

**Title:** “I can have an opinion without being like, the internet has to know”: How space matters in social (news) media

**Bio:** Tim Groot Kormelink is a PhD Candidate in Journalism Studies at the VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands ([t.grootkormelink@vu.nl](mailto:t.grootkormelink@vu.nl))

Irene Costera Meijer is Professor of Journalism Studies at VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands. She directs (with M. Broersma) the NWO (Media/ICT) strategic research project The New News Consumer ([icostera.meijer@vu.nl](mailto:icostera.meijer@vu.nl)).

### **Abstract**

It has been claimed that news is becoming a shared, social experience (cf. Hermida et al. 2012; Purcell et al., 2010). “If searching for news was the most important development of the last decade, sharing news may be among the most important of the next,” wrote Mitchell and Rosenstiel in 2011. News, however, has always been social: long before the advent of social media, people made small talk about the news at the water cooler, and discussed it while watching the news together on the couch. Second, without seeking to minimize the impact of social media, our audience research suggests that news consumption on Facebook and Twitter is supplemental. The research participants do regularly encounter news in their Facebook feeds, but they usually do not experience news as an important part of Facebook, and, conversely, do not experience Facebook as an important part of their news use. While Twitter generally also plays a limited role in their news diet, Twitter users do appear to be more welcoming to news. This result highlights the importance of differentiating between social networking sites and their respective genre conventions.

Between 2011 and 2014, 113 people were interviewed in an everyday setting about their news use, employing such qualitative research methods as sensory ethnography, ranking exercises, and the think-aloud protocol. The experiences of a wide spectrum of research participants were included: younger and older users, laggards and early adopters, and light and heavy users. The results show how space matters in news use: by the water cooler, people use news as fodder for conversation, but on Facebook, news becomes part of the user’s identity. The research participants showed a marked hesitancy about engaging in liking, sharing and commenting on the news. Displaying an awareness of the (potential) publicness of these practices, they worried about “what others might think”. Why should they share their

news interests with “all and sundry”? What is more, they showed concern for their privacy: what exactly happens when you click on a share button? Rather than “share” the news, several participants preferred to “link” the news, i.e., copy and paste the article’s URL. As these acts of linking are not registered by news organizations, web metrics do not accurately reflect the (re)distribution behavior of users.

**Title:** Online Remediation of the News on the Eurozone Crisis by the Eurosceptic-Populist Party True Finns

**Bio:** Niko Hatakka is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Political Science and Contemporary History at the University of Turku, Finland ([nthata@utu.fi](mailto:nthata@utu.fi)).

### **Abstract**

The paper explores how populist euroscepticism – a political discourse historically excluded from the Finnish public sphere – has found its way to the mainstream via online remediation and politically motivated reframing of the news flow. My research addresses the transformation of discursive public space, in which web-communication and traditional journalism have become tightly interconnected parts of the political public sphere. Due to the rise of social media, news on politics and social issues are no longer being merely broadcasted, but as the paper enlightens, they are being remediated and ideologically reconfigured through individuals' online commentary of the news. This enables activists and fringe politicians to get more involved in the framing and public contestation of policy options within their political communities.

The relationship between journalism and eurosceptic-populist online remediation of the news is analyzed in the context of the on-going Eurozone crisis. In the paper a compilation of the populist party True Finns parliamentarians' blog-texts, Facebook-updates and tweets from the years 2010–2014 is subjected to qualitative textual frame analysis in order to answer the question of how the news flow on the Eurozone-crisis has been diffused into populist rhetoric, argumentation and anti-EU advocacy. By utilizing Robert Benford and David Snow's theory on social movements' framing processes, the findings suggest that politically motivated online remediation of the news increases the eurosceptics' framing power at the cost of reducing the journalists' and the political elite's control over public discourse on European integration. In the paper it is further elaborated, how this type of research approach could be used to better understand how networked counter-publics contribute to the formation and political utilization of alternative spheres of knowledge.

**Title:** Bigger than the brand. Journalists, social media and audience relations

**Bio:** Piet Bakker is Professor Cross Media & Journalism at the School of Journalism and Communication at the Technical University Utrecht, The Netherlands (piet.bakker@hu.nl).

### **Abstract**

For journalists, their network has always been an important asset; their Rolodex, phonebook and contact-list gave them access to sources and information. Because it was a private network, it also gave them a competitive advantage over competitors. A whole industry of deep background off-the-record information, trusted sources, anonymous spokesmen and mysterious leaks could be traced back to this network.

These private networks still exist but have been expanded and partly substituted by public networks. Politicians and other public figures can ‘skip’ traditional media by using social media to communicate directly with audiences; journalists can expand their network with sources, audience members and colleagues by using these same media. In many cases the journalists themselves become more popular than the media they work for. Almost every broadcaster and newspaper in the Netherlands now employs journalists who have more followers – and more interactions with the audience - than the media they represent. Sometimes this concerns the editor-in-chief of the medium, but in most cases it concerns columnists, prolific reporters or foreign correspondents.

In this research we focus on this expanded network and how journalists deal with this position based on their online popularity. We argue that in these cases individual journalists ‘become’ the media brand, and often even bigger than the brand. They change from professionals into celebrities. An unwanted by-effect of this popularity is that they also have to take the blame for mistakes media are claimed to make or for opinions these media are taught to hold according to members of the audience. This includes taking abuse– ranging from name-calling to death threats -, and dealing with trolls and online stalkers.

