

English abstracts

Tarmo Malmberg

Truth in the Age of Post-Truth – Media Studies and Philosophy of Science

In 2016, the concept of post-truth, in the sense of spreading disinformation, caught wide public attention. The concept can be applied to media studies itself, because since the 1970s it has been popular in the field to deny, even in principle, the relevance of truth as a norm. To study the issue, the paper advances four perspectives on the philosophy of science of media studies. 1) As a general background, aspects of philosophy of science in the modern era are portrayed. 2) The development of epistemological positions assumed in media studies in the 20th century is characterised especially by the work of Walter Lippmann and Roland Barthes. 3) In the systematic part, the applicability of well-known truth-theories to media studies is assessed. 4) Different reasons supporting the conclusion that the discourse on truth remains intricate in empirical disciplines like media studies, are presented.

Keywords: *media studies, philosophy of science, epistemology, truth-theories*

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Peat info ad campaign - Facts, lies, and affective reception

The campaign lobbying the energy usage of peat was visibly present as a topic in different media in Finland in the early part of 2017. The claims put forth in the rather provocative campaign were regarded in the reactions as simplifying, false, and sometimes insulting. This article looks into the contents and reception of the campaign. The focus is on the interplay between factuality, affectivity, and the role of the hybrid media environment. Our theoretical framework consists of affect theories and the notion of hybrid media environment. At the end we also look at the wider energy political context.

Keywords: *affect, media storm, peat energy, alternative facts, hybrid media system*

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Searching for lies: Use of sources in false media, case MV-lehti

Abstract

This research investigates the sources used by one particular fake media, MV-website, with the help of a source analysis. The empirical research material comprises of writings published in the MV-website during a two week period, 13.–26.2.2017. The total number of writings published during that period was 525. In this research the used sources were typified and classified. In addition, the credibility and style of usage were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The popularity of the writings were analysed by the number of times each writing was read and how many times it was shared in Facebook.

The website uses entirely sources of electronic form. Every seventh writing is missing a source. When the source was named, the reference was inadequate or inaccurate. Only every tenth picture used in writings had a reference while three out of four videos had a reference. The source material used in the writings varied significantly. The use of social media was substantially common, Facebook in particular. Some used sources were also strongly biased; false media and even racist sources were used. While using official material published by authorities (administration, police etc.) as well as mainstream media, there were also signs of purposeful use. The MV -website used these sources in a selective way to reinforce their anti-immigration agenda.

The use of sources was inadequate concerning copyright issues as well as ethical issues and represents therefore questionable solutions in source use. For example, suspects of criminal activities had their pictures published against the common journalistic practice. Facebook pictures of private persons were copied to be used as illustrations.

Earlier research has not paid attention to how the use of sources can enable disinformation: instead, the truth value and correctness of information have been considered. Disinformation could look as reliable information, if it seems to base on sources. However, sources could be used in such a way that is incorrect even though it looks solid at the first glance.

Key words: *fake media, source analysis, MV-website, disinformation*