

English Abstracts

Christoph Neuberger: Conflict, Competition and Cooperation. Modes of Interaction in a Theory of Dynamic Networked Public Sphere (Konflikt, Konkurrenz und Kooperation. Interaktionsmodi in einer Theorie der dynamischen Netzwerköffentlichkeit), pp. 567-587

With the rise of the Internet, opportunities for interaction and participation in the public realm have increased significantly. I suggest that coping with the growing complexity of the field requires communication scholars to enhance their relational and dynamic analyses by employing interaction modes. Interaction modes like conflict, competition and cooperation are basal constellations of actors, which can be differentiated as ideal types with the help of attributes like the number of participants (dyads, triads) as well as direct and indirect, one-sided and mutual, punctual and sequential, single-stage and multi-stage communication. These three modes are discussed for different subsystems and media as context. Traditional mass media foster the universalization of competition in several dimensions, because competition needs only one-sided relationships of observation and influence. The Internet supports mutual, multi-stage and sequential communication, which characterise conflict and cooperation. Finally, I expand on further theoretical and empirical application.

Keywords: conflict, competition, cooperation, interaction modes, networked public sphere

Sven Engesser / Frank Esser / Carsten Reinemann / Sebastian Scherr / Jörg Matthes / Anke Wonneberger: Negativity in Political News. Austria, Germany, and Switzerland in Comparison (Negativität in der Politikberichterstattung. Deutschland, Österreich und die Schweiz im Vergleich), pp 588-605

Negativity is a key concept in political communication research but it still lacks a consensual definition and operationalization. Up to now, most studies on negativity have focused on single countries and single election campaign coverage. This article tackles that gap by disaggregating negativity into four main dimensions, namely tonality, conflict, incapability, and unfavorability. Comparing the three German-speaking countries Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, we investigate political news coverage of leading media outlets, particularly in the periods between election campaigns. The study sheds light on commonalities and differences between online and offline media, four media sectors (public and commercial broadcasting, as well as upmarket and mass-market press), and shows that the media in Austria, online outlets, and opinionated news are more negative in tone than their comparison groups. By contrast, the Swiss media publish more positive news and portray political actors in less gloomy ways. Finally, we reveal that, in contrast to common expectations, the mass-market press provides political news with the least negative touch.

Keywords: negativity, conflict, tonality, political communication, international comparison, content analysis

Doreen Reifegerste / Patrick Rössler: Social Appeals in Health Communication. Motives as a Basis for a Theoretical Integration and Systematisation of Empirical Findings (Soziale Appelle in der Gesundheitskommunikation. Motivkategorien als Grundlage für die theoretische Integration und die Systematisierung empirischer Befunde), pp. 606-634

In the field of health communication, social appeals, such as the representation of social consequences, have recently been employed increasingly. However, there is still the need for a systematisation and, moreover, a clear definition of social appeals in communication research. This is particularly true with regard to comparisons of social appeals and appeals that mainly refer to health consequences. As a result, findings of media content analyses and experimental studies are often insufficiently interpreted and compared. Based on the framing approach, we suggest a differentiation of messages that is linked to psychological findings about social motives. We present an overview of empirical studies indicating how this can lead to a systematisation of findings in health communication and point out how different the effects of the various appeals are. Both the motives and the health topics addressed are, indeed, relevant for the effects of social appeals. We discuss the implications for further theoretical developments, for empirical research of content and effects, and for the planning and evaluation of campaigns.

Keywords: health communication, social appeals, message strategies, framing, motivation

Anna M. Theis-Berglmair: Medialization, Systems and Organisations. A Re-Arrangement of Theory and a Reply to Michael Meyen's 'The Medialization of German Professional Football' in M&K 3/2014 (Medialisierung, Systeme und Organisationen. Ein Re-Arrangement von Theorie und eine Replik auf Michael Meyens „Medialisierung des deutschen Spitzenfußballs“ in M&K 3/2014), pp. 635-644

The concept of medialization mostly comes along with the idea of a modern society as a functionally differentiated society. Sport, too, is considered as such a functional system. Empirical data seem to confirm that actors like football clubs and associations have adapted to the logic of the mass media in recent years. Scholars often describe these developments using metaphors such as 'superposition', 'merger' or 'concealment' of system logics. In this paper I propose to refrain from using these metaphors, for they contradict the architecture of systems theory. Instead, I introduce an alternative model which refers to the process of multi-referential organizations dealing with different logics through communicative processing. In fact, this process appears more like tottasting and diaeresis than merger.

Keywords: medialisation, systems theory, tottasting, diaeresis

Michael Meyen: Medialization Theory. A Response to Anna M. Theis-Berglmair (Theorie der Medialisierung. Eine Erwiderung auf Anna M. Theis-Berglmair), pp. 645-655

This paper focuses on Theis-Berglmair's two main points. According to her, systems theory's architecture wouldn't allow any medialization concept targeting actors. Instead, she proposes to analyse "the communicative processing of different system logics" within organisations. In response, I discuss the functions of theories in general. Then, based on both the field's traditions and research opportunities, I explain why the linking of actor and systems theory might be appropriate. Finally, now based on Schimank's approach of actor-structure dynamics, I define medialization as long-term second order media effects or, to put it more precisely, as actors' reaction in other social functional systems to the media system's logic.

Keywords: medialization, function of theories, actor and systems theory, communication's subject



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