JOURNALISTICA

2023

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Editorial preface

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We are happy to present the 2023 issue of Journalistica. The 2023 edition opens with a special issue on "Nordic Narratives: Embracing narrative journalism in the Nordic countries", edited by **Rasmus Rønlev** and **Steffen Moestrup**. The special issue presents an exciting, interdisciplinary compilation of studies in narrative journalism as an emerging field of research. The two guest editors will introduce the issue and its contributions in full detail on the following pages.

The issue also includes four open-themed articles. Two of these articles have first been presented at the Journalistica pre-conference for early career researchers, which was held in connection with the 2022 ECREA conference:

In the article "From stark opposition to partial adaption: How 12 Danish alternative media construct and position themselves vis-à-vis the media- and political mainstream", **Miriam Brems** investigates differences and commonalities in how Danish alternative media construct and position themselves against the media- and political mainstream and discusses the different potentials for impact that alternative media may have on the media and political systems they enter. The Danish-language article "Event-driven or topic-driven climate journalism? A content analysis of Danish newspapers' climate coverage between 2018 and 2021", written by **Line Weldingh**, shows that climate journalism in Denmark is by no means only driven by external events. Topic-driven climate journalism more often puts people in the center, but citizens remain underrepresented as sources also in topic-driven climate-related news articles.

In addition to these two articles from talented early career researchers, the current issue also include the article "From investigative to critical local journalism: A quantitative content analysis of critical reporting in local Swedish newspapers with a new analytical focus", where **Magnus Danielson and Ari Nykvist** revisit the question of what constitutes critical journalism in local journalism. Based on a content analysis of three Swedish local newspapers, they show that the amount of critical journalism is limited and that it is very seldomly the journalists themselves that are agents of criticism.

Finally, the article "Persona-driven journalism at Radio24syv: Ditte Okman's affective labor of performing an unashamed persona" by **Steffen Moestrup** proposes an analytical approach to the study of persona-driven journalism, drawing on concepts from performance studies. The article uses an exemplary case from Denmark to describe a journalism practice that draws on bodily expressivity, outspoken attitudes, and the creation of a socializing media space.

Last year, in 2022, we introduced the Journalistica Methods Section, which puts a spotlight on research methods used in journalism studies and/or journalism practice in an accessible format. We are very pleased to see this format grow, and in 2023 we have been able to include three new Methods Section articles. **Morten Thomsen** presents online text-based focus groups in journalism studies, **Nils Holmberg, Lene Heiselberg, Jenny Lindholm, and Erik Knudsen** discuss the application of psychophysiological methods in journalism studies, and **Johan Farkas** contributes a piece on discourse analysis in journalism studies. Two of the method articles have also been published as a podcast, a format which we will develop further in the coming year.

Finally, the 2023 edition also includes a review by **Erik Svendsen** of the book "Kulturjournalistikens världar: Om kulturbevakningens politiska, globala och digitale dimensioner" by Kristina Riegert, Anna Roosvall og Andreas Widholm, which examines the development of cultural journalism since the 1980s in Sweden.

All in all, the 2023 issue is an excellent showcase of Journalistica's interdisciplinary profile as it incorporates articles drawing on a broad variety of theoretical and methodological approaches. The 2023 edition also further consolidates Journalistica's Nordic profile with contributions in English, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish.

A big thanks to all the contributors, internal and external editors, and reviewers. A special thanks to our student podcast editor Julienne C. Raboca, and not least our editorial assistant Leif Hemming Pedersen for keeping the ship afloat. Last, but not least, we say thanks to Jannie Møller Hartley from Roskilde University, who will step down from her role as associate editor with the end of this year.

God læselyst!

On behalf of the Journalistica group of editors,

Eva Mayerhöffer, editor-in-chief

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Embracing narrative journalism in the Nordic countries
Introduction to special issue

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Narrative journalism – understood broadly as journalism "that display storytelling techniques to report upon real-world events and situations" (van Krieken and Sanders, 2021, p. 1404) – has a long and proud tradition in the Nordic countries (Bech-Karlsen, 2007, p. 41). In recent years, however, the genre has gained renewed momentum in the region. Digitally born media such as Zetland in Denmark makes extensive use of the approach, but traditional print media, for instance Verdens Gang in Norway and Kristeligt Dagblad in Denmark, have also discovered the power of narrative and won international awards for their digital storytelling (Moestrup, 2022). Public service media such as Danish DR, Icelandic RÚV, and Swedish SVT experiment with style and digital elements in their narrative web docs, and narrative journalism also thrives in new print media such as the newly launched publications Atlas in Denmark (2010), Magasinet Plot in Norway (2011), and Filter in Sweden (2008).

But what is the state of research in narrative journalism? Internationally, narrative journalism has attracted some scholarly attention, not least due to the journal *Literary Journalism Studies* which has served as an arena for studies of the form since 2009 (van Krieken and Sanders, 2021), and the efforts of the journal's publisher, the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies, which has organized conferences, published newsletters etc. In a Nordic context, practitioners of the form have reflected on its particular characteristics and qualities, for instance at the annual, ever-growing conference Fortellingens Kraft in Bergen and in a number of anthologies with prescriptive texts, interviews with practitioners, and examples of narrative journalism (Kinch-Jensen, 2001; Sønnichsen & Kramer, 2002; Dalviken, 2005; Hvid, 2007; Skjold,

2015; Vaaben, 2019). However, until now, narrative journalism still has not been the subject of unified research across countries and institutions in the Nordic countries, which is why, with this special issue, we take initiative to such a collaborative effort. The aim is not only to shed light on a form that is becoming more and more important – and debated – in journalistic practice, but also to promote a research agenda that increasingly attracts attention from scholars across Nordic research environments focusing on journalism, media, literature, rhetoric, etc.

In this special issue, you will encounter articles on narrative journalism from a range of theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches. Taken together, the articles cover both conceptual, empirical, critical, and educational issues.

A narratological analysis of journalism set in the future is done in the article by **Harald Hornmoen, Yngve Benestad Hågvar** and **Jørgen Alnæs**. By investigating reporting on the climate crisis, the corona pandemic, and the war in Ukraine, the authors provide an analytical approach that differentiates between stories *about* the future, stories *from* the future, and stories *evocating* the future.

Cecilia Aare presents a close reading of three books about gang criminality in Sweden. Using her own concepts of *narrative compassion* and *narrative empathy*, Aare shows how the books offer – and block – insights into characters such as gang members, victims, and family members. Thus, her study showcases how narrative journalism may qualify – and inhibit – public debate about pressing societal matters.

A critical look at the term storytelling is carried out by **Frank Harbers**. He examines the discourse on digital storytelling as journalistic innovation in the Netherlands. The analysis shows a one-dimensional and techno-centric focus where journalistic innovation is seen as a matter of mastering the digital affordances of new technological tools and platforms without questioning how this impacts journalism's professional ethics and cultural authority.

Steffen Moestrup and **Karsten Vestergaard** provide an educational approach in their article. They introduce the *Digital Story Model* and discuss student experiences of applying the model in the production of digital journalism. By drawing on an action research approach, the authors co-develop and test the model in an international classroom setting with 85 journalism students representing 35 countries.

Rasmus Rønlev and **Susanna Sommer** focus on the functions of the third-person narrator in narrative journalism. Adopting a rhetorical-narratological perspective, they show how third-person narrators may be more or less (c)overt in narrative journalism. In continuation of this, they argue that no matter how covert a third-

person narrator journalists choose to use in their journalistic narratives, journalists cannot evade their role and moral responsibility as the creative force *behind* the narrator.

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Journalistisk langtidsvarsel

Narrativ analyse av framtidsfortellinger i norske nyhetsmedier

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Sammendrag

Journalistiske fortellinger om framtiden preger både norske og internasjonale nyhetsmedier. Men hvilke teknikker bruker journalistene til å fortelle sannferdig om noe som ennå ikke har skjedd? Artikkelen diskuterer hvordan narratologiske kategorier kan brukes til å forstå og diskutere framtidsfortellinger i vår tids journalistikk. Et sentralt begrep er foranstilt narrasjon, altså en fortellerposisjon der den rapporterte virkeligheten foreløpig ikke finnes, men kan komme til å oppstå. Et grunnleggende premiss er at journalistiske narrativer er noe mer enn den tradisjonelle oppfattelsen av narrativ journalistikk som tilbakeskuende reportasjer skrevet i en skjønnlitterær form. Også konvensjonell nyhetsjournalistikk har narrative elementer, og fortellingen behøver ikke handle om hendelser som er avsluttet. Klimakrisen, koronapandemien og krigen i Ukraina er eksempler på temaer som har generert journalistiske fortellinger om framtiden. Artikkelen utvikler et begrepsapparat for analyse av slike framtidsfortellinger. Vi analyserer tre ulike tekster som illustrerer forskjellen mellom det vi kaller fortellinger *om* framtiden, fortellinger *fra* framtiden og *frammaninger* av framtiden.

NØKKELORD
framtidsjournalistikk, journalistiske fortellinger, foranstilt narrasjon, narratologi, nærlesning

Innledning

Journalistikken er full av fortellinger, men i dag er mange av dem av en art som utfordrer det begrepsapparatet som har vært vanlig i journalistikkforskningen. Mens den tradisjonelle fortellerteorien er laget for å analysere fortellinger om noe som *har skjedd*, handler nemlig mange av vår tids journalistiske fortellinger om noe som *kommer til å skje* eller *kan komme til å skje*.

Dette gjelder ikke bare klimajournalistikken, men også journalistikken om kriser som pandemier eller kriger. Et eksempel finner vi i en artikkel fra BBC om mulige utfall av krigen i Ukraina (Landale, 2022a). Denne presenterer mulige hendelser over en velkjent lest:

> President Putin declares victory and withdraws some forces, leaving enough behind to maintain some control. Thousands of refugees continue to flee west. Ukraine joins Belarus as a client state of Moscow.

Tekstutdraget tilfredsstiller de fleste kravene til en fortelling, men dette er altså en fortelling om handlinger som *muligens vil utspille seg i framtiden*. Slike framtidsfortellinger er det mange av i dagens journalistikk. Det kan henge sammen med krisefokuset i journalistikken, med journalistikkens ønske om å skape innlevelse, fordypning og nedsenkning i stoffet, og med at ny teknologi muliggjør en annen type journalistikk. For å granske disse tekstene trenger vi et begrepsapparat og en fortellerteori som er tilpasset ikke bare journalistikk og fortellinger om virkeligheten, men også fortellinger fra nåtiden om framtiden.

Vi skal derfor nærlese tre slike framtidsfortellinger fra norske nettaviser. Analysene vil vektlegge hvilke narrative grep journalistene benytter seg av for å si noe substansielt om framtiden uten å gå på akkord med journalistiske idealer, som at journalistikken skal være sannferdig og etterrettelig. Vi framhever hvordan tekstene forankrer framtidsfortellingene i en verifiserbar nåtid, hvilke narrative funksjoner som tas i bruk, hvor narrasjonen plasseres i tid, og hvordan fortellingen gjør bruk av multimodale[1] teknologiske affordanser. Analysene gjør det mulig å utlede ulike typer framtidsfortellinger i journalistikken.

Artikkelen har både et empirisk og et teoretisk siktemål. Empirisk vil de narrative analysene avdekke hvilket betydningspotensial som ligger i de analyserte framtidstekstene, og hvordan de vil kunne virke inn på leserens forståelse og engasjement for presserende samfunnsutfordringer. Teoretisk bidrar studien til å videreutvikle diskusjonen om hva narrasjon er i journalistikken, og hvordan journalistikken både trekker på og skiller seg fra fiksjonslitteraturen. Vi

argumenterer videre for at fortellingen er til stede og spiller en av-gjørende rolle i andre typer journalistikk enn det som ofte betegnes som narrativ journalistikk.

Hva vet vi om framtidsjournalistikk?

Tidligere studier av journalistikk som henviser til framtiden, har ikke vært opptatt av om tekstene kan sies å være fortellinger, og hvordan disse i tilfelle er konstruert. De fleste studiene har målt fo-rekomsten av framtidshenvisninger på setnings- eller ordnivå. Nei-ger (2007) fant referanser til framtiden i hele 70 prosent av hovedtit-lene på israelske papiravisforsider mellom 1985 og 2003, et tall som var stabilt gjennom hele perioden. I en korpuslingvistisk undersø-kelse av danske papiraviser fra 1997 til 2013 fant Hansen (2015) at andelen ord som typisk brukes til å markere framtid, sank noe i løpet av perioden, særlig i kvalitetsavisene. Det fins med andre ord ikke noe belegg for å hevde at journalister skriver *mer* om framtiden enn før, iallfall ikke på papir.

Neiger og Tenenboim-Weinblatt (2016) har også undersøkt sam-menhengen mellom hvor langt fram eller tilbake i tid nyhetene ser, og hvilken funksjon nyhetene har. Mens nyheter om nåtiden skal oppdatere oss, vil nyheter om nær og fjern fortid henholdsvis rap-portere og kontekstualisere eller ritualisere. Nyheter om nær fram-tid har derimot som funksjon å forutse og analysere utfall av hendel-ser, og å sette dagsorden for den overskuelige framtiden. Hvis nyhe-ten ser svært langt fram, blir funksjonen å forme kollektive syn. Par-allelt med at journalistikken om fortiden former kulturens kollektive hukommelse, vil framtidsjournalistikken kunne skape et felles pre-skriptivt minne, altså en kulturelt fundert påminnelse om hva som bør gjøres (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2011, 2013). Her er det lett å se koplingen til våre dagers journalistikk om klimasaken.

I sin analyse av israelske medier fant Neiger (2007) at kriser kunne anspore journalistikken til å se lenger fram i framtiden enn tidligere. For eksempel utløste Gulf-krigen i 1991 en type framtidsjournalis-tikk som fortsatte også i årene etter krigen. En tilsvarende effekt oppstod i amerikanske medier etter terrorangrepene 11. september 2001 (Grusin, 2010), da journalistene ble opptatt av å forebygge flere angrep. Russlands invasjon av Ukraina i 2022 er en moderne hen-delse som kan tenkes å ha liknende effekt på europeiske medier.

Enkelte studier dokumenterer at andelen framtidsjournalistikk varierer med sjanger og plattform. Når Hansen (2015) viser at fram-tidsreferansene synker i danske papiraviser, gjelder det bare nyhets-journalistikken. I kommentarstoffet øker framtidsformuleringene, samtidig som andelen kommentarstoff i avisene også vokser.

Hansens forklaring er at framtidsnyhetene i økende grad er overlatt til "live media" (Hansen, 2015, s. 132). Omtrent på samme tid fant imidlertid Tenenboim-Weinblatt & Neiger (2014, 2018) at israelske og amerikanske papiraviser faktisk hadde flere framtidsreferanser enn sammenliknbare nettaviser. Deres forklaring er at nettavisene på denne tiden hadde som hovedoppgave å dekke øyeblikket og den umiddelbart nære fortid, slik at framtiden ble overlatt til papiravisene. I 2023 er imidlertid nettavisenes rolle blitt en annen. Sosiale medier og andre nettkilder spiser seg stadig inn på hegemoniet nettavisene hadde om å være først ute med siste nytt, samtidig som nettavisenes affordanser og publiseringsformater har blitt betydelig mer avanserte. Vår studie kan ikke si noe om det er flere eller færre framtidsfortellinger i nettavisene enn før, men vi legger til grunn at nettet er en viktig plattform for slik journalistikk, og henter analysematerialet vårt derfra.

Det finnes også et lite knippe kvalitative studier av hvordan journalister håndterer oppgaven med å forutsi framtiden. Blom et al. (2021) viser hvordan journalister og intervjuobjekter både oppildnet og modererte hverandre i spekulasjoner om den tidlige covid-19-utviklingen i Danmark. Forfatterne anerkjenner verdien av at journalister spekulerer om framtiden, men finner at dette fungerer best når en av partene inntar en mer faktaorientert rolle. Gjennom intervjuer med journalister som driver med prediktiv datajournalistikk i fem forskjellige land, finner Pentzold og Fechner (2021) at det er vanskelig å lage gode journalistiske framskrivninger, selv med svært omfattende data, fordi prediksjonene alltid vil bestå av konkurrerende scenarioer. Analysene i vår artikkel illustrerer noen mulige løsninger på dette problemet.

Vår studie skiller seg fra tidligere forskning ved at den ser spesifikt på nettmediet, har tekstene i fokus og undersøker *fortellinger* om framtiden, ikke enkeltstående henvisninger. Det betyr at vi leser tekstene kvalitativt, ved hjelp av et narrativt begrepsapparat, for å analysere hvordan de er konstruert. I tråd med poengene ovenfor har vi valgt tre tekster som på hver sin måte handler om kriser, som ser nokså langt framover i tid, og som er publisert i norske nettaviser.

Narrativitet og narrative funksjoner i journalistikken

Hva menes med en journalistisk fortelling? Schudson (2011) peker på at "All news stories are stories, but some are more storylike than others" (s. 186). Istedenfor å diskutere om noe er en fortelling eller ikke, er det altså mer fruktbart å diskutere *i hvilken grad* en tekst er en fortelling, eller *hvor mye* fortelling teksten er. Denne

tanken kommer fra Prince (1982), som lanserte begrepet *narrativitet*. Noen tekster er mer fortelling enn andre, hevder Prince, og han lokaliserer ulike trekk som vil gjøre at en tekst oppfattes som *mer* fortelling. Kort oppsummert vil lesere ofte oppfatte en tekst som en fortelling hvis den gjengir adskilte hendelser som er forbundet gjennom en årsakssammenheng, hvis den inneholder en konflikt, og hvis den formidler menneskelig erfaring (se også Fludernik, 1996; Pier, 2008; Herman, 2002; Iversen, 2013). Jo mer dominerende disse narrativitetsmarkørene (Iversen, 2013) er, desto mer fortelling er den journalistiske teksten. Dette innebærer at det ikke bare er det som ofte blir kalt fortellende journalistikk, som er journalistiske fortellinger.[2] Også den daglige nyhetsjournalistikken kan inneholde fortellinger, riktignok med ulik grad av narrativitet.

Journalistiske fortellinger kan være skrevet på ulike måter for å synliggjøre årsakssammenhengen mellom de ulike hendelsene de beretter om. Dette kan beskrives gjennom begrepene *intriguing function* og *configuring function*, som begge viser til to ulike funksjoner narrativer kan ha knyttet til begrepet plott (Vanoost, 2013). Plott defineres konvensjonelt som den dramaturgiske organiseringen av hendelsesforløpet i fortellinger. En *intrigerende* funksjon i en fortelling vil vekke leserens interesse for fortellingen og behov for å vite mer (Baroni, 2009). I fiksjonsfortellinger hvor denne funksjonen dominerer, er det vanlig å presentere et plott med en komplikasjon, en narrativ spenning og en forventning om en oppklaring eller et utfall. En *konfigurerende* funksjon forsøker derimot å rekonstruere en sammenheng i noe som har skjedd, og vil på den måten skape en forståelse av eller forklaring på det som har utspilt seg (Ricoeur, 1984).

Vanoost (2013) framholder at den konfigurerende funksjonen dominerer i journalistikkens narrativer. Hun argumenterer imidlertid for at den intrigerende funksjonen ikke bare har en viktig plass i fiksjonsfor-tellinger, men også i journalistiske narrativer. Med støtte i Baroni (2007, 2008) poengterer hun at når journalister ikke har sikker kunnskap om en hendelses årsaker eller kjenner utfallet av en hendelse, kan de vektlegge usikkerheten og skape en viss spenning og nysgjerrighet hos leseren for hvordan utfallet vil kunne bli. Vi mener at dette blant annet vil kunne gjelde for mye journalistikk som skisserer krisers mulige utfall, ikke minst kriser som strekker seg over tid, slik som klimakrisen og dens framtidige scenarioer. Samtidig, legger vi til, kan journalister som vil berette om mulige scenarioer for kriser som er under utvikling, anvende en konfigurerende funksjon for å skape en best mulig forståelse av hva som vil kunne skje som en følge av krisen, og hvordan vi kan innrette oss for å håndtere og svekke uheldige konsekvenser av den.

Det referensielle nivået og narrasjonens plassering i tid

Et nokså vanlig premiss i definisjoner av fortelling er at fortellingen handler om noe som *har* hendt (jf. Kayser, 1971). Vanoost (2021) argumenterer for at det i narrativ journalistikk *må* være en avstand i tid mellom journalisten og det fortalte, og hevder at "narrative journalism only tackles events that are already over" (s. 407). I dagens journalistikk finner vi likevel en rekke tekster som tilfredsstiller kravene til en fortelling, men som handler om det som kommer til å skje, eller som *kan* komme til å skje. Disse framtidsfortellingene er også fortellinger. To viktige spørsmål er da hvordan fortellingen forankres i den erfarte virkeligheten, og hvilken posisjon fortellingen fortelles fra.

I tradisjonell narratologi skiller man gjerne mellom historien og framstillingen, eller som det heter med Chatmans begreper, mellom story og discourse: "Story is the content of the narrative expression, while discourse is the form of that expression" (Chatman, 1978, s. 23). En fortelling består altså både av en historie (story) og en diskurs (discourse), som er framstillingen av historien. Men som Genette (1988) peker på, kan fortelling også bety en fortellerhandling, altså *det å fortelle*. I den engelske oversettelsen heter det narrating, og på norsk kalles det gjerne *narrasjon* (Lothe, 1994; Aaslestad, 1999).

En fortelling er altså tre ting på en gang: fortellerhandlingen, diskursen og historien som diskursen representerer. Cohn (1999) introduserer ytterligere et nivå som er aktuelt for ikke-fiksjon, nemlig *det referensielle nivået* – hva som har hendt i virkeligheten. Diskursen i fortellingen forholder seg jo ikke bare til en historie, men også til faktiske forhold. Det referensielle nivået legger derfor føringer for hva som kan inkluderes og ikke kan inkluderes i fortellingen. For framtidsjournalistikken skaper dette en spesiell utfordring, siden det referensielle nivået for fortellingen ikke eksisterer når teksten skrives. I analysene våre vil vi derfor ha et blikk for hvordan journalisten enten sannsynliggjør et framtidig referensielt nivå eller forankrer teksten i et nåtidig eller fortidig nivå som kan verifiseres.

Både i fiksjonstekster og i journalistikk kan selve narrasjonen utspille seg fra forskjellige temporale posisjoner. Ofte foregår narrasjonen etter at hendelsene har funnet sted, og da snakker vi om *etterstilt* narrasjon. I noen tilfeller kan narrasjonen foregå parallelt med hendelsene, noe vi kan betegne som *samtidig* narrasjon. I denne artikkelen skal vi også undersøke fortellinger der historie og diskurs foregår etter fortellerhandlingen. Slike fortellinger vil, med en omskriving av Kayser (1971), innebære en situasjon der en forteller forteller noen tilhørere om noe som kommer til å skje. Dette kaller Genette (1980) "prior narration"[3], og på norsk kan det kalles *foranstilt* narrasjon (Aaslestad, 1999). I skjønnlitteraturen er dette en

sjelden form, skriver Genette. I journalistikken er den vanligere, vil vi hevde. Her er et eksempel fra det norske A-Magasinet (Nipen et al., 2021):

> Kvitt, kvitt. Lyden av morgen fyller soverommet og vekker deg før lyset skrur seg på automatisk. Fuglene er for alvor tilbake i byen, bokfink, svarttrost og pilfink, ekorn piler høyt og lavt.

> Året er 2050.

Siden foranstilt narrasjon innebærer at det det fortelles om, foregår i en tid som kommer etter fortellerhandlingen, må vi altså lokalisere fortellertidspunktet for å kunne diskutere om narrasjonen er foranstilt.[4] Vi kommer tilbake til dette eksempelet i tekstanalysene nedenfor.

På bakgrunn av narrasjonens plassering i tid vil vi skille mellom fortellinger *fra* framtiden og fortellinger *om* framtiden. Fortellinger med foranstilt narrasjon, der handlingen i det store og hele er lagt til framtiden og fortalt i framtidig presens[5], kaller vi fortellinger *fra* framtiden. For-tellinger der personer i nåtiden diskuterer hvordan framtiden kan bli seende ut, kaller vi derimot fortellinger *om* framtiden.

I tillegg til disse to kategoriene, som er utledet av teorien, kan vi regne med at det finnes andre måter å fortelle om framtiden på. I vår analyse nedenfor vil vi også se hvordan fortellinger om nåtiden indirekte kan *mane fram* bilder av framtiden.

Tekstutvalg og analytisk tilnærming

Framtidsfortellinger som bestreber seg på å tilfredsstille journalistfaglige krav, må anvende andre kriterier for å sannsynliggjøre det de beretter om, enn når de søker å forstå og berette om hendelser og begivenheter som har inntruffet. Til forskjell fra *journalistiske rapporter om det inntrufne*, kan ikke journalistiske beretninger om en mulig framtid styrke sin troverdighet ved å verifisere noe som har skjedd. Til forskjell fra *skjønnlitteraturen* må 1) journalistikkens framtidsvisjon framstå som sannsynlig på et plan som er klart for leseren, for eksempel ved at den framlegger et scenario som er forankret i vitenskapelige modeller for å predikere framtiden på feltet og dessuten informerer leseren om dette, og 2) framtidsfortellingen må på en eller annen måte være rammet inn av en nåtids- eller fortidssituasjon. Spørsmål for en analyse blir dermed hvordan journalistikkens narrativer både kan vekke leserens engasjement overfor noe som kan skje i framtiden, og samtidig gi kontekster og forklaringer

som styrker troverdigheten til de mulige virkelighetene de beretter om.

Vi vil nærlese tre tekster fra norske nettaviser som på hver sin måte forteller om framtiden. En nærlesning ser etter meningsproduksjonen i teksten; den skal ikke primært fortolke, men retter oppmerksomheten mot hvilke grep teksten tar, mot det Smith (2016) kaller tekstens maskineri. Dette er en abduktiv metode, basert på en tiltro til den hermeneutiske prosessens verdi i forskningen når det gjelder å skape ny innsikt (Svennevig, 2001). Det innebærer at vi begynner med en foreløpig forståelse av det som skal undersøkes, med grunnlag i observasjoner av journalistikk om framtiden, for så, gjennom analysen, å utvikle en dypere forståelse av hvordan denne typen tekster er konstruert. For å beskrive og undersøke dette trenger vi begrepene vi har diskutert over.

Analysene vil være særlig orientert mot fire forhold i teksten: 1) Hvordan forankres teksten i det referensielle nivået og sannsynliggjør at framtidsfortellingen er sann eller troverdig? 2) Er plottet basert på en intrigerende eller en konfigurerende narrativ funksjon, eller på en kombinasjon av disse? 3) Er narrasjonen etterstilt, samtidig eller foranstilt? 4) Hvordan utnytter fortellingene nettmediets multimodale affordanser? Vi vil samtidig understreke at vi har vært opptatt av å forstå hvordan tekstene fungerer og skaper mening på sine egne premisser, i tråd med tradisjonell nærlesning og hermeneutisk metode. Analysene er derfor ikke strukturert som punktvise gjennomganger av de fire spørsmålene, selv om lesningene indirekte forholder seg til dem. Vi ser først på fortellende tekster i langform som forholder seg på ulike måter til framtiden når de beretter om mulige konsekvenser av miljøkrisen for liv på jorda. De to eksemplene er *Velkommen til 2050: Den lysegrønne versjonen* (Nipen et al., 2021) fra den digitale utgaven av A-Magasinet, helgebilag til den riksdekkende norske avisa Aftenposten, og *Blålys for havet* (Nord & Fossaskåret, 2021) fra nettsidene til den norske allmennkringkasteren NRK.

Tekstene er eksempler på hvordan de mest innovative journalistiske fortellingene i dag blir utviklet og presentert i digitale formater på medienes nettsteder. Disse kan kombinere verbaltekst, fotografi, lyd og video med grafisk animasjon og interaktiv datavisualisering for å gi en mer navigerbar og absorberende brukeropplevelse. Langformfortellinger i digitalt format omtales ofte som *scrollytelling*, med henvisning til hvordan formen anvender digitale mediers tekniske muligheter til å tilrettelegge for at leserne engasjerer seg i lange og komplekse temaer og hendelser ved at de skroller aktivt for å drive fortellingen framover, slik at nye dimensjoner ved det den beretter om, framtrer (Amabili, 2019). Scrollytelling kan med andre ord defineres som å fortelle om komplekse temaer i digital

journalistikk ved å bruke gjennomgående virkemidler med to eller flere multimodale elementer, som leseren navigerer seg gjennom ved å skrolle vertikalt (Mangersnes, 2022).

Denne formen innbyr til det som engelskspråklig litteratur alt i før-digital tid omtalte som *immersion* i narrativ journalistikk (Walters, 2017), men som det digitale langformformatet har gitt nye betingelser og muligheter. Immersion oversettes til norsk med ord som *fordypning, innlevelse, neddykking* og *nedsenkning*. Disse hinter alle til en journalistikk med ambisjoner utover kun det å informere (Vanoost, 2021). Snarere er dette en journalistikk som vil gi leseren muligheten til å leve seg inn i og forstå det den beretter om, på nye måter. Hvordan gjør den det i digitale langformfortellinger som tar for seg klima- og miljøkrisen? På hvilke måter kan den berette om krisens følger for mulige framtidsscenarioer for livet på jorda?

Den tredje analyseteksten skiller seg fra langformsakene ved at den føyer seg inn i den dagsaktuelle nyhetsjournalistikken. Den handler dessuten om en annen form for krise, nemlig krigen mellom Russland og Ukraina. Artikkelen heter *Fem scenarioer: Slik ender krigen* og er publisert i VG, Norges største avis, 5. mars 2022 (Ridar, 2022). Den eksemplifiserer en type scenariojournalistikk som var vanlig i denne tidlige fasen av krigen. Journalisten presenterer et sett med framtidsscenarioer etter tur, forankret i intervjuer med eksperter og faktaopplysninger om hva som har skjedd tidligere. Opplysningene ordnes slik at de konstruerer parallelle, alternative fortellinger om hvordan framtiden kan se ut.

Fortelling fra framtiden: Fuglekvitter en morgen i 2050

Hovedteksten i oppslaget *Velkommen til 2050: Den lysegrønne versjonen* er en fortelling som skisserer en tenkt dag i en mulig framtid, nærmere bestemt i året 2050.[6] Men i oppslaget inngår også andre former for tekst. For det første rammes fortellingen inn av en innledende og en avsluttende tekstsekvens, den første ved å introdusere tre norske ungdommer, den avsluttende ved å la de samme ungdommene utdype sine ambisjoner, vyer og syn på hvordan livet i landet vil ha endret seg fram mot 2050. For det andre kan leserne følge lenker som tar dem til utdypende tekster om henholdsvis 1) status og fakta om klimakrisen med grafer som illustrerer hvordan den globale oppvarmingen har skutt fart, 2) bakgrunn for artikkelen, og 3) angivelige fakta om fem klimaframtider. Bakgrunnstekstene inneholder dessuten lenker til kunnskapskildene som er anvendt, og en av dem inneholder en lenke til et panel av eksperter som kan besvare lesernes spørsmål om klima.

Følger man oppslagets invitasjon til å skrolle vertikalt gjennom teksten, møter man først i tur og orden de tre ungdommene. Hver av dem er portrettert i korte, nærgående filmsekvenser som fanger deres ansiktsmimikk og deres oftest direkte tilskuer-henvendte blikk ledsaget av tekstsnutter som dukker opp for hvert portrett. Snuttene gir kortfattede uttrykk for de portretertes holdninger eller framtidsvyer og etterlater liten tvil om at vi har å gjøre med miljø-engasjert ungdom, for eksempel: "Hulda tror ikke det er bil, kjøtt og olje som gjør oss lykkelige i Norge." Slik etableres det umiddelbart en ramme i publikasjonens samtid for den kommende fortellingen. De portretertes blikk i direkte henvendelse mot betrakteren signa-liserer også at dette er et tema som angår den som fanger blikket, altså leseren. Rammen skaper et inntrykk av at framtidsfortellingen er motivert av et ønske om å framstille et scenario for et tidspunkt hvor de unge har blitt voksne. Mer spesifikt dreier det seg om det året Norge har lovfestet at landet skal ha nådd målet om å bli et lav-utslippssamfunn, noe som framgår av det overordnede spørsmålet som stilles til slutt i opptakten til fortellingen: "Men hva kan gjøre livet verdt å leve i et 2050 der vi har kuttet utslipp dramatisk?" Spørs-målet forutsetter at vi har nådd klimamålet. Samtidig gjør den på-følgende tittelen til framtidsfortellingen (*Velkommen til 2050: Den lysegrønne versjonen*) det klart at vi har å gjøre med en av flere mu-lige fortellinger (fig. 1).

Figur 1: Tittelbilde i A-magasinets framtidsvisjon om 2050, 29. oktober 2021 (illus-trasjon: Björn Öberg).

Det er verdt å merke seg hvordan forutsetningene som den påføl-gende fortellingen hviler på, gjøres eksplisitte også i de to avsnittene etter at den foranstilte narrasjonen innledes med en morgenscene fra byen i året 2050 ("Kvitt, kvitt. Lyden av morgen fyller soverom-met og vekker deg …"). I det tredje avsnittet i fortellingen heter det blant annet: "Hvordan ser verden ut i best case-scenarioet for kli-makrisen? Der vi har kuttet utslipp i en rekordfart, lagt om til

fornybar energi og lagt fra oss klimavennlige vaner." Når slike metakommentarer og spørsmål innlemmes som en del av diskursen (samtidig som de skaper et midlertidig brudd med den foranstilte fortellerposisjonen), bidrar dette også til å etablere en overenskomst med leserne: 'Fortellingen dere nå skal få, beskriver en framtid som er mulig, vel å merke gitt at de og de omstillingsforpliktelsene knyttet til klima er oppfylt.' Underforstått er andre scenarioer mer sannsynlige dersom omstillingene ikke er gjennomført.

Den foranstilte fortellingen utgjør hoveddelen av oppslaget og inneholder mellomtitler som: "Huset ditt er lite. Men smart."; "Klesskapet har krympet"; "Byen lukter skog"; "Egen bil er for spesielt interesserte". Teksten akkompagneres av illustrasjoner av blant annet en kvinne i et miljøvennlig hjem, en fugl på en gren i en plantegrønn by og et motiv med en vindpark som glir harmonisk inn sitt havmiljø, altså et glimt av det teksten framstiller som en voksende havvindnæring. Den multimodale fortellingen er innbydende, og stedvis kan den nok framstå som idylliserende og imaginær. Men den rommer også partier som forklarer hvordan mennesker i 2050 innretter seg som en konsekvens av at endringene i klimaet har blitt mer markante:

> (...) i perioder regner det mer og kraftigere enn før. Derfor er huset ditt rustet kraftig opp for å tåle påkjenningene.

Fortellingen avrundes dessuten med å poengtere at utslippene ikke er borte ennå, og at jorden nå er preget av en høyere snittemperatur, mer issmelting, hetebølger, mer stormflo og nye skogbranner som konsekvens. Samtidig presiserer den følgende:

> Folk har gjort alt de kan. Herfra vil temperaturen bare gå en vei: nedover.

Det er altså en avrunding som gir et tvetydig svar på det åpne spørsmålet som blir stilt i undertittelen til fortellingens siste del: "Snur det snart?"

Fortellingen skiller seg på avgjørende måter fra mange av dem vi møter i skjønnlitteraturens og den narrative journalistikkens fortellinger om noe som har skjedd. *Velkommen til 2050* presenterer ikke et plott med en tydelig protagonist og antagonist, med spenning, konfliktopptrapping og et hendelsesforløp som skaper en forventing om et tydelig utfall. Det er likevel spor av en *intrigerende* funksjon i denne teksten. Teksten vekker umiddelbart interesse med sin *in medias res*-åpning med fuglekvitter en morgen i 2050. Den avslutter introduksjonspartiet om at fortellingen handler om hvordan verden ser ut etter å ha kuttet utslippet i rekordfart, med spørsmålet: "Kan det bli bra?" Slik skaper fortellingen en nysgjerrighet om hvordan

den vil svare på det, samtidig som den nevnte overenskomsten som teksten tidlig etablerer med leseren, neppe skaper en forventning om at fortellingen vil gi entydige svar.

Den *konfigurative* funksjon i denne framtidsfortellingen skiller seg også på avgjørende måter fra hvordan den kan framtre i journalistikkens fortellinger om noe som har skjedd. Her handler det ikke om å rekonstruere en sammenheng. Den handler snarere om å skape en sammenheng i noe som kan skje gitt at visse betingelser er tilfredsstilt, slik at teksten framstår som plausibel. Hvordan gjør teksten det? Den introduserer og omtaler ulike detaljer om hva som kjennetegner samfunnet i 2050, som dens nye boliger, bymiljøer, folks endrede energibruk, klesvaner, matvaner, transportmåter, og landets endrede jordbruk og off-shoreindustri. Men presentasjonen av disse detaljene framstår neppe som tatt ut av luften for normalt samfunnsengasjerte lesere. Endringene kan alle forankres i anbefalinger og foreslåtte tiltak som har preget den offentlige samtalen om bærekraftig produksjon og forbruk i publikasjonens samtid. Å *konfigurere* – altså å gi sammenheng til – en fortelling om miljø og mennesker i framtiden, handler på den måten om at den bygger på delt kunnskap blant fellesskapets folk i den forutsatte fortiden for teksten, en fortid som er leserens samtid. Utover det velger teksten komprimert og i fortidsform å forklare hvordan lavutslippssamfun-net den beretter om, er muliggjort av hvordan tiltak er iverksatt. Omleggingen har:

> i bunn og grunn handlet om to ting: Å slippe ut mindre CO_2 og andre drivhusgasser og suge opp mer. Plante!

Etter framtidsfortellingen slipper de tre miljøengasjerte ungdommene i publikasjonens nåtid til. I intervjuer utdyper de sine ambisjoner og sine syn på hvordan livet i landet vil endre seg fram til 2050. Det gjør de på en måte som kan bidra til at leseren opprettholder en viss tro på at det skisserte framtidsscenarioet – eller iallfall deler av det – kan være mulig å realisere.

Frammaning av framtiden: Varsko fra havdypet

Blålys for havet er en langformfortelling i skrolleformat fra NRKs klimaredaksjon. Den er lagd av en journalist og en fotojournalist (Nord & Fossåskaret, 2021) med støtte av en rekke ekspertkilder og erfarne undervannsfotografer. I tekstens fortelling omtales disse i tredjeperson i roller som miljøengasjerte aktører og dokumentarister.

Denne teksten er ikke et eksempel på foranstilt narrasjon eller en framtidsfortelling slik store deler av *Velkommen til 2050* er. Snarere er det en beretning i historisk presens som vil informere om en uro-vekkende utvikling i havet rundt Norge som følge av menneskers på-virkning. Samtidig vil den åpenbart gjøre noe mer enn å informere oss om dette i en tradisjonell nyhetsjournalistisk fortelling. Teksten er multimodal på en nyskapende måte. Visuelle bilder, verbalspråk og havets lyder utfyller hverandre. Dette tilrettelegges slik at bruke-ren kan delta interaktivt og utforske den representerte tilstanden der nede på nært hold, og samtidig – via lenker – klikke seg inn til utdy-pende forklaringer på problemene og våre muligheter for å gjøre noe med dem. Ved å legge til rette for at leseren aktivt anvender de ulike modalitetene med tilhørende virkemidler, vil fortellingen kunne framstå som "immersiv", altså virke oppslukende. Vi leser den slik at den vil få oss til å se og føle det som skjer under havet, på nye måter. Den vil stimulere ulike sanser, la oss kjenne at vi er med under havoverflaten og slik kan være med på å utforske – og nær-mest få en kroppslig følelse av – tilstanden for livet og miljøet der. Den framstår som en fortelling med ambisjoner om å skape enga-sjement rundt et presserende problem. Den vil vekke oss, skape en erkjennelse av at det haster å gjøre noe med tilstanden for havøko-logien og årsakene til den. Snarere enn å utbrodere framtidsscena-rioer *frammaner* teksten en bevissthet om *mulige, framtidige hav-miljøscenarioer* og hva som må til for å bremse og snu utviklingen som fortellingens nærgående dokumentasjon av forholdene under havoverflaten vitner om. Hvordan gjør den det?

Tematisk er *Blålys for havet* en helhetlig tekst om sporene som vi mennesker legger igjen i havet, nærmere bestemt i ulike norske og tilgrensende havområder fra Antarktis og ned til Oslofjorden og Lin-desnes, og videre opp langs vestlandskysten og nordover igjen til Troms og Barentshavet. Teksten er vevd sammen av en komposisjon med en rekke fortellinger: en dramatisk rammefortelling i tre deler om en hvalforsker som forsøker å redde en knølhval som har satt seg fast i det som tilsynelatende er fiskeredskap og et antatt tau; tekstens introduksjon av dens menneskelige protagonister, det vil si ekspert-kilder og undervannsdokumentarister avbildet i nærgående foto-portretter; ytterligere elleve andre fortellinger under metafor-ladede titler som "Den aller siste dans", "Dødeleg cocktail" og "Eit surt opp-støyt er undervegs". Titlene innevarsler at dystre havmiljøscener vil utfolde seg under overflaten som følge av menneskelig påvirkning.

Men en fortelling skapt i en redaksjon som ønsker å framstille miljø- og klimatematikk slik at "publikum opplever at det gjelder dem" (Rommetveit i Fauconnier, 2020), nøyer seg ikke med ensidig nedslående dokumentasjon med implisitte dystre framtidsutsikter. Den vil vise at det fortsatt er håp hvis mennesker engasjerer seg og

handler for å gjøre noe med utfordringene for havmiljøet. *Blålys for havet* viser dette i rammefortellingen som innleder, som fortsetter igjen midtveis og deretter avslutter fortellingen. Allerede tittelens blålysmetafor gir signaler om endringsvilje, om enn ikke dersom blålys tolkes i samme betydning som i folketroens *nålys* – som var et blålig lys som varslet døden for den som så det (Språkrådet, 2022). Vi tolker det mer som blålyset i forbindelse med utrykning, med konnotasjoner av at havet er i nødssituasjon og at det haster å handle. Intertekstuelt er det linjer til Herman Melvilles roman *Moby Dick*, men hovedpersonen her er hvalredder i motsetning til hvaljegeren Ahab i romanen. Skildringen av protagonisten Auduns kamp for å frigjøre hvalen er en symbolsk fortettet fortelling om hvordan menneskelige inngrep i havmiljøet kan hemme bevegelsesfriheten til arter som lever der, samtidig som Auduns dramatiske kamp framstår som en forbilledlig handling av en som spiller på lag med naturen og gjør absolutt alt i sin makt for å redde hvalen.

Den *intrigerende* funksjonen er mye mer framtredende i denne for-tellingen om noe dramatisk som har inntruffet, enn i den foranstilte fortellingen om noe som skjer i 2050. Visuelt skaper bevegelige bilder av hvalens kamp for å komme seg løs og Auduns kamp for å hjelpe – supp-lert av hans gjengitte rop til hvalen ("Vi skal prøve alt vi kan, mister") – i slutten av første del en spenning om hva utfallet vil bli. Spenningen opprettholdes gjennom del to, men i tredje og siste del får fortellingen et utfall på en måte som en foranstilt journalistisk framtidsfortelling ikke kunne ha fått. Forsøk på å redde hvalen ved å kutte den løs mislykkes, en prosess som vanskeliggjøres ved at det viser seg at det antatte tauet som er surret rundt den, er en internettkabel. Men hvalen klarer til slutt å komme seg løs selv i sin desperate kamp. Vi får imidlertid ingen entydig "lykkelig slutt" om hvordan naturen slo tilbake mot menneskeskapte snarer i havet. Selv om Audun og andre ikke klarer å spore hvalen, er det usikkert hvordan det vil gå med en hval som har fått betydelige skader etter kampen for å frigjøre seg fra en kabel som ifølge beretningen veier flere tonn, er fem kilometer lang og skulle vært gravd ned på havbunnen på nær 200 meters dybde. På den annen side: Nettopp ved slik å antyde et usikkert utfall på sikt, kan rammefortellingen frammane en bevissthet om nødvendigheten av å bremse uvettig bruk av havet for slik å kunne legge til rette for et bedre framtidsscenario.

Når undervannsfotografene i andre beretninger i *Blålys for havet* visuelt dokumenterer hvordan det ser ut under overflaten og ned mot havbunnen, kan fortellingenes budskap på tilsvarende måte som i rammefortellingen framstå som tvetydige – eller iallfall kontrastfylte – i måten de formidler tilstanden på. Mest slående er dette i "Den aller siste dans", som dykker ned i Oslofjorden. På den ene siden dokumenterer den en "sjuk" fjord med en mudderdekket

bunn og belter av søppel med blant annet bilvrak, trafikkjegler, persienner, og et gammelt fiskegarn som en hummer kjemper for å komme seg ut av. På den andre siden dokumenterer fotografier områder med et mangfold av liv, med blant annet oransje sjønelliker, rosa flyndrer og fluorescerende koraller. Sammen med ledsagende verbaltekst kan den visuelle gjengivelsen anta en litterær kvalitet. Det oppnår den ikke minst ved bruk av en *hyperrealistisk* validitet (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021, s. 156) i forstørrede undervannsfotografier/nærbilder i høy oppløsning. Disse presenterer leserne for en ny og "virkeligere virkelighet" under havoverflaten enn den de selv normalt har tilgang til eller kan se "med det blotte øyet". Vi opplever disse undervannsfotografienes gjengivelser av liv – og mangelen på liv – under vann som både absorberende og rystende. De kontrastfylte undervannsscenene frammaner slik en fornemmelse av hvordan dette kan utvikle seg til *ulike* framtidsscenarioer avhengig av hvorvidt, hvordan og hvor raskt vi handler for å snu utviklingen: En mer eller mindre død fjord, eller en fjord som er friskere enn den vi har i dag.

De mest fryktinngytende scenene under vann finner man i avsnittet "Dødeleg cocktail", som forteller om hvordan vannet langs deler av kysten vår blir mer grumsete og mørkere på grunn av menneskelig påvirkning. Den dødelige cocktailen består blant annet av overfiske, tilførsel av næringssalter fra landbruk og utslipp fra oppdrett. Fortellingen poengterer hvordan cocktailen legger et kvelende algeteppe over havbunnen og slik truer tareskogen, som lager oksygen og verner oss mot en varmere klode. Men det er den visuelle og framfor alt verbalspråklige skildringen av en manet som trives i det grumsete vannet, som gir denne fortellingen en form som truer med å frata leseren alt håp om en lysere framtid for hav og klode. Den verbalspråklige framstillingen av maneten får en poetisk karakter ved bruk av metaforisk *besjeling* som virkemiddel, altså gir den menneskelige egenskaper til noe som ikke er menneskelig, i dette tilfellet en organisme som attpåtil er uten hjerne. Det litterære preget forsterkes også av egennavnet som organismen tildeles: "Mørkets fyrste" har allusjoner til velkjente, fiktive figurer som grev Dracula i den gotiske romanen og i filmer, og Darth Vader i *Star Wars*-universet. Det er i det hele tatt vanskelig å forestille seg hvordan fortellingen om Mørkets fyrste kan frammane noe annet enn et framtidsscenario med dystopisk preg, et samfunn hvor havmiljøet har brutt sammen (se også fig. 2):

Men ein skapning diggar det mørkare vatnet.

Han toler ikkje dagslys og er sjølvlysande.

Han er utan hjerne, hjartelaus og væpna med giftige tentaklar.

Mørkets fyrste – kronemaneten – blømer i fleire fjordar.

(…) Forskarane trur manetane kan bli vinnarar i økosystema – og herske i fjordane i framtida.

Men ein skapning diggar det mørkare vatnet.

Han toler ikkje dagslys og er sjølvlysande.

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Mørkets fyrste – kronemaneten – blømer i fleire fjordar. 〰

Figur 2: Miljøtrusselen "Mørkets fyrste" presenteres med tekst og video i NRKs *Blålys fra havet,* 10. april 2021 (foto: Gisle Sverdrup / NRK).

Forskernes tanker i utdraget over blir gjengitt indirekte som en antakelse om manetens framtidige overlevelsespotensial i økosystemene. Vi merker oss hvordan bruken av verbet "trur" i kombinasjon med et modalverb som "kan", skaper et inntrykk av at det er ganske sannsynlig at dette vil skje.

Det er heller ingen spesielt optimistisk framtidsvisjon for havområdene rundt Norge som frammanes når forskeres framtidsantakelser igjen påkalles og henvises til i avsnittet "Eit surt oppstøyt er undervegs". Tittelen er uten modalitetsmarkør, tar ingen forbehold og bygger på en erkjennelse av at de store CO_2-utslippene fra menneskelig virksomhet setter fart på forsuringa av havet. Hvilke konsekvenser vil det få? Gjennomgående blir forskerens framtidsantakelser framstilt med modalverbet "kan", som i følgende eksempler:

Fiskeyngel og dyr tidleg i livet er spesielt utsette. Det betyr at torskefisket kan bli redusert i framtida. (…)

Skaldyr og ikkje minst dei artsrike korallreva kan vere i fare.

Mer urovekkende blir det når forskernes framtidsantakelser framstilles som bekymringer i fortellingens konklusjon:

[forskarar] uroar seg for at nokre giftige tungmetall vil bli frigjort meir i surare hav. Og igjen blir tatt lettare opp i alle dyr og fisken vi lever av.

Indirekte kan dette nok oppfattes som oppfordring – kanskje ikke minst rettet mot myndigheter og næringsliv – til å ta ansvar og gjøre noe med årsakene til forsuringen, for eksempel ved å forsterke innsatsen *mot* klimaendringene ved å redusere utslipp av klimagasser. *Blålys for havet* inneholder flere lenker til vitenskapelige artikler. For mange lesere vil nok disse skape større håp om en mer håndterlig miljø- og klimaframtid. Det gjelder for eksempel en vitenskapelig artikkel som presenterer sitt sentrale funn på følgende måte:

We find that a substantial increase in ocean protection could have triple benefits, by protecting biodiversity, boosting the yield of fisheries and securing marine carbon stocks that are at risk from human activities.

(Sala et al., 2021)

Denne teksten vil ikke på samme måte kunne *frammane* en bevissthet om framtidige havmiljøscenarioer slik hovednarrativene i *Blålys for havet* kan gjøre. Snarere presenterer den nøkternt optimistiske, forskningsfunderte framtidsscenarioer for havøkologien ved å vise hvordan beskyttede havområder *kan* være er et effektivt verktøy for å gjenopprette havets biologiske mangfold og økosystem. Slik inngår journalistikkens og forskningens sjangere i en fruktbar symbiose, der journalistikken levendegjør og skaper engasjement for forskernes nøkterne prediksjoner, samtidig som forskningen utgjør et nødvendig fundament for klimajournalistikken.

Fortelling om og fra framtiden: Ukraina-krigens ulike utfall

BBC-nyheten vi siterte i innledningen, beskrev et tenkt scenario i krigen mellom Russland og Ukraina (*Ukraine: How might the war end? Five scenarios,* 03.03.22). I Norge har NRK publisert *Fem scenarioer for hvordan Ukraina-krigen kan utvikle seg* (05.03.22) og *Tre scenarioer for Ukraina-krigen* (24.08.22). Den riksdekkende tabloidavisa Dagbladet har hevdet at *Tre scenarioer kan tvinge Nato* [til å gripe inn] (13.04.22), mens den kristendemokratiske avisa Vårt land redegjør for *To scenarioer før 9. mai* (04.05.22). Det er med andre ord

gode grunner til å anse slike scenariofortellinger for en egen under-
sjanger i nyhetsjournalistikken om krig og konflikt.

Vi skal se nærmere på artikkelen *Fem scenarioer: Slik ender krigen*,
som ble publisert i VG på nett og papir 5. mars 2022 (Ridar, 2022, fig.
3). Dette er en omfattende tekst som går over fire sider i papirutga-
ven, og som krever mye skrolling på nett. Her skal vi konsentrere oss
om nettutgaven. Den er utstyrt med store mellomtitler som signali-
serer ett og ett scenario: *1 Et land i ruiner*; *2 En av dem gir opp*; *3
Forhandler seg til fred*; *4 Palasskupp i Moskva*; *5 Kina som mulig jo-
ker*. Saken er for abonnenter og derfor fri for reklameavbrudd. Lese-
ren får opplevelsen av å skrolle seg gjennom fem koherente kapitler,
rikt illustrert gjennom en miks av rektangulære bilder fra krigsskue-
plassen og sirkulære portretter av ekspertkildene. Redaksjonen har
altså trukket presentasjonen noe i retning av featureformatet, men
innholdet tilhører definitivt de harde nyhetene.

Figur 3: Første skjermbilde i VGs scenariofortelling om Ukraina, 5. mars 2022.

Både hovedtittelen og de fem mellomtitlene preges av foranstilt
narrasjon. De er fortalt i framtidig presens, uten modalitetsmarkø-
rer av typen "Slik *kan* krigen ende". På den måten skisserer para-
tekstene (det som ikke er en del av brødteksten) og den femdelte
strukturen en overordnet fortelling om framtiden, eller rettere sagt
fem parallelle fortellinger med hvert sitt utfall. På dette nivået har
fortellingen en intrigerende funksjon – vi lurer jo på hvordan det skal
gå i krigen, og det ligger en spenning i hvordan de fem scenarioene
skal utspille seg. Også ingressen bygger opp om den intrigerende
funksjonen, ved å holde tilbake informasjon: "Mens Ukraina bren-
ner, sprer atomfrykten seg i Europa. Det er én joker som kan bli sen-
tral for å skape fred, mener ekspertene." Hvem jokeren er? Den
spenningen utløses ikke før vi har kommet til femte og siste del av
teksten og oppdager at det er Kina.

Går vi inn i de respektive scenarioene, forandrer imidlertid dette bildet seg. Når de varslede scenarioene skal beskrives i detalj, blir fortellingen mer konfigurerende. Istedenfor å skildre hvordan et gitt scenario vil utspille seg, forklarer VG hvorfor scenarioet er mer eller mindre sannsynlig, basert på kildeutsagn og etablerte fakta.

Fortellingen mister også preget av foranstilt narrasjon, ettersom framtidsscenarioene blir lagt i munnen på kildene. Både journaliststemmen og kildene tar gjennomgående forbehold. Det svekker også den generelle graden av narrativitet, siden det blir større usikkerhet om årsakssammenhengene. Eksempelet nedenfor er representativt (forbeholdene er kursivert av oss):

Tor Bukkvoll fra FFI *har heller ingen tro* på at Putin vil innse nederlaget og trekke seg ut.

– Men et *mulig scenario er* at det russiske forsvaret kjører seg fast. Altså at Ukraina ikke klarer å kaste dem ut, men Russland klarer heller ikke å ta byene, sier Bukkvoll.

– Dette scenarioet *har økt i sannsynlighet* på grunn av at de ukrainske styrkene har demonstrert imponerende evne til å stå imot. *Da kan man se for seg* at det blir en stillstand: Frontlinjer omkring i landet eller utmattelseskrig.

Her ligger ikke fortellerperspektivet i framtiden; isteden handler det om hvilke vurderinger kilden gjør i taleøyeblikket. Altså er det i praksis etterstilt narrasjon, med svak grad av narrativitet. Dette innebærer også at det referensielle nivået forskyves, fra framtid til fortid. Mens den foranstilte narrasjonen må svare til en sannsynlig framtidig virkelighet, behøver denne typen intervjuer kun å forholde seg til spørsmålet om intervjuobjektet faktisk sa dette eller ikke.

På denne måten flytter scenariofortellingene seg fra å være fortellinger *fra* framtiden i paratekstene til å bli fortellinger *om* framtiden i brødteksten – omtrent motsatt bevegelse av det vi så i A-magasinets klimareportasje fra 2050.

Dette betyr ikke at foranstilt narrasjon er utenkelig i de detaljerte scenarioene. Vi har ikke observert det i norske mediers dekning av Ukraina-krigen, men BBC bruker foranstilt narrasjon som et grep også i andre scenariofortellinger enn eksempelet vi viste i innledningen. En senere artikkel heter *Ukrainian war: Five ways Russia's invasion may play out* (Landale, 2022b). Innledningen rammer inn fortellingene ved å forsikre oss om at "Here are five potential scenarios – they are not mutually exclusive, but all are within the bounds of plausibility". Deretter begynner første scenario slik:

The war might continue for months – if not years – as Russian and Ukrainian forces grind each other down.

Momentum shifts to and fro as both sides make gains and losses. Neither side is willing to give up. Russia's President Putin judges he can gain by demonstrating strategic patience, gambling that Western countries will suffer from "Ukraine fatigue" and focus more on their economic crises and the threat from China.

