were written down in memos in order to identify the relationships between themes and categories and to extract the explicit and implicit meanings of such relationships. This was important for eliciting and illustrating participants' views and forming a conceptual link between them (Charmaz, 2006, p. 72).

4. Results

4.1. Quantitative Analysis

Starting with the intensity of reading Egyptian newspapers (offline and online), the results found that about two-thirds (71%) of the respondents read newspapers, while less than a third (29%) did not read them. Among the readers, more than one-third (41.2%) achieved a high level of readership, about one-third (33.1%) had a moderate level, and about a quarter (25.7%) achieved a low level. These results indicate that Egyptian youth read newspapers in a relatively high rates; this can be ascribed to their high exposure to the Internet, as well as to the political polarization post-25J. With regard to PP levels, the results found that moderate participation came in the first place with 46.5%, followed by low participation with 28.2% and high participation with 25.3%.

More significantly, the correlation between reading newspapers and political participation was examined using a non-parametric test (Spearman's rho). As shown in Table 1, the results found a significant positive relationship between the two variables (r_s[284] = .131, p = .027): as reading newspapers increases PP increases, and as reading decreases PP decreases. These results agree with the findings of previous studies (e.g. Bakker & De Vreese, 2011; Fawzy, 2008; Moeller et al., 2014; Shehata, 2010), which have found a significant relationship between reading newspapers and PP. However, the findings disagree with some other studies (e.g. Gorsche, 2002; Wang, 2002; Wright-Phillips, 2010), which have found no such relationship between the variables.

With respect to the intensity of using SNS, the results indicated that the vast majority of respondents (97%) used SNS—especially Facebook, Twitter and YouTube—while only 3% did not use them. Among the users, exactly half of them (50%) used SNS at a moderate level, while slightly more than a quarter (25.5%) used them at a high level, and slightly less than a quarter (24.5%) used them at a low level. These results indicate that a relatively large proportion of Egyptian youth were highly exposed to SNS that were strong social and political platforms.

Furthermore, the correlation between SNS exposure and PP was examined using a non-parametric test (Spearman's rho). Unexpectedly, the results found no significant relationship between the two variables (r_s[388] = .081, p = .111) (Table 2). The Levels of using SNS were not associated with the levels of PP, which resulted in the elimination of the effects of SNS on youth's PP. These results agree with the results of previous studies (e.g. Dimitrova & Bystrom, 2013; Schlozman et al., 2010), though they disagree with the results of some other studies (e.g. Holt et al., 2013; Kamel, 2014; Khamis & Vaughn, 2011; Meier, 2011; Rice et al., 2012; Schuster, 2013; Valenzuela, 2013).

Comparing the relationships of both newspapers and SNS with youth's PP revealed that newspapers correlated significantly with PP, while SNS did not. The lack of a significant relationship between SNS and PP can be ascribed to the fact that participation was quantitatively examined for the two years preceding the questionnaire (June 2013 to June 2015), during this time period, all major political actions were undemocratic. SNS users were obvi-

Table 1. The relationship between newspaper readership and political participation.

			Levels of readership	Levels of PP
Spearman's rho	Levels of readership	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.131*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.027
		N	284	284
	Levels of PP	Correlation coefficient	.131*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.027	.
		N	284	400

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2. The relationship between using SNS and political participation

			Levels of using SNS	Levels of PP
Spearman's rho	Levels of using SNS	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.081
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.111
		N	388	388
	Levels of PP	Correlation coefficient	.081	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.111	.
		N	388	400

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

ously opposed to such actions. In contrast, the significant relationship found between reading newspapers and PP can be attributed to the fact that newspapers discourse was in line with undemocratic actions, which likely encouraged readers to participate.

Furthermore, political affiliation was examined to determine whether it yielded significant differences in PP levels. Using the non-parametric test of Kruskal-Wallis, the results found no significant differences between the two variables (χ^2 (2, $N = 97$) = .554, $p = .758$). This can be explained by three main factors: (1) most Egyptian youth do not tend to involve themselves in political parties or movements; (2) political parties and movements have been under government control for decades, and are also ineffective; and (3) the recent political actions in Egypt have been found to be connective actions (Shehata, 2017). According to Bennett and Segerberg (2012), most participants in connective actions tend to be unaffiliated, and these actions are likely moderated by communication technologies without interference from organizational actors (p. 755). This helps individuals (including youth) emerge as a political actor in the face of counter-actors. In this way, SNS can empower political actors. This supports Castells' claim about the importance of mass media and Internet-based media for practicing power (Castells, 2009, p. 416). However, his is not an absolute claim, because the importance of SNS or even newspapers for structuring power relations and empowering political actors is contingent upon several factors, such as government repression and media censorship. In the following section, the discussion will seek more evidences to support or refute this claim.

4.2. Qualitative Analysis

The coding schemes of grounded theory yielded 803 codes, which represented the core ideas of the interviews transcripts. These codes were grouped into 33 categories and subcategories. Following this, two main categories were emerged from the analysis: fluctuation of PP; and power relations of political actors. Both categories were handled in relation to newspapers and SNS over the previous six years.

Starting with the fluctuation of PP, most interviewees pointed out that the youth's participation increased during and after 25J. This participation manifested in in-

creased involvement in political parties, entities, and civil society organizations, and participating in protests and elections. However, since July 3rd, 2013, PP had been fundamentally thwarted by the governments. The lack of participation since then was best described and explained by the prominent political activist N. Abd Alhamid (personal communication, October 22nd, 2015), who told me in a despairing tone:

> Youth didn't run for elections; they didn't participate! You're talkin' about youth who have been distorted for two years! You're talkin' about the 25J that has been distorted for two or three years! You're talkin' about youth who have been excluded from political work! You're talkin' about jailed people! So, it is normal not to have a youth participation.

4.2.1. The Effects of Newspapers/SNS on Political Participation

Alongside the power transformations that occurred several times in post-25J Egypt, newspapers' attitudes toward the revolution and political actors rapidly changed. While newspapers supported the revolution and revolutionary youth in the wake of Mubarak's ouster, they turned against the revolution after July 3rd, 2013. This shift, as one interviewee stated, was normal in a context in which "media career in Egypt is subjected to two limitations: the extent of subordination to political authority; and, in a greater degree, the capital of the media" (A. Abdeen, personal communication, October 12th, 2015). This result agrees with Abdulla's study (2014), which also ascribed this shift to the changes in newspapers' freedom, which increased after 25J and declined after July 3rd, 2013.

Egyptian newspapers have suffered from both external and internal restrictions, especially since July 3rd, 2013. Whereas the former restrictions have manifested in security censorship, the latter restrictions have manifested in the self-censorship of editors-in-chief. Under these restrictions, many newspapers have suffered, according to the Freedom House (2016), from confiscation, banning issues, deterring writers from writing, and the imprisonment of journalists. Such restrictions have

forced all newspapers to adopt a pro-government editorial policy, with very few exceptions, such as weak online newspapers such as *Bawabt Yanayer* (January Gate), *Albedaya* (The Beginning) and *Albadil* (The Alternative).

In a very significant testimony about the security interference, the journalist M. Al-kholy (personal communication, October 8th, 2015) revealed, "we received here in our newspaper a letter from the Defense Ministry stating that 'we'd like you not to publish any news about Sinai [the northeastern part of Egypt in which the army is fighting against terrorist groups] except the official statements issued by the Ministry's Department of Moral Affairs'." With regard to internal restrictions, the political activist and journalist S. Sayed (personal communication, October 20th, 2015), for example, talked about her personal experiment with newspapers' internal restrictions:

> I remember when I was working at Al-badil newspaper, I once uploaded a video and photos on Facebook entitled "MB demonstrations". In a very serious tone, my head of the department shouted at me and said "Don't you ever write the name of MB, you must append it with the term of terrorist group, this is an order for all newspapers."

In contrast to newspapers, SNS have been the main informational and mobilizational platforms for many political actions post-25J. In this regard, they have bridged the gap left by the government's control of mainstream media. However, the power transition since July 3rd, 2013 has negatively affected SNS. One such negative effect, for example, is that the use of SNS for opposition activities has increasingly become a case that might lead users to prison. As one interviewee noted, "there are more than one trial case, as published in newspapers, in which posting offensive content against the army or the country was between the seizures" (M. Al-kholy, personal communication, October 8th, 2015). As a result, the political effect of SNS has declined, although their ability to spread political awareness has increased (A. Dabbour, personal communication, October 15th, 2015).

In addition, most interviewees noticed that SNS had transformed from being platforms for political mobilization to being tools for political sarcasm and the defense of human rights. In this context, the prominent Journalist T. Abo Arab (personal communication, October 7th, 2015) noted:

> Now on Facebook there's no calls for protests, taking attitudes toward elections or overthrowing someone, because politics is no longer existent. The alternative is that SNS have become focusing on human rights and people's issues, and they've turned into a media channel that publishes what other media channels ignore.

The transformation of SNS from mobilization channels to human rights defenders adds a new dimension to the

study of Alexander and Aouragh (2014), which found that online media are no longer primary platforms for transferring the activities and voices of specific revolutionary groups. More importantly, the transformations in attitudes of both newspapers and SNS toward PP coincided with and followed the transfer of political authority. Consequently, we can assume that the attitudes of newspapers and SNS toward PP related to authority transfer.

4.2.2. The Effects of Newspapers/SNS on Power Relations

The interviews had a special focus on the relationship of newspapers and SNS with the power relations of political actors post-25J. Initially, most interviewees agreed on the major actors, which included the army, the MB, revolutionary youth, remnants of the Mubarak regime, and, to a lesser degree, political parties. The prominent political activist S. Diab (personal communication, October 23rd, 2015) classified political actors into three groups:

> The political field in Egypt includes three sides: the country, not only the army but all institutions and those who belong to them; political Islam side, not only the Brotherhood but all Islamic actors; and civil side. Within every side there're influential and uninfluential actors....If two of these three sides allied against the third, they defeat it.

Based on the effectiveness of political actors, the previous six years could be divided, according to most interviewees, into three chronological stages: (1) from Mubarak's ouster on February 11th, 2011 to the beginning of 2012, when revolutionary youth, liberal actors, and leftist actors were a striking force in political activism; (2) from the beginning of 2012 to June 2013, when Islamic actors—including the MB and the Salafis—were a leading force in parliament and the presidency; and (3) after Morsi's ouster on July 3rd, 2013, when the army, remnants of the Mubarak regime, and business elite controlled all of the country's institutions.

Although it had only been a short period since the eruption of the revolution, political authority had been transferred several times, and with each transfer, the landscape of political coalitions and conflicts profoundly changed. During the revolution, a very short-term and spontaneous political coalition was formed between the revolutionary youth and the MB. This coalition cracked in March 2011, when the Brotherhood entered into an implicit coalition with the army. This new coalition completely broke down on June 30th, 2013, when the army joined a new coalition with the remnants of the Mubarak regime and a large portion of the civil forces and business elite. This latter new coalition managed to oust the MB from power on July 3rd, 2013, and following this, it massively repressed the MB and turned against revolutionary youth. Consequently, the three main actors (the army, the MB, and revolutionary youth) became separate and

strongly conflicted. Accordingly, it can be said that the development of political relationships constructed the power and counter-power of political actors. In other words, political coalitions enabled allied actors to exert power over other actors. This analysis supports one of Castells' central claims that considers power as relationships between actors (Castells, 2009, p. 10).

Newspapers and SNS were indeed platforms upon which conflict and cooperation relationships were centered. On the one hand, newspaper ownership played a crucial role in shaping political discourse and affecting PP activities. According to the prominent activist I. Abd Al-fatah, newspapers that are owned or controlled by major political actors spark conflict relationships. While the army has almost controlled all types of newspapers, the MB-owned *Alhoriya Wa Aladala* (The Freedom and Justice), and the revolutionary youth have worked at some newspapers, through which they have expressed their views (I. Abd Al-fatah, personal communication, October 10th, 2015).

