

▾ Summaries of the articles

Esa Reunanen

Media capital as experienced by the politicians

In the article, current political media culture is analyzed from the point of view of the politicians. It is asked, how politicians evaluate media publicity in their work and how they personally experience it. The theoretical framework of the article is built on the Bourdieusian concept of “media capital” and Pels’s idea of “political style” as a basis for the relationship of politicians and publics. The empirical data comprises of fourteen thematic interviews of Finnish politicians. The interviews were made in early spring 2011. According to the results, media capital is an important component of political capital. However, it is not unambiguously appreciated, and some of its forms can also weaken politician’s position in the political field. The factors that make political publicity enjoyable from the point of view of politicians were found to be intellectuality and authenticity.

Jari Väliverronen

Something old, something new. Citizens’ evaluations of the media and journalism during the “election funding crisis”

Citizens’ opinions about the media and journalism in Finland are well known at a general level through regular polls. However, in the narrower field of political communication, the topic has attracted far less attention from scholars. To shed light on the issue, this article focuses on citizens’ views of the media and journalism during the “election funding crisis” in 2008–2011. The article aims to find out how people evaluated journalism and journalists, which ways of reporting were considered acceptable or unacceptable, and how these evaluations differ from observations made in past studies. These issues are investigated both quantitatively and qualitatively in three different samples collected during the election funding crisis: two nationally representative surveys, two extensive online message board samples, and diaries written by 23 citizens. The results indicate that citizens’ attitude towards the media and journalism has become more ambiguous than in the past. On one hand, the active and adversarial reporting style used by journalists during the crisis garners more support from citizens who regard it as a sign of increasing openness. On the other hand, journalists are seen to have become too aggressive while their reporting is accused of relinquishing journalism’s traditional tenets, such as objectivity and fairness.

Jukka Kortti

Teasing the consensus Finland. Student magazine Ylioppilaslehti in the Finnish public sphere of the 80s.

The article discusses the changes of the Finnish political climate and journalism during the 1980s through the student magazine Ylioppilaslehti, which was founded in 1913 and is still published. The magazine has not only been an important forum for university students, but also occasionally served a significant role in the wider Finnish public sphere. Here, the objects of research are the magazine's relation firstly to those in power, and secondly to the counter publics. The analysis is based on the ideas of new journalism and the theories of the public sphere. The article depicts how institutionalised but independent medium such as Ylioppilaslehti reacted not only to the changes of mediascape, but also to the changes in the political sphere of the 80s. The article shows how Ylioppilaslehti for its part and in the vanguard was questioning the consensus Finland.

Ville Pitkänen

From reporting issues to analyzing performance. Television debates as seen by newspapers from 1960 to 1980.

This article analyzes the ways in which newspapers have written about television debates from 1960s to 1980s. The material consists of articles published in Aamulehti, Helsingin Sanomat, Ilta-Sanomat and Iltalehti during presidential and parliamentary elections. The material reveals many differences between the decades. During the 1960s and the 1970s newspapers were interested in political substance of the debates whereas the performance skills of politicians were not an issue of interest. During the 1980's however, newspapers started to highlight television debates as important media events and the most prominent forums of political campaigning. In addition to substance matters, newspapers started to analyze the appearances of the politicians from visual point of view as well. Clothing, body language and overall appearance of politicians became new points of interest.