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Innovation, young audiences, and political support in public service media. New challenges or are we late? An in-depth analysis of the Catalan case

Authors

Dr. Aida Martori Muntsant - Universitat Autònma de Barcelona

Abstract

For many years scholars have been analysing the challenges of Public Service Media (PSM) in the digital era (Moragas&Prado, 2000; Armstrong&Weeds, 2007; Ferrell Lowe&Bardoel, 2007; Bardoel&d'Haenens, 2008; Dönders, 2012; Jankowsky, 2012; Ferrell Lowe&Steemers, 2012; Gulyás&Hammer, 2013; Sehl, Corina&Kleis Nielsen, 2016; Galán-Cubillo, Soler-Campillo&Marzal, 2021). Innovation is added to the traditional main goals of public service media to be adapted to the online consumption patterns and to be findable in a globalized media market in which big platforms have the power. The use of algorithms and data collection by PSM is an issue under debate (Sørensen, 2020): whereas there are point of views against it in terms of public interest, others argue that it could be a way to prevent the risks of news avoidance, especially in young people (Skovsgaarda&Andersen, 2020). PSM could not only propose content based on big data of people's personal preferences, but also on what the broadcaster itself find relevant for the users (European Broadcasting Union, 2016). One of the dangers of the PSM pillars in Europe is universality (Arriaza&Morillas, 2022), that remains in the public service objectives while content must be targeted to reach all potential audience. The most disconnected from PSM are youngers, with diversified consumption habits through digital platforms in a context of platfomization (Raats, Dönders&Ramsey, 2022). These challenges are not able to be faced without political support that make public service outlets strong and provided with enough financially sources.

Following Raats, Donders&Ramsey (2022) topics of analysis, this communication looks at three items: innovation, young audiences and political support in the Catalan public service media, as key elements to their adaptation to the current and (near) future challenges. This case-study brings knowledge to the debate of the situation of regional public media with a role in promoting minority languages (so Minority Language Media-MLM). Using a qualitative methodology, consisted in consultation of documentation and interviews, this research explores the situation of PSM regarding new and old challenges. Preliminary results show how budged cuts are affecting innovation in PSM, and therefore its presence in platforms and the digital sphere. The adoption of new narratives -such as transmedia (Jenkins, 2008; Monoley, 2011; Scolari, 2013)-have been limited, with implications in the potential of exploring engagement, especially with young audiences. Moreover, the recent launch of an OTT for children content appears after years of a scarcity of new programming for kids. This strategy was accompanied with the creation of a new music program for young people, with an incipient multimedia strategy, who has been more consumed by kids and families than the target to whom was designed (youngers). Finally, the

independence of public service media is not guaranteed after the election of the board members and the chair of the public corporation following political criteria more than professional.

This communication contributes to the current international debates about PSM and in-depth analyses one study case to provide up-dated information and explore challenges -and possible solutions- that can be applied by other public media outlets.

Key Words
Public Service Media, innovation, platformization, universality, young audiences, challenges, digitalitzation

Public Service Media online: A comparative policy perspective on the shift to digital portals in six countries

Authors

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Abstract

In the current fast-changing media landscape, Public Service Media (PSM) are increasingly repositioning their own video-on-demand (VOD) services as portals to their brands and content offerings. This 'platformization' process comes with both challenges and opportunities in reaching the public service remit (Bardoel and d'Haenens, 2008; Donders, 2021). The former range from reaching audiences of all ages and backgrounds, to dealing with government cutbacks and competition with global VOD services and video-sharing platforms (D'Arma et al., 2021; Donders, 2019). The competition is not only focused on audience reach and market share, but also on securing programming rights, and dealing with algorithmic curation and data privacy concerns (Michalis, 2022; Moe, 2008). Moreover, policy and regulation are often impacted by political agendas (Freedman, 2008; Van den Bulck and Raats, 2022).

This paper addresses the shift towards online portals from a policy perspective. The aim is to determine what the core policy priorities are and how these are translated into specific requirements for the PSM VOD service. The research sets out from a comparative case study across six countries: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Italy, Poland, and the UK. The study is based on policy document analysis, conducted through close reading and textual analysis. The dataset consists of over 75 documents, including media legislation, management contracts, monitoring reports of media regulators, annual reports of PSM organisations, Government agreements and resolutions, policy notes, and other country- and context-specific documents. The comparative analysis follows eight dimensions: (1) PSM values and mission; (2) core concepts used to define the role of PSM; (3) strategic objectives and priorities; (4) audience reach; (5) multiplatform requirements; (6) algorithms, recommenders, data handling and processing; (7) prominence rules; and (8) digital collaborations and use of third-party platforms.

Preliminary findings point to a wide diversity of policy priorities, ranging from broad requirements to reach 'relevant audiences' and the necessity of PSM's accessibility online, to very specific multiplatform requirements aiming to integrate all PSM brands into one central VOD portal. There is a notable level of techno-optimism across the cases with regard to the use of 'taste-broadening' or 'public service' algorithms but often limited information on the editorial strategy behind recommender systems, their workings, or forms of evaluation. Political contexts are also present in the formulation of priorities and objectives for PSM, ranging from establishing prominence rules for domestic content, to supporting the media 'ecosystem' through strategic partnerships and informal collaborations.

Key Words

The crossroads of the Public Broadcasting System of the Mexican State in a Digital Ecosystem (2014-2022)

Authors

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Abstract

In Mexico, the Public Broadcasting System of the Mexican State (SPREM) was created after the Federal Telecommunications and Broadcasting Law was approved in 2014. This document recognizes for the first time as public services of general interest broadcasting and telecommunications, thus replacing the Law of 1960 and the Law of 1995 which in their political foundations presented a series of legal gaps with respect to the essential principles of public service (cultural diversity, ideological and political plurality and promotion of plural and independent information, among others).

It is important to note that since its origins, the media in Mexico have been managed by business groups, which has generated relations of power and political and economic influence that have limited and hindered the development of public media. The functions of the media financed with public resources in Mexico have coexisted with a series of economic and political interests that at certain times have diluted the obligations and missions with respect to the generation of educational and cultural content, so that historically in Mexico a public media service has not been consolidated.