In addition, as most newspapers have been controlled by anti-revolution actors (the army, remnants of the Mubarak regime, and the business elite), their attitudes have been very negative toward the revolutionary youth and protest activities. This consequently has, as noted by M. Al-kholy (personal communication, October 8th, 2015), negatively affected newspapers' credibility for citizens, who no longer trust them. These results agree with those of some studies (e.g. Al-Maskati, 2012; Hamdy & Gomaa, 2012; Ibrahim, 2012; Youssef, 2012), which have found that newspapers have adopted negative attitudes toward protestors and participation activities.

On the other hand, SNS have been key tools for political information and mobilization. Revolutionary youth, in particular, have been superior in using them to organize protest activities. However other political actors have started to use SNS for counter-mobilization and shaping public opinion. In this context, T. Abo Arab (personal communication, October 7th, 2015) stated:

> Primarily, before the 25J, Facebook was mostly used by liberal activists, while the MB and the army were out of it. Straight after the revolution, the MB, followed by the army, started to use it intensively. The conflict between the MB and the army, therefore, moved to SNS. Both of the actors have had electronic teams that rivalled revolutionary youth online.

Going back to the argument of the inability of SNS to empower revolutionary youth in the long run, we can say, in light of this analysis, that SNS enabled the youth to transfer their voices, to provide different narratives of political actions, and to mobilize people for protests. As an emerging political actor, revolutionary youth could do this when they were the main users of SNS, which were also more free. But these conditions changed, and the ability of SNS to empower youth was affected by at least four determinants: access of other actors to SNS, the government's censorship of SNS, the government's control of mainstream media, and the political repression following July 3rd, 2013. As a consequence, the ability of SNS to give rise to revolutionary youth has considerably declined, leaving its ability to empower them in the long run very much in doubt.

This analysis disagrees with the results of some studies (e.g. Alexander & Aouragh, 2014, p. 892; Meier, 2011), which have shown that the Internet has shifted the power balance in favor of pro-revolution actors in Egypt. However, this does not necessarily mean that SNS have not been important for new political actors. Indeed, SNS and the Internet have been essential for playing, at least, two other roles: increasing tensions within the overall structure of power (Curran, 2002, p. 65) and making power (Castells, 2009, p. 416). These roles have not been maintained or translated into long-term empowerment by revolutionary youth.

5. Discussion

The quantitative analysis found that newspapers, but not SNS, related significantly with PP. The qualitative analysis supported these results and further indicated that both SNS and newspapers were crucial platforms for political actors, who were involved in a series of conflicts and coalitions over the last six years. While SNS gave rise to pro-revolution actors (especially revolutionary youth) and enabled them to topple Mubarak on February 11th, 2011, newspapers and other mainstream media enabled anti-revolution actors (especially the army) to restore authority on July 3rd, 2013. Thus, it can be said that SNS were not sufficient to empower the emergent force of revolutionary youth in the long-run in the face of anti-revolution actors.

The main reasons why the empowerment of revolutionary youth was obstructed, despite their strong access to SNS, are that anti-revolution actors controlled all mainstream media and practiced massive repression against opposition forces, and that SNS increasingly became available for anti-revolution actors (see, e.g., Castells, 2009, p. 414; Fenton, 2016, p. 176). These factors eventually led the anti-revolution actors to outweigh the revolutionary youth. Here, we can say that all aspects of the obstruction of PP by political regimes after July 3rd, 2013 undermined the emergence of new political actors and, at the same time, impaired the power of both revolutionary youth and the MB. Thus, it is reasonable to consider SNS a space for—not a holder of—power (Castells, 2007, p. 242). Nevertheless, this does not negate the importance of SNS and new political actors for the alteration of staging power relationships and decision making (Castells, 2009, p. 412; Curran, 2002, p. 65).

Furthermore, the quantitative analysis showed that Egyptian youth used newspapers and SNS in relatively high rates, and the qualitative analysis pointed out that political actors have overused both channels. Newspa-

pers were exploited, especially by the army, for fighting political battles against opposition forces. As a result, the political discourse of newspapers became highly politicized and biased, and this consequently affected their credibility. In contrast, SNS were overused, especially by revolutionary youth, as a counter-platform for information and mobilization purposes. Many aspects of PP also shifted and were practiced through SNS. Especially right after the revolution, this made the logic of SNS more prevalent than the logic of political actions, which could be considered a type of mediatization of politics.

6. Conclusion

This article investigated the effects of newspapers and SNS on the political participation of youth and the power relations of political actors in Egypt following the 2011 revolution. In this context, I argued that SNS cannot, in the long run, empower new political actors, especially if newspapers and other mainstream media are under the control of old actors. In order to empirically validate this argument, a survey was applied on a sample of Egyptian youth and semi-structured interviews were conducted with a number of political activists and journalists.

The results found that newspapers, but not SNS, significantly related with youth's political participation. It was also found that both newspapers and SNS were decisive platforms for enabling pro- and anti-revolution actors, as powers and counter-powers, to achieve interim political goals. Both anti-revolution actors (supported by newspapers) and pro-revolution actors (supported by SNS) were involved in a series of cooperation and conflict relationships, which eventually ended up favoring the anti-revolution actors. Thus, SNS were not sufficient to empower revolutionary youth as a new political actor in the face of anti-revolution actors, primarily due to SNS censorship and political repression.

Acknowledgements

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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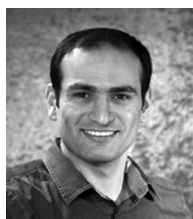
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Book Review

A Historical Analysis of Media Practices and Technologies in Protest Movements: A Review of *Crisis and Critique* by Anne Kaun

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Abstract

Dr. Anne Kaun's book, *Crisis and Critique: A Brief History of Media Participation in Times of Crisis* (London: Zed Books, 2016, 131 pp., ISBN: 978-1-78360-736-5), is a concise but comprehensive analysis of the changing media practices and technologies in protest movements. The book overviews the topic within the context of major economic crises and scrutinises three richly detailed case studies in the United States: (a) the unemployed workers' movement during the Great Depression in the 1930s, (b) the tenants' rent strike movement of the early 1970s, and (c) the Occupy Wall Street movement following the Great Recession of 2008. Kaun begins her book with an introduction to economic crises and protest movements and highlights the relationship of crisis and critique to media practices. She goes on to investigate historical forms of media participation in protest movements from three different perspectives: (a) protest time, (b) protest space, and (c) protest speed. The book contributes to the recent discussion on the emerging role of social media in protest by providing a historically nuanced analysis of the media participation in times of crisis. As a whole, the book is valuable to anyone interested in media and social activism.

Keywords

critique; economic crises; media history; media participation; media practices; media technologies; protest movements

Media play an important role in times of crisis. The media operate as platforms during crises, enabling critique and assisting with the organisation and mobilisation of activism and protest movements. Many crises arise, develop, and live out their lives mainly through media—either traditional or social media. Media also take part in defining what situations, events, or circumstances we call crises. Thus, media do not simply inform us of ongoing crisis situations; media name, rename, and label crises. Consequently, one could argue that media construct—present and represent—crises.

Media are strongly linked with activism and protest movements. However, media are not only a separate means of sharing protest-related information or a space for coming together and crowdsourcing. Media practices and technologies are present in everyday life of protest

movements—and actively shape them. Dr. Anne Kaun's inspiring and timely book, *Crisis and Critique: A Brief History of Media Participation in Times of Crisis*, focuses on the topic and investigates the changes which have occurred regarding media practices and technologies in protest movements.

Innovations in media, such as recent developments in social media, have affected protest throughout history. As Kaun notes, the emerging and multifaceted role of social media in activism and protest movements has recently become a widely-studied research subject (e.g., Castells, 2015; Gerbaudo, 2012). However, at the same time, there is a lack of studies focusing on the historical aspects of media participation in protest movements. How has the media work of protest movements changed over the time? What kinds of impacts have media inno-

vations and changes in media ecology had on protest? Furthermore, what are the consequences of changes in protest practices to political, economic, cultural, and social states of affairs?

Anne Kaun's book attempts—and manages—to fill these gaps, adding to the current discussion on the impact of media technologies on society by providing an in-depth historical analysis of the role of media practices and technologies in protest movements. One of the particular strengths of the book, among many, is that Kaun does not take the role of media for granted but remains analytical and critical throughout the book. Thus, she considers not only the ways that prevailing media practices and technologies have shaped activism, protest movements, and resistance to capitalism but also how changes in the methods and forms of protest and protest practices have affected media practices and technologies.

The book explores the topic through three case studies of American protest movements, all in the context of major economic crises. The case studies are as follows: (a) the unemployed workers' movement during the Great Depression in the 1930s, (b) the tenants' rent strike movement in New York that emerged in the context of the 1970s oil and fiscal crisis, and (c) the Occupy Wall Street movement in the aftermath of the Great Recession of 2008. Comparing three actual case studies from three different eras makes historical changes apparent and hence the abstract topic concrete. The case studies are described thoroughly, using both archive documents and interview data. This makes Kaun's arguments easy to follow, even for a reader without an in-depth background knowledge of the cases.

The book is divided into six sections: (a) introduction to economic crises and protest movements, and to book itself; (b) overview of the theoretical framework, main concepts, and the relationship of crisis and critique to media practices; (c) the temporality of protest media practices, i.e. protest times; (d) the production of space in events of contention, i.e. protest spaces; (e) resynchronising fast capitalism, i.e. protest speeds; and (f) conclusion, summarising the book from the perspective of protest technologies and futures of protest media. Analytical categories of protest time, space, and speed provide a common thread throughout the book.

The first of these, *protest times*, investigates media technologies' temporalities and changing time regimes of media technologies. As Kaun argues, the role of time and timing is essential in protest. Media technologies have many temporal consequences and they allow, for example, "common public time, namely the experience of a shared timeframe" (p. 11). However, even though media technologies are often considered to be purely resource- and time-savers in protest, Kaun points out that the temporality of media technologies does not always make things easier for activists.

The second main category, *protest spaces*, describes changes and continuities in the spatial practices and the spatial consequences of media technologies. Kaun shows that space—or the disappearance of it—is highly important to protest movements. Even though all three protest movements discussed in the book share some spatial practices and the spatial protest work on the ground has not changed that dramatically, the symbolic production of space has transformed and new media technologies have enabled protest movements to reach larger, global scales and made it possible to connect over vast distances.

The third of Kaun's analytical category, *protest speeds*, brings together categories of time and space as protest speed describes "the movement through space in a certain amount of time" (p. 13). Media environments which activists are navigating have become increasingly fast, and activists may either resist the changes or adapt to them. Kaun describes the new challenges media immediacy has generated for protest movements and, for example, how media ecology has sped up and created a constant need to produce new content to attract external attention. In addition, Kaun's notion of protest speed assists in tracing the increasing desynchronization between immediate media practices and rather time-consuming political practices of decision making and participatory democracy.

Kaun's book proficiently illuminates a major shift from effortful "mechanical speed in the 1930s to perpetual flow in the 1970s towards [effortless] digital immediacy nowadays" (p. 97). The other interesting theme concerns the changes in activists' media production, distribution, and consumption.

In the 1930s, protest media ranged from radio talks to printed materials, such as various bulletins, leaflets, brochures, and shop papers written by unemployed workers and distributed in factories. Thus, during that time, media technologies brought people together as the workers spent plenty of time together while producing, distributing, and consuming content.

