

English Abstracts

Elena Link / Axel Haverich / Christoph Klimmt / Tobias Schilling: Stuck between Intention and Obligation: Aspects of Motivation and Commitment with regard to Communication in Life Science Collaborative Research Networks (Zwischen Wollen und Müssen. Motivation und Engagement für die Kommunikation in lebenswissenschaftlichen Forschungsverbänden), pp. 375–395

In the past, a variety of internal and external developments in medialization have put increasing pressure on basic scientific research, demanding more transparency in order to make their work filter through to the public and communicate research using public relations. Our study contributes to the field of research examining the changing relationship between science and the public by exploring actual and desired activities of science communication among participants in life science collaborative research projects, thus seeking out their motivation for action. Such collaborations are faced with the dilemma that, on the one hand, they are financed by the public through tax revenues. On the other hand, however, due to their scientific complexity and lack of application they have relatively little tangible knowledge to offer to non-scientific audiences. Drawing on data from a survey of 47 life science Collaborative Research Centres (with a total of 422 respondents), our research shows that the agility and the perceived benefits in relation to active science PR can be seen as modest, at best. We discuss our findings in view of the conceptual aspects of science communication, and offer ideas for practical implications.

Keywords : science communication, science-PR, collaborative research, life science, collaborative research centres, survey

Stefan Gürtler / Ruedi Käch / Ruedi Niederer: ‘Up to 8 months in custody despite being innocent’. On the presumed Influence of Media Reporting in Swiss Complaints about certain Programmes from 1984 to 2016 („Bis zu 8 Monate unschuldig in U-Haft“. Vermutete Medieneinflüsse in Schweizer Programmklagen 1984 – 2016), pp. 396–416

The ‘influence of presumed media influence’ (IPMI) effect suggests that beliefs about the power of the media can, eventually, alter audiences’ attitudes and change media behaviour. These interconnections are well-researched; however, the main body of work focuses on audience studies. Yet, there is no clear indication with regard to the question if IPMI occurs only because the recipients are asked about it. Likewise, most of these studies capture general perceptions and intentions, but no definite actions. One way to study actual occurrences of this phenomenon is to look at audiences’ complaints about certain programmes and services (‘Programmklagen’). We believe that if recipients experience an excessive media influence on their opinion formation (perceptual component), they are also able to take legal action against the programme (action component). In this study, we examined all Swiss programme complaints against electronic media (Radio, TV) from 1984 to 2016 with regard to whether IPMI could have been triggering the administrative appeal. In fact, this applies to a quarter of the cases we looked at. Yet, our subject of investigation the decisions rather than the complaints, for their uniform structure and terminology makes them machine-readable. The perceptual phenomena we observed represent a differentiated picture of layman’s perceptions of spheres of influence and circles of media coverage. In particular, audiences objected to cognitive

(misinformation, obstruction of opinion formation) and affective effects (disregard of conservative values and feelings of the public). Critique focused on broadcasts of major TV stations, which confirms the presumed media reach as a moderating variable of the IPMI. The entertainment programmes of these broadcasters, to which a value-conservative audience takes offense over the years, are affected only disproportionately.

Keywords: influence of presumed media influence, audience perceptions, audience actions, subjective media theories, programme complaints, framing, media effects, media reception

Patrick Donges / Alexandra Gerner: Specialized Media as Policy-Brokers. On the Empirical Findings of Mediation in Policy Fields (Fachmedien als Policy-Broker. Empirische Befunde zur Vermittlungsleistung in Politikfeldern), pp. 417–436

The paper addresses the vagueness of the concept of mediation within communication studies and applies the policy broker approach to the research field of political communication in order to define mediation more precisely. The empirical question is which forms of mediation (or 'brokerage') can be found in the coverage of specialized media in selected policy fields. Potential mediation functions which specialized media serve are specified by distinguishing between bonding and bridging. Specialized media may serve as policy brokers by mediating between actors and interests within individual coalitions in policy networks, between coalitions of different policy networks, and between policy fields and their relevant sub-environments. Thus, three levels of specialized publics can be distinguished. Through semi-structured expert interviews (n = 33) and a quantitative content analysis of eight specialized media focussing on agricultural, healthcare and Internet policy (n = 1,451 articles), the concrete forms of mediation by specialized media were tested empirically. The findings show that in agricultural and healthcare policy, specialized media predominantly bond, while in Internet policy, they predominantly bridge. However, the specialized media differ widely within the policy fields. In conclusion, we discuss the functions and possible dysfunctions of the mediation of specialized media.

Keywords: political communication, specialized Media, specialized publics, policy broker, mediation

Horst Pöttker: 'The Press Betrays her Calling'. Theodor Geiger (1891-1952) – An (Almost) Forgotten Classic of Communication Studies („Die Presse verrät ihren Beruf“. Theodor Geiger (1891–1952) – ein (fast) vergessener Klassiker auch der Kommunikationswissenschaft), pp. 437–458

Theodor Geiger, who emigrated from Germany to Scandinavia in 1933 and never returned after 1945, was one of the last universal scholars in the field of social science. Among many contributions, Geiger provided decisive contributions to the sociology of law, to social stratification, and to the sociology of education and ideology criticism. Yet, his extensive research in the field of journalism, the public sphere and the media has only received scarce attention so far. His expertise as a classic also in the field of communication studies can, above all, be seen from the still existing topicality of his theoretical-normative, and at the same time empiric-analytical investigations. In his analysis of the intelligentsia which in his view includes journalists, he postulates that ideology critique based on facts and sober rationality should be the main task of this public-related occupation, which should confront all parties involved in the political power struggle in a fundamentally independent distance. In his 'Criticism of Advertising' he reconstructs the history of the development of this phenomenon, characteristic to affluent capitalistic societies, and designs a systematic typology of the methods of persuasive public communication. He also unmasks in precise economic argumentation as ideological errors the common assumptions that cross-financing by advertising would enhance the journalistic quality and would mean real money-saving to audiences. Moreover, of his empirical research on radio reception can teach us that there are realistic chances of popular distribution of cultural products, as well as methodical potentials are resulting from his experiment. From the example of Theodor Geiger, a classic forgotten in communication science and journalism, productive possibilities of an interdisciplinary subject history can be derived which does not understand itself as hagiography.

Keywords: emigration, subject history, Theodor Geiger, radio reception, ideology critique, journalism, media economics, National Socialism, Scandinavia, advertising, commercials