The power of media monopolies in Mexico has extended from the analog stage to the digital ecosystem from a series of processes that have generated social and economic transformations that in turn restructure social communication systems. Thus, the foundations of Mexico's digital media ecosystem are underpinned in two columns: 1. The establishment of liberalization and convergence policy strategies have promoted corporate ownership in the telecommunications sector asymmetrically; 2. The platformization that has increased the power of media companies in the areas of production and distribution of informative and entertainment content.

Given this context, the objective of this paper is to carry out an evaluation of the Mexican Public Broadcasting System (SPR) in a digital ecosystem, based on five conceptual elements that are a fundamental part of the ethos of public service: 1) Independence. Related to the generation of a plural political environment based on a democratic and inclusive vision; 2) Universality. This is divided into three fundamental points: (a) universal access to services for the entire population; (b) Encourage the development of a common culture that includes minority communities and groups (c) The construction of programming that includes information, education and entertainment; 3) Citizenship. It starts from a national identity and the construction of the foundations of a democratic political culture; 4) Quality. Based on the obligation to promote and develop the best programming and services; and 5) Diversity. Enrich and promote the common interests of all social groups, including the most vulnerable.

Key Words

How Does the Korean Wave Reimagine the Discourse on PSMs?: The Reconfiguration of Korean PSMs by the Confluence of Neoliberalism and Nationalism

Authors

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Abstract

Public service broadcasting (PSB) worldwide is facing a crisis. PSBs were designed as a project of modernity for enhancing social integration and democracy, however, have been threatened by newly emerging factors such as convergence, audience fragmentation, privatization, and neoliberal globalization in a networked society. Their legitimacy has been continuously questioned in a decentralized and networked media landscape that de-emphasizes mass media and calls for an industrial role in generating a profit in an increasingly competitive new media environment.

In this changing context, much of the literature has addressed the recent legitimacy and identity crises of public service media (PSM) and discussed its future role. However, the literature often fails to capture diverse perspectives and dynamics by paying asymmetrical attention to PSMs in Europe while neglecting the non-Western PSM context. Against such a backdrop, this study traces the trajectory of discourse on PSMs in South Korea by analyzing news and government documents to identify how discourse is closely interwoven with media governance, assuming that Korean media governance is legitimized by a cultural policy centered on the Korean Wave as a nation-branding initiative fueled by a confluence of nationalism and neoliberalism.

It is intriguing to analyze the South Korean PSM in three ways: (1) the Korean broadcasting industry has rapidly developed so that South Korea ranks third worldwide in broadcast content export with the sudden popularity of Korean culture, often called the Korean Wave, during which PSMs played a crucial role in media production; (2) Korea's PSMs have been vulnerable to government intervention since past military regime used them as a propaganda vehicle, leading to public distrust; and (3) the media industry has undergone massive structural changes over the last decade by introducing pro-market neoliberal policies that allowed the entry of large corporations. This study argues that studying the local context of Korean PSMs will enrich PSM studies by providing different social contexts. To this end, this study employs Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, which views institutions as a social construct of discourse, to analyze news articles and government documents about two major PSMs in South Korea (KBS and MBC) to identify how their social functions have faded from public discourse and evolved into neoliberal logic, most notably in accordance with the rise of the Korean Wave-focused nationalist sentiments and profit-driven narrative.

The Use of Social Media by the Public Service Media in Mexico: ¿Has anything changed?

Authors

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Abstract

Since the digital technological revolution, the ability to demand better content, exercise citizens' rights and use of public service media as an instrument of transparency and citizen space, has modified the type of communication established between government authorities and audiences in general in Mexico.

Particularly, this modification has been related to the integration of new concepts in the policies and laws that regulate public service media in this country. In this reconfiguration process, concepts such as "public sphere"(Papacharessi,2012); "public interest"(UNESCO, 20116) "digitalization" and "public service media" (Federal Telecommunications Law, 2014) have been adapted.

Main research question that motivates this work is to know if in Mexico there have been a change in the use of digital platforms by public service media in general or if on the contrary, in some cases, especially in those funded by the State, they continue to be used as simple promoters of government activities.

Methodologically, a first comparative study is carried out between 2015 and 2023 on the use by university public service media and state-funded public service media between 2015 and 2023.

As a result, a better and greater understanding of these concepts is observed within public service media integrated to Public Universities than within those public service media funded by the government. The ones that once use to be called official public media before the federal 2014 law.

This study pursues the additional intention of accounting for the changes or advances in the transition of public media in Mexico after digitalization towards a better public communication, understood as "the set of phenomena of production, treatment and feedback of information that reflects, creates and guides public issues. Public communication understood not only as the work of the media, but also of the institutions, companies, movements and groups that intervene in the public square" (Beauchamp 1991).

The content analysis done during a month of the publications of several public service media since 2015 and now in 2023, both within university and government founded public service media , helped to identify the differences in the management and use of the social networks of this kind of media.

Key Words

Public Service Media, Social Media Use, Mexico, 2015-2023

Assessing impartiality as cornerstone of news reporting in European Public Service Media. A comparative analysis of the BBC, RTÉ, and VRT.

Authors

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Prof. Tim Raats - imec-SMIT, VUB

Abstract

In 2012, members of the European Broadcasting Union unanimously voted to abide by a set of editorial principles guiding news reporting. Amongst these is the value requiring public service media (PSM) to be *impartial* from political and commercial interests (EBU, 2012). The EBU protocols reaffirm the importance of 'impartiality' as central to PSM values since their inception. However, the concept itself has always remained vaguely defined and has often been used interchangeably with notions such as neutrality and objectivity resulting in conflicting assessments of how useful the concept really is (Boudana, 2016; Friedman, 1989; Ojala, 2021). Most research in the field focuses on the BBC (Barwise & York, 2020; Bélair-Gagnon, 2013), with measurements of impartiality relying mostly on counting actors and sources in news items (Cushion et al., 2017; Cushion & Lewis, 2017). This is valuable, yet poses several limitations, for example related to the difficulties of adding 'weight' to a source contribution (Masini et al., 2018; Masini & Van Aelst, 2017). Some media scholars even oppose the use of 'impartiality' as it is considered to precisely impede the political independence it sets out to protect (Barnett, 2012).