By the 1970s, media ecology had become more complex, including newspapers, radio, and television. In addition, tenants were drawing posters and banners together and producing content for media outlets. Thus, media production and distribution were still quite often collective actions. However, because television had become more common, the consumption of media was individualised.

By 2011/2012, social media had become crucial. In addition to the camping and campaigning at Zuccotti Park, within Wall Street's financial district, activists were mobilising online, composing a constant flow of tweets, memes, films, images, and texts as well as live-streaming events and activities in the camp. Generally, media production, distribution, and consumption were individualised.

Anne Kaun provides a fascinating illustration of this change in media production, distribution, and consumption, from it being collective to it being more individualised. In addition, she gives an interesting description

of how these changes in media practices and technologies have affected the bonds between people and activists' identities.

No book is without some limitation. Even though Kaun's "big three" (p. 10), protest time, space, and speed, are extremely inspiring and stimulating, the reader misses more detailed information on why and how has she settled on these three analytical categories. In the book, it is said that "these come very close to what Michel Foucault once considered as the big three, namely territory, speed and communication" (p. 10), but this relationship could have been described more explicitly.

In addition, even though all the choices Kaun made during her ambitious and engaging research project were appropriate and reasonable, some other choices could have been justified more clearly. For example, why were these three case studies selected, not some others? How were the data collected? Why were these particular archive data used and how were the informants selected and interviewed?

The book mentions it draws on the work of Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956), and Raymond Williams (1921–1988). As a matter of fact, the name of Kaun's book, Crisis and Critique, is the same as Benjamin and Brecht's planned journal, *Krise und Kritik*, which was, however, never published. This topic could also have been described in greater detail. How have these theorists affected the book? To summarise, the book might have benefitted from justifying all the major choices made during the research project more profoundly and from more explicitly illustrating the connections between the book and "its philosophical roots".

Every book has its limitations—and word limits. Thus, it is understandable that none of the books can answer all the questions. As a matter of fact, one can argue that while good books answer the questions, the best ones stimulate questions. If everything could be solved and fixed by reading a book, wouldn't life be boring? How would that further the development of research or promote scientific, analytical thinking?

As an American writer, Nancy Willard (1936–2017), has put it: "Sometimes questions are more important

than answers". Anne Kaun's book proficiently shows the changes of media practices and technologies within protest movements but also leaves many questions unanswered. First, the book concentrates on protest movements in the context of major economic crises. This makes a reader question what the significance of this context is to the conclusions drawn. Do media practices of protest movements vary in other contexts? Second, all the case studies discussed in the book are American, even though the latest movement, Occupy Wall Street, spread globally. Are there any geographical or cultural differences in protest media practices? If so, what are the most significant similarities and differences?

In complex media ecologies, activists need specific communication strategies. For example, in the 1970s, the Metropolitan Council of Housing arranged workshops to improve tenants' professionalism in media practices. What kinds of competences are beneficial for participation in today's media environment, and how are these competences built in the context of protest?

To conclude, one of the strengths of Kaun's fascinating book is its heuristic, thought-provoking nature. Readers are provided with a deeper understanding of the topic, as well as with plenty of new, inspiring questions. Thus, I recommend the book to everybody interested in new perspectives on media and social activism.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Crises, Rumours and Reposts: Journalists' Social Media Content Gathering and Verification Practices in Breaking News Situations

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Abstract
Social media (SoMe) platforms provide potentially important information for news journalists during everyday work and in crisis-related contexts. The aims of this study were (a) to map central journalistic challenges and emerging practices related to using SoMe for collecting and validating newsworthy content; and (b) to investigate how practices may contribute to a user-friendly design of a web-based SoMe content validation toolset. Interviews were carried out with 22 journalists from three European countries. Information about journalistic work tasks was also collected during a crisis training scenario ($N = 5$). Results showed that participants experienced challenges with filtering and estimating trustworthiness of SoMe content. These challenges were especially due to the vast overall amount of information, and the need to monitor several platforms simultaneously. To support improved situational awareness in journalistic work during crises, a user-friendly tool should provide content search results representing several media formats and gathered from a diversity of platforms, presented in easy-to-approach visualizations. The final decision-making about content and source trustworthiness should, however, remain as a manual journalistic task, as the sample would not trust an automated estimation based on tool algorithms.

1. Introduction

Journalists use the same social media (SoMe) channels as the public to gather information about breaking news situations. Due to the vast amount of available information, filtering and validation is time-consuming and demanding (Diakopoulos, De Choudhury, & Naaman 2012; Schifferes et al., 2014; Silverman, 2014). A central challenge for crisis journalism is to find ways to simplify this process. As suggested by e.g. Brandtzæg, Luders, Spangen-

berg, Rath-Wiggins and Folstad (2016), part of the solution may be to introduce new technical innovations that support journalistic filtering and validation processes.

The general aim of this study is to add to current knowledge about how existing journalistic verification practices and needs can be applied to a changing information environment, and to map how practices could be adjusted. A second aim is to apply this knowledge to a product development framework, to provide valuable information for scholars and product developers aiming to design new technical innovations supporting verification processes. We employ two approaches: First, we map practical challenges news journalists currently face in their SoMe usage, and thus identify the main needs and emerging new practices. Second, we investigate how the needs may contribute to a user-friendly design of a content validation toolset for journalistic work in everyday and crisis-specific contexts. We aim to expand current knowledge by illustrating how journalistic needs could be implemented in a validation toolset, and by explaining why designing the tool in the suggested way will improve situational awareness (SA) when working in a high-stress environment.

In the literature review, we first elaborate on the challenges journalists face when gathering information from SoMe platforms, and on whether journalists use tools that can support their work. We then introduce two concepts that are relevant when designing innovations for journalistic work in emergencies—usability and SA.

1.1. Journalistic Challenges with Gathering and Verifying SoMe Information

Sourcing is an integral part of the journalistic news production process. For decades, journalists have tended to rely heavily on official and elite sources, such as government representatives, in their reporting (Hallin, Manoff, & Weddle, 1993), and have developed different methods to verify sources (Shapiro, Brin, Bédard-Brûlé, & Mychajlowycz, 2013). Journalists can apply established practices to social media content, but the structure and usage of the Internet and SoMe complicate journalistic information gathering and verification processes. First, online, users communicate "through complex networks that are bottom-up, top-down, as well as side-to-side" (Ito, 2008, p. 3). For journalists, these communication traces can be difficult to follow. Second, costs as a barrier to disseminating information have practically been eliminated (Benkler, 2006), leading to a situation of journalists online being confronted with an increasing number of sources. While greatly expanding the range of available sources, the digital environment thus confronts journalists with challenges related to filtering and assessing the authority, trustworthiness and veracity of sources. These challenges are accentuated during emergencies where the production pace is faster, SoMe activity increases, and trustworthy information is crucial (Diakopoulos et al., 2012).

Existing research on content gathering and validation strategies suggests that when journalists find interesting information via SoMe channels, the majority still turn to traditional verification methods, such as phone, e-mail or face-to-face contact (Brandtzæg et al., 2016). A small number of journalists make use of manual crowdsourcing techniques in social media (Hermida, Lewis, & Zamith, 2014). However, journalists are not dismissing new innovations, such as content validation tools, as long as functionality and design reflect established journalistic verification procedures and needs (Brandtzæg et al., 2016; Silverman, 2014).

There have been several examples of so-called hybrid techniques, i.e. trial-and-error attempts to combine new tools with well-established journalistic verification strategies (Schifferes et al., 2014). Guidelines and tip sheets such as the European Journalism Centre's "Verification Handbook" (Silverman, 2014) and the "Social Media Reporting Tools" by the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma (Jenkins, 2013) include case examples of how hybrid techniques have been developed and tried out. These descriptions currently form a basis for what may become established practices. When scholars have previously mapped journalists' experiences and needs relating to the possible use of a tool, responses about identifying new content have usually overlapped with answers about verifying the trustworthiness of the information.

The importance of the following factors have commonly been emphasized. Tools should:

- be able to monitor SoMe content and identify newsworthy information, such as emerging events or trends, sudden turns during ongoing events, and key influencers affecting SoMe opinions about the event (Brandtzæg et al., 2016; Schwartz, Naaman, & Teodoro, 2015; Schifferes et al., 2014);
- be able to handle verification of varying forms of content, such as text or videos, and integrate content from several SoMe platforms into verification processes (Brandtzæg et al., 2016; Schifferes et al., 2014);
- offer the journalist a high level of control over, and possibilities to filter, what type of content is tracked or presented, e.g. being able to address both content and source verification in order to answer to individual journalistic needs (Diakopoulos et al., 2012; Schifferes et al., 2014);
- be able to identify the geographical location of a source (Diakopoulos et al., 2012);
- have an easy-to-use design and visualization of content to answer to the rapid content production requirement (Brandtzæg et al., 2016; Schwartz et al., 2015);
- have a user-friendly design regardless of the technical equipment used (Brandtzæg et al., 2016).

In addition to needs explicitly related to the tool, most studies have highlighted the importance of understand-

ing how the tool has carried out included tasks and algorithm transparency, e.g. whether the tool uses crowd-sourcing as a part of the validation process (Schwartz et al., 2015). If journalists do not understand how results reported by a tool are produced, it will be difficult to make a final journalistic decision regarding the trustworthiness of the content (Diakopoulos, 2014; Park, Sachar, Diakopoulos, & Elmqvist, 2016).

While previous works have produced several relevant findings, their results are also limited. Studies have co-operated with legacy newsrooms situated mainly in the United States and the UK (Diakopoulos et al., 2012; Schifferes et al., 2014; Schwartz et al., 2015). Their research has focused on experienced social media editors, e.g. "some of the best, most prominent, and leading-edge users of social media in journalism today" (Diakopoulos et al., 2012, p. 6), drawing from a male-dominated sample (Brandtzæg et al., 2016; Diakopoulos et al., 2012). Brandtzæg et al. (2016) suggest future research that better considers the perspective of young and female practitioners. Our study seeks to fill the research gaps outlined above by integrating the perspectives of young journalists of both sexes, with varying SoMe experience, and working in mid-sized media organizations in different European countries.

1.2. Usability and Situational Awareness

One of the aims with this study is to investigate how a SoMe validation tool should be designed to reach good usability and contribute to SA. Usability is the extent to which a product can be used by a specified user group to achieve goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use (ISO 9241, 2010). Usability-focused developers try to optimize a product according to how users can, want, or need to use it, not to force users to change their behaviour according to the product's requirements (Hertzum & Clemmensen, 2012; Wallach & Scholz, 2012).

When investigating usability in a high-stress context, an understanding of factors affecting SA is central. SA addresses the challenges occupational groups face when working with information flows in high-stress surroundings including many actors and other moving parts (Endsley, 2009; Salmon et al., 2008). News work with SoMe content during an emergency is indeed such an event. A high level of SA is a state of experiencing that one is in control and understands what is happening in a situation (Yin, Lampert, Cameron, Robertson, & Power, 2012). Individuals are often a part of a team working in the same environment, and thus, SA includes individual and collaborative decision-making (Salmon et al., 2008).

Underlying cognitive mechanisms that affect the level of SA include information processing—such as collecting relevant information and interpreting it correctly—and decision-making. The cognitive mechanisms interact continuously with external factors and requirements. For instance, physical or psychological fatigue due to vast workloads may affect working memory and decision-making, while technical factors such as tool or system complexity may take away attention from the main functions necessary for carrying out tasks (Endsley, 2009; Salmon et al., 2008; Yin et al., 2012).

According to Brandtzæg et al. (2016), user-centred methods should be emphasized in future research on journalism innovations. Previous studies mapping journalistic validation needs have in some cases provided general suggestions for how to design a tool that could answer to these needs (Schifferes et al., 2014), but rarely included explanations of how the design would enhance SA. Thus, our study provides a valuable contribution to the literature, as we present strategies for turning journalistic needs into features relevant for tool design, and also clarify how such features will support better SA for individual users and teams during high-stress assignments.

