English abstracts

Heidi Hirsto and Ville Manninen

Startup investors as gatekeepers in the field of journalism

The role of startup companies in renewing journalism is a topic of debate; however, startups are generally thought to challenge incumbent institutions and innovate new ways of doing things. The significance of investors in the field of journalistic startups has, to date, garnered little attention. Yet it is investors who decide which companies get a chance to launch and develop their business. In this study, we examine startup investors in the field of journalism through the SCOT theoretical framework, as journalism's gatekeepers and discussants in the metajournalistic discourse – actors imbued with power and responsibility with regard to the future of journalism. Our aim is to describe the ways of talking and reasoning that guide funding decisions in the journalistic startup field, with the focus on how investors conceptualize their own role and the role of startup companies in the evolution of journalism. Our data comprises interviews with startup investment experts, which we analyse from a discourse analytical viewpoint. The analysis reveals in the interviewees' talk a fundamental contradiction between the ideals of journalism and venture capital investing, which defines journalistic startups as something of a paradox. There are, however, traces of more transformative thinking. These are based on interpretive flexibility such as stretching the concept of journalism towards entertainment or the concept of venture investing towards socially responsible investing. The investor subject speaking in our data does not position themselves as a gatekeeper with power or responsibility. Instead, they assess journalism and its prospects from an assumedly neutral position, thereby creating a vacuum of responsibility.

Keywords: startup company, journalism, startup investment, venture capitalist, Social construction of technology (SCOT), responsibility

Satu Sorvali

The age of the pen wars
The power and responsibility of the 1890s Finnish press in the phenomenon of polemic writings and arguing

The discussion culture of the Finnish press at the end of the 19th century was full of enthusiasm and aiming for society's progress, but at the same time, it was also controversial and full of anger-like emotions. Readers and journalists clashed with each other in letters to the editor, editorials, and causeries, although newspapers explicitly withdrew from the harshest aggressive outputs. The constant dispute combined with personal insulting was seen as a problem, although some saw the positive side of the controversy, such as the fact that it was a way of moving things forward. The newspapers emphasized their traditional role as educators, but also increasingly highlighted their new role as ideological influencers, which lead to an increase in the number of controversial issues and polarization of opinions. The press demonstrated its power through its choice of publication and its comments, and in this way built and maintained the phenomenon. At the same time, newspapers were also aware of their social, legal, and economic responsibility for the problems caused by polemic writings and therefore actively sought to develop solutions.

Keywords: culture of debate, Grand Duchy of Finland, letters to the editor, newspapers, power, reader letters, responsibility

Meri-Maaria Frig

The role of news media in uncovering irresponsible business conduct

Despite the increased interest in corporate social responsibility (CSR) in legacy and social media, corporate social irresponsibility (CSI) remains an under-researched area. In this article, I examine the role of journalistic media in uncovering corporate irresponsibility. The data comprises of 497 news articles, podcasts, radio programs, television programs, columns, commentaries, or editorials published in Finnish journalistic media. The research material also includes social media posts that were central in the corporate irresponsibility events. The findings show that the news articles examine corporate social responsibility in a global economy, working conditions and ethical leadership, corporate communication, or the environmental impact of business conduct. The analysis of different ways in which CSI events are presented in the journalistic media shows that although CSI scandals are influenced by the participation of various social

actors, stakeholders also evaluate the social responsibility of news media. Non-governmental organizations and sustainability influencers can be seen to complement the work of news reporters and investigative journalists by bringing forth societal problems and corporate wrongdoing.

Katja Valaskivi, Petri Jääskeläinen, Jukka Huhtamäki and Johanna Sumiala

"Holy shit!!! If that doesn't wake people up, nothing will!"

Conspiratorial populist imagination and structures of feeling in social media

The article analyzes the populist imaginaries of conspiracy theories in Finnish-language social media discussions during the pandemic year 2020–2021. The article examines populism as a political genre, which produces and maintains a certain kind of political imaginaries and structures of feeling and is based on particular ideological worldview, beliefs, and perception of reality. The multi-method research combines online ethnographic observation and computational methods. The research material has been compiled from Telegram, Twitter, and two Christian revivalist websites during four news events between March 2020 and March 2021. Our research sheds light on the diverse ways in which conspiracy theories were part of the populist genre and contributed to the production of the populist structure of feeling in Finnish-language social media during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Auli Harju

From SoleTM to Slack, and back
The datafication of university work

The article examines datafied university work from the perspective of autonomy by analyzing researchers' experiences and views of the information systems and the digital platforms used at Finnish universities. University work is characterized by digital routines and the constant presence of digital technology. The research data consists of diaries of 13 researchers and their interviews. Different digital platforms and IT systems are used in research and in teaching, in planning, coordinating and reporting researchers' work and performance. The use of IT systems, and the administrative work linked to them, is seen partly as a routine, partly as a mandatory task that burden and take time that is off from the actual research work. Hence researchers are trying to find ways to balance their use of time and control it in order to be able to do their core work, i.e. research and teaching. Researchers recognize the mechanisms of monitoring, controlling and steering of their work built into IT systems, but they are unaware how the data collected is used.

Keywords: datafication, university work, IT systems, autonomy

Laura Bruun and Henrik Rydenfelt

Challenges and pressures in CSR communication

Questions regarding CSR communication have become topical in the everyday life of companies of all sizes. Research that previously focused on the public sustainability and responsibility reporting of the largest international corporations has begun to show an interest in the CSR communication of smaller companies. In this article, we examine the thinking about CSR communication in medium-sized and large Finnish companies by means of interview research. We study the pressures and motives leading to CSR communication, as well as the problems and challenges associated with it. We argue that the pressures and challenges of CSR communication create multidimensional pressure for companies, which may lead to paradoxical situations.

Keywords: sustainability, CSR communications, corporate responsibility, organisational communications