This research aims to understand how impartiality is shaping the editorial freedom of PSM from a policy and governance perspective. The purpose of the study is to broaden the scope of research on impartiality as a mechanism to enable or limit PSM independence. We employ a comparative case study analysis of three PSM organisations: BBC (UK), VRT (Flanders-Belgium), and RTÉ (Ireland). The method applied is document analysis, including government charters, contracts, editorial guidelines, and reports on impartiality. The choice of case studies is based on three reasons. All three PSM have been criticised on a perceived lack of impartiality in the press and political discourse (Droeven, 2022; O`Donnell, 2022; Waterson, 2022). All three operate in societies characterised by growing societal polarisation (Cushion & Thomas, 2019; Raats et al., 2021, 2022). Finally, all three cases have defined and operationalised 'impartiality' in regulatory documents and internal editorial guidelines.

Findings demonstrate that PSM define impartiality mainly in internal documents rather than public service contracts or media legislation. Impartiality is also considered across a series of programs rather than within one news item. Thirdly, significant differences exist with regard to its scope. The analysis also shows that impartiality has more resemblance with 'plurality' (as PSM define it as representing a multitude of views), rather than with independence or neutrality. We argue that a policy emphasis and government attempts on monitoring impartiality feed one-sided ideals of absolute balance as something achievable, similarly defined, and quantifiable. We contend that

impartiality is useful to study as 'viewpoint diversity' and argue for a deeper understanding of its relevance. This can be done by studying how it is openly or indirectly constructed within PSM newsrooms, and, most importantly, to what extent existing regulations guide decisions made with regard to viewpoint diversity.

Key Words

Public Service Media, impartiality, viewpoint diversity, independence, balance, media policy.

Connecting Communities and Fostering a Sense of Local Autonomy: The Value of PSM in a Network Era

Authors

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Mr. Kazuya Sano - TORCH Inc.

Dr. Tomoko Kanayama - Institute of Advanced Media Arts and Sciences

Abstract

The significance of public service media (PSM) has been questioned due to the digitalization of global media platforms, which led to a political debate. It has been pointed out that PSM will have no future unless it can clarify what kind of value it has for our society (Rodríguez-Castro, et.al., 2021).

In the 1980s, Japan's public broadcaster NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) solved the problem of difficulty viewing areas by establishing satellite broadcasting. The meaning of "delivering information far and wide" needed to be developed qualitatively, not quantitatively, to meet the needs of a wider range of viewers. It is essential to depart from classical public broadcasting and reconstruct it for the new era (Yoshida, 2018).

Under this circumstance, NHK Sapporo Station, a branch station of NHK, has sought untried innovations, and recently begun to adopt program proposals from local players. "A travel journal with Local-Friends" is a program in which residents in each local area in Hokkaido proactively introduce their lifestyles and produce the program with their own wills and voices. After three years of broadcasting this program has gained a high recognition rate in the areas where "Local-Friends" lives, exceeding 50%. Also, it has received major design competition awards in Japan, attracting attention in terms of "empowering the activities of communities themselves through the integration of the mass media's capability to disseminate, edit, and produce information and the ability of regional residents to pick up niche information about the communities" (Good Design Award 2022, Good Design Best 100).

This study focuses on the establishment of connections among local actors and the creation of new local activities after the program was broadcast. Using Actor-network-theory as the research perspective, we tracked more than 120 programs broadcasted so far, 100 local actors from 20 regions and 20 program directors and it's conducted in-depth interviews with important actors.

The result of the study indicates that local players have developed a sense of local autonomy through the program production process, that networks have been formed among the players in each region, and that local communities are linking and bonding with each other. In addition, NHK's regional stations were stimulated by the activities of local players. As a result, a movement to seek values in public media that differs from traditional journalistic methods has occurred and a search has begun to change the human resource development system.

PSM Climate Action and its Challenge born by New Geopolitics An integrated theories of global communication critique

Authors

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Abstract

It has been a year-long for War in Ukraine. The democratic regime led by U.S. and European Union is consolidated for defending their allies and the value they shared. The threat of authoritarian regime (Russia, China, and Iran) has been increasingly demonstrated as present and clear danger. An unprecedented challenge to global PSM for dedicating into peace, mutual understanding, diversity, unity, progress, accountability and humanitarian is caused by the strategic block of major realist players for security and political concerns.

The wake-up call for a democratic coalition organized by Association for International Broadcasting (AIB) held on 15 July 2022 is a landmark deal. The summit endorsed media as the important stakeholders of achieving SDGs by ECOSOC (U.N. Economic and Social Council). It was the first time inviting the delegate of UA: PBC (Public Broadcasting Company, Ukraine) join into the major group of global public news media (with BBC, VOA, DW etc.) by multilateral organization stood for a side-event of U.N. High Level Political Forum (HLPF). One questioned this very special occasion of supporting SDGs included the climate action (SDG 13) has been reshaped by new geopolitics already or not.

On the other hand, Asia-Pacific, a continent comprising of the most nations have been affected by weather-related events such as storms, flooding and heat waves in the past, already well-prepared into group action tackling climate change and disaster reporting. It went even further for combating COVID-19 pandemic formed a Union (ABU) consolidation between Japan (NHK), Korea (PBS), China (CCTV), India (Prasar Bharati), Turkey (TRT), and Australia (ABC) together in first ever CEO Forum in August 2020. However, an ambivalent position was also created by Public Media Alliance (former Commonwealth Broadcasting Association) called Global Task Force for Public Media. In mostly welcome for a new member, KBS, once achieved, the existing coalition is tenable to be recognized as "Global" with ABC, CBC (Canada), BBC (UK), SVT (Sweden), ZDF (Germany), France TV (France), and RNZ (New Zealand) altogether. The Task Force is firmly reinstated their mission including held the establishment and vested interest accountable.

This paper proposed it is desperately needed a review of the organized activities above. It is critically questioning the existed disaster risk reduction and climate action organized by ABU would be compromise by new international regime. The theorizes of global communication (Frederick, 1993) is played a key methodological inquiry into the core of this problematics. The micro-level of global theoretical view is centralized on the motive and situation of one actor (ex. CEO) or group interacting within which an international media governance PSM involved. The mid-range side of it locked on the message who convene, the ritual how perform, and the symbolic meaning where to

interpret. This precise study should be paid to the event held by AIB conjunctively with ECOSOC as a "ground-breaking" talk on media contribution to SDGs.