The West, however, shows resolve and continues to supply Ukraine with weapons. Semi-permanent front lines are established. Steadily the war becomes a frozen conflict, a "forever war".

Første setning fungerer her som en forankring i nåtiden, før narrasjonen blir foranstilt i hele resten av avsnittet. Samtidig ser vi at plottet får en intrigerende funksjon.

Med andre ord kan både foranstilt narrasjon og en intrigerende narrativ funksjon forekomme også i harde nyheter og den løpende dag-til-dag-journalistikken. Dette utfyller tidligere diskusjoner av hva narrasjon er i journalistikken (f.eks. Vanoost 2013, 2021; van Krieken & Sanders, 2021).

Konklusjon

Narratologiske kategorier og begreper er velegnet når vi skal diskutere måten journalister forteller om framtiden på. Framtidsjournalistikken utfordrer både forestillinger om hva en fortelling er, og hvordan journalister forholder seg til en verifiserbar virkelighet. Formen kan stille høye krav til journalistens forståelse av vitenskapelige prediksjonsmodeller, som i klimaspørsmål. Samtidig ser vi at journalistene er nøye med å forankre fortellingene i nåtiden gjennom å balansere den intrigerende funksjonen med den konfigurerende, og ved å bryte opp framtidig presens med modalitetsmarkører. Det er vanskelig å se for seg en journalistisk tekst som utelukkende er skrevet som foranstilt narrasjon, i framtidig presens og med en intrigerende funksjon. Den ville i tilfelle ha hatt for uviss kopling til det referensielle fortellingsnivået – journalisten kan jo bare fortelle hva som er sannsynlige, mulige verdener, ikke hva som faktisk kommer til å skje.

Et springende punkt er når teksten går fra å være en nåtidig redegjørelse for hva ulike kilder tror kommer til å skje, og til å bli en fortelling om det som ennå ikke har skjedd. Dette er relevant, siden det sistnevnte aktualiserer grunnleggende journalistiske spørsmål om forholdet til virkeligheten. Vi har sett at begrepet foranstilt narrasjon

kan være fruktbart i slike diskusjoner. Mye tyder på at dette begrepet bør videreutvikles innen journalistikkforskningen.

Vår studie viser at det finnes minst tre perspektiver for å fortelle troverdige fortellinger om framtiden som er forankret i nåtiden: Vi kan skille mellom fortellinger *om* framtiden, fortellinger *fra* framtiden, og fortellinger fra nåtiden som samtig *maner fram* framtiden. Fortellinger om framtiden vil gjerne ha samtidig eller etterstilt narrasjon, være konfigurerende og inneholde modifiserende modalitetsmarkører. Dette er det vanligste når nyhetene spekulerer på hva som kan komme til å skje, for eksempel når forskere gjetter på hva Putin vil foreta seg i Ukraina. Fortellinger fra framtiden, derimot, preges av foranstilt narrasjon, framtidig presens og færre forbehold. Plottet kan ha intrigerende elementer, men vil i de fleste tilfeller trenge en konfigurerende forankring. Det er dette som foregår i A-magasinets fortelling om livet i 2050. *Frammaninger* av framtiden, på sin side, kan vi finne i fortellinger som har etterstilt narrasjon, slik vi tradisjonelt forstår narrativ journalistikk. Her kan plottet være heftig intrigerende, siden faktaopplysninger kan verifiseres, samtidig som fortellingen gir klare signaler om framtiden gjennom å fortelle hva som skjer i dag. Dystopien som framgår av *Blålys for havet*, er et eksempel på dette.

Alle de tre analysetekstene er ansporet av kriser, på hver sin måte. Dette er helt i tråd med Neiger (2007). De bidrar også til å konstruere preskriptivt minne, jf. Tenenboim-Weinblatt (2011, 2013), særlig om hvordan vi kan forholde oss til klima- og miljøkrisen. Samtidig vil vi hevde at framtidsjournalistikken vi har analysert, viser mer positive og konstruktive tendenser enn det tidligere studier har pekt på. Når Neiger (2007) skriver om journalistikk som ser langt fram, er han først og fremst bekymret for spekulasjoner som tjener bestemte makthavere, og at mediene risikerer å skape verstefallsscenarioer eller rope "ulv, ulv" så lenge at leserne mister tilliten. A-Magasinets 2050-artikkel er et eksempel på at journalistikken også kan vektlegge konstruktive bestefallsscenarioer, og *Blålys for havet* kan til tross for sitt tidvis dystopiske preg skape en forståelse for behovet for å være føre var og vekke et engasjement for å gjøre noe med situasjonen. Disse to tekstene forholder seg til vitenskapelige prediksjoner, noe som reduserer graden av spekulasjon, til tross for lange tidsperspektiver.

Tidligere studier av framtidsjournalistikk har hovedsakelig vært innholdsanalyser av titler og ingresser, eller de har på andre måter studert språket på setningsnivå. Sammenliknet med disse gir vår tekstorienterte tilnærming en kvalitativ forståelse av hvordan tre narrative perspektiver fungerer parallelt og sammen med hverandre, og hvilke språklige grep journalistene bruker for å legitimere og gjennomføre framtidsjournalistikken.

I denne artikkelen har vi hovedsakelig gjort bruk av eksisterende begreper og kategorier, men det bør utvikles mer spesifikke narratologiske begreper for å styrke forståelsen av både fortellinger om virkeligheten og fortellinger om framtiden. Vårt bidrag har vært å vise hvordan ikke-fiktive tekster kan behandle framtiden gjennom de tre narrative perspektivene *fortelling om framtiden*, *fortelling fra framtiden* og *frammaning av framtiden*.

NOTER

[1] Ordet "modalitet" har to forskjellige betydninger. I dette avsnittet viser det til et semiotisk system, for eksempel skrift, bilder eller video. I lingvistikken, derimot, viser modalitet til hvordan avsenderen forholder seg til det referensielle innholdet i en ytring. For eksempel kan man bruke modalitetsmarkører som "kanskje" for å signalisere usikkerhet. Hvilken betydning av ordet vi viser til i hvert tilfelle, vil gå fram av sammenhengen.

[2] Narrativ (fortellende) journalistikk kan forstås både som en avgrenset sjanger (jf. van Krieken & Sanders, 2021) og som en narratologisk egenskap ved journalistikk generelt. Vi er ikke her så opptatt av å vurdere om våre analysetekster faller innenfor eller utenfor de tradisjonelle grensene for sjangeren, da sjangernormer uansett ikke er stabile, men endrer seg over tid. Egenskapene vi observerer i en del framtidsjournalistikk, kan være eksempler på en slik sjangerutvikling.

[3] Foranstilt narrasjon dreier seg om forholdet mellom fortellerhandlingen og den narrative diskursen. I diskursen, som altså er det leseren møter, kan elementene fra historien settes sammen i kronologisk eller ikke-kronologisk rekkefølge. Slike hopp fram og tilbake i tid betegnes gjerne som analepser eller prolepser, eller som frampek og tilbakeblikk.

[4] Men hva med George Orwells roman *Nineteen Eighty-Four* fra 1949? Allerede tittelen antyder at denne teksten foregår i framtiden, og på en av de første sidene kommer det eksplisitt fram: "In small clumsy letters he wrote: April 4th, 1984." (Orwell, 1987 [1949], s. 9). Men er dette foranstilt narrasjon? Neppe, for det er ingenting i fortellingen som tilsier at dette skal skje. Som mye annen skjønnlitteratur er fortellingen fortalt i preteritum, og slik er det ingen hint om at fortellerhandlingen befinner seg i en tid forut for hendelsene. Her kan det være nyttig å skille mellom implisert forfatter og historisk forfatter. Den historiske forfatteren, George Orwell, befant seg selvsagt på et tidspunkt forut for det virkelige året 1984 da boka ble skrevet. Den impliserte forfatteren, derimot, som er den fortellerinstansen som fører ordet i romanens univers, gir få hint om hvorvidt han befinner seg forut for eller etter at handlingen har utspilt seg. I journalistiske tekster er det imidlertid sjelden at den impliserte forfatteren befinner seg på et annet tidsplan enn den historiske. I 2050-eksempelet vårt forteller den impliserte forfatteren fra 2050, men det framgår klart fra starten av teksten at det er et tankeeksperiment, med utgangspunkt i vår tids klimautfordringer.

[5] Verbtiden presens betegner vanligvis noe som skjer på nåtidsplanet, men presens kan også brukes for å levendegjøre en fortelling om fortiden, der man ellers ville brukt preteritum. Det kalles tradisjonelt

historisk presens. På samme måte kan vi bruke begrepet framtidig presens når framtiden beskrives i presens istedenfor futurum.

⁶ Vi vil takke doktorgradsstipendiat Gøril Borgen-Eide, som tipset oss om denne artikkelen.

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Abstract

Hur ser berättelsen om svensk gängkriminalitet ut i tre aktuella reportageböcker och med vilken berättarteknik är den konstruerad? Med en blandning av narratologisk och medieretorisk analysmetod undersöker den här artikeln hur innehåll och form samspelar i *Mammorna* av Alexandra Pascalidou, *Familjen* av Johanna Bäckström Lerneby och *Tills alla dör* av Diamant Salihu. En slutsats är att skiftande berättarperspektiv kan motverka ensidighet, samtidigt som narrativ medkänsla utan parallell narrativ inlevelse kan hindra läsarens möjlighet att föreställa sig de skildrade människornas situation. Dramatiserade händelseförlopp kan öka närvarokänslan, medan en reporter som ifrågasätter sin egen auktoritet uppmuntrar läsaren till att undvika förenklande slutsatser. Till sist bidrar personbeskrivningar och urval av fakta i de tre böckerna till skilda budskap. Studien visar att reportagegenren tack vare sin narrativa form har potential att skildra samhällsproblem på komplexa sätt. Detta gäller särskilt när gestaltningen kombineras med gedigen faktaresearch.

Inledning

De senaste åren har allt fler reportage, reportageserier och reportageböcker publicerats om svensk gängkriminalitet. Flera av dem har på avgörande sätt påverkat samhällsdebatten. Det kan vara intressant att jämföra hur reportrar skildrar människorna och miljöerna där kriminella gäng blivit ett fast inslag. Vems perspektiv lyfts fram och hur beskrivs kriminalitetens underliggande strukturer? Erbjuds läsaren att känna förståelse eller oförståelse? Och hur ser berättartekniken ut bakom de budskap som förmedlas?

Journalistik speglar samhället men bidrar också aktivt till människors värderingar, inte minst i kontroversiella frågor. Det spelar därför roll om den bild som förmedlas om dominerande samhällsproblem är svart-vit eller komplex. I den här studien undersöker jag hur innehåll och form samspelar i tre svenska reportageböcker om gängkriminalitet från perioden 2018–2021: *Mammorna* av Alexandra Pascalidou, *Familjen* av Johanna Bäckström Lerneby och *Tills alla dör* av Diamant Salihu.

Dessa böcker har alla påverkat svensk samhällsdebatt om gängkriminalitet. *Familjen* ledde till att politiker och opinionsbildare för första gången i Sverige började tala högt om släktbaserade nätverk som delaktiga i kriminaliteten i vissa förorter. Två kända statsvetare, Peter Esaiasson och Bo Rothstein, skrev i *Dagens Nyheter* debattartikeln "Forskningen har missat de kriminella nätverken", där de hyllade Bäckström Lerneby och samtidigt efterlyste forskning om de strukturer som hon pekat ut (*DN Debatt*, 2020). *Tills alla dör* ledde till att machokulturen bland kriminella tonåringar började diskuteras men också till ett större fokus på frågor om vad skola och socialtjänst skulle kunna bidra med i utsatta områden, medan *Mammorna* lyfte in drabbade mödrar i det offentliga samtalet. Den senare effekten förstärktes av att Pascalidous bok blev tv-dokumentär och sedan även en teaterpjäs som gick för utsålda hus på Stockholms stadsteater. Ett produktionsbolag har köpt rättigheten till att göra en tv-serie av *Familjen*.

De tre reportrarna har intervjuats i tv-soffor och Diamant Salihu, till vardags anställd på Sveriges Television, är i dag återkommande tv-kommentator så fort nya skjutningar har ägt rum. *Tills alla dör* läses i skolklasser och på fängelser. Salihu har också gjort dokumentärer av materialet från boken. Han och Bäckström Lerneby har vunnit en rad priser för sina böcker och han och Pascalidou har i år, 2023, utkommit med uppföljare i bokform. Sammanfattningsvis har alla tre väsentligt bidragit till hur både opinionsbildare och allmänhet talar om svensk gängkriminalitet.

I artikeln används en blandning av narratologisk och medieretorisk analysmetod för att söka svar på två parallella frågor.

Dels undersöker jag vilken bild som tecknas av gängkriminalitet i de tre böckerna. Dels vilket innehållsurval och vilken berättarteknik som ligger till grund för den bilden. Särskild vikt fästs vid hur narrativ inlevelse skapas och i vilken omfattning de förmedlade budskapen problematiseras. Vidare undersöker jag vilka inslag som lyfts fram i den kriminella miljön, hur dramatisering kan öka närvarokänslan samt vilken roll reportern tilldelar sig själv i berättelsen, både som berättare och reporter på plats.

Teoretisk bakgrund

Ett reportage är en typ av *berättelse*. *Innehållet* är hämtat från verkligheten medan *formen* kan jämföras med formen i en fiktions-berättelse. Jag har tidigare lanserat en genredefinition där, enligt svensk praxis, alla typer av berättande journalistik ingår. Med ett re-portage menas då:

> Varje text som har skrivits med ett journalistiskt syfte och som helt eller del-vis berättas i en narrativ form med sceniska inslag.
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> (Aare, 2021, s. 9).

Med "narrativ form" avses att händelser inte rapporteras som av-slutade, som i en nyhetsartikel, utan som pågående, så att läsaren steg för steg upplever sig följa vad som händer. Scenisk framställ-ning varvas då med en berättarröst som inte bara informerar om fakta i en neutral ton utan också, som i en roman eller novell, i en personlig ton tycks ledsaga läsaren genom handlingen. Scenerna kan vara direktupplevda av reportern eller bygga på rekonstruktion, men alla verifierbara fakta måste gå att styrka mot källmaterial.

De reportrar vars reportageböcker undersöks i denna artikel upp-ger alla tre att deras skildringar bygger på ett faktaunderlag som har stöd i intervjuer, filmer eller skriftliga källor. Bäckström Lerneby gör i sitt förord tillägget "I vissa fall där jag inte haft möjlighet att inter-vjua personen själv har jag tagit mig friheten att tolka en persons känslor utifrån uppgifter i polisförhör eller uppgifter de lämnat till andra personer som jag har talat med" (2020, s. 6). *Familjen* skulle därmed kunna sägas innehålla enstaka inslag av fiktion. I denna ar-tikel avstår jag från att diskutera hur ett sådant skrivsätt kan påverka etik och trovärdighet. I stället väljer jag att koncentrera mig på hur den narrativa formen ligger till grund för det budskap som förmed-las.

De sceniska inslagen i ett reportage medför att läsaren erbjuds dela de upplevande karaktärernas "här och nu", följa vad som hän-der dem och föreställa sig deras tankar och känslor. Detta innebär

att ett reportage, på ett annat sätt än en nyhetsartikel, kan förmedla en känslomässig förståelse av någon eller något, en slutsats som stöds av forskning.

[1] Samtidigt rymmer längre reportage ofta också faktaavsnitt och en analys av fakta som inbjuder till logiskt tänkande. På så vis har ett reportage möjlighet att parallellt tala till *både* läsarens känsla och tanke. En sådan "dubbelverkan" saknas hos renodlade nyhetsartiklar.

Den narrativa formen gör det möjligt att analysera reportagetexter med hjälp av narratologi. Analyserna i artikeln utnyttjar en handfull narratologiska analysverktyg som här förklaras i korthet. Grundläggande bygger *diskursnarratologi* på antagandet att en *berättelse* är en berättares representation (en viss form) av en *historia* (ett visst innehåll) och att det går en tydlig skiljelinje mellan *berättare* och *karaktärer*. I ett reportage berättat i första person skiljer jag mellan en *berättande reporter* och en *upplevande reporter*. Den upplevande reportern är en av flera karaktärer och den som är på plats i berättelsens scener. Den berättande reportern är den som i efterhand klär den upplevande reporterns upplevelser i ord. Berättaren kan också återge händelseförlopp samt reflektera och kommentera, ibland genom att vända sig direkt till läsaren.[2] Vidare skiljer jag mellan om framställningen är *gestaltande* – det vill säga i scenisk form synliggör hur karaktärer, bland andra en upplevande reporter, agerar och upplever det som händer – och *berättande* – då en scen saknas och berättaren ensam för ordet.[3] Scener kan vara *rekonstruerade*. Då bygger de inte på vad reportern själv har iakttagit på plats i en miljö utan på vad intervjuade personer har berättat för reportern om sina upplevelser vid ett visst tillfälle. Jag skiljer mellan om en scen återges i *första* och *tredje person.*

Ett viktigt inslag i artikelns analyser är berättarperspektivet. Vems blick inbjuds läsaren att dela? Är det ett ögonvittnes utifrån betraktande blick (här kallad *afferent perspektiv*) eller är det de skildrade människornas inifrån upplevda blick (här kallad *efferent perspektiv*)?[4] Scenerna kan vara av yttre eller inre slag, det vill säga återge iakttagelser på en plats, även dialog, alternativt vad någon tänker eller känner i ett visst ögonblick.

Jag har tidigare utvecklat en teoretisk modell över hur en reporters *professionella (kontextuella) engagemang* omsätts i ett *narrativt (textuellt) engagemang* i reportagetext (Aare, 2021). Det narrativa engagemanget, det vill säga det engagemang som texten kommunicerar, kan delas in i *narrativ inlevelse* och *narrativ medkänsla*.[5] Med narrativ inlevelse ska förstås att läsaren erbjuds att dela de upplevande karaktärernas *här och nu*.[6] Narrativ inlevelse hör därmed främst ihop med berättelsens scener. Narrativ medkänsla ska förstås som att en upplevande eller berättande reporter explicit uttrycker

medkänsla eller sympati med någon av (de andra) karaktärerna, alternativt att texten implicit förmedlar medkänsla eller sympati med en karaktär. Ibland kan generaliseringar som uttalas, även positiva sådana, försvaga inlevelsen, något som inte behöver hindra medkänsla. Båda formerna kan påverkas av *urvalet av fakta*, vad vi alls får veta om en person.

Inlevelse, att känna *med* någon, kan förmedlas oberoende av om läsaren känner sympati för en person eller inte. Det är fullt möjligt att texten erbjuder inlevelse i en mördares tankar, bara berättarperspektivet är internt (efferent perspektiv). Medkänsla/sympati, att känna *för* någon, innebär att läsaren erbjuds att tycka synd om eller sympatisera med någon utan att nödvändigtvis föreställa sig den personens situation. I analyserna används ytterligare begrepp som förklaras i fotnoter. Några av dessa hör hemma inom *kognitiv narratologi.*

Parallellt med att berättartekniken beskrivs i en analys kommer texten att tolkas. Detta sker med en medieretorisk utgångspunkt om att all journalistik förmedlar budskap (Nerman, 1973, Hultén, 2000). Det innebär att jag kommer att söka efter värderingar i texterna, både inom enskilda scener och när det gäller framskymtande budskap om hur gängkriminalitet ska förstås och varför vissa människor blir kriminella i utsatta områden.

Mammorna

Alexandra Pascalidous *Mammorna* från 2018 är en motberättelse. Dess underförstådda premiss är att berättelser om svensk gängkriminalitet handlar om män som dödar män i särskilda "utanförskapsområden", oftast på tryggt avstånd från en svenskfödd medelklass. *Mammorna* är berättelsen om dem som inte hörs och syns i nyhetsbevakningen eller debatten. I boken kommer 21 kvinnor till tals i varsitt kapitel och i form av varsin redigerad monolog. De flesta har tvingats uppleva att deras söner eller män mördats eller skadats allvarligt. De intervjuade kvinnorna berättar i jag-form om sitt och sin familjs liv, ofta med ett "före" och ett "efter" ett attentat mot en anhörig i en gängkonflikt, någon gång i stället med ett rasistiskt motiv. Ett kapitel handlar om 62-åriga Sawsan Zatara, vars man var nära att dödas av den så kallade "Lasermannen":

> Läkarna sa att han skulle dö inom tre dagar. När jag hörde det svimmade jag där på sjukhusgolvet. Han låg i koma i fem månader. Det var operationer hela tiden. Varenda dag efter skolan hämtade jag våra sju barn och tog tunnelbanan till sjukhuset. Vi var där fyra–fem timmar. Hemma var det kaos. Jag var ensam och ibland fick jag panik. Som tur var lagade min väninna från Syrien mat åt oss.

> Hasan som hade lämnat hemmet på två ben den där januarimorgonen 1992, kom hem ett halvår senare som en grönsak i rullstol. […] Från samhället fick vi ingen hjälp alls. Medierna förvärrade bara sorgen. Innan Hasan blev skjuten brukade en massa vänner samlas hos oss varje lördag. Vi lagade mat och åt tillsammans. Männen spelade kort medan vi kvinnor och barnen dansade och lekte. Men de flesta försvann efter dådet. Vi bodde alla i Rinkeby och trots att många av dem hade bilar frågade de inte ens om jag behövde skjuts med barnen till sjukhuset.
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> Några månader efter Lasermannens skott bildades föreningen "Hasans vänner", som demonstrerade mot våld och rasism. Jag gick dit med barnen, men fick ingen större hjälp. Barnen drabbades hårt. De ville inte ens gå till skolan. De gick till BUP någon gång men orkade inte med alla frågor. Jag fick antidepressiva för att orka leva.
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> (2018, s. 190–191)

Här, liksom i de andra monologerna, har en berättande reporter lämnat över ordet till "en berättare inom berättelsen", det vill säga den talande kvinnan har övertagit rollen som berättare. I citatet finns många av de ingredienser som återkommer genom boken. Det dramatiska anslaget (ska mannen överleva?); kvinnan som måste vara stark för andras skull och ensam tvingas bära en orimlig börda (sju barn, dagliga resor till en medvetslös man); kontraster (mellan undantagstillståndet på sjukhuset och en vardag som måste gå ihop; mellan före attentatet och efteråt). Här finns också bilden av gemenskap i förorten (beskrivningen av lördagarna innan Hasan sköts) och av ett samhälle som sviker.

I förordet skriver Pascalidou: "Det är mammor vars sorg inte är sorglig nog och vars kraft inte är kraftig nog för att räknas. Förrän nu. Det här är deras berättelse." Detta innebär att boken redan från början utger sig för att vara en partsinlaga. I det citerade avsnittet är perspektivet efferent (upplevt inifrån) och tycks förmedla en direkt inblick i kvinnans upplevelser och känslor. Språket består främst av huvudsatser staplade på varandra, något som kan associeras med ett muntligt, spontant berättande. Trots det kan vi anta att texten inte är ordagrant nedtecknad från en bandinspelning. I ett antologikapitel om spökskrivande finner Rasmus Rønlev och Rikke Hyldgaard (2022) att det "jag" som talar till läsaren i en spökskriven text är långt ifrån ett autentiskt "jag" (s. 124–128). När en journalist gör sig till talesperson för någon som intervjuats är det inte bara så att skribenten klipper och klistrar i svaren på intervjuarens frågor. Journalisten kan också – genom för läsaren osynliga frågor i intervjusituationen – ha lockat fram en berättelse som bara skenbart är spontan. Bakom texten finns inte berättarjagets utan spökskrivarens dramaturgi.

Varje kapitel i *Mammorna* inleds med utvalda bakgrundsfakta om området där den intervjuade kvinnan bor. Det rör sig om medelinkomst (mycket låg), medelålder (låg) och typ av bostadsområde (flerbostadshus byggda under 1960- och 1970-talen, ofta i miljonprogramsområden i förorter runt större och medelstora städer i Sverige). Därmed har ett outtalat samband angetts: Visserligen består boken av individuella berättelser. Men de ska läsas mot en bakgrund av socioekonomiska faktorer.

Monologerna föregås av varsitt avsnitt med kursiv stil där den berättande reportern (alltså bokens primära berättare) tecknar ett snabbporträtt av den kvinna som för till fället står i centrum. Så här beskrivs 63-åriga Fatma Ipek, som inte intervjuas för att hennes familj utsatts för våldsbrott utan för att hon startat "mammavandringar" i området där hon bor:

> Första gången vi möts står Fatma vid T-banan och talar i mobiltelefonen. Hon har svarta solglasögon och svart fotsid dräkt med silverbroderier. Hennes hand är inlindad i deg eftersom hon har brutit armen. Det sägs att deg lindrar svullnaden.
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> På vägen genom betongkolosserna som skymmer solen denna sensommardag stannar Fatma var femte meter för att växla några turkiska ord med förbipasserande kusiner och kompisar. […] Utanför turkiska kulturföreningen sitter ett gäng gubbar som hon hälsar på. Sedan vänder hon sig till mig och viskar: "De vill inte ha oss kvinnor där."
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> Dörren är olåst när vi kliver in i det ombonade radhuset mellan Alby och Fittja. I hallen hänger en stor valaffisch med vackra Gul Alci, som förutom moderat lokalpolitiker visar sig vara en av Fatmas fem döttrar!
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> På teven rullar en turkisk serie som min egen mamma följer slaviskt. Stora skinnsoffor, glittriga paljettkuddar, silvrigt kakel i det skinande rena köket. Med sin funktionsdugliga hand kokar Fatma kardemummakaffe och lägger fram en Marabou chokladkaka. […] Hon hinner knappt börja berätta innan systersonen med sin fru och nyfödda bebis plötsligt står i vardagsrummet. Fatma visar prov på imponerande simultankapacitet när hon svarar på mina frågor samtidigt som hon konverserar med det unga paret med ett öga på kärlekssåpan.
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> (s. 71–72)

Kvinnan framställs som en dynamisk blandning mellan svenskt och turkiskt och som en mycket handlingskraftig person. Den fotsida dräkten och heminredningsstilen antyder ett traditionellt turkiskt kvinnoliv. Kommentaren om "gubbarna" utanför kulturföreningens lokal visar å andra sidan att hon kan ifrågasätta könsroller. Ett sådant intryck förstärks av bilden på den dotter som är en känd kommunalpolitiker. Degen runt armen signalerar "traderad kvinnovisdom" och förtjusningen i tv-såpan pekar mot "kvinnliga

intressen". Gästfriheten (släktingar kan bara titta förbi; dörren är till och med olåst) tycks osvensk medan simultankapaciteten visserligen också kan kodas som "typiskt kvinnlig", men samtidigt förbereder läsaren inför den kommande monologen. Där berättar Fatma Ipek om hur hon lärde sig att "skjuta, simma och rida" av sin pappa, att hon jobbat som sjuksköterska i Ankara och att hon inte är rädd att säga ifrån till stenkastande ungdomar när polisen ringt henne och bett om hjälp. En bild framträder av hur hennes initiativkraft och ledaregenskaper möjliggjort insatser i civilsamhället.

Andra kvinnor beskrivs inte som lika handlingskraftiga. Men även de som tvingats vara med om att deras söner mördats framstår som starka – om inte annat så starka i sin sorg och i sin lojalitet mot de mördade sönerna:

> Han var jättesnygg. Såg du den där bilden med rosorna jag lade ut på Facebook? En kompis sms:ade mig den och skrev: "Träffade Marley i Liljeholmen: Jag hade ett tungt lass med blommor i famnen och han sa: 'Du får inte bära tungt, ge mig dem.' Så hjälpte han mig från tvärbanan till tuben. Världens finaste kille".

(s. 42)

Flertalet intervjuade måste fortsätta bära ansvaret för sina kvarvarande barn: "Jag tvingar mig till att laga mat och städa. Resten av tiden vill jag bara sova. Jag tänkte att jag skulle ta mitt liv. Jag har försökt. Skära mig. Men sen kommer jag på att jag har en son till." (s. 93) Parallellt med sitt familjeansvar slåss kvinnorna mot myndigheter, ibland mot sina män eller tidigare män: "Hem till Sverige ville jag inte för där var Robert. Men till slut tänkte jag: Fuck it, vill han döda mig så får han döda mig, jag orkar inte gömma mig längre." (s. 29)

Bokens upplevande reporter kan skymta i korta passager där en monolog tillfälligt avbryts och intervjuscenen blir synlig. Detta kan ske när en anhörig eller vän till kapitlets huvudperson lägger sig i samtalet: "Det är värre än Chicago här. Skriv det! säger Sawzans bror Halil som precis klivit in genom dörren för att äta kycklingsoppan till lunch." (s. 193) Här anas reporterns närvaro indirekt, genom uppmaningen "Skriv det!" Denna typ av avbrott förstärker intrycket av att monologerna utgörs av spontant nedtecknade berättelser, riktade till en bestämd lyssnare.

Ibland möter läsaren mammor som vågar säga ifrån till söner med en kriminell livsstil. En mamma berättar att hon flera gånger har polisanmält sina söner men att de ändå är stolta över henne och det jobb hon gör som larmoperatör på SOS Alarm: "För dem är polisen fienden. Polisen stör ju deras business. Ändå är de väldigt stolta över

mitt jobb. För de vet, det har jag gjort klart för dem, att jag gör allt för att hålla dem vid liv!" (s. 115)

Just den övergripande bilden av den starka modern är det som i längden paradoxalt nog ställer sig i vägen för ett djupare narrativt engagemang. Det här är självklart inte boken som kan ge läsaren en analys av orsakerna bakom alla dödsskjutningar. Premissen att detta är mammornas version är given från början. Men till sist finns en risk att läsaren börjar längta efter nyanser i mamma-bilden. Ett talande citat ur en av monologerna lyder: "När man frågar barn vem som är deras förebild säger de alla samma sak. På första plats kommer mamma. Sedan kommer Zlatan." (s. 127)

I förordet är Alexandra Pascalidou personligen som mest synlig genom en hyllning till sin egen mamma, invandrad till Sverige från Grekland, dubbelarbetande och ensamstående med tre barn. Denna hyllning blir till ett anslag för hela boken tillsammans med förordets motto, som inleds: "I begynnelsen var Modern och Modern var hos Gud" (en travestering på Johannesevangeliets inledning). Mödrar omnämns sedan som "hjältar" de är "maktlösa", de "kämpar", ingen lyssnar på dem, de står "lägst i alla hierarkier". Läsaren har med detta förord fått en karta, en läsanvisning och med den en uppsättning värderingar om vad mödrar representerar i utsatta förorter. Man kan säga att förordet, liksom resten av boken, präglas av narrativ medkänsla och en viss narrativ inlevelse. Inlevelsen ges dock inte utrymme att fördjupas. Vi kan känna *för* alla dessa kämpande mammor, men för att känna *med* dem skulle vi behöva kunna tänka oss in i deras situation, något som delvis hindras av de återkommande idealiseringar som både uttalas av berättaren och intervjupersonerna själva. Pascalidou skriver att de intervjuade kvinnorna har fått "tala fritt. Utan förskönande filter eller författarens tolkningar". (s. 14) Men är det inte i själva verket ett förskönande filter vi möter, ett filter skapat av den empatiskt lagda "spökskrivare" som är minsta gemensamma nämnare mellan förordets öppna och de 21 monologernas dolda värderingar?

Familjen

Johanna Bäckström Lernebys reportagebok *Familjen* från 2020 är en berättelse om en släkt med turkisk-libanesiska rötter och starka familjeband och om ett parallellsamhälle i Göteborgsförorten Angered. Boken är också en berättelse om en reporters mångåriga arbete med att kartlägga förbindelserna mellan släkten Al Asim, som i Angered består av cirka 120 personer, och hur parallellsamhället upprätthålls.

Till en del berättas texten i första person, med avsnitt där läsaren får följa reportern genom mängder av intervjuer och research i

myndighetsdokument. Till en del berättas den i tredje person, med ett pärlband av rekonstruerade scener. Dessa scener bygger på reporterns intervjuer och vittnesuppgifter hämtade från polisens förundersökningar. Ofta gestaltar de situationer där människor hotas verbalt eller jagas och angrips med vapen. Ett exempel:

> Bråket eskalerade, det skreks och kusinerna plockade upp stenar som de började kasta.
> Chilenaren drog fram en kniv, gjorde ett utfall mot dem som kastade sten, men missade. De började springa.
> Tareq hamnade på efterkälken.
> Sedan gick allt fort.
> De andra hörde hur Tareq skrek och vände sig om. De såg hur han fick flera knivhugg bakifrån. Chilenaren tappade en sko, han högg igen och sedan sprang han sin väg. De andra rusade fram till Tareq som blödande sjönk ihop på en bänk.
> Någon kom utspringande från ett hus, en annan ropade till några trygghetsvärdar som var på nattvandring längre bort i kvarteret. En ung kille tryckte krampaktigt sin hand mot Tareqs vänstra sida för att stoppa blodflödet.
> Människor började samlas på balkongerna i husen runt omkring. En del kom utrusande. Flera ringde efter ambulans. Folk skrek upprört. Gärningsmannen kom från Latinamerika ropade någon, från Chile någon annan, eller Brasilien, ropade en tredje.
> Tareq blödde kraftigt. Till slut svimmade han.
> -   Vem var det som gjorde det?
> -   Vi måste få tag i honom!
> Upprörda röster avbröt varandra.
> Klockan var 22.00 på lördagen den 23 mars 2007 och 15-årige Tareq Al Asim såg död ut när ambulansen körde iväg med honom med sirenerna påslagna.
> <div align="right">(2020, s. 24–25)</div>

Scenen är spänningsdriven genom att handlingar, vad olika personer gör, avlöser varandra i ett högt tempo. Dramaturgin understryks genom korta stycken, flera gånger med en enda mening. Dialogen mot slutet, liksom ställen där korta meningar staplas på varandra, ökar tempot ytterligare. ("De började springa. / Tareq hamnade på efterkälken. / Sedan gick allt fort.") En berättarteknik av den här typen skapar en framåtrörelse i texten; vi läser för att vi vill veta hur det ska gå, samtidigt som närvarokänslan ökar så att vi tycker oss vara på plats.

Berättarperspektivet är afferent, som iakttaget från utsidan, och kan delvis kopplas ihop med ett ungdomsgäng som följer Tareq ("De andra hörde hur"; "De såg hur"). Men iakttagelserna verkar också kunna knytas till anonyma vittnen som dyker upp under

händelsernas gång (trygghetsvärdar i området, människor som kommer ut på sina balkonger). Detta gör perspektivet på samma gång externt och delvis allvetande; man skulle kunna jämföra med en filmscen där kameravinkeln skiftar mellan olika positioner. Därmed erbjuds läsaren att tänka sig in i situationen av att stå och se på vad som sker, men inte att leva sig in i någon enskild person.[7] Spänningen som stegras i ögonblicket blir därmed det centrala, inte hur det kan kännas att vara inblandad i händelserna.

Det är värt att notera att det är en pojke som tillhör släkten Al Asim som nästan dödas, och att just då saknas offrets perspektiv. I stället får vi veta att han tidigare förföljt och kastat stenar efter förövaren. När offret är någon utanför släkten skiftar perspektivet ofta till efferent, som upplevt inifrån. Offret kan sedan vara någon som hotas för att dra tillbaka en anmälan eller betala en påstådd skuld, och hotet kan vara enbart verbalt eller inkludera fysiskt våld. En afghansk flykting som återkommer i boken är pojken Mahmoud, som fått skyddad identitet efter att ha vittnat under en rättegång mot en far inom släkten Al Asim och hans två söner. Inför en fotbollscup i Göteborg stöter han på sönerna, som rör sig fritt i väntan på att avtjäna sitt straff. De och vänner till dem börjar hota och följa efter Mahmoud:

> Mahmoud blev förvirrad. Varför satt de inte i fängelse? Hur kunde de vara ute och köra moped när de hade dömts? Varför var de inte inlåsta? […] Det samlades fler människor runt dem. Mahmoud kände igen en svensk och en somalisk tjej som han sett förut. I ögonvrån såg han också hur porten till Wahids trappuppgång öppnades, och han försökte snabbt uppskatta om han skulle hinna springa in i porten och låsa dörren utan att de hann i fatt honom.
>
> (s. 72–73)

Scenen återger Mahmouds perspektiv, både i form av vad han kan se (människorna runt omkring, portuppgången) och vad han tänker. De tre frågorna på första och andra raden återges i *fri indirekt diskurs*, ett berättarperspektiv som skapar en särskild närhet och inlevelse och här uttrycker pojkens rädsla.[8]

Samma händelsekedja återges också utifrån vad en av pojkarna Al Asim uppger. Innan dess får läsaren veta att de tre tigit under polisförhör. Pojkens vittnesmål refereras i stället från en rättssal och föregås av följande berättarkommentar: "Under häktningsförhandlingen i augusti 2017 gav Salim sin version av vad som hade hänt." (s. 77) Här markeras att det som komma skall är just en "version". Läsaren får sedan ta del av Salims berättelse, men med inskjutna referenser som "Enligt Salim". Direkt efteråt noterar berättaren:

"Domaren i häktningsförhandlingen lyssnade uppmärksamt på hans berättelse. Sedan beslutade tingsrätten att häkta honom på sannolika skäl misstänkt för övergrepp i rättssak." (s 78)

Sammanfattningsvis är Salims version av händelsen inbäddad i en kontext av att den är en partsinlaga. Dessutom återberättas den i stället för att gestaltas, medan Mahmouds version i scenisk form gestaltas som en dramatisk händelse ögonblick för ögonblick, utan berättarkommentar. Två versioner av samma händelse ställs alltså till synes mot varandra, men genom olika kontexter och skilda framställningsformer har Bäckström Lerneby gett oss en fingervisning om vem vi ska tro mest på.

Och så ser det genomgående ut i boken. Fram växer en bild av en släkt som kontrollerar den lokala narkotikahandeln, stjäl, hotar och misshandlar, till och med mördar dem som sätter sig upp mot någon av släktens medlemmar. Om småbarn från släkten hamnar i bråk med andra barn skickas äldre bröder efter för att ingripa, allt för familjehederns skull. Fram växer också en bild av systematiskt bidragsfusk; beskyddarverksamhet; bostadsbolagets störningsjour som inte vågar anmäla grannbråk mellan barn där föräldrar skräms att ta tillbaka sina anmälningar samt hur ingen vågar vittna mot släkten Al Asim i polisförhör eller vid rättegångar. En viss förändring sker tack vare ett försöksprojekt där myndigheter som polisen, Försäkringskassan, socialtjänsten och Skatteverket samarbetar. Vid informella träffar delar de information om familjen, vilket leder till att personer kan åtalas, ibland också fällas för brott och att bidragsfusk kan stoppas. Boken gestaltar återkommande detta arbete i rekonstruerade scener, många gånger uppdelade i mindre avsnitt med tydliga cliffhangers:

De båda poliserna gick direkt fram till det förråd där de skulle göra husrannsakan, drog på sig vita galonhandskar, tog fram bultsaxen och knipsade enkelt upp hänglåset. Sedan gav de hunden kommandot: Sök.
Det första fyndet tog bara några sekunder för hunden att hitta.

(s. 155)

Här kan vi känna igen den spänning som utgör anslaget i scenen där Tareq Al Asim knivhuggs. Handlingen avbryts för några sidor med bakgrundsinformation om myndigheternas samarbetsprojekt. Därefter återupptas scenen med gestaltning av hur poliserna i det ena förrådet efter det andra finner olika typer av narkotika och en våg som de gissar har använts till att väga upp och portionera kokain. Texten fortsätter:

> Polismännen var noga med att byta galonhandskar och munskydd flera gånger under tiden de arbetade i förråden. De ville inte ge någon advokat chansen att i efterhand anklaga dem för att ha kontaminerat det ena eller det andra. De visste att om de bara var smarta och inte klantade till det skulle bevisen de samlade den här dagen kunna räcka ända in i rättssalen.
>
> (s. 161)

Precis som i scenen med Mahmoud kombineras spänningen här med ett efferent perspektiv som ger läsarens engagemang möjlighet att öka; när vi följer hur enskilda personer tänker och känner inför vad som händer är det lättare att ryckas med än om vi inom berättelsen enbart erbjuds ett vittnes position.[9] Den här gången är det dock inte ett offer utan poliser i arbete som läsaren erbjuds att dela perspektiv med.

Parallellt med att skildra polisens jakt på bevis i olika utredningar lyfter Bäckström Lerneby fram hur den lokala polisen i Angered försöker knyta positiva kontakter med medlemmar av släkten Al Asim, inte minst med släktens överhuvud, imamen Abu Nizar. Honom har reportern en egen relation till, och det är i mötena dem emellan som bokens budskap kompliceras. Tre gånger är hon hembjuden till imamen och hans närmaste familj och varje gång är han lika varm och vänlig.

Dessa träffar fungerar som nav i boken. Här stannar reportern upp. Hon blir synlig i första person, både som upplevande reporter och som en berättare som funderar över sin egen roll, sina bevekelsegrunder och om hon alls förmår att ge en rättvis bild av de band som håller släkten Al Asim samman: "Hos familjen Al Asim gick familj och släkt före allt, före livet och döden." (s. 84) Hon konstaterar att familj är viktigt för henne också och att hon är uppvuxen i en by där kusiner och nära släktingar hjälptes åt. "Men i mitt fall handlade det kanske om att hjälpa till att flytta, vara barnvakt, sjösätta en båt eller låna ut ett släp." (s 84)

Den upplevande reportern samtalar med imamen med, förstår läsaren, en genuin avsikt att förstå honom. Hon vet från sin research att han ofta anlitas för att medla mellan familjer som hamnat i konflikt med varandra. Sådana uppdrag tar han på sig både i Sverige och utomlands. Flera gånger har han anlitats av polisen när denna myndighet misslyckats med att bryta en våldsspiral i ett område. Han är själv inte dömd för några brott och säger att det som påstås om hans släkt är väldigt överdrivet. Han har inte kontroll över alla och vet att några har begått brottsliga handlingar, men de flesta finns ändå inte i polisens brottsregister. Trots det har myndigheterna förföljt personer bara för att de råkat heta Al Asim, menar han, och nämner barn som omhändertagits och familjer som hotats med vräkning.

Den upplevande reportern invänder att barn nog inte omhändertas utan goda anledningar. Hon kan heller inte förstå varför föräldrar ska ge sig in i slagsmål med andra föräldrar om barnen har hamnat i en konflikt. Återkommande blir den berättande reportern synlig genom metakommentarer om den upplevande reporterns roll: "Varför såg vi på situationen så annorlunda?" (s. 88) Och: "Under diskussionen krockade våra världsbilder igen." (s. 87) Alla reporterns trevande frågor leder till svar som i grunden tycks bottna i olika synsätt hos henne och imamen. Apropå afghanske Mahmoud – som pojkarna Al Asim menar inledde bråket mellan dem och honom genom att knuffas – försöker han förklara: "I deras värld gjorde de bara vad som förväntades av dem. De försvarade sin lillebror." (s. 88)

Efter hembesöken hos Abu Nizar lyssnar reportern igenom de bandade samtalen. Den berättande reportern konstaterar då självkritiskt att Abu Nizar flera gånger försökt prata med henne om kriget i Syrien men att reportern inte varit intresserad: "Där och då var jag alltför fokuserad på det jag tyckte var spännande, som maffiaryktena runt familjen, makten och kriminaliteten." (s. 92) Senare spårar hon hans släkt till ett antal arabiska familjer som efter första världskriget kom från södra Turkiet till Beirut i Libanon, där de aldrig riktigt integrerades med stadsbefolkningen utan behöll sin egen rättsskipning med så kallad sedvanerätt. Enligt den är en familj kollektivt ansvarig för ett brott som begåtts av en familjemedlem. Under 1980-talets libanesiska inbördeskrig flydde människor från dessa familjer till bland annat Sverige: "De hade ingen utbildning och många var analfabeter. De kom från områden där man levde i klaner och i klaner var varje individ en liten pusselbit. Om du som enskild pusselbit togs bort så var du död eftersom det inte fanns någon stat som tog hand om dig. Bara familjen, släkten och klanen." (s. 95)

Läsaren får aldrig se Abu Nizar eller någon annan i hans släkt ur ett efferent perspektiv. Därmed omöjliggörs narrativ inlevelse. Narrativ medkänsla uppfattad som viss sympati förmedlas däremot med imamen genom en kombination av faktaurvalet – vad vi får veta om hans släkts bakgrund och hans egen roll som fredsmäklare i det sunnimuslimska civilsamhället – och berättarens metakommentarer, som belyser att en journalists förkärlek för förenklad dramatisering ("maffiaryktena runt familjen") ibland kan skymma en mer komplex bild. Som läsare kan vi alltså inte känna *med* Abu Nizar, men i någon mån *för* honom – även om vi aldrig får veta om han är helt okunnig om vad som pågår omkring honom eller om det kanske bara råder en viss arbetsfördelning: att han mycket väl vet, men att det är praktiskt att inte just han smutsar ner händerna.

En narrativ medkänsla kan anas i det första kapitlet i *Familjen*. Det utspelar sig mer än tio år innan Johanna Bäckström Lerneby bestämmer sig för att skriva sin bok och några månader innan Tareq

Al Asim är nära att dö efter att ha knivhuggits. Hon är då ute på ett nyhetsuppdrag för att följa ungdomspolisens arbete i Angered. På en fritidsgård träffar hon och en polisman Tareq, då en glad 15-åring som spelar pingis, pratar och skojar, ställer nyfikna frågor till besökarna och berättar att han älskar musik. Att pojken hör till en familj som redan vid den här tiden har börjat kallas "maffia" känner reportern inte till. Hon ser bara en vanlig tonåring som är glad och nyfiken.

Trots den mörka bilden av kriminalitet och ett parallellsamhälle styrt av släkten Al Asim finns här en glipa ljus. Och kanske ett dolt budskap om att barn kan socialiseras in i ett system men att man aldrig får glömma att hålla isär barnet och systemet. Eller, för den delen, imamen som kom med ett arv till Sverige och det arv han kom med.

Tills alla dör

Det finns många likheter mellan *Familjen* och Diamant Salihus *Tills alla dör* från 2021. I båda böckerna förekommer rekonstruerade scener samt växlingar mellan afferent och efferent perspektiv liksom mellan en första- och tredjepersonsberättare. Salihus anslag är dock bredare. Han vill inte kartlägga en enskild släkts inflytande i ett bostadsområde utan hur en flerårig konflikt mellan två ungdomsgäng på Järvafältet i Stockholm kunnat leda till en eskalerande våldsspiral där den ena dödsskjutningen följt på den andra.

Likt Bäckström Lerneby använder han sig av förundersökningar från polisen och andra myndighetsdokument. Precis som hon har han också intervjuat poliser, lärare, fritidsledare, anhöriga och andra nyckelpersoner runt de unga offren och förövarna. Men intervjuerna är fler, täcker in fler perspektiv och går tätare inpå killarna i de två gängen och deras verklighet.

Även i denna bok får läsaren dels följa polisens utredningsarbete, dels reporterns jakt på svar och förklaringar. Men den upplevande reportern är inte lika synlig som i *Familjen*. I långa avsnitt får i stället en tredjepersonsberättare en framträdande plats. Redan första kapitlet är exempel på det. Inledningen lyder: "Rinkebykonflikten, eller 'kriget' som de inblandade själva säger, har ett tydligt startdatum: onsdagen den 22 juli 2015. Det var händelserna den dagen som triggade igång en lång kedja av brutala mord." (2021, s. 15) Detta anslag blir på samma gång en cliffhanger för det kommande kapitlet och för hela boken. En scenangivelse ges: "Det är varmt och på torget i Rinkeby syns ett par spridda grupper av personer, de flesta av dem är tonåringar." (s. 15) Direkt därpå är berättaren tillbaka med en kommentar som underbygger läsarens förväntningar: "Det ligger en

spänning i luften bland killarna, en extra laddning just denna kväll." (s. 15)

I nästa avsnitt gestaltas i scenisk form ett rån som ägt rum tidigare samma dag på ett växlingskontor (i citatet syftar "han" på en chef):

> Plötsligt hör han ett metalliskt ljud från nödutgången. Han kastar en blick mot monitorn som visar bilder från kameran i garaget och ser två personer iförda hjälmar som är i full färd med att bryta sig in. Chefen springer ut till sin kvinnliga kollega.
> "Nej, nej, nej!" säger han och skriker: "Larma! Larma!"
> Han inser att rånarna snart kommer vara igenom dörren men hinner trycka på larmknappen innan han och kollegan flyr in på toaletten och låser om sig. Där inifrån ringer de 112.
>
> (s. 16)

Här knyts ett efferent perspektiv till kontorschefen. Scenen gestaltas i högt tempo fram till att rånarna har försvunnit med bytet. Handlingen fortsätter sedan med en ny scen: "Det har hunnit bli sen kväll i Rinkeby när 16-åriga Maslah går runt med flera vänner och är förbannad. Han är arg på sina äldre kompisar som deltagit i Forex-kuppen, men framförallt på den tre år äldre Izzy." (s. 17) Här har alltså det efferenta perspektivet flyttat över till en 16-åring som, får läsaren veta, "ansåg att han hade varit med i planeringen [av rånet] och han började känna sig allt mer kränkt av att ha lämnats utanför." (s. 18) Ett händelseförlopp gestaltas och kulminerar med att en präst blir vittne till hur 19-årige Izzy skjuts med flera skott. Prästens uppgifter kommer från ett polisförhör men omvandlas i framställningen till hennes efferenta perspektiv: "Men hon tror just då att det är ett leksaksvapen eftersom den unga mannen fortsätter springa." (s 19)

Därefter är det dags för ännu ett scenbyte i den allvetande skildrade episoden: "Samtidigt vid radhusområdet i Bromsten står en kvinna böjd mot asfalten med en sekatör i handen." (s. 20) Izzy dyker upp: "'Kan du hjälpa mig? Jag har blivit skjuten." Polis och ambulans tillkallas, grannar reagerar, Izzy kommer in till sjukhus "där ett trettiotal sörjande har samlats". Bråk uppstår när Izzys bror försöker tvinga sig in i sjuksalen. Händelsekedjan liksom kapitlet slutar: "Izzy är död." (s 21) Sammantaget har då en rad efferenta perspektiv avlöst varandra medan dramatiska händelser har skildrats i ett uppskruvat tempo.

Den allvetande berättarrösten från inledningen är ett återkommande inslag som varvas med eller flätas in i bokens rekonstruerade scener. Den kan kommentera karaktärers personlighet eller egenskaper ("Nu är tillfället här, *stunden* då Indiana *är sårbar.*" (s. 55)); karaktärers avsikter ("De senaste nätterna har han undvikit Rinkeby, men nu är han tillbaka *för att rentvå sitt namn.*" (s 169)) liksom

fortlöpande hur händelser ska tolkas inom ramen för en större berättelse ("Samma sommar som Makelele slutade sexan, 2010, var *ett slags vändpunkt.*" (s. 40)); ("*den dagen* hände någonting i Khaleds liv" (s. 50)); ("*Vad han inte vet* är att ett par skyttar väntar i bakhåll." (s. 28)). (Mina kursiveringar i samtliga citat.)

Den här typen av kommentarer har en metakaraktär, det vill säga berättaren kommenterar sin egen berättelse. Metakommentarer var typiska för äldre tiders allvetande berättare, innan den moderna romanen blivit en etablerad genre.[10] Inom en tradition av muntligt historieberättande kan liknande kommentarer fungera som ett medel för att trollbinda åhörarna. Berättaren vänder sig då direkt till sin publik genom att särskilt understryka berättelsens märkligheter och höjdpunkter. Ett sådant stilgrepp kallas *tellabilty*, berättbarhet, och kan även utnyttjas i skriftliga berättelser.[11]

Salihu använder sig främst av tellability för att peka ut nyckelögonblick i handlingen. Kommentarerna fungerar då som profetior som kan föra tankarna till ett grekiskt ödesdrama. Ännu ett exempel från scenen med rånet: "Rånarna har haft bråttom och slarvat rejält. Spåren ligger utspridda över asfalten och ska senare leda polisen till viktiga gripanden, men *än är det långt kvar till dess.*" (Mina kursiveringar.) (s. 17). Liknande inpass från berättaren ger sken av att allt som ska hända är förutbestämt och att boken vi läser följer en ramberättelse där varje rekonstruerad scen och varje återberättat händelseförlopp har sin givna plats. Denna berättarteknik skapar inlevelse, men inte på samma sätt som när ett efferent perspektiv ger läsaren möjlighet att tänka sig in i en enskild karaktärs situation. Här är det i stället berättelsens dramaturgi som knyter läsaren till berättaren: vi läser vidare för att följa vad som ska hända härnäst och vi guidas särskilt av berättarröstens speciella retorik.[12]

Vid sidan av de längre rekonstruerade scenerna finns ett stort antal intervjuscener, varav flera varvar korta rekonstruktioner av vad intervjupersonen har berättat med direktcitat av vad personen säger till reportern. Detta är ett sätt att skapa närhet till den som för tillfället intervjuas. Läsaren möter då en partsinlaga i växelvis scenisk form och intervjuform. Med denna teknik introduceras läsaren för anhöriga till gängmedlemmar, engagerade medborgare i civilsamhället, utredande poliser, lärare och många andra. Vissa kapitel kan vara uppbyggda kring en ung pojke som beskrivs av flera personer, alla med sin bild av pojken.

Gång på gång förmedlas intrycket av hur omgivningen försöker att lugna ner medlemmarna i de två gäng som står mot varandra. Inte minst vädjar anhöriga och religiösa ledare om fred och förlåtelse. I en djupt symbolisk handling begravs gängkonfliktens två första offer bredvid varandra, efter en ceremoni som anordnats gemensamt av familjemedlemmar från konfliktens båda

grupperingar. Detta tycks fungera en tid. Men efter ett och ett halvt år är det dags för ett tredje mord, och sedan eskalerar det dödliga våldet med en hel serie mord.

I bokens förord skriver Salihu: "Jag har skrivit den här boken utifrån en ambition att förstå […] varför unga män inte har sett några andra karriärvägar än kriminaliteten och hur det har kunnat gå så långt som det har gjort." (s. 7–8) Ett slags svar som framskymtar är hur det tycks ha varit tillfälligheter som avgjort vem som blivit fiende till vem. Så beskrivs till exempel mördaren i det uppmärksammade dubbelmordet i Köpenhamn 2019 (då Rinkebykonflikten tillfälligt flyttat utomlands) som barndomsvän med offret. Trots att flertalet av de inblandade i konflikten har föräldrar från Somalia menar några intervjuade unga kvinnor i Rinkeby att varken fattigdom eller etnisk familjebakgrund spelat roll. I stället pekar de ut en machonorm som bidragande orsak till det gränslösa våldet.

Den uppfattningen förstärks av intervjuer som Salihu gör direkt med aktiva gängkriminella. Här får läsaren höra hur dessa personer själva resonerar – men sällan på ett sätt som går att förstå känslomässigt. De säger till exempel att de inte ens hatar dem som mördas inom fiendegänget. Det är bara så att dessa måste dö, eftersom de i sin tur har dödat eller skadat någon (s. 260). Vi får heller inte ta del av killarnas tankar och känslor, bara höra vad de svarar på reporterns frågor. Det visar sig att de har en strikt rollfördelning för vem som gör vad när de begår brott. Däremot, svarar en av dem på reporterns fråga, finns inga ledare: "'Det finns bara vänner', säger Klivaren. 'Om du behöver hjälp kommer de andra att ställa upp.'" (s. 258) Ingen av de intervjuade räknar med att överleva sin 25-årsdag.

Salihu återger också hur de grövsta brottslingarna uttrycker sig när de tror att de talar ostört, i form av replikskiften som fångats upp då polisen avlyssnat deras telefonsamtal och meddelanden på chatforumet Snapchat. Här framträder en total oberördhet inför konsekvenser av våldshandlingar.

Den starkaste narrativa inlevelsen i boken uppstår i ett antal kapitel om de två pojkarna Khaled och Vincent. De bådas öden utgör sidoberättelser som genom hela boken löper parallellt med ramberättelsen.

Khaled har sålt narkotika samt varit inblandad i stölder, rån och vissa våldsbrott. I hans fall förmedlas inlevelse när vi får ta del av hans personliga berättelse, både i form av vad han berättar för reportern under många och långa samtal och i form av scener som rekonstruerar hans erfarenheter under dramatiska ögonblick i hans liv. En nyckelscen är när Khaled som barn blir slagen av en annan pojke och gråtande springer in till sin pappa, som tvingar honom att gå ut igen och slå tillbaka. Läsaren förstår att pappans inflytande sedan den dagen har tvingat sonen att göra sig hård. När reportern

möter honom har han till sist bestämt sig för att bryta med sin kriminella livsstil. Men vartefter tiden går tillstöter många svårigheter:

> Ibland kände Khaled att det var som att han var tvungen att byta ut hela sin person, kasta allt som var han och bli någon annan. Ju längre man kom in i kriminaliteten desto svårare blev det, det var som ett missbruk. […] För att rättfärdiga allt man gjort och inte gjort började man så småningom bli medberoende till sina kriminella vänner, man ville inte svika dem, man ursäktade och ljög för sig själv.
>
> (s. 269)

Läsaren erbjuds att dela Khaleds efferenta perspektiv, samtidigt som narrativ medkänsla förmedlas med honom; det är lätt att både leva sig in i hans situation och tycka synd om honom samt hoppas att han ska klara att stå emot frestelser från sitt gamla liv.

