

Esa Sirkkunen:
In An Electric Tram

In this article the method of synchronic contextualisation is elaborated in order to read the journalistic texts as a part of the textual world of their time. The analysis begins by examining a story entitled "In An Electric Tram", which is considered to be one of the first newspaper reports published in Finnish. The aim is to study this particular story as part of the journalism of a certain issue of *Päivälehti* (published 1889-1904) as part of a broader textual world of a certain period. At the end of the article special attention is attached to the interrelation of journalism and new technology. According to the author journalism is still continuing its (modern) mission which started more than 100 years ago in making the new technology familiar to the reading public.

**Mika Renvall &
 Esa Reunanen:**
**How to Save
 Democracy
 with Journalistic
 Irony**

In this article the irony found in journalism is considered from the viewpoints of social interaction and political participation. The aim of the discussion is to get rid of the notion that irony is doomed to provoke cynicism and passivity. On the contrary, its more positive and activating potentials are sought for. The starting point is so-called Socratic irony. Journalistic irony is analysed with the help of some concrete examples and focusing especially on how events are ironised and de-ironised, how and at whom the irony is aimed, and what its functions are. Finally, the attempt is made to reconstruct the text examples in a little more 'Socratic' fashion.

Pirjo-Liisa Niinimäki:
**Broadside Ballads
 as News**

Broadside ballads have been published all over Europe since the end of the 15th century. In Finland publishing began in the 1640's after the Turku Academy and its printing office were established. The topics of broadside ballads have varied from religious songs to love songs and from folksongs to ballads dealing with murders and accidents. Disseminating news has been one of the purposes of broadside ballads in many countries. In Germany, for example, the oldest broadside ballads from the 16th and 17th centuries have even been called *Zeitungslieder*, i.e. "newssongs". In Finland most of the broadside ballads from the 17th and 18th century were religious and they were sung to the tunes of Lutheran hymns. All the typical European newstopics can be found in them: songs about successful battles; songs of praise to the king and the royal family; ballads on accidents and executions; songs about supernatural creatures. As there were no newspapers in Finland until the 1770's, broadside ballads were, in a way, a medium of disseminating news before the press. They can be placed between oral and written cultures and between folklore and mass communication.

Heikki Luostarinen:
**The Birth and
 Disappearance
 of Propaganda
 Concept**

This article examines the history of the propaganda concept, which up to the 1950s was in such a prominent position in media research. Why did it attain such a dominant place and why did it disappear? From the internalist point of view the narrowing of the concept to refer only to authoritarian, distorted communication was a part of natural development. When mass communication research expanded, the term in a way "choked" as a general term for mass communication. From the externalist point of view, however, the change seems to be connected to the decisions made by the US foreign policy administration in the Cold War. The United States informed people, only its enemies made propaganda. The US academic community, which was deeply integrated into the state security system, changed scientific concepts and terms accordingly. The "golden age" of propaganda studies seems to have much in common with the current trend to study "information society". Both areas are well funded by the authorities, new research centres have been established and the concept has a dominant and often unquestionable role in the academic discussion.