We track journalists from regional and national newspapers and broadcasters. We compare their popularity with that of their employer, but more important we investigate how they communicate with audience members, what topics they discuss, the way they communicate with followers, whether they are seen (and react) as celebrities or journalistic professionals, and how they deal with criticism and abuse.

Theoretically, this research must be seen against the background of media and communication within the public sphere becomes more personal and direct; we are

particularly interested in the consequences these developments might have for media, the people they employ and public communication.

**Title:** Serendipitous news consumption. A mixed-method audience-centred study on mobile devices

**Bio:** Kristin Van Damme is a research and teaching assistant at Ghent University, iMinds-MICT-Ghent University, Belgium (Kristin.VanDamme@UGent.be).

Cédric Courtois, and Jorre Afschrift, iMinds-MICT-Ghent University - Belgium

### **Abstract**

As a consequence of media convergence, news production and consumption are substantially liquefying (Murray, 2003). This especially holds up for news items, which have become transferable commodities that are no longer inherently tied to a specific platform. In recent years, mobile news consumption has increasingly permeated individuals' news consumption repertoires (Picone, Courtois, & Paulussen, in press). Hence, the main purpose of this study is to gain insight in the serendipitous find of mobile news, with an emphasis on mobile news consumption through social media. Based on existing models of serendipity (Sun, Sharples, & Marki, 2011; Rubin, Burckell, & Quan-Haase, 2011), the role of serendipity in mobile news consumption has been investigated.

The study elaborates on the relation between serendipity in mobile news and (1) specific news types, (2) the news interests of the consumer, (3) the location and (4) the device used by the consumers. A second topic is the difference in the experience of serendipity between different groups of mobile news consumers. A multi-method user-centred design was set up to investigate these topics, combining four research phases: (1) a guiding cluster analysis on news consumption ( $N = 1279$ ), (2) in-depth interviews ( $N = 30$ ) on news habits, followed by (3) a week in which the news related activities of the respondents are being followed through diaries and device logging and (4) a debriefing to confront the respondents with their news consumption patterns.

The data analysis shows that three groups of mobile news consumers can be distinguished. A first cluster of *omnivores* is predominantly characterized by a digital news diet originating from multiple sources. Each of them experience news serendipity differently. They frequently experience serendipity through the use of social network sites. Second, a cluster of *traditionalists* is discerned, which mainly sticks to traditional audio-visual outlets, while rarely engaging in mobile news consumption. To them, serendipity is mostly experienced on the tablet, through social network sites or the scanning of news websites.

Finally, a third cluster is composed of *stumblers*, not routinely engaging with news, albeit usually digital in nature when they do. The smartphone is the preferred device and they experience serendipity through scanning of news websites.

Results show that news serendipity is mostly experienced at home for all three of the groups and the greatest part of serendipity is directed towards lighter news types and the types of interest from the consumer.

**Title:** Public Interfaces of Science Topics – News and Tweets

**Bio:** Moritz Büchi is a research and teaching associate in the Division on Media Change and Innovation at the Institute of Mass Communication and Media Research, University of Zurich, Switzerland (m.buechi@ipmz.uzh.ch).

### **Abstract**

For most people, media are their main source of scientific information. Services such as Twitter offer new ways to disseminate and debate research-based knowledge. How are scientific topics being discussed on Twitter? And in traditional news outlets? Who are the central players? What does the network structure tell us about the diffusion of topics? How are web resources and other users referenced in tweets with scientific content?

The interface between the science community and the public is shifting – from traditional news outlets to originally web-based services (Brossard & Scheufele 2013, Brossard 2013). For the empirical analysis, the old and new web are represented by traditional news websites and Twitter, respectively. Others have stressed the importance of Twitter for «science 2.0» (e.g. Darling et al. 2013). The dominant functional role of Twitter is not entirely solidified (van Dijck 2012), therefore the structure of tweets and the network constellation of users is analyzed. News websites are selected based on a classification by Weber & Monge (2011). Related Twitter research has e.g. been conducted by Bruns & Burgess (2012) and Veltri (2013). The unique feature of this analysis however, is a dynamic linkage between tweets and online science news – this avoids an ex-ante restriction on a specific issue (e.g. nanotechnology).

A dynamic setup automatically collected online science news articles, extracted topic key words using latent Dirichlet allocation (Blei 2012), and scraped the Twitter API for matching tweets over the course of five weeks. The data comprise 965 news articles and 72,469 tweets. Methods include topic modeling, bag-of-words based co-occurrence analysis (Grimmer & Stewart 2013), multidimensional scaling, social network analysis, and sentiment analysis.

Major topics in the period of data collection are space (e.g. water on Mars), the Nobel Prizes, the U.S. government shutdown, breast cancer, and climate change. The prevalence of mentioning other users and linking to Web pages in tweets points to a recommender role of Twitter. The mention network of users shows some conversational aspects but a pronounced and unidirectional focus on big traditional players such as The New York Times. Science

news is on average more positive in tone than tweets, which in turn experience much greater sentiment variation. The contextualization of science issues (term co-occurrences) differs for some topics while it is essentially the same for others. The empirical results and the literature review insights are synthesized in a bigger picture to foster future research.