2. Methods

Dataset 1 consisted of semi-structured interviews with news journalists ($N = 22$, females $n = 8$) from three European countries (see Table 1 for sample characteristics). Interviews were carried out in 2015, and recorded and transcribed by the authors. The following main themes were included: a) descriptive data related to work description and background; b) SoMe usage strategies in everyday work and during sudden crises; c) the usefulness of a SoMe content validation toolset for news work, and d) factors that would enhance usability when using a toolset. To enable a detailed mapping of points c) and d), a relatively broad sample of journalists was included.

Information for dataset 2 was gathered by shadowing work tasks and conducting subsequent contextual interviews with journalism students ($N = 5$, females $n = 4$; Table 1) during a crisis training scenario in 2015. Students were involved as news journalists covering the crisis. To protect the identity of participants, information about the region of the scenario is excluded. The scenario was a two-day event in a large city setting. Authorities, rescue personnel, hospitals and media workers participated, and the crises included various industrial accidents with casualties and injured. The personnel trained crisis management and how to communicate with mass media and the public. They communicated directly with participating media organizations, and informed via web pages and two SoMe platforms (Table 1). SoMe content included continuous posts from professional communicators, the public, and media organizations.

The authors observed a training scenario instead of an actual crisis due to the practical difficulties related to planning for shadowing newsrooms during ongoing crises. Three authors carried out the job shadowing. The observers followed work routines and developments on the journalist's computer screen. Observations were followed up with semi-structured interviews within two weeks to verify that the observer had understood developments during the training correctly.

Table 1. Study sample characteristics.

	Dataset 1. Interviews, news journalists ($N = 22$)	**Dataset 2.** Job shadowing during crisis scenario, journalism students ($N = 5$)
Country	Austria, Finland, and Norway	
Types of media	Newspaper, radio, television and web	Newspaper, television and web-based outlets during scenario
Types of work tasks	Management tasks, news production, news broadcasting	News production in the field or at a news desk during scenario
Number of SoMe platforms	1–5 used daily for work purposes	Two platforms used during scenario: Twitter and a platform reminiscent of Facebook, created for usage in scenarios
Years of work experience	3–35	0–4

We used conceptual frameworks as described in the transcendental realism approach (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) to design interview/observation schemes and to analyse data. We applied ethical guidelines provided by the Ethics Board at Åbo Akademi University in the study, including e.g. informed consent, guaranteeing participant anonymity, and using secure servers for data storage.

3. Results and Discussion

First, we present results related to aim 1, mapping practical challenges news journalists face in their SoMe usage. We then present results focusing on aim 2, investigating factors that may enhance usability of a content validation toolset and user SA. These results are derived from dataset 1 only, as the crisis scenario did not focus on usability.

3.1. Current Challenges: Changing Practices and Lacking Guidelines

Journalists mainly used Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in their everyday information validation work. In the acute phase of an emergency, Twitter usage was accentuated due to the short content format and platform searchability, e.g. hashtags. Participants saw Facebook as not keeping up with developments during the acute phase, but as useful when crises calmed down. Instagram was rarely mentioned.

Participants also described an ongoing change when it comes to SoMe practices. While all organizations had clear strategies about publishing their own media products and monitoring the reach of such content, none had similar guidelines for gathering and verifying information in SoMe platforms. The latter was rather seen as something that a small group of journalists within the organization, often described as young reporters with good computer skills, were good at—while the rest lagged behind:

> We don't have a good system to verify social media content. We have several journalists who are really

good at this, but what we manage to get done really depends on who happens to be working. (Social media editor, radio/television/web journalism)

The discrepancy between well-developed SoMe publication strategies and close to non-existent gathering and verification guidelines was explained in several ways. Some participants in the two datasets referred to limited financial resources or lack of interest to develop strategies among e.g. managers in the organization. This finding echoes previous research. Brandtzæg et al. (2016), for instance, point to how the current general newsroom context with financial restraints and a growing workload on journalists will affect the way in which SoMe validation strategies are developed. This context may take different concrete forms, such as managers' reluctance to promote strategies, or the "outsourcing" of validation tasks to a small subgroup of tech-savvy journalists.

Other participants described individualized and hybrid techniques (cf. Schifferes et al., 2014; Silverman, 2014) where, for instance, each journalist continuously modifies individual combinations of verification skills and tasks, but where general journalistic guidelines and golden standards apply. Here, traditional journalistic skills are combined with available technical innovations in order to construct relevant routines for individual journalists' work with SoMe content (Schifferes et al., 2014; Silverman, 2014). From this viewpoint, the need for specific SoMe strategies is limited.

> How you do this [SoMe content verification] should really be up to you to decide. Of course, there are general requirements about how to carry out your job that you need to follow, you need to act responsibly and so on. But...I do not see any need for specific regulations about this. (Editor-in-chief, radio/television/web journalism)

The lack of overall SoMe verification strategies was also reflected in the low number of participants who were familiar with and used existing tools designed for SoMe content handling. Figures on how common such tools

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are have seldom been provided in previous research (Brandtzæg et al., 2016). In this study, most participants did not use a tool themselves. One fourth of the journalists had heard about someone else at the workplace using a tool. Among these tools, Tweetdeck was the most common. However, while not currently using tools, virtually all participants considered a toolset as something that would be useful.

3.2. Current Challenges: Many Platforms and Vast Amounts of Information

Participants were asked to freely identify challenges with their current SoMe usage in everyday journalistic work as well as during crises. The most common challenge concerned filtering out interesting content and/or rapidly finding the original source among vast amounts of information (see also Brandtzæg et al., 2016; Schifferes et al., 2014). The issue of backtracking to the original source becomes especially relevant during unfolding crises or similar high-priority news events, where the production pace is faster, SoMe activity increases and verified information is crucial (cf. Diakopoulos et al., 2012). In our study, a majority of journalists highlighted challenges concerning information overload as a main problem that an automated validation tool could help to solve.

> To be able to quickly find the original source, who started writing about this?...What I see as a problem is the huge amount of information, to try to filter that, so that is the kind of help I need. (News journalist and anchor, radio/television/web journalism)

Journalism students participating in the crisis training scenario experienced similar problems. During the training, social media feeds included information from official communicators as well as from the public. Observed students seldom tried to contact potential eyewitnesses or other non-authority social media users directly to verify posted information. In post-scenario interviews, students explained that they were aware of the need to include eyewitnesses in crisis-related journalism, but they had chosen not to. They based their decisions on insecurity about how to carry out the actual verification process, and on time constraints, i.e. not having enough time to backtrack and verify the content.

Another challenge that emerged in the study was the need for simpler routines and innovations for information gathering across several SoMe platforms simultaneously. This would provide a better overview of social media activity and diminish the risk of overlooking relevant content. Again, this need becomes even more relevant during crises. For example, during the training scenario, one participant who was assigned to monitor SoMe platforms for a television outlet simultaneously followed over 20 SoMe and web channels on one screen. While this mostly worked well, the participant overlooked several pieces of vital information due to the vast number of

monitored channels. In addition, requirements set by the physical surrounding, e.g. a hectic production pace, also contributed to increasing the risk of missing relevant content. In this specific case, the student disrupted the monitoring when asked to carry out unexpected tasks, such as booking interviews. Similar problems could be observed with other cases during the training, and were also familiar to the journalists interviewed.

Participants also sought for better strategies for identifying possibly interesting content gathered from these platforms. In practical terms, SoMe content should be channelled from several platforms into one, and presented according to the journalist's personal needs. Useful sorting functions mentioned by participants included features familiar from existing SoMe platforms, such as the time of content posting or trending topics in terms of reposts or comments, but also more specific features such as geolocation of sources or lists of most popular sub-trends within a trending story.

These needs reflect attempts at diminishing time pressure and supporting the quick choices required in journalistic work, and are consistent with other studies. For instance, Schifferes et al. (2014) reported that journalists need to monitor information across platforms as well as across content formats, while Diakopoulos et al. (2012) and Schwartz et al. (2015) stated that journalists want support with identifying possible hyperlocal news.

3.3. Usability of a Validation Toolset: The Importance of Insight into Automation

In this section, we shift focus from identifying journalistic challenges to discussing practical factors that should be addressed when designing a user-friendly information validation tool for everyday and crisis journalism. A central challenge related to implementing a tool was the risk of automation taking over. Most journalists were concerned that the level of automation in a tool might affect the quality of their journalistic work. Participants mentioned this in two ways.

Firstly, to be able to use a tool for verifying content trustworthiness, the user needs to be able to verify the tool itself. This includes factors such as understanding how central algorithms are constructed, and being able to follow chains of searches or other tasks carried out automatically by the tool (for more about suggested ways to do this, see below). This design-related risk is familiar from SA literature in general. E.g., Endsley and Jones (2011) refer to the "out-of-the-loop syndrome" as one of the main issues designers need to understand when building complex systems. The European ISO-standard for human-centred design (ISO 9241, 2010) underlines the importance of using a multi-faceted decision process based on several levels of comparisons when choosing which tasks to automate and which ones to assign to human performance.

The second automation risk focused on the possible automation of final decisions about what is labelled as

useful or verified content (see also, Diakopoulos, 2014; Park et al., 2016; Schwartz et al., 2015). This was seen as something that cannot be outsourced or programmed, but rather has to remain a manual choice based on several layers of information, provided e.g. by a validation tool. In other words, the former type of risk related to automation is based on a practical sense of enhancing SA by understanding how the tool works, and thus avoiding the "out of the loop-syndrome". The latter risk is perhaps a more general reflection of the unique type of work and practical decisions included in day-to-day journalism.

> It would be good if something would take care of [verifying content] since this is a job you do not have time to do if you are in the midst of something. But this does not release us from our responsibility. (Social media editor, newspaper/web journalism)

> I am not sure that this is an entirely technical issue, I think it involves something of a real journalistic technique to know whether a source is credible or not. (News journalist, newspaper/web journalism)

3.4. Usability of a Validation Toolset: Using Visualizations to Explain Automation

Thus, the functions included in a SoMe validation tool should, according to the sample, be seen as supporting manual verification work rather than taking over work tasks. A crucial issue was the level of insight into tasks and algorithms carried out automatically. This was present in most discussions about the types of practical tasks that should be included in order to enhance usability and SA when designing the tool. Therefore, based on the interviews, we have extracted three main usability-promoting categories (see Table 2). The categories represent automatic features, manual tasks, and visualization of results. However, the reader is advised to bear in mind that listed features were those most commonly mentioned, e.g. a wish list, but not necessarily those that can all be integrated into a well-functioning tool. Listed functions often hovered across functions related to monitoring, filtering, and verifying SoMe content.

Automatic features (Table 2) are tasks that according to the sample should be carried out automatically by the tool, and that would provide solutions to some of the main SoMe challenges related to risk of information overload and fatigue among users. Central automatic features included: (1) identifying the original source who posted a piece of information, by collecting data from several SoMe platforms, using timestamps, and creating chains of posted and reposted content (regardless of content format) within as well as between SoMe platforms; (2) identifying the trustworthiness and quality of a source, by carrying out comparisons of the type, quality and quantity of the source's previous SoMe activity within and across platforms, and by carrying out comparisons based on geolocation information; and (3)

finding new trending content as well as new developments within already identified content areas, by collecting data from within and across SoMe platforms.