Mer märkligt är det att kapitlen om Vincent skapar en så stark inlevelse. Vincent har flera neuropsykiatriska diagnoser, bland annat autism och ADHD, och har begått allt grövre brott. Reportern träffar honom bara perifert. I stället bygger denna del av *Tills alla dör* helt på sekundärkällor, i första hand pappan men också en tjejkompis, flera lärare, ett klassfoto från ettan liksom skriftliga orosanmälningar från socialtjänst och skola. Den röda tråden är pappans oro och kärlek för sonen. I intervjuer kritiserar han sig själv för att han lämnade fru och barn och bildade en ny familj utan att samtidigt vara en närvarande pappa för Vincent. När han försöker gottgöra detta tycks det vara för sent.

Vid ett tillfälle döms Vincent till fängelse för vapenbrott. Han reagerar då med lättnad, och pappan tycker att det verkar som om Vincent ville åka fast. När pappan besöker honom i fängelset talat han om att få ordning på sitt liv. Pappan bokar en resa för dem båda till sitt hemland Kamerun och Vincent är beredd att följa med. Där ska han få distans till den kriminella miljön, resonerar pappan.

Men planerna blir aldrig verklighet. Bara dagar efter att han släppts ur fängelset häktas han för grov stöld och döms på nytt till fängelse: "En av hans vänner menar att Vincent sannolikt begår brott för att han är desperat. Han vill sitta inne." (s. 227) När han på nytt släpps fri hoppas pappan att den uppskjutna Afrikaresan ska bli av. I stället mördas Vincent, men inte av gänget på fiendesidan. När pappan kommer hem från sjukhuset efter att respiratorn stängts av möter reportern honom:

"Sakta börjar det sjunka in att Vincents egna vänner mördat honom i en intern uppgörelse. Han visar mig flera bilder på Vincent, som barn i pyjamas, som kärleksfull bror i tonåren och bilder som ung vuxen när han visar långfingret. Det är svårt att titta på bilderna." (s. 252) Den sista meningen är ett av få ställen där den

upplevande reportern blir personlig och antyder egna känslor. Läsaren förstår att reportern gripits av Vincents öde.

Ett tidigare kapitel om Vincent inleds: "Det är höst och Vincent är hemma efter en längre tids LVU-placeringar. Inget har lyckats få honom att vända sitt liv, trots att insatserna har avlöst varandra. Men just den här dagen är en bra dag." (s. 100) Detta visar sig vara en dramatisering av ett ögonblick som reportern inte har varit med om. Han träffar pappan vid ett senare tillfälle. Då visar pappan en bild som är tagen under den "bra" dagen och föreställer Vincent tillsammans med sin syster, pappan och tre halvsystrar:

> Systern har precis spelat färdigt en basketturnering i Rissne och Vincent är stolt över att hon tagit sig till final och vunnit. Han ler mot kameran när pappan tar en bild för att föreviga den fina stunden.
> Pappan blir tårögd när han berättar om den här eftermiddagen på McDonald's, om hur Vincent vände sig mot sin syster och frågade:
> "Hur går det med skolan?"
> "Bra."
> "Ni måste sköta er i skolan. Skolan är viktig."
>
> (s. 102)

Därefter upplyser berättaren att Vincent de senaste åren "knappast varit närvarande i skolan" (s. 103) under sina många flyttar mellan jourhem och olika typer av ungdomshem.

Genom skildringen involveras läsaren i pappans uppenbara stolthet över att sonen kan önska sin syster det han själv inte klarat av. För att använda ett begrepp från narratologen Seymour Chatman kan man säga att pappans önskan om att sonen ska ta sig ur missbruk och kriminalitet förs över till läsaren via funktionen *intressefokus* (1990, s. 148). När vi lever oss in i pappan erbjuds vi att dela hans känslomässiga intresse för Vincent. Pappans engagemang för sin son blir därmed till läsarens engagemang.

Kapitlet fortsätter med att pappan kritiserar de samhällsinsatser som gjorts för Vincent samtidigt som han i minnet återkommer till den dag då fotot togs: "Pappan blir glansig i ögonen och zoomar in bilden från snabbmatsrestaurangen när Vincent var som vilken storebror som helst." (s. 105)

Den afferenta iakttagelsen om de glansiga ögonen är reporterns iakttagelse. Med vetskap om reporterns egna, tidigare uttryckta känslor kan vi föreställa oss att reporterns blick är empatisk. Via den empatin ökar vår möjlighet att föreställa oss pappans känsla när han tittar på bilden. Och, i ett tredje led, kan vi läsare också känna inte bara *för* utan också *med* Vincent.[13] Detta underlättas ytterligare av det urval av fakta som genom boken har getts om hur Vincent aldrig verkar ha fått rätt stöd för sin autism och ADHD och att han mot

slutet av sitt liv möjligen aktivt längtat efter att sitta inne bara för att få lugn och ro.

Sammantaget förmedlas bokens starkaste narrativa inlevelse i Vincent, trots att reportern aldrig kommer nära honom i direkt form. Närhet skapas i stället genom en komplex kombination av skiftande berättargrepp.

Slutsatser och diskussion

I vilken omfattning kan man då säga att de undersökta böckerna ger en komplex bild av miljöerna och människorna de skildrar? Alexandra Pascalidous *Mammorna* är den som skiljer sig mest från de andra två. Genom att vara en öppet deklarerad partsinlaga för mammor i utsatta områden innebär den å ena sidan en motbild till gängse medierapportering, som brukar fokusera på brottslingarna och de primära brottsoffren, det vill säga på dem som dödas eller skadas. Därmed är den ett värdefullt bidrag till en sammantagen mediebild. Å andra sidan lyfts inte fler parter fram samtidigt som Pascalidous berättare inte gör någon djupare analys av gängkriminalitetens orsaker. Hennes uttalade ärende är att ge röst åt de mammor som annars inte hörs i den offentliga debatten. 21 monologer utgör starka vittnesbörd men problematiserar inte individuella erfarenheter, än mindre samhälleliga strukturer.

När det gäller det narrativa engagemanget förmedlas narrativ medkänsla med alla kvinnor i boken. Däremot uppstår ingen djupare narrativ inlevelse. Det beror på att mammorna sammantaget idealiseras av den "spökskrivande" författare som redigerat kvinnornas svar, ställt frågor i intervjusituationen som inte syns för läsaren och ger egna beskrivningar av kvinnorna där nyanser inte riktigt framträder. Idealisering motverkar generellt inlevelse. Som läsare kan vi alltså tycka synd om kvinnorna, men trots att de är bokens huvudpersoner får vi svårt att tänka oss in i deras situation.

Både Johanna Bäckström Lernebys *Familjen* och Diamant Salihus *Tills alla dör* utnyttjar dramaturgi på en rad sätt som bidrar till läsares närvarokänsla. Ett exempel är rekonstruerande scener i tredje person, ofta från dramatiska ögonblick när någon blir jagad, skadad eller dödad. Båda reportageböckerna använder också cliffhangers. I *Familjen* rör det sig om att händelsekedjor klipps av i spännande ögonblick. I *Tills alla dör* är det stilmedlet *tellability*, i form av profetior i berättarröstens retorik, som triggar läsarens förväntningar.

De dramatiserande inslagen gör berättelserna spännande och får oss att vilja veta vad som ska hända härnäst. Därmed ökar läsarens engagemang för reportagens *ämne*. För att narrativ inlevelse ska uppstå krävs dock något mer, oftast i form av ett efferent

berättarperspektiv; det är först när vi ges möjlighet att följa en karaktärs tankar och känslor som vi på allvar kan tänka oss in i den karaktärens situation och därmed motarbeta instinktiva föreställningar om att "det här är en verklighet som inte angår mig". Bäckström Lernebys scener domineras av afferenta perspektiv då läsaren erbjuds positionen av att *iaktta* snarare än *uppleva* det som händer. Här finns också enstaka efferenta inblickar i offers eller polisers perspektiv. I *Tills alla dör* är de rekonstruerade scenerna fler och längre samt återger fler typer av situationer. Detta sker nästan alltid ur efferenta perspektiv som ger inblickar i hur brottsoffer, anhöriga, lärare, fritidsledare, poliser och socialarbetare men även brottslingar tänker och känner. Därmed får läsaren i denna bok en bred "rundmålning" av människor i en utsatt miljö. Många perspektiv korsar varandra vilket både ger den narrativa inlevelsen stort utrymme och problematiserar bokens övergripande budskap. Starkast narrativ inlevelse ges i pojken Vincent, trots att reportern bara träffar honom flyktigt och att han inte skildras ur ett efferent perspektiv. Här blir inlevelse i stället möjlig genom andra berättargrepp, främst konstruktionen *intressefokus*.

Den upplevande reportern är hos Bäckström Lerneby mer synlig än hos Pascalidou och Salihu. Hennes undersökning försvinner aldrig ur läsarens sikte, och hennes tre möten med imamen och familjeöverhuvudet Abu Nizar blir ett självklart och komplicerande fokus i boken. Även i *Tills alla dör* finns en upplevande reporter som återkommer i intervjuscener och genom researchprocessen. Men här finns dessutom en allvetande berättare som genom *tellability* pekar på sin berättelses märkligheter – ett inslag som saknas i de andra böckerna och som minskar läsarens intryck av att ta del av journalistik.

Bäckström Lernebys berättare utnyttjar metakommentarer och faktaurval för att nyansera budskapet om den kriminellt belastade släkten Al Asim, som hotar och skrämmer sin omgivning till tystnad och upprätthåller ett parallellsamhälle i Göteborgsförorten Angered. Metakommentarerna används den här gången inte av en allvetande berättare utan av en berättande reporter som självkritiskt ifrågasätter den upplevande reporterns kanske förhastade slutsatser. Detta stilgrepp syns i samtalen med imamen. Tillsammans med fakta om familjens rötter i turkiska klanstrukturer komplicerar de den förmedlade bilden och gör svaren på frågor om skuld och orsaker mindre självklara.

Salihu hittar inga direkta kopplingar mellan enskilda familjer och gängkriminalitet. Han söker efter förklaringar till det eskalerande våldet och får många svar med ännu fler nyanser. Till slut sammanstrålar de i en bild som främst handlar om grupptryck inom en machokultur där unga män blivit blinda för våldets konsekvenser –

konsekvenser som drabbar deras vänner, deras före detta vänner, deras fiender, dem själva och samhället.

Avslutningsvis ska sägas att två av de analyserade böckerna, *Familjen* och *Tills alla dör*, kombinerar reportageformen med grävande journalistik. De återges alltså både i en narrativ form och är resultatet av månaders research inom ett omfattande källmaterial. *Mammorna* bygger främst på långa intervjuer med de kvinnor som kommer till tals. En slutsats skulle kunna vara att den narrativa formen i ett reportage har störst möjlighet att påverka på djupet om den kombineras med och vilar på ett gediget faktaunderlag.

NOTER

¹ Se till exempel Maier et al., 2018.

² De två reporterinstanserna motsvarar Dorrit Cohns (1983) indelning av jaget i ett *berättande jag* och ett *upplevande jag* (s. 143). Indelningen kommer ursprungligen från Leo Spitzer, i en essä från 1922 om Marcel Proust.

³ Jag använder dessa begrepp med samma innebörd som Wayne C. Booth (1983) när han talar om *showing* respektive *telling* (s. 40, 50 och 94), för två framställningsformer.

⁴ Begreppen har myntats av Göran Rossholm (2005, s. 148–149). Afferent perspektiv innebär att något är "som iakttaget eller uppfattat" av någon, antingen en anonym iakttagare eller en karaktär i berättelsen. Detta perspektiv passar särskilt bra för att beteckna den iakttagande positionen i ett klassiskt ögonvittnesreportage. Den kan förklaras med att ett ögonvittne i en scen är internt placerat, det vill säga närvarande inom berättelsen, men samtidigt externt placerat i förhållande till det eller dem som iakttas. En konsekvens av ett afferent perspektiv i ett reportage är att den iakttagande reporterns egna känslor görs osynliga eller underordnas. Iakttagelsen i sig är det centrala. Efferent perspektiv innebär att något är "som uttryckt, tänkt eller känt" av någon, primärt inom en scen. Så fort denna någon inte sammanfaller med reportern möjliggörs läsarens inlevelse i den personen. Både afferent och efferent perspektiv kan förekomma i dels första person, dels tredje person.

⁵ Dessa två begrepp kan delvis sägas motsvara Suzanne Keens (2013) *narrative empathy* respektive *compassion/sympathy*. Jag vill dock understryka att Keens begrepp, som hör hemma inom fältet *narrative empathy*, ska förstås som både (skribentens) teknik och (textens) effekt (på läsaren). Mina begrepp syftar främst på strukturella och stilistiska konstruktioner inom texten, alltså vissa berättar- och stiltekniker.

⁶ Detta motsvaras av narratologen Käte Hamburgers (1973) begrepp *deiktiskt centrum* (s. 67), tid och plats då och där någon talar i berättelsen. Begreppet syftar på hur centrum för vem som talar och upplever något har flyttat från en berättare till de upplevande karaktärernas tid och plats.

⁷ Detta kan jämföras med Monika Fluderniks (1996) begrepp *viewing*, en av tre läsarstrategier inom de teoretiska modeller Fludernik har samlat under den kognitivt inriktade *naturliga narratologin* (s. 176–177).

Fludernik tänker sig att vi, när vi läser en berättelse, strävar efter att göra den begriplig för oss. Vi prövar den då mot mänskliga erfarenheter av sådant vi känner igen från situationer i det verkliga livet. Tre centrala begrepp och grundläggande mänskliga aktiviteter är här att uppleva/erfara (*experiencing*), iaktta (*viewing*) och berätta (*telling*). *Viewing* motsvarar därmed en situation av att iaktta, samtidigt som läsaren föreställer sig en åskådare jämförbar med ett ögonvittne som är på plats i berättelsen men själv inte deltar.

[8] *Fri indirekt diskurs* är ett stilmedel som i grundfallet innebär att en tanke eller känsla uttrycks i tredje person, samtidigt som ett sägeverb i stil med "tänkte hon", "kände han" saknas. Göran Rossholm (2005) diskuterar hur både det som uppfattas (efferenta perspektiv) och det som iakttas (afferenta perspektiv) kan vara mer eller mindre "perspektiviskt", det vill säga återges med mer eller mindre närhet till ett visst yttrande eller en viss iakttagelse (s. 152–153). För yttranden hänvisar han i en annan text (2004, 251 ff.) till Brian McHale (1978), som inordnar yttranden på en skala mellan identiska med ursprungsyttrandet och fullständigt omformulerade av en berättare (s. 258–259). *Fri indirekt diskurs* kommer på andra plats, vilket motsvarar en tydlig närhet. Keen (2013) pekar ut denna stilteknik som ett välkänt sätt att hos läsaren "evoke empathetic response" (par. 8).

[9] Med Fluderniks (1996) terminologi rör det sig här om att "känna igen" karaktärernas upplevelser från en för läsaren bekant situation av att själv uppleva och erfara, lässtrategin *experiencing* (s. 330).

[10] Eva Broman (2005) skriver om den klassiska 1800-talsromanens berättare: "Den 'allvetande' berättaren har ingen anledning att göra sig osynlig och demonstrerar ofta sin överlägsna kunskap och bedömningsförmåga genom att kommentera personernas tankar, känslor och handlingar." (s. 51).

[11] Begreppet, som ursprungligen användes om muntligt historieberättande, innebär att ett innehåll och/eller en form används för att ge intrycket att något verkligen är värt att berätta (Baroni, 2014).

[12] Denna typ av text aktiverar den lässtrategi som Fludernik (1996) kallar *telling* (s. 340–341). Berättelsen drar då uppmärksamheten till äldre tiders tydligt synliga allvetande berättare. Därmed kan den påminna läsaren om det mänskligt primära behovet av att berätta (*telling*).

[13] För att göra en sådan tolkning kan man ha stöd av den kognitivt inriktade analysmetoden *mind-reading*, se Zunshine (2006, s. 3–10). Begreppet, som ursprungligen hör hemma inom kognitiv psykologi, har förts över till en teknik för att tolka fiktiva karaktärers sinnen utifrån information som ges ur ett externt (afferent) perspektiv, bland annat om karaktärernas kroppsspråk. Det bör även kunna användas på ickefiktiva texter av berättande karaktär.

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Digital storytelling as sociotechnical imaginary

The performative power of journalistic innovation discourse

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Abstract

This article zooms in on the sociotechnical imaginaries within the discourse on digital storytelling as journalistic innovation in the Netherlands. It analyzes how digital storytelling is discussed since 2015 on the online platforms of the Dutch Journalism Fund and the Dutch Association of Journalists, two central intermediary organizations within the Dutch journalistic landscape that play a vital role in the debate about journalistic innovation and journalism's future. My analysis shows that this discourse provides a rather one-dimensional and uniform sociotechnical imaginary that presents the future concerning the story forms journalism employs as one in which digital-savvy news consumers need to be engaged through a more captivating way of reporting, allowing for more interactivity and forms of storytelling that draws them into the story on an experiential and emotional level. In terms of storytelling, the techno-centric focus reinforces the already prevalent understanding of journalistic innovation as primarily a matter of mastering and exploiting the digital affordances of new technological tools and platforms without questioning or problematizing how this impacts journalism's professional ethics and subsequently its cultural authority.

KEYWORDS

journalistic innovation, digital storytelling, sociotechnical imaginaries, technological drama, innovation discourse

Introduction

For over two decades, journalism has been grappling with the challenges of the digital era. A key concern is journalism's difficulties with attracting and engaging news consumers in the highly competitive context of the digital era (Broersma & Peters, 2013). This struggle has prompted gloomy narratives of decline from both journalists and scholars, raising the alarm about journalism's survival and the societal impact of its decline in a post-truth age. In response, people within and outside journalism have – with increasing urgency – been calling for rapid and far-reaching changes in journalism (Hepp & Loosen, 2022; Creech & Nadler, 2018). The term 'innovation' has become a driving force within this debate and is widely embraced as a panacea that promises to safeguard journalism's future in the digital age (Bossio & Nelson, 2021).

Exuding a utopian aura of novelty and (radical) progress, journalistic innovation promises to fundamentally reinvent the profession (Creech & Nadler, 2017). In doing so, innovation discourse performatively naturalizes the idea that innovation is crucial for journalism's future, and projects specific images of journalism's future that include "a diagnosis that points to the need for a fundamental change in the shape of pressure to innovate: journalism or media organizations would have to do this or that so as not to miss trend x, to meet challenge y." (Hepp and Loosen, 2022: 118). As such, it establishes an intricate relation between the way journalism's future is envisioned and what 'innovation' entails and how it should be implemented, which steers the direction in which journalism develops as practice and industry. As Godin (2015: 284) argues, "discourses make innovation happen." Yet, innovation as a notion is seldom problematized within discussions on journalism's future, resulting in the uncritical acceptance of such claims without critically assessing the promises that are made (Creech and Nadler, 2018).

To elucidate the performative nature of innovation discourse, this article zooms in on the discourse in the Netherlands on digital storytelling as journalistic innovation. My analysis of the debate on digital storytelling in the Netherlands acts as an insightful case-in-point, but the article centers on the development of a theory-driven argument about the role discourse on innovation play in shaping journalism's future, which I believe holds merit for other journalistic cultures and contexts as well – particularly concerning journalism in the West. In the theoretical framework following the introduction, I start by arguing that innovation is a fuzzy, value-laden, and performative notion, which is strategically exploited by journalistic actors – journalists, news media, intermediary organizations as well as journalism critics and scholars – to paint a picture of what

journalism's future hold, and which developments and initiatives are necessary to make this future happen (Godin, 2015; Creech & Nadler, 2018).

Subsequently, I discuss how this discourse, which is rather utopian in nature, presenting innovation as something of a 'magic bullet', can be fruitfully analyzed through the conceptual lens of 'sociotechnical imaginaries', i.e., specific images of journalism's role in society and its use of technology that affords this, are conveyed within this discourse (Jasanoff, 2015). Such imaginaries are often presented with a high degree of certainty about what the future holds, aimed at convincing people within and outside of journalism of the necessary actions necessary to realize this future (Schiolin, 2021; Ruotsalainen et al., 2021). As such, a key focus of the empirical analysis of this article is to scrutinize what imaginaries are put forward with regard to digital storytelling as innovation, and how they shape and constrain how journalism's future is envisioned.

With the growing attention for journalistic innovation, ancillary intermediary organizations such as professional associations, innovation labs, funding agencies, and incubator and accelerator programs have started to discuss, encourage, support and fund journalistic innovation (Lowrey et al., 2019). Therefore, the discourse on journalistic innovation – in the form of news and background articles, announcements and interviews on journalistic innovation ranging from new outlets and ideas, predictions of journalism's future, to coverage of research projects and announcements of support programs – to a large extent takes place on their websites and platforms, and is strongly shaped by their understanding of innovation and journalism's future. By highlighting and providing a platform for different actors to convey specific sociotechnical imaginaries, they steer how journalism's future is envisioned, and, particularly through the support, funding, and prestige these intermediary organizations distribute, they actively shape, but also limit the direction in which journalism develops (Lowrey et al., 2019; Willemsen, Witschge & Sauer, 2021).

In that sense the quality of the debate about innovation and journalism's future is important as it plays a central role in shaping the way journalism evolves and changes. The discourse on innovation on the websites of these ancillary organizations thus provides highly relevant research material. In the method section following the theoretical framework, I discuss and justify how I have conducted a textual analysis of a sample of 68 articles on digital storytelling from the websites of two central intermediary organizations within the Dutch journalistic landscape with a strong focus on journalistic innovation, respectively The Dutch Journalism Fund (www.svdj.nl) and

Villamedia (www.villamedia.nl), part of the Dutch Association of Journalists.

The remainder of the article is devoted to a theoretically driven discussion of the characteristics of the way digital storytelling is discussed as journalistic innovation that can safeguard journalism's digital future. Overall, my analysis shows that within that debate on innovation, journalists of established outlets and of novel journalistic initiatives and startups as well as journalism scholars regularly point to digital storytelling as an important innovation that has the potential to attract audiences, particularly a younger generation, and re-engage them with journalism. They clearly have a techno-centric perspective on digital storytelling and emphasize how the affordances of digitalization enable a new type of storytelling that appeals to the audience through captivating, interactive and immersive multimedia stories (Cf. Vázquez-Herrero, López-García & Irigaray, 2020). Moreover, the discourse lacks a comprehensive perspective on the lineage of and relation between the different storytelling trends, which are as a result largely discussed in isolation.

Based on these findings, I argue that the emphasis within the discourse on digital storytelling is too much on the 'bright shiny things', providing a one-sided techno-centric perspective on digital storytelling without considering the impact the implementation and use of these news technologies might have on journalism's core values and professional ethics. Ultimately, this means that digital storytelling as innovation is taken for granted as a positive development without a thorough critical discussion about the impact it has on journalism as a professional practice.

An overemphasis on innovation and change

Journalism's focus on 'innovation' aligns with a broader trend of embracing 'innovation' beyond its original economic and business context. In the last decades, the concept entered the debate in many public sectors, like health care, education, or the environment, and is now an integral part of their political agendas (Ampuja, 2016; Perren & Sapsed, 2013). The EU's Horizon Programme, for instance, allocates 10 billion euros to the European Innovation Council between 2021 and 2027 (Horizon Europe, 2022), which demonstrates the growing belief in the efficacy of 'innovation' to solve public issues.

So, innovation is a 'hot' topic, which has put it high on the research agenda, with journalism studies being no exception. Research into journalistic innovation has grown considerably in the last decades. Many scholars have examined how both existing

outlets and new actors have experimented with and tried to adopt new ideas, ranging from the use of new technologies, and business and distribution models to the implementation of alternative work routines and journalistic norms and forms – with more and less successful results (Bélair-Gagnon & Steinke, 2021; Garcia-Aviles, 2021). While this has rendered many important and insightful studies into which aspects of journalism are subject of innovation and how journalists and outlets have implemented – or tried to implement – innovations, this focus on innovation has somewhat obscured the aspects of journalism that have remained stable.

For this reason, Peters and Carlson (2019: 638) argue that journalism studies subscribes to a 'change paradigm', with which they mean that "the idea of change, and especially forward-looking change, gains almost paradigmatic status." Carlson and Lewis (2019: 643) further develop this idea and point out the often a-historic, future-oriented nature of research into journalism. While they understand how the concerns about journalism's future have encouraged and justified this research focus, they argue that journalism scholars run the risk of only examining "trends and fads without sufficient critical reflection", thus disregarding the ongoing interaction between stasis and change in the way journalism develops. To counter this 'tunnel vision', they call for more 'temporal reflexivity' in research to get out from under the pull of 'the new'.

While these scholars talk about journalism studies in general, their argument applies *a fortiori* to research into journalistic innovation, which has mainly focused its attention on the latest industry trends (Posetti, 2018; Bélair-Gagnon & Steinke, 2021). As such, many journalism scholars studying innovation implicitly seem to accept the promise of innovation that is central to its discourse:

> The 'innovation' discourse seems to fulfil an important purpose: It contributes to a general self-assurance of 'innovation's' importance. This discourse acts as a driving force for the initiation and legitimization of processes of institutional change, leading us to believe observers would agree that both journalism and journalism research are primarily concerned with future trends.
>
> (Hepp & Loosen, 2022: 118)

While there is research pointing to the potential negative consequences of digital technologies for journalism and highlighting new media's resistance to change (e.g., Cohen, 2015; Hendrickx & Picone, 2020; Bossio & Holton, 2019; Ferrucci & Perreault, 2021), only few studies problematize the notion of journalistic 'innovation' itself (Creech & Nadler, 2018; Bossio & Nelson, 2021). To counter this, I do not only argue for more temporal reflexivity, but also for a

more reflexive and critical stance towards journalistic innovation, which acknowledges the value-driven and performative nature of the understanding of and debate on journalistic innovation (Godin, 2015; Creech & Nadler, 2018).

Innovation as a strategic and performative concept

As much as 'innovation' is being studied, the concept remains "ill defined", lacking a shared understanding (Bleyen et al., 2014:29; Garcia-Aviles, 2021). The term is used rather loosely, encompassing any effort to adapt journalism to the digital age (Küng, 2013; Bélair-Gagnon & Steinke, 2021). What the many different perspectives have in common is a rather broad definition of 'innovation' as something 'new and improved', which is used commonsensically (Bélair Gagnon & Steinke, 2021; Storsul & Krumsvik, 2013; Garcia-Aviles, 2018).

Yet, what counts as 'something new' cannot be established objectively and always refers to something being perceived as new (Steensen, 2009). This goes a fortiori for what 'improvement' entails. Whether an outlet, tool, or practice is considered 'innovative' or not is ultimately rooted in a normative perspective on what journalism is and should be to ensure its future. So, innovation is by no means 'simply' a neutral, descriptive concept (Hepp & Loosen, 2022).

In his comprehensive study of innovation as a concept, Godin (2015) argues that the meaning of the concept and its 'utopian' aura, is too often taken for granted and unreflexively embraced. According to him, "researchers have asserted that innovation is good and have sought the conditions under which innovation takes place, the conditions which facilitate its diffusion, and the characteristics which distinguish more innovative individuals, groups, and organizations from less innovative ones." (Godin, 2015: 283). Conversely, Godin (2015: 284) conceives innovation as a value-laden concept that has strong performative power. According to him innovation is:

> [A]n abstract panacea, anti-historical and disconnected from the study of social problems (the problems are taken for granted) but aimed at solving all of humankind's problems and bringing about in a radical way a perfect society.

Thus, the discourses about innovation have a lot of performative power: "[D]iscourses make innovation happen" (Godin, 2015: 284).

More specifically, Godin warns against uncritically accepting the promises of innovation due to the market-oriented nature of the way the concept is widely understood, which "evolves around a key ideology of modernity, namely economic issues, and the 'positive'

contribution of industrial/technological innovation to economic growth." (Godin, 2015: 284). This is nicely illustrated by the role innovation plays in the EU's Horizon program, which clearly embraces the promises of innovation by emphasizing how it "support[s] breakthrough technologies and game changing innovations to create new markets and scale up internationally". This quote not only shows how innovation is understood as radical change and improvement, but also reveals the underlying 'entrepreneurial', market-driven goals (Horizon Europe, 2022; Godin, 2015).

Critics fear that such 'innovation fetishism' results in the adoption of an entrepreneurial logic in which commercial motives invalidate public values as key drivers of policy decisions (Ampuja, 2016; Van Dijck, 2019). However, Montgomery (2016) highlights that this plea for how to understand innovation isn't settled yet. He argues that despite the popularity of an entrepreneurial understanding of 'innovation', the right way to understand 'innovation' is still part of an ongoing negotiation about what innovation means and what role it should have in tackling societal problems.

While the notion of innovation often goes unquestioned, this struggle over the way innovation should be understood is also evident within journalism. Its strong commitment to public ideals like independent reporting and a well-informed citizenry, and professional values such as truthfulness, factuality, and impartiality, underscore why the emphasis on technological advancement and entrepreneurship in the debate around journalistic 'innovation' has been criticized for abandoning these core values (Posetti, 2018; Ward, 2009; Garcia-Aviles, 2018). Innovation is thus a concept that is highly value-laden – often combined with adjectives like 'disruptive' or 'radical' – aimed at fundamentally changing journalism to safeguard its future.

This perspective is established performatively; people within and outside journalism need to be convinced of its value (cf. Godin, 2015). Within the context of the discussion on journalism's reluctance to innovation, the strict protection of journalism's professional ethics is often framed as the losing battle of a stubborn, nostalgic "rearguard" that is wasting precious time to reinvent journalism (Kleis Nielsen, 2019). By accepting such a perspective innovation is performatively established, presenting fundamental change as the only way to 'save' journalism. This "pro-innovation bias" assumes that "exceptional contemporary conditions require journalism to shed many of its historical accretions" and shows how successfully 'innovation' has naturalized the idea that fundamental change is urgent and inevitable to secure journalism's future (Creech & Nadler, 2017:192,188; Godin, 2015).

Moreover, this understanding of innovation and the way it shapes how journalism's future is envisioned, steers the distribution of already scarce funds and resources within the industry (Creech & Nadler, 2018; Carlson & Usher, 2016). This has made the term a strategic asset in the ongoing competition for legitimacy and resources between established journalists and new contenders of competing outlets, but competition can also occur within journalistic organizations (Ruotsalainen et al., 2021; Holton & Bélair-Gagnon, 2018; Vulpius, forthcoming). Like the concept of journalism in general, journalistic innovation is also involved – implicitly and explicitly – in a definitional struggle, in which different voices attempt to performatively establish its meaning as well as the way journalism's future is envisioned (Carlson, 2016). How 'innovation' is understood and imagined therefore steers and legitimizes the way journalism's future is envisioned and which new journalistic initiatives need to be funded (Hepp & Loosen, 2022; Creech & Nadler, 2018).

Sociotechnical imaginaries of journalism's future

A useful way to gain insight into the way innovation is understood and how journalism's future is imagined is to study the 'sociotechnical imaginaries' that are strategically put forward in this debate. A sociotechnical imaginary entails a selective portrayal of journalism's future in terms of its technological affordances, revenue models, societal and professional values and practices, and audience behavior and expectations (Jasanoff, 2015). These imaginaries are an important discursive strategy in convincing people of the value of journalistic innovation as well as delimit what type of ideas and initiatives are legitimized as innovative – i.e., fruitful – ways to change journalism to sustain it in the digital age.

As Schiolin (2020) shows, such imaginaries attempt to predict what the future holds for society – often in an authoritative way. They provide a scenario of how certain new developments will change society, but at the same time, he argues, these descriptive statements are highly normative claims about "what the world and humans *ought* to be" (Schiolin, 2020: 544). These scenarios are often typified by what he calls 'future essentialism', which he sees a discursive strategy that "produce[s] and promote[s] an imaginary of a fixed and scripted, indeed inevitable, future, and that can be desirable if harnessed in an appropriate and timely fashion but is likewise dangerous if humanity fails to grasp its dynamics" (Schiolin, 2020: 545). It highlights the inevitability of certain (technological) developments, thus emphasizing the urgency to act and invest in certain initiatives.

Schiolin (2020) critiques this strategy of presenting the future as a given. The authoritative way of establishing what the future holds reduces the complexity and open-endedness of the way society develops. It is not only "imagining and defining the future" but it also means "deciding and governing it" (Schiolin, 2020: 543). The certainty with which these narratives about the future are presented leaves no room for contestation, debate, and alternative scenarios. Thus, convincing people of the merit of a certain imaginary "restrict[s] which kinds of futures for journalism people can imagine and what they can reasonably expect" (Ruotsalainen et al., 2021: 4). In other words, these sociotechnical imaginaries of the future project a diagnosis of how the present falls short, which determines which 'innovation' efforts are considered necessary to bring about this future (Hepp & Loosen, 2022). This reaffirms the idea about the power these intermediary organizations wield by facilitating and steering the debate about innovation; even more so, as they also have a central role in distributing scarce resources (Creech & Nadler, 2018; Willemsen, Witschge & Sauer, 2021).

While these sociotechnical imaginaries are compelling, as the rise of innovation as a buzzword proves, research shows that "the culture of professionalism in the newsroom remains remarkably resilient and resistant to change, as changes in practice may implicate changes in identity" (Hendrickx & Picone, 2020: 2028). Carlson (2015) conceptualizes and illustrates this resilience nicely in his case study into 'automated journalism', i.e., journalistic articles written by an algorithm. He argues that when it comes to journalistic innovation, scholars have focused too much on "shallow questions of usability" than delve deeper into the way technological developments "reshape the cultural practice of news creation" (Carlson, 2015: 417).

Through the lens of 'technological drama', Carlson (2015) analyzes the debate about automated journalism which ensued between different actors within and outside journalism after the introduction or push to exploit the technological opportunities these algorithms offered. Drawing on Pfaffenberger, Carlson defines technological drama as conflict between different actors with different "axiomatic commitments" which brings them to make competing claims of what impact and opportunities these technological developments have and hold for journalism's professional practice. As Carlson (2015: 418) formulates it, "the question becomes not only how technological changes alter news practice, but more importantly how they alter the ways in which practice is imagined by the actors involved." It is exactly that insight into the discursive and social nature of technology, which makes this conceptualization so fruitful. It acknowledges the interaction between technological

affordances and professional practices that together determine the uptake and further development of new technologies.

In terms of sociotechnical imaginaries, technological drama can be regarded as a debate in which alternative imaginaries compete for legitimacy. It implies that there is debate about what the future holds, allowing for different scenarios to be weighed against each other. Building on Schiolin (2020), a healthy amount of technological drama – i.e. a balanced exchange of different normative perspectives on how journalism future could look like and how journalism needs to develop, in which, for example, the pros and cons of new technologies in relation to established professional practices are carefully discussed and negotiated – could be considered an antidote against the future essentialism that only presents one scenario, obscures alternatives, and disavows the inherent high level of uncertainty of any attempt to predict the future. A healthy pluriform debate about innovation and journalism's future would acknowledge this uncertainty and do justice to the different perspectives and ways of imagining journalism's future. Analyzing the sociotechnical imaginaries in this discourse is therefore a fruitful approach to analyze and assess how these ancillary intermediary organizations understand journalistic innovation and to what extent they facilitate a fruitful debate about journalism's future.

Research design and method

A textual analysis was conducted to examine which sociotechnical imaginaries the discourse on digital storytelling showcased, and how digital storytelling is discussed and understood in relation to innovation and the future of journalism. Textual analysis is a suitable method for this as it is an in-depth interpretative method of analysis that employs a contextualized way of analyzing how "the meanings of our social realities are constructed" (Brennen, 2012: 192). As a qualitative method, it provides a useful way of analyzing texts in terms of their content, structure, style as well as its 'absences' – aspects of an issue that are downplayed or disregarded altogether, which all are an integral part of the meaning-making process. As such, it is a fruitful method to analyze how digital storytelling is being discussed in relation to journalism and its future. It can analyze the thematic focus and rhetorical devices used to highlight certain aspects of digital storytelling while downplaying or disregarding others.

Because of their central role in shaping the debate on journalistic innovation, I have conducted a textual analysis of the discourse on digital journalistic storytelling since 2015 on the websites of the

Dutch Journalism Fund [Stimuleringsfonds voor de Journalistiek; www.svdj.nl] and Villamedia, an editorially independent online platform on Dutch journalism, that is part of the Dutch Association of Journalists [Nederlandse Vereniging voor Journalisten, www.villamedia.nl]. The Dutch Journalism Fund and the Dutch Association of Journalists are two central intermediary organizations within the Dutch journalistic landscape, which devote considerable attention to journalistic innovation and therefore are pivotal in shaping the debate about journalistic innovation and journalism's future.

They publish articles on all kinds of aspects relating to journalistic innovation and change, highlighting new initiatives and startups with regard to challenges, such as finding new online business models, new digital technologies, changing journalistic practices and forms, covering conventions and conferences on innovation as well as the latest research projects and insights into journalistic innovation. As such, they also provide a platform for a mix of actors in and outside of journalism, such as most obviously journalists, editors-in-chief, journalistic entrepreneurs, digital media professionals as well as a few journalism professors and so called 'lectors', a specifically Dutch title for the equivalent of full professors who work at a university of applied sciences and have a much more practice-oriented research focus.

Through a keyword search in their online archives for "Digital Storytelling" OR "Storytelling" – to make sure I wouldn't miss articles on digital storytelling that didn't explicitly mention the term 'digital' – a sample of 68 articles was compiled for analysis.[1] While it seems to make sense for analysis of storytelling as a form of innovation to include 'innovation' as an associated search term, I didn't use this term to narrow down my search query. By not including this term, I took a more inclusive approach, making sure I wouldn't miss articles on digital storytelling that didn't explicitly mention the term innovation, but clearly discussed digital storytelling with regard to journalistic renewal, change and/or journalism's future. All articles only very briefly mentioning, but not really discussing, storytelling – for instance, by announcing a specific award category – were discarded. Similarly, all articles discussing digital storytelling without any reference to innovation, renewal, change or the future of journalism – for instance, a 'how-to' article solely on the best way to structure the plot of a journalistic story – were also discarded.

Inspired by the inductive analysis process of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014), the textual analysis was conducted in three consecutive rounds of analysis. In the first round, the material was labeled staying quite close to the original wording in the texts, inventorying several aspects of the text, such as who is given the floor to speak; what characteristics of digital storytelling are mentioned in

terms of its journalistic aim, function, form, practices and professional ethics, what is considered novel or innovative about digital storytelling, which digital affordances and requirements are discussed mentioned, and which characteristics of journalism's future are offered. In a second round the material and the initial labels were revisited, while connecting and clustering these labels into more abstract categories (e.g., immersive abilities of digital storytelling; audience engagement strategies). These categories were used in the third and last round to formulate, as it turned out, one sociotechnical imaginary, which is thus ultimately an analytical construct.

The affordances of digital storytelling: immersion, emotion, and interaction

So, what findings did the examination of the discourse about digital storytelling render? The textual analysis clearly shows that digital storytelling is considered a novel practice and viable alternative to tackle the challenges journalism faces in the digital era. Yet, storytelling is generally not very well defined in these articles and used loosely as novel forms of reporting that have the potential of really grabbing the attention of news consumers who have embraced the affordance of the digital era (Cf. Roiland, 2015). This also relates to the fact that while digital storytelling as a term is mentioned, most of the articles focus on one particular type of digital storytelling. Overall, there are quite a few forms of digital storytelling discussed: multimedia storytelling; cross-media storytelling; transmedia storytelling; interactive storytelling; visual storytelling; podcasting as intimate storytelling; and immersive journalism. Yet, questions pertaining to how the different forms of storytelling relate to each other or why digital storytelling wasn't immediately embraced aren't tackled or only addressed superficially within this discourse.

In most cases, however, digital storytelling refers more specifically to a move beyond the traditional short, factual, and 'linear' news stories in which journalists attempt to "sketch the entire story in a bone-dry way" as a foreign correspondent at commercial broadcaster RTL puts it (Schohaus, 2021). It is considered to offer a promising alternative, in which the online possibilities in terms of length, interactivity, or combining different media are exploited to write captivating stories that exploit narrative means, such as point-of-view reporting, emplotment, the use of dialogues and scene reconstruction, and the detailed and colorful portrayal of setting and atmosphere (Van Krieken & Sanders, 2021) – even if these specific terms aren't often mentioned themselves.

Those narrative characteristics of the different forms of digital storytelling are seen as the reason for their potential to appeal to groups of news consumers who aren't interested (anymore) in traditional forms of journalism, often (implicitly) related to the objectivity regime (Harbers, 2016; Boesman & Costera Meijer, 2018). What is for instance always mentioned is the need for engagement of the news consumer with the story. There are different ways in which this is envisioned for storytelling. In some articles it is suggested to exploit the possibility of publishing different stories on different media channels as a way of creating a story 'universe' in which the news consumer can play – often via social media – a much more active role in different phases of the production process. As one of the co-founders of documentary platform The Case, which received and innovation grant from the Dutch Journalism Fund, states:

> At The Case it is possible to follow a story and its possible development from the start. 'In that way communities of diverse target audiences emerge automatically, people who are interested in a particular topic and who can make a difference together'.
>
> (Lina, 2016)

Another central way in which different types of storytelling are considered to engage news consumers is by drawing them into the story and making it tangible on an experiential and emotional level. As a lector in cross-media journalism explains in an article on the future of journalism: "The idea is that, if you do it well, you can generate more emotional involvement and impact with the user than with a printed piece of 'flat' text" (Nab, 2019).

Somewhat unsurprising, this is also the core claim of 'immersive journalism', a form of reporting that attempts to exploit the opportunities of augmented or virtual reality (AR or VR). The project leader of Media Valley, an innovation project in which students of the Academy of Media, Design and Technology collaborate with regional newspaper *De Limburger* to experiment with digital technologies, stresses the opportunities of this technology to create a captivating and vivid experience of the news as if you were actually present:

> One of the things we would like to do is work with immersive journalism: to immerse the public in stories by means of 360 degrees videos. It is still in its infancy, but we have the ambition to reconstruct factual news in way that people can relive these as if they were themselves.
>
> (Van der Meer, 2017).

Interestingly enough, this claim of immersing the news consumer also figures prominently in the discussion of multimedia storytelling, and podcasting. As the newly appointed editor-in-chief of podcast network 'Dag en Nacht Media' [Day and Night Media] argues:

> Podcast is often an empathetic medium. It hits home, touches you because there are no visuals to distract you. I am crying on my bike with some stories. Preferably people become smarter or happier from our podcasts. They should learn something or be touched by them. Sometimes more of the first, sometimes more of the latter. As long as it does something to you.
>
> (Madou, 2021)

What is interesting about these quotes above is first and foremost that it shows there is no clear consensus on what creates an immersive experience; do we need a virtual reality environment a news consumer can enter, or can a mix of text and audiovisual material be enough? Or are visual elements even too distracting for someone to really get immersed in a story?

The articles specifically about immersive journalism do suggest that – if properly exploited – the affordances of AR and VR are necessary for an immersive experience, which is at the basis of the claim to innovation. As the earlier mentioned lector in cross-media journalism explains in a different article:

> An immersive journalistic production can create involvement or a sort of presence, as the researchers call it. It is the feeling that you get when you can fully project yourself into the story. That feeling results in a fading awareness of the real world around you.
>
> (Cools, 2020)

Yet, she emphasizes that the use of AR or VR technology in itself is not enough. Without the use of narrative means, such as a first-person point of view, to create a captivating and compelling story, a story doesn't create an immersive sensation: "Moreover, the journalistic story needs to be central. If you film a location in 360-degrees video, but there is no story, you won't get much involvement from the user" (Cools, 2020). However, to what extent this could mean that other forms of storytelling drawing on such narrative means, can still accomplish an immersive experience is not addressed.

So, a key part of the sociotechnical imaginary that is conveyed in the discourse on digital storytelling presents journalism as a practice and industry that needs to adapt itself to the rapidly changes of a digitized society. In the digital era, tech-savvy news consumers are no longer interested in a static, top-down form of journalism that

presents the news in the form of detached factual information. This change is taken for granted as inevitable and basically already as journalism's new reality and isn't being problematized or discussed. As such, the only way for journalism to ensure its future is to embrace the affordances of the available digital technologies to cater to these preferences of the news consumers. This point is emphasized in one of the articles by highlighting the frustration with the slow pace of the developments in this respect. In response to a question whether the opportunities that digital storytelling provides should be central in journalism's future, a journalist at the Dutch data journalism platform Pointer says:

> 'Future? It should have already been reality! Sticking to a specific form, like newspapers do, is hopelessly old-fashioned. This should have been journalism's reality ten years ago and we are very happy that we are getting the opportunity to do this now.'
>
> (SvdJ, 2019)

This adds urgency to the call for journalists to realize the necessity to innovate the way they tell their stories.

A techno-centric focus

Like much of the debate on innovation in general (Posetti, 2018; Godin, 2015), the discourse on digital storytelling also shows a techno-centric focus. The specific occasion for many stories is connected to the latest technological trends. An article about the reappearance of multimedia storytelling, for instance, relates this to the invention of foldable phones, which will enlarge the screen in a way that is expected to make multimedia storytelling user-friendly and appealing again for smartphone users (Van den Bos, 2019). Technology is seen as a pivotal aspect of digital storytelling and constitutes an important part of the promise innovation holds for journalism's future. One of the strongest examples of this perspective is voiced by Mir Wermuth (2017), board member of the Dutch Journalism Fund between 2009 and 2019, who writes about journalistic innovation in general:

> The top trends in technological development, relevant for the media sector, this year are Artificial Intelligence and chatbots. In the US, these buzzwords are everywhere, from the influential innovation conference SXSW to the editorial offices of Associated Press, Vice and Huffington Post. And again, this is how we are startled by technological applications journalism needs to engage with.
>
> (Wirmuth, 2017)

Particularly with concerning to VR, Wirmuth represents a form of techno-utopianism that is reminiscent of Silicon Valley's innovation rhetoric (Schiolin, 2021; Godin, 2015). Despite the slow uptake of VR in journalism, she professes its merits and foresees a bright future for this technology in media and journalism:

> A tour along American media companies displays an untethered optimism towards VR. VR is exploited for both entertainment and more serious media purposes, because of the enormous impact on the individual experience. According to many, the issue of the currently low user penetration is a matter of (only limited) time. The price of hardware is decreasing, the user-friendliness of the VR-goggles is improving, and with the launch of Facebook 360 the most low-key form of VR, 360 degrees video is ready for general use.
>
> (Wirmuth, 2017)

This leads her to claim with authoritative certainty that VR in journalism "is here to stay" (Wirmuth, 2017). This emphasis on the importance of new technologies is reinforced by several articles in which the authors, all journalists, mainly discuss technological tools or software that are be able to smoothen the implementation of digital storytelling practices (Visser, 2016; Piels, 2017a, 2017b; Van den Beld, 2017; Van den Griendt, 2019). One of the few attempts to define what (journalistic) innovation entails, is also striking in that respect, as the tech journalist who wrote the article defines innovation as: "trying something new, often (but not always) through technology" (Kivits, 2020). Innovation is thus considered to be almost inextricably linked to technology. It is this emphasis on the 'bright shiny things' that Posetti (2018: 8) warns against in her critical report on journalistic innovation:

> [R]elentless, high-speed pursuit of technology-driven innovation can be almost as dangerous as stagnation. In the absence of a purposeful strategy and reflective practice, ad-hoc, frantic and often short-term experimentation is unlikely to lead to sustainable innovation or real progress.

Some articles convey some awareness of a techno-centric perspective on journalistic innovation and digital storytelling. A few consulted sources, like the earlier mentioned lector in cross-media journalism as well as the chief of cross-media journalism at national newspaper *de Volkskrant*, explicitly state that the merit of new technologies should not be taken for granted, but rather they should be assessed with the journalistic aim and added value to the content in

mind (Van der Steen, 2016; Cools, 2020). While this adds a bit more 'technological drama' to the discourse, it remains a minor part of the discourse and doesn't go beyond the idea that journalists should first envision the story and how it can be best told before focusing on the technological possibilities. This is reflected in the emphasis on research and experimentation with new technologies rather than immediate adoption. A good example of this is what a lector of journalistic innovation says about the purpose of the newly installed 'VR-cave' at the journalism school in Tilburg:

> Innovation is often driven by technology: 'we are able to do something, so we are doing it'. But the question what the actual added value of the new technology is, can easily disappear to the background. Our pairs of students should specifically focus on what VR can add. With the VR-cave we want to look beyond just the hype.
>
> (Kivits, 2018)

Another article on the same VR-cave, indeed, reveals the tension between such a critical and reflexive stance and the initial enthusiasm about the promise of new technology as a journalistic skills-teacher states that that their students "should be frontrunners in seizing new forms" to teach them that "opportunities need to be seized the moment they present themselves" (Katzenbauer, 2018).

So overall, new technology plays a central part in the sociotechnical imaginary that is put forward. Embracing the new technological opportunities is presented as the key solution to the problem of attracting news consumers in the digital era. Moreover, the adoption of the new technologies is generally presented as feasible and unproblematic for the standing journalism practice, thus contributing to a rather uniform perspective on journalistic innovation and journalism's future.

An a-historic disregard of the role of journalism's professional norms

What becomes particularly clear from an overview of the discourse on digital storytelling throughout the entire period is the decontextualized way in which these latest industry trends in digital storytelling are being discussed. Apart from an occasional brief mention of earlier related storytelling forms or similar prior initiatives, the different forms of digital storytelling are discussed separately from each other. Moreover, their innovative nature is pretty much taken for granted rather than being discussed in-depth. This obscures a clear picture of the stable characteristics and novel

elements throughout the long-term development of digital storytelling. It remains unclear to what extent these forms of storytelling build on each other's ideas, insights, and experiences about what works and what doesn't, and, consequently, what exactly makes these initiatives innovative compared to earlier counterparts. It is this lack of attention for the long-term lineage of new (digital) storytelling forms that reinforces the idea that journalistic innovation is prone to the "ad-hoc, frantic and often short-term experimentation" that Posetti (2018:8) critiques as detrimental to a more sustainable way of envisioning journalism's future through innovation.

Moreover, it fits in with Carlson & Lewis' (2019: 643) critique on the future-oriented perspective on innovation and its attention for the latest "trends and fads" at the expense of a more reflexive approach that studies novelty and change in journalism against the background of the complex and long-term interaction of continuity and change. This not only becomes apparent in the lack of a comprehensive long-term perspective on the development of (digital) storytelling in journalism, but also in the general disregard for the connection and impact these digital developments and opportunities might have on journalism's professional values and practices.

On the few occasions when this issue is addressed it either relates to the importance of better and earlier collaboration between journalists and designers or programmers (SvdJ, 2019; De Laet, 2019) or to a very brief remark on journalism's professional values. In one of these instances regarding immersive journalism, the professional values of journalists are presented as the reason for journalism's reluctance to innovate (cf. Ferruci & Perault, 2021). As the earlier mentioned lector in journalistic innovation, who has a background in the field of design, claims: "Generally speaking, designers dare to try a little more. (...) Journalists are held back a bit more by the journalistic morals, while a designer just starts to play" (Kivits, 2018). This example echoes the idea that journalism's professional ethics are excess counterweight when it comes to innovation (cf. Kleis Nielsen, 2019).

On another occasion, what is presented as a factual statement – rather than being problematized – is that journalists "are allowed to take a much more subjective role" since "the objective role is eroding and there are several types of authorial journalism emerging" (Katzenbauer, 2018). So, in none of the articles there is a substantial discussion about the possible tension between these new digital storytelling technologies and forms, and journalism's time-honored professional values, which are the foundation for the trust and authority people assign to journalism (Garcia-Aviles,2018; Broersma, 2010).

Of course, this could suggest that such tensions aren't there, and these digital storytelling forms are considered unproblematic in relation to journalism's professional values. Yet, this goes against much of the research on journalistic storytelling and narrative forms of journalism, which point to the longstanding tension between storytelling means and forms and truthful and trustworthy reporting (Eason, 1982, 1986; Hartsock, 2001; Harbers, 2014; Harbers & Broersma, 2014; Van Krieken & Sanders, 2017; Baym, 2017; Boesman & Costera Meijer, 2018; Harbers, 2023). All this research points to the persistent ambivalence both journalists and news consumers feel towards journalistic forms of storytelling. While it is indeed seen as an engaging and captivating way of drawing readers into the news, the practices and forms of journalistic storytelling keep on raising suspicion towards the truth status of such stories. Employing such narrative means remains to be strongly associated with the realms of fiction, which is clearly considered off limits for journalists (Harbers, forthcoming; Baym, 2017; Harbers & Van den Broek, 2016). Again, this shows there is little technological drama going on in the discourse on digital storytelling, which makes it rather one-sided in the image of digital storytelling as innovation that it presents.

In part, the disconnection might be ascribed to the loosely used term of (digital) storytelling, which can lead to the idea that this practice "developed *ex nihilo*", which "misrepresents the truth and cuts it off from important antecedents" and "divorces it from the rich lineage of literary [aka narrative] journalism" to borrow an argument from Roiland (2015: 65). By using this term, it becomes easier to disregard the central issues these storytelling practices raise concerning journalism's professional ethics. As such, Creech and Nadler's (2018: 187) more general critique on the discourse on journalistic innovation as being "merely technical and eliding the persistent epistemological and philosophical conflict between journalism and the technology industries" also applies to the discourse on digital storytelling.

To conclude

My analysis shows how the discourse on digital storytelling in the Netherlands doesn't contain a diverse mix of sociotechnical imaginaries, but presents one rather uniform and one-dimensional imaginary, which paints journalism's future as one in which tech-savvy news consumers are no longer interested in traditional ways of reporting. In terms of storytelling, they need to be engaged through a more captivating way of reporting, which exploits the affordances of digital technologies, such as interactivity and immersion, to draw

them into the story on an experiential and emotional level. The techno-centric focus of the discourse reinforces the already prevalent understanding of journalistic innovation as primarily a matter of mastering and exploiting the opportunities new technological tools and platforms offer, without questioning or problematizing how this impacts journalism's professional ethics and practice, and the cultural authority that is rooted in them.

As such, the innovative nature of these new digital storytelling technologies and trends is taken for granted as valuable and feasible without considering their relation to the long and rich history of journalistic storytelling and narrative forms of journalism dating back as far as the 18th century (Underwood, 2008). As this long history shows an unremitting tension between narrative as form and practice and journalism's professional norms and claims concerning their trustworthy and truthful coverage of the world it is crucial to scrutinize new technologies and practices with this tension in mind (Boesman & Costera Meijer, 2018; Van Krieken & Sanders, 2017; Harbers, 2014, Eason, 1986).

In that sense, the way journalism's future is envisioned – at least in terms of its storytelling practices – shows characteristics of future essentialism as outlined by Schiolin (2021). It authoritatively claims that the preferences and needs of news consumers in the digital era have changed whether journalists like it or not. Consequently, journalists would be wise to embrace the new technological opportunities – preferably sooner than later – as they enable them to cater to these needs. If not, then journalism will make its profession obsolete – with all the consequences for a well-informed society. As Schiolin (2021) points out, such an unequivocal image of what journalism's future holds, restricts an in-depth exchange about journalism's future in which there is space for alternative ideas and scenarios. This is of particular importance as journalism, even on the level of national journalistic cultures, is not a homogenous profession, and is served by a debate that reflects the diversity in ideas about journalism's profession and its future (Carlson, 2015; cf. Hellmueller & Konow-Lund, 2019).

Therefore, this article can be read as a plea for more technological drama – i.e., more different perspectives and debate on digital storytelling as innovation – to ensure a thorough debate between different actors within and outside of journalism about journalism's future. Moreover, it argues that an integral part of this should revolve around questions concerning how new technology interacts with the way journalism envisions its profession. Ultimately, this means moving beyond a limited focus on the way technology changes journalism to a more comprehensive perspective that asks

what the impact is on the way journalism is imagined as a cultural practice (Carlson, 2015).