Finally, the macro-level one helps tune the focus into the making of global public service media by PMA. A new geopolitics is channeling PSM into a new state-media bloc through their common exchanges, culture, national consciousness, and boundaries. The European nations, with the margin of Western culture expanded into Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, is the best exemplar for a classic liberal democratic one. However, to levelling a "Global" coalition, recommended Korea PSM join the new camp in 2020 is a crucial step. This final step brought the issues of disaster risk reduction, peace and unification, disaster reporting, and regional integration back to central concerns through a multilateralism clashing with unilateral strategic confrontation. Those levels from individual to system analysis should assess the recent days of PSM globally mobilization for either their original humanitarian missions intact or a divided world view barely serving the exclusive power of new order respectively.

Key Words
ABU, AIB, Disaster Risk Reduction, Geopolitics, International relation, PMA, SDGs

Publics, Counterpublics and Public Service Media: the case of CBC's English-language services

Authors

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Abstract

Public Service Media (PSM) create value by supporting important public goods, notably democratic practices, social cohesion, inclusion, freedom of expression, cultural authority, and innovation (Goodman 2013: 193; Martin & Lowe, 2014). However, PSM around the world currently are facing similar 'wicked' problems in making their value propositions salient in a media environment rife with asymmetrical media power, surveillance, dis- and misinformation, hate speech, social polarization, conspiracy theories, commercial intent, and data enclosure (EBU, 2012; IAMCR, 2021; Ofcom, 2020; Rodríguez-Castro, Campos-Freire, & Túñez-López, 2021; Savage, Medina & Lowe, 2020). In a number of countries, including Canada, right-wing populist counterpublics have emerged that seek to reduce or eliminate PSM.

In this paper we use a computational approach to examine public and counterpublic perceptions of the value of CBC, Canada's national English-language public media organization. We first provide an overview of CBC/Radio-Canada the English and French-language arms, respectively), an organization in a decades-long crisis (Raboy & Taras, 2005, 2007; Taras & Waddell, 2020). Severely underfunded by international standards, this PSM is mandated to provide the distinctly and predominantly Canadian cornerstone for the national media ecosystem by reflecting Canadian identity, addressing its audiences as citizens, and providing media products and services that private broadcasters cannot or will not provide (Taras & Waddell, 2020). We then summarize recent English-language press coverage of CBC, showing ongoing largely negative representations of Canada's national PSM, with only occasional consideration of its public service mission (DeCillia & McCurdy, 2016). We then apply text mining, topic modeling, and computational linguistics tools to analyze two corpora: 9000+ English-language "interventions" or comments that Canadians sent to CRTC, the regulatory agency, on the occasion of the CBC/Radio-Canada's license renewal hearings in late 2019 and early 2020, and 40,000 tweets since 2012 that use the #defundtheCBC hashtag. We identify the major topics of interest and concern, providing a basis for identifying and comparing ways that Canadian publics and counterpublics perceive CBC's value.

The analysis shows a pattern of deep polarization. For approving publics, positive values are perceived national reach, trustworthiness, and contribution to a sense of Canadian identity, while for counterpublics, negative values are perceived cultural arrogance, low quality, and political bias against Western Canada, rural regions, and socially conservative points of view. More recently, opposition to CBC has been amplified by populist hostility toward covid-related public health

measures. We discuss expectations regarding PSM in the context cultural polarization between 'hypercultural' and 'cultural essentialist' values (Reckwitz, 2021), noting the current argument that CBC can no longer afford to be all things to all people, i.e. it must strategically optimize its audience rather than seek universality (Taras & Waddell, 2020).

Key Words

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, CBC, publics, counterpublics, PSM, public service media

Regulated participatory mechanisms in Public Service Media: public complaints in different Media Accountability Instruments in Brazil and Germany

Authors

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Mr. Dominik Speck - Erich-Brost Institute for International Journalism

Abstract

With the emergence of new platforms and media ecosystems and changing consumption patterns, Public Service Broadcasters (PSB) around the world face similar challenges. Arguably, what ultimately might become the shift from PSB to Public Service Media (PSM) requires more audience participation and feedback channels for complaints. While Germany and Brazil have different Public Service Media models and experiences, those reveal similarities with regard to Media Accountability Instruments (MAI) used to guarantee and stimulate audience access, interaction and participation (Carpentier, 2015).

At this work-in-progress study, we analyze the case of two public broadcasters - the Brazilian Empresa Brasil de Comunicação (EBC) and the German Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR) - regarding regulated accountability mechanisms to receive, analyze and publish audiences' requests and complaints. The Brazilian EBC is the national PSM company that runs radio and TV public stations and a public news agency, as well as provides media services for the government. The WDR is a regional PSB that manages public radio and TV stations from the Northwest of Germany. While in Brazil we have a recent experience for a national PSM company, in Germany a decentralized PSM model is more consolidated, despite there being a debate in both countries about PSM importance for democracy in a neoliberal and digital context, especially in view of recent events that include changings of regulations and political struggles into the PSM role discussion.

So the choice to analyze procedures from Empresa Brasil de Comunicação (EBC) in relation with Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR) intends to highlight established parameters of acting for participatory mechanisms as Media Accountability Instruments into PSM companies. In a primary observation, we identified Ombudsman Service (EBC) and Audience Office (WDR) as well as Broadcasting Council/Programming Committee (EBC/WDR) as regulated mechanisms that maintain comparable procedures of receiving, analyzing and responding to demands from the audiences.

The analysis compares regulatory and organizational documents, such as reports and legal texts from both institutions to describe and interpret some discursive data in those cases, considering the comparison between socio-historical and organizational contexts. It takes into account comparative studies on Media Accountability Systems and Instruments (Bertrand, 2002; Fengler et al., 2022).

According to Nico Carpentier, in minimalist democratic models of participation "the participatory procedures are seen to be resulting in the expression of a collective and homogeneous public will" (Carpentier, 2011). Depending on how these procedures are taken, regarding regulation and organizational processes on programming requests and complaints, it could result in changes in organizational procedures and content quality for those broadcasting companies.