The second subcategory, manual tasks (Table 2), includes settings within the tool that a user or team should be able to modify according to current needs. Commonly mentioned settings included familiar parameters, such as basic search (a Google across SoMe platforms) and sorting functions (fresh; top; trending), combined with more advanced settings. A key element here would be to allow for searches across platforms. Advanced search and sorting parameters should, for example, include geolocation and language of content settings as well as being able to set content publication timeframe limitations and to choose between formats (e.g. video only). The idea with a range of manual tasks was that since journalists have individual needs, a user-friendly tool should allow for a large degree of personalization. In addition, manual tasks enhance SA by allowing for more insight into the automatically carried out algorithms, as the user or team is able to create own parameters.

The third subgroup of features enhancing tool usability—visualization of results—represents factors that would further bridge the gap between functions automatically carried out and journalists' needs to (a) understand what the tool has done, and to (b) make well-judged manual decisions based on the information provided. By including clear visualizations of interesting content, the tool would enhance the level of SA by, again, addressing the need to understand tool algorithms, and by avoiding user fatigue. In addition to visualizations related to trending content in general, the tool should provide information focusing on areas of interest relevant to the specific assignment the journalist or team is carrying out (Table 2). Such parameters should be set by the user within the tool's "manual tasks" subcategory. Mentioned visualizations included: summaries of how content has been automatically compared and cross-referenced across SoMe platforms; visual chains of automatically identified steps between reposts and the original source of information; and summaries of content listed according to advanced search parameters, such as geolocated posts placed on a map of e.g. the media organization's distribution area.

In addition to the automatic/manual/visualization features, journalists mentioned some purely technical requirements to enhance usability. Requirements reflected central practical needs for journalists, as well as the need to be able to integrate a new tool into existing workplace software. The sample stressed the importance of tool functionality across screen sizes and equipment, as well as automatic and frequent updates of content feeds to enable rapid inclusion of the latest information. Moreover, participants wanted an easily accessible content saving function in a format compatible with existing publication formats.

The main features suggested by this sample for each tool subcategory (automatic; manual; visual; technical)

Table 2. Subcategories of features and main factors enhancing usability and SA in a social media information validation tool.

Automatic features	Manual tasks	Visualization of results
Include and save content from several SoMe platforms	Set which platforms to include	Overview of content from several SoMe platforms
Cross-reference content between platforms	Set content search/cross-referencing parameters	Cross-referenced content overview
Create chains of reposts back to original source across platforms	Set content presentation parameters	Chains of reposts back to original source overview
Track and gather trending content across platforms	Communicate tasks with colleagues	Trending content overview
		Source geographical location and similar advanced search parameter overviews
How the subcategory would enhance individual and team SA		
Avoid fatigue, by taking care of complex and time-consuming monitoring and validation tasks automatically	Diminish information overload and enhance understanding of tool algorithms, by allowing users to set parameters for areas of interest across several platforms in one tool	Diminish information overload and enhance understanding of tool algorithms, by providing visualizations of summarized content of interest
Diminish information overload, by compressing information seeking procedures from several platforms into one tool	Enhance team SA, by including communication into the tool and thus allowing team members to avoid repeating monitoring and validation tasks already carried out by other team members	Avoid fatigue and support journalistic choices, by providing summaries of content of interest visualized according to parameters of relevance (e.g. geolocation)

are roughly similar to functions mentioned in previous research (as listed in the introduction section). However, compared to other studies, factors such as the ability to monitor across several SoMe platforms simultaneously and the risks of automation taking over were more emphasized in this study, while the importance of finding content regardless of format (text; picture; video) was toned down.

3.5. Usability of a Validation Toolset: Enhancing Team-Level Usability

While many of the above-mentioned factors can be applied to enhancement of individual as well as team SA, one factor explicitly addressing team level SA also emerged. This factor was part of the manual tasks subcategory (Table 2), and reflected the need to communicate within the toolset with colleagues about e.g. search results/visualizations or tasks being carried out. By including a communication function, team SA would be enhanced as unnecessary repetitions of tasks already carried out by other team members could be avoided. This need has seldom been reported in previous attempts to map journalistic usability of validation tools, perhaps because team-level SA has rarely been overtly mentioned.

However, as stated by Salmon et al. (2008), team level SA should be taken into account when designing user-friendly products, and this area should be integrated into future research about journalistic work, technical innovations, and SoMe.

4. Conclusions and Limitations

The first aim of this study was to map central challenges news journalists currently face and the new practices that are emerging in regard to using SoMe for validation of potentially newsworthy content. The second aim was to investigate how challenges and practices may contribute to a user-friendly design of a content validation toolset for journalistic work in everyday and crisis-specific contexts, and to improved SA. Journalists reported that they are in the midst of a change in applying traditional practices to SoMe content. However, news organizations lack formal guidelines concerning how to gather and validate content.

The most common challenges when carrying out validation of content included problems with simultaneously monitoring and filtering out content across vast amounts of information acquired from several platforms, and with backtracking across platforms and reposts to

identify the original source. In order to approach the challenges and the ongoing redefinition of journalistic practices, journalists underlined the key role of senior managers. A positive attitude towards introducing new strategies and allocating appropriate resources are central contributing factors.

Journalists also saw a tool for SoMe content validation or similar technical innovations as useful means to support their work. To achieve a user-friendly design, a validation tool needs to support, but not fully automate, the journalist's work. The final decision about content trustworthiness has to remain a manual task. By designing the product according to an automatic-manual-visual feature dynamics, where several manual settings and clear visualizations allow the journalist to interpret automated content filtering results, the tool design would provide better SA during assignments, and allow for a high level of insight into automated tasks, but leave more control to the journalist.

This study has some limitations that need to be taken into account. Listed usability factors provide a wish list of possibly useful features for a SoMe information toolset, not features that have to be included for the tool to work. On the contrary, too many functions will affect usability and SA negatively, as the tool will become too complex and offer the user an overload of information. Most journalists in the sample addressed this concern. Also, study results should be interpreted with caution, as the data were gathered from a convenience sample. Results may not reflect all aspects of journalistic needs or represent other work contexts than those included in the study. Students were included in one dataset, and this subsample will naturally have a more limited work experience than seasoned journalists. On the other hand, this subsample may be more tech-savvy and have a better understanding of SoMe usage patterns. Also, the crisis training scenario does not reflect an actual crisis assignment, and comparisons between results gathered from this part with work in real-life crises should be made with caution.

A useful tool can be developed based on knowledge from this study, previous research on the subject, and functions provided by existing tools. However, tool content should be carefully weighed against tool complexity, and practical usability tests of tool prototypes should be carried out with journalists.

Acknowledgments

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Reinvention of Publishers' Revenue Model—Expectations of Advertisers towards Publishers' Products

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Abstract

Publishers have to reconsider their revenue model. Facing a massive decline in the circulation of newspapers and magazines over the past years, publishers have lost not only readers but also many advertisers. Thus, publishers are faced with both changed customer expectations as well as difficulty in generating profit. Users are increasingly less willing to pay for digital products and their expectations of digital content have changed: They would like to contribute their own content as well as to comment or share with others. Furthermore, advertisers can choose from a greater variety of options for placing adverts, particularly on social media and other online platforms. Therefore, many publishers struggle with the questions: How to earn money? What is the revenue model of the new business model? In order to determine the implications for publishers' revenue models, we assume that advertising companies are going to play a prominent role in the new business model. Hence, this paper focuses on publishers' services for advertising companies and therefore the expectations of advertisers towards publishers' services. In particular, this preliminary qualitative study explores advertisers' marketing interests in communities of readers who simultaneously contribute to discussions. Therefore, (1) a pre-study was conducted followed by (2) qualitative interviews with managers from advertising companies in Germany. Our initial findings confirm that advertisers could play an important role in the revenue model of publishers if they meet the expectations of advertisers who expressed their interest in both, using communities for customer research as well as interacting with users directly. The results also identify other possible services that publishers could offer advertisers in conjunction with addressing communities of contributing readers.

1. Introduction

Formerly publishers operated in two markets: (1) Selling exclusive content to users; and (2) selling advertising space and access to target groups to advertisers (Kilman, 2015). With a massive decline in the circulation of newspapers and magazines over the past years, publishers have not only lost readers, they have also lost many advertisers as customers (Chyi, 2012; Ihlström &

Kalling, 2007; Tennant, 2014). Due to increasing competition in the online sector, former print advertisers can now reach their target groups more easily and cheaply via new forms of online advertising such as digital platforms, news aggregators, social media, or marketplaces (Dennstedt & Koller, 2016).

Hence, publishers struggle with their revenue model. Since there is less willingness to pay for digital news, some publishers have created paywalls, freemium mod-

els or personalized content for their digital products. Nonetheless, digital revenue cannot yet compensate for the losses from the print sector. Therefore, the creation of value added services for both—users and advertisers—could deliver a new revenue stream for publishers (Zeng, Dennstedt, & Koller, 2016). In this paper, we would like to focus on advertisers as a source of revenue, particularly on their expectations for an advertisement if it is placed on a platform where publishers, and users alike, are discussing it. A simple digitalization of advertisements is not enough: "In the digital world, annoying customers with ads doesn't work anymore. Each content—either cat videos or snapshots from dinner—takes part in the battle for customers' attention" (Ralf Heul, CEO Grabarz & Partner, in 2016). Also, advertising agencies have realized the need for new advertising approaches. Within digital content, users can easily choose whether they are interested in a certain form of advertising; if they do not like the ad, they simply close it.

Furthermore, there are areas where readers may have greater knowledge or experience than journalists. These areas would be suitable for a digital community where readers and journalists of special interest magazines interact and share information. For instance, a person who loves golf will be very passionate about this topic. By being involved with a magazine about golf, he could provide information about his own experience, e.g., about learning how to golf or about the greatest golf courses. Furthermore, whenever he is playing golf he could share his impressions or pictures with other readers. Referring to the widespread term "User Generated Content" as well as to Eric v. Hippel's concept of users with specific application knowledge in their field of expertise, those contributing readers are also named as "users" in our study. In our research, we focus on the integration of communities into the product line of magazines only.

Exclusive access to such user communities can be of interest to advertisers since they can directly address their target group. Therefore, we are particularly interested in the expectations of advertisers with respect to the fact that users are not only reading articles but are also creating content or getting into intensive discussions with one another or with the authors of such articles. Does this affect the expectations of advertisers? And are there any supplementary services a publisher could offer to the advertising companies? Both questions are relevant for the possibilities for publishers to be able to generate revenue and to complement their business model and allow them to survive. This resulted in the following research question: "What are advertisers' expectations towards publishers' products?".

In order to answer the research question, a qualitative study amongst advertisers in Germany was conducted. Our explorative study may illustrate implications for the future revenue model of publishers. The remainder of the paper has the following structure: Starting with the development of our conceptual framework, we describe our research design and method. Subsequently,

we present and discuss our findings and derive managerial implications for publishers' revenue models, the crucial element of their new business model. Finally, we close with some limitations which open up new questions in need of further investigation.

This paper is a preliminary study that provides a better understanding of the expectations of advertising companies regarding their access to topic-related singular users or even topic-related communities. Nevertheless, the results should be interpreted cautiously. Since only 15 German advertisers were questioned, we are far from being able to present representative results.

2. Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Background

2.1. Business Model Innovation

The topic of business model innovation has become very important in the course of increasing digitalization. New competitors, evolving user expectations, and new revenue models require existing business models to change in order to improve the satisfaction of users' needs. Existing literature regarding the business model and business model innovation (Amit & Zott, 2001; Chesbrough, 2003; Christensen, 2008; Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) define the business model with various numbers of components. Amongst the various definitions, three to four cornerstones are consistently mentioned as being core elements: value proposition, revenue stream, key resources as well as key processes. This is why we base our research on the model of Johnson, Christensen and Kagermann (2008). It represents those four core elements and it is easy to use as a framework for the publishing industry. According to Johnson et al., a business model consists of four characteristics: it creates a customer value proposition by applying key resources and key processes and allows revenues by a profit formula (Johnson et al., 2008). In this study, we particularly focus on publishers' revenue model.