Acknowledging the performative power of the discourse on innovation, also reveals the central role and power of intermediary organizations, such as the Dutch Journalism Fund and the Dutch Association for Journalists, in shaping this understanding and setting the agenda in terms of what are considered promising venues for journalism to pursue. They are not just describing how journalism is changing. Much rather, they determine and delimit how journalism's future is envisioned by selecting which new ideas and initiatives they amplify and legitimize in their coverage of journalistic innovation (Willemsen, Witschge & Sauer, 2021). Take, for instance, the recurring focus on the potential and promise of VR for journalism throughout the period. The attention, in which claims are made about the value and promise of the technology for journalism – VR "is here to stay" as Wirmuth (2017) concludes – legitimizes VR as a valuable and viable innovation. In turn, such legitimacy is highly beneficial in attracting resources for the further development and application of the technology within journalism, and thus ultimately plays a role in determining the direction in which journalism will develop itself (Ruotsalainen et al., 2021).

As my last point, I argue that these intermediary organizations therefore also have a responsibility in facilitating the debate on journalistic innovation. Moreover, based on my analysis I suggest that they must step up their game to do more justice to the complex and ongoing interplay of technology and cultural practices as well as the different perspectives and assessments within the journalistic field from a long-term perspective. One way of improving this would be to find a way to integrate more of the existing academic research into journalistic innovation and change into the coverage. At the same time, this would also require a more reflexive and critical approach to journalistic innovation from journalism scholars themselves (Creech & Nadler, 2018; Godin, 2015).

NOTES

[1] Because the material was in Dutch, I also searched for "verhalende" and "narratieve" the Dutch equivalents of the term "storytelling". This rendered only a few more hits as "storytelling" has become a highly common anglicism in the Netherlands.

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Bringing it to the classroom

An empirical study of using a hands-on model for creating digital storytelling

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Abstract

The article introduces the *Digital Story Model* and discusses the student experiences of applying the model. The model is made with the ambition to improve and enrich digital stories created by journalism students, professional journalists, and other kinds of digital storytellers. In the study, we adopt an action research approach and test the model in an international classroom setting with 85 journalism students representing 35 countries. The findings of students' experiences with applying the model point to a number of strengths and weaknesses. Strengths include the model's usefulness as a structuring and planning tool, to improve creativity, as a shared language in an international group and as an assistance in considering the potential story modalities. Shortcomings include the model preventing creativity and creating standardized stories, the model being mostly beneficial for inexperienced reporters and being too linear. The study concludes that the model is significantly useful when it comes to enriching digital storytelling but there is a need to revise the model further and to alter the way it is presented in the classroom.

KEYWORDS
digital storytelling, digital journalism, action research, digital story model, narrative journalism

Introduction

Why do our students – in a course on digital journalism – continuously use text as their primary modality and then consider other modalities as icing on the cake? Why don't they take advantage of the many modalities offered by technological developments when creating digital storytelling? And why don't they consider the entangled relationship between form and content? It is questions like these that form the primary motivation for the work presented in this article.

As educators of students within the fields of journalism and interactive design, we are dealing with students who to a large degree are working with the art of telling stories. No matter if we are focusing on a journalistic long read, a news report or a piece of interactive design, there is always an element of mediated storytelling at work (Schudson, 2011, p. 186). It is essential that the students acquire knowledge of and experience with the various tools at hand that they can use to tell stories. Our experience has been that many students fall back on the tools that they are most familiar with. For journalism students, this is often the modality of text. It is a flexible modality. Easy to work with. Does not demand much technical savviness nor create much technical difficulty. Therefore, it quickly becomes the main building block of stories.

The research on digital journalism and in particular the research focusing on longer formats, feature journalism and multimedia storytelling seems to support our classroom experience. As pointed out by among others van Krieken (2018) and Hiippala (2016) text is often the primary modality when it comes to storytelling in digital journalism.

This is not necessarily bad or wrong. Text is without doubt a very useful and very flexible modality. However, it is unfortunate if text is primarily chosen as modality because it is the easy path or perhaps because the storyteller is not familiar with the other options.

Based on our experiences in the classroom and reading the literature in the field, it is our impression that there is room for improvement. Our work with *The Digital Story Model* is a step towards this improvement (the model and a user guide can be found in appendix 1). With the model, it is our aspiration that students and storytellers can use the model as a processual guide in the making of stories. Furthermore, we hope the model can challenge the "text first" way of thinking when it comes to creating stories and hopefully enrich the storytelling landscape.

This article will present the development of the model as well as experiences applying the model. The central focus of the article is to investigate how the students assess the model and its applicability.

This focus was chosen because the model was developed in co-creation with the students which has led to the follow research question:

RQ: Which strengths and shortcomings do the students experience when working with *The Digital Story Model*?

We adopt an action research approach consisting of a mix of data which will be presented and discussed in the method section. Before doing so, we will dig further into the literature on digital storytelling and the literature presenting hands-on models. A methodological section will be presented before introducing and discussing the findings based on our work with the model in an international classroom setting. Finally, a discussion and conclusion will sum up our work and points to some of the strengths and shortcomings of the model and the necessary future roads to take.

Literature review

This section will address research on digital storytelling in a journalistic context in two parts. The first part will consist of a discussion of the work on the modalities in use in digital storytelling while the second will deal with the various attempts of creating models with some similarity to the work that we embark on.

Digital journalism has in recent years been partly characterized by a renewed interest in doing narrative journalism using digital tools. An extensive study done by Jacobsen, Marino and Gutsche Jr (2015) analyzed 50 long-form multimedia journalism productions published 2012-2013 and claimed the pieces represented a "driving force behind a new period of literary journalism" (2015, p. 2). The content analysis found three main literary functions of the multimedia elements in the data. Firstly, the authors found an interplay of multimedia and literary techniques such as characterization and the use of scenic description to create meaning. Secondly, the analysis highlighted the use of video loops to establish the stories' sense of time, place, and character. And, finally, the researchers found an extensive use of parallax and single-page scroll to create a more linear way of doing narratives. In a more recent study, Dowling (2019) tracks the development since the release of the groundbreaking New York Times production "Snow Fall" in 2012 and by analyzing productions such as "Greenland" from 2015 and "Cocainenomics" from 2015, Dowling finds an extensive use of literary storytelling techniques such as characterization, dramatic tension, scenes and dialogue, which are then placed in an immersive and distraction-

free design "carefully edited and less cluttered with gratuitous inter-actives" (Dowling, 2019, p. 533). This last observation resonates with the concept 'cognitive container' which was originally used by Dowling and Vogan (2015) to describe storytelling "in which media add-ons work to hold reader attention rather than scatter it to external Web sources" (Dowling & Vogan, 2015, p. 209). The authors underlined the need for cohesion and stylistic unification. A similar point was made by (Moestrup, 2022) where an analysis of a number of digital longform stories from the Danish daily Kristeligt Dagblad demonstrated the use of *digilogue* artefacts, in which analogue media such as handwritten letters, drawings, super 8 video footage and private family photos were digitalized and used to create personalization and cohesion in the storytelling (Moestrup, 2022, p. 177).

Despite the many opportunities in the digital toolbox, several studies have shown that text is still a very fundamental modality in many digital journalism productions. In an analysis of the classic of digital longform journalism – "Snow Fall" – van Krieken concludes:

> Text is used for all three categories of narrative techniques—scene recon-structions, event structure, and viewpoint techniques—and is thus not re-placed by other media formats. Rather, text is complemented with audio, video, pictures, and graphics.
>
> (van Krieken, 2018, p. 12).

What is obvious from van Krieken's analysis is that text seems to be the modality around which all other modalities circle and comply with. It is text that ties the piece together and it is text that forms the main narrative. A similar conclusion was reached by Planer, Godulla, Seibert & Pietsch (2022), who examined a range of award-winning digital storytelling from 2011 to 2021. The authors found that "continuous text proved to be the most stringent feature" (Planer, Godulla, Seibert & Pietsch, 2022, p. 609).

In their suggestion for a taxonomy of digital stories, Grabowicz et. al, 2014, suggest differentiating between traditional multimedia and embedded multimedia. The former being defined as a Christmas-tree approach where "multimedia elements like videos, photo slideshows, maps and graphics are add-ons, placed to the side of the main text story like ornaments hung on a tree" (Grabowicz et. al, 2014, para. 1) whereas the latter is characterized by having multimedia elements "integrated into the main story so they're viewed at appropriate points in the narrative" (Grabowicz et al., 2014, para. 1). As pointed out by Andreasen and Giebner, 2021, a content element such as a video cannot be removed in an embedded piece without changing the story. If it is possible to remove the video without any consequence for the story and the cohesion of the story, then we are

probably dealing with a piece of traditional multimedia where the video is merely a piece of ornament (Andreasen & Giebner, 2021, p. 320).

Hiippala's content analysis of 12 longform digital articles used the analytical concept of screen defined as "a transition to another semiotic mode, for instance, from paragraphed text (e.g. text-flow) to a full-screen looping video (e.g. dynamic image-flow) (Hiippala 2016, p. 13). The 12 longform articles contained a total number of 206 screens. 42 % of these screens were the mode of text, 29% were photography, 18 % was video, 4 % was map and only 1 % was animation (Hiippala, 2016, p. 15). Hiippala argues that the choice of text as primary modality is a way to create the cognitive container because "the linear structure of text-flow does not require resolving discourse relations across the layout space, allowing the reader to remain focused on the unfolding narrative" (Hiippala, 2016, p. 17). A similar point has been made by Lassila-Merisalo who argues:

> Multimedia and interactivity add new levels to the "multireferential plane" of narrative journalism, which can strengthen the authenticity of a story. However, too many sensory elements can distract the reader's attention, which weakens the immersive effect.
>
> (Lassila-Merisalo, 2014, p. 10)

We do not object to the immersive and distraction-free characteristics of text. But we do believe that with the right design and a careful attendance to a cohesion between content and style, other types of modalities such as audio, video, graphics, and animation also incorporate the ability of creating immersion and a distraction-free narrative. This point will be further discussed later in this article once we have presented the *Digital Story Model*.

Now we will turn to the second part of the literature review, and examine work done by researchers whose aim has been to develop models or other hands-on approaches to the production of digital storytelling.

In their foundational work on practical approaches to multimedia journalism, Hernandez and Rue take a departure point in a non-hierarchical understanding of modalities. "One isn't better than another", they write in the introduction, (Hernandez and Rue, 2016, p. 2) and emphasize the importance of considering modalities early in the pre-production phase. The authors propose three categories of prototypes called digital story packages that each have different characteristics and are each suitable for different kinds of stories. The main argument from the authors is the need to decide early in the process, what kind of prototype story to build and which modalities to draw on in the specific prototype (Hernandez & Rue, 2016, p.

187). When the digital toolbox become increasingly expanded with new technologies and new platforms, it also becomes increasingly important to decide what to use and what not to use and in the words of Pincus et al to make sure the multimedia elements are placed at "appropriate points in the narrative" (Pincus et al, 2017, p. 749).

This aligns with the main argument from Dunham, 2020, where he states that failed multimedia stories often depend too heavily on just one modality or has too many elements and becomes redundant and repetitious. In the words of Dunham, "clarity of purpose is essential to successful multimedia projects" (Dunham, 2020, p. 317). We have adopted this focus on purpose as a main guideline in the work with the model. This has been done by continuously addressing the value of purpose in the presentation of the model was well as when gathering input from the students as will be addressed below.

Another hands-on approach can be found in the work by Pavel & Pavel, 2017. The authors focus on the genre of interactive documentary and develop a conceptual and analytical framework articulating key dimensions of the genre. The framework is used to analyze 10 interactive documentaries and concludes that there does not seem to be a single design standard but rather a mix of approaches in which "journalists utilize a wide spectrum of techniques in producing and designing interactive documentaries" (Pavel & Pavel, 2017, p. 394). It is our ambition to conceptualize the *Digital Story Model* in a way that allows for this wide range of approaches while still guiding the student and professional user in a fruitful way. Unlike Pavel & Pavel, 2017, it is not our ambition to create a model for analysis of existing stories but primarily to develop a processual model to use for creating stories.

Overall, the literature review points to several relevant findings considering the ambition of this article. Firstly, we found studies highlighting the dominating use of text as the main modality throughout the corpus of digital storytelling in journalism. Secondly, we have discussed studies problematizing the use of modalities in ways that disturb the need for immersive and distraction-free experiences. Thirdly, the literature review has presented a few hands-on approaches to the production of digital journalism where the approaches are characterized by a non-hierarchical understanding of modalities. These different points will inform the analysis and discussion in this article but before reaching that point, we will now turn to a methodological introduction to our work.

Methods

As stated in the introduction to this article, the departure point of our work has been a very practical challenge. The challenge is two-fold; firstly, inspired by the literature review, we have identified the use of text as the main modality in many of the digital stories done by the students and, secondly, we have identified a lack of cohesion and a tendency to multimedia ornamentation (the Christmas tree-approach) in much of their work. In other words, we have the ambition of changing a current practice in a classroom setting; namely to enrich the student's skillset when it comes to creating digital stories.

A beneficial methodological approach, when the aim is to change or improve a practice, is the action research approach. It is beyond the scope of this article to embark on an extensive discussion of the approach, which can for instance be found in Greenwood & Levin, 2006 and Reason & Bradbury-Huang, 2007. In the current work, we subscribe to an action research approach rooted in a journalism education context which has been applied and successfully tested by for instance Grubenmann (2019) and Meier & Schützeneder (2019). In the latter work, the approach was conceptualized and four main principles are deduced. Here is an outline of the principles and how we situate our current work in relation to these principles:

1. The action research of problems must include "possible solutions and their implementation in practice" (Meier & Schützeneder, 2019, p. 202). By suggesting a model for the students to work with, we aim for a possible solution rooted in a practical implementation.

2. Unlike traditional research where the researched is seen merely as objects, "in action research it is the dialogue between the researcher and 'researched' that permits insights to be gained." (Meier & Schützeneder, 2019, p. 202) In our case, the students are seen as dialogue partners because it is the student experiences of working with the model that forms the output of our study. The Digital Story Model can be seen as the research object, but it is through the use of this object and the dialogue surrounding this use that insights are gained.

3. "Research undergoes several cycles that are organized as a learning process" (Meier & Schützeneder, 2019, p. 202). The model is seen as a dynamic instrument that will change according to the experiences of the users. In the first cycle we presented what was initially labelled The Digital Journalism Model. Based on input from the students, this model was altered and refined in the second cycle where it was labelled The Digital Story Model and as we will discuss in the final

paragraph further cyclical processes are to be expected.

4. "The fundamental difference between the science and practice system is acknowledged" (Meier & Schützeneder, 2019, p. 203) and it becomes important "to see one's own practice through an outsider's eyes" (Meier & Schützeneder, 2019 qouting Moser, 1995, p. 14). In our current work, the model is not only used by the students to enhance their practice, but it also becomes an instrument with which the students can critically engage with their own practice. This is done in reflection reports accompanying the journalism product. In the reports students critically discuss how the model has been used and what kind of consequences this particular use has had in their current practice.

The four principles have informed our work and guided us in the phrasing of the research question which we state as:

RQ: Which strengths and shortcomings do the students experience when working with *The Digital Story Model*?

This is the main research question that we will respond to in this article. However, it is necessary to outline the various methods that has informed this work and the cyclical research processes that has been carried out. The current study presented here is the second iteration of an ongoing cyclical process with developing the model.

The first prototype of the model – called Digital Journalism Model – was presented to the students in the first course ([see appendix 1](#)). The students applied the model in a group assignment creating a digital piece of journalism. Supplementing the journalistic product was a reflection report where the students discussed their use of the model. Furthermore, eight students participated in focus group interviews where the educators gained more qualitative data on the experiences of the model from a student perspective. Finally, the educators have made use of observations from coaching sessions with the students as well as assessing the product being made with the prototype of the model.

These three types of data (student reflections, focus group interview data and educator observations) have all informed the revision of the model, which resulted in *The Digital Story Model*, that was introduced and applied in the second course. In this course, the students worked in groups and created a larger piece of digital feature journalism making use of the model. Once again, the students have discussed the use of the model in a reflection report and, lastly, we have created a survey which 61 students responded to partially or totally and which 47 students completed. The data from the survey is considered the main data set when responding to our research

question listed above. The questions in the survey were informed by a combination of observations from the educators and reflections from the students stemming from their reflection reports.

Before proceeding to the findings and the analysis, we will briefly discuss some of the weaknesses of the methods applied. As previous research has shown, action research has capabilities when it comes to bridging theory and practice closer together through the holistic and inclusive approach (Grubenmann, 2019: 164 and Fendt & Kaminska-Labbé, 2011). However, in our current study the bridging of theory/academic insights with practice/classroom work had the challenge that we were acting as both researchers looking for data as well as being educators training students and grading them. This two-fold function can be seen as a weakness in action research as it could affect some of the data we have gained as well as how we interpret the data. For instance, there is a risk that the students will sweet talk the educators in order to maintain a good relation when they also receive grades from the same educators. This challenge is one of the main reasons why we chose to also gather data from a survey where the students responded anonymously.

The goal of action research is to "improve practice in a controlled manner (Grubenmann, 2019: 169) and this is somewhat challenged by the two-fold function we have had in the project. In action research the researcher becomes more like a collaborator which can challenge this form of qualitative inquiry.

Furthermore, we cannot directly measure if the practice has been improved only by investigating the experiences the students have had using the model. This would also require an evaluation of the journalistic products being made with the model. This latter aspect is beyond the scope of the paper to include but the lack of it does add to the insecurity of the results in our study. Finally, because the action research approach often involves a great number of mixed data which was also the case in our study, it can be difficult to systemically collect these data as some of them arrive unexpectedly. In many ways, this less systematic element in the method is a strength because it adds a great amount of flexibility and openness to the method. The downside, however, is that the lack of formality can actually make it hard for the researcher to discover the values of the different kinds of inputs that much be gathered more or less while they occur (Grubenmann, 2019: 170).

Before proceeding to the findings, it is necessary to outline the context in which the model was presented and applied, as well as to introduce the model itself.

Context and the model itself

The model has been introduced and tested in two courses at master level in the fall of 2022 at the Danish School of Media and Journalism. The courses are part of an international Erasmus Mundus master in journalism with a class of 85 students enrolled. The students represent 38 different nationalities and have very different skillsets and professional levels which will be presented in further detail below. The international and diverse classroom creates a unique setting for testing the extent of the general usefulness and universality of the model.

Before we present and discuss the main findings from the survey, we will now briefly introduce *The Digital Story Model* (a more comprehensive guide of the model can be found in <u>appendix 1</u>). The students are introduced to the model as a graphical illustration supplemented by a written set of guidelines. This is the model in its graphical version:
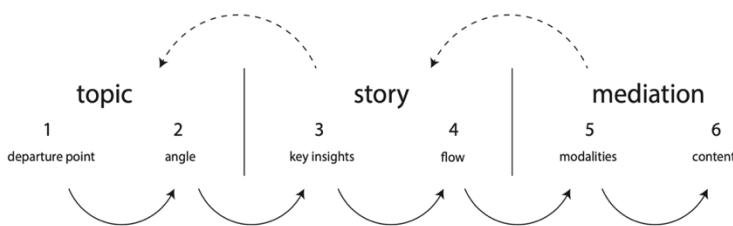
Figure 1: The Digital Story Model

The model consists of six steps: *departure point, angle, key insights, flow, modalities,* and *content* which are grouped into three phases: *topic, story,* and *mediation.* The arrows pointing from one step to the next step suggest a linear process where one step must be dealt with before moving on to the next step. The vertical lines illustrate, that the user goes from one mindset to another when changing phase. For instance, in the phase labelled *topic,* the user has a broad mindset investigating a lot of opportunities when it comes to different angles. Moving to the next phase, the user has narrowed down the mindset by deciding on the main angle of the story and now focuses on the key elements of this particular story. In the last phase the focus has moved solely to the mediation of the story. However, the dashed arrows on top of the three phases also underline a possibility to move back and revise some of the previous parts of the model due to the developments encountered once the

research of the digital story has begun. As such, the model is linear with circular options when needed.

The first step, *departure point*, consists of the initial idea development of the story. This can be a set task given by an editor, insight from a journalist's surroundings. It can be based on reports gathered or simply an idea shaped in the journalist's mind. In the second step, *angle*, the students start researching their story to get a clearer idea of the story angle which is then phrased as a core sentence starting with the wordings "I want to say that...". The student also decides which audience to target and what kind of platform to use. This is put with a sentence phrased as: "I want to say X to Y, and I will say it using Z" (Y being the audience and Z being the platform or technology to be used such as VR, Instagram-story, web doc etc.).

In the third step, *key insights*, we move into the story phase. In key insights the students find the main building blocks of the piece. What insights will the audience learn from the piece which also translates to, what kind of material the journalist needs to gather (for instance interviews, data, reportage elements etc.). In step 4, *flow*, the students will outline the structure of the piece. Here the angle on the story (step 2) is combined with key insights (step 3) to determine the best structure in which to unfold the story. This can be a linear structure where the students decide on the progression of the individual elements, or it could be a non-linear structure demanding a more interactive user approach. In this step, the style of story is also determined which again is partly dependent on the audience and platform decided upon in step 2.

In step five, *modalities*, the students determine which modalities to use in the story. Often, it will be a good idea to discuss modalities for each key insight and determine which one is most suitable. Modalities are categorized into three types: *static*, *dynamic*, and *interactive*. The static modalities can be experienced as a single impression. This can be text, images, maps, graphs, timelines etc. These modalities don't dictate how and in what order the user is supposed to engage with it. The dynamic modalities are modalities that unfold over time such as audio, video, and animation. Common to these modalities are that you start the modality and experience it while it unfolds. Finally, there is the interactive modalities. These modalities draw upon the other modalities but add a layer of user engagement. These modalities can be things like navigation, interaction, and gamification. You can have a traditional timeline or a timeline you can interact with. You can have images or interactive images. You can even have small games embedded, that consist of several images and sounds to give a game-like experience that perhaps allows the user to understand the story on a new level. It is highlighted in the guidelines that no modality is better than another. It all comes

down to context, the ambition of the story, the intended audience, and what material the journalist can gather within the production time allocated to the story.

Finally, in step six, *content*, the production is taking place. The game is being coded, the audio recorded and edited, the words being written etc. Some of the content production might have started already in step three (key insights) because the research part and the production often take place simultaneously in journalism, but it is here in step six that the content production is finalized. Once again, it is important to underline the circular nature of the model. Different decisions taken in the model progression might affect prior decisions and make it necessary for the user to go back to these steps again. Furthermore, the model is situated in the idea that form and content are dependent on each other and shapes each other. Form is not merely a way to dress up content but also to some degree dictates what kind of content it is possible to create and communicate in each specific story.

Findings

Before presenting and discussing the findings from the survey, we will touch briefly upon the details of the students with which the model was tested. As stated above, the program is an international master program with 85 students enrolled representing 35 different nationalities and primarily working in groups during the assignments. 61 students responded to the survey (N=61), however only 47 respondents completed the entire survey. The class has a diverse professional experience level as illustrated in figure 2.

For how long have you practiced journalism in a professional setting?

|		Number of answers
No professional experience	7%	4
Less than 1 year	25%	15
Between 1 and 3 years	32%	19
Between 3 and 6 years	20%	12
More than 6 years	17%	10
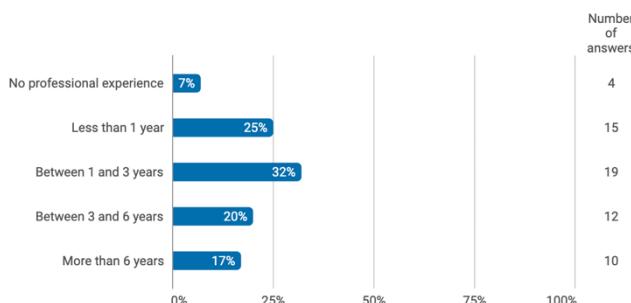
Figure 2: Experience with professional journalism

While only 4 students have no prior experience, most of the class has either less than year (N=15), between 1 and 3 years (N=19) or between 3 and 6 years (N=12). This diversity has made it possible to test the model on students with not only mixed cultural backgrounds but also different experience levels. Now let us turn to the findings from the survey.

Structure and creativity

A significant number of students respond positively to the model when it comes to structuring their work. This can be seen both in the quantitative as well as the qualitative data. In the survey 47 responses were made to the statement "I feel that I became more structured when using the Digital Story Model". A high number of students either somewhat agreed (N=9), agreed (N=20) or strongly agreed (N=11) with this statement while only very few either strongly disagreed (N=1) or disagreed (N=5) as can be seen in the figure below:

Please state how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: - I feel that I became more structured when using the Digital Story Model

	Respondents
Strongly Disagree	2% → 1
Disagree	11% → 5
Somewhat Disagree	0% → 0
Neither/Nor	2% → 1
Somewhat Agreee	19% → 9
Agree	43% → 20
Strongly Agree	23% → 11
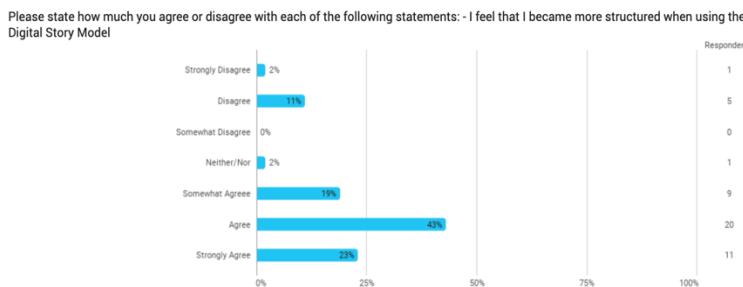
Figure 3: Becoming more structured or not with the Digital Story Model

One of the most repeated qualitative statements about the advantages of applying the model is how it helped structure the workflow. This can be seen in quotes such as these:

> "The digital story model helped me plan and structure my story well in the pre-production phase."

> "The Digital Story Model helped my group put our brainstorm into words and break the story structure into layers so we could better visualize what we were starting to produce."

It seems clear from these statements that the model is particularly useful in the pre-production phase where the students need to decide and design the overall structure of their work. These data can

also be interpreted as a way the model helps the students get to the clarity of purpose as it is phrased by Dunham, 2020. By helping the student to decide on the primary focus of the story – both content-wise and modality-wise – the model makes it easier for the students to stay on track when it comes to the purpose of the story. This will likely also help the students to avoid the risk of having repetitious and redundant modality use as pointed out by Dunham.

The qualitative data, however, also points to some shortcomings when it comes to the structuring abilities of the model. This can be for instance be seen in a statement such as this:

> "The idea gave me structure, but I had to tweak it a lot of time because it's not the way my brain works to produce a digital piece (not in the same order, some stuff comes up at the same time in my mind, etc.)."

This statement perhaps points to a shortcoming in the linear way the model seems to be interpreted by the students. Despite the attempt to visualize the circular aspects in the model by using arrows, it seems some students think of the model as a linear tool. This is underlined in statements such as these:

> "I sometimes felt constrained by making sure that everything in my project fit into the Digital Story Model."

> "Rigidity of the model. Should provide more freedom to explore through cyclical processes and allow room for going for back and forth."

These statements to some extent point to a general weakness with models; that applying a model can be experienced as an unnecessary standardization that limits the wiggle room of the user. As we stated in the literature review, our ambition with making a process model rather than a prototype-guided model such as the one done by Hernandez and Rue (2016) was to allow a greater degree of flexibility. We cannot know how the students would experience a prototype-guided version of our model, but it seems clear that the current process model still needs further revisions in terms of flexibility and wiggle room.

Speaking of wiggle room in relation to structure, it naturally makes sense to investigate the degree to which the model accommodates creativity. From the quantitative data, we can interpret a mixed set of experiences when it comes to the statement "I feel that I became more creative while using the Digital Story Model". Again, we have 47 responses and while 9 respondents disagree with the statement and 4 disagree, we can also find 8 respondents agreeing and 14 respondents somewhat agreeing:

Please state how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: - I feel that I became more creative while using the Digital Story Model

|		Respondents
Strongly Disagree	4%	2
Disagree	19%	9
Somewhat Disagree	9%	4
Neither/Nor	21%	10
Somewhat Agreee	30%	14
Agree	17%	8
Strongly Agree	0%	0

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%
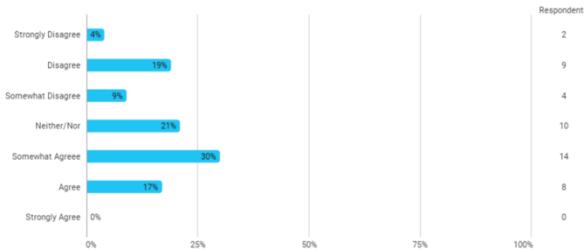
Figure 4: Becoming more creative or not with the Digital Story Model

When we look at the qualitative data, it becomes clear that the aspect of creativity when applying the model is interpreted in quite different ways. Some students find the model beneficial for their creativity. This can be found in statements such as these:

"The structure actually made my creativity flow better due to the step-by-step guide allowing me to come at it from a variety of different approaches/angles."

"Induces structure, clarity, creativity and made me think of points I didn't before."

Other students on the other hand find the model to be a hindrance when it comes to creativity. This point is for instance articulated in responses such as these:

"Maybe a lack of creativity/creates a standardized way of telling stories that don't give space for unique/creative exploration."

"I think it's a good starting point for green reporters, but for people who have experience, the model restricts our creativity because there is now a "checklist" we need to check while creating stories for the course."

The mixed experiences likely point to two different types of students. Some students seem to get more creative if they get a framework in which to unfold their creativity within while other students feel constrained creativity-wise if they are told to act within a certain of rules or guidelines.

Experience level and teamwork

The last statement is interesting because it is backed up by a number of statements that suggest that the model is mostly useful for inexperienced reporters while students with a larger amount of professional experience find less use of the model. This interpretation of the model and its level of relevance can also be seen in the quantitative data when looking at the responses to the statement "Steps in the Digital Story Model are irrelevant for the creation of digital stories". We have crossed the responses with the different levels of professional experience which results in these results:
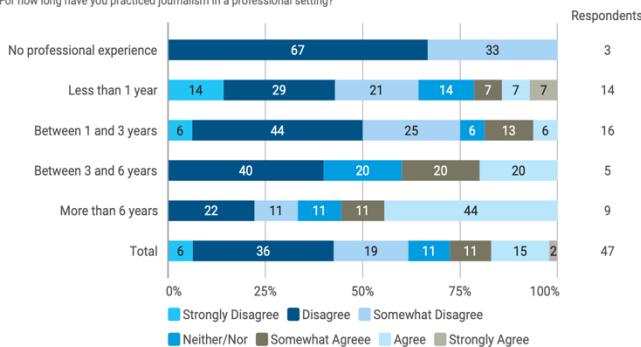
Figure 5: Relevancy of the steps in the Digital Story Model

There is a slight tendency to find the model irrelevant when the respondent has more professional experience while the more inexperienced respondents seem to find the model more relevant. This could indicate that the model is primarily useful in a classroom setting for training purposes and less so in a professional industry setting.

One aspect of relevance that does seem to resonate with most of the class no matter the experience level is the value of using the model as a team. Many statements support this:

"It's especially useful when doing group work, because it gets everyone on the same page regarding what to expect, how much time and effort to put into it, as well as divide tasks among group members. "

"I would say that the DSM has been extremely useful to get everyone in my group to understand what we are doing and to work towards the same goal. The model is helpful in decreasing the risk of getting lost in translation."

From these statements it becomes clear that the model has value as a team structuring tool. The students use the model to align the group expectation and as a planning tool when for instance determining who does what in the group. Furthermore, it becomes clear that the international class benefits from the model as a way to find a common work language and to avoid misunderstandings in the process.

Modalities and storytelling

One of the main ambitions with the model is to help the students create better digital stories with a more deliberate use of modalities. This seems to have been partly successful when we look at the survey data. Some students point to the usefulness of the model when it comes to modalities and storytelling. This can be seen in statements such as these:

> "Since now our team had to find a story and focus on it first rather than making the modalities, I think the model worked well because it helped us on crafting the storytelling aspect."

> "I think its focus on modalities is really important because the presentation of stories matters now in the digital era."

> "Making you think about both the story and the modalities from the very beginning. Sometimes you might only think of the story and then the modalities come later and vice versa. In this way, you think about both aspects from the beginning."

These statements resonate with the theoretical scholarship done on digital storytelling that emphasize the value of deciding on modalities early in the production and even pre-production phases (Pincus et al, 2017 and Hernandz & Rue, 2016). From the interview data, we can see that the students seem to understand the modalities in a non-hierarchical way (cf. Hernandez and Rue, 2016, p. 2) keeping an open mind as to which modality might be the best for the purpose at hand.

As stated in the methodological parts of this article, the method we apply consists of mixed methods. When considering to which degree the model actually facilitates better digital stories in terms of a more deliberate use of modalities, it makes sense to address the data of anecdotal observations done by the educators. We have anecdotal evidence suggesting that the stories being done by the student this year - which was the first year the *Digital Story Model* was implemented – are somewhat different to stories produced in previous

classes. For instance, we observe a higher level of cohesion in the stories creating pieces that to a larger degree resonate with the idea of a cognitive container (Dowling & Vogan, 2015, p. 209. Furthermore, we found a larger number of modalities in use as well as a more diverse modality use which has challenged the text-first way of thinking. This is for instance expressed by the use of interactive, information-rich maps and gamified elements such as quizzes and mini games which we have not seen before. We cannot be sure that the model has actually caused these changes and we must underline again that these observations are merely anecdotal evidence. However, in combination with the survey data, it seems likely that the model has been valuable in terms of having a more deliberate modality use for most students.

However, some students have a different experience and state this in comments such as these:

> "The part about modalities becomes a weakness because new journalists may consider thinking about them at first rather than having a solid story."

> "I saw so many classmates using media for no reasons, as if they think the story would automatically be better once they add different components."

From the above statements we can see a diverse set of experiences. Some students find that the model helps them to consider modalities early on and get a better coherence between content and form. Other students, however, have the experience of becoming too modality-focused and giving too little attention to the story. We interpret this as a Christmas Tree-approach (Grabowicz et. al, 2014, para. 1) where the students end up putting a lot of decorative modalities onto a piece while not spending enough time actually researching and building a strong story content wise.

Lastly, we will point out two shortcomings that some students seem to experience in relation to the kinds of stories they produce. These are expressed in statements such as these:

> "I don't think the model as such is bad, but I do believe it really depends on the project one is undertaking."

> "The model is most relevant for stories that need time to produce as it is a little time-consuming to figure out all aspects of the story and put it into a model. It is not relevant to all kinds of stories."

We interpret such statements as having an experience of the model as context dependent. It is not a one size fits all-model but rather a model that is useful for larger projects, preferably team-

based projects and projects with the aim of taking advantage of digital opportunities. Perhaps this mixed experience of the model is terms of whether the model has broad applicability and whether or not it is too time consuming can also be interpreted from the mixed responses to the statement "I will use the Digital Story Model to guide my process if I am making a digital story in the future":

Please state how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: - I will use the
Digital Story Model to guide my process if I am making a digital story in the future
Crossed with: For how long have you practiced journalism in a professional setting?
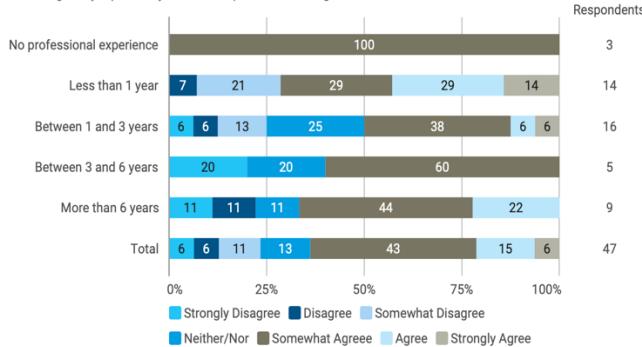
Figure 6: Likelihood for future use of the Digital Story Model based on journalistic experience

From these data we can see that there is a slight tendency for the students with less professional experience to state willingness to use the model in the future whereas more experienced students are a bit more reluctant. However, these data actually do support that the model can be used for both training purposes in a classroom setting as well as practical purposes in a professional industry setting as a majority of respondents with 3+ years of experience do reply that they "somewhat agree" with the statement that they will likely use the model in their future work (60 % of the respondents in the group 3-6 years of experience and 44 % of the respondents in the group with 6+ years of experience).

Discussion and conclusion

In this section of the article, we will sum up our findings, discuss some of the methodological shortcomings as well as some of our anecdotical observations as educators using the model in the classroom and, finally, point to some of the future roads to take regarding the further development of the model.

Our research question was phrased the following way:

Which strengths and shortcomings do the students experience when working with The Digital Story Model?

Based on the qualitative and quantitative data presented and discussed above we can conclude that the student experience a mix of strengths and shortcomings which can be summed up like this:

Strengths:
- Helps the user as a structuring and planning tool.
- Generates a shared language in the group and to allocate what each person in the group does.
- Promotes creativity.
- Helps the user to consider different modalities and keeping an open mind towards each modality.

Shortcomings:
- Seems too linear and not flexible and open enough.
- Standardizes stories in an unnecessary way.
- Prevents creativity.
- Seems too obvious for experienced reporters and is primarily useful for inexperienced reporters.
- Removes focus from the core content of the story due to the model focusing on modalities and form.

Both the strengths and the shortcomings are interesting to notice on three levels. First, the findings give us valuable input regarding the interpretation of the model. Some students have for instance interpreted the model as a very linear tool which was not the idea from our end. Furthermore, it is interesting to notice that some students experience the model as an aid in terms of creativity while other students feel the opposite, that the model prevents creativity. We cannot be sure but perhaps this very mixed experience is explained by people having different attitudes to models on a general level. Some feel that models help them accomplish their ideas and ambitions while others feel constrained and standardized by model usage.

Secondly, the findings point to different suggestions when it comes to the practical presentation and use of the model. For instance, the data suggest a need to underline the circular nature of the model, the aim of considering both content elements as well as form/style elements, the importance of underlining that more is not more in the understanding that more modalities do not necessarily create better digital stories. It is important to frame the model in such a manner when presenting it to classes. From the findings, we can also conclude that the model seems particularly helpful in larger

assignments accomplished in groups and perhaps in particular in groups where the professional experience level is varied.

And finally, thirdly, the findings also suggest some possible revisions of the model. According to the action research approach the desire to improve a practice should be understood as a dialogical and cyclical process. This means that the findings located in this current study should be used for further development and enhancement of the model. We could for instance try and make the circular/dynamic ideas of the model become more evident in the visual representation of the model and we could expand the guidelines to address some of the shortcomings and misinterpretations that our findings have rendered visible. This could for instance be related to the misunderstanding that no research should be done while going through the model which was not the intention from our end.

In this final part of the article, we would also like to point to some of the methodological shortcomings of the setup of our study. Methodologically, it is unfortunate that only a bit more than half of the class, 47 students out of 85, has replied in completeness to our survey while 61 students have either completely or partly responded to the survey. This provides us with some error margin in the data set. However, we can see a diverse group of students among the 47 respondents and based on our knowledge of the demographics of the class at large we cannot see a clear bias selection when it comes to who responded to the survey and who did not. We also cannot locate any attrition in the survey that can explain why 14 respondents did not complete the survey and conclude that this dropout is likely just due to survey fatigue.

The focus of this article has been to present the *Digital Story Model* and to investigate how the students experience using the model. Another research project that would be interesting to carry out as a follow-up study would be to analyze the productions done by the students. As stated in the analysis, we have some anecdotal evidence about the characteristics of the stories produced with the model, but we have not examined this in a systematic way by for instance by comparing the productions from this year with previous productions from other classes that did not use the model. Such an endeavor could be used in combination with the conclusive findings listed above in future revisions of the *Digital Story Model*.

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Mellem tilbagetrukket og fremtrædende

Tredjepersonsfortællerens funktioner i nyere skandinavisk fortællende journalistik

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Abstract[1]

Tredjepersonsfortælleren er det naturlige førstevalg i fortællende journalistik, men påfaldende lidt studeret i journalistikforskningen. Det efterlader ikke blot tredjepersonsfortælleren, men journalistens rolle som fortællerens iscenesætter som et blindt punkt i fortællende journalistik. I denne artikel introducerer vi derfor et retorisk-narratologisk blik på tredjepersonsfortælleren og dennes funktioner i fortællende journalistik. Med afsæt i tre eksempler på nyere skandinavisk fortællende journalistik viser vi hvordan tredjepersonsfortælleren kan træde mere elle mindre tydeligt frem i journalistiske fortællinger alt efter i hvilken grad fortælleren varetager fortællerfunktionerne at berette, fortolke og vurdere på henholdsvis direkte og indirekte vis. På baggrund af analyserne konkluderer vi at uanset hvor tilbagetrukket tredjepersonsfortælleren er, kan fortællende journalister ikke undslå sig rollen som den skabende kraft bag fortælleren og dermed heller ikke det ansvar der påhviler dem for den relation de skaber til deres publikummer, og de værdier deres fortællinger kommunikerer.

KEYWORDS
Tredjepersonsfortæller, fortællerfunktioner (Phelan), fortællende journalistik, retorisk narratologi

Introduktion

Fortællende journalistik er en genre med en stærk tradition i Skandinavien (Bech-Karlsen, 2007, s. 41 og 50; Jørgensen, 2007, s. 79). Lader man samlebetegnelsen 'fortællende journalistik' henvise bredt til journalistik der gør brug af fortællende virkemidler til at formidle virkelige historier (van Krieken & Sanders, 2021, s. 1404), er det en journalistisk genre som er blevet dyrket af prominente danske, svenske og norske journalister siden slutningen af det 19. århundrede (Bech-Karlsen, 2007, s. 49-59; Jørgensen, 2007, s. 79). Inspireret af amerikansk journalistik har genren imidlertid været genstand for fornyet interesse blandt skandinaviske journalister siden årtusindskiftet (Bech-Karlsen, 2007, s. 184; Sønnichsen & Kramer, 2002, s. 7-9), hvilket har resulteret i at eksisterende medier som DR, SVT og NRK har satset strategisk på genren, mens nye medier som eksempelvis danske Zetland har slået sig op på at anvende (træk af) genren som en integreret del af deres journalistik.

Den norske journalistikforsker Jo Bech-Karlsen har argumenteret for at påvirkningen fra amerikansk journalistik har betydet at fortællende journalistik i Skandinavien nu synes underlagt en række formmæssige dogmer, ikke mindst hvad angår fortælleren i fortællende journalistik (Bech-Karlsen, s. 184-188 og 193). Idealet er ifølge Bech-Karlsen at journalisten skjuler sig og tiltrækker sig så lidt opmærksomhed som muligt ved at anvende en tredjepersonsfortæller (ibid., s. 186-187). "Jo mere umerkelig journalisten er, des bedre", opsummerer Bech-Karlsen (ibid., s. 187). Om end Karlsens, lidt polemiske, udlægning kan diskuteres, ikke mindst med hensyn til hvor firkantet skandinaviske journalister rent faktisk udmønter den slags dogmer i praksis, er det tydeligt at i såvel den amerikanske som skandinaviske grundbogslitteratur om fortællende journalistik fremstår tredjepersonsfortælleren i dag som det naturlige førstevalg. I 1973 udpegede Tom Wolfe tredjepersonsfortælleren som et konstituerende træk ved den nye, fortællende journalistik der voksede frem i 1960'ernes USA (Wolfe & Johnsen, 1973, s. 46-47), og siden er tredjepersonsfortælleren blevet fremhævet som norm*en* i flere grundbøger om fortællende journalistik (Dalviken, 2005, s. 45; Hart, 2011, s. 47; Sønnichsen & Kramer, 2002, s. 8). "[T]hird person offers so many possibilities and advantages that it serves as the nonfiction storyteller's default point of view", skriver Jack Hart eksempelvis i grundbogen *Storycraft* (Hart, 2011, s. 47). Tredjepersonsfortællerens status i fortællende journalistik bestyrkes af at førstepersonsfortælleren ofte problematiseres i journalistiske grundbøger fordi den begrænser fortællingens perspektiv til journalisten selv (Hart, 2011, s. 47; Wolfe & Johnsen, 1973, s. 47), gør journalisten til det vigtigste i fortællingen (Sønnichsen & Kramer, 2002, s. 8) og leder til

fortællinger der er for selvoptagede og idiosynkratiske, ja, for vilde og syrede (Hart, 2011, s. 45; Hvid, 2007, s. 82). Per kontrast fremstår tredjepersonsfortælleren som det sikre valg hvor journalisten tilstræber at være objektiv og neutral og først og fremmest retter opmærksomheden mod kilderne frem for mod sig selv.

Hvor den journalistiske førstepersonsfortæller i flere nyere studier har været genstand for interesse i såvel skandinavisk som international journalistikforskning (Abrahamson, 2018; Harbers & Broersma, 2014; Moestrup et al., 2022; Nichols, 2021; Phillips, 2019; Tulloch, 2014), måske netop fordi jeg-formen er et mere kontroversielt valg i journalistik, har tredjepersonsfortælleren endnu til gode at tiltrække den samme opmærksomhed blandt journalistikforskere. I lyset af hvor central tredjepersonsfortælleren fremstår som genrenorm i den socialiserende grundbogslitteratur om fortællende journalistik, er det faktisk påfaldende hvor lidt studeret denne fortællerrolle er i journalistikforskningen. På baggrund af en systematisk gennemgang af den internationale forskningslitteratur om fortællende journalistik konkluderer journalstikforskerne Kobie van Krieken og José Sanders at der stadig kun er sparsom forskning i teoretiske aspekter af fortællende journalistik, herunder fortællerens betydning i denne slags journalistik (van Krieken & Sanders, 2021, s. 1401). En markant undtagelse – som van Krieken og Sanders fremhæver, og som vi inddrager senere – er den svenske journalistikforsker Cecilia Aares narratologiske analyser og diskussioner af journalisters fortællerroller (Aare, 2021). Men generelt er fokus i den eksisterende journalistikforskning ifølge van Krieken og Sanders i højere grad på hvordan fortælleren udfolder sig i specifikke, navngivne journalisters journalistik, frem for på generelle aspekter ved fortælleren i fortællende journalistik (van Krieken & Sanders, 2021, s. 1401).

Det efterlader ikke blot tredjepersonsfortælleren, men journalistens rolle som fortællerens iscenesætter som et blindt punkt i fortællende journalistik. I retorisk narratologi – som er det perspektiv på fortællinger vi anlægger i denne artikel – anses det for et grundvilkår at fortællinger er retoriske i den forstand at de er udtryk for at en afsender (journalisten) bruger narrative ressourcer til at kommunikere noget til et publikum (læserne, lytterne, seerne) (Phelan, 2005, s. 18; 2011, s. 56; 2018, s. 1-2). Disse ressourcer inkluderer, men begrænser sig ikke til tredjepersonsfortælleren (Phelan, 2011, s. 68; 2018, s. 7). Når fortællende journalister idealiserer tredjepersonsfortælleren i den tro at de på den måde kan skrive sig selv ud af deres fortællinger, afspejler det ud fra et retorisk-narratologisk perspektiv en forfejlet opfattelse af at dét rent faktisk kan lade sig gøre. Uanset hvor tilbagetrukket en fortæller man som fortællende journalist vælger at gøre brug af, vil fortællingen altid afspejle den skabende kraft

bag fortælleren (Booth, 1983, s. 70-71; Phelan, 2011, s. 71-72). Denne kraft har afgørende betydning for fortællingen og oplevelsen af samme, for som ikke mindst Wayne C. Booth har understreget, oplever publikum mødet med en fortælling som et møde med et andet menneske, og de danner naturligt en relation til det menneske og en opfattelse af hvad det menneske vil med sin fortælling (Booth, 1983, s. 70-71; se også Kock, 2009, s. 72).

Derfor stiller vi i denne artikel følgende spørgsmål: Hvordan kan tredjepersonsfortælleren i fortællende journalistik karakteriseres og kvalificeres med afsæt i retorisk-narratologisk teori og analyse af journalistiske modeleksempler? Formålet med vores undersøgelse er at skabe grundlaget for mere præcise analyser af tredjepersonsfortællerens rolle i fortællende journalistik og i forlængelse af dette at sætte den objektivitet som tredjepersonsfortælleren ofte tilskrives – per kontrast til førstepersonsfortælleren – til diskussion. Som vores analyser vil vise, aner man bag selv den mest tilbagetrukne tredjepersonsfortæller en iscenesættende instans med bestemte værdimæssige tilhørsforhold. Således tjener artiklens begrebsapparat og analyser til at kvalificere journalisters valg af hvordan de vil udfolde tredjepersonsfortælleren i deres fortællinger, men også hvilken rolle de vil indtage som fortællingens og ikke mindst fortællerens iscenesætter og den relation de derigennem skaber til deres publikum.

I tre delanalyser viser vi med afsæt i eksempler på nyere skandinavisk fortællende journalistik hvordan tredjepersonsfortælleren kan træde mere elle mindre tydeligt frem i journalistiske fortællinger. På den baggrund diskuterer vi tredjepersonsfortællerens betydning, muligheder og begrænsninger i fortællende journalisters kommunikation med deres publikummer. Først introducerer vi dog artiklens retorisk-narratologiske perspektiv på fortælleren i fortællende journalistik med særlig vægt på hvordan tredjepersonsfortællerens relative tydelighed beror på i hvilken grad fortælleren varetager de grundlæggende fortællerfunktioner at berette, fortolke og vurdere på henholdsvis direkte og indirekte vis.

Tredjepersonsfortællerens funktioner

I narratologisk teori er den udbredte betegnelse for fortælleren i fortællinger fortalt i tredje person ikke en tredjepersonsfortæller, men en *heterodiegetisk fortæller.* Ud fra et narratologisk synspunkt er det afgørende ved denne fortællertype ikke den grammatiske form, men derimod at fortælleren befinder sig på et andet niveau (= hetero) end det fortalte (= diegesis) og altså ikke optræder som karakter i, men alene som fortæller af fortællingen (Genette, 1980, s. 244-245, se også Larsen, 2012). Som Jack Hart skriver i *Storycraft,*

tilbyder denne fortælleposition "an incredibly rich vista for viewing an unfolding story", og hans begrundelse betoner netop at tredjepersonsfortælleren befinder sig uden for karakterernes værensområde (Hart, 2011, s. 47). Hvor førstepersonsfortælleren – uagtet dén fortællertypes særlige muligheder (Moestrup et al., 2022) – begrænser journalisten til hans eller hendes eget perspektiv, gør tredjepersonsfortælleren det ikke blot muligt i sin personbundne form at formidle andre karakterers tanker og følelser via indre syn, men også i en mere alvidende form at formidle på tværs af tid og sted på en måde der hæver sig over noget enkeltindivids perspektiv (Hart, 2011, s. 47-48).

Som Harts karakteristik antyder, kan tredjepersonsfortælleren i journalistik indtage en mere eller mindre fremtrædende rolle som fortællingens formidler. I narratologien er det veletableret at man kan karakterisere fortællere ud fra hvordan de placerer sig på et kontinuum fra tilbagetrukket til fremtrædende (Booth, 1962, s. 16-20; Chatman, 1978, s. 146-147; Genette, 1980, s. 161-175; Stanzel, 2004, s. 54-56). Afsættet er typisk en grundlæggende skelnen mellem *mimesis* og *diegese* som kan spores tilbage til Platon (Chatman, 1978, s. 146; Genette, 1980, s. 162-163; Aare, 2021, s. 57). Mimesis skal her forstås som en scenisk fremstillingsform der efterligner eller spejler det der fortælles om, tilsyneladende uden indblanding fra en fortæller, mens diegese skal forstås som en genfortællende fremstillingsform hvor fortælleren omvendt træder tydeligt frem som beretter af fortællingen (Melberg, 2012, s. 191-195). I journalistikken er denne skelnen – inspireret af den realistiske vending i litteraturen – kendt som "showing" og "telling" (Aare, 2021, s. 57), og traditionelt har fortællende journalister ikke blot overtaget den litterære realismes nomenklatur, men også dens favorisering af mimetisk show over diegetisk tell (jf. dogmet "don't tell it – show it"). Det er dog værd at bemærke at fortællende journalistik i praksis altid vil befinde sig et sted mellem de to teoretiske yderpunkter. På den ene side er ren mimesis en illusion af den simple grund at en fortælling altid er medieret via sproget og derfor ytret af nogen (Genette, 1980, s. 163-164); det gælder på skrift (Aare, 2021, s. 58), men også på lyd og video er der altid en instans der retter mikrofonen eller kameraet i en bestemt retning (Chatman, 1978, s. 147). Omvendt bryder ren diegese med fortællende journalistik som genre og forventningen om at fortællende journalister bruger scener og dialog som en måde at 'vise' den verden der fortælles om, frem for alene at 'berette' om den (Hvid, 2007, s. 78-79; Vaaben, 2019, s. 18-19; Wolfe & Johnsen, 1973, s. 46). Ikke desto mindre er modsætningsparret mimesis og diegese brugbart til at karakterisere tredjepersonsfortællerens relative tydelighed i fortællende journalistik: Jo mere en mimetisk fremstillingsform dominerer, desto mere tilbagetrukket vil fortælleren være; og omvendt: jo

mere en diegetisk form dominerer, desto mere fremtrædende vil fortælleren være.

I forlængelse af dette har narratologer diskuteret de konkrete virkemidler som kan trække en fortællings fremstilling i henholdsvis en mimetisk og en diegetisk retning. Bestemte fortælleelementer som fx beretning og ikke mindst fortællerkommentarer (Jørgensen, 1994, s. 31 og 35) gør åbenlyst fremstillingen mere diegetisk og bidrager til at tydeliggøre fortælleren (Booth, 1962, s. 16; Chatman, 1978, s. 223-225 og 228). Andre fortælleelementer som fx karakterernes tale (Jørgensen, 1994, s. 3) kan både trække fremstillingen i en mimetisk og en diegetisk retning alt efter hvordan de formidles: Vælger journalisten at gengive talen som direkte tale (fx Drengen spurgte: "Hvorfor kører du dog ikke?", Nordentoft, 1972, s. 111), vil fremstillingen fremstå mere mimetisk og fortælleren mere tilbagetrukket (Chatman, 1978, s. 200; Genette, 1980, s. 172); vælger journalisten i stedet at formidle talen som indirekte tale med fortælleren som mellemled (fx Drengen spurgte hvorfor han ikke kørte, Nordentoft, 1972, s. 111), vil fremstillingen omvendt fremstå mere diegetisk og fortælleren mere fremtrædende (Chatman, 1978, s. 200; Genette, 1980, s. 171). Mellem disse yderpunkter kan journalisten vælge at gøre brug af dækket direkte tale, også kendt som fri indirekte stil (fx Hvorfor kørte han dog ikke?, Nordentoft, 1972, s. 111), hvilket undertiden kan skabe tvivl om hvorvidt der er tale om mimetisk fremstilling af karakterernes tanker eller diegetisk formidling af fortællerens refleksioner, en flertydighed der kan have markant æstetisk virkning i fiktion (Kock, 2008, s. 155-156), men som også kan være diskutabel i journalistik netop fordi den slører hvem der er kilde til ytringerne (Bech-Karlsen, 2007, s. 181-182 og 188-189). Alt efter hvilke af fortællingens grundlæggende byggesten journalisten vælger at bringe i spil, men også måden hvorpå de byggesten realiseres i den konkrete fortælling, har det altså betydning for fortællerens synlighed. Valget og dermed fortællerens synlighed hænger sammen med den journalistiske metode der er anvendt. Handler fortællingen om et hændelsesforløb i nutiden, og bygger den derfor på reportage, muliggør det en tilbagetrukket fortæller fordi det hændte vil træde naturligt frem i scener og dialog; handler fortællingen omvendt om et hændelsesforløb i fortiden, og bygger den derfor på rekonstruktion, kalder det ofte på en mere fremtrædende fortæller fordi det der skete engang, må forklares og sættes i sammenhæng.

Den retoriske narratolog James Phelan har hævet diskussionen om fortællerens relative tydelighed et abstraktionsniveau op og underordner spørgsmålet om de konkrete virkemidler som får fortælleren til at træde mere eller mindre tydeligt frem, et mere overordnet spørgsmål om de grundlæggende *fortællerfunktioner* ("narrator functions") som fortælleren tjener (Phelan, 2005, s. 12 og 50-52).