Key Words

PSM, MAI, Brazil, Germany, Audience, Participation, Regulation, Accountability, Democracy

The Role of Public Service Broadcasting in Developing Networked Public Sphere: An Empirical Evidence from Global South

Authors

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Abstract

The traditional concept of the "public sphere" has undergone significant transformations with the growth of the internet and the rise of digital media platforms. This transformation has both positive and negative implications. Despite many challenges, this [transformed] public sphere continues to be an important force in shaping public discourse and determining the future direction of our society. In this context, the understanding of the media manager of public service broadcasting (PSB) about digital media broadcasting and the [transformed] public sphere is crucial for ensuring that PSB can effectively serve their audiences and contribute to a well-informed and engaged citizenry. A good understanding of digital media platforms and the [transformed] public sphere allows media managers to make informed decisions about the content that is produced and disseminated through their media outlets. This includes understanding the potential impact and the ethical and legal implications. There is a theoretical understanding that Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) organizations are transforming themselves into Public Service Media (PSM) organizations in order to better contribute to the [transformed] public sphere of online and social networks. Empirical research also supports this theoretical understanding. However, in the context of the global south, this research wants to employ this theoretical understanding, as it has been a topic of extensive discussion and lacks empirical evidence. This research aims to contribute to this discussion by offering a new perspective based on a theoretical understanding of the role of digital media in creating [transformed] public sphere. It seeks to understand how digital media, including online and social networks, can facilitate the creation of the [transformed] public sphere. Additionally, this article also examines the potential challenges and limitations of digital media in facilitating the [transformed] public sphere. By examining the experience of PSBs in the global south, this research can provide valuable insights into how PSBs can play a crucial role in the development of a public sphere that is inclusive, participatory, and diverse. To do this, this research combines and operationalizes two relevant theoretical concepts: digital transformation and the networked public sphere. In addition to the theoretical targets, this research aims to provide practical insights and tools for the PSB's practitioners (of the global south) to understand the challenges of organizational changes and develop managerial practices. Primary data for this research has been collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews with different levels of media managers at the public radio broadcaster (Bangladesh Betar) of Bangladesh. In the interviews, this research has found that digital media platforms have broadened the scope for creating the public sphere. However, this article argues that broadcasting selective content on digital media platforms can limit the creation of a robust public sphere, particularly in societies where the digital divide is high and digital media literacy is low.

Key Words

«Man 18» -the challenge of new media practices.

Authors

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Abstract

The Norwegian state broadcaster NRK has a problem with attracting and retaining a younger, male audience. One of the problems is that this demographic habitually uses YouTube, podcasts, games and forums for their news and entertainment. To meet this shift in media use NRK has started a channel on the streaming service *Twitch*. This paper is a discussion of the conflicts between the public service mandate of NRK, the nature of open and commercial streaming services, the aesthetics of streaming culture and the demands of digital streaming as it meets the habits of established television.

LL35 ("Langs Linjen 35," an address) is a Twitch stream from a house bought and refurbished by NRK, an experiment with both genre and technology in experimental beta-state since May/June 2022. Here 3 streamers live 24/7, and stream (at this point) five hours each day. The streamers are selected with an eye to the target audience, but there are other considerations as well: can they be trusted to work independently, will their actions fit within the expectations from a very established and family friendly channel, can they handle constant co-habitation with other streamers who are initially strangers, and can they be trusted to make editorial decisions on the fly?

In addition comes the questions the collaboration between NRK and Twitch invoke. Twitch streaming is a two-way communication channel, where the audience can comment while the streams are live, which means that it needs moderation. LL35 also has a Discord server (a chat program for gamers), where the audience can chat with each other, the personalities, the moderators and the editorial/technical team. And while NRK is an ad free channel (license financed), Twitch is very much a commercial service, where advertising or paid promotions are common, and the audience is used to buying special privilege. Further, when streaming from the computers the streamers use for play and for navigating online cultures, and using the technologies of play, NRK will end up showing advertising and products, even if they are not in partnership with any sponsors for this.

This paper is a discussion of the dilemmas NRK find themselves in while venturing into this very new arena, both when it comes to mastering the genre in competition with large streamer communities, introducing the new genre to the Norwegian mainstream audience, and handling two-way communication, while exploring how to talk about games in a way that a younger gamer audience appreciate and embrace. To study this we have watched LL35 at irregular intervals, and interviewed the project lead and the program editor. We discuss this on a backdrop of theory on streaming, gaming and public service, leaning on TL Taylor's work on streaming (2018) and Trine Syvertsen's work on public service broadcasting in Norway (2008).

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Key Words
Public Service broadcasting, gamers, streaming, Twitch, online culture, produsage,

The part played by commercial broadcasters in the transformation of the Czech Television into a most trusted Czech media institution

Authors

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Abstract

In Central-Eastern Europe, the post-Communist public service broadcasters often have a bad reputation for being subservient to their governments rather than serving the public interest and exercising independent journalism. In contrast, the *Czech Television*, a public service TV broadcaster in the Czech Republic, is consistently beating its domestic competitors in trustworthiness while keeping solid audience figures. Its 24/7 news channel *ČT24* ranked as the most trustworthy news source and its *Události* evening news bulletin the most reliable news program in the country according to a poll among the Czech TV viewers.

This paper argues that the *Czech Television* has been able to reach and maintain this comparatively unique position mainly due to a series of specific reactions on pressures from its commercial rivals after marketization of broadcasting in the mid-1990s and also on political pressures. After the fall of Communism in Czechoslovakia, the former state television that has been until recently used as the main propaganda tool of the old regime had to transform itself into a public broadcaster. Inspired by dual models in the UK and Germany, the Czech lawmakers decided to implement a combination of public and private broadcasting system when an idea of a Czech commercial broadcaster has been still only hypothetical. After this idea materialized, the former monopoly of the post-Communist institution has been swiftly undermined by two private broadcasters *Premiéra TV* (1993) and *TV Nova* (1994). The private broadcasters turned the established habits upside down by introducing new formats, new forms of entertainment, commercialization, and tabloidization, pushing Czech Television into a new role of a struggling outsiders desperately seeking a new identity. The crisis of the public service TV culminated in 2000 during a crisis when the Czech Television journalists orchestrated a successful strike and mobilized their viewers in the name of public service journalism against a new general director suspected of ties with main political party at that time.