2.2. Publishers' Revenue Models

There are several definitions of the term revenue model. According to Johnson et al. (2008) the revenue model (resp. the "profit formula") "is the blueprint that defines how the company creates value for itself while providing value to the customer". Furthermore, "it also answers the fundamental questions every manager must ask: How do we make money in this business? What is the underlying economic logic that explains how we can deliver value to the customers at an appropriate cost?" (Magretta, 2002). According to Zott, Amit and Massa (2011) "revenue model innovation represents innovation in the way revenues are generated, for example through re-configuration of the product-service value mix or new pricing models" (Zott et al., 2011).

For decades, publishers operated in a steady market and generated revenue from two streams: Selling con-

tent to users and selling advertising space to advertisers. Recently, however, advertising revenues have been falling since advertising companies can choose between growing numbers of possibilities to contact their relevant audience (Tennant, 2014). At the same time, circulation revenues are decreasing since willingness to pay for digital content is low (Åkesson, 2009; Kilman, 2015).

Literature on innovation of publishers' revenue models, in particular advertisers' expectations towards publishers' products, is scarce. However, previous studies have found that readers expect printed products to be enhanced by digital, with digital offering features including user generated content and platforms for discussion (Dennstedt & Koller, 2016). Furthermore, new demands and features, as well as the possibility of interaction between users and advertisers, have become increasingly important to both (Dennstedt & Koller, 2016; Zeng et al., 2016). However, little is known about how publishers, as well as advertisers, have reacted to these new demands in terms of a new publishers' revenue model in order to be profitable in the digital age.

2.3. Expectations of Advertisers' in a Digital World

Due to digitalisation and changed media consumption (e.g., ad-blockers), the expectations of advertisers towards new advertising approaches has also changed (Åkesson, 2009; Amit & Zott, 2001; Chyi, 2012; Kanuri, Thorson, & Mantrala, 2014). Features such as location-based advertising are on the rise and advertisers have started adapting their ads to the digital users' behaviour (Xu, Oh, & Teo, 2009). Research regarding the various options for addressing users directly and via personalized approaches (Barnes & Hair, 2009) has paved the way for new advertising approaches. Furthermore, new features regarding new forms of advertising on the Internet (Pan & Zinkhan, 2004) support our assumption regarding the potential of advertising within communities. Recent studies have also focused on advertisers' demands of advertising agency services and different categories of expectations (Turnbull & Wheeler, 2014). Nonetheless, advertisers' expectations of the digital advertising space have yet to be fully investigated, particularly those offered by publishers.

3. Method and Data

In contrast to a quantitatively oriented study conducted through a standardized questionnaire, our data collection aimed at gathering new information by posing open questions. Qualitative guided interviews were used in this process. Parts of the interview were previously tested during a pre-study. The pre-study helped us implement additions as well as receive indications regarding specific questions in order to prevent misunderstandings. Furthermore, it enabled us to gauge the possible duration of future interviews more precisely and to collect further relevant background information.

3.1. Sample and Data Collection Procedure—Pre-Study

For our pre-study, 15 advertisers and intermediaries from various industries were surveyed qualitatively in face-to-face interviews in order to learn more about advertisers' expectations towards digital advertising. Since we assumed that there are different expectations and needs, depending on the advertiser's industry as well as the product, we categorized the advertising companies into the following five categories: (1) Retail (two interviews), (2) B2B & Services (three interviews), (3) Banking & Finance (one interview), (4) FMCG (fast moving consumer goods) (three interviews) and (5) Internet (software and technology) (three interviews). Additionally, intermediaries (agencies), working in these various markets, were questioned (three interviews).

The purpose of the study was presented to each interviewee. The interviewer used the predetermined questions for orientation purposes while still being able to answer comprehension questions using additional information. Furthermore, the interviewer was allowed to ask suitable follow-up questions. The interviews were fully recorded in order to ensure effective evaluation.

As a result of the pre-study, we clustered the expectations depending on the industries and target groups and derived questions for the second step of the empirical study. As far as possible, the final interview questionnaire was based on items found in the aforementioned literature. These items were changed slightly to fit the context of publishers and advertisers.

3.2. Second Step of Empirical Study—Guided Interviews

Based on these results guided interviews were conducted. Fifteen marketing managers from various industries, as well as intermediaries, were questioned in order to generate data on their expectations and solutions for possible future collaborations between advertisers and publishers. As with the pre-study, we covered the five industries: Retail, B2B & Services, Banking & Finance, FMCG and Internet (software/technology). The items that were included in the questionnaire were based on previous studies (Dennstedt & Koller, 2016; Zeng et al., 2016) as well as the pre-study. They were asked about their current advertising strategy, their expectations towards using communities or topic platforms as an advertising channel as well as their general expectations of publishers. Again, the interviews were fully recorded and transcribed in order to ensure effective evaluation.

3.3. Evaluation and Category Formation

In addition to the interview transcripts, data from the preliminary studies regarding the customer value proposition of publishers (Zeng et al., 2016) as well as the key resources and key processes of publishers (Dennstedt & Koller, 2014) were available for evaluation. While reading the 15 interview transcripts, all relevant and noticeable

aspects were noted. Having gained an overview of all the data, we decided to proceed with a category-based evaluation of the interviews. We created five categories in order to have an adequate system for our data. Our category nominations were established based on evaluation goals, interviews, and the pre-study. The five categories being: added value, composition, quality, interaction, and additional services.

Results from the pre-study and previous research (Zeng et al., 2016) showed that *quality* of a community and target group is vital to many advertisers. For advertisers, we assume, the low quality (e.g., reach and precise target groups) of most existing communities is the main reason for not interacting with communities so far. Thus, we consider quality as one essential expectation of advertising towards communities. Additionally, the *composition* of a community is important in terms of its size (number of community members) and affinity towards a specific topic. Furthermore, the *interaction* between advertisers and users seems to be key. In order to discover the desired extent of interaction, we formed a category focusing on interaction. A further item reflecting the question of expectations of advertisers is the *added value* that publishers can deliver. As we discovered from previous studies (Dennstedt & Koller, 2016) and the pre-study, advertisers would use topic-related communities in order to increase their brand awareness, conduct market research due to customer feedback and interact with lead users. Since we assume that advertisers wish for further services provided by publishers (e.g., a community manager) we formed a fifth category focusing on publishers' additional services.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results from the Pre-Study

In the course of the pre-study, selected companies were interviewed about their previous marketing strategy. Most of those companies are already advertising in printed and online media as well as on TV. The main reasons named for print media and TV advertising was to reach and access target groups. Low costs and favourable access to target groups were stated as the principal reasons for online advertising. Most companies mentioned that a digital marketing strategy is crucial since their users were likely to increase their digital activities: "We use digital communities and digital marketing a lot in order to be close to the users. We would like to give them the chance to provide feedback as well as to get in touch with us. By doing this we build up a good brand loyalty" (Internet/Service company respondent). The marketing manager of a banking and finance company stated: "Communities become more and more relevant. Users inform themselves online and rely on their friends' opinions. Never underestimate the power of lead users".

The function of the pre-study was to gain an overview of the expectations of advertisers towards print media as a foundation for the main qualitative study. Core to the pre-study was the fact that it dealt with the same questions as the main interviews. The final items of the main study were derived partly from the literature review and previous papers as well as the pre-study.

The pre-study focused on the following topics: (1) Advertisers' current advertising strategy, (2) expectations towards print media as an advertising channel (including its advantages and disadvantages), and (3) existing marketing strategies of advertising within communities. Findings from the pre-study helped us identify questions for the guided interviews.

For the interviewees, reaching their target groups and measurability of ads were the main advantages of advertising on publishers' digital platforms. In addition, the cross-media linkage, meaning the interconnection between multiple types of advertisements and redirection to a website was also rated very highly. Some companies also emphasized the specific advertisement of certain categories.

Lack of social interaction was named as being a disadvantage of advertising within publishers' digital platforms. While social networks such as Facebook have access to demographic data and can address users individually, publishers are yet to have this capacity. Currently, only a few interviewees already used communities as a target group for marketing. Those companies used communities in social networks such as Facebook for product development, customer communication (FMCG company respondent) and service optimization (banking sector respondent). For advertisers, however, the low quality of most of the existing communities is a disadvantage. They rarely have a moderator and the users are not sufficiently transparent to be able to categorize them into target groups. Furthermore, the marketing managers stated that talking "around the product" rather than "about the product" was also an advantage of advertising within communities.

In total, all interviewees found advertising in communities interesting, serving both as opinion forming as well as a feedback channel for users. Some companies would like to position themselves as experts regarding specific topics within the communities.

Essentially, some companies only want to join communities passively and refrain from actively adding content because they are reluctant to put in the necessary effort. If they actively contribute to the community they want the content to stay authentic and maintain a high quality within the community.

Adjustable billing models and audience-specific targeting are additional services that companies expect from publishers. Furthermore, advertorial packages and the establishment of communities and theme platforms are attractive for many companies. While those companies which are already working with communities are interested in a pay-per-post interaction model, others tend to prefer flat rates: "The billing model depends on the company's marketing goals. There can be advertorials,

where companies sponsor a series about a certain topic. Therefore, publishers could offer a fixed price. Furthermore, publishers could sell user insights to advertisers that are interested in market research about a certain topic or community. There could be also flat rates for the exclusive access to communities, as well as traditional banner ads within the community" (Agency respondent).

4.2. Results from the Guided Interviews

According to our assumptions and to the results of the pre-study, we formed the following five groups (see Figure 1) of questions: (1) Added value of advertising within communities or topic-related platforms, (2) interaction between the advertiser and the community, (3) composition of the community, (4) quality of the community, and (5) demand for additional services offered by publishers.
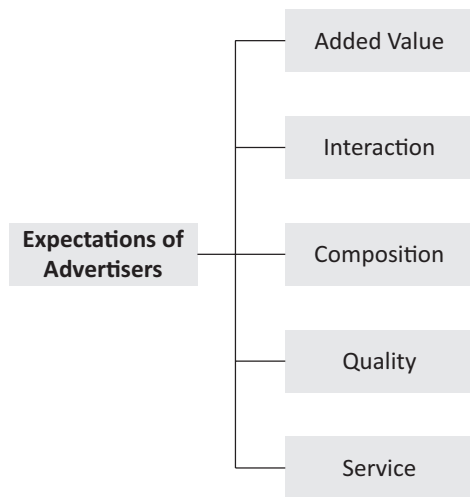
Figure 1. Advertisers' expectations towards publishers' products.

4.3. Added Value of Advertising within Communities/Topic Related Platforms

Advertisers have a variety of expectations regarding the added value of advertising within communities (see Figure 2). The question of whether companies regard topic-based communities as a relevant target group in marketing has been confirmed by every interviewee. One reason for this is the interviewees' opinion that "users now tend to trust their friends' tips more than any glossy advertisement" (FMCG sector respondent). A good fit with the target group and customer retention are often named as being major advantages of advertising within communities. This applies to marketing objective market research as well as to branding. Furthermore, the possibility of providing users with product features and additional information is highly valued by every interviewee: "People are not online to see advertisements but to gather information about specific topics and to communicate. Because of that, communities are a great way to reach customers" (Agency respondent).

Furthermore, the advantage of personalized advertisements was often named and highlighted as a relevant trait of a community or topic platform: "Users are not looking for traditional advertisements anymore but instead wish to receive personalized solutions and suggestions based on their user behaviour and preferences. In communities, there is personal communication which is often accompanied by emotions; those are the best moments to offer or present products to users" (FMCG Beauty sector respondent).