Phelan konceptualiserer fortællinger som kommunikation og opstiller en model for denne form for kommunikation med to konstanter, nemlig forfatteren (i vores tilfælde journalisten) og hans eller hendes publikum, og så en række variable, nemlig de *narrative ressourcer* ("resources of narrative", Phelan, 2018, s. 2) som forfatteren kan gøre brug af for at kommunikere med sit publikum (se Figur 1). I dette perspektiv er fortælleren blot én af de ressourcer som journalister har til rådighed i fortællende journalistik, hvor andre er fx plot ("structure", Phelan , 2011, s. 68; "arrangement", Phelan, 2018, s. 7), karakterer, genre, stil mv. (ibid.). Tilsammen understøtter ressourcerne den relation mellem journalist og publikum som ud fra et retorisk-narratologisk perspektiv er så afgørende for oplevelsen af fortællinger.

```
Journalist  < >     Narrative ressourcer  < >     Publikum

                    Fortæller(e)
                    Karakter(er)
                    Genre
                    Stil
                    Plot
                    Etc.
```
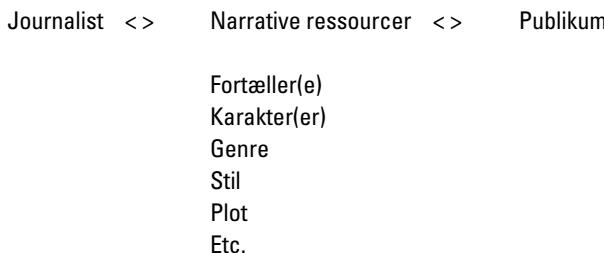
Figur 1: Konstanter og variable i fortællende journalistik som kommunikation (bearbejdet efter Phelan, 2011, s. 68; 2018, s. 7).

I sin karakteristik af fortælleren som narrativ ressource skelner Phelan mellem tre grundlæggende funktioner som alle fortællere udfylder, nemlig at berette ("report"), fortolke ("interpret") og vurdere ("evaluate") (Phelan, 2005, s. 12 og 50-52). Når fortælleren kommunikerer om fortællingens fakta, karakterer og hændelser, udfylder fortælleren sin berettende funktion; når fortælleren kommunikerer en bestemt opfattelse ("perception") eller forståelse af selvsamme fakta, karakterer og hændelser, udfylder fortælleren sin fortolkende funktion; og når fortælleren kommunikerer om fortællingens etik, altså hvad fortællingen udstikker som rigtigt og forkert, udfylder fortælleren sin vurderende funktion (ibid., s. 214). Om end de tre funktioner kan udfyldes på forskellig vis i forskellige fortællinger, må de alle altid bringes i spil for at en fortælling får betydning. Andre narratologer har opstillet beslægtede typologier over fortællerens funktioner (Genette, 1980, s. 255-256; Ryan, 2001, s. 147), men når vi har valgt at fremhæve Phelans bud, skyldes det at vi mener at han tilbyder journalister et enkelt, men dækkende begrebsapparat til at analysere og konceptualisere (tredjepersons)fortælleren i fortællende journalistik.

Phelan skriver ikke eksplicit at fortælleren kan varetage sine funktioner på mere eller mindre fremtrædende vis, men på baggrund af hans egen brug af begreberne i analyser kan man slutte at det er tilfældet: I en analyse af fortællerkonstruktionen i et uddrag af kriminalromanen *Friends of Eddie Coyle* fra 1970 viser Phelan hvordan forfatteren, George V. Higgins, begrænser fortællerens funktion til det Phelan kalder en 'minimal berettende funktion' ("minimal reporting function") hvor fortælleren på knap og konstaterende vis giver den nødvendige baggrund for og rækkefølge af talere i karakterernes dialog (Phelan, 2011, s. 61-62). Forfatteren har med andre ord valgt at gøre brug af en relativt tilbagetrukket fortællerinstans og realiserer ifølge Phelan i stedet de grundlæggende fortællerfunktioner *indirekte* ved at lade dialogen mellem fortællingens karakterer tjene til at berette, fortolke og vurdere, fx når en forsvarsadvokat og en anklager diskuterer det amerikanske retssystem og dets mangler (ibid., s. 59-63). Per kontrast kan man slutte at forfatteren kunne have valgt at realisere fortællerfunktionerne *direkte* ved i stedet at lade en mere fremtrædende fortællerinstans selv berette, fortolke og vurdere. Phelans centrale pointe er at fortællerens funktioner er konstante, i den forstand at de altid vil være i spil i en fortælling, men at fortælleren kan træde mere eller mindre tydeligt frem alt efter hvor (in)direkte fortælleren varetager de funktioner. Netop heri ligger styrken i teorien som vi ser det, for ved at anskue fortællerens funktioner som konstante uagtet hvor fremtrædende en fortæller der varetager dem, tilbyder Phelan fortællende journalister et grundlag for på tværs af journalistiske fortællinger med såvel tilbagetrukne som fremtrædende tredjepersonsfortællere at diskutere hvad de fortællere bidrager med og hvordan.

I analyserne der følger, anvender vi derfor Phelans fortællerfunktioner som overordnet strukturerende princip. På tværs af analyserne viser vi hvordan tredjepersonsfortællerne i tre eksempler på nyere skandinavisk fortællende journalistik udfylder de grundlæggende funktioner at berette, fortolke og vurdere, men samtidig hvordan de gør det på mere eller mindre direkte vis og dermed træder mere eller mindre tydeligt frem. I analyserne inddrager vi de konkrete virkemidler som andre narratologer har peget på kan trække en fortælling i henholdsvis en mimetisk og en diegetisk retning og dermed har betydning for fortællerens relative tydelighed, fx scener og dialog på den ene side og beretning og fortællerkommentarer på den anden side; men inspireret af Phelan fokuserer vi først og fremmest på hvordan fortællerne varetager deres fortællerfunktioner, og kun sekundært hvordan de konkrete virkemidler understøtter dette. For hvert eksempel giver vi først en karakteristik af fortællingen og dens kommunikationssituation; så analyserer vi hvordan de tre fortællerfunktioner varetages på direkte vis; og endelig analyserer vi

hvordan fortællerfunktionerne udfyldes indirekte, først og fremmest via karaktererne, men også via andre narrative ressourcer som plot og genre. Ulempen ved denne makroanalytiske tilgang er at den slører skift og nuancer i fortællerkonstruktionen på fortællingens mikroplan (Aare, 2021, s. 133-134); omvendt er fordelen at den tydeliggør tredjepersonfortællerens overordnede betydning som narrativ ressource i fortællende journalistisk og den ressources samspil med de øvrige narrative ressourcer fortællende journalister har til deres rådighed. At vi anlægger dette mere overordnede, makroanalytiske blik på tredjepersonfortælleren i fortællende journalistik, understøtter artiklens overordnede praktiske sigte, nemlig at kvalificere fortællende journalisters evne til at analysere og vurdere fortællerrollen i andre journalisters fortællinger såvel som at planlægge og realisere fortællerrollen i deres egne fortællinger.

Eksemplerne vi analyserer, er valgt så de to første eksemplificerer yderpunkterne på et kontinuum af fortællermæssig tydelighed, nemlig henholdsvis den tilbagetrukne og den fremtrædende fortæller, mens det tredje og sidste eksempel eksemplificerer en midterposition, nemlig den delvist fremtrædende fortæller. Dermed forsøger vi at dække bredden i hvordan tredjepersonsfortælleren kan realiseres i fortællende journalistik. Fordi vi ønsker at diskutere tredjepersonsfortælleren som formmæssigt dogme i skandinavisk fortællende journalistik i bred forstand (Bech-Karlsen, 2007, s. 193), går de valgte eksempler på tværs af landene Danmark, Sverige og Norge og platformene skrift/web, lyd og video. Fordi vores forhåbning er at vores analyser kan tjene til at kvalificere journalistisk praksis, har vi desuden valgt at tage udgangspunkt i eksempler der alle er blevet hyldet med journalistiske priser og dermed er blevet fremhævet af fagfæller som eksemplariske og værd at efterligne (Wahl-Jørgensen, 2013, s. 134). Ved at tage afsæt i hvad fortællende journalister ifølge deres fagfæller allerede gør godt, er vores mål at vise andre journalister hvad de kan lære af de valgte eksempler med henblik på selv at fortælle godt.

Den tilbagetrukne fortæller: "Danmarks yngste dragqueen"

I den ene ende af fortæller-kontinuummet finder man den tilbagetrukne tredjepersonsfortæller der gør minimalt opmærksom på sig selv. I fortællinger med en tilbagetrukken fortæller begrænser journalisten fortællerens rolle til et minimum og lader i stedet karaktererne træde frem i scener og dialog tilsyneladende uden indblanding. Dette valg gør måske nok at fortælleren udviskes som fortællingens formidler; men som vi skal se, stiller det omvendt store krav til journalisten som den skabende kraft bag fortællingen. For

når en fortælling skal berettes, fortolkes og vurderes uden en tydelig fortæller til at varetage disse fortællerfunktioner, kræver det i ekstra høj grad planlægning og struktur.

Som et eksempel på en fortælling med en tilbagetrukket fortæller har vi valgt den danske tv-dokumentar "Danmarks yngste Dragqueen" af Lisbeth Dilling og Maria Lyhne Høj hvis to afsnit blev bragt på DR1 hhv. d. 12. og 19. december 2021 (og siden har kunnet streames på DRTV) (Dilling & Høj, 2021). Dokumentaren blev i januar 2023 hædret med TVPRISEN som uddeles af ProducentForeningen i Danmark. Den vandt i kategorien "Bedste karakterdrevne serie", og juryen fremhævede netop fortællingens karakterer i deres begrundelse: "Vi elsker de medvirkende, og at deres historier fortælles med stor respekt." ("Vindere af TVPRISEN 2023", n.d.)

Dokumentaren er et eksempel på fortællende journalistik der trænger bag facaden (Dalviken, 2005, s. 37-38) og giver et intimt og rørende indblik i en række karakterer der umiddelbart fremstår genkendelige, men som ikke desto mindre færdes i et for mange ukendt miljø, dét nogle amerikanske fortællende journalister kalder 'den hemmelige have' (Vaaben, 2019, s. 23 og 79-80): Den handler om Jeppe Gammelby der ved fortællingens start er 11 år. Han bor i Gilleleje i Nordsjælland sammen med sin mor Hanne der er maler, og sin far Allan der er skraldemand. Siden børnehaven har Jeppe elsket at tage kjoler på, og til fastelavn i 4. klasse kom han som Roberta der har ildrødt hår og går i kjole og høje hæle. "Hun er lidt af en diva", siger Jeppe selv om sit alterego. Seriens første afsnit bærer undertitlen "Jeppes juleønske", og i anslaget ser man Jeppe beundre et overdådigt pyntet juletræ mens han i en voice-over fortæller at hans "største drøm, det er at blive professionel drag". Før hans 12-årsfødselsdag tager hans forældre kontakt til den profes-sionelle dragartist Tinus de Schunard som Jeppe brændende ønsker at møde – og som forældrene håber kan rådgive dem. Tinus siger ja, og da Jeppe sammen med sin far og mor mødes med Tinus, tilbyder Tinus Jeppe at være med i sin julecabaret. "Det kræver skarp træning!", understreger Tinus efter at Jeppe har indvilget, og resten af dokumentaren følger de tos forberedelser frem mod den afsluttende forestilling hvor Roberta optræder til Mariah Careys juleklassiker "All I want for Christmas".

Dokumentaren er i al væsentlighed fortalt i scener krydsklippet med interviews hvor de medvirkende reflekterer over deres historie. Undervejs nøjes fortælleren med at udpege fortællingens karakterer, steder og kilder i skrift på skærmen, fx "Tinus de Schunard, Dragartist", "Gilleleje" og "Fra Jeppes Tik Tok" (da der vises billeder af Robertas optræden på det sociale medie). Fortællerens direkte varetagelse af fortællerfunktionerne er således begrænset til minimal beretning (Phelan, 2011, s. 62) hvor fortælleren på konstaterende vis

kridter fortællingens verden op (Phelan, 2005, s. 114). Den tilbage-trukne fortæller og den medfølgende illusion om at seerne får ad-gang til et ukendt miljø, understøttes yderligere af videomediet. Som Seymour Chatman er inde på i sin diskussion af videofortællinger, muliggør videomediet "a bare visual record of what happened "out there"" og på den måde "pure visual objectivity" (Chatman, 1978, s. 159), en tilsyneladende rent registrerende form som stadig anven-des i tv-dokumentarisme som en videreførelse af cinema verité (Christensen, 2023, s. 330).

I stedet for at fortælleren selv varetager den berettende fortæller-funktion, er funktionen i al væsentlighed uddelegeret til karakte-rerne, ikke mindst de voksne bikarakterer, fx når Jeppes mor hen-vendt til Jeppe siger "Vi skal til Tinus" da familien sidder i deres bil på vej til det første møde, eller når Tinus igen henvendt til Jeppe si-ger "Nu skal Roberta jo genfødes på ny" da de to sidder foran spejlet i Tinus' garderobe, og Tinus skal til at sminke Jeppe. Det ved Jeppe selvfølgelig godt, og der er i den forstand tale om beretning der er overflødig set fra karakterernes perspektiv, men nødvendig set fra seernes perspektiv (Phelan, 2005, s. 12), fordi karaktererne siger ting til hinanden som de hver især godt ved i forvejen, men hvor de ikke desto mindre siger det fordi det sætter journalisten i stand til at kommunikere til publikum som tredjepart. Når Jeppes mor i en scene spørger: "Hva' så, Jeppe, hvad ønsker du dig allermest i fød-selsdagsgave?", og Jeppe svarer: "Du har modtaget min ønskeliste", tydeliggør forældrenes efterfølgende forsøg på at få Jeppe til at svare at svaret er vigtigt, ikke for dem, men for fortællingens publikum. Denne form for indirekte beretning via karakterernes dialog udvi-sker altså måske nok fortælleren, men fremmaner samtidig journa-listens rolle som instruktør.

På samme måde varetages den fortolkende fortællerfunktion in-direkte via karakterernes dialog, ikke mindst i kraft af karakteren Ti-nus der løbende bidrager med et korrigerende perspektiv på de an-dre karakterers forståelse af verden omkring dem. Fx når Jeppes far siger at han var "nødt til [at kontakte Tinus], fordi Jeppe, han har simpelthen snakket så meget om dig", og Tinus svarer: "Men det er jo hele pointen, det er du netop ikke nødt til!"; eller når Jeppe for-tæller at hans klassekammerater "tog det helt koldt" da han fortalte at han skulle være med i Tinus' julecabaret, og Tinus svarer: "Det er sket meget siden jeg gik i skole!" Via dialogen mellem Tinus og de andre karakterer formidles en central fortolkning af familien Gam-melbys historie: Den harmoni den er udtryk for, er usædvanlig. Jep-pes forældre støtter ham, det samme gør hans klassekammerater, og i en alder af 12 år får Jeppe realiseret sin største drøm; men Tinus minder de andre karakterer (og seerne) om at dét langt fra er nogen selvfølge.

I forlængelse af dette spiller Tinus og hans korrektioner en væsentlig rolle for den vurderende fortællerfunktion. Som vi allerede har antydet, fungerer Tinus som Jeppes parallel- og kontrastkarakter (Jørgensen, 1994, s. 37-38): De har begge elsket at tage kjoler på siden de var helt små, men omverden og ikke mindst deres forældre har reageret meget forskelligt. Som Tinus selv siger, er Jeppe og han "de vildeste kontraster i forhold til hvordan man kan ønske sig at vokse op". Kontrasten mellem Tinus' og Jeppes historier og den vurdering den implicerer, træder bl.a. frem i karakterernes dialog, fx da Jeppes forældre besøger Tinus for anden gang og spørger ham til råds:

> Hanne, Jeppes mor: "Jeg kan jo godt blive usikker på om man skubber ham i en gal retning. Det gør man vel ikke ved at bakke ham op?"

> Tinus: "Du skubber ham jo ikke nogensomhelst steder. (…) Det som I to giver Jeppe nu, det er at I skåner ham for de der 5, 10, nogle gange 15-20 år som mange af folk som os gennemgår fordi vi hele tiden skal gå i en skamperiode og tænke: Åh nej, bare jeg ikke skuffer mine forældre."

Selvom der ikke er nogen fortæller der direkte fælder vurderinger i fortællingen, træder fortællingens værdier om accept og anerkendelse ikke desto mindre tydeligt frem via karakterernes dialog.

Phelan argumenterer for at fortællerfunktionerne også kan varetages indirekte via andre narrative ressourcer end karaktererne og deres dialog (Phelan, 2011, s. 71-72). I "Danmarks yngste Dragqueen" varetages den vurderende fortællerfunktion således også indirekte via fortællingens struktur. I dokumentarens andet afsnit fortæller Tinus hvordan han som barn altid stod bag scenetæppet og spejdede efter sin mor når han spillede skolekomedie. Tre minutter senere følger en ordløs scene hvor Jeppe og Tinus trækker tæppet til side kort før den afsluttende jule-cabaret går i gang. Hvor Tinus' mor aldrig kom, ser man i næste klip Jeppes forældre sidde i salen – sammen med Tinus' morbror "Onkel Buller" hvilket gør at ikke kun Jeppes karakter, men også Tinus' karakter forløses. I dette "ekko" i fortællingens struktur (ibid.) ligger en klar vurdering som beror på en iagttagelse journalisterne har gjort i deres research, filmet og måske instrueret efter og til sidst lagt ud som noget den opmærksomme seer kan slutte sig til.

Tilsvarende beror den fortolkende fortællerfunktion ikke alene på Tinus som kontrastperson og hans dialog med de øvrige karakterer. Det usædvanlig fravær af konflikt i Jeppes fortælling fremhæves yderligere af måden fortællingen er iscenesat såvel visuelt som auditivt, nemlig som et juleeventyr. Iscenesættelsen alluderer til nostalgiske julefilm hvor familien er i centrum og julen en anledning

til moralsk refleksion, og tilføjer et element af magi til fortællingen. Den genremæssige allusion sætter en klar fortolkende ramme for fortællingen – og antyder samtidig en vurdering af hændelsesforløbet, nemlig at det er godt at familien samles og forsones til sidst, præcis som i en klassisk julefilm – og igen udnytter journalisterne altså andre narrative ressourcer end fortælleren til at varetage fortællerfunktionerne (Phelan, 2018, s. 7). Selvom journalisterne har valgt at gøre brug af en tilbagetrukket fortæller, er der med andre ord alligevel tale om en moralsk fortælling der rummer en tydelig stillingtagen til sin problemstilling; denne er blot ikke formidlet via en tydelig fortællerinstans.

Som opsamling på denne første delanalyse kan vi konkludere at når fortælleren træder tilbage, må noget andet træde i stedet. I analysen har vi fokuseret på hvordan fortællerfunktionerne i fortællinger med en tilbagetrukket fortæller kan varetages indirekte via karakterernes dialog, men også antydet hvordan det kan ske via andre ressourcer som struktur og genre. Uanset hvilke ressourcer journalisten vælger at lade træde i stedet for fortælleren, er der tale om valg der stiller krav til journalisten som fortællingens instruktør (Aare, 2021, s. 91-106), fx når de medvirkende skal instrueres i at fortælle hvad der sker i fortællingen (beretning), og hvordan det kan forstås (fortolkning) og bør evalueres (vurdering). Heri ligger samtidig en væsentlig retorisk udfordring, for selvom journalistiske fortællinger er 'instrueret virkelighed' (ibid.), må instruktionen ikke påkalde sig så meget opmærksomhed at det fortalte ender med at fremstå uvirkeligt eller manipuleret. Når fortællerkonstruktionen i "Danmarks yngste Dragqueen" lykkes, skyldes det at den er afstemt i forhold til kommunikationssituationen. Den tilbagetrukne fortæller understøtter illusionen om at seerne får et uforstyrret kig ind i en 'hemmelig have' og på den måde lov til at danne sig sin egen mening om et aktuelt, omdiskuteret emne (i dette tilfælde børns kønsidentitet). Den vellykkede fortællerrolle hænger samtidig sammen med mediets særlige muligheder og den anvendte journalistiske metode: Informationstætheden i tv-mediets parallelle strøm af levende billeder, lyd og ord gør det i særlig grad muligt for journalisterne at lade den fortalte verden træde frem for seerne stort set uden indblanding fra en fortæller, og denne mimetiske illusion bestyrkes yderligere af at det fortalte med afsæt i reportage tilsyneladende fortælles samtidig med at det sker.

Den fremtrædende fortæller: "En kjærlighedshistorie"

I den anden ende af fortæller-kontinuummet finder man den fremtrædende fortæller der i modsætning til den tilbagetrukne

fortæller gør tydeligt opmærksom på sig selv som fortællingens formidler. Hvor journalisten fortrinsvis lader den tilbagetrukne fortæller varetage sine funktioner indirekte via karaktererne, lader journalisten i lige så høj grad den fremtrædende fortæller udfylde funktionerne direkte; fortællingens karakterer træder stadig frem for publikum i scener og dialog, men en sådan mimetisk fremstillingsform suppleres af en diegetisk hvor fortællerens beretninger, fortolkninger og vurderinger står i centrum, vel at mærke uden at fortælleren dermed optræder som karakter i fortællingen.

Som et eksempel på en fremtrædende fortæller har vi valgt den norske artikel "En kjærlighetshistorie" af Nils Anker (og med fotos af Aleksander Nordahl) som blev bragt i Dagens Næringslivs kultur- og livsstilsmagasin D2 d. 6. november 2020 (fortællingen er også publiceret som en digital fortælling på dn.no) (Anker, 2020). Fortællingen blev i september 2021 tildelt Fortellerprisen af den norske forening Fortellingens kraft bl.a. med den begrundelse at der var tale om "et eventyr" der "bobler over av fortellerglede" (Berglihn, 2021). Artiklen er et eksempel på fortællende journalistik som går tilbage til en nyhedshistorie og udreder hvad der siden skete (Vaaben, 2019, s. 62-63): I april 2020 sprang den norske industrifisker Joar Hesten i havet ud for den norske nordkyst og befriede en hvidhval for et snærende seletøj, muligvis monteret af det russiske militær (Klo & Horn, 2019), en dåd der fik stor, positiv opmærksomhed i såvel norske som internationale medier (Nordvåg & Bye, 2019). Med deres artikel i D2 ønskede Anker og Nordahl efter eget udsagn at lære Hestens historie at kende og "hans syn på den offentlige besættelse [af hvalen] i Norge" (Siddons, 2021, vores oversættelse).

Karakteristisk for "En kjærlighetshistorie" er altså at den historie som fortællingen tager afsæt i, i høj grad allerede er kendt af artiklens (norske) læsere. Dette afspejler sig i måden fortælleren flere steder udfylder sin berettende funktion, nemlig i panoramiske, stramt kondenserede genfortællinger af de kendte dele af hændelsesforløbet, fx som i eksemplet nedenfor hvor den norske offentligheds månedlange spekulationer i hvalens oprindelse opsummeres på få linjer:

Heller ikke russerne meldte sin interesse – tross seletøyets nesten Disney-film-aktige hint om dyrets mulige opphav. Hvalen ble følgelig av medier karakterisert som en mulig «spionhval». (...) Det ble også hevdet – og senere tilbakevist – at man kunne ha med den russiske basseng- og terapihvalen «Semjon» å gjøre. Reimene er overgitt Politiets sikkerhetstjeneste.

(s. 17)

Fortællerens genfortællinger tillader uindviede at stige på fortællingen, men driver samtidig i højt fortælletempo fortællingen et sted hen hvor også indviede kan finde den relevant.

Den retrospektive fortælleform hvor fortælleren har bagudsyn på det hændte (Jørgensen, 1994, s. 27), afspejler sig også i måden fortælleren varetager sine øvrige funktioner. Allerede i indledningen træder fortælleren tydeligt frem som fortolker:

> Det finnes øyeblikk, midt i hverdagen, som kan omdefinere hele livsløp: Den brennhete pappkoppen med kaffe som plutselig svikter mellom bena i førersetet på motorveien. Blikket fra en forbipasserende i en rulletrapp. For yrkesfisker og tidligere hvalfanger Joar Hesten (40) kom dette øyeblikket den 26. april i fjor, i havet utenfor Ingøy, Finnmark.
>
> (s. 12)

Frem for at starte med en scene hvor fortællingens udløsende hændelse gestaltes, i dette tilfælde Joar Hestens "redning" af hvidhvalen "Hvaldimir" (som hvalen med allusion til Ruslands præsident senere blev døbt i Norge, se Nordvåg, 2019), starter artiklen med at fortælleren sætter en markant fortolkende ramme for hvordan dén hændelse bør forstås. Sammenligningen med den glohede papkop og mødet på rulletrappen er en subjektiv, ja, personlig fortolkning som man må formode alene står på fortællerens regning. I en situation hvor den oplagte, indledende komplikationsscene (Hvid, 2007, s. 50) allerede er kendt af mange, er det at lade fortælleren træde tydeligt frem som subjektiv fortolker en måde at gøre fortællingen relevant på ny.

Den tidlige og tydelige fortolkning varsler hvordan fortælleren er tilsvarende fremtrædende som vurderende instans i fortællingen. Flere steder falder fortællerens vurderinger i forlængelse af karakterernes og særligt hovedkarakteren Joar Hestens. Fx parafraserer fortælleren i indirekte tale fiskerens "tordentale" i norsk morgen-tv om "at nå måtte styresmaktene ta ansvar, at vi er avhengig av et økosystem, at en hval må få være en hval – et fritt dyr i et riktig miljø" (s. 17) og samler derefter kortfattet op: "«Det var en klok fisker», sa tv-kokk Wenche Andersen etter innslaget, men så ble det liksom med dét. Offisiell handlekraft lar stadig vente på seg." (ibid.) Ved at fremhæve kontrasten mellem Hestens indignerede tordentale og myndighedernes apatiske reaktion fælder fortælleren en vurdering der er tydeligt solidarisk med Hestens.

Andre steder nøjes fortælleren ikke med at samle op på hovedkarakterens vurderinger, men kommer også med egne vurderinger, fx i en scene hvor Hesten sætter sin båds motor i tomgang på Ofotfjorden og på den måde lokker Hvaldimir frem fra dybet:

Ved båtripen glir denne kritthvite, uutgrunnelige skapningen ut av det mørke havet – fysiognomien tilfeldigvis formet i et mildt, mobilvennlig smil, som skapt for å ledsages av svulmende hjerte-emojis selv fra de mest hjerterå av oss.

(s. 20)

I refleksionen over hvalens udseende ligger en kritisk afstandtagen til nordmændenes (og resten af verdens) reaktion på dyret, nemlig et mediehysteri der afspejler lige dele antropomorfisering og kapitalistisk udnyttelse af hvalen. Vurderingen er i tråd med en kritik som Hesten løbende giver udtryk for, men på dette sted må vurderingen ikke desto mindre tilskrives fortælleren, inklusive den subjektive iagttagelse og association den bygger på. På den måde forstærker vurderingen fortællerens fremtræden som en selvstændig skikkelse tydeligt adskilt fra hovedkarakteren.

Der er steder i artiklen hvor fortællerens og karakterernes perspektiver umiddelbart overlapper, fx da artiklen når til at genfortælle hvordan Hesten reddede Hvaldimir:

En hvit skygge åpenbarte seg bak fiskesjarken, kom mot det vesle mannskapet som en torpedo. Var det kveite som gikk i overflaten? Gikk hvithval så langt vest? Og hva i all verden var denne skapningen viklet inn i? Søppel? Tauverk?

(s. 12)

Den første sætning synes at stå på fortællerens regning, om end det kan diskuteres om den afsluttende sammenligning ("som en torpedo") skal tilskrives fortælleren eller karaktererne. De efterfølgende spørgsmål fremstår dog mest af alt som tanker karaktererne gør i situationen. Her ser vi altså et eksempel på hvordan brugen af dækket direkte tale kan tjene til at skabe glidende overgange mellem fortællerens og karakterernes perspektiver (Chatman, 1978, s. 201-203; Kock, 2008, s. 155-156). Som Cecilia Aares mikroanalytiske nærlæsninger af fortællende journalistisk på skrift eksemplificerer, fx af Jimmy Breslins berømte fortælling om graveren der gravede præsident John F. Kennedys grav i 1963 (Aare, 2021, s. 138-140 og 163-165), tillader skriftmediet på særlig vis netop denne type glidende perspektivskift (se også Larsen, 2012, s. 58). Hverken i eksemplet ovenfor eller i "En kjærlighetshistorie" generelt er det dog særlig vanskeligt at skelne fortælleren og karaktererne fra hinanden, ikke mindst grundet fortællerens relative synlighed i fortællingen som helhed.

Fortællerens direkte varetagelse af fortællerfunktionerne understøttes indirekte via flere andre fortællemæssige ressourcer. Vi har allerede antydet hvordan fortællingens struktur (Phelan, 2011, s. 68;

2018, s. 7) er med til at fremhæve fortælleren som fortolkende instans, bl.a. i kraft af den prominente plads den indledende fortolkning har i anslaget. På samme måde er den genremæssige iscenesættelse af fortællingen (Phelan, 2018, s. 7) ligeledes med til at bestyrke særligt de fortolkende og vurderende fortællerfunktioner. Hændelsesforløbet er "som i en Disney-film", bemærker fortælleren undervejs (s. 17), hvilket understreges af at artiklens manchet og hvert afsnits begyndelsesbogstav er sat i Disney-fonten Waltograph. Iscenesættelsen af fortællingen som et Disney-eventyr rummer en særlig romantisk fortolkning af Joar Hestens usædvanlige forhold til hvidhvalen Hvaldimir og forudgriber samtidig på ironisk vis den kritik som fortællingen udtrykker af menneskers tendens til at anlægge selvsamme fortolkning.

I denne delanalyse har vi fokuseret på hvordan den fremtrædende tredjepersonsfortællers tydelighed kan bero på fortællerens direkte varetagelse af sine fortællerfunktioner, men også antydet hvordan funktionerne yderligere kan understøttes på indirekte vis via andre narrative ressourcer som struktur og genre. Analysen har tydeliggjort hvordan tredjepersonsfortælleren – og altså ikke kun den omdiskuterede journalistiske førstepersonsfortæller – kan træde frem på udtalt subjektiv vis i journalistiske fortællinger (Aare, 2021, s. 161-163). Det kan styrke en fortælling, fx ved at fremhæve fortællingens tematikker og etiske implikationer og føje fornyet relevans til en allerede kendt historie i kraft af fortællerens unikke, personlige perspektiv; men omvendt kan faren være at fortælleren stjæler billedet fra karaktererne og fraøver læserne muligheden for at danne sig deres egen mening om den fortalte historie. Når fortællerkonstruktionen i "En kjærlighetshistorie" lykkes, skyldes det – ligesom i det foregående eksempel – at den er tilpasset den kommunikationssituation fortællingen indgår i. Den fremtrædende fortæller gør fortællingen relevant på ny ved at udfordre læserne med en markant subjektiv fortolkning og vurdering af hændelsesforløbet. Samtidig hænger den vellykkede fortællerrolle sammen med mediets særlige muligheder: Som vi har vist, udnytter fortællingen de glidende, ofte upåfaldende perspektivskift mellem fortæller og karakterer som er mulige på skrift, og som bidrager til at fortælleren ikke er påtrængende selvom den er fremtrædende.

Den delvist fremtrædende fortæller: "Estonia – natten jag inte dog"

I de to foregående analyser har vi fordybet os i yderpunkter på fortællerkontinuummet, fra den tilbagetrukne fortæller i tv-dokumentaren "Danmarks yngste Dragqueen" til den fremtrædende fortæller

i artiklen "En kjærlighetshistorie". Hvor den tilbagetrukne fortæller i tv-eksemplet kan være vanskelig at realisere i alle medier, ikke mindst på skrift hvor fortællerens medierende funktion i særlig grad påkalder sig opmærksomhed (Aare, 2021, s. 57-58), afhænger den fremtrædende fortæller i skrift-eksemplet af at journalisten er parat og i stand til at tage en så markant rolle på sig. Eksemplerne er med andre ord måske nok eksemplariske, men kan i praksis være svære, krævende eller blot mindre egnede i andre situationer. I det følgende analyserer vi derfor et eks-empel der indtager en mere klassisk midterposition: Her står fortælleren frem med en tydelig stemme i fortællingen, også i direkte fortolkninger og vurderinger, men når det sker, lægger fortælleren sig tæt op ad karakterernes oplevelse af historien. Som vi skal se, kan journalisten på den måde bruge den delvist fremtrædende fortæller til at drive fortællingen frem på afgørende punkter i historien og tydeligøre fortolkninger og vurderinger som allerede ligger i scener og dialog.

Som et eksempel på en delvist fremtrædende fortæller har vi valgt den svenske radiodokumentar "Estonia - natten jag inte dog" (i det følgende blot "Estonia") som blev bragt første gang på Sveriges P1 d. 29. september 2019 (Olsson, 2019). Dokumentaren er lavet af Annika Olsson og produceret af Ylva Lindgren. Fortællingen blev i oktober 2020 tildelt en Prix Europa i kategorien "Best European Radio Documentary" bl.a. med den begrundelse at den var "et rørende vidnesbyrd" frem for "et koldt referat af hændelser" ("PRIX EUROPA Best European Radio Documentary of the Year 2020", n.d., vores oversættelse). Dokumentaren er et eksempel på fortællende journalistik der tager afsæt i en fortidig dramatisk hændelse, men især betoner hvad der siden skete (Hvid, 2007, s. 71-72), og fortæller én hovedkarakters skæbnefortælling og løfter den op på et eksistentielt niveau (Dalviken, 2005, s. 34-36; Vaaben, 2019, s. 23 og 31): Den handler om den svenske kvinde Ulla (hvis efternavn er udeladt i dokumentaren) som var én af blot 14 kvinder der overlevede færgen Estonias forlis i Østersøen i september 1994. Blandt de kvinder der omkom, var Ullas søster Lena. Via rekonstruktioner og interviews med Ulla, hendes veninde Annelie, hendes anden søster Irene og præsten Lars som Ulla mødte da hun efter ulykken var indlagt på psykiatrisk afdeling, fortæller dokumentaren om Ullas udvikling fra at tro hun skulle dø på åbent hav, over at føle skam over at have overlevet til at 'begynde at leve igen', som det hedder i programomtalen (Olsson, 2019).

Den dominerende fortællerfunktion i "Estonia" er den berettende. Ligesom i det første eksempel, "Danmarks yngste Dragqueen", tjener fortælleren i passager en minimalt berettende funktion (Phelan, 2011, s. 62) hvor fortælleren indimellem karakterernes genfortællinger formidler tid, sted og karakterer, fx når fortælleren i fortællingens præsentation kort rammesætter

hovedkarakteren Ullas genfortælling af forløbet: "Det är 1994. Ulla är 30 år, och hon och hennes äldre syster Lena går på Konstfack och delar livet i Stockholm med varandra." Herefter tager Ulla over og siger bl.a. at "det hade varit så där lite segt på Konstfack innan." Her er fortællerens rolle begrænset til at gøre det muligt at følge med i karakterernes talestrøm, om end fortælleren alene i kraft af at man hører journalistens stemme, træder tydeligere frem end i tv-fortællingens berettende skilte.

I modsætning til hvad tilfældet var i "Danmarks yngste Dragqueen", varetager fortælleren dog også en mere fuldtonet berettende fortællerfunktion hvor journalisten lader fortælleren tage magt over fortællingen og udlægge nøglescener i hændelsesforløbet, fx i anslaget der starter in medias res:

> Ulla var nog mer förvånad än lättad. När döden kastat henne tillbaka. Förstod att hon var tvungen att vara en krigare nu. För att erövra livet igen. Blodsmaken i munnen som inte ville försvinna. Fysiskt var hon ganska okej, det var den trasiga själen som smakade blod. Efter att allting krossats, i ett rasande hav.

Via indre syn får lytterne indsigt i hovedkarakterens tanker som formulerer fortællingens centrale konflikt: Kan Ulla 'generobre livet (...) efter at alt er slået i stykker i et rasende hav'? Det er fortællerens stemme der høres, men det er hovedkarakteren der ser (Gennette, 1980, s. 186), og i denne slags passager optræder fortælleren således primært som et subjekt der kanaliserer et andet subjekt. Her formidler fortælleren altså måske nok mere end den minimale beretnings knappe fakta, men indtager ikke desto mindre stadig en relativt tilbagetrukket rolle som mellemled for fortællingens hovedsag: karaktererne. Det er et eksempel på den slags overlap mellem fortællerens og karakterernes perspektiver som er velkendte i litteratur (Chatman, 1978, s. 201-203; Kock, 2008, s. 155-156), men som også kan skabe diskussion i journalistik fordi de sår tvivl om journalistikkens kildemæssige grundlag (Bech-Karlsen, 2007, s. 181-182 og 188-189), fx hvem der er ansvarlig for konklusionen "det var den trasiga själen som smakade blod".

Andre steder indtager fortælleren dog også rollen som en mere selvstændig, alvidende instans der ved mere end karaktererne både på tværs af tid ("Långt senare ska Ulla inse att…") og sted ("I Sverige, Finland och Estland försöker man på morgonen att överblicka katastrofen."). Denne autoritative fortællerinstans ser man fx i fortællerens opsummering af hvad der sker når færgen for anden gang krænger voldsomt:

Knix nummer två. Bogvisiret faller av och vatten börjar forsa in på bildäck. Möbler, utrustning, och människor som inte lyckas hålla fast i något, far som projektiler genom luften inne i båten. Många står som fastfrusna vid väggar och trappräcken. En del slår sig fram, andra väntar på sin tur. För de som fortfarande är kvar i sina hytter är det nu nästan omöjligt att rädda sig upp på däck. Kaptenen gör en kraftig gir och båten kantrar ännu mer.

Baseret på omfattende research lader journalisten fortælleren opsummere de dramatiske sekunder på en måde som ingen karakter ville kunne gøre det. Fortælleren har nu ydre syn på begivenhederne ("Mange står som fastfrusna"), og om end brugen af dramatisk præsens giver fremstillingen et levende, umiddelbart præg, er fortællerpositionen ikke desto mindre præget af bagudsyn ("För de som fortfarande är kvar i sina hytter är det nu nästan omöjligt att rädda sig upp på däck"). I denne slags passager er fortælleren altså en alvidende iagttager der har distance til karaktererne i både rum (de beskrives kun ude fra) og tid (de beskrives på et senere tidspunkt), og som dermed træder frem med større selvstændighed. Også sprogligt fremstår fortælleren selvstændig, fx grundet sin brug af sammenligningen "som projektiler" i eksemplet ovenfor. Om end passager som denne er tydeligt berettende, trækker den lydlige iscenesættelse (Poulsen, 2006, s. 39-40) af fortælleren, i dette tilfælde en klaustrofobisk lydside af brummende motorer og klirrende glas, ikke desto mindre fremstillingen i en mere mimetisk retning og bidrager således i kraft af hvad man kunne kalde 'auditiv showing' til at balancere fortællerens diegetiske beretning.

Selvom den berettende fortællerfunktion dominerer i fortællingen, er der også eksempler på såvel direkte fortolkning som vurdering fra fortællerens side. I anslaget som vi allerede har citeret, rummer antitesen mellem krop og ånd i sætningen "Fysiskt var hon ganska okej, det var den trasiga själen som smakade blod" en fortolkning der sætter en ramme for fortællingen der følger, nemlig at den handler mindre om at overleve og mere om at leve oven på det hændte. Som vi har været inde på, er det her fortælleren der taler, men uanset om man tilskriver tolkningen hovedkarakteren Ulla eller fortælleren, er det en tolkning der ligger tydeligt i forlængelse af hovedkarakterens perspektiv. Også mod fortællingens slutning tolker fortælleren direkte Ullas livssituation efter at hun er blevet udskrevet fra psykiatrisk afdeling: "Alla pilar som pekat så tydligt framåt: konsten, kärleken, familjen, resorna och Lena, ligger nu som plocke-pinn vid hennes fötter." Her er det fortælleren der sammenligner Ullas situation med et mikado-spil ("plocke-pinn") og dets rod. Men umiddelbart inden har bikarakteren Irene, Ullas søster, fortalt hvordan deres ellers så rolige familie var i opløsning: "Det var kaos! Vi bråkade och vi kastade möbler." Sammenligningen står

altså måske nok på fortællerens regning, men fremhæver blot en tråd som allerede ligger i karakterernes beretning.

Kort efter falder en direkte vurdering fra fortælleren der opsummerer fortællingens lykkelige udgang: "Nu har hon en plats i livet igen. Världen har vridits rätt." Her implicerer adverbiet "rätt" en etisk vurdering: Det er godt at 'verden er vredet rigtigt på plads', og at Ulla dermed er endt med at 'generobre livet' sådan som anslaget spurgte til om hun kunne. Også her falder den direkte vurdering fra fortælleren i umiddelbar forlængelse af en lignende vurdering der er formidlet indirekte via karaktererne, nemlig når hovedkarakteren Ulla siger om sine børn: "Det var inte så att jag gav dem ett liv, utan de gav faktiskt mig ett liv…" Selvom der er eksempler på direkte fortolkning og vurdering i fortællingen, er der altså snarere tale om at fortælleren i skærpet form kanaliserer karakterernes fortolkninger og vurderinger end sine egne. Den nære forbindelse mellem fortællerens og karakterernes perspektiver efterlader en lille tvivl om hvem der er kilde til formuleringer som at alle pile lå "som plocke-pinn", eller at "[v]ärlden har vridits rätt"; det fremstår som fortællerens fortolkninger og vurderinger, men kan bygge på noget kilderne har sagt.

I denne tredje og sidste delanalyse har vi vist hvordan den delvist fremtrædende fortællers relative tydelighed kan bero på hvordan de forskellige fortællerfunktioner er vægtet i en journalistisk fortælling, og ydermere hvordan de varetages på henholdsvis direkte og indirekte vis. I "Estonia" varetager fortælleren den berettende fortællerfunktion direkte i minimalt berettende passager, beretning der kanaliserer karakterernes perspektiv, og beretning der formidler fortællerens perspektiv. Særligt den sidste form for beretning gør at fortælleren træder tydeligere frem end den tilbagetrukne fortæller i "Danmarks yngste Dragqueen". I "Estonia" fortolker og vurderer fortælleren også direkte, men disse funktioner er sparsomme og falder i højere grad som opsummerende konklusioner der tydeligt lægger sig i forlængelse af fortolkninger og vurderinger som inden da er formidlet indirekte via karaktererne. Sammenlignet med den fremtrædende fortæller i "En kjærlighetshistorie" der indtog fortællingens forgrund som modspil til karaktererne, indtager den delvist fremtrædende fortæller i "Estonia" en mere ydmyg rolle i fortællingens baggrund som støtte for karaktererne. På den måde udfylder den delvist fremtrædende fortæller i radiodokumentaren en klassisk journalistrolle som reporter (jf. den engelske betegnelse for den berettende fortællerfunktion: "to report", Phelan, 2005, s. 12 og 50) hvor fortælleren først og fremmest fungerer som tilstræbt neutralt mellemled for karakterernes historie. Når fortællerkonstruk-tionen i "Estonia" lykkes, skyldes det – ligesom i de foregående eksempler – at den tjener en tydelig funktion i den konkrete

kommunikationssituation. Den delvist fremtrædende fortæller styrker formidlingen af en langstrakt og kompleks historie ved først og fremmest at drive fortællingen fremad med autoritativ beretning på afgørende steder i hændelsesforløbet og ellers understøtte karakterernes fortolkninger og vurderinger på mere afdæmpet vis. Fortællerrollen tager samtidig højde for lydmediets særlige kendetegn og den anvendte journalistiske metode: Sammenlignet med tv-mediet gør lydmediets fravær af levende billeder behovet for en mere fremtrædende fortæller større, og dette behov øges yderligere af den udbredte brug af rekonstruktion.

Konklusion

Samlet set demonstrerer vores analyser spændvidden i tredjepersonsfortællerens fremtrædelsesformer og betydning i fortællende journalistik. Fælles for de eksempler vi har analyseret, og de tre nedslag på kontinuummet fra en tilbagetrukket til en fremtrædende fortæller de repræsenterer, er at tredjepersonsfortælleren i alle tilfælde er motiveret i forhold til fortællingernes kommunikationssituation og de kommunikative behov som fortællingerne søger at dække. I alle tre eksempler udgør tredjepersonsfortælleren og dens relative tydelighed med andre ord et vellykket formmæssigt valg fordi den understøtter formidlingen af et bestemt indhold i en bestemt kommunikationssituation, i et bestemt medie og med brug af en bestemt journalistisk metode.

På baggrund af vores analyser fremstår det at tilrettelægge tredjepersonsfortællerens rolle i fortællende journalistik som en balancekunst, ikke mindst når man som journalist bevæger sig ud i yderpositioner som den tilbagetrukne og fremtrædende fortæller. Hvis scener og dialoger i fortællinger med en tilbagetrukket fortæller fremstår *for* iscenesatte, kan det skabe unødig opmærksomhed om journalisten som fortælling-ens instruktør; omvendt kan den fremtrædende fortæller skabe unødig opmærksomhed om journalisten hvis fortællerens fortolkninger og vurderinger fremstår *for* subjektive og idiosynkratiske. Som sådan kan den delvist fremtrædende fortæller i det tredje eksempel fremstå som den ideelle, gyldne middelvej. Det synes fx at være budskabet når Mikkel Hvid skriver at "featurefortælleren" (i bestemt form ental) på den ene side skal være "markant, ansvarsbevidst og direkte", men på den anden side ikke må "være farvet og subjektiv" (Hvid, 2007, s. 30-31). Hvis man skal forstå Hvid sådan at den balancerede midterposition i vores tredje eksempel altid er at foretrække i fortællende journalistik, er vi uenige. I de eksempler vi har analyseret, fremstår såvel den tilbagetrukne som den fremtrædende fortæller vellykkede netop fordi de er afstemt i

forhold til den kommunikationssituation som de respektive journalistiske produktioner indgår i. Tredjepersonsfortællerens relative vellykkethed kan med andre ord ikke bedømmes isoleret, men kun i lyset af kommunikationssituationen.

Dette peger i retning af at journalisters valg af tredjepersonsfortælleren i fortællende journalistik og beslutninger omkring hvor fremtrædende den fortæller skal være, med fordel kan indgå som en del af den samlede konceptualisering og planlægning af journalistiske fortællinger. Fortællende journalister er forpligtet på fortællerfunktionerne at berette, fortolke og vurdere, men må tage stilling til om de funktioner bedst forløses direkte eller indirekte i netop deres fortælling. I nogle fortællinger vil det fungere bedst at en fremtrædende tredjepersonsfortæller varetager funktionerne direkte, i andre fortællinger vil det fungere bedre at funktionerne varetages indirekte via karaktererne eller andre narrative ressourcer. Men uanset hvad kan fortællende journalister ikke undslå sig rollen som den skabende kraft bag deres fortællinger og dermed heller ikke det ansvar der påhviler dem for den relation de skaber til deres publikummer, og de værdier deres fortællinger kommunikerer.

Som vi var inde på indledningsvis, fremstilles tredjepersonsfortælleren undertiden i journalistiske grundbøger som det mere objektive og derfor foretrukne alternativ til den ofte subjektive og derfor problematiske førstepersonsfortæller. Cecilia Aare har som tidligere nævnt imidlertid argumenteret for at tredjepersonsfortælleren lige såvel kan være subjektiv; jo tydeligere en tredjepersonsfortæller træder frem, fx i kraft af diegetiske træk som beretning og fortællerkommentarer, desto mere subjektiv vil en fortælling fremstå (Aare, 2021, s. 161-162). Denne pointe har vi ført endnu videre og argumenteret for at også journalistiske fortællinger med mere tilbagetrukne tredjepersonsfortællere kan fremstå som udtryk for en bestemt moralsk subjektivitet (Steensen, 2017, s. 29 og 43). Med afsæt i Phelans model for fortællinger som kommunikation har vi vist hvordan de grundlæggende fortællerfunktioner at berette, fortolke og vurdere ikke bortfalder i fortællinger med en tilbagetrukket fortæller, men i stedet realiseres indirekte via andre af de narrative ressourcer journalisten har til rådighed, fx karaktererne og deres dialog, genremæssige allusioner og plotmæssige valg. Som Phelan skriver, kan dét skabe opmærksomhed om journalisten som dirigenten bag fortællingen: "[S]ometimes the conductor's arrangement of those resources makes her role in the mediated communication especially prominent" (Phelan, 2011, s. 71). Som vores analyser har vist, er det således ikke kun de markante fortolkninger og vurderinger fra den fremtrædende fortæller i "En kjærlighetshistorie" som formidler et bestemt, subjektivt verdenssyn; det samme sker i "Danmarks yngste Dragqueen" i kraft af den genremæssige iscenesættelse af Jeppe

Gammelbys historie som et juleeventyr med lykkelig udgang uagtet at fortælleren i dén fortælling er så godt som udvisket. Hvad man skal mene om en sådan subjektivitet i de enkelte journalistiske fortællinger, er en journalistfaglig diskussion værd. Men uanset hvor man står i den diskussion, kan man først tage kvalificeret stilling til tredjepersonsfortællerens subjektivitet og hensigtsmæssigheden af den når man er bevidst om den.

NOTER

[1] Startkomma er udeladt i artiklen.

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From stark opposition to partial adaption

How 12 Danish alternative media construct and position themselves vis-à-vis the media- and political mainstream

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Abstract

Alternative media are defined by their position as challengers of mainstream media and politics alike. However, recent studies suggest that they act out their opposition to mainstream media and their political partisanship in different ways. Against this backdrop, the study at hand investigates how 12 Danish alternative media construct and position themselves against the media- and political mainstream. The study identifies substantial differences regarding the outlets' commitment to or rejection of the ethical rules and norms of professional journalism, whether they adopt or deviate from a neutral journalistic style, what ideological agendas they advocate, their political ties, and the media- and political criticism they voice. In doing so, the study adds to a growing body of research suggesting that alternative media are a heterogeneous group. Based on these findings, the study discusses the different potentials for impact that alternative media have on the media- and political systems they enter.

Introduction and research question

Over the past decade, (hyper)partisan alternative media have entered many Western media systems, including the Nordic (Heft et al., 2020). Unlike other forms of partisan news, these outlets do not only advocate one-sidedly in favor of political agendas, but also explicitly challenge the legitimacy of mainstream media and mainstream politics alike (Barnidge & Peacock, 2019). Previous studies have found that they attack the credibility of their mainstream counterparts (e.g., Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2019), disseminate partisan news content in pursuit of ideological agendas (e.g., Nygaard, 2019), and frequently attack political opponents (e.g., Mayerhöffer & Schwartz, 2020). This has sparked concern that alternative media might erode political- and media trust and fuel political extremity, not least because their upsurge coincides with the rise of populism. When such concerns are voiced, alternative media are usually discussed as a collective group. However, recent studies indicate that they are far from homogeneous. For instance, alternative media employ different strategies of normalization or radicalization (Heft et al., 2020), draw on different frame repertoires in their portrayal of political reality (Klawier et al., 2022), and have varying amounts and targets of media criticism (Cushion et al., 2021) as well as different political orientations and aims (McDowell-Naylor et al., 2021). Thus, while alternative media share some defining traits, there is reason to believe that they do not necessarily act out their opposition to mainstream media and political partisanship in the same way. In other words, they might portray the media- and political mainstream they profess to counter in different ways and take different positions relative to it – and thereby have different potentials for impact on the media- and political systems they enter. Focusing on Denmark as a case, the study at hand further explores this by investigating the following research question:

RQ: How do Danish alternative media construct and position themselves vis-à-vis the media- and political mainstream?

Alternative media and their relation to the media- and political mainstream

The term alternative media has a longstanding research tradition. Originally, it referred to primarily progressive or radical left-wing media advocating minority rights and challenging capitalist hegemony (e.g., Downing, 2001, Atton, 2002). However, it has increasingly been used for denoting – predominantly right-wing – online news outlets disseminating ideologically partisan news content (for

review of this development see Holt, 2020). While it is still debated whether the label should be reserved for outlets possessing the traits originally associated with it (Rae, 2021), this study adopts the definition proposed by Holt et al. (2019), which makes no claims about the ideological aims of the outlets. Rather, it considers the defining trait that they "represent a proclaimed and/or *(self-) perceived corrective*, opposing the overall tendency of public discourse emanating from what is perceived as the dominant mainstream media in a given system" (Holt et al., 2019, p.862, emphasis in original). Previous studies have investigated this oppositional relation to mainstream media by exploring explicit mainstream media criticism in alternative media content. Six right-wing Norwegian alternative media were found to use criticism of specific news items as basis for more general assertions that mainstream media are ideologically biased in favor of the left, politically correct, neglect reporting on immigration-problems, and are distanced from the people (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2019). Similarly, a U.K. study found that both left-wing and right-wing alternative media criticized specific mainstream outlets for lacking impartiality, but that left-wing alternative media more often criticized mainstream media in general, while right-wing alternative media more often took aim at individual journalists (Cushion et al., 2021).

Alternative media are not only defined by their oppositional relation to mainstream media but also by their explicit partisanship (Mayerhöffer & Schwartz, 2020) and questioning of the legitimacy of mainstream politics (Barnidge & Peacock, 2019). Several studies have identified promotion of populist and immigration-critical discourses in (right-wing) alternative media (e.g., Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022) and found that they portray European societies as threatened by immigration (e.g., Nygaard, 2019; von Nordheim et al., 2019). However, it differs how this partisanship manifests itself and how their agendas are promoted. For instance, right-wing alternative media from Sweden, Norway, and Denmark (Nygaard, 2019) and Germany (Klawier et al., 2022) seek to advance their ideological agendas by either adopting a neutral journalistic style mimicking that of mainstream media or by being overtly commentary. This kind of heterogeneity is also evidenced by a study comparing 70 right-wing online news sites from the U.S. and five European countries, which found that they employ different strategies of appearing as conventional news sites or openly advertising their right-wing bias (Heft et al., 2020).

Other studies have shed light on whether and how alternative media engage with party-political actors. A Danish study on five right-wing alternative media found that they frequently attacked the credibility of members of political parties from the opposite political side

and, to a lesser extent, supported specific party-political candidates during an election campaign (Mayerhöffer & Schwartz, 2020). Other findings suggest that alternative media can be more or less party-politically or ideologically partisan (Brems, 2022) and can orient more on criticism and support of party-political actors or on taking sides on cultural issues (McDowell-Naylor et al., 2021). Previous studies have also identified ties between some Scandinavian alternative media and political parties and organizations (Brems 2022; Ihlebæk & Nygaard, 2021; Mayerhöffer, 2021).

While the oppositional relation to the media- and political mainstream are general traits shared by alternative media, previous findings thus suggest that alternative media can act out these characteristics in different ways. However, many of the studies reviewed focus solely on right-wing outlets, and most of them focus on the relation to either mainstream media or mainstream politics. This points to the need for more studies that directly compare a broad left-to-right-spectrum of alternative media and investigate their relations to the media- and political mainstream within the same analytical framework, which is the aim of the study at hand.

Analytical framework and the Danish case

Following the definition of alternative media proposed by Holt et al. (2019), the alternative/mainstream schism should be considered a continuum rather than binary categories (see also Kenix, 2011) and any news medium can be more or less alternative. The asserted alternativeness can be analyzed at the micro, meso, and macro level (Holt et al. 2019) and can manifest itself in the structure and content of alternative media (Mayerhöffer 2021). The importance of this latter distinction was evidenced by the finding that five Danish right-wing alternative media resisted "normalization" in the structural dimension, for instance by shunning membership of the press-ethics council and press subsidies, but that equally stark opposition to mainstream media was not mirrored in their content (ibid.). In other words, alternative media might appear more oppositional to the mainstream in their structure than their content really is and vice versa. This highlights the importance of studying how alternative media's positions relative to the media- and political mainstream manifest themselves empirically in both of these dimensions.

Because alternative media are defined by their proclaimed opposition to what is perceived as mainstream in a given system (Holt et al., 2019), what constitutes the mainstream (and how alternative media portray it) must be understood as bounded by the characteristics of the media- and political systems alternative media enter.

Therefore, the study focuses on a single country case (Denmark) and the selection of relevant indicators of alternative media's relation to the media- and political mainstream were guided by the traits of the Danish media- and political context.

Analyzing positions vis-à-vis the media- and political mainstream in the structure

In the structural dimension, the overarching question regarding alternative media's relation to the (media) mainstream is whether they "succumb to an (outward) strategy of normalization or not" (Mayerhöffer 2021, p. 123). In this respect, this study focuses on whether alternative media formally commit to or reject the rules and norms associated with professional journalism (ibid.; Holt et al. 2019), as this is particularly relevant for understanding whether alternative media seek a status (appearing) as legitimate actors within the media mainstream or seek to delegitimize the mainstream. Because the Danish media system has a strong institutionalized self-regulatory system organized via membership of the press-ethics council *Pressenævnet* (Syvertsen et al., 2014), a relevant indicator hereof is *whether alternative media seek or shun membership of the press-ethics council.* Traditional news media are born members, but any born-digital news site can choose to sign up. Therefore, (non-) membership can be seen as an active decision on behalf of alternative media. As an additional indicator, the study considers *what official positions alternative media take on the professional journalistic norm of neutrality,* which alternative media criticize mainstream media for breaching.