Tracing the individual reactions of the public service institution to a series of challenging crisis one by one, this paper claims that the path towards Czech Television's current position of autonomy on political field, leading position in the Czech media field, and relatively high trust among the Czech media audience can be best explained not as being driven by some consistent guiding principle, but rather as a sum of ad-hoc efforts to provide an alternative to various impulses of its commercial competitors that may seem consistent only in hindsight. A comparison with neighboring countries highlights the uniqueness and precariousness of this development, with

productive cohabitation of public and private broadcasters similar to the Western models being an exception rather than a rule.

Key Words

Czech Television, marketization, commercial broadcaster, public servis media, media trust

Artificial Intelligence and Journalism: Critical Considerations for Public Service Media

Authors

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Abstract

Public Service Media (PSM) - predominantly those that are well-resourced and in developed economies - are increasingly deploying artificial intelligence (AI) in news production (EBU 2019, Jones, Jones & Luger 2022) as are counterparts across the news industry (Beckett 2019, Diakopoulos 2019, Marconi 2020). However, PSM organisations' approach to technology innovation has to reflect their distinct role, remit, and values (EBU 2020). This raises complex questions about what it means to responsibly procure, develop, deploy, and report on AI and how to ensure core PSM commitments to principles such as independence, impartiality, and accuracy can be maintained in an era of AI. Our study draws from a series of workshops as part of three years' collaborative research with Britain's largest public service broadcaster, the BBC. The overarching research question we address here is: What do PSM need to consider when integrating AI into news production? We broke this down into sub-questions: RQ1: What are the core PSM values and how do they shape journalism? RQ2: How is AI being applied in news operations and what risks and opportunities does this raise? RQ3: Given the answers to RQ1 and RQ2, what value tensions and associated challenges arise that PSM should address? We conducted a) desktop research and literature review to identify key themes pertaining to the application of AI in journalism, b) six two-hour workshops bringing together selected industry representatives from the BBC and European Broadcasting Union, with academic experts in diverse fields (e.g. law, ethics, business, AI, computer science etc.,) and c) six further workshops with BBC journalists and decision-makers, focusing on the specific topics of generative AI and synthetic media. Drawing together frameworks for responsible AI (Floridi 2021), and public service values (EBU 2012, Donders 2021) enabled us to explore ways of thinking about the benefits and risks of AI that extend beyond, and provide an alternative to dominant commercial market-based approaches that prioritise profit generation. Our analysis finds unresolved tensions between long-held values including independence, universality, diversity, impartiality, and accuracy, and emerging logics of datafication, personalisation, choice, scale and efficiency. We identify critical questions regarding AI that are not yet adequately addressed by PSM regarding sustainability (e.g. climate impacts of energy-hungry AI models), (in)equality (e.g. mitigation of bias and harms, the digital divide and data literacy), labour relations and work conditions (e.g. exploitation in supply chains, hidden or 'ghost' labour, human displacement via automation), and regulation and governance (e.g. oversight of mutable and inscrutable AI systems). We then use the example of generative AI (e.g.

large language models like GPT-3) to illustrate some of these issues and the conflicting priorities at play before suggesting potential mitigations and responses. We contend that these core considerations are important for any public interest news organisation looking to introduce or already incorporating AI-based systems.

Key Words

Artificial Intelligence

Public Service Media

BBC

Journalism

News production

Imperfect Complements: Public Service Broadcasters and For-Profit Digital Platforms

Authors

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Abstract

This paper uses a case study of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) to argue that, while all legacy public service broadcasting institutions are now actively using their content through corporate social media accounts, their institutional policies and cultures frequently to uncritical and uncreative uses of these platforms for promotion and programming. This is problematic for several reasons: 1) This approach may lead PSBs to become dependent upon platforms whose values (e.g. surveillance capitalism, user monetization) contradict their own 2) This approach risks relegating content-oriented PSB organizations to the role of 'complementor' (a value-adding super-user) (Nieborg and Poell, 2018) on for-profit, third-party platforms and 3) These activities risk the further undermining of PSBs legitimacy in an era in which digital platforms are quickly becoming our pre-eminent media institutions (despite their protestations otherwise) (Napoli and Caplan, 2017).

The paper begins with a review of existing scholarship on legacy PSBS use of for-profit social media platforms (Donders, 2019; Van Es and Poell, 2020; S Stollfuß, 2021), which reveals a tendency toward the sort of approach detailed above in both Europe and North America. It then proceeds with the CBC case study, using internal documents procured through Access-to-Information requests, public documents, and interviews with staff members to develop a comprehensive picture of the CBC's approach to the use of platforms like Facebook/Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat. On the basis of this evidence, the paper then argues for the need for legacy PSBs to engage in sustained, intentional reflection on their usage of these platforms so that they might develop detailed policies to govern the creation and usage of institutional accounts in order to mitigate the three problematic dynamics referenced above. Finally, the paper concludes with a brief consideration of what public service platforms created by legacy PSBs might look like and the reasons why such organizations might be well-positioned to create them.

Key Words

Public Service Broadcasting; Social Media Platforms; Complementors; CBC

A Public Utility Approach to AI in Public Service Media

Authors

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Abstract

The use of AI tools and data-driven or automated decision-making is becoming increasingly important in journalism operations and content generation and moderation industries. However, we must scrutinize the commercial narratives surrounding the deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Public Service Media (PSM) and digital public services. The dominant players in the tech industry control the ownership, deployment, and utilization of the most widely accessible AI tools, and the narratives they put forth often prioritize their own interests.

Going beyond the risk and benefit narratives of AI, in this paper we highlight its public utility values. We argue that by relying on these commercial entities, governments in advanced economies are missing an opportunity to redefine AI as a public utility resource. The leading AI developing and deploying companies are contributing to data colonialism and are caught between the conflicting realities of surveillance states and neoliberalism.

Therefore, we propose that PSM should prioritize investing in the development of their own, non-commercial AI tools and platforms, instead of relying on commercial providers for short-term gains. It is crucial that PSM practitioners, policymakers, government agencies, and researchers work together to develop a public utility approach to the use of AI in public service. This could include the development of ethical machine learning models, Natural Language Processing, representative data set training, automated content generation, and AI-supported content delivery.