Especially "when a product needs further explanation (e.g. is sold at a much higher price than its competitors), topic communities are meaningful and ideal to explain our product or the price to users in the relevant target group in order to provide more transparency" (FMCG Beauty sector respondent).

Essentially, the added value is regarded as very high across the industries and there are no substantial differences between the individual domains concerning the assessment of this surplus value. In summary, the most important asset of the added value of advertising with the community is the possibility of personalized communication towards specific interest groups.
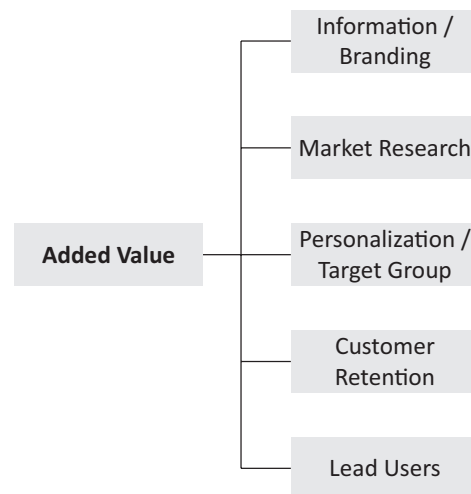

Figure 2. Advertisers' expectations towards the added value of marketing within communities.

4.4. Composition of a Community

Advertisers' have broad expectations towards the composition a community (see Figure 3). Most interviewees named the user affinity of a community as an important characteristic in terms of the composition of a community. Furthermore, the nature of communication (content), as well as the number of users (high reach for advertisers), is essential to many advertisers. Affinity is defined as the intensity of the interaction between users who have a high interest towards the community's topic. Advertisers stated that the more interaction takes place between users, the more interested the users seem to be into a specific topic—which leads to a greater advertising potential. Additionally, the possibility to collect infor-

mation about users (e.g., demographics) is vital to many interviewees: "It's exciting to know if a user is male or female and how active he or she is. Facebook, for instance, offers a service that lets you select based on age, gender, and interest. Those parameters are specifically important to have little loss from divergence and to precisely address the user. Moreover, it would be fantastic if one could see which terms (topics) are used the most and by which user. Subsequently, you could offer a station wagon instead of a sports car to someone who has kids and is interested in a lot of space" (Agency respondent). Furthermore, the marketing manager of a retail company mentioned: "Based on the user behaviour one could improve the community's infrastructure or personalize the content. At the same time, it could be also interesting to gain further information about the user journey (e.g. click from the community to the company website). Using these insights we could also improve our own online-shop".

In addition, interviewees mentioned that the community should be easily accessible to anyone and that the respective company should have the possibility to place content such as videos, links, or pictures. A community manager is rated as a helpful neutral authority who can both control and moderate. To sum up, the most important aspects of the composition of a community was stated as being both, insights about users (e.g., affinities, age etc.) as well as the affinity of users towards this specific topic.
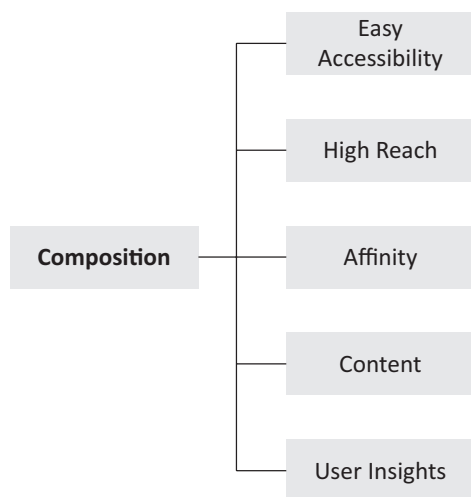

Figure 3. Advertisers' expectations towards the composition a community.

4.5. Interaction between the Advertiser and the Community

Advertisers' expectations of the interaction within a community can be categorized into five pillars (see Figure 4). Amongst the interviewees, the demand for interaction has shown some differences which seems to depend on their marketing goals. When a company simply wants to conduct market research, they prefer a rather pas-

sive use of the community. On the other hand, if a company wants to raise brand awareness or sell products, an active interaction including content posts becomes relevant: "We offer a large variety of products and most customers don't even know what our products can do. Communities can help us inform our customers" (Internet Software company respondent). Furthermore, innovative ideas from users about new products or features were also stated as a useful value of marketing within communities "User-generated-content, that can be used again on our own website is very interesting, because it's for free. This could be product reviews or self-designed outfits of users. Furthermore, new ideas regarding our fashion lines are very relevant as well" (Retail company respondent).

In this case "the communication does not necessarily have to happen about product-related questions but can also deal with general tendencies and developments in the respective domain" (B2B Retail sector respondent). This can help a company enter into dialogue and gather information about user needs and opinions. Furthermore, several marketing managers stated an interest in discussions and feedback about their products or services.
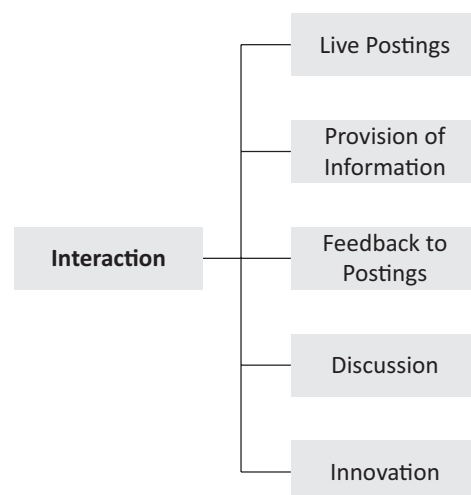

Figure 4. Advertisers' expectations towards the interaction within a community.

An additional approach comes from an Internet-based company. The interviewee suggested offering an added value and information in real time, something they could only receive at a much later time in the case of traditional media: "Furthermore, live moments such as Twitter's concept are interesting. Users actively discuss a topic and companies can offer their product at that particular moment while picking up a specific topic. One example: Users are reporting live from IAA while Audi is sponsoring the page and offering further exhibition fair insights"(Internet Software company respondent). Thus, the two most named factors of the level of interaction within a community are passive monitoring for companies who would like to conduct market research and ac-

tive provision of information and receipt of feedback for companies who would like to increase their company's brand awareness.

4.6. Quality of a Community

To all interviewees, a high quality community or topic platform equates with high reach (high number of users) and up-to-date content (see Figure 5). Moreover, all interviewees value transparency regarding users very highly (e.g., demographic information) as well as competent users who are interested in the specific topic. In this way, advertisers can rely on the fact that the users they address within the community fit their own brand. "The more interaction that takes place within such a community, the more relevant it becomes for us as a target group. We would like to get in touch with the user in order to receive feedback. Therefore, the competency of the users is important. Furthermore, the community's size is essential, in order to gain high reach" (FMCG Beauty sector respondent). Furthermore, the marketing manager from the Banking & Finance sector stated: "The quality of a community is given, when users question certain topics and when they get involved with the content and discussions".

In addition, a community manager featuring as a "supervisor" was regarded as important to many of the interviewees to ensure high quality: "Spending capacity and brand loyalty are essential. Companies can offer additional and high-priced products to users who show a high brand affinity and who are heavy users" (Agency respondent).
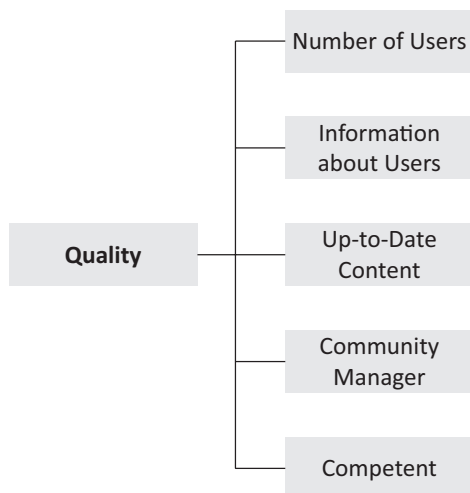

Figure 5. Advertisers' expectations towards the quality of a community.

4.7. Service and Payment Model

Advertisers' have numerous expectations regarding further services of publishers (see Figure 6). When asked about the additional services companies expect from publishers, many interviewees mentioned the access to target groups: "The biggest competence of publishers is content. The content they offer. Most users are not looking for advertisements but content and information. Should publishers succeed in creating topic-related communities where a relevant interest group is active, an environment where advertisers want to be present—in whichever way—could emerge" (Agency respondent).

Education about marketing possibilities within communities as well as best practice examples of dealing with communities was also frequently mentioned. Many interviewees want publishers to provide a neutral authority by having community managers who forward content and user contributions to the company in a bundled form and answer user comments and questions. Firstly, publishers need to provide the infrastructure to enable a direct dialogue between companies and users.

Several possibilities were mentioned when interviewees were asked about a fitting payment model for the aforementioned cooperation. Monthly flat rates, exclusive access to communities and billing models based on size/reach of a community were all named in this process. A payment based on user interaction (posts) was also mentioned.
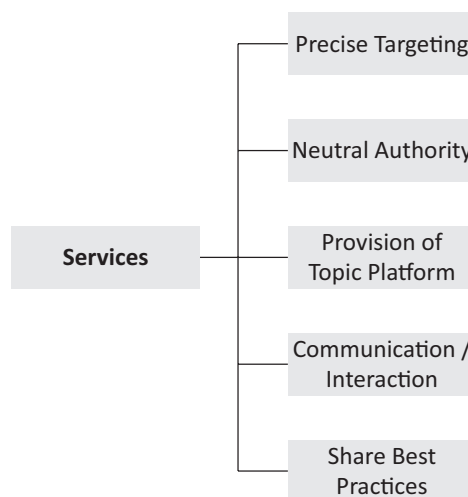

Figure 6. Advertisers' expectations towards further services of publishers.

"It would be interesting if publishers could offer companies to sponsor particular theme communities or articles. The German magazine "Autobild" could create a community regarding electric cars by cooperating with Audi, provide users with relevant information about this specific topic and furthermore inquire about user interest. Such an example would have a much more reputable impression on users than if Audi created such a community. The relevant target group would already exist and would not need to be discovered by "Autobild" in the first step (FMCG Beauty sector respondent). Consequently, the provision of such a topic-related community and access to specific target groups was currently considered as being publishers' biggest asset.

5. Managerial Implications for Publishers' Revenue models

The most important findings of advertisers' expectations are summarized in the following managerial implications. Thus, the most important factors regarding the five pillars are the following:

- The most important asset of advertising within communities is the possibility of personalized communication towards specific interest groups;
- Key aspects of the composition of a community are (1) insights about users (e.g., affinities, age, etc.) and (2) affinity of users towards this specific topic;
- The two most frequently named factors regarding the level of interaction within a community are (1) passive monitoring for companies who would like to conduct market research only, and (2) active provision of information and receiving feedback for companies who would like to increase their company's brand awareness;
- A high quality of a community or topic platform equates with a high reach (high number of users) and up-to-date content;
- Consequently, the provision of such a topic-related community and access to specific target groups currently seems to be publishers' biggest asset.

This qualitative study aims to uncover the expectations of advertisers towards publishers of digital newspapers and magazines. In the future, publishers can no longer solely focus on selling advertising space. They probably have to create an infrastructure for selling access to certain target groups to advertisers. They can thus become the marketplace behind the content and the advertisements as well.

Our research shows that publishers can offer a distinct advantage over advertisers: They can have direct access to specific target groups regarding certain topics. Furthermore, they are trusted by and are reliable for their users, which is also an asset for advertisers. Therefore, managers from publishing houses could establish a community network or topic-related platform in order to foster interaction between users, following which they could offer access to advertisers. Since publishers have decades of experience in dealing with users and interest groups, they could also support advertisers to address these target groups directly.