As an indicator of their relation to the political mainstream in the structural dimension, the study considers *what official ideological stances alternative media take.* While it is beyond the scope of this article to judge whether the political agendas the investigated alternative media advocate fall within the political mainstream in absolute terms, this can give insights into how broad a spectrum of ideological stances Danish alternative media advocate, where on the ideological spectrum they place themselves relative to each other, and whether they directly address a political mainstream when positioning themselves. The study also investigates *whether alternative media have any ties to political parties or organizations.* The presence or absence of such ties is particularly relevant in the context of the Danish media system, which is historically rooted in the party-press (Hallin & Mancini 2004).

Analyzing positions vis-à-vis the media- and political mainstream in the content

In the content dimension, the main question of interest is to what extent the positions alternative media take in the structural dimension are mirrored in their content (Mayerhöffer 2021). Particularly relevant indicators hereof are any *explicit media- or political criticism,* as this is indicative of whether alternative media seek to delegitimize the mainstream media- and political systems (ibid.). Moreover, this is where different ways of constructing the mainstream that alternative media position themselves as correctives of can be expected to manifest themselves most clearly.

In addition to this, the study considers *what topics alternative media cover and from what angles.* This can give an indication of what different ideological stances Danish alternative media advocate in their content, following the notion that the political stances of alternative media can manifest themselves in their news selection (e.g. McDowell-Naylor et al., 2021). Lastly, the study considers *what journalistic style alternative media employ* in their news coverage as an indicator of the degree to which alternative media adhere to or deviate from the norm of neutrality in their content. The analytical focus points are summed up in Table 1.

	Relation to media mainstream	Relation to political mainstream
Structure	Membership of press-ethics council Official stance on norm of neutrality	Political ties Official political stance
Content	Explicit media criticism Journalistic style	Explicit political criticism Topics, angles (agendas advocated)

Table 2: Analytical framework

Method and data

Selection of cases, documents, and articles for analysis

Cases were selected based on Blach-Ørsten and Mayerhöffer's (2021) overview over Danish "hyperpartisan" alternative media, which includes the seven right-wing outlets *24NYT, 180Grader, Den Korte Avis, Document, FOLKETS, Indblik, NewSpeek,* and the three left-wing outlets *Konfront, Netavisen Pio,* and *Solidaritet.* In addition to this, the right-wing outlets *Kontrast* and *ditOverblik* were included in the analysis. These 12 outlets all live up to the criteria of positioning themselves as alternatives to or correctives of

mainstream media, publishing nonfictional content on current affairs, and identifying as news outlets (based on their self-descriptions and page layout) proposed by Heft et al. (2020). The latter criterion excludes blogs (e.g., right-wing *Snaphanen*) and websites of political organizations (e.g., *Nordfront, Trykkefrihedsselskabet*) (Mayerhöffer 2021), and the selection of cases should thus include all relevant Danish alternative media spanning from left to right on the ideological spectrum.

Membership of the press-ethics council was assessed based on their list of what online media have registered with the council. Analysis of official stances on the professional journalistic norm of neutrality and official political stances was based on the investigated alternative media's 'about us' sections or mission statements. Analysis of political ties was based on news articles from mainstream media providing information on connections between alternative media and political parties or organizations, direct statements of collaboration in the 'about us' sections and information provided on any economic support from political actors, official records of candidates who have run for political parties, publicly available resumes, and links to the web- or social media pages of political parties on the outlets' front pages (the latter inspired by Frischlich et al., 2020).

To collect the article sample for the analysis of content, all textual content published by each of the selected cases over a two-week period from May 24 to June 6, 2021, was manually accessed (see appendix A). This was the most recent period at the time of sampling. No elections were coming up, and while Covid-19-restrictions were still enforced, Denmark was well underway in the process of reopening society, leaving room for other political topics on the news agenda. Because of the focus on adherence to or deviation from the norm of neutrality, only news articles were included in the sample. In cases where the sample of news articles from one outlet exceeded 30 articles, a random sample of 30 articles was selected. *FOLKETS* and *Konfront* published only four and two articles respectively and were therefore excluded from the analysis of content but included in the analysis of structure. The sample from *Kontrast* and *Solidaritet* include seven and eleven news articles respectively and content analysis of these should be read with some reservation. In total, 250 news articles were analyzed.

Qualitative textual analysis

The analysis of the content was carried out as a qualitative textual analysis. Inspired by Deterding & Waters (2021), overall coding categories were derived from the analytical framework outlined above

(see codebook <u>appendix A</u>). Each article was coded for its dominant topic (see list of topics <u>appendix B</u>). While this is a qualitative analysis of smaller article samples, the selection of topics combined with qualitative assessments of the angle of the coverage can give an indication of what ideological stances the alternative media promote. All instances of explicit media- and political criticism were identified. The former was defined as any critical mentions of mainstream news media or journalists such as allegations of bias or criticism of specific news items. The latter was defined as critical mentions of political actors, the political system (including the judiciary system, civil servants), or authorities not attributed to any source, thereby taking into account that political coverage often cites political sources criticizing each other. Inspired by previous studies (Frischlich et al., 2020; Nygaard, 2019), all instances where a commentary tone, calls for action, or degradation was used were identified to assess the journalistic style employed. Examples of commentary tone could be speculating in the motive of specific actors, giving interpretation, or expressing opinions not attributed to any source. Examples of calls for action could be advertising demonstrations or signatures of citizen law propositions, and degradation could be derogatory language or stereotypes about one or more specific religious, ethnic, social, or political groups, or sexual minorities. Text bits where instances of explicit media- or political criticism, commentary tone, calls for action, or degradation were identified were subsequently subject to close-reading textual analysis. In articles where most of the text possessed the above characteristics, representative examples were selected for close-reading textual analysis. All examples from the articles cited in the analysis are translated by the author.

Analysis of the structure

Membership of the press-ethics council and official stances on neutrality

The insights from the analysis of structure are summarized in Table 2. Half of the investigated alternative media are members of *Pressenævnet* and thereby formally commit and subject themselves to the press-ethical rules of professional journalism, while the other half are not. Because membership of the press-ethics council is not mandatory but optional for born-digital news sites, this can be interpreted as active decisions to signal either commitment to or rejection of these ethical guidelines. At the same time, the press-ethics council cannot refuse specific outlets membership. Therefore, the decision to become members can also be seen as a strategy employed for drawing on the legitimacy associated with professional

journalism. While the press-ethics council can investigate the conduct of its member outlets of its own accord, the council is, in practice, mainly reactive and takes up cases following complaints from involved parties. Thus, membership does not necessarily equate following the rules, nor does non-membership bear witness to breach of these rules. This remains an empirical question.

Only five of the investigated outlets provide official statements that give an indication of their stance on the professional journalistic norm of neutrality. *Kontrast* states that it will report from, for and on "non-socialist[1] Denmark," which will be reflected in their choice of topics, while *Solidaritet* states that they are not neutral. These statements should not necessarily be interpreted as opposition to the norm of neutrality, however, but could be seen as reflecting perceptions that their own biases are necessary counterbalances to the perceived biases in mainstream media (see also Ihlebæk et al., 2022). More radically, *24NYT*, *NewSpeak*, and *Konfront* openly challenge the notion of neutrality. For instance, *24NYT* states that "We believe that we should be open about values we hold, rather than hiding behind a veneer of 'unbiased' coverage", while *Konfront* "[…] reject[s] the idea of objectivity […] the mainstream press' fetishization of objectivity way too often serves the agendas of capitalism and imperialism, while feigning neutrality." The analysis of the structure thus shows that some alternative media draw on the legitimacy associated with the rules and norms of professional journalism by formally committing and subjecting themselves to them, whereas others reject and, in some cases, de-legitimize them. Notably, left-wing and right-wing cases can be found in both groups.

Media mainstream			Political mainstream	
	Member of Pressenævnet	Official position on norm of neutrality	Official political stance	Political ties
24NYT	No	Challenges notion of unbiased news coverage.	Conservative, non-socialist. "Unapologetically" pro-Brexit, pro-Israel, against socialism and Muslim immigration	*Personal:* Founder, Jeppe Juhl, launched candidacy for right-wing party New Right while still being editor for 24NYT.

			(among others). States political independence.	Declared in 2019 that collaboration stopped. Content-producer is former member of New Right.
180Grader	Yes	None provided.	Non-socialist-liberal. States political independence.	*Personal:* Founded by later MP for right-wing party Liberal Alliance, Ole Birk Olesen, no longer editor-in-chief.
Den Korte Avis	No	None provided.	None provided.	*Personal:* Founders Ralf Pittelkow and Karen Jespersen were previously political advisor to and MP for center-left party Social Democrats respectively. Overlapping with role as editor, Jespersen was MP for center-right party Denmark's Liberal Party*.
ditOverblik	Yes	None provided.	Non-socialist-national.	*Organizational:* Launched and funded by Danish People's Party.
Document	No**	None provided.	Ambition of being "organ	*Personal:* Content-

			for the new right."	producer ran for far-right party Hard Line in 2019.
FOLKETS	No	None provided.	Wants greater popular sovereignty, protects Danish freedom of mind and property rights.	None discernible.
Indblik	Yes	None provided.	Supports freedom of citizens and the productive Denmark.	*Personal:* Editor-in-chief founded Covid-19-critical protest organization, formerly held positions in right-wing party Liberal Alliance's youth division.
Konfront	No	Rejects notion of objectivity.	"[B]ased in and exists in and for the Danish radical left-wing." Declared fundamental distrust in parliamentary institutions, revolutionary hopes.	*Organizational:* Declares collaboration with far-left political organizations.
Kontrast	Yes	Ambition of reporting from, for and on "non-socialist Denmark" reflected in	Non-socialist.	None discernible.

		choice of top-ics.		
Netavisen Pio	Yes	None provided.	Democratic-socialist. States political independence.	*Organizational and personal:* Social Democrats and traditional labor unions (see appendix C).
New-Speek	No	Declares that content is influenced by personal opinions, will not hide behind "false neutrality or fake objectivity".	Non-socialist.	*Personal:* Content producers ran for far-right party Danish Unity in 2017 and is former member of right-wing party New Right, respectively.
Solidaritet	Yes	"[N]ot politically neutral."	Socialist, feminist, radical democrats. States political independence.	*Organizational and personal:* Red-Green Alliance (see appendix C).

Table 3: Positions vis-a-vis the media- and political mainstream in the structure

Note: The table reflects membership status, official stances, and political ties at the point of the sampling in June 2021. See full overview over political ties and references in appendix C.
* Poul Erik Andersen, member of the Islam Critical Network in the Church of Denmark creates content for Den Korte Avis (Mayerhöffer 2021), but was not on byline in the article sample analyzed in this study.
** Editor-in-chief, Hans Rustad, was accepted into the Norwegian Association of Editors in 2018 as editor of Norwegian Document.no (Ihlebæk & Nygaard 2021).

Official political stances and political ties

Turning to their official political stances, *Den Korte Avis* is the only of the investigated outlets that makes no mention at all of a political stance, which could be interpreted as a way of signaling political independence. On the right-wing, *Indblik* and *FOLKETS* do not directly state ideological stances but declare support for freedom of

citizens and the productive Denmark, and for protection of Danish freedom of mind and property rights respectively, indicating liberalist stances. *FOLKETS* additionally declares support for "more popular sovereignty," thereby invoking populist notions of a political mainstream where ordinary people have too little say over political matters. *180Grader*, *Kontrast*, *ditOverblik*, and *NewSpeek* all cite variants of non-socialist stances. Compared to this, *Document* and *24NYT* take positions further to the right. The former states an ambition of being an "organ for the new right," while the latter among other things declares itself "unapologetically" pro-Brexit, pro-Israel, and "unapologetically against" Muslim migration to Europe, thereby insinuating that these positions are something you must excuse inside the political mainstream.

On the left-wing, *Netavisen Pio* declares a democratic-socialist stance. Taking a position comparatively further to the left, *Solidaritet* declares themselves radical democrats who work "for freedom and socialism and against capitalism, fascism, and imperialism" as well as against "the capitalist class society." More radically, *Konfront* states that it exists for the radical left and stands out with declared rejection of representative democracy and "fundamental distrust in the existing system's institutions, including the judiciary, the police, parliamentary and state institutions, the press, etc." Thereby, it does not only position itself further towards the fringes of the ideological spectrum than the other left-wing outlets, but also questions the legitimacy of the entire political system.

The official stances advocated by the investigated alternative media thus span the ideological spectrum, not only in the sense that left-wing and right-wing positions are represented, but also in the sense that some of the investigated cases take stances comparatively further to the left- or right than others. The analysis also shows that some of the outlets signal their stance by implicitly or explicitly addressing and positioning themselves critically against a political mainstream. While most of the outlets declare political stances, *180Grader*, *24NYT*, *Netavisen Pio*, and *Solidaritet* at the same time state editorial independence from organizational and/or party-political interests. In doing so, they mimic Danish national dailies, which are party-politically independent but have ideological leanings (Hjarvard 2010). This could be interpreted as a strategy of outward normalization.

Most of the investigated alternative media have tighter or looser organizational or personal ties to political organizations or parties (full overview in appendix C). As examples of organizational ties, *Konfront* declares collaboration with far-left organizations as *Queerland, Antifa*, and *Feminist Self-defense*, *Solidaritet* has received financial support from left-wing party *Red Green Alliance*,

mainstream media have reported that *Netavisen Pio* received financial support from labor unions, and *ditOverblik* was launched and is funded by the right-wing *Danish People's Party*. Regarding personal ties, some of the alternative media were launched by former or later members of parliament. For instance, *180Grader* was launched by later MP for right-wing party *Liberal Alliance* Ole Birk Olesen, founder of *24NYT*, Jeppe Juhl, ran for right-wing party *New Right*, and co-founder of *Den Korte Avis*, Karen Jespersen, is a former MP for center-left party the *Social Democrats* and center-right party *Denmark's Liberal Party* (see also Mayerhöffer 2021). In all three cases, their roles as editors and political candidates or MPs partly over-lapped in time. Personal ties also take the form of editors or content-producers having run for political parties. As examples, content-producers for *NewSpeek* and *Document*, Lone Nørgaard and Uwe Max Jensen, ran for far-right immigration-critical parties *Danish Unity* and *Hard Line* respectively, none of which are represented in parliament, and editor-in-chief for *Netavisen Pio* tried to run for the *Social Democrats* before becoming editor. Thus, as also pointed out by Mayerhöffer (2021, p. 130) "[t]he career profiles of some of the founders and editors are […] characterized by a strong party-political component." Notably, the political ties identified are with far-left and far-right as well as more centrist political parties and organizations. This diversity is interesting, as alternative media are often considered extreme. It should be pointed out, though, that alternative media do not necessarily align with the political parties or organizations they have (in some cases previous) ties to. This is perhaps best exemplified by *Den Korte Avis*, which is considered markedly more right-wing than co-founder Karen Jespersen's previous MP-positions for the *Social Democrats* and *Denmark's Liberal Party* would suggest. Altogether, the analysis of political ties identifies notable overlaps between the Danish alternative media and political landscapes. As exceptions, *FOLKETS* and *Kontrast* had no discernable political ties at the point of sampling.

Analysis of the content

Ideological agendas advocated in alternative media news content

The analysis now turns to the question of what ideological agendas the investigated alternative media advocate in their news content. *ditOverblik*, *Den Korte Avis*, *Document*, *180Grader*, *24NYT*, and *NewSpeek* can be considered what Holt (2016) labels immigration-critical alternative media. Similar to previous findings (e.g., Nygaard, 2019; von Nordheim et al., 2019), these outlets portray Danish society as threatened by (predominantly Muslim) immigration and

advocate immigration-critical stances. This manifests itself in high prioritization of the topic immigration covered from a negative angle, for example by focusing on crime committed by immigrants. While these are shared traits, the immigration-criticism is markedly more vehement in *Den Korte Avis*, *Document*, and *NewSpeek*. These outlets write extensively about an alleged on-going Islamization of Europe and Denmark, such as here: "A rapid Islamization of society is taking place. Immigrant clans are developing their own parallel power system, which is growing stronger and stronger" (*Den Korte Avis*). Thereby, they create the impression that Danish culture might be displaced by a culture of Muslim immigrants portrayed as uncivilized and incompatible with democratic rights. For instance, *Den Korte Avis* refers to Arabs' "clan- and warrior-society" and *NewSpeek* calls Islam a "[…] women-oppressing, homo-hating, freedom-hating, and democracy-hating movement." More radically, *Document* and *NewSpeek* make references to "the great replacement," a theory often associated with white nationalism positing that the white European population is being replaced by Muslim immigrants, while *NewSpeek* suggests that there is a pact between the European left-wing and Muslim organizations to overthrow democracy.

The article sample from *Kontrast* is small, but five of the seven articles from the outlet focus on gender and minority rights, reflecting a theme production on these topics. Several of these articles are one-source interviews where the quoted sources convey the image that issues of gender-inequality are being exaggerated in Denmark and that the MeToo-movement was marked by "feminist revenge." A comparatively more radical version of this stance is advocated in *Document* where it is explicitly stated that societal norms in Denmark are undergoing fundamental change: "Today, Danes are subject to a strict moral code shaped by, among others, the left-wing's metoo-army which has subjected the masses to an identity-policy life perspective." Thus, Danish culture is again portrayed as threatened, only by left-wing woke culture. Reflecting that the sampling period was between two Covid-19 lockdowns, *Indblik* and *180Grader* devote much attention to Covid-19. However, their angles on the topic more generally reflect liberalist state-critical agendas with critical coverage of state-limitations of personal liberties and excessive public spending during the lockdowns.

Turning to the left-wing outlets, one of the most prominent topics in *Netavisen Pio* is (un)employment covered from an angle largely positive towards the social-democratic government and labor unions. This is in line with *Netavisen Pio*'s political ties to these actors and suggests alignment with their political agendas, as also found in a previous study (Brems, 2022). Placing itself comparatively further to the left, *Solidaritet* features stark anti-

capitalist advocacy and conversely portrays society as permeated by capitalist logics. For instance, one article states that "Globalization discourses such as economic rationalism and neoconservatism are ideologies that increasingly dominate our understandings of education" while another features use of socialist vocabulary like "the capital." The more left-wing stance is also reflected in the topics they cover, such as alleged greenwashing and police-violence against left-wing protesters.

The analysis thus shows that within the groups of left-wing and right-wing alternative media, the investigated cases focus on different agendas and that it differs whether they orient on so-called culture wars and/or more classic divides over economic policy. Additionally, it varies whether any negative portrayals regard specific parts of the population (which is especially the case in some of the right-wing outlets), authorities, and/or allegedly dominant ideologies. The findings also highlight the important point that alternative media that advocate the same overall agendas can promote more moderate or radical versions hereof. Notably, the ideological agendas advocated in the content only partly correspond to the outlets' official ideological stances. For instance, *Den Korte Avis* takes no official ideological stance but advocates stark anti-immigration stances. Likewise, the immigration-critical agenda promoted by *NewSpeek* must be considered markedly more radical than its declared non-socialist stance indicates. This could be interpreted as a strategy of downplaying extremity in their official stances to signal that the agendas advocated in their content should not be considered extreme.

Journalistic style

As the analysis above indicates, the investigated outlets employ different journalistic styles in their news content. Although based on a small sample, *Kontrast* stands out as the only outlet making no use of commentary tone, calls for action, or degradation. In this regard, this outlet adopts a neutral journalistic style. However, this could be interpreted as a strategy of creating an appearance of objectivity (see Nygaard, 2019; Klawier et al., 2022) where (selected) facts speak for themselves or quoted sources deliver the political messages, for example that feminism has become too radical. *Netavisen Pio* displays a partial adoption of a neutral journalistic style. The outlet features no calls for action or degradation, and commentary tone is present in less than a third of the articles. When it is, it mainly takes the form of giving interpretation of political events or providing grounds for the politics of the social-democratic government, to which the outlet has political ties.

More widespread use of a commentary tone is found in *Solidaritet*, *Indblik*, *180Grader*, *ditOverblik*, and *24NYT*, which features in between a third and close to all their articles. This can take the form of interpretation as in *Netavisen Pio*, but with more direct advocacy in favor of specific political stances and explicitly telling the readers how to understand political events. Referring to a letter sent by scientists calling for investigation of the origin of Covid-19, *Indblik* for instance states that "[t]he theory of a possible leak from a Chinese lab was originally dismissed as a conspiracy theory. But the letter from the scientists shows that a potential lab leak must be taken seriously." Commentary tone is also manifest in *Solidaritet*'s use of collective "we" when talking about the pro-Palestinian movement and in the use of irony, for instance in *180Grader*: "Sweden is now Europe's most shooting-mad country – but this has nothing to do with immigration, says Swedish researcher." None of these outlets feature instances of degradation, however, and only *24NYT* makes two calls for action, both of which seem to be the result of copy-pasting press releases from NGO's without labeling them as such, in line with previous findings (Mayerhöffer & Heft, 2021).

Standing out from the rest of the outlets, *Den Korte Avis*, *Document*, and *NewSpeek* display stark deviation from the norm of neutrality. A commentary tone is used in between two thirds and all of their articles, *NewSpeek* features calls for action, and setting them markedly apart from the other investigated alternative media between five and ten articles in the samples feature degradation of Muslims and Arabs. For instance, *Den Korte Avis* refers to Muslims as behaving like "the master race," a term also used to denote the Nazi view that the Aryan race was superior to others; *Document* uses the term "Muslim settlers" and refers to the 2015 immigration crisis as "the invasion," suggesting that immigrants wage war against European countries; and *NewSpeek* calls Muslims a "barbarian movement." The degradation also takes the form of crude generalizations. For instance, *NewSpeek* suggests that immigrants are less intelligent than Europeans and violent: "It is possible that most mena-citizens [from the Middle-East and North-Africa] would not give positive results in a pisa-test [used for testing school kids], but the conqueror-appetite and the general contempt for the West is deeply rooted in them." As the analysis demonstrates, the equivalent of this form of advocacy of ideological agendas through degradation of a specific group in society was not found in the investigated left-wing outlets, but it should be emphasized that degradation was also not found in the other investigated right-wing outlets.

Media criticism

Kontrast, Indblik, and *ditOverblik* stand out with no instances of explicit media criticism. This highlights the important point that the oppositional relation to mainstream media that defines alternative media does not necessarily translate into blatant attacks on their credibility. This does not necessarily mean that these alternative media are uncritical of their mainstream counterparts: Like the adoption of a neutral journalistic style, it could be considered a strategy of appearing more mainstream and carrying out a form of implicit criticism by delivering the coverage they find missing in mainstream media.

Turning to the seven of the investigated alternative media that do feature explicit criticism of their mainstream counterparts, its severity and aims vary. The most modest form of criticism is found in *Netavisen Pio*. It occurs in only one article in the sample where mainstream media in general are criticized for low quality in their culture journalism, citing results from an MA thesis. Harsher criticism is found in *Solidaritet, 24NYT,* and *180Grader*. All three criticize mainstream media for right-wing or left-wing bias. However, in *Solidaritet* and *180Grader,* the criticism is restricted to either U.S. mainstream media in general or specific Danish mainstream media. In *24NYT,* the criticism is directed at Danish mainstream media in general, but voiced by quoted journalistic or political sources and thus not by *24NYT*. This and the above-mentioned example from *Netavisen Pio* resemble a strategy of outsourcing mainstream media criticism to other actors, thereby giving it greater credibility (Cushion, 2021). In addition to allegations of left-wing bias, *180Grader* recurrently refers to the national broadcaster TV2 as "the state medium," thereby insinuating that it lacks independence from the government and serves as a tool for political powerholders.

The far most severe explicit criticism is found in *Den Korte Avis, Document,* and *NewSpeek*. Their points of criticism include left-wing bias, pro-immigration advocacy, and political correctness similar to those in Norwegian right-wing alternative media (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2019). In addition to this, these outlets make use of name-calling using terms as "journalistic left-wing party," "red propagandists," and "the liar press." *Den Korte Avis* and *Document* also criticize omission of immigration problems, while *Document* and *NewSpeek* assert that mainstream media are not politically independent and act as tools for Islam. In other words, they assert that mainstream media fail to report on the alleged threat from immigration, and *NewSpeek* and *Document* also place responsibility with mainstream media for actively contributing to the purported ongoing Islamization of Europe. For instance, *NewSpeek* states that:

> […] the politically correct media world's actions can cause an opinion for-
> mation that in the long run will cause an entirely or completely Islamized
> Europe. It happens via influencing opinions in favor of immigration.

NewSpeek also criticizes lack of critical journalism and makes allegations of censorship of immigration-critical and Covid-19-critical voices. The criticism in these three outlets is directed at both specific Danish mainstream media, Danish mainstream media in general, journalists in general and, in one instance in Document, at a specific named journalist. Thus, these outlets actively undercut the legitimacy of the mainstream media system. None of these outlets are members of the press-ethics council, indicating some overlap between official rejection of the ethical rules and norms of professional journalism and the vehemence of the criticism voiced in alternative media's content.

Political criticism

The analysis identified three overall forms of explicit political criticism in the investigated outlets' news content: Party-political criticism of specific actors within the political system, criticism of political actors in general or of the political system as a whole, and radical distrust. Party-political criticism was found in all investigated outlets apart from *Kontrast*, and covers a range of different strategies employed for delegitimizing specific party-political actors. Examples include criticism of parties or politicians for flip-flopping, acting out of accordance with their own ideology, breaking political promises, or being unwilling to answer critical questions, accusations of hypocrisy, alleging untruthful statements, or name-calling. Here, alternative media act as partisans taking sides within the mainstream political system by aiming criticism at political opponents, at competitors to the parties they have ties to (especially in *ditOverblik*), or by policing ideological deviance of parties from the same political side.

Criticism of political actors in general or of the political system as a whole was found in *24NYT, Indblik, Solidaritet, Den Korte Avis, Document*, and *NewSpeek*. This criticism is aimed at politicians in general for being hypocritical, unintelligent, untrustworthy or lying, or deceiving the voters. For instance, *24NYT* states that:

> In order to create an illusion that they have an iron-hard immigration policy,
> the political parties in parliament have passed legislation allowing the ap-
> plications for asylum to take place outside of Denmark […]. The politicians'

statement that they will move the applications for asylum to other countries is nothing but spin, symbolic policy and deceiving the voters.

This conveys the image that politicians cannot be trusted and even when they pass promised legislation this is just to trick the voters. Other manifestations are criticism of authorities and civil servants for not acting neutrally or lacking qualifications for taking care of Denmark's interests internationally.

Finally, radical distrust in politicians and the political system is voiced by *Den Korte Avis*, *Document*, and *NewSpeek*. In addition to the above, they criticize authorities for embracing Islam, construct divides between the political – or media or expert – elite and the people, and *NewSpeek* questions the legitimacy of the judiciary system. Similar to their criticism of mainstream media, *Document* and *NewSpeek* also criticize politicians in general for embracing or being useful idiots for Islam and thereby contributing to the alleged Islamization of the Danish and European societies. Most radically, *NewSpeek* asserts that political powerholders used the Covid-19 crisis as disguise for taking world control, and speculates that politicians will force people to get the vaccine:

> In reality, it will be forced vaccination. Because if you do not do as they say and take the shots, your son will not be able to get an education, and if you do not fall in line, you will lose your job […]. The globalists have waited for this opportunity to 'mark people' – and now it is here.

Taken together, the analysis of explicit media- and political criticism shows that alternative media do not only position themselves differently vis-à-vis the mainstream but that some of the outlets through their explicit criticism also construct much more hostile portrayals of the mainstream they profess to counter.

Discussion and conclusion

Alternative media are often discussed as a group defined by their shared opposition to the media- and political mainstream. Against this backdrop, the findings from the study suggest that alternative media within the same media- and political system can take markedly different positions vis-à-vis the mainstream, which they can also construct in different ways. Thereby, the study adds to a growing body of work suggesting that alternative media are a heterogeneous group (e.g., Heft et al., 2020; McDowell-Naylor et al., 2021). This is in line with the theoretical notion that the alternative-mainstream schism is not binary but a matter of degree. Positioned

closest to the mainstream, some of the investigated alternative media commit to the ethical rules and norms of professional journalism, wholly or partly adopt a neutral journalistic style, advocate more moderate versions of ideological agendas, and explicit media- and political criticism is absent or moderate. Positioned furthest from the mainstream, other alternative media reject and de-legitimize ethical rules and norms of professional journalism, starkly deviate from a neutral journalistic style, advocate more radical versions of ideological agendas also through degradation of specific societal groups, and actively undercut the legitimacy of and voice radical distrust in the media- and political systems.

These contrasting positions can be interpreted as an indication that alternative media can pursue strategies of seeking to be perceived as legitimate correctives and partisans positioned close to or within the media- and political mainstream, or of de-legitimizing the media- and political systems from positions as clear outsiders. However, as the findings show, this is not a clear-cut divide, as it varies where on the spectrum the investigated cases position themselves, also depending on what indicator is assessed. This is mirrored, for instance, in the finding that some alternative media refrain from explicit media criticism but employ an overtly commentary journalistic style, placing them closer to or further from the mainstream based on these respective indicators.

The study finds that both left-wing and right-wing alternative media can take more or less oppositional positions vis-à-vis the mainstream. Even so, the three right-wing outlets *Den Korte Avis*, *Document*, and *NewSpeek* stand out with the far-most radical oppositional position, mirrored especially in their degradation of Muslims and Arabs and their vehement criticism of the media and political mainstream. The equivalent of this was not found in the left-wing outlets. This could be interpreted as a difference in how the oppositional relation to the media- and political mainstream and ideological partisanship play out in left-wing and right-wing alternative media, but importantly also highlights the considerable heterogeneity within the group of right-wing alternative media, which span the spectrum of alternativeness. Moreover, this seeming left/right-difference should be viewed in the light that fewer left-wing cases were included.

The diverging positions the investigated alternative media take vis-à-vis the mainstream are in line with the proposition that we might see a development where some alternative media "radicalize" and emphasize their opposition to the mainstream, while others "normalize" and become less alternative (Heft et al., 2020). This is interesting in light of ongoing debates on how alternative media might influence the media- and political systems they enter. On the

one hand, taking positions closer to the mainstream could be interpreted as a strategy of advancing their ideological agendas by drawing on the legitimacy of professional journalism (see also Nygaard, 2019, Klawier et al., 2022). This could make it more difficult to distinguish between alternative and mainstream (Heft et al., 2020), particularly in the Danish context where national dailies also have ideological leanings that are reflected in choice of topics and angles (Hjarvard, 2010). On the other hand, alternative media that advocate more radical versions of ideological agendas, make use of degradation, blatantly attack the legitimacy of mainstream media, and express radical distrust in politicians and the political system arguably have greater potential for fueling extreme political attitudes and contributing to erosion of media- and political trust. Finally, the finding that most alternative media have some ties to political actors suggest that alternative media might represent a revival of political parallelism in the Danish media system and emphasizes that alternative media are media-*political* actors whose roles and potentials for impact must be understood through their relation to the media- as well as political mainstream.

Lastly, some weaknesses should be addressed. The study only included news content from alternative media and more blatant media- and political criticism and advocacy of more radical political agendas could be present in opinion pieces. Moreover, the study focused on comparing the investigated alternative media to each other but did not directly compare their structure and content to that of mainstream media, or the ideological agendas they advocate to those of political actors. Therefore, the results cannot be used for placing the alternative media relative to the mainstream in absolute terms. Finally, the qualitative analysis was based on small article samples and its depth comes at the expense of its generalizability. By addressing these issues, future research could further our understanding of alternative media's place in the media- and political systems they enter.

NOTES

[1] In Denmark, non-socialist designates parties that do not have a socialist foundation and can capture anything from center parties to the far-right.

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Begivenhedsstyret eller emnestyret klimajournalistik?

En indholdsanalyse af danske dagblades klimadækning mellem 2018 og 2021

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Abstract

Medierne spiller en afgørende rolle i forhold til at informere befolkningen om klimaforandringer. Forskningen peger imidlertid på, at dækningen af klimaet udgør en udfordring for nyhedsjournalistikken. Blandt andet medfører journalistikkens fokus på begivenheder, at dækningen i høj grad er bundet op på nøglebegivenheder, så som klimatopmøder. Denne artikel undersøger, om den daglige klimadækning også er begivenhedsstyret og bidrager derudover med ny viden om, hvad der kendetegner henholdsvis begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret klimajournalistik. Baseret på en kvantitativ indholdsanalyse af klimajournalistik i landsdækkende dagblade mellem 2018 og 2021 (n=367) viser analysen, at emnestyret klimajournalistik fylder en smule mere end begivenhedsstyret, og at der er en forskel på de to typer journalistik. Hvor den begivenhedsstyrede klimajournalistik har mere fokus på politik, erhverv og politiske kilder, fylder artikler med mennesker i centrum og borgere som kilder mere i emnestyret klimajournalistik. Borgere er dog generelt underrepræsenterede i forhold til elitekilder. Artiklen konkluderes med en diskussion af definitionen af begivenhedsstyret journalistik og anbefalinger til en bredere klimadækning.

KEYWORDS
klimajournalistik, nyheder, begivenheder, indholdsanalyse, kilder, medielogik

Indledning

FN's klimapanels seneste rapport viser med stor tydelighed, at klimaforandringernes konsekvenser rykker tættere på. Tidspunktet for hvornår klodens gennemsnitstemperatur vil stige 1,5 grader er rykket fra 2040'erne til 2030'erne, mens forskerne vurderer, at vandniveauet vil stige 1-2 meter frem mod år 2100, hvis udledningen af drivhusgasser fortsætter som hidtil (Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change, 2021). På grund af klimaforandringernes karakter som risici, der til en vis grad er usynlige, usikre og fremtidsrettede, spiller medierne en vigtig rolle i forhold til at synliggøre disse trusler (Beck, 1997, 2009). Medierne har af samme grund stor mulighed for at sætte dagsordenen i forhold til klima og miljø (Ader, 1995; Soroka, 2002). Imidlertid vanskeliggør klimaforandringernes karakter den journalistiske dækning – blandt andet fordi, nyheder ofte ses som begivenheder, der foregår her og nu. Klimaforandringer, der er vedvarende og strækker sig over tid og rum, er således mindre nyhedsværdige end klimabegivenheder som orkaner og oversvømmelser (Adam, 2021; Berglez, 2011). Forskning viser, at mediernes dækning af klima og miljø er koblet til begivenheder. Emnerne dækkes således intenst i perioder med større begivenheder som vejrfænomener og politiske topmøder, der for en tid fastholder mediernes opmærksomhed på emnet (Djerf-Pierre, 2012; Eskjær, 2019; Saunders et al., 2018; Schäfer et al., 2014). Det er imidlertid ikke belyst, om begivenheder også dominerer den daglige dækning af klimaforandringer, ligesom det heller ikke er undersøgt, om der er en forskel på dækningen, når klimaforandringer dækkes på baggrund af konkrete begivenheder, og når de ikke gør.

Denne artikel vil derfor undersøge, hvilke egenskaber begivenhedsstyret klimajournalistik har i forhold til klimajournalistik, der ikke falder sammen med begivenheder – i denne artikel kaldet emnestyret klimajournalistik. Artiklen bidrager dermed empirisk til den sparsomme forskning i dansk klimajournalistik og teoretisk til forskningen i begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret journalistik med følgende undersøgelsesspørgsmål som udgangspunkt:

> Hvad kendetegner henholdsvis begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret klimajournalistik i dansk nyhedsdækning, og hvilken type dominerer?

I artiklens første afsnit beskrives klimajournalistikkens udfordringer. Herefter introduceres begivenhedsstyrede og emnestyrede nyheder, som operationaliseres til indholdsanalysen. Denne præsenteres i metodeafsnittet, der efterfølges af analysens resultater. Artiklen konkluderer med en diskussion af, hvordan begivenhedsstyrede nyheder kan defineres i fremtidige studier samt en række anbefalinger til, hvordan klimaforandringer kan dækkes bredere.

Klimajournalistikkens udfordringer

Klimajournalistik, forstået som journalistik om klimaforandringer, hører til under miljøjournalistik, der i 1970'erne voksede til en selvstændig nyhedsgenre efter tidligere blot at være blevet behandlet som emne inden for videnskab eller generelle nyheder (Djerf-Pierre, 2013). I danske medier har miljødebatten eksisteret i over 100 år (Jensen, 1996), men bestod op til 1980'erne af enkelte indlæg fra videnskabsfolk, og først efter FN's klimapanel, IPCC, blev oprettet i 1988, begyndte journalister at beskæftige sig med klimaspørgsmål (Danielsen, 2015). Disse spørgsmål blev for alvor en mediedagsorden i Danmark i forbindelse med COP15 i 2009, der udgjorde et hidtidigt højdepunkt i dansk såvel som international klimadækning (Eskjær, 2019; Schmidt et al., 2013).

Klimaforandringer er imidlertid svære at dække journalistisk - både på grund af emnets kompleksitet (Hornmoen, 2011) og journalistikkens rutiner og strukturer (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2007). Sidstnævnte betegnes ofte som medielogik; den måde, journalister "konstruerer" nyheder på ved hjælp af institutionaliserede standarder og rutiner, der er blevet til i takt med at pressen er vokset (Altheide & Snow, 1979; Tuchman, 1978). Herunder kan man tale om en mere specifik nyhedsmedielogik, der dækker over professionelle normer baseret på journalisternes fælles værdier, så som objektivitet og fælles standarder, der skal sikre effektivitet i produktionen og tages for givet af journalisterne. Sidstnævnte er for eksempel nyhedsværdier og storytelling (Asp, 2014).

Nyhedsmedielogik spiller en væsentlig rolle i forhold til dækningen af klimaforandringer. Således viser et studie af amerikansk klimajournalistik mellem 1988 og 2004, at dækningen er afhængig af, at stoffet lever op til nyhedskriterier som aktualitet og sensation. Undersøgelsen indikerer samtidig, at journalistiske normer har farvet dækningen af klimaforandringer og indirekte resulteret i manglende politisk handling:

> Adherence to the norms of dramatization, personalization, novelty, balance, and authority-order is part of a process that eventuates in informationally biased coverage of global warming. This informational bias has helped to create space for the US government to defray responsibility and delay action regarding climate change.
>
> (Boykoff & Boykoff, 2007: 1201)

Andre studier viser at "balanceprincippet", der er et udtryk for objektivitetsnormen i form af upartiskhed, hvor journalister hører alle "parter" i en sag, tidligere har resulteret i at klimaforandringer er blevet dækket som en debat for og imod, hvorvidt de er

menneskeskabte (Brüggemann & Engesser, 2017; Ryghaug, 2006; Ytterstad, 2011). Andre undersøgelser peger dog på, at balanceprincippet er på tilbagetog og at klimajournalister i højere grad tolker objektivitet i forhold til, hvorvidt der er konsensus på området (Hiles & Hinnant, 2014).

Nyhedsjournalistikkens tidsmæssige struktur er en anden del af medielogikken, der besværliggør dækningen af klimaforandringer (Berglez, 2011; Moser, 2010). Hvor klimaforandringer strækker sig over tid og rum og ofte er fremtidsrettet, har nyhedsjournalistikkens fokus på aktualitet og begivenheder. Klima og miljøstoffet dækkes derfor i bølger udløst af en begivenhed, som eksempelvis klimatopmøder, der får journalister til at fokusere på emnet i en periode, før opmærksomheden igen aftager (Boykoff, 2007; Djerf-Pierre, 2012; Downs, 1972; Soroka et al., 2012). Dette ses også i dansk klimajournalistik, hvor dækningen er steget i perioder efter klimatopmøder og IPCC-rapportudgivelser (Eskjær, 2019).

Det er inden for begivenhedsstyret journalistik, denne artikel vil bidrage. Begrebet udfoldes mere i følgende afsnit.

Interne og eksterne påvirkninger af nyhedsdækningen

Nyhedsværdien af et emne er påvirket af interne såvel som eksterne faktorer. Interne faktorer har at gøre med den tidligere nævnte medielogik, herunder nyhedsrutiner i forhold til hvor og hvordan journalister finder nyheder, nyhedskriterier og konkurrencen mellem emner. I forhold til konkurrencen mellem emner er nogle "svagere" end andre og skal derfor leve op til flere nyhedskriterier for at blive dækket. Endelig berør interne faktorer også andre mediers dækning, da nyhedsværdien påvirkes af, hvorvidt andre medier bringer nyhederne (Geiß, 2018; Schultz, 2006).

Udover de interne faktorer påvirkes nyhedsdækningen af eksterne faktorer, herunder udefrakommende begivenheder. Det er især de eksterne faktorer, forskningen i nyhedsdækning af klima og miljø har beskæftiget sig med. Forskningen viser, at mediernes opmærksomhed på klima og miljø går op og ned i bølger, der startes af "trigger events", begivenheder der skaber stor mediebevågenhed og i en periode giver anledning til flere nyheder inden for miljø generelt (Djerf-Pierre, 2012). Dækningen er altså ikke stabil, men afhænger i høj grad af eksterne faktorer i form af begivenheder (Lorcher & Neverla, 2015; Soroka et al., 2012), og disse begivenheder er i høj grad politiske (Schäfer et al., 2014).

Tidligere forskning fokuserer altså på, hvordan begivenheder påvirker dækningen af klima og miljø over tid og definerer derfor det begivenhedsstyrede og det emnestyrede i relation til dette. Hans

Mathias Kepplinger og Johanna Habermeier (1995) undersøger eksempelvis, hvorvidt nøglebegivenheder giver anledning til en større dækning af lignende begivenheder og sondrer i den forbindelse mellem forskellige typer af begivenheder, herunder "ægte" begivenheder, der sker uafhængigt af journalistisk dækning, lignende begivenheder og tematisk relaterede begivenheder, der relaterer sig til nøglebegivenheden. "Ægte begivenheder" kan for eksempel være jordskælv, mens tematisk relaterede begivenheder kan være hjælp til jordskælvsofre. Inden for andre undersøgelser af nøglebegivenheder ser man lignende sondringer mellem begivenhedsstyret journalistik som nyheder om en hændelse og tematisk relateret stof, der kan bestå af baggrundsinformation (Haßler et al., 2014), interview og features (Vasterman, 2005).

Operationalisering og underspørgsmål

Denne artikel undersøger, i modsætning til tidligere forskning, egenskaber og forskelle på den daglige dækning, afhængigt af om den er foranlediget af eksterne faktorer (begivenheder) eller interne faktorer. Min definition af begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret journalistik er derfor inspireret af Hans Mathias Kepplingers definition, der har til formål at fastslå anledninger til politiske nyheder uafhængigt af nøglebegivenheder ud fra "the stimuli that most likely occasioned the article" (Kepplinger, 2002, p. 975). Kepplinger kommer frem til tre årsager til nyhedsdækningen: Begivenhed, udmelding og emne. Han forstår begivenhed som noget, der er afgrænset i tid og sted, mens emne er tilstande, der ikke har nogen synlig begyndelse eller slutning. Udmelding forstås som en kommentar om et givent emne eller en begivenhed (Kepplinger, 2002).

Begivenhedsstyret	Emnestyret
Udløst af eksterne faktorer (begivenheder)	Udløst af interne faktorer (mediernes dynamikker, herunder nyhedsrutiner)
Anledning: Hændelse afgrænset i tid og rum	Ingen hændelse med synlig begyndelse og slutning som anledning
Eksempel: "Klimabevægelsen stævner fredag staten for den lov, som skal bane vej for et af danmarkshistoriens største byggeprojekter, den kunstige halvø Lynetteholm ud for Københavns Havn."	Eksempel: "I Senegal er de mægtige baobab-træer en vigtig del af landets kultur og selvforståelse. De karakteristiske træer er en del af alle aspekter i livet. Men nu forsvinder de i hastigt tempo på grund af klimaforandringer og befolkningstilvækst.

Tabel 1: Kendetegn ved begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret klimajournalistik

Jeg definerer derfor begivenhedsstyret journalistik som journalistik med en konkret begivenhed afgrænset i tid og rum som anledning angivet i artiklen. Emnestyret journalistik definerer jeg som journalistik om et emne, her klimaforandringer, der ikke har en begivenhed afgrænset i tid og sted angivet som anledning. Begivenhedsstyret journalistik er altså udløst af eksterne faktorer (begivenheder), mens emnestyrede artikler er udløst af interne faktorer i de enkelte medier, der blandt andet tæller nyhedsrutiner og nyhedskriterier (Geiß, 2018). Mange af disse faktorer kan ikke fastslås medmindre man laver felt- eller interviewstudier. Det er dog muligt at finde indikatorer på mediernes forsøg på at aktualisere artikler, hvis nyhedsværdi ikke giver sig selv, da de ikke er bundet op på dagsaktuelle begivenheder. Disse indikatorer kan være såkaldte nyhedskroge (Schultz, 2006, p. 106), som uddybes yderligere i forbindelse med indholdsanalysens første underspørgsmål:

Hvad er anledningerne til klimajournalistik i danske dagblade?

Et studie af danske dagblades miljøjournalistik mellem 1997 og 2003 viser at politiske forhandlinger er den mest dominerende anledning til at skrive om drivhuseffekten (Ørsten et al., 2005, p. 80). Min analyse skal dels fastslå, om den dominerende anledning til at skrive om klimaforandringer fortsat er politiske forhandlinger, og dels undersøge anledningerne til emnestyret klimajournalistik.

Anledninger til begivenhedsstyret såvel som emnestyret klimajournalistik forstås som sandsynlige årsager til at artiklen bringes (Kepplinger, 2002). Hvor anledninger til begivenhedsstyret journalistik for eksempel kan være politiske møder eller nye undersøgelser angivet i artiklen, kodes anledninger til emnestyret journalistik ud fra eventuelt angivne "kroge", der gør historien aktuel. Det kan for eksempel være en mærkedag, som årsdagen for en naturkatastrofe, eller en serie, der retfærdiggør at mediet sætter fokus på et overordnet tema i en afgrænset periode (Andersson, 2014).

Der findes ikke en skarp opdeling mellem eksterne og interne anledninger til nyhedsdækningen. Eksempelvis kan en "ny" undersøgelse både ses som en ekstern årsag til, at artiklen bringes og en intern årsag, i form af en "krog" til at gøre en artikel dagsaktuel. I operationaliseringen har jeg derfor vedtaget, at en ny undersøgelse er begivenhedsstyret, hvis der i artiklen er angivet, at den er ny. Samtidig skal en artikel være udgivet inden for et tidsrum på 14 dage før eller efter den angivne begivenhed finder sted for at være begivenhedsstyret.

For at finde ud af, hvad der kendetegner hhv. begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret klimajournalistik, fokuserer analysen desuden på følgende underspørgsmål:

Hvad er det indholdsmæssige fokus i hhv. begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret klimajournalistik?

Da journalistikken i høj grad fokuserer på begivenheder, og nogle emner inden for klima og miljø i højere grad er associeret med spektakulære begivenheder, er emner associeret med disse mere synlige i klimadækningen, mens andre er usynlige (Hansen, 2019, p. 87). En analyse fra 2012 viser blandt andet, at dansk klimajournalistik især er økonomisk, politisk og forbrugerorienteret med stort fokus på teknologiske løsninger (Almlund & Danielsen, 2016). Spørgsmålet er, om denne tendens stadig ses i dag, og om der er forskel på, hvad begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret journalistik handler om. Andet underspørgsmål er derfor:

Hvilke kilder dominerer hhv. begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret klimajournalistik?

Nyhedsmediernes normer for objektivitet og upartiskhed favoriserer autoritative og institutionelle kilder, der traditionelt opfattes som objektive. Disse overrepræsenteres derfor traditionelt i nyhedsjournalistikken og får lov til at være "primary definers" for et problem, forstået som at de sætter rammerne for, hvordan medierne efterfølgende dækker emnet (Hall, 1978). Dette gælder også for klimajournalistik, der generelt er domineret af politiske kilder, hvorimod miljøorganisationer og "almindelige borgere" sjældent optræder i medierne (Anderson, 2017; Schäfer & Painter, 2021). Det er altså i høj grad politikere, der definerer klimaforandringer som et problem – og i hvilken grad, det er et problem - i medierne. Da begivenheder inden for politik og den politiske periferi samtidig fylder meget i den begivenhedsdrevne klimajournalistik (Schäfer et al., 2014), er det interessant at undersøge, om dette afspejles i kildebruget, og hvorvidt emnestyret klimajournalistik har en anden kildesammensætning.

Metode

Undersøgelsen består af en kvantitativ indholdsanalyse af klimajournalistik fra syv landsdækkende dagblade i perioden 2018-2021 fundet via søgedatabasen Infomedia. Den lægger sig i forlængelse af andre kvantitative undersøgelser med fokus på "news performance", der blandt andet tæller indholdsanalyser med fokus på diversitet i forhold til kildebrug og synspunkter (Wetts, 2020). De har tilfælles at de bunder i en normativ forståelse af, at medierne spiller en rolle i forhold til at klæde borgerne på til at deltage i demokratiet

- og at den stigende kommercialisering kan have en negativ effekt på dette (Humprecht, 2023).

Empirien består af klimajournalistik fra de tre broadsheet-aviser Politiken, Berlingske og Jyllands-Posten, nicheaviserne, Børsen og Information samt tabloidaviserne BT og Ekstra Bladet, så det er muligt at undersøge, om der er forskel på dækningen i de forskellige avisformater. Analysen fokuserer på den trykte presse, da aviserne er øverst i den journalistiske fødekæde og leverer nyheder til de øvrige platforme (Lund et al., 2009; Schrøder, Blach-Ørsten & Eberholst, 2022).

Der er lavet en repræsentativ stikprøve i form af i alt otte konstruerede uger mellem 2018 og 2021 ved at vælge mandag i én uge, tirsdag i en anden osv. ud fra 14 tilfældigt genererede ugenumre for hvert år. På den måde sikrer man repræsentativitet ved at undgå at en stor begivenhed dominerer materialet, og at "nyhedshuller" i form af for eksempel søndage eller feriedage er over- eller underrepræsenteret (Østbye et al., 2002; Riffe et al., 1993). En ulempe ved konstruerede uger er, at man ikke kan indfange kontinuiteten i dækningen, men til gengæld kommer man med denne sampling så tæt som muligt på den aktuelle indholdssammensætning (Eskjær & Helles, 2015; Riffe et al., 2005).

Perioden gør det muligt at undersøge karakteren af dansk klimajournalistik i løbet af dens seneste højdepunkt i 2018 (Eskjær, 2019) og i årene efter, klima for alvor kom på den politiske dagsorden i 2019 (Blach-Ørsten et al., 2020).

Klimajournalistik forstås i denne undersøgelse som journalistik, der behandler klimaforandringer som emne: Dets kendetegn, årsager og konsekvenser, og hvordan man forsøger at begrænse dem eller tilpasse sig dem (Brüggemann & Engesser, 2014; Schäfer & Painter, 2021). Der er derfor foretaget en indledende søgning i Infomedia med søgestrengen:

klima* OR drivhuseffekt* OR 'global* opvarmning*' OR CO2* OR 'grøn* omstilling*' OR temperaturstigning* NOT heading:debat.

Hvor en indledende søgning på alle artikler i hele perioden gav 37.711 hits, resulterede en indledende søgning i stikprøve-perioden i 1540 artikler.

Undersøgelsen fokuserer på nyhedsjournalistik, og artikler uden for informationsgenren – så som navnenoter og ledere - er derfor sorteret fra – med undtagelse af nyhedsanalyser, som berør både informations- og opinionsgenren (Blom & Rønlev, 2019b). Samtidig er artikler uden byline sorteret fra for at undgå bureaustof, der ikke har avisen som afsender. Endelig er der, jf. min forståelse af klimajournalistik, lagt vægt på at artiklen skal behandle klimaforandringer

som emne, dvs. at enten klima, global opvarmning eller CO_2 skal være nævnt og underbygget med minimum ét citat i artiklen.

Dette resulterede i et datamateriale på 367 artikler. Empirien blev kodet af to studentermedhjælpere på baggrund af en kodemanual bestående af 15 variabler [1], der blev udarbejdet med inspiration fra tidligere undersøgelsers kodemanualer (bla. Djerf-Pierre, 1996) såvel som flere pilotkodninger. Arbejdet blev afsluttet med en interkoderreliabilitetstest på baggrund af 10 procent af de kodede artikler. Interkoderreliabiliteten lå mellem 0.679 og 1, hvilken er inden for det acceptable niveau i forhold til reliabilitet (Krippendorff, 2004), hvor der dog kun kan drages tentative konklusioner af den laveste (kilde 1). Kodningerne for kilde 1 er altså behæftet med en vis usikkerhed, og man derfor ikke drage sikre konklusioner på baggrund af artiklernes første kilde alene. Der er talt op til fem kilder per artikel. Tema-variablens reliabilitet var dog ikke tilstrækkelig, og fokus blev derfor undersøgt kvalitativt ved gennemlæsning af artiklerne. Anledningerne for den emnestyrede del af artiklerne (med kategorierne serie, tema, mærkedag, undersøgelse udført på mediets initiativ, ingen umiddelbar og andet) indeholdt ved endt kodning en forholdsvis stor andet-kategori, der efterfølgende blev genåbnet til rekategorisering.

Resultater

Overordnet viser figur 2 at mængden af klimajournalistik stiger markant mellem 2018 og 2019 og fortsætter med at stige i den undersøgte periode. Det er altså en mediedagsorden, der har bidt sig fast nationalt i samme periode, som vælgerne satte miljø og klima øverst på dagsordenen i folketingsvalgkampen (Blach-Ørsten et al., 2020). Denne tendens, hvor dækningen er forblevet på et højt niveau trods coronaepidemien i 2020 og 2021, ses også globalt (Pearman et al., 2022). De to tabloidmedier Ekstra Bladet og BT har meget få artikler i den undersøgte periode (15 i alt), hvorfor de ikke undersøges særskilt.

Der er 217 journalister inde over de i alt 367 artikler, og omkring en femtedel har skrevet flere end én af stikprøvens artikler. Det tyder på, at mange journalister ikke dækker klima fast. Dette er en tendens både i norden og internationalt og skyldes blandt andet at klimaforandringer går på tværs af stofområder (Brüggemann & Engesser, 2014; Lyytimäki, 2020). Alle dagblade har dog journalister, der jævnligt dækker området.
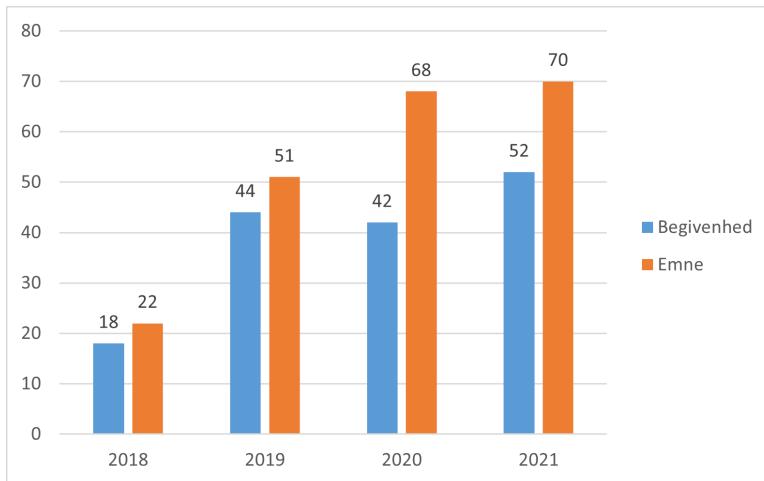
Figur 4: Fordelingen af emnestyret og begivenhedsstyret klimajournalistik (n=367). Forskellen mellem emnestyret og begivenhedstyret journalistik er ikke statistisk signifikant mellem årene (chi-i-anden test). Der er altså en kontinuitet i relationen mellem de to typer af klimajournalistik.

Anledninger til klimajournalistik

Som det fremgår af figur 1, viser undersøgelsen at en stor del af klimajournalistikken er emnestyret, på trods af at tidligere forskning viser at den journalistiske dækning af klima og miljø er domineret af såkaldte nøglebegivenheder (Djerf-Pierre, 2012; Eskjær, 2019). 211 ud af 367 artikler, svarende til 57,5 procent, er således emnestyrede, forstået på den måde at der i artiklen ikke er angivet en konkret begivenhed med en tydelig begyndelse og slutning som anledning.