Brainstorm & the Conversation: the public service co-production of academic news

Authors

Dr. Fiona Martin - The University of Sydney

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Abstract

In this era of global misinformation and disinformation, as news deserts are blossoming, public service outlets and the academy have stepped in to provide robust, verified information to the public sphere. The *Conversation*, which began in Melbourne in 2011, publishes 800-word articles written by academics and researchers in collaboration with the platform's journalists about either their research findings or analysis on an issue which falls within the area of their expertise. In Australia the *Conversation's* founding partners included four universities plus a government-sponsored research facility. Among its cast of members now are all the Australian universities plus some federal and state institutions and philanthropic organisations, making it arguably new form of multistakeholder public - if not public service - media. There is now a *Global Conversation* plus region-specific versions named for Africa, Canada, Spain, France, Indonesia, New Zealand, the UK and the US. Articles are published through a 'Creative Commons' agreement and can be picked up for free by the media.

In Ireland, the situation is different. Scholars can obviously contribute to *Conversation* editions in either the UK or Europe. However, an increasingly popular, home-grown outlet is *RTÉ Brainstorm,* and it works in conjunction with the Irish public broadcaster. Its founding partners were six universities, and two further strategic partners have since been added: the Irish Research Council and the Agricultural and Food Development Agency. On this site academics and researchers publish expert opinion and analysis of a similar length to the *Conversation*, and the work is edited by RTÉ and featured alongside the PSM's online journalism. This research presentation will feature content analysis of both sites and interviews with editors and academics, exploring the extent of the two publications public service remit, the modes and challenges of collaboration, and the extent to which these services can demonstrate an impact on their news ecologies.

Key Words

public service media, The Conversation, Brainstorm, RTE, innovation, collaboration

Georgian Public Broadcasting: Practice towards the Adoption of Constructive Journalism in Georgia

Authors

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Abstract

Constructive journalism has received considerable attention worldwide. Today digital disruption grows distrust toward media organisations and calls to question good journalism and the role of media in society. Most media outlets operate online, which polarises the modern media environment even more. The various crises in the world demand the answer to critical questions and seek ways to overcome issues with the public to find positive solutions. Nevertheless, Social media create spaces where journalists directly communicate with the public and increase interactivity (Napoli, 2014). However, the new practices tend to restructure journalistic relationships and attitudes towards the audience in the news construction process.

Georgia is in a similar condition to other countries. Enhanced populism and propaganda limit the strengthening of democracy. Journalism faces a loss of credibility due to a lack of professional journalistic standards and norms (IREX, 2019) in journalistic work. Georgian Public Broadcasting (GPB) attempts to tackle the problems to make society better and its role in improving democracy. Implementing constructive journalism is a new challenge for GPB. The concept is based on the values of truth and the responsibility of journalists to share verified information. On the one hand, nothing is new in this commitment. Georgian Journalists follow the principles, procedures and standards regarding the policy and guidelines established by the "Law on Broadcasting" since 2005 that regulates the obligations of the GPB with the commitment to specific remit provisions for the public interest.

Health communication between journalists and audiences contributed to the emergence of Constructive journalism in Georgia. For example, during Covid-19, professional journalists engaged in social medicine established a new relationship with the public by helping people provide information on possible solutions. Research on news communication and decisions that demonstrate knowledge through actions that truly solve societal issues in their everyday news work is limited. Therefore, it is essential to understand how constructive journalism works in Georgia.

The paper relies on a new institutionalism approach from a sociological perspective along with routines. So the paper aims to explore the following:

The ways GPB adopts the constructive journalistic function;
and concrete practices to measure quality criteria for good journalism standards

Based on the case of Georgia, the paper proposes the following research questions:

What are journalistic distinct rules that journalists use in constructive news via social media?

How do these rules shape constructive journalism and fit into the policy of PSB?

Based on the assumption that constructive journalism is a new way of approaching information, the paper argues that constructive journalism as a phenomenon dominates in debates of values such as impartiality and the exchange that institutions contribute to benefit the public (Bozeman & Moulton, 2011). On the one hand, it establishes the news rules (Ryfe, 2006)in practices, which, on the other hand, shapes constructive dialogues and resolves problems with the targeted audience.

The study focuses on new institutionalism, which includes levels of analysis, micro (journalists), meso (GPB) and macro (the entire state of construction journalism in Georgia). The paper applies a qualitative approach as a starting point to study the state of constructive journalism in the Georgian context beyond the comparative one. Data collected includes in-depth interviews that examined Georgian journalists' experiences about their daily actions and experts' opinions.

Findings reveal that journalistic routine activities enact reciprocal relationships between journalists and thematic groups. Such groups include immigrants and thematic groups, including drivers, health, travelling, etc. The dynamic of Geographic models builds a global model of the complex connection between journalism and the audience within the social media realm. The intersection of new experiences and previous knowledge to sustain constructive news is difficult as work habits to approach technology and professional beliefs are entirely recognisable from the past (M.Schudson, 2019). Constructive journalism in PSB is in the phase of advancement. It means that public journalistic activity embeds in the social aspects of interactions between journalism and the public (Ryfe, 2017). PSB is leading in advocating constructive news and performing a constructive role.

Key Words

The meaning of innovation in Public Service Media: Case study of RTVE and RTP

Authors

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Abstract

In the digital era, innovation has become a key concept in the public service narrative (Fernández-Quijada et al., 2015), becoming a core element within the public value definitions proposed by Public Service Media organisations (EBU, 2012). However, in some contexts most of the main public service narratives emerge as a result of a market failure (Goodman, 2013). In a highly competitive scenario, PSM need to place the innovation rationale at the centre of their strategy (Cunningham, 2015), as a transversal tool to respond to market challenges and redefine their position in the digital scenario. Innovation should be understood as the adaptation to inexorable processes in the sector (Carvajal et al., 2015), such as those arising from technological convergence, the penetration of social networks, mobile communication, user participation, the integration of newsrooms or the emergence of hi-tech (Horowitz, Milosavljević and Van den Bulck, 2022). An adaptation key to improving the commitment of PSM to universality and ensuring the maximum quality of its audiovisual offer in the new media ecosystem.

