

English abstracts

Laura Tarkiainen

Deservingness representations of poverty and wealth in the reality TV programme 'Rich House, Poor House'

In this article, I examine the deservingness representations of Finnish poverty and wealth in the reality TV programme 'Rich House, Poor House'. As my data I used 10 episodes, broadcast in Spring 2020, in which Finnish families construed as representing the extreme ends of income groups swapped their lifestyles and daily budgets for one week. My research questions were as follows: How does the reality TV programme 'Rich House, Poor House' represent deservingness? How is the deservingness of Finnish people living in poverty and wealth represented? As a result of my analysis, I conclude that in the programme, the deservingness of wealthy Finnish people is strengthened by representing wealthy people as committed to both hard work and the moral principle of reciprocity. Conversely, Finnish people living in poverty are represented as entrepreneurial or as having legitimate needs as the background of their poverty. In the programme, class distinctions and income differences are explicitly present. However, strengthening the 'sameness' and 'mutuality' of the extreme ends of income groups also fades these differences. Hence, it seems that in Finland, it is possible to display class differences only by representing the extreme ends of income groups as deserving and similar to each other. To examine class differences, however, the values of social mobility, meritocracy and consumption are idealised. Therefore, wealthy Finnish people can target moral pedagogy towards people living in poverty by giving tips and guidance on 'better' living.

Key words: deservingness, reality TV, representations, wealth, poverty

Taneli Heikka

Dialogue experiments challenge the concept of good discourse in public journalism

Journalism has responded to the polarization of public discourse by creating new dialogue-based approaches. In this study, dialogue journalism differs from other reform movements based on public journalism. Public journalism has perceived dialogue as a prelude to deliberation and democratic decision-making. Dialogue journalism, on the other hand, momentarily disconnects itself from democratic objectives such as deliberation and decision making and turns its attention to the production of experiential speech. Dialogue journalism constructs exclusive dialogues with participants selected by journalistic media. Deliberation and debate related to public discourse are suspended so that all selected participants are heard, and different perspectives are included in the conversation. The article investigates four dialogue experiments through qualitative content analysis: Suomi puhuu and Eurooppa puhuu (Finland speaks and Europe speaks) by Helsingin Sanomat; Kutsu Yle kahville (Invite Yle for coffee) by Finland's national broadcaster Yleisradio; dialogue experiments in the United States by Time and Advance Local; and Fresno Bee. The analysis indicates that the projects use dialogue-specific approaches, such as building safe spaces and guiding participants towards experiential speech as means for creating understanding between different social realities. These dialogical needs are explained by Martin Buber's conception of dialogue. Participants use experiential speech to strive towards an I-Thou relationship free of preconditions.

Key words: Dialogue journalism, Buber, public journalism, socially responsible journalism, polarization