En forklaring på denne forskel kan være at jeg, modsat den øvrige litteratur, undersøger den daglige dækning og ikke dækningen under en "nyhedsbølge", hvor nøglebegivenheder dominerer. Samplingen er altså en anden. En del af forklaringen ligger dog også i denne undersøgelses operationalisering af det emnestyrede, hvilket jeg kommer nærmere ind på i dette afsnit. Endelig betyder klimaforandringers karakter som vedvarende og fremtidsrettede, at der findes færre begivenheder inden for dette emne end inden for eksempelvis politik, der foregår nu og her. Kepplinger (2002) finder således, at politisk stof i høj grad er begivenhedsstyret, og denne undersøgelse viser da også den begivenhedsstyrede del af klimajournalistikken i høj grad er udløst af politiske begivenheder. Man kan altså argumentere for, at dækningen afspejler emnet. At klimaforandringer i dansk dagspresse både er begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret kan derfor ses som et udtryk for, at emnet ligger højt på dagsordenen og

er blevet en fast del af både politikernes, erhvervslivets og mediernes agenda i forlængelse af klimavalget i 2019.

Begivenhedsstyret klimajournalistik

Som det fremgår af figur 2, har den begivenhedsstyrede klima-journalistik hovedsageligt politiske aktiviteter som anledning. Her er både tale om internationale, nationale og også få lokale aktivite-ter. I 2019 er dækningen således præget af reportager fra C40 klima-topmødet i København, hvor borgmestre og ledere fra C40-lan-dende mødtes for at diskutere klimaløsninger.

I 2020, hvor politiske aktiviteter udgør den største andel af den be-givenhedsstyrede journalistik, kan man se klimaloven, der vedtages i juni 2020, som en nøglebegivenhed (Kepplinger & Habermeier, 1995). Forud for vedtagelsen af loven fylder forhandlinger og udspil, og efter vedtagelsen dækkes begivenheder, der hænger sammen med nøglebegivenheden. Det er blandt andet delaftaler om udfas-ning af olie og gas og landbrugsaftale.
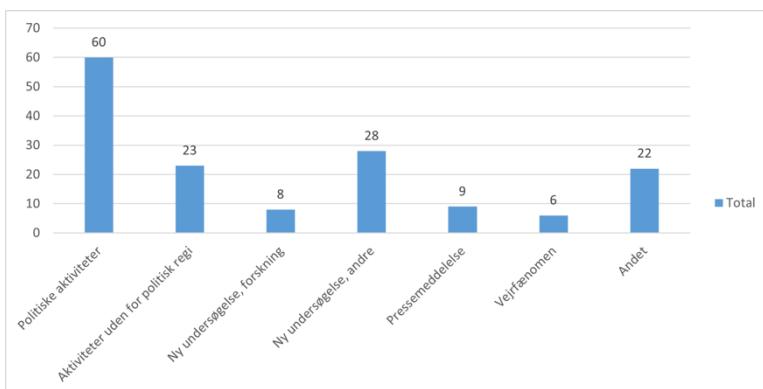
Figur 5: Anledninger til begivenhedsstyret klimajournalistik (n=156)

Den anden hyppigste anledning til begivenhedsstyrede nyheder er undersøgelser fra andre end forskningsinstitutioner. De tæller undersøgelser og rapporter fra blandt andre miljøorganisationer, virksomheder og ikke umiddelbart identificerbare forskningsinsti-tutioner. For eksempel danner rapporter fra miljøorganisationer baggrund for flere finanshistorier om, at danske banker og pensi-onsselskaber investerer i olie og kul. Det er interessant, at miljøor-ganisationers undersøgelser dominerer i denne kategori, samtidig med at de sjældent optræder i medierne som kilder eller via udmel-dinger. Miljøorganisationer har altså umiddelbart lettest adgang til medierne, når de præsenterer nye oplysninger. Det støtter op om tidligere studier, der viser at miljøorganisationer i højere grad

trækker opmærksomhed til et bestemt emne frem for at få dækket deres egen definition af klimaforandringer, som i højere grad defineres af elitekilder (Hansen, 2019).

Historier om klimaaktivisme findes primært i kategorien aktiviteter uden for politisk regi. Derudover går artikler om samarbejder og projekter inden for erhvervslivet igen i denne kategori, og størstedelen af dem er ukritiske. Det er for eksempel en historie om en ny alliance af virksomheder inden for biotek, der skal fremme grøn omstilling med kilder udelukkende fra alliancen. Denne form for erhvervsjournalistik kan ses som selvfremstilling, hvor virksomhederne er med til at bestemme, hvordan de dækkes, via blandt andet pressemeddelelser (Blach-Ørsten, 2013) og er mere fremherskende i erhvervsjournalistik end i andre stofområder (Reich, 2009).

Andet-kategorien består blandt andet af artikler på baggrund af kulturbegivenheder. Her findes også en håndfuld historier om nye produkter og projekter inden for erhvervs- og finanslivet.

Emnestyret klimajournalistik

På grund af manglende teoretiske diskussioner såvel som empiriske studier, der går i dybden med emnestyret journalistik, der ikke er knyttet til nøglebegivenheder, er kategorien i første omgang kodet ud fra formodede angivne anledninger, så som serie eller tillæg. Det medførte en forholdsvis stor andet-kategori, der efterfølgende blev gennemgået kvalitativt. I den proces viste det sig imidlertid, at omkring en femtedel af de emnestyrede nyheder består af nyheder, der har en begivenhed som anledning, der ikke er afgrænset i tid.

Disse begivenheder, som jeg kalder *ikke-tidsafgrænsede begivenheder* (se figur 3), falder ikke ind under operationaliseringen af begivenhedsstyrede artikler som kræver en angivelse i tid. I forhold til en undersøgelse betyder det, at der som minimum skal være angivet at den er "ny". Fælles for de ikke tidsafgrænsede begivenheder er dog, at de har fundet sted uafhængigt af medierne.
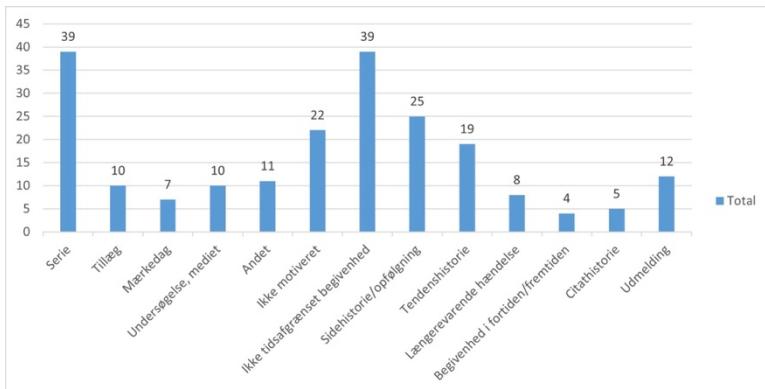
Figur 6: Anledninger til emnestyret klimajournalistik (n=211)

Lidt over en tredjedel af de ikke-tidsafgrænsede begivenheder er begivenheder fra erhvervslivet. Det er for eksempel nye samarbejder eller investeringer. At disse begivenheder ikke har en tidsangivelse kan skyldes, at erhvervsstoffet ikke er i stor konkurrence med andre emner (Geiß, 2018), da det har en sektion – eller en avis – for sig selv. Der er derfor ikke er lige så strenge krav til eksempelvis aktualitet som i nyhedssektionen. Udover begivenheder fra erhvervslivet er en tredjedel af anledningerne til artiklerne i denne kategori ikke-tidsafgrænsede begivenheder inden for andre stofområder, heriblandt politik og kultur. Under disse finder man et par tydelige eksempler på nyhedskroge, hvor en begivenhed bruges som "krog" til at aktualisere en artikel (Schultz, 2006), der ikke omhandler selve begivenheden. For eksempel er der et interview med en forfatter og højskolelærer om unges dårlige mentale helbred, hvor det udelukkende nævnes i underrubrikken at forfatteren skriver om det i en ny bog. Derudover består cirka en fjerdedel af kategorien af undersøgelser og opgivelser, der ikke er tidsangivet.

Udover ikke-tidsafgrænsede begivenheder er *serie* eller tema den hyppigste anledning til emnestyret klimajournalistik (figur 3). Er artiklen en del af en serie, står det typisk i en faktaboks, mens temaet ses i layoutet, for eksempel i form af "Tema: valg i virkeligheden". Fælles for tema og serie er, at de retfærdiggør, at artiklerne bringes netop denne dag - og at man i en kortere eller længere periode har fokus på dette emne. Serier, som fylder mest i kategorien, kan beskrives som et tematisk projekt, der "tager udgangspunkt i et overordnet tema, som mediet sætter fokus på gennem en intensiv dækning i en afgrænset periode" (Andersson, 2014, p. 14). De er en af de dominerende anledninger til emnestyret klimajournalistik - og til klimajournalistik generelt i Information og Politiken, der begge kalder sig klimaaviser. Udover at serier holder et emne på dagsordenen

i en periode, kan de bruges til at brede emnet ud over flere stofom-råder. Et eksempel er serien "Tilbage til naturen", der i en måned sætter fokus på menneskets forhold til naturen i Politikens kultur-sektion.

En anden kategori, der giver anledning til at skrive artikler om et særligt emne, er *tillæg,* som i denne undersøgelse udelukkende er repræsenteret ved Børsen, der siden efteråret 2020 har haft det ugentlige tillæg Børsen Bæredygtig.[2]

For 21 af de emnestyrede artikler gælder det, at der ikke er angivet nogen anledning til at de bringes netop denne dag. Disse artikler, kaldet *ikke-motiveret*, tæller interview, portrætter, reportager, nyhe-der og baggrundsartikler. Det er for eksempel en reportage fra en produktionshøjskole i Korsør, hvor journalisten vil finde ud af, hvor langt væk fra byerne, klimaoprøret strækker sig. Eller en nyhed om at byggebranche-certificering er uigennemskuelig. Denne kategori indeholder også et par artikler, hvor skribenterne går uden for det traditionelle nyhedsformat og tæller for eksempel en klima-frem-tidsnovelle.

Kategorien *udmelding*, som er kendetegnet ved at nogen vil, kræ-ver eller foreslår noget, består overvejende af artikler med politiske udmeldinger som anledning, men også et par udmeldinger fra inte-resseorganisationer. Det er for eksempel en udmelding fra klimami-nisteren om, at regeringen vil forsøge at sikre europæisk opbakning til vedvarende energi og et forslag fra Landbrug og Fødevarer til at nå klimamålene for landbruget. Udmeldinger er ikke knyttet til en reel begivenhed, som er afgrænset i tid og sted, og man kan dermed ikke fastslå, om anledningen til artiklerne er opstået uden for medi-erne eller på initiativ fra medierne. De er dog kendetegnet ved, at kilden forsøger at farve begivenheder eller emner fra sit perspektiv (Kepplinger, 2002).

Kategorien *længerevarende hændelse* fylder ikke meget, men er interessant, da den indeholder artikler om udviklinger over længere tid end et år, heriblandt konsekvenser af klimaforandringerne så som tørke på Afrikas horn og det stigende grundvands fremtidige konsekvenser for dansk landbrug. Artikler om klimaforandringer, som i den begivenhedsfokuserede nyhedsjournalistik er så svære at beskrive med mindre de hænger sammen med begivenheder (Adam, 2021), findes altså, om end i begrænset antal.

Derimod beskriver *tendenshistorier* tendenser, der sker lige nu og kan afgrænses til et kalenderår. Tendenshistorier er typisk baseret på en eller flere kilder, der bekræfter denne tendens. Det kan for eksempel være en historie om, at flere danskere fravælger kød, der bliver bekræftet af flere supermarkedskæder.

En lille del af de emnestyrede nyheder er *citathistorier,* der som anledning har, at andre medier har bragt dem, hvorfor de har fået

nyhedsværdi (Geiß, 2018). Endelig befinder der sig i andet-kategorien artikler, hvis anledning ikke er angivet tilstrækkeligt tydeligt. Det er eksempelvis historier, der ligner en serie på layoutet, men ikke er angivet som sådan.

Fokus i emnestyret og begivenhedsstyret klimajournalistik

Kigger man på artiklernes fokus har dækningen i begivenhedsstyret såvel som emnestyret klimajournalistik overordnet fokus på grøn omstilling i forhold til blandt andet CO2- besparelser, vedvarende energi og grønne investeringer, sådan som det også var tilfældet i nyhedsugen i 2012 (Almlund & Danielsen, 2016). Begrebet grøn omstilling bruges altså overvejende som det norske "grønne skift", der i højere grad har fokus på et markedsdrevet skift end et mentalitetsskifte (Ytterstad & Bødker, 2022).

Det politiske stof dominerer overordnet, som Almlund & Danielsen (2016) også fandt, mens erhvervsstoffet også fylder. Politik og erhverv dominerer dog mere i den begivenhedsstyrede del af journalistikken, hvorimod dækningen i højere grad breder sig ud over flere emner i den emnestyrede del. Samtidig er der en tendens til, at den begivenhedsstyrede politiske dækning har et større nationalt fokus end den emnestyrede. Denne dækning handler, som tidligere nævnt, i høj grad om klimaloven, mens den emnestyrede politiske dækning i højere grad bevæger sig til andre lande. Et eksempel er en artikel om Sibiriens smeltende permafrosts betydning for Ruslands økonomi.

Artikler om energi og teknologi fylder mindst i den begivenhedsstyrede del, hvor de handler om vedvarende energikilder, mens de emnestyrede klimanyheder også kommer omkring teknologi, der kan hjælpe den grønne omstilling på vej. Artikler om økonomi handler overvejende om grønne investeringer, og herefter den grønne omstillings omkostning for økonomien. Her er dækningen cirka lige stor i begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret journalistik.

Klimaforandringer som emne fylder omtrent det samme i emnestyret og begivenhedsstyret klimajournalistik. I den begivenhedsstyrede handler disse artikler om vejret og ekstreme vejrfænomener, men der findes også artikler om længerevarende forandringer, med nye undersøgelser som anledning. Det er for eksempel en artikel om, at klimaforandringerne får Danmark til at hæve sig. I den emnestyrede del er der en lille tendens til, at der dækkes flere længerevarende forandringer, men den største forskel er, at de dækkes uafhængigt af, at der er lavet en undersøgelse.

Den største forskel på begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret klimajournalistik er, at "blødt stof" i form af stof, der har borgeren eller forbrugeren i fokus, fylder mere i den emnestyrede del. Artikler med

mennesker i fokus er blandt andet portrætter, artikler om borgere, der er selvforsynende og om, hvordan klimaforandringerne påvirker mennesker. Et eksempel er en artikel om, hvordan man italesætter klimakrisen over for børn. Artikler med forbrugeren i fokus, hvad man kan kalde servicejournalistik i form af forbruger- og livsstils-journalistik (From, 2013), er for eksempel tendensartikler om, at flere vil bo småt eller at flere investerer bæredygtigt. Samtidig er der kun et begrænset antal guide-artikler, som især unge danskere ef-terspørger (Willig et al., 2022), og umiddelbart kun i den emnesty-rede del af klimajournalistikken. Det kan for eksempel være en guide til grønne rejser. Kultur, i form af nyhedsartikler om blandt andet kunst, litteratur og film, fylder forsvindende lidt i begge kategorier. Til gengæld indeholder det begivenhedsstyrede flere artikler om ak-tivisme, med konkrete aktioner som anledning.

Fremstillingsmæssigt adskiller det begivenhedsstyrede og emnes-tyrede sig mest i forhold til det fortælletekniske. Det "bløde stof" i det emnestyrede giver således plads til flere fortælletekniske genrer som features og portrætter (Blom & Rønlev, 2019a) samt et par an-dre genrer såsom en dagbog og en novelle. Der er en tendens til, at det aktualitetsorienterede i form af nyheder og baggrund fylder en smule mere i det begivenhedsstyrede, og opinionsgenren i form af analyser dominerer denne kategori. Dette er måske ikke så overra-skende, da der i høj grad er tale om analyser, der beskæftiger sig med aktuelle begivenheder.

Kilder i emnestyret og begivenhedsstyret journalistik

Kigger man på de citerede kilder i samtlige artikler (984 i alt) er elitekilder dominerende i form af erhvervspersoner som de mest ci-terede, efterfulgt af politikere og forskere (se Figur 4). Kilder, der ta-ler for klimadagsordenen, i form af personer fra miljø- og græsrods-organisationer samt "almindelige borgere" optræder sjældnere som kilder, hvilket også gør sig gældende i internationale undersøgelser (Anderson, 2017; Schäfer & Painter, 2021).
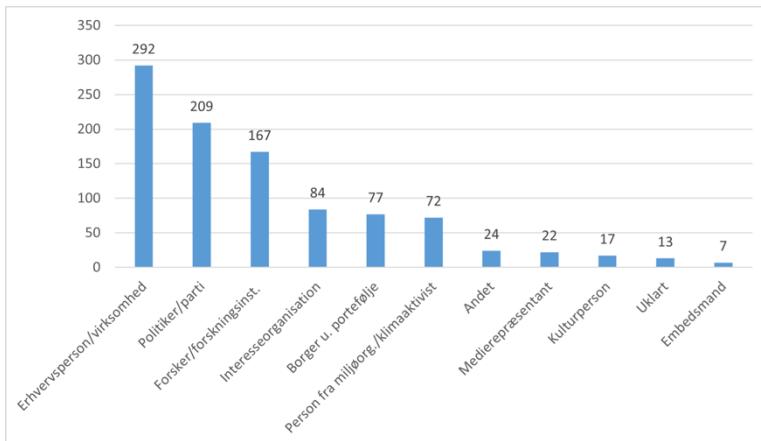
Figur 7: Antal kilder fordelt på kildetyper i undersøgelsens 367 artikler (n=984). De første fem kilder i alle artikler er talt og registreret.

Kildesammensætningen i denne undersøgelse har flere lighedspunkter med sammensætningen af kilder i dagspressen generelt, der også er præget af elitekilder. Her går erhvervspersoner igen som den mest dominerende kildetype, mens borgere uden portefølje i begge tilfælde kommer ind på en femteplads (Skovbjerg & Schultz Jørgensen, 2006). Klimajournalistik er dog mere præget af politiske kilder og forskere end de gængse nyheder. Dette er umiddelbart ikke overraskende, da klimaforandringer ligger højt på den politiske dagsorden og samtidig er svært tilgængeligt stof, hvilket i høj grad gør journalisterne afhængige af forskeres "oversættelse" (Ryghaug, 2006). Mikkel Eskjær finder da også at klimajournalistikken befolkes af elitekilder med en overvægt af politiske kilder i sit studie af dansk klimadækning mellem 2009 og 2018 (Eskjær, 2019) . I Eskjærs undersøgelse er virksomheder og erhvervspersoner imidlertid stort set fraværende. En forklaring kan være, at flere medier er begyndt at dække emnet i takt med den øgede politiske opmærksomhed efter klimavalget i 2019, og at kildesammensætningen i den helt brede dækning derfor er anderledes i dag end i 2018. For eksempel dækkede Børsen stort set ikke klimaforandringer før 2019 og var i 2021 den avis af de undersøgte, der havde flest klimaartikler.
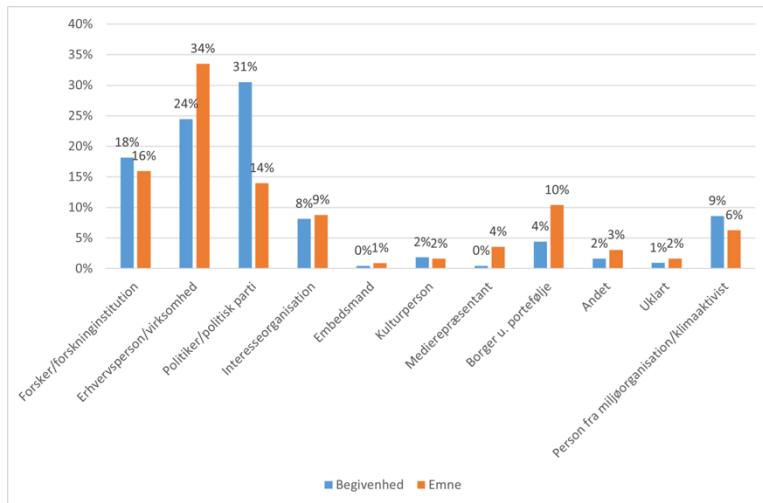
Figur 8: Kildetyper i procent af begivenhedstyret (156) og emnestyret (211) klimajournalistik (n=367). Forskellen er statistisk signifikant med p<0.01 (chi-i-anden test).

Ser man på, hvordan kilderne fordeler sig på hhv. emnestyret og begivenhedsstyret klimajournalistik (figur 5) er den mest markante forskel, at politiske kilder fylder væsentligt mere i den begivenhedsstyrede journalistik. Dette stemmer overens med at det politiske stof dominerer den begivenhedsstyrede del af klimajournalistikken. I den emnestyrede journalistik er erhvervspersoner mest dominerende, samtidig med at borgere uden portefølje fylder mere, hvilket bakker om op om det øgede fokus på det bløde stof med borgeren i centrum. Det er især Børsen, Berlingske og Jyllands-Posten, der citerer erhvervspersoner, mens borgere uden portefølje og kilder der repræsenterer den klimapolitiske dagsorden- såsom miljøorganisationer og klimaaktivister - er helt fraværende i Berlingske og Børsen.

Elitekilder i form af politikere, erhvervspersoner og forskere får altså i høj grad lov til at være "primary definers" (Hall, 1978) og sætte rammerne for, hvordan medierne dækker klimaforandringer i både begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret klimajournalistik. Samtidig fylder politikere mere end forskere på trods af, at omkring halvdelen af danskerne ifølge en spørgeskemaundersøgelse mener, at politiske holdninger fylder for meget og eksperter for lidt i klimadækningen (Willig et al., 2022). I den begivenhedsstyrede del af journalistikken er det i højere grad politikerne, der definerer problemet, mens erhvervspersoner er mere dominerende i den emnestyrede del. Borgerne har generelt meget lidt at skulle have sagt.

Konklusion og diskussion

Denne artikel har undersøgt, hvorvidt den daglige dækning af klimaforandringer bærer præg af mediernes begivenhedsfokus, samt om der er forskel på dækningen, når klimaforandringer dækkes på baggrund af begivenheder, og når de ikke gør.

Undersøgelsen viser, at dansk klimajournalistik har en lille overvægt af emnestyret journalistik. Serier og ikke tidsafgrænsede begivenheder er de hyppigste anledninger til emnestyret journalistik, men mange har dog ingen synlig anledning. Kigger man på kildesammensætningen generelt dominerer elitekilder, imens repræsentanter for civilsamfundet sjældnere høres. Der er dog en tendens til, at borgere uden portefølje fylder mere i emnestyret klimajournalistik, og mens politik og erhverv dominerer, er der en større variation af emner i denne del af klimajournalistikken, hvor stof med borgeren i centrum også fylder mere.

Den begivenhedsstyrede klimajournalistik udløses ofte af politiske aktiviteter, aktiviteter i erhvervslivet og nye undersøgelser. Også her dominerer elitekilder på bekostning af repræsentanter for civilsamfundet. Politiske kilder fylder dog væsentligt mere end i emnestyret klimajournalistik, mens politik og erhverv dominerer som fokus.

Undersøgelsen peger dermed på, at medierne i høj grad formår at sætte emnet på dagsordenen, uden at der er tydelige begivenheder som anledning, og at der er en forskel på begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret klimajournalistik i forhold til kildevalg og fokus, om end den ikke er stor. Det ser med andre ord ud til, at der er mere plads til andre definitioner af klimaforandringer som et problem end den politiske i den emnestyrede del af klimajournalistikken.

Undersøgelsens begrænsninger er især relateret til operationaliseringen af begivenhedsstyret og emnestyret journalistik. Artiklens udgangspunkt er, at begivenhedsstyret journalistik har en begivenhed afgrænset i tid og sted som anledning, og jeg har valgt en smal operationalisering, hvor den tidslige afgrænsning skal være angivet manifest i teksten. Det har jeg gjort for at sikre en konsistens i kodningen og dermed en høj reliabilitet (Eskjær & Helles, 2015). Resultaterne bekræfter imidlertid, at grænsen mellem interne og eksterne dynamikker ikke er entydig, men præget af en "fuzzy logic", hvor emne og begivenhed i nogle tilfælde overlapper (Geiß, 2018, p. 85). Således har knap en femtedel af de emnestyrede artikler begivenheder, der ikke er afgrænset i tid som anledning. Disse begivenheder er udefrakommende, men uden angivelse af, hvornår begivenheden har fundet sted.

En bredere definition af begivenhedsstyret journalistik, der lægger mere vægt på, hvad artiklen indikerer som anledning og mindre

vægt på, hvorvidt tidspunktet for begivenheden er angivet i teksten, ville gøre andelen af begivenhedsstyret journalistik en smule større. Det ville dog ikke ændre ved den overordnede konklusion, at begivenheder ikke dominerer så meget, som man skulle tro.

Undersøgelsen peger samtidig på muligheder for en bredere dækning af klimaforandringer, som jeg vil komme ind på herunder.

En stor del af dækningen fokuserer på den grønne omstilling i forhold til måder at mindske CO_2-udledningerne og betydningen for økonomien, mens et bredere fokus på klimaforandringer, såsom alternative bud på at løse klimakrisen eller hvordan det påvirker os som mennesker at stå midt i en klimakrise, fylder meget lidt. Et middel til at få mere af det kan være en redaktionel ramme som serier. Den bruger eksempelvis Politiken til at undersøge ungdomsoprøret hos danske kunstnere, mens Jyllands-Posten undersøger, hvordan danskerne påvirkes af klimaforandringer. En bredere dækning kalder også på at inddrage et større udvalg af kilder i dækningen, så der er flere "almindelige mennesker" og andre repræsentanter for civilsamfundet i spalterne og borgerne i højere grad kan se sig selv i dækningen. Disse tiltag kan give en større grad af identifikation, som igen kan bane vejen for en højere grad af engagement (Spence et al., 2012).

Endelig er der potentiale for mere kritisk erhvervsjournalistik inden for klimaområdet. I empirien er der således mange eksempler på, at det lykkes virksomhederne at have indflydelse på, hvordan de dækkes via ukritisk videreformidling af grønne resultater og planer inden for erhvervslivet. En mere kritisk erhvervsjournalistik kan være dialogisk fremstilling, hvor journalisten i artiklen lader kilder fra en virksomhed gå i dialog med andre kilder, der kan forholde sig kritisk til virksomheden (Blach-Ørsten, 2013). Det kan for eksempel være ekspertkilder, der kan vurdere virksomhedens årsrapport i forhold til klimamål og CSR.

Denne undersøgelse siger noget om dækningen af klima i dansk dagspresse. Fremtidige undersøgelser kunne med fordel inkludere flere medier for at kaste lys over, om eksempelvis erhvervskilder er lige så dominerende i public service-medier. Samtidig kan man forestille sig, at det begivenhedsstyrede fylder endnu mere i tv-nyheder, som i højere grad har brug for billedrige historier, og at der dermed er mindre plads til at formidle klimaforandringer som fremtidsrettede og vedvarende.

NOTER

¹ Variablerne bestod af: Løbenummer, koder, år, dato og måned, rubrik, avis, byline, længde, anledning til artiklen, hvilken begivenhed? (hvis anledning=begivenhed), anledning til at skrive om emnet (hvis anledning=emne), artiklens tema, kildetype, hvilket parti (hvis politisk kilde), kildens nationalitet.

² Børsens artikler udgør desuden en stor andel af kategorien sidehistorier. I disse artikler fremgår det af layoutet eller i selve artiklen at de er knyttet til andre artikler i avisen, der er bragt samme dag.

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From investigative to critical local journalism

A quantitative content analysis of critical reporting in local Swedish newspapers with a new analytical focus

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Abstract

Journalism is considered to fulfil a societal watchdog role. However, research indicates that local news rarely lives up to established state-of-the-art definitions of investigative journalism. Therefore, this article argues that the assessment of local accountability journalism must include research on the extent to which it assumes a societal watchdog role in a more basic sense, namely by being critical of events and conditions in the local society in some way.

A content analysis of approximately 1600 articles in three local Swedish newspapers shows that criticism, even in its mildest form, constitutes less than a fifth of the overall output, and that journalists themselves are the agents of criticism in less than 15 % of the critical articles, disregarding editorials, and that they more often criticize national than local power. In news articles, journalists are less often agents of criticism than both politicians, the public, and representatives of organizations. Actors in the public sphere are targets of criticism in 75 % of the critical articles, whereas those articles rarely target the private sector or civil society.

Introduction

Journalism is reckoned to be an important social accountability institution at all levels in a democratic society (Christians, et al., 2009; Schlosberg, 2013). This designated role has, to a great extent, been assumed by so called investigative or watchdog journalism; a type of high-profile, resource-demanding reporting that through thorough investigations expose wrong-doing in places of power and hold responsible officials to account (Waisbord, 2016; de Burgh, 2008). However, research indicates that even though that type of journalism occasionally appears in the local news, it is far from being a prominent feature (Knobel, 2018; Karadimitriou, et al., 2022). This article argues that a more realistic measurement of how local journalism is shouldering a societal accountability role may be to study the extent to which its content is critical in a basic sense.

Local journalism in the Nordic countries (Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Denmark) has traditionally been held in high esteem and is still viewed as a very important factor for identity shaping, social cohesion, and the formation of an informed and democratically active citizenry at a local level (Nygren, 2020; Morlandstø & Røe Mathisen, 2022). In Hallin and Mancini's (2004) classification of media systems, Sweden is classified as belonging to the Democratic Corporatist Model, which is characterized by high circulation rates, substantial journalistic autonomy, a developed professionalism, and a strong local media (p, 144). News consumption is still high, and local populations trust local news organizations and find their output to be of high journalistic quality (Wessels, et al., 2017). A recent Swedish survey shows that the demand for local journalism in the country supersedes production (Truedson & Karlsson, 2019).

Despite its traditionally strong position, Swedish local journalism is far from untouched by the challenges local journalism faces in most countries. Circulation has declined 40 percent since the 1980's, and since 2001 the reduction of staff has been between 55 and 65 percent among local news organizations. Sparsely populated regions are gradually losing journalistic presence and coverage (Nygren, 2020). The number of political and municipal communicators at a local level has increased dramatically in the last ten years and they are bypassing and supplanting local journalists as sources of information about local politics and administration to a certain degree. Facebook has become a complicated, but determinant, factor in terms of how citizens consume news and information about local society (Nygren, 2020). This development has altered the way local news is selected and produced and has had detrimental effects on the preconditions for local journalists to produce high-quality, resource demanding investigative journalism (Karadimitriou, et al.,

2022). A recent survey shows that investigative journalism in Sweden is suffering from cutbacks and diminishing resources, that less and less time is devoted to this type of journalism, and that local journalism is virtually devoid of substantial high-profile and resource consuming investigations (Stiftelsen Grävfonden [The Foundation for Swedish Investigative Journalism], 2021). The 2022 Swedish government investigation of media subsidies proposes, due to declining economic circumstances, that an increased part of governmental media subsides should be allocated to support local news organizations, especially in so called "white spots" (Sveriges Regering [The Swedish Government], 2022). Sweden is therefore a critical case if we want to examine how local journalism – in a country where it traditionally holds a very strong position – is upholding a societal accountability function in the face of present challenges. And since there are substantial similarities between the Nordic countries in this context (Morlandstø & Røe Mathisen, 2022), the results from such an examination could, to a certain extent, be generalized across these countries.

We argue that the most realistic way to research the topic may not be to focus on high-profile and resource consuming investigative journalism in local newspapers, but to examine to what extent the accountability function is assumed by a broad criticism of power in all societal sectors. Knobel (2018) points out that even the study of simple criticism in local news gives a valuable understanding of local journalism's watchdog function and its contribution to the public sphere. Benson (2010) even claims that simple negative assessments "offer a more comprehensive measure of criticism on a day-to-day basis than the occasional in-depth investigative report" (p. 3). Nygren & Tenor (2020) state: "It is more beneficial to view the media's watchdog role in a broader perspective than to establish an ideal model for what is investigative journalism, and what is not" (p. 199), and Dimova (2012) points out that the simply critical media coverage "sets the range of disputable issues" (p. 65) and is thus giving consumers of local news a bird's-eye view of areas subject to criticism in the local community, whereas the occasional in-depth investigative story zooms in on one particular problem area.

In this article, we first review previous research on local media's prerequisites to assume the role as a societal accountability institution. Secondly, we explain the rationale for our study and state our research questions. Thirdly, we present our method, and the results of our study of the extent to which three local Swedish newspapers are critically assessing power in all societal sectors. Fourthly, we present out main findings, and fifthly, based on our results and previous research, we discuss in what sense, and to what extent, local journalism could be considered a societal watchdog, and we also

consider some of the societal implications of the strengths and weaknesses of how that role is assumed.

Literature review: How and to what extent does local journalism hold power to account?

Being critical of societal power has not always been a commonly adopted professional ideal in Swedish media. After World War II, the main role of Swedish journalists was to mirror societal events. The press informed citizens about facts, situations and events in society, and journalists were generally more of a reverent mouthpiece for the authorities than their critic (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull, 2013). But during the 60s, following the professionalization of Swedish journalism and the dismantling of the party-press, journalists came to consider themselves as a regulatory body with a mission to be critical of power and to investigate the exercising of authority (Danielson, 2016); a societal function of the media that has since been supported by governmental reports (SOU, 1975:78; SOU, 2000:1; SOU, 2016:80) and established as a journalistic ideal in Western democracies (Christians, et al., 2009, p. 56).

This development of professional ideals has shaped the image of journalism as one of a democratic society's most important accountability institutions (Schlosberg, 2013). Today, investigating power, asking authorities critical questions, and giving voice to critical opinions are some of the ways in which journalism is assuming a broadly accepted societal responsibility to hold power to account. This responsibility has to a great extent come to be associated with the concept of investigative, or watchdog, journalism (Waisbord, 2016). In Sweden, the shouldering of this purported role is one of the major reasons that journalism is reckoned to be a part of the democratic system, and as such also why it receives public subsidies (Nygren, 2020, p. 183).

Efforts have been made to find a suitable way of defining and typologizing investigative journalism and distinguishing it from other types of journalism. However, there is still no conceptual consensus of what is meant by investigative journalism (de Burgh, 2008; Strömbäck, 2003; Ekström, et al., 2006; Carson, 2020). Some journalists and media researchers even consider the term irrelevant and misplaced (Kunert, et al., 2022; Aucoin, 2005). The prevailing notion, both among practitioners and researchers is, however, that investigative journalism is a "distinct form of reporting, requiring special efforts beyond reporting the daily news" (Carson, 2020, p. 52), or a societal function of "critical scrutiny over the powerful, be they in government, business or other influential spheres of society"

(McNair, 2003, p. 239). It has even been suggested that investigative journalists are "a breed apart" (Lanosga, et al., 2017). In their book *Normative Theories of the Media*, Christians et. al. (2009) state that "the purpose is not simply to report events that are public and have public importance but to systematically discover social problems or abuses of power and to use rhetorical resources to move the public to act on these problems" (p. 57).

In Sweden, the public notion of investigative journalism is largely formed by spectacular revelations, nationally acclaimed investigative tv-shows, and high-profile investigations undertaken by journalists associated with national news outlets (Danielson, 2016). Theorists and practitioners propose ideological and normative definitions of investigative journalism, suggesting high degrees of journalistic involvement and high impact results as requirements to qualify as such (Christians, et al., 2009; Stiftelsen Grävfonden [The Foundation for Swedish Investigative Journalism], 2021; Karadimitriou, et al., 2022; Strömbäck, 2003; Waisbord, 2016). In a recent Swedish report, the criteria for what could be qualified as investigative journalism are: high levels of engagement, elaborate research, profound analysis, exclusivity, great importance, and extensive processing (Stiftelsen Grävfonden [The Foundation for Swedish Investigative Journalism], 2021). The report, entitled 'Less and Less Time for Investigative Journalism', defines investigative journalism as: "projects that lead up to one or a series of journalistic publications that reveal or depict important events or facts previously unknow to the public. Investigative projects have further been defined as an investigation that approximately has taken a total of (the whole team) at least 40 hours to accomplish" (p. 5, own translation). Strömbäck (2003) claims that journalism that only reproduce criticism based on opinion or hearsay does not qualify as investigative. He labels journalism that just reports, and not actively generates or analyses criticism, "pseudo-investigative" (p. 30).

There is evidently some high-quality investigative journalism produced by local news organizations. The Swedish Association of Investigative Journalism (Föreningen grävande journalister) yearly receives several ambitious locally produced entries competing for their prestigious prize The Golden Shovel; entries that correspond well to the most ambitious definitions of what is meant by investigative journalism (FGJ, 2022). And some local newsrooms do allocate considerable resources to this type of journalism. However, research indicates that in-depth, resource consuming, and high impact investigative journalism is not a prominent feature of local journalism, neither in Sweden (Nygren & Tenor, 2020) nor in other Western democracies (Karadimitriou, et al., 2022; Knobel, 2018; Barclay, et al., 2022). A Danish report states that critical investigative

journalism is virtually absent in local Danish news (Svith, et al., 2017). Nygren (2020) writes that revelatory news stories based on elaborate journalistic investigation are quite rare at a local level (p. 186). In line with these findings, the above-mentioned governmental media investigation explicitly states that producing investigative journalism according to prevalent definitions is not a prerequisite to receive subsidies (Sveriges Regering [The Swedish Government], 2022, p. 149). More than 45 percent of the responding journalists in the report 'Less and Less Time for Investigative Journalism' answered that they did not engage in investigative journalism at all during 2019 (the year of the survey). Of those who indicated that they engage in investigative projects on a daily basis, not a single one worked either in a small town or municipality, nor in any sparsely populated area (Stiftelsen Grävfonden [The Foundation for Swedish Investigative Journalism], 2021, p. 6). In their recent study of the performance of investigative journalism in 18 countries, Karadimitriou et. al., (2022) conclude that recent economic development in the media industry has been a "severe deterrent to costly investigative journalism", that investigative reporting is considered "a luxury process" by some journalists, and that the volume, quality, and complexity of investigative journalism is proportional to the financial strength of the media organization (p. 101). This is a development that does not necessarily favour local news media's possibilities to engage in that kind of journalism.

Local journalists' close connections to the local community also poses a challenge to their purported role as investigators. Local journalists juggle their role as watchdogs with a sense of local patriotism and loyalty. The intimacy of local communities makes critical distance a difficult journalistic ideal. In an interview study in Norway, regional columnists acknowledged the importance of their role as critics within the local community, but they also strongly identified with a patriotic role linked to their geographical position and perceived their work as a mission to advocate the interests of the region (Røe Mathisen & Morlandstø, 2017, p. 245).

In a 2022 interview study of audience perception of local news in seven local communities in the United Kingdom, respondents conveyed that local government was "poorly scrutinized" and that national institutions and local public services were "under-reported, and mis-represented" (Barclay, et al., 2022, p. 6). A survey from the United States shows that even though local news is more trusted than national news, the confidence in the watchdog role of local journalists is low (Knight Foundation, 2019, p. 2), and, in her study of investigative journalism in a cross-section of American newspapers, Knobel (2018) shows that nationwide and metropolitan newspapers do considerable investigative reporting, but that local and

regional investigative journalism is scarce and "do not produce enough accountability reporting to fully engage and empower citizens" (p. 81). She concludes that even though small local papers take their watchdog role seriously, "their size and strength do affect what they are able to achieve" (p. 82).

Furthermore, concerns for the lack of investigative journalism in the local news are not a completely new feature of journalism studies. Earlier research indicates that high-profile investigative journalism has not been a prominent feature of local journalism during the 2000s. One study published in 2002 found that less than 10% of the material in Swedish local newspapers could be qualified as investigative, even if using the moderate definition "journalism based on some kind of investigation, a critical approach and focusing on influential groups in society" (Nord, 2007, p. 520). Commenting on a 2003 Swedish study of 1 184 local news articles, Nygren & Tenor (2020) mention that some of the articles were investigative in some sense, but that "none of the articles were even close to the ideals of investigative journalism" (p. 198, our translation). Ekström et. al (2006) conducted a longitudinal study on how three Swedish local newspapers from 1961 to 2006 "scrutinize" local politicians in the daily reporting. They identified seven types of scrutiny categorized according to methods, structure, involvement and invested time, and analysed the prevalence of those types. Less than one third of the articles could be qualified as scrutinizing in any sense (p. 299), even though one of the categories, labelled "reporting criticism", was defined as low-key as:

> Conveying scrutiny without the editorial staff themselves having to do any active investigation. We are here referring to articles where the newspaper in various ways stages others' criticism. One example is when the newspaper gives ample space for the political opposition's criticism of current politics. Another example is articles where dissatisfied citizens or users are interviewed.
>
> (p. 297)

In his interview study of Swedish local journalists, Nord (2007) found that some local journalists identified "traditional news routines, which were perceived as more or less adapted to short-term news work" (p. 519), as a factor hampering high-quality investigations. The interviewees stated that most editors favoured fast and swift news reporting over more time-consuming investigative projects. In their study on local journalism in the U.K., O'Neill and O'Connor conclude that local journalists use a minimum range of sources – often favouring one authoritative source – and that local journalists are increasingly passive, limiting their reporting to a

narrow range of perspectives and favouring simplicity over complexity (O'Neill & O'Connor, 2008).

The apparently weak position of investigative reporting in local journalism has been the cause of alarm since it compromises local media's capacity to shoulder its threefold democratic mission: to inform the community about significant events and conditions of public interest, to serve as a platform for debate and discussion, as well as to criticize irregularities and wrongdoings and investigate and hold institutions, organizations and individuals wielding societal power accountable (Christians, et al., 2009). Failure to perform adequately in these areas is believed by media scholars to mean a less informed and less engaged citizenry, a poorer debate climate, and a lack of restraint with regards to corruption and power abuse (Moore & Ramsey, 2016, p. 14; Allern & Pollack, 2016; Wahl-Jorgenssen, 2019b, p. 164).

Much of the scholarly measuring of the extent to which local news fulfils the watchdog role has however been concentrated on the lack of high-impact, resource-demanding investigative reporting (Karadimitriou, et al., 2022; Stiftelsen Grävfonden [The Foundation for Swedish Investigative Journalism], 2021; Knobel, 2018). But what happens if we settle for a more pragmatic and low-key definition, including the basic elements of accountability in daily reporting? Nygren (2020) offers a typology consisting of four ways in which local journalism could be reckoned to fulfil the watchdog role. In this typology, he incorporates both investigative reporting that "deeply scrutinize corruption and political scandals" (p. 187) as well as the abstract assumption that the media have a preventive role in deterring mismanagement and corruption. But he also argues that local media serves as a watchdog by regularly publishing articles that, in one way or another, criticize people in power and identify sensitive questions, conflicts and issues at a local level to which politicians and other stakeholders must respond (p. 186). Our research is about the magnitude and range of local accountability journalism at that level.

Aims and research questions

Our research interest is to find out to what extent local newspapers are critical in a basic sense, how agents and targets of that criticism are socially distributed, andwhat people in power are criticised for, in order to discuss to what extent such criticism qualifies local journalism for the societal watchdog role it has been assigned.

Previous studies have focused on criticism of local politicians (Ekström, et al., 2006; Nygren, 2020), but our study includes

criticism of civil society and private enterprise since we reckon that journalism's responsibility to act as a societal institution of accountability should encompass all types of societal power – political as well as economic and cultural. Therefore, we are interested in the overall social distribution of critical assessments. That is also why our research concerns the entire journalistic output of local newspapers (sports, culture, national news, etc.) and not only local news. We also want to know who is given voice of criticism in the articles, since part of our research interest is to study the extent to which journalists are the origin of the critical assessments, and to what degree they outsource the criticism to experts, officials, and others. This would be an indication of the balance between criticism based on journalistic research and analysis, and reports on criticism and opinions that circulate in the local community. To get indications of the extent to which local journalism is a local watchdog, we are also interested in comparing proportions between criticism directed towards national and local targets.

By quantitatively analysing a broad spectrum of negative assessments concerning all societal sectors, we aim for an overview of the scope of journalistic criticism of societal power in the local community, its agency, and its social distribution. The study also fills a knowledge gap by examining differences in types of misdemeanours for which the representatives of the different sectors are criticized. Our research questions are:

RQ1: To what extent are articles in Swedish local newspapers critical?

RQ2: What sectors are criticized? And for which type of misdemeanour?

RQ3: Who are the critics?

Method

Approximately 1600 articles from three local Swedish newspapers were subject to a quantitative content analysis. The newspapers constitute a non-probability sample representative of Swedish local newspapers in general (Bryman, 2016; Krippendorf, 2004). The newspapers were chosen to represent different regions in Sweden with different numbers of subscribers, owners, political backgrounds, and editorial policies; Barometern in Kalmar, Norran in Skellefteå and Värmlands Folkblad in Karlstad (see Table 1). Their accumulated circulation in 2019 was around 70 000 copies. However, we intend no comparison between the newspapers. Thus, the

articles are considered as an aggregated body of texts, constituting a sample of Swedish local journalism.

Name of news-paper	Barometern	Norran	Värmlands Folk-blad
Circulation	36 000	19 000	13 000
City/Region	Kalmar/ South Sweden	Skellefteå/North Sweden	Karlstad/Central Sweden
Type of owner-ship	Foundation	National media group	Local media group
Politicalback-ground	Conservative	Liberal Party	Social Demo-cratic Party
Editorial poli-cies	Liberal/ Conservative	Liberal	Labour

Table 4: Description of the three local newspapers featured in the study.

The dataset consists of a randomized probability sample of articles collected during a 10-day synthesized period between March and June 2019, and a similar period between September and December 2019. The main reason for the choice of sampling period was to avoid possible impact from the COVID-19 pandemic, which spread in in Sweden in early 2020. As we are interested in the overall critical output of the local papers, the sample includes all journalistically produced articles, categorized according to the indicative headings employed by the newspapers. All articles including a headline, a preamble, and at least 500 characters are included in the study.

In our study, we establish a minimum requirement, or lowest common denominator, of what could be considered critical journalism by drawing on elements of Strömbäck's (2003) concept of pseudo-journalism (p. 30); Nygren's (2021) category "news that does not always put decision-makers in a positive light" (p. 186); and Ekström et. al's (2006) category "reporting criticism" (p. 297). We consider criticism as any discrete critical statement directed at some sort of societal power, and we measure criticism by the number of articles in which "critical statements" appear (Benson, 2010, p. 9).

The coding frame included 14 variables of which the first four identify the units of analysis: article ID, newspaper ID, newspaper name, and date of publication. The 10 analytical variables are: 1) criticism present (yes, or no), 2) target sector of the criticism (public sector, private sector, or civil society), 3) type of conflict (unilateral, bilateral), 4) agent of criticism (authoring journalist, expert, politician, official, representative, member of the public, other), 5) origin of article (inhouse, news agency, other), 6) geographic focus (local,

national, international), 7) Type of article (editorial, op-ed, sports, news, financial news, culture, other) 8) criticism of public sector (deviousness, callousness, incompetence, none), 9) criticism of private sector (deviousness, callousness, incompetence, none), 10) c criticism of civil society (deviousness, callousness, incompetence, none). The two authors coded half of the articles each. Inter-reliability testing resulted in an overall Krippendorff's Alpha reliability score of = 0.826 (Krippendorff, 2004). The variable "callousness" showed the lowest score (0,78) but was within the reliability range.

Results

The entire sample consisted of n=1601 articles (see Table 2). News stories in a narrow sense accounted for more than half of the sample. The second most frequent category of articles, sports, represented around a third of the sample. Economy news were scarce, representing only 1,1 % of the total number of articles. Inhouse produced articles dominated the analysed material, representing 80% of the output, leaving 20 % to news agencies.

Category	%	N = 1601
Editorial	3	55
Chronicle	5	84
News	52	827
Economy	1	18
Culture	7	105
Sports	31	492
Other	1	20

Table 5: Overview of article categories

How critical are local news?

Our study shows that criticism could not be seen as a predominant feature of local journalism even when applying a minimum requirement for what is considered critical. According to our criteria, we found that less than a fifth of the articles (18%, n=290) included some sort of criticism. Of all news articles (n=827), 23 % included at least one critical statement, but only 7,5 % of all articles on culture and 4 % of all sports articles were critical in any sense. Of all the critical news articles (n=190), 83 % were locally produced and only 17 % were material from news agencies. Half of all the critical articles (n=290) had a local focus, 35 % had a national focus, and in 15 % of the critical articles the target of criticism was international.

Who is criticized, and for what?

The most frequent target of criticism is the public sector. Of all the critical articles (n=290), more than 73 % dealt with some sort of public office, political or administrative. The private sector, notably private businesses and enterprises, were objects of 13% of all critical articles, and 10 % of the critical articles concerned civil society.

The main critical focus was incompetence (42 %). Officials were criticized for not handling public affairs with the required skill and dexterity. In a third of the articles in which public servants were criticized, the focus was callousness, in the sense of not taking people's feelings into account, disregarding the vulnerable in society, not caring about nature, or in some other way displaying insensitivity. Close to 11 % of the critical articles concerning holders of public office accused them of being devious, corrupt, or dishonest (Table 3).

	Incompetence		Callousness		Deviousness	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
Public Sector	48	119	38	94	12	23
Private Sector	32	7	32	7	23	5
Civil Society	32	12	53	20	8	3

Table 6: Types of criticism by criticized societal sector (n= 290)

Slightly more than half of the critical articles had a local focus. Close to a third of the critical articles focused on issues of a national character, and 14 % of the critical articles had an international focus. However, the editorials had a national rather than local critical focus. In most critical articles, criticism was expressed unilaterally. Only 16 % of the critical articles were part of a bilateral conflict, in which two parties are criticizing each other.

Who is the critic?

In all critical articles (n=290), criticism is most often expressed by authoring journalists (31 %), followed by representatives of public offices or organizations (26 %), politicians (21 %), and the public (13 %). However, the authoring journalists mainly express criticism in editorials and chronicles. More than 65 % of the criticism expressed by journalists (n=59) are found in the editorials and chronicles, and these account for only 9 % of the total output of critical articles (not in table).

Around 21 % of the criticism in editorials and chronicles deals with local circumstances. The vast majority (61 %) have their focus on national affairs. In the total output, authoring journalists criticize national circumstances more than local, whereas three out of four

critical statements by the public concern local circumstances (see Table 4).

	Local		National		International		No geographic focus	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Politician	48	28	32	18	19	11	1	3
Journalist	42	36	48	41	9	8	1	2
Expert	40	6	33	5	26	4	1	2
Repre-sentative	57	40	33	23	10	7	0	1
Member of the Public	76	28	8	3	16	6	0	0
Other	2	3	3	4	13	10	1	1

Table 7: Geographic foci of critical voices (n=290)

In the critical news articles (n=290), 14 % of the criticism is expressed by the authoring journalists themselves, compared with the 27 % in which the main critical voice belongs to politicians. This corroborates Dimova's (2012) study on critical news articles in Bulgarian, Russian, and German newspapers, where she found that the foremost criticism of politicians in the media originated from opposing politicians, not journalists (pp. 73, 74).

Experts are not prevalent as critics in our material. Of all critical news articles (n=190) only 5 % featured a critical expert, whereas 20 % included critical voices from the public. In our material, politicians and the public are criticizing the public sector to a higher degree than other critics, and experts are more inclined than other critics to criticize the private sector. Close to 90 % of the criticism expressed by politicians concerned the public sector (see Table 5).

	Public		Private		Civil		Several	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Politician	88	49	5	3	4	2	3	2
Journalist	78	66	15	13	6	5	0	0
Expert	40	6	27	4	20	3	13	2
Representative	66	46	11	8	18	13	4	3
Member of the Public	81	30	14	5	5	2	0	0

Table 8: Distribution of type of critical voice by criticized sector (n=290)

Summary of findings

Of all articles (n=1601), less than a fifth contain criticism of a basic character. Of those critical articles (n=290), only half concern the local community. Of the criticized sectors, the public sector is criticized almost three times as often as the private sector and civil society put together. Critical statements against representatives of the public sector concern allegations of incompetence and callousness in equal measure, whereas accusations of deviousness are rare.

Authoring journalists are agents of criticism in 31 % of the total critical output (n=290), but in less than 14 % of the critical news articles (n=190), which is less than both politicians (27 %), the public (20 %), and representatives of public institutions and civil organizations (32 %). Of the criticism originating from authoring journalists, two thirds were found in editorials and chronicles. However, the critical editorials do not have a predominantly local focus but are mainly criticizing societal affairs at a national level. Experts are not frequently used as critics in local journalism.

Discussions and conclusions

By producing a steady flow of aggregated and accessible criticism of local society, Swedish local journalism is to a certain degree shouldering a watchdog role in the sense of providing a birds-eye view of problem areas in the local community. Even though criticism is not a dominant feature of the total output, it may still fulfil an important "signalling function" (Benson, 2010) by, on a day-to-day basis, displaying what is considered wrong in local society and putting a certain "range of disputable issues" (Dimova, 2012, p. 65) on the agenda for the public to consider and possibly react upon. Since the critical statements focus mainly on the public sector, this critical output constitutes an important counterbalance to the information distributed by municipal communication professionals, giving the public a steady, even though not abundant, flow of critical views of how the local community is politically governed in regions covered by local journalists.

However, since previous research shows that the degree of "engagement, elaborate research, profound analysis, exclusivity, great importance, and extensive processing" (Stiftelsen Grävfonden [The Foundation for Swedish Investigative Journalism], 2021) is low in local Swedish journalism, and since our study shows that: (1) articles containing critical assessments constitute not more than 20 percent of the total output, (2) only half of those critical articles concern the

local community, (3) the private sector and civil society rarely are targets of criticism, and (4) the majority of the critical editorials were not aimed at the local community; we conclude that local journalism may be fulfilling a local societal watchdog role only in a limited sense.

A factor that is also possibly limiting the quality of the watchdog role is that a journalistic critical voice is not prevalent in the examined texts. In her study on emotions in the media, Wahl-Jørgensen (2019a) notes that journalists outsource emotional expressions to sources and interviewees. Our study indicates that local journalists likewise outsource criticism to citizens, representatives of interest organizations, and politicians. This lack of journalistic criticism raises questions of the importance of a critical stance, that is one of journalism's declared professional virtues. If sources are the main, and often undisputed critics, what about the critical perspective, the journalistic analysis, and the independence towards those sources?

The results also raise questions as to how much of a deterrent from corruption and other misdemeanours local journalism represents, especially to power outside the political realm. If thorough and well-researched investigative journalism constitutes a deterrent to a certain degree – simply critical statements from sources in news texts may not have the same preventive potency. And since the private sector is the target of only 13 percent of the critical articles, of which authoring journalists rarely are agents of criticism – local businesses may not have to worry too much about journalistic scrutiny. The rare accusations of deviousness may indicate that honesty is increasing among people in power but is more likely an indication of a lack of the time consuming and in-depth investigations needed to expose such deviousness. And if in-depth investigations and analytical critical journalism are to be expected only occasionally, the deterring effect upon mismanagement and corruption at a local level may not be particularly strong.

The fact that local business and civil society are not particularly criticized in the local news may indicate that the journalistic ambition to be a champion of the local community interferes with the professional ideal of the watchdog role (Røe Mathisen & Morlandstø, 2017), a friction that leaves local journalists with an important, and presumably difficult, choice as to what journalistic ideals to adopt, and what journalistic identity to develop. This choice may also be compromised by the apparently increased societal, economic, and political friction between centre and periphery that explicitly and implicitly calls for local patriotism, even from journalists. Morlandstø & Røe Mathisen (2022) note that Norwegian local journalist operating in that friction sometimes have been "criticized for being an uncritical lapdog, described as superficial and

deferential and one that skirts controversy" (p. 2). This proclivity for local patriotism may be one explanation for the somewhat surprising result of our study that criticism in the editorials was not primarily focusing on the local community, but on national issues.

Our results also raise some important questions for future research. Does today's output of critical statements and comments still make local journalism stand out as a more critical and analytical source of societal information than other local media output? Is it conveying more complex and illuminating criticism than what is found on algorithm-driven social media platforms or in hyperlocal media initiatives? If the critical reporting in local newspapers is more of a reflecting surface of criticism circulating in the local community than a result of research and journalistic analysis, how does local journalism distinguish itself from other local media initiatives? And on a final note, what could we reasonably expect from local journalism? What is a realistic balance between critical voices from the community and critical journalistic engagement and analysis, and at what point could local journalists be considered to "produce enough accountability reporting to fully engage and empower citizens" (Knobel, 2018, p. 81).

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Persona-driven journalism at Radio24syv

Ditte Okman's affective labor of performing an unashamed persona

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Abstract

The article proposes an analytical approach to the study of persona-driven journalism. Drawing on concepts from performance studies, the article builds an analytical framework for engaging with empirical material where the performance of the journalist's persona becomes a central part of the journalistic product. The analysis of journalist and radio host Ditte Okman identifies a journalism practice that draws on bodily expressivity, outspoken attitudes and the creation of a socializing media space. This practice is interpreted as affective labor of authenticity and sincerity which leads to the performance of an unashamed persona. The main contribution of the article is to conceptualize a methodological approach to the study of persona-driven journalism practices by drawing on ideas and concepts from performance studies, thus adding methodologically to journalism studies.

