

Seija Fidell

The viewer in the flow, or will meaning be drowned in the everyday?

The article starts out from the 'ethnographic' turn of mass communication research. For media ethnography, everyday life is the primary context for the analysis of the use and interpretation of mass communication. The primacy of the 'everyday' finds one extreme manifestation in the recent research programme of Joke Hermes's, according to which the texts of mass communication, in everyday use, are for the most part meaningless and therefore need not be taken into account in the study of reception.

The article looks at the challenge that Hermes believes her thesis of meaninglessness presents to today's culture-oriented audience research. I approach the issue in a roundabout fashion by looking at what kind of commitments are contained in the metaphorical definition of everyday television viewing as a 'flow'. Before that I briefly look at the way in which ethnographically oriented mass communication research represents everyday life itself as a 'flow'. A dip in the flows of the everyday and television viewing provides a useful background for assessing the meaning of the meaninglessness thesis particularly for critical research into culture-oriented news research.

Marja Alastalo

"Can I say what I really think?". An interpretation of talk about the European Union

The article describes how I arrived at my interpretation of the following of news reporting on the European Union on the basis of an interview material. The text is divided into two parts: the first looks at the preconditions and the nature of the interview material and at the difficulties involved in interpretation; and the second presents my interpretation of the material.

Päivi Pöntinen

On a methodological journey. Re-contextualizing media ethnography by Fairclough's critical discourse analysis

The article is based on a research (or travel) diary which traces the theoretical and methodological paths I followed in an attempt to resolve the contradiction between the approach of the study, i.e. 'superficial' ethnography, and the aims of the study, i.e. uncovering 'deep meanings'. The problem and the path leading to the solution of the problem are described in the article through my research material, which deals with changes in media practices and the cultural ways of analysing them. Norman Fairclough's

version of so-called critical discourse analysis is put forward as one possible methodological solution. The model combines detailed textual analysis and social theory and shows some interesting similarities with the ethnography of critical reception. The article is concluded with a discussion of possible applications of the method of analysis to media ethnography. Solutions are also suggested to some of its problems.

Pekka Isotalus & Maarit Valo

TV friendship and radio love. Parasocial relationships the Finnish way

The article looks at the affective relationships of TV viewers and radio listeners to their favourite radio or TV presenters, i.e. the parasocial relationship. The study describes specifically the parasocial relationships of Finnish people, compares their attitudes towards radio and TV presenters and describes the differences in attitudes towards presenters of different types of programme. The research results are examined against earlier studies of parasocial relationships in other cultures as well as against interpersonal communication relationships.