Innovation, as a concept, is multidimensional, since it can be explored from multiple perspectives. In its simplest definition, innovation represents the introduction or incorporation of something new and still unknown to a given context. However, in this research, we take as a reference the proposal presented in the Oslo Manual (2005), where innovation is broken down into four central dimensions: products, processes, marketing, and organizational methods.

Considering the context in which PSM are immersed, this research examines the meaning and implementation of innovation within two public service broadcasters often neglected in comparative studies on European PSM: RTP (Portugal) and RTVE (Spain). Therefore, this study is built from the following three objectives: (1) to analyze whether RTP and RTVE have defined an innovation strategy; (2) to determine the innovation models adopted and how innovation is fostered; (3) and what measures and actions are applied to enhance a culture of innovation within each company. To achieve the objectives of this research, the methodological design is based on the application –and triangulation– of two different techniques: on the one hand, a document analysis of corporate online documents in which both PSM state their respective missions, commitments, strategic plans, or lines of action, among other aspects; and, on the other hand, semi-structured in-depth interviews with professionals and heads from both broadcasters (N=12).

The results of the research reveal that RTVE and RTP have placed innovation as a key strategic concern. However, neither of them has defined in their corporate documents a clear and concise strategy as such that could serve as a roadmap for change towards the cultural transformation of

the public service media. At present, they both present different approaches to innovation: RTVE opted form a model of open innovation and collaborative management, while RTP's is based on the so-called creative bubbles. Nevertheless, they face a common challenge: to consolidate the penetration of the culture of innovation within the two corporations, as resistance to change is still perceived.

Engaging youth in Climate change and deforestation using multiplatform media content in Indonesia

Authors

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Abstract

Social and behavior change communication has a critical role in supporting young people to meaningfully engage with climate change because ultimately, they will be at the forefront of addressing it and leading on innovative adaptation and mitigation solutions in the years to come. Known as the "Lungs of the World", Indonesia has some of the world's highest proportion of forests and biodiversity. However, it also has one of the world's largest carbon footprints. BBC Media Action's Kembali Ke Hutan (Return to the Forest) project aims to engage Indonesia's millennials on the sustainable development challenges the country faces, help them to make informed choices, and create platforms to have their voices heard. It includes a TV drama, #CeritaKita aired on private national broadcaster Surya Citra TV, a social media brand and discussion series, and supports the capacity of media and civil society organisations to address climate action.

Research was used throughout the project to inform, adapt and evaluate the drama and social media content. In late 2021 a mixed methods evaluation was conducted to measure reach and explore the impact of programming on youth audiences' knowledge, discussion, willingness to share environmental posts on social media and follow influencers on these issues, as well as efficacy, motivation and participation in climate, environmental and green growth issues. First, a process evaluation documented how the intervention was implemented. A representative survey of adults 16-55 years in Java, Sumatra and Kalimantan was conducted in December 2021 (sample n=5,000) to measure reach and compare differences between exposed and unexposed groups using regression. A randomised-controlled trial involving urban youth (n=843) was conducted to rigorously measure impact at one week and 4 months post exposure. These were complemented by qualitative research and social media analytics to attain a triangulated understanding of impact.

Over 25 million Indonesia were reached across the multi-media programming with 35 million aware of Kembali Ke Hutan brands. We found that watching the project's TV drama and social media discussion programme increased people's interest in news and current affairs, motivated public discussion of climate change, made people more knowledgeable about humans' impact on nature and the climate, increased willingness to share environmental posts and follow relevant online influencers, and boosted support for the Indonesian government climate pledge and broadcasters to do more to cover climate and deforestation issues in their content. It did not,

however, influence people's climate related risk perceptions nor did it have an impact on the intent to get involved in local environmental action (clean-up/tree-planting).

This paper will share one of the very few media-based interventions aimed at climate action in low- and middle-income countries, will highlight the transformative potential of civic participation and governance interventions using storytelling and public engagement strategies to address sustainable development issues, and examples of the fast-paced programmes that uses humour, as well as real and fictional stories of young people leading change in their communities.

Key Words
Climate change, deforestation, multiplatform media, Indonesia, BBC Media Action

Supporting the sustainability of Australia's local news ecosystem

Authors

Prof. Susan Forde - Griffith University

Abstract

The Australian local news ecosystem, like many around the world, has been significantly depleted over the past decade – initially due to the rise of digital media forms; and secondly due to the additional financial pressures faced by media organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has led to the development of a number of 'news deserts' – regional and rural areas without any local media services – and other areas that have insufficient local media and primarily rely on syndicated content from larger cities.

This research confronts this issue in the Australian context, partnering with Australia's major public broadcaster, the ABC, to understand what role the national, publicly funded broadcaster might play in enhancing the local news ecosystem in rural and regional areas. We have a focus on sustainability – how can public interest journalism be sustained in the longer-term, particularly in fragile and underserved areas with smaller populations?

The project has four specific objectives: firstly, to identify the news needs, challenges and priorities of local news and information providers, and communities identified as being especially underserved by public interest journalism in rural and regional Australia. Secondly, we will critically examine existing local news subsidies and their effectiveness in addressing these news needs, and determine the role public broadcasting might play to enhance quality public interest journalism for rural/regional areas. Thirdly, we are developing clearly defined concepts around local news needs and a rigorous methodological framework that can inform targeted solutions to key policy challenges around local news provisions. And finally, we are identifying and road-testing innovations and initiatives that learn from existing interventions in Australia and overseas (such as training programs, civic journalism resourcing and support, digital resources). The research will involve an innovative co-design process with Australia's local news stakeholders across all states and territories to identify and conceptualise areas of news need, forms of interventions necessary and to road-test novel and targeted approaches involving the public broadcaster to improve the quality and diversity of regional and rural news and information. Importantly, the research will create a conceptual and methodological framework to drive targeted solutions that address these key policy challenges. The project will develop new knowledge around media power and how news providers can work together to secure the sustainability of local news; and will find ways to support local journalism that ultimately enhances the demographic health and social fabric of small towns and cities.

This project is led by Professor Kristy Hess, Deakin University Australia; with team members Professor Matthew Ricketson (Deakin) and Professor Susan Forde (Griffith University). Our

research partners from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) are Dr Angela Ross; and Mr Hugh Martin.

Key Words

public service media, local news, news deserts, public interest journalism