KEYWORDS
Persona-driven journalism, Radio24syv, Ditte Okman, affective labor, performance analysis, performativity, radio

Introduction

The journalist sneezes into the microphone on a radio show aired live. The journalist makes snoring sounds when the guest in the radio studio bores her. The journalist openly shares private life details, creating a confessional radio space. What's going on? When the journalist becomes a central part of the story, it makes sense to analyze such journalism as an example of persona-driven journalism (Moestrup, 2019) In this article, an analytical approach to the study of persona-driven journalism will be proposed, and it will be demonstrated how the approach can enrich our understanding of an important aspect of contemporary journalism, namely the function of the journalist inside the story and inside the mediated product.

In what follows, the radio station Radio24syv and the individual case, Ditte Okman, will be introduced, followed by a section on the theoretical foundations of the study. This section will draw on the work of scholars from performance studies and persona studies. The methodological section that follows will introduce the general approach of performance analysis as well as propose an analytical model that can be used to study journalistic practices rooted in the performance of a journalist's personality. In the analytical section, an analysis of Ditte Okman's practice will be conducted, after which a conclusion will sum up the findings and point to the general usefulness of applying performance analysis when studying persona-driven journalism.

Introduction to the case

The Danish radio station Radio24syv began as a political project and was shut down again by the politicians in 2019. Prior to its launch in November 2011, talk radio in Denmark was mainly dominated by the Danish Broadcasting Corporation. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss in detail the background and political negotiations that lay the groundwork for the birth of Radio24syv. However, briefly put, the station was part of the media bill of 2011-2014, where politicians agreed to make a call for applicants who were willing to establish a public service radio station that lived up to a number of specifications articulated in the media bill. An example of the specifications was this characterization of the upcoming radio station:

> With the intention of creating a broadly appealing and innovative news and talk radio station (...) and a particular requirement of having distinctive radio hosts.

(The Ministry of Culture, 2010b, own translation from Danish)

In the end, only one applicant applied for the radio frequency, and this was a consortium consisting of the media house Berlingske and the company PeopleGroup. Radio24syv began airing on 1st November 2011. Their strategy was in line with the mandate in the media bill and was expressed in three overall keywords: the management wanted to apply an *experimental* approach to radio, create radio programs that gave listeners an *experience*, and allow *new kinds of voices* to enter the radio frequencies. Hiring several hosts with no prior radio experience was an attempt to carry out the latter ambition. These people instead had cultural capital from other spheres of the Danish media and culture landscape and included satirist and actor Frederik Cilius Jørgensen (who performed on-air as the fictional character Kirsten Birgit Schiøtz Kretz Hørsholm), the convicted financier Klaus Riskær, novelist Martin Kongstad (Moestrup, 2022) and Ditte Okman, whose practice will be analysed in more detail in this paper. The station also hired a number of high-profile journalists as freelancers from other media institutions such as Poul Pilgaard Johnsen from Weekendavisen, a national weekly newspaper. Pilgaard Johnsen used the radio station as a place to engage in more personal, emotional, and subjectivity-driven journalism (Moestrup, 2021).

The station was subdivided into two overall segments: the news division and the programme division. In charge of programmes, two well-known and experienced Danish media personalities were hired, namely Mikael Bertelsen and Mads Brügger. Both were known for their experimental approaches to journalism (see for instance Reestorff, 2013; Isager, 2008; Bruun, 2012). Bertelsen was mainly known for his work in television shows such as "De Uaktuelle Nyheder" ("The Out-of-Date News", 2002) and "Den 11. time" ("The Eleventh Hour", 2007-2008), while Brügger, at the time of the launch, was mainly known for his work in print journalism, where he often adopted a gonzo-style approach in magazines including Virus and Euroman – a style he also used in experimental documentary film such as "The Ambassador" (2011) and "Cold Case Hammarskjöld" (2019). The radio station has been chosen as a case because it functioned as a disruption to the existing radio/media landscape. Firstly, it was a political project aimed at doing things differently and, secondly, the journalism practices carried out at the station ended up being somewhat different than the existing norms of radio journalism.

Ditte Okman is selected as a case because she is one of the norm-breaking journalists that personify the radio station's strategy, and because she hosted one of the most popular and most discussed

shows on the station, namely the weekly gossip show "Det vi taler om" ("What we talk about"). In the show, the host and 3-4 different panelists share the latest gossip and rumors about the rich and famous but also include gossip from less exposed industries, such as the business and financial world.

The case sampling done for the research presented in the article is composed of 32 episodes of the show "What we talk about"[1]. The purpose of the present article is not to carry out a comprehensive analysis of Okman's career but rather to investigate the journalistic products where Okman's persona performance seems most distinct and explicit. This has guided the sampling of the empirical material. The choice of using Radio24 as the source of empirical material with Okman is due to the strategic nature of the radio station as well as a way of demarcating the range of the empirical material to fit the current article. It would be possible to extend the analysis to Okman's other media platforms, including social media, and this would likely expand the insights into Okman's persona performances but would also be too extensive for the scope of the present article. For a more extensive analysis of Okman's media persona, I suggest consulting Moestrup (2019).

Before turning to the theoretical framework, it makes sense to briefly clarify how the work of Okman can be read as journalism. In the present research, I adopt the approach developed by scholars engaged in the blurring boundaries discussion on what journalism is and could be. The overall assumption is that there is no static definition of journalism but rather underline the ongoing fluidity and renegotiation of what counts as journalism:

> Journalism is not a solid, stable thing to point to, but a constantly shifting denotation applied differently depending on context. Whatever is distinct about journalism must be continuously constructed.
>
> (Carlson and Lewis, 2015: 2)

The quote points to the necessity of continuously researching how journalism is performed and unpack the ongoing definitional struggle which has modernists on one side and postmodernist on the other. The modernists emphasize the democratic functions of journalism (Peters & Broersma, 2017) and label journalists a watchdogs, gatekeepers and the fourth estate (Street, 2001; Deuze, 2005) while the postmodernists criticize the modernist position and especially the insistence on the special relationship between journalism and democracy (Nerone, 2013; Josephi, 2013). In the postmodern camp, we find for instance Barbie Zelizer who insist on journalism also being a ritual, a performance, a narrative and an interpretive community (Zelizer, 2004, 2017).

In the case of Okman's show, I adopt the postmodernist view to understand the show as part of the journalistic landscape. It is aired on a radio channel among other more traditional journalistic formats, and it includes journalistic approaches such as interviews with people related to publicly important events. Furthermore, the activity of gossiping, which can be claimed to the fundamental activity of the show, aligns the show with the category of talk radio, which means it is based almost exclusively on human talk and often rooted in opinionated talk verbalized by strong personalities (Faine, 2005; Wolfenden, 2012).

Theoretical foundation

The two overall guiding theoretical concepts in the analysis below, persona and performance, will now be introduced and discussed.

The use of the term "persona" to describe a certain type of journalism is inspired by the works of David Marshall. Marshall, who pioneered the field of "persona studies", differentiates persona from the notion of person in a communicative setting. Person implies internal dimensions of the self, whereas persona is the expression of these dimensions as "the external representations and manifestations of the self" (Marshall, 2016, p. 1427). As such, persona is a kind of show casing, a display or performance of sorts.

Marshall claims that one of the most significant cultural traits of contemporary society is the predominance and use of personas, or in Marshall's words, an increase in the "publicisation of the self" (Marshall 2013, p. 154). Marshall argues that persona studies should be seen as a "wider study of how self and public intersect" (Marshall 2013, p. 153). Engaging with the term as a variation of strategic communication underlines the close correspondence between persona and performance. Marshall argues that the manifestations of personas take place in a performative space as "a resignification of identity that relies on what is playable and performable in a public world" (Marshall and Barbour 2015, p. 5).

Developing the idea of persona as an analytical concept, the article subscribes to the work done by Philip Auslander. According to Auslander, the persona can be viewed as a contextualized self-construct made suitable for the specific performance situation and not necessarily similar to the person's self-presentation in other contexts. This last point is important in order to understand the distinction between the persona concept and the many instances of self-presentation. The persona is an actual tool that is used to "serve the needs of the performance" (Auslander, 2015). This context-based

reading of persona is fruitful when it comes to persona-driven journalism because journalism is always contextualized and framed by the institutions, genres and media platforms in which the journalist persona operates.

By reading personas through the lens of performance, Marshall underlines how agency is articulated in an ongoing negotiation of – or even power struggle over – what a journalist can be as also noted by the blurring boundaries discussions outlined above. This is highly inspired by the work done by Judith Butler. Drawing on notions concerning performative capabilities in language, Butler (1988, 1990, 1993) developed a theory of gender performativity, interpreting gender as something constructed, activated and maintained through reproduced linguistic and social practices and performances. Paraphrasing the famous words of Simone de Beauvoir, "one is not born, but rather, *becomes* a woman" (de Beauvoir, 1949, 2009), Butler suggests that there is no natural definition of gender. Gender is performed by ways of dressing, standing, walking, talking, acting, and learning, which in turn implies that a term such as gender can always be countered, altered, opposed, resisted or verified, acknowledged and consented. By labeling one of her most important books *Gender Trouble*, Butler underlines her intent to question the assumption that gender is somehow fixed or 'natural'. Her aim is to conceptualize gender as an ongoing definitional struggle.

This understanding of performatives can be fruitfully applied to the continuous negotiation of what journalism is. This can be done by drawing on the notion of performative acts, understood as "the stylized repetition of acts through time" (Butler, 1988, p. 520), and acknowledging these acts as important elements in any kind of definitional struggle or negotiation about the characteristics of a field. The staging, manifestation and continuous use of the journalist persona can essentially be seen as an ongoing acting out of stylized repetition of acts across time and media.

The conceptualization of the term performance used in this article can be understood as 'restored behaviour' (Schechner, 2013). Schechner argues that "restored behaviour is living behaviour treated as a film director treats strips of film", and it is "me behaving as if I am someone else" (Schechner, 1985, p. 36). This is not to be understood as a personality someone takes on, but rather as if there were "multiple me's in each person" (Ibid: p. 36), which makes this approach suitable for a study looking at the idea of a persona created from a multitude of doings. Furthermore, Schechner points to an important notion that will form a guiding principle in the analytical parts of this article: "focus is on the 'repertory', namely what people do in the activity of their doing it" (Schechner, 2013, p. 1). In

other words, the analysis is interested in the doing of creating and using a persona and examines the practices where this happens.

The notion of repertory comes from the work of performance studies scholar Diana Taylor, whose differentiation between *repertoire* and *archive* is useful when unpacking the persona performances. An archive refers to "supposedly enduring materials (i.e., texts, documents, buildings, bones)" while the repertoire consists of "embodied practice/knowledge (i.e., spoken language, dance, sports, ritual)" (Taylor, 2003, p. 19). The repertoire is whatever is being done to outline, establish, manifest and use a persona, for instance, a particular way of interviewing, a certain writing style, personal appearances, disclosing details from one's private life, certain bodily behavior etc., while the archive is the container in which these repertoires are collected and gathered into a somewhat solid shape. In the context of journalism, this would translate into a mediated product such as an article in a printed newspaper, a radio show or a social media update. In the persona context, the archive will consist of a repertoire of doings that underlines the persona of the doer.

Drawing on the idea of performance in the analysis of the persona is undertaken for three reasons. First of all, performance studies is interested in elements that are in a state of flux, connecting well to Marshall's notion that analyzing persona requires a broad spectrum of possible doings (Marshall, 2013). Secondly, the explorative nature of performance studies demands attending "to all modalities in play" (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, 1999, p. 12). Thirdly, by framing the analytical focus on performance, it becomes central not only to investigate the material but the actual doing of the material, how the material is performed.

While investigating the doing of the material, it becomes clear that the doing itself can be treated as a way to understand what has been labelled as affective labor (Hardt, 1999: 96). The term has been used to critically engage with modes of production (Hardt & Negri, 2004) as well as digital capitalism (Betancourt, 2010). In the present context, the term will however be applied to encapsulate and discuss the ways Okman performs her persona as an example of affective labor.

Methodological proposal: four useful concepts

In order to engage with the doings of our case, Ditte Okman, a performance analysis will be undertaken by activating four different concepts, each of which will shed light on the different aspects of persona manifestation. Performance analysis is known as an

interpretive, eclectic approach rooted entirely in the spectator's point of view, meaning that engaging with the material in an explorative and abductive manner creates the conceptualization of the analytical approach (Counsel and Wolf, 2001). The abductive exploration of the material leads to an analytical conceptualization consisting of four concepts. All four concepts have been chosen because they enable us to grasp the multitude of doings that are in use in the material. The concepts will be introduced briefly below. For a more extensive discussion of the concepts and a further developed analytical model, see Moestrup (2019).

The first concept is *theatricality*. Theatricality addresses a quality that relates to the world of theatre (Davis & Postlewait, 2003, p. 2). According to Davis and Postlewait, theatricality is what happens when material rooted in the material reality enters a relationship with the imaginary. Theatricalization often calls attention to whatever is being theatricalized (Kirby, 1965). As Féral points out, theatricality is by no means limited to theatre but should rather be understood as a possible manifestation that can come from both the doer and the spectator. Féral does not locate theatricality inside an object, a space or an agent but rather sees theatricality as "the result of a perceptual dynamics linking the onlooker with someone or something that is looked at" (Féral, 2002, p. 105). Theatricality is a useful concept when dealing with elements that are by nature or norm not theatrical, but which can be allocated the attribute of theatricality by the doer.

When looking for theatricality in the material, it is useful to ask questions such as: How does this seem dramatic to us? What has been done to make it look and feel like theatre?

The second concept can be labeled *body*. The performance analysis of persona aims to comprehend a multitude of doings including bodily doings. Here, a distinction between bodily exteriority and bodily interiority based on the work of David Graver is useful (Graver, 1997). The notion of bodily exteriority covers elements such as appearance, ways of dressing, gesture, manner, body language, posture and verbal utterances, while bodily interiority should include factors such as emotion, attitude, opinion, thought, belief and life approach. A bodily interior element such as an emotion can find an exterior expression in a gesture or verbal utterance. Showcasing a public self by, for instance, dressing up in the same kind of attire again and again can underline a certain life approach. The word interiority should not be understood as a kind of core essence or natural fervor. Similarly, exteriority should not be understood as necessarily more fake or more constructed than interiority. Both exteriority and interiority are likely to resonate between the stable, the fluid and   the   constructed.

When looking for body in the empirical material, it is useful to ask questions such as: How is the body used in the material? Which elements and practices make the body of the agent appear to us?

Thirdly, the concept of *voice* should not be understood literally as the human voice of the agent, since this way of addressing voice is part of the body concept as outlined above. Voice addresses what could be called the position and the point of view of the agent. Drawing on the work done by Auslander (2015) and Graver's outline of the actor's seven kinds of presence (Graver, 1997), the concept of voice addresses the multitude of possible first-person gestalts. This could for instance be a confessional "I" sharing details from her private life or a character-like mobilization that functions within a given framework and gestalts itself in specific ways to drive forward a narrative. It could also be a conversational voice manifesting itself through verbal interaction with other voices, even if these are fictional. By applying this concept of voice, it is possible to unpack the different ways in which personas can take on various appearances/ways of being present according to factors such as theme, genre, platform and media. This way of approaching voice also equips the analyst to better comprehend the use of alter ego and the general playful adaptation of identity that some personas seem to use.

When looking for voice in the empirical material, it is useful to ask questions such as: What kind of voice is being used? From which position does the agent speak? What is the function of this voice in the performance?

Finally, the concept of *spatiality* is useful in order to examine how personas use space and how spaces are part of persona manifestation. In his pivotal work *The Practice of Everyday Life,* de Certeau outlines his theory of space and the distinction between place and space (de Certeau, 1984). Place is often a physical location understood as an ordered structure, while space is created by the practices of living; in other words, space is practiced place. Drawing on the work of Michel de Certeau, it makes sense to differentiate between what could be labeled 'the media space' and 'the life space' and investigate the relations between space and place. The two spheres overlap and intertwine, as the life space, a geographic location such as a specific house or a street, is both a space that the persona's body can use as a performative scene/stage, as well as a space located inside a media space, such as the frame of a print article or the media space of a radio show. It can be argued that what is termed 'the life space' above is similar to de Certeau's notion of place. At the same time, it is important to remember that the life space of the journalist persona is not just the physical location but a used location that allows for the repertoire (Taylor) to occur, and later (or

simultaneously, if it is a live broadcast) these life space doings form a media space, which seems similar to de Certeau's notion of space (a practiced place).

When looking for spatiality in the empirical material, it is useful to ask questions such as: What kind of space is present in the material? How does the agent use this space? What is the relationship between life space and media space like?

As will be demonstrated in the analysis, the four concepts overlap somewhat and work best analytically when applied together. In the following analysis, the four concepts will be used to examine how the persona of Ditte Okman becomes manifested and activated across her work.

Analysis of Ditte Okman and her journalistic practice

The case to be analyzed is the practice of journalist Ditte Okman. At Radio24syv, Okman hosted the weekly gossip show "Det, vi taler om" ("What we talk about"). In the show, Okman discusses some of the week's biggest gossip stories with a panel of more or less regular participants, mostly other gossip reporters as well. The show was among the most popular shows at Radio24syv, and after the station shut down in 2019, the show continued its existence on the website of the tabloid newspaper BT. Below, it will be demonstrated how Okman's journalism practice takes on a transgressive nature in its performance of bodily expressivity and affect, and how her performance can be read as a persona-driven approach to doing journalism.

Bodily expressivity

Radio is an invisible media (Crisell, 1994, p. 3). We do not see the bodies in a radio show; we only hear them. But despite this media materiality, Okman's practice is still bodily expressive and becomes a fundamental component in creating the media space of the radio show. For instance, Okman often makes snoring noises if the panelists start to bore her. This happens especially if they speak for too long or say something too commonsense or politically correct. Okman wants the panelists to be honest, direct, devoid of filter and also, it seems, provocative. The snoring sounds are a way of cutting off a panelist and clearly signal for them to either stop talking or change the way they talk and/or what they are talking about. The snoring helps to move the show along and secure a steady pace in the discussions. It filters out information and descriptions in favor of opinions and emotions. Hence, Okman uses snoring sounds as a

way of guiding the voices of the other panelists, and points to her own voice and the position from which it is speaking. The snoring also works as a signal to the audience. It is a way for Okman not only to display her persona (being a no-bullshit kind of character) but also to signal that she is in control and considers the audience's expectations.

Furthermore, Okman is very explicit when it comes to other bodily sounds as well. She sneezes, laughs and coughs without any attempt to tone down these bodily (re-)actions. On the contrary, she almost exaggerates them in a theatrical manner, thus performing an act of 'the showing of the doing' (Schechner, 2013, p. 28). When a 'showing of the doing' is carried out, whatever is being done is pointed out and gets special attention in the context. By exaggerating bodily sounds, Okman emphasizes them and makes them stand out. This is furthermore reiterated because 'the showing of the doing' is a recurring element in the show. This way of behaving on-air elucidates Okman's persona and makes it assume a direct and straightforward form, communicating honesty and authenticity, as well as a provocative and rather reckless attitude. A radio host would normally avoid these bodily sounds, but this is certainly not the case in Okman's practice, which more or less adopts the opposite approach.

Voice and language use

Bodily behavior is accompanied by Okman's distinctive voice and way of using language which is interpreted as part of the body concept introduced above. According to Lawaetz (2014), it makes sense to differentiate between a semantic and a performative level when it comes to the study of the human voice. The sematic level deals with what is being said, while the performative level deals with how something is being said, including tonality, tempo, modulation and voice characteristics (Lawaetz, 2014, p. 9-10 and p. 177-192). Okman's voice is characterized by its rather hoarse quality. This can give the impression that Okman has more or less just woken up and gone from bed to radio studio, thus underlining the somewhat intimate elements in her persona elucidation. Sometimes the voice seems affectionate while at other times it is drawling, adding an additional layer of intimate and personal connotations (Van Leeuwen, 1999). The tone of the voice is accentuated by the way Okman uses language on the radio show. Often, she uses everyday language that seems direct, to the point and unscripted. The phrases seem to "come from the heart" and the mundane language use is accentuated by profound use of swearing and obscene language. Okman can be confrontational in her language use, both towards the

panelists and towards those who are part of the gossip stories she covers. However, the confrontational element is almost always supplemented with a somewhat affectionate and/or humorous element. An example of this can be found in the episode aired on August 31, 2018. Okman introduces the contents of the show and reveals that a specific story will be outlined by one of panelists. Instead of saying "outline", Okman uses the anglicism "fill us in" (in Danish "fylde os ind", but it came out as "fill us out" (in Danish "fylde os ud"), which can be perceived as sexually connotative in Danish. Everyone in the studio starts cheering and laughing, prompting Okman to exclaim, "Oh, my, you people are all so horny!". A few sentences later, Okman once again alludes to sexuality and body by introducing the only male panelist in the episode with the words: "it is nice to have a little penis on the show". He interrupts her and says, "a little?" to which Okman replies, "I mean, a huge penis, of course" ("What we talk about", episode aired August 31, 2018, timecode 00:00 - 02:20).

The semantic level is characterized by a preoccupation with bodily behaviors. These bodily expressivities can come from Okman herself or be related to either the panelists or the topics being discussed. Okman, for instance, introduces an episode of the show by saying, "This is going to be a great show. I need to pee. Which is a good sign" ("What We Talk About", episode aired August 10th, 2018, 03:10). In this example, Okman points to her own body and thus her presence in the show, not just as a voice, which is naturally the most dominant sound element in talk radio, but also as a body. Okman seems to say: I am here because I have a bodily sensation, and I share this with my listeners to signal that I am here. It is a way of sharing an intimate detail, which some might find shameful, but it is also a way of leveling with the listener and producing a mood that is mundane, homely and unashamed. In the following episode, when a panelist briefly mentions that he recently had an ear operation, Okman immediately seizes the opportunity to get him to disclose as many details as possible, stressing "the grosser, the better" ("What We Talk About", episode aired August 17th, 2018, 03:28). Once again, the bodily element presents itself both as an attitude and a recurring element content-wise. In this case, it almost takes the form of a shared life experience that brings the panelists closer to each other and the audience. They dare to share, and in doing so, they materialize their personas to the audience.

Another recurring topic among the panelists is their sexuality. It is often stated (for instance, in the episode aired August 17, 2018) that several of the male panelists are gay. The focus on intimate and at times taboo-laden topics allows the listeners to become familiar with the panelists, but it is also a way of emphasizing that the voices

we hear on-air come from bodily beings. In addition to panelists alluding to their sexuality, there is also recurring mention of who the panelists and Okman would like to have sex with, as well as explicit mention of the panelists' genitals.

To gossip

Referring to the panelists' genitals is a way of emphasizing the bodily focus that seems to pervade the show. This is also the case when the host and panelists discuss current gossip topics, making direct reference to the people involved, which is a common characteristic of gossip and celebrity journalism. Bergmann (1993) defines gossip as informal, private communication between two or more parties about a third, absent party's private affairs, often with a focus on embarrassing or scandalous behavior (Bergmann, 1993). This people-focused coverage allows for a preoccupation with bodily behaviors, bodily appearance and bodily mishaps of the people being covered. Sexuality, which is a recurrent theme, as already indicated, is also an archetypal gossip theme (e.g., Jerslev, 2010). Furthermore, research in celebrity journalism has demonstrated how focus is often on the private lives of celebrities (Turner, 2004, 2013), making gossip an often integrated element in the reporting on celebrities. Okman's show is to some extent an example of celebrity journalism as its primary topics relate to national or international celebrities. However, the show also gossips about topics and people who do not belong to the traditional celebrity sphere, which is mainly rooted in the entertainment industries. Thus, the show is primarily a gossip show and only secondarily a celebrity journalism show.

The media materialities of radio, and particularly talk radio, naturally prescribe that the human voice is the main component of the show. "What we talk about" also exhibits a connection between the main materiality of the show, i.e., human talk, and the topic and focus of the show, i.e., gossip and rumour. Gossiping is a particular speech genre and essentially a human way to talk. In other words, "What we talk about" is a show about gossip, but it is also a show where the host and panelists do just that: gossip. Drawing on Austin (1962), Jerslev (2010) has argued that gossip is a performative speech act because it produces what it says. It is not possible to talk about gossip without creating gossip (Jerslev, 2010, p. 25). Talk radio necessitates that the talk being done is interesting, provocative and/or resonates with the listeners (Faine, 2005). Broadcast talk always needs to be accessible to the intended audience (Scannell, 1991). In the case of Okman and "What we talk about", this is done by emphasizing the bodily expressivity of the host and the panelists, as well as providing a bodily focus when dealing with the gossiping on the

show. Bodily expressivity is used to create accessibility for the intended audience. It resonates with gossip show listeners who will likely expect a direct or confrontational approach. This could be done in a number of ways, but Okman's persistence on a bodily approach is a way of elucidating her persona and making her gossip approach stand out. This is further emphasized by her recurring focus on bodily elements in the topics being covered. The bodily becomes a trademark for Okman.

Creating a socialising space

Okman's bodily expressivity, including her informal use of language, is one element in the transformation of the space in which the show takes place, but the socializing space is also partly created by Okman's way of using the panelists. The show was recorded in an ordinary radio studio at Radio24syv in Copenhagen, but by being bodily present and adopting an informal attitude when speaking and addressing the panelists, Okman transforms the ordinariness of the radio studio and creates an atmosphere and a space that resemble an informal dinner party or perhaps even a Christmas party with colleagues. This mood is further accentuated by the show being broadcast live on Friday afternoons just as people are moving from the sphere of their everyday working lives to the typically more casual weekend life.

The atmosphere in the studio is mostly friendly and joyful, but sometimes also characterized by a sarcastic or somewhat confrontational tone. The studio generally presents itself as a socializing space, though. The host and panelists seem to enjoy each other's company and do not mind addressing private issues or gossip related to themselves, as discussed above.

Okman often refers to the panelists as "my second family", thus emphasizing being in joyful and important company. The feeling of joyful company in a socializing space is also manifested by Okman inviting the same panelists again and again. Okman usually has three individuals on the panel, but she often selects between the same five-six individuals. These individuals include a theatre critic, a gossip reporter, a communications advisor and a chief-editor at a gossip magazine, which means that the panelists usually belong to the sphere of gossip and celebrity journalism.

Another socializing and community-building aspect between the host and panelists is evident when the show contacts a person outside the studio. This was done in the episode aired August 10, 2018, where one of the topics is a money-laundering scandal at Danske Bank (Denmark's largest bank). Okman chooses to focus on the whistleblower who leaked the information to the public. During the

show, Okman calls a lawyer who specializes in employment legislation and interviews him about the whistleblower's contractual obligations. This example illustrates that the show is not only about tabloid gossip and celebrity journalism but also deals with political issues, which seems a bit uncommon on a gossip show. However, when the topic is political, there is often a focus on a specific person or the relationship between different individuals, and political topics are often treated with the same straightforward attitude as other topics. The person-oriented approach is also used for the money-laundering topic, where the sole focus is on the whistleblower. The socializing aspect is palpable as the interview progresses. The panelists all participate in the interview and take turns asking questions and following up on each other's questions and comments. This collective form of interviewing often takes place when the show uses an external source. This repertoire of collective interviewing becomes a defining element in the show (the "archive" in Taylor's terminology). The panel and host almost seem to merge and act as one live organism with the same goal and approach in mind, creating both a conversational and a collective voice while maintaining the persona of Okman as the central character.

Conclusion: the unashamed persona as a piece of effective labor

Based on the analysis above, we can now claim that the journalism practice of Okman can be described as using an 'unashamed persona'. According to the Oxford Dictionary, feeling shameful means being preoccupied with feelings of humiliation, especially when the humiliation is the result of foolish, inappropriate or wrong behavior. To feel un-shameful means the opposite, i.e., paying very little attention to feelings of humiliation and regret as a result of wrong behavior. By performing an un-ashamed persona, Okman presents a persona that does not care much about what other people think. Or rather, she probably wants people to think of her as an outspoken, straightforward and perhaps sincere personality who can deliver gossip journalism in an entertaining way.

By putting this label on the attitude, we emphasize that Okman is performing against a norm that could be called the shameful. Following Butler, Okman's bodily expressivity and lucid behavior, which in Butler's terminology would be Okman's "stylized repetition of acts" (Butler, 1988, p. 520), work as a way of negotiating what is deemed shameful in media and in society in general. One argument could be that Okman expands the space of what is possible as a radio host by performing her persona. However, another argument could be that Okman is merely pointing to the existence of the

shameful as a category by attempting to transgress it. Her attitude continuously produces and reactivates the shameful in her audience. Viewed this way, Okman has no intention of breaking down norms or boundaries when it comes to acceptable behavior. On the contrary, it is in her interest that her performance is continuously read as unashamed and that the category of the shameful is maintained.

Contemporary affect theory can be used to discuss the outcomes of Okman's persona performance. According to affect theory, emotions are understood as creating relations between us rather than situated inside us. Affect theory is less interested in what emotions *are* and more interested in what they *do.* Sara Ahmed's work suggests that emotions are "the very effect of the surfaces or boundaries of bodies and world" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 118). Ahmed proposes viewing emotions not as residing within the individual as psychological dispositions; instead, "we need to consider how they work, in concrete and particular ways, to mediate the relationship between the psychic and the social, between the individual and the collective" (Ibid: p. 119).

Conceptualizing emotions in this way means reading emotions as relational and performative. Okman's persona practices, rooted in bodily expressivity, outspoken attitudes and the use of a collective, socializing space, support the notion that affect is a useful term when addressing how a body situates itself among other bodies. Emotions bind subjects together (Ahmed, 2004, p. 119), and this is what happens when Okman creates her socializing space in the studio. By using her affective strategies, Okman rubs off on the panelists in the studio as well as the listeners. This causes her persona to become elucidated, because the act of elucidating and using a persona is also a way of surfacing one body among other bodies by making one distinct compared to others. However, when Okman creates her socializing space, she is also creating a space that only includes some parts of the public while excluding others. This could be said to be a basic characteristic of community-building in general; however, in the case of Okman and her affective persona's performance strategies, the exclusion of some individuals is perhaps more profound. Doing persona-driven journalism brings the journalist to the front. Some members of the public will respond to this staging of self positively while others will feel negative about it. In the case of Okman, where the persona-driven practices are rooted in the performance of the unashamed and a clearly affective approach, the potential audience subscribing to this approach is likely to be smaller than the audience that prefers a more neutral approach.

By having a persona-driven approach that is rooted in the use of affect, Okman carries out what Hardt has termed "affective labor". Hardt defines affective labor as labor that "is immaterial, even if it is corporeal and affective, in the sense that its products are intangible: a feeling of ease, wellbeing, satisfaction, excitement, passion – even a sense of connectedness or community" (Hardt, 1999, p. 96). These characteristics resonate well with Okman's affective persona performance. It is a kind of labor that produces a persona by calling for affective responses in the audience, underlining the notion of affect as relational. Okman's unashamed persona performance, including the bodily expressive, the lucid behavior and the socializing aspect, points to the need for affective reactions. She performs these reactions herself. She expects it from the panelists. And all her media texts analyzed above are clearly constructed to trigger affective responses from her audience.

Okman's affective strategies create a persona that will provoke and repel some people. These strategies might seem for some members of the audience to add to the psychological depth of her persona. Others might see it as merely a carnevalistic show. No matter how the outcome is interpreted, the affective strategies include Okman's staging herself as a gossiper with outspoken behavior. By using herself bodily and emotionally, she is certainly neither a passive bystander nor a neutral sender of information but rather a creator of tension, conflict, discussion, laughter and outspokenness, all of which resonate with affective labor.

The result of Okman's affective labor and the staging of herself is a variation of journalism that is *played out* as authentic and sincere but not necessarily *is* authentic and sincere. Addressing the notion of sincerity, Scannell has pointed to the performative paradox (Scannell, 1996, p. 58). Scannell builds on Goffman's understanding of performance, arguing that an individual must perform sincerity according to criteria that reflect specific social settings. However, a person's appearance and behavior will not be deemed sincere if they are perceived by others as a performance, hence the paradox. In the case of Okman, it is not possible to conclude whether or not the performance of the sincere and the authentic is convincing to an audience or if it is interpreted as put-on and feigned. The ambition here is not to conclude whether or not Okman avoids Scannell's performative paradox but merely to point to Okman's performative practices. Additionally, in the case of Okman, perhaps Scannell's performative paradox is not even relevant. Perhaps Okman's audience is fully aware that the performance of sincerity and authenticity is merely put-on and feigned, and this may be the reason they follow and enjoy her work. They enjoy the performance in itself. In other words, when employing persona-driven performance as the

approach to do journalism, it is not necessarily a matter of true sincerity vs. put-on sincerity but whether or not the performance works.

NOTES

[1] The show stopped airing when Radio24syv closed down. However, after having been reborn on various platforms, the show is currently (April 2023) being aired on the website of the Danish tabloid newspaper B.T. and can be accessed here: https://www.bt.dk/detvitalerom

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Online text-based focus groups in journalism studies

Journalistica: The Methods Section

In this section, Journalistica puts a spotlight on research methods used in journalism studies and/or journalism practice.

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KEYWORDS
qualitative, focus groups, online, text-based, sensitive, synchronous

1. Description of the method

Online focus groups refer to a family of methods that are related to offline (i.e., in-person) focus groups, but where participants can participate from a place of their preference. Online focus groups can be divided into text-based (e.g., chat) and non-text-based (e.g., Zoom) (e.g., Janghorban et al., 2014), and the former can further be divided into synchronous (i.e., live) and asynchronous (i.e., participants contribute with comments at a time of their preference) focus groups. This paper focuses on text-based synchronous focus groups. This type of online focus groups is usually conducted in an online chat-forum. Such a forum can in principle take place in accessible and familiar messaging services such as Messenger or WhatsApp. Similar to offline focus groups, the aim of the text-based online focus groups is to produce data about a given topic from group interviews where the discussion and interaction between group members becomes particularly salient and relevant to the researcher (Janghorban et al., 2014).

Like offline focus groups, the discussion is primarily based on a standardized question guide, supported by follow-up questions. However, vignettes (e.g., pictures or short news articles) can be included to stimulate the discussion. In general, creating a comfortable, unthreatening and stimulating setting for the discussion is important for all types of focus groups, since such a setting facilitates open and engaging discussions (Kitzinger, 1994). 6-8 participants

are generally considered an optimal number of participants for off-line focus groups, as this number of participants balances diversity with opportunity for all participants to share their thoughts, feelings and ideas (Krueger & Casey, 2002). However, online text-based focus groups sometimes include a higher number of participants to increase the level of interaction. In this case, discussions may be less controlled by the moderator. Participants may initiate discussions of multiple topics simultaneously, which may be beneficial for some studies (Stewart & Williams, 2005).

2. Example of use

Schmitz Weiss and Higgins Joyce (2009) examined how globalization and technologies have changed how journalists are working using online synchronized focus groups in Latin America, North America and Europe. The authors used a chatroom called Tapped In. By choosing text-based online focus groups, they were able to collect data without having to travel across the globe. Furthermore, they could connect participants across cultures in the same focus groups, providing a novel approach to discussing the impact of globalization in journalism.

Thomsen et al. (In review) used online text-based focus groups to examine how practitioners can improve communication of pesticides and biocides. Pesticides and biocides may generally be a topic of low relevance to the general public, potentially leading to less interaction among participants compared to offline focus groups. However, online text-based focus groups allowed us to reach participants that lacked the time to participate in offline focus groups (people in rural areas, parents) or preferred the anonymity of text-based platforms (e.g., people with low degree of trust). The reduced cost also enabled us to include more focus groups than would be possible with offline focus groups. Furthermore, online text-based focus groups may reduce social desirability bias compared to offline focus groups, creating an anonymous environment within the text-based platform where participants could openly write how and why they used pesticides and biocides. To address the expected low level of interaction among participants, participants were exposed to vignettes (e.g., short news stories about pesticides and biocides) with sometimes conflicting information, aimed at stimulating discussion in the text-based online focus group.

3. Main advantages and challenges of using the method

There are three main advantages of using online text-based focus groups: 1) reduced resources (price and time consumption) in conducting the focus group(s), allowing for e.g. an increase in the number of focus groups (Stewart & Williams, 2005). Furthermore, as people answer and discus in writing, less time, if any, is used to transcribe the discussions, although comments and notes of behavior (e.g., hesitations) taken during the focus group discussions can be added at a later stage; 2) Recruitment may be easier for certain groups. Offline focus groups often experience issues with non-attendees (Rabiee, 2004). Furthermore, recruitment of certain groups may be difficult due to lack of time or means for transportation. In addition, some participants may feel uncomfortable in an unfamiliar social situation (Stewart & Williams, 2005);3) As mentioned above, sensitive topics can be easier to discuss in an anonymous, text-based chat (Woodyatt et al., 2016).

One important drawback of focus group interviews conducted as text-based chats is that moderators and other participants are not able to perceive the tone and body language of each other. Conducting online focus group interviews therefore carries the risk of misinterpretation. Compared to offline focus group interviews, non-written cues and interactions (e.g., verbal expressions) are therefore not available for analysis in online, text-based focus group interviews. The lack of non-written cues limits the possibility for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of participants underlying meaning. For example, it may be more difficult to capture irony or emotional responses, which may be particularly relevant for some studies. Although the automatically generated transcriptions initially saves time, themes and patterns often begin to emerge when the researcher transcribes the discussion (Rabiee, 2004). Therefore, analyzing online text-based focus group discussions often begins at a later stage compared to offline, in-person focus group interviews. However, analyzing such discussions may require more time for the researcher to become familiar with the material.

Another potential drawback is that text-based chat may lead to lower engagement or interaction between participants. To minimize such risk, discussion could be stimulated, for example by using vignettes (i.e., visual stimulus material) or by including more participants, as mentioned earlier. Furthermore, researchers should consider whether the given topic is of a nature that can generate discussion among participants in online text-based environments (e.g., relevant or sensitive to participants).

4. Ethical considerations

As in other studies, both qualitative and quantitative, the anonymity of participants must be considered, especially if platforms on participants' own devices, such as WhatsApp, are used. All participants can in principle take screenshots of discussions in the focus groups, providing little anonymity for people using their own name. Therefore, researchers should consider anonymizing participants during data collection, especially for sensitive topics. Furthermore, researchers planning studies using online text-based focus groups should examine legal (e.g., GDPR) and ethical requirements, and they should acquire informed consent from participants.

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Psychophysiological methods

Journalistica: The Methods Section

In this section, Journalistica puts a spotlight on research methods used in journalism studies and/or journalism practice.

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1. Description of the method

Psychophysiological measurements trace and record bodily physiological phenomena to draw inferences about psychological processes happening in the mind. In communication research, psychophysiological measures have been used to understand different cognitive and emotional processes during media use (Potter & Bolls, 2012). Psychophysiological measures are especially useful to study causal media effects because they provide an implicit measure of the mental life of media users, are minimally invasive, and can register changes over time.

There exists a range of different psychophysiological approaches. One is to study the body's electrophysical activity in the central and peripheral nervous systems. Central nervous system measures include electroencephalography (EEG), that measures electric activation in the brain. Peripheral nervous system measures include heart rate, facial expressions, and electrodermal activity (EDA) that

measures changes in the skin's electric conductance. Another commonly used psychophysiological approach involves recording people's eye movements to infer cognitive processes such as visual attention, cognitive load, and decision making. In reading research, behavioral eye movement data are often co-registered with more neurological measurements such as EEG or functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to obtain detailed results about e.g., word processing and memory (Simola, 2011).

2. Example of use

Although psychophysiological measurements are underutilized in journalism research, psychophysiological methods have been used to study aspects of journalism reception (Heiselberg, 2021). EDA has been used to study the effect of tabloid and standard packaging styles on calm and arousing news stories (Grabe, Lang, & Zhao, 2003) and to study gender differences in responses to negative news (Soroka, Gidengil, Fournier, & Nir, 2016). Eye tracking measures have been used to study how news consumption influences learning across different platforms (Kruikemeier, Lecheler & Boyer's, 2018), and to study audience evaluations of news. Some have studied news visualizations (including information graphics), where results showed that news consumers make use of such visualizations, regardless of the platform on which the visual is published (Holsanova, Holmberg & Holmqvist, 2009; de Haan, Kruikemeier, Lecheler, Smit, & van der Nat, 2017). Others have studied how digital news users mostly focus on text rather than multimedia elements (e.g., pictures or videos) (Hassler, Maurer, & Oschatz, 2019). The use of EEG in journalism studies is spare, but Heiselberg (2021) applied EEG measurement, with promising results in a pilot study, to analyze how digital journalism is processed.

3. Main advantages and challenges of using the method

Psychophysiological methods can provide considerable contributions to journalism research. On a basic level, a thorough understanding of how users react to and process multimedia messages across different target audiences can yield vital information about how to design such messages to obtain some desired behavioral effect. The main advantage of psychophysiological measures is that they give insight into the mental processes which are partly involuntary. Therefore, psychophysiological measures as opposed to self-reported measures are less contaminated by social desirability, participants' answering style or interpretation of questionnaire item

wording, limits of participant memory, or, equally important, by observer bias. In addition, psychophysiological measures can be recorded automatically and continuously in real time without disturbing the participant's natural behavior. On a higher level, psychophysiological methods can also enable journalism research to uncover insights into the psychological mechanisms and cognitive states that guide the meaning production of audience members.

The main challenge with psychophysiological measures is to correctly determine the cognitive function of a certain physiological measure. Simply put, if an eye tracking study shows that participants devote a lot of fixations (visual attention) to a text passage, does this indicate reader interest or reader confusion? Another example would be to determine the positive or negative emotional valence of an increased skin response. The response itself signals an increase in arousal level but does not readily differentiate between a negative or positive experience. This challenge could be mitigated using questionnaires and retrospective interviews (Gidlöf, Holmberg & Sandberg, 2012). Furthermore, a lack of adherence to research protocols and guidelines can seriously jeopardize the meaningful use of these methodologies. Reliable results require controlled experiments with close monitoring of variables, large enough sample sizes, and expertise in electrical signal processing. Moreover, the experimental preparations and procedures during testing, such as setting up the equipment, placing electrodes, and testing the signals are time-consuming (Heiselberg, 2021). Lastly, some equipment, such as EEG measurement, is costly. One suggestion for junior researchers would be to collaborate with labs that already use this methodology. In a Nordic setting, such labs are the Humanities Lab at Lunds University, The BASS Lab at Business and Social Science at University of Southern Denmark, Cognition and Behaviour Lab at Business and Social Science, Aarhus University or Experience Lab at Åbo Akademi University.

4. Ethical considerations

Given the psychological effects studied in psychophysiological research, this type of research should operate according to ethical principles laid down by local governing bodies. As in all lab experiments, it is important to obtain informed consent, respect participants' right to withdraw, and consider physical contact between the researcher and participants. According to GDPR, most psychophysiology is considered sensitive personal data, which requires researchers to adequately motivate the collection, processing, and storage of these data.

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Discourse analysis in journalism studies

Journalistica: The Methods Section

In this section, Journalistica puts a spotlight on research methods used in journalism studies and/or journalism practice.

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1. Description of the method

'Discourse analysis' is an umbrella term used to describe a series of overlapping theoretical and methodological schools that share an overarching commitment to examining how humans construct meaning, identity, and cultural change (Fairclough, 2003; Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002; Laclau, 2014; Unger et al., 2016). Rather than sharing a specific set of methods, discourse analysts share, what Jorgensen and Phillips (2002) describe as, "certain key premises about how entities such as 'language' and 'the subject' are to be understood. They also have in common the aim of carrying out *critical* research" (p. 2, original emphasis). This means not only describing the world, but also engaging in processes of social change.

In practice, discourse analysis typically begins with the compilation of an archive of texts (understood in a broad sense), which is then used to analyse the discursive construction of meaning, identities, power, antagonism, and social change (Fairclough et al., 2011; Torfing, 2005). This might involve interviews, news articles, ethnographic observations, academic studies, policy documents, speeches, or even survey responses (Hansen & Sørensen, 2005; Unger et al., 2016; Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Importantly, the aim of studying texts is never to do so in a vacuum, but rather to understand them as part of wider structural formations and historical shifts.

Two important schools of discourse analysis are Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), also known as Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), and Discourse Theory (DT), also known as the Essex School of Discourse Theory. While the former is associated with scholars such as Norman Fairclough (2003, 2013) and Ruth Wodak (2014), the latter is primarily associated with the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2014).

CDA and DT originate from within different academic disciplines, namely linguistics (CDA) and political philosophy (DT). This has resulted in key distinctions, notably an emphasis within CDA on discourse as *language* and a focus within DT on discourse as *socio-political relations.* This is reflected in key definitions, with Fairclough (1995, p. 9) describing discourse as "the use of language seen as a form of social practice" and Laclau and Mouffe (2014, p, 91) defining it as "any practice establishing a relation among elements."

Despite differences, CDA and DT share many methodological and theoretical perspectives. As Torfing (2005) concludes: "when it comes to the actual analysis of social and political discourse, the differences between Fairclough and Laclau and Mouffe are small" (p. 9).

2. Example of use

CDA and DT have been used to study journalism and its role in shaping political agendas, cultural norms, social identities, and discursive formations for decades (Dahlberg & Phelan, 2011; Fairclough, 1995; Richardson, 2008, 2010). This includes research into journalistic coverage of wars (Nohrstedt et al., 2000), sports (Riggs et al., 1993), crime (Teo, 2000) national referendums (Zappettini & Krzyżanowski, 2019), and immigration (Baker et al., 2008). However, rather than being published in academic journals associated with journalism studies, these works have often featured in dedicated discourse analytical outlets, such as *Critical Discourse Studies* or *Discourse & Society*. This has led to discourse analysis largely residing at the margins of journalism studies as an academic discipline.

In recent years, however, interest in discourse analysis within journalism studies has grown, not least due to a rise in discursive perspectives on journalistic roles and boundaries. Scholars such as Carlson (2016, 2018) and Hanitzsch and Vos (2017) argue that journalism should fundamentally be understood as a discursively constituted field, the boundaries of which are continuously negotiated through discursive struggle. From this perspective, "*discourse* is the principal vehicle through which journalists construct their professional norms and ideals" (2019, p. 397, original emphasis).

To study journalistic roles and boundaries, Carlson (2016) introduces the notion of *metajournalistic discourse*, encompassing a rhetorical "site in which actors publicly engage in processes of establishing definitions, setting boundaries, and rendering judgments about journalism's legitimacy" (p. 350). Through discursive practices – from official rulemaking to informal knowledge sharing – the limits around what journalism 'is' and ought to be are continuously (re-)drawn, not only by journalists, but also by "such diverse actors and sites as government officials, historians, entertainment media, and educators" (Carlson 2016, 356). By studying discursive practices – for example how journalists and other actors define key journalistic values – scholars can critically unpack both changing societal norms as well as shifting internal and external pressures of journalism.

Using the concept of metajournalistic discourse, scholars have in recent years analyzed the discursive construction of journalistic boundaries in relation to topics such as artificial intelligence (Moran & Shaikh, 2022), racism (Dindler & Blaagaard, 2021) and fake news (Carlson, 2018). In my own work – situated in a Danish context – I have studied how journalists, media experts, government officials, and social media company representatives reflect on journalism's role in combatting or potentially contributing to fake news and misinformation as a threat to democracy (Farkas, 2023a; 2023b).

3. Main advantages and challenges of using the method

When studying journalism, a key strength of both CDA and DT is their ability to bring questions of power, antagonism, and exclusion to the forefront. By emphasising the contingency of social relations, CDA and DT draw our attention to the complex ways in which power relations shape both journalism as a profession and news as a construct. This includes questions such as: Who has the authority to define the limits of 'good' journalism? Which voices and agendas are deemed 'newsworthy'? And who is defined as part of an 'us' in relation to an excluded 'other'?

A challenge of conducting discourse analysis – particularly drawing on DT – can be the lack of clear methodological guidelines for how to collect and analyse data. Some scholars have criticised discourse analysis on this point, arguing for clearer "rules for how empirical discourse analysis should or should not be carried out" (Marttila, 2016, p. 8). While this line of criticism certainly has merits, it is important to remember that neither CDA nor DT aim to provide step-by-step methods. Rather, these schools seek to provide

theoretical frameworks and conceptual vocabularies for critically unpacking the construction of socio-political relations.

4. Ethical considerations

Discourse analysis itself involves few research ethical considerations, though some forms of data in CDA and DT might. This includes interviews and participant-observations, which involve questions of informed consent and potentially also questions about sensitive personal data, for example around ethnicity, health information, or political opinions.

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Kulturjournalistikens världar: Om kulturbevakningens politiska, globala och digitale dimensioner
Af Kristina Riegert, Anna Roosvall og Andreas Widholm. Nordic Academic Press, 2022. 358 s.

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I journalistisk praksis starter man med det vigtigste: Det er en meget vellykket bog, de tre svenske (kultur)journalistikforskere Kristina Riegert, Anna Rooswall og Andreas Widholm har begået. Den er velskrevet, velkomponeret og funderet i et ganske omfattende empirisk materiale, der omfatter kulturjournalistiske tekster fra såvel svensk presse som tv og med nedslag i henholdsvis 1985, 1995, 2005 og 2015. De mange og mangefacetterede analytiske resultater er overbevisende, og de diskussioner og perspektiver, som de tre forskere tilføjer, er alle prægnante. Der er meget at komme efter, hvis man interesserer sig for feltet, hvad jeg "tilfældigvis" gør.

Meget groft sagt handler bogen om kulturjournalistikkens udvikling (i Sverige særskilt men med affinitet til beslægtede lande, herunder Danmark) og derfor også om de ændrede vilkår, som feltet får med avis-offentlighedens pressede økonomi, digitaliseringen og professionaliseringen af kulturjournalistikken (som de tre benævner "journalistificering"). Og man må tilføje: Med globaliseringen, som kulturjournalistisk manifesterer sig som en transnational tendens, der ikke mindst i svensk regi er bemærkelsesværdig. Det er selvsagt ikke alene i Sverige, at interessen for det finkulturelle daler til fordel for en øget og permanent interesse for transnational populærkultur (der dog primært er bundet til den vestlige kulturkreds og den amerikanske i særdeleshed), men forskydningen får en særlig accent, som de tre forskere nu ikke gør et større nummer ud af, fordi bogen er skrevet til en decideret svensk kontekst. Jeg finder det egentlig sympatisk i disse internationaliseringstider at fokusere på det nationale (paradoksalt nok med at bogens fokus akkurat er det transnationale), men i fremstillingen glemmer de tre forfattere efter min mening at gøre opmærksom på nogle nationalt særegne

forhold, herunder (kultur)politiske, som er uudtalte præmisser for en stor del af bogens ræsonnementer.

Jeg starter med kort at annoncere disse, derpå følger en redegørelse for nogle af bogens vigtige iagttagelser og brugbare begrebshåndteringer, hvorefter jeg afrunder med en efterlysning af et specifikt begrebsapparat, udelukkende for at sætte den glimrende bog i relief.

For en svensker er det en selvfølgelighed, men det er det ikke for en dansker: Det moderne Sverige udmærker sig ved at have en særlig historie, der ultrakort fortalt ligger i kombinationen af udenrigspolitisk neutralitet (der "starter" allerede under 2. Verdenskrig), velfærdsstaten og store industriforetagender, der har haft store dele af verden som marked. Man får paradoksalt nok en kombination af national autonomi og omvendt en klar verdensvendthed, et engagement i den internationale verden, som klart overgår den danske efter befrielsen. Min pointe er den, at det transnationale ligger i det moderne Sveriges DNA, hvorfor man eksempelvis i så mange år har haft et tv-kulturprogram som Cobra (2001-2017 – et udenrigskulturprogram i primetime, der præsenterede en meget bred vifte af svenske kulturelle artefakter og fænomener), samtidig med at svenske seere præsenteres for internationale tendenser. Og det med en horisont, der ikke begrænser sig til den vestlige. Kristina Riegert har et meget informativt kapitel om Cobra, og under læsningen slog det mig, at selv om vi har meget at takke DR for som public service-institution at udvide danskernes horisont, så er Cobra som koncept for internationalt og transnationalt til at blive en succes i en dansk kontekst.

En anden tilbagevendende pointe i bogen er en udpræget tendens til, at kultursiderne er fulde af artikler, der tematiserer det politiske og samfundsmæssige problemstillinger. I Sverige er der så at sige tradition for at samtænke det politiske, kulturelle og samfundsmæssige, men jeg mener ikke, at vi har en tilsvarende sidestilling i den danske presseoffentlighed, hvor kulturstof selvsagt kan tematisere mere end det æstetiske og det universalistiske kulturbegreb, og vi ser det måske i stigende grad – omend der er et stykke vej op til "svenske tilstande". Desværre. I øvrigt vil det være værd at undersøge den danske historik, hvad angår kulturjournalistikken og dens berøringsflader med det politiske. De tre forfattere beklager sig til gengæld over, at livsstilsjournalistik og for eksempel mode ikke rigtig har vundet indpas i svensk kulturjournalistik, hvad jeg derimod vil være tilbøjelig til at mene, er tilfældet i dansk sammenhæng. Danskere er mere til hygge og fashion end til politik.

Bogen falder i tre nogenlunde lige store dele: Widholm indleder om medielandskabets forandringer og kulturjournalistikkens rolle i den digitale medieøkologi; Riegert fokuserer på det transnationale,

inddragelsen af den globale omverden, herunder hvordan det så-
kaldte kulturelle filter fungerer i den sammenhæng; og Rooswall af-
slutter festen med at diskutere kulturjournalistikkens politiske di-
mensioner, herunder undersøger hun blandt andet specifikt, hvor-
dan identitetspolitik blev lanceret i 2000, og hvordan der siden har
været vedvarende fortolkningskampe om begrebet. Det kunne være
nyttigt at få tjekket om det famøse begrebs historie har haft lignende
dynamisk uklarhed i dansk sammenhæng, for Mikkel Thorups bog
Kampen om identitetspolitik: En samtidsidéhistorie (2022) har slag-
side mod det amerikanske.

Jeg har noteret flere nyttige begreber og analytiske resultater. Til
de sidste hører eksempelvis, at der bredt sagt er færre kritiske værk-
analyser i kulturjournalistikken – men til gengæld en vækst i de de-
skriptive, narrative og ikke mindst dialogiske teksttyper. Meget kul-
turstof præsenteres, og på en måde opnormeres det oplevelsesmæs-
sige, mens en faglig-æstetisk tilgang bliver mindre markant. Under
det begrebslige kolporterer Widholm Nicklas Håkanssons tvedelte
GAL/TAN-skala, der er et nyt bud på, hvordan man i dag kan diffe-
rentiere mellem værdipolitiske orienteringer. GAN står for grøn, al-
ternativ og liberal, der udgør en mere eller mindre sammenhæn-
gende akse eller ækvivalenskæde, mens TAN er akronym for traditi-
onel, autoritær og nationalistisk. GAN-sympatisører er for internati-
onal solidaritet og lighed, mens TAN samler forskellige konservative
afarter. Som supplement til moderniserede varianter af Bourdieus
sociologiske tilgang er GAL/Tan ikke ueffen.

En analytisk differentiering mellem kultur og politik i de enkelte
artikler giver også god mening: Fra artikler der har en kultur-kultur
vægtning, over artikler der har kultur-politik orientering (med fokus
på det institutionelle), og artikler der har vægtningen politik-kultur
(der synes at være en udbredt kombination i svensk kontekst) til ar-
tikler der er "rene" politik-politik, der snarere hører hjemme i den
regelrette politiske journalistik. Jeg finder det sympatisk, at forfat-
terne indædt forsvarer en agonistisk tilgang og har en udtalt skepsis
over for en antagonistisk tænkning. I den første har vi et demokra-
tisk debatrum, hvor der er respekt for hverandre og hersker konflik-
tuel konsensus, hvorimod den antagonistiske udvikler reduktive di-
kotomier. Desværre tyder både den danske, svenske og globale po-
litiske offentlighed på, at antagonismens polariseringer ikke er så-
dan at udrydde. Og hvad jeg savner, er for eksempel reference til for-
skellige menneskeopfattelser, hvor ikke mindst en modstilling mel-
lem homo universalis og homo socious vil sætte de konstante
kampe mellem GAL og TAN i relief, idet socious advokerer for det
nære og den samfundsmæssige forbundethed hermed, mens uni-
versalis har mennesket (uanset baggrund og præference) som al-
tings målestok og derfor plæderer for det transnationale. Akkurat

som i Cobra. Kulturjournalistik er nemlig først og sidst politisk funderet.

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