Another example would be a parenting magazine which provides a community where mothers discuss characteristics of their pregnancy or talk about attributes of their babies. This specific and baby-affine target group now becomes relevant for advertisers. A baby nutrition supplier could now sponsor or join this digital community in order to interact directly with the users, promote products or to conduct market research. Furthermore, the publishers could provide a community manager to share useful insights with the advertiser and to reply to users' questions.

Regarding the composition of such a community, our results show that advertisers have certain expectations. Within communities, advertisers want to offer personalized information about products or services and address the users' needs individually. Therefore, managers from publishing houses should start gathering useful user data about the various users in order to address them personally. Furthermore, within such a community each user could have their own profile with their own preferences. As a result, publishers could cluster the users into topic-related groups. For instance, they could cluster the women in the parenting community into "mother" or "mother-to-be". As a result, advertisers could then address users individually, based on their needs and interests at that time.

Our results show that quality is an important factor for advertisers' consideration of advertising within communities. Therefore, managers from publishing houses could implement dedicated journalists to, not only take care of their specific articles but also to be responsible for a related topic community.

Since the interaction of advertisers with users in a community seems to depend on advertisers' strategy, managers from publishing houses could offer various packages of access to communities and target groups. There could be "read only" access for advertisers who are interested in market and customer research as well as access with interaction for, e.g., advertisers who are interested in selling products. Furthermore, such interaction and cooperation between publishers and advertisers could, for instance, be personalized advertisements to single users or certain groups of interests, using user data in order to address interested users for suitable products and services, and access to special interest communities (e.g., sailors, automotive enthusiasts) in order to participate in their chat, or even using publishers' platforms for direct sales activities.

To meet advertisers' expectations regarding publishers' services, they could offer workshops about working within communities. Furthermore, they could offer innovative pricing models such as cost per interaction (between advertiser and community) or different pricing models depending on the topic (e.g., broad target group or niche market).

This short investigation is only able to present initial results about the expectations of advertising companies regarding the contact to users and to supplementing services from publishers. However, two implications seem to be obvious: Firstly, this topic is worth further, more detailed investigation because (secondly) these expectations of advertising companies are becoming a really important element for the revenue model and, together, for the business model of publishing houses. If the users' willingness to pay for content continues to decrease, access to publishers' products will be mostly free—the main part of publishers' revenue might come from new advertising services.

Furthermore, our findings contribute to the literature regarding business model innovation in the publishing industry. Discussions about advertising solutions (e.g., communities or topic platforms) are essential as publishers are realizing that advertisers have a strong interest in communities, personalized advertisements and even direct interaction with users.

Managers of publishing houses will need to rethink their business models and their services for advertisers. They will have to address several critical challenges: pricing policies for these new advertising approaches, a new infrastructure for these redefined distribution networks that preserve format diversity, and the reallocation of value among industry participants.

At this point, it is noteworthy that the involvement of advertisers in communities and publisher content can also be a substantial threat. Publishers act as opinion-forming media and therefore carry a responsibility to provide their users with objective and thoroughly researched information. As a consequence, publishers must be careful that their readers do not feel disillusioned once they notice that advertisers have been integrated into both content and communities. Therefore, content must be made obvious and sponsored communities have to be presented as such. In addition, publishers need to make sure that personal user data is not passed on to advertisers and that the latter are only given access to target groups and specific topics. Publishers must ensure that advertisers do not influence content too extensively and must regulate the power of advertisers within the multiple types of co-operation.

6. Limitations and Future Research

This preliminary qualitative study provides a better understanding of the expectations of advertising companies regarding their access to topic-related singular users or even topic-related communities. This understanding is essential for the survival of publishing houses since business with advertising companies might turn into "the" cornerstone of the revenue model within publishers' business models. Our study has an explorative character and, as such, some limitations which provide opportunities for future research.

Firstly, due to self-selection, the sample is biased. Therefore, results should be interpreted cautiously. Since only 15 advertisers were questioned, we are far from presenting a scalable majority opinion. Furthermore, there we found no significant difference regarding the expectations of advertisers from different industries. Future studies could try to interview even more advertisers from more industries in order to discover if there are differences. Secondly, the need and suitability of integrating communities into their advertising strategy also depends on the advertisers' marketing strategy. There might be businesses (e.g., B2B or small local businesses) that do not fit into this approach.

It would be highly valuable to see a quantitative study proving the results quantitatively. Hopefully, some of the aforementioned categories might be helpful for operationalizing the constructs of that research model.

Finally, future studies could also focus on international markets, rather than just German markets, in order to see if the interest in such an approach is scalable.

As the previous section stated, a mutually compatible co-operation between advertisers and publishers is crucial. The future scale of advertiser access to communities and legal restrictions has yet to be analysed.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Commentary

Welcome to the Era of Fake News

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Abstract
For the news industry, information is used to tell stories, which have traditionally been organized around "facts". A growing problem, however, is that fact-based evidence is not relevant to a growing segment of the populace. Journalists need facts to tell stories, but they need data to understand how to engage audiences with this accurate information. The implementation of data is part of the solution to countering the erosion of trust and the decay of social discourse across networked spaces. Rather than following "trends", news organizations should establish the groundwork to make facts "matter" by shaping the narrative instead of following deceptive statements.

Issue
This commentary is part of a multidisciplinary issue of *Media and Communication*, edited by Epp Lauk (University of Jyväskylä, Finland) and Raul Reis (Emerson College, USA).

1. Introduction

"Fake news. It's complicated", writes Claire Wardle (2017). While the term is problematic in application, it is useful for framing the larger structural issues in the media ecosystem. In modern news reporting, stories are traditionally organized around facts. Due in part to the plenitude of online sources, however, factual reporting can be displaced with "alternative" narratives. The use of the "fake news" label to denote organizational untrustworthiness is a related concern, as it portrays media watchdogs as entities that operate to deliberately misinform. The rising culture of institutional rejection in the United States and United Kingdom has resulted in a coup for fringe politics, encouraging xenophobia and hate speech (Anderson-Nathe & Gharabaghi, 2017).

Social interaction is at the heart of the "fake news" debate. To deconstruct the changing environment, highlighting the dual role of media as both sources of information and sites of coordination is vital, "because groups that see or hear or watch or listen to something can now gather around and talk to each other" (Shirky, 2009). Due to the disinhibitory effects of online inter-

action, ideological echo chambers, and increasing tribalism (Rainie, Anderson, & Albright, 2017), the emotional component of sharing means news can be used to target and influence segments of the public. "If readers are the new publishers", writes Jason Tanz, "the best way to get them to share a story is by appealing to their feelings" (2017, p. 48).

As such, the study of the "fake news" ecosystem involves reconstructing how audiences express sentiment around news development. By tracing the flow of information across expansive networks of websites, profiles, and platforms, we can "gain insight into the mutual shaping of platforms and apps…as part of a larger online structure where every single tweak affects another part of the system" (Van Dijck, 2013, p. 285). With these structural considerations in mind, I outline a few considerations for media and communication research in the "fake news" era.

2. Transparency and Trust

First, proprietary "black box" (Pasquale, 2015) technologies, including opaque filtering, ranking, and recommen-

dation algorithms, mediate access to information at the mass (e.g., group) and micro (e.g., individual) communication levels. In addition to the delivery of content, platform tools are built from the ground-up to establish the underlying context around users' interactions (e.g., Facebook's "like" button). Van Dijck explains:

> Social media are inevitably *automated* systems that engineer and manipulate connections. In order to be able to recognize what people want and like, Facebook and other platforms track desires by coding relationships between people, things, and ideas into algorithms. (2013, p. 12)

Importantly, the provision of information through opaque technologies disrupts the layer of organizational credibility and reputational trust established in the process of professional reporting. This lack of transparency is also problematic in the sense that information literacy, defined as the ability to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use [it]" (American Library Association, 2000) is less useful when the mechanisms used to "locate" and "evaluate" the information (e.g., topical search results) are not fully known.

3. Social Distortion

The mechanisms through which attention can be influenced is another consideration in the study of the broader "fake news" environment. For instance, third-party applications allow the rapid amplification of emotionally-charged messages across platforms such as Twitter. This strategic distortion of attention can hasten the spread of misinformation and the establishment of "alternative facts":

> When a Facebook user posts, the words they choose influence the words chosen later by their friends. This effect is consistent with prior research on emotional contagion, in that the friends of people who express emotional language end up expressing same-valence language. (Kramer, as cited in Turow & Tsui, 2008, p. 769)

Sentiment-based sharing tools (e.g., Facebook's "reaction" emoji) further complicate the social distortion problem, as they codify and aggregate sentiment that is attached to news. This means that even if a controversial claim can be adequately "fact-checked", it may have already sowed outrage or confusion for its target audience.

4. Attention Models

A third challenge in the "fake news" era involves the industry model traditionally focused on the "manufacturing" of audiences (Bermejo, 2009). Through the collection of "detailed and intimate knowledge of people's de-

sires and likes, platforms develop tools to create and steer specific needs" (Van Dijck, 2013, p. 345). Technology companies' core business involves the design of identity-based data collection and profiling systems. This means that even the most resourceful news organizations will find it difficult to deliver news through platforms such as Facebook, which can manufacture both the audience and the audience's "needs". Technology companies hold much of the data needed to fully understand how information reaches audiences. This amounts to a contemporary data blindspot, and is a factor in the erosion of trust between news organizations and the broader public. If critically important facts are unable to reach large segments of the public, then the Fourth Estate cannot effectively function as a democratic safeguard against corruption, deception, and special interests.

5. Trust and Data

Because the tools that the public relies on to gauge truth, fairness, and accuracy are designed around the codification of sentiment and the monetization of attention, the "fake news" battle cannot be won at the level of content alone. "Indisputable facts play only a partial role in shaping the framing words and images that flow into an audience's consciousness", notes Entman (2007). Given this scenario, objectivity, while important at the reporting level, is less valuable for establishing trust between news organizations and audiences in the "fake news" era. As more actors opt to go "direct" to their audiences using platforms like Twitter, news organizations will be forced to "follow the conversation" instead of leading the way to establish narratives that accurately inform the public through their reporting. In this regard, as Richard Tofel argues, "publishing [news] and then fact-checking is not enough" (2015).

While researchers can collect more data than ever before, much of the data that explains how "fake news" reaches and impacts its audiences is missing. Researchers must therefore focus on innovative methods to collect data: one technique that might help to address the platform data gap involves network analysis, which helps articulate the relationships between companies, political actors, governments, and the public. Network graphs (e.g., link maps) help make the invisible "visible", facilitating the system-level understanding of the "fake news" environment. For instance, network analysis can be used to display how information released by Wikileaks flows through forums like Reddit before entering "fact-checking" sites like Wikipedia through article updates.

The focus on "facts" at the expense of long-term trust is one reason why I see news organizations being ineffective in preventing, and in some cases facilitating, the establishment of "alternative narratives". News reporting, as with any other type of declaration, can be ideologically, politically, and emotionally contested. The key differences in the current environment involve speed

and transparency: First, people need to be exposed to the facts before the narrative can be strategically distorted through social media, distracting "leaks", troll operations, and meme warfare. Second, while technological solutions for "fake news" are a valid effort, platforms policing content through opaque technologies adds yet another disruption in the layer of trust that should be re-established directly between news organizations and their audiences.

The complex ecosystem of emerging platforms, practices, and policies marks the beginning of a new era in the study of media, politics, and information. While the mechanisms are not entirely new, when put together in the scope of global politics and civil discourse, the effects they generate create novel problems. Welcome to the era of "fake news".

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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