Book Reviews

Editors: Ragnhild Mølster & Maarit Jaakkola

Martin Eide, Helle Sjøvaag & Leif Ove Larsen (eds.)
Journalism Re-Examined: Digital Challenges and Professional Orientation (Lessons from Northern Europe)

Intellect Ltd., 2016, 215 p.

The question of a sustainable path for journalism has been the subject of interest for many observers, both in the Nordic countries and beyond. The book *Journalism Re-Examined* presents a number of well-researched and empirically enlightening case studies that show the depth and variety of the journalistic profession, which is a helpful invitation to think about the topic in terms of institutional theory and to see journalism as an institution or field, and thus more than a mere profession.

Two of the editors, Martin Eide and Helle Sjøvaag, set out the new institutionalist theoretical framework, which they propose as a helpful tool to analyse the challenges facing journalism in a digital age. They present the different case studies and thus the chapters of the book and they argue cogently through their chapter that new institutionalism is particularly fruitful, because it allows more room for human agency and the duality of structure and agency than older institutional approaches.

The theoretical arguments build on the previous work of David Ryfe (2006) and the editors highlight that many of the chapters paradoxically show that despite the digital challenges facing journalism and the profession, no profound changes can be detected

because of its institutional nature. Chapter 5 by Jan Fredrik Hovden is a good example of this. Despite many changes in the market and working conditions, the values of investigative journalism persist and they are even becoming more influential. Hovden's impressive systematic approach and large amount of quantitative data from surveys with Nordic journalism students from 2005-2012 enable him to conclude that 'the slimming down of the multifaceted task for journalist in modern society is ambiguous not only in its causes but also in its consequences'. This he sees in terms of increased specialisation and as an example of the re-orientations of journalism in the modern age.

The book, like previous examples of analysis of new challenges facing journalism in a digital world, shows how slow change is and why we as scholars need to constantly compare the new and the old when researching journalism and journalistic practices. Even digital challenges and struggling business models do not seem to change the fact that print identities are strongly present online, as Helle Sjøvaag shows in her comprehensive analysis of online and offline content (chapter 7).

Especially original and intriguing are the chapters on algorithms in the newsrooms

(chapter 6), online debates (chapter 9), interpretative journalism (chapter 10) and the analysis of the relations between blogs, books and journalism (chapter 11). These chapters are taking the first and important steps towards including different genres and areas into research on journalism, as these areas have not previously been seen as traditional journalism and thus not subjects relevant for journalism research. It is interesting and indeed important to show, like Brita Ytre-Arne does in her chapter, how the blogosphere can be viewed as being made up of overlapping thematic communities and as sub-publics that can give new voices to marginalised groups and provide potential for power and agency between journalistic institutions and those overlapping it.

The case study chapters are however mainly empirical and leave little space to discuss the overall new institutional framework. And a discussion of the limits and challenges to this theory in the light of the different conclusions would have been welcome, especially as this theoretical framework is a specific focus of the book. For example, the chapters of Rodney Benson (chapter 3) and Jan Fredrik Hovden (chapter 5) provides a framework of analysis partly based on Pierre Bourdieu's field theory. But the ongoing discussion of the concepts of *field* and *institutions* (see for example Benson, 2006) can be merged and how they differ in focus is by large ignored, even though having both approaches in a book with a focus on new institutional focus might invite this discussion. It is worth noting that institutional theory originates in organisational theory, while field theory originates in practice-orientated sociology.

Institutional theory has been criticised for not explaining heterogeneity and homogeneity across media organisations. However, Mark Blach Ørsten's chapter (11) uses the new institutionalist framework to highlight such variation of different news beats in great detail. Ørsten brings the concept of mediatisation into the analysis and the conclusion thus illustrates the challenges to the mediatisation theory, as it is unable to explain the variation

in levels of mediatisation. However, the chapter also illustrates that institutional theory does not factor in the complex hierarchies of production and reception of media content, which is likely to influence the variation observed between the coverage, number of sources and the different levels of originality discussed in Ørsten's chapter.

The new institutional approach is mainly discussed in the opening chapter 'Journalism as an institution', where Eide and Sjøvaag argue that despite the challenges that are making institutions re-orientate themselves, one sees more stability than change. The authors introduce concepts of 'border maintenance' (Gieryn 1983) to explain this structural stability. But the book only provides a few empirical examples of how this maintenance work on the borders of journalistic institutions actually take place.

Examples of what could be seen as boundary maintenance is provided in some of the interview examples in Tania Bucher's chapter (6). She investigates algorithms as actors in the news production from a Science and Technology Studies perspective (STS), by interviewing directors, editors and developers from large Scandinavian news organisations. She provides an excellent analysis of how the algorithms are both material and discursive in ways that might contest and change existing ways of doing and thinking about journalism. It would have been interesting to consider whether new institutional theory could have provided the same focus on the material objects of analysis, in this case the algorithm?

This touches upon the question of agency which the editors argue is exactly the contribution of new institutional theory. Reading the different chapters, however, we find little evidence for agency, as that which we do find seems to come from *outside* the journalistic institution, at least if you define the institution as the journalistic profession, for example, in the case of blogs or in the case of newspapers debates on social media. These changes are framed well in the other main theoretical chapter by Martin Eide, which suggests *re-orientations* as a concept to capture the

changes that challenge the journalistic ontology. It leaves us with the question of whether we can speak of one overall journalistic ontology? In this chapter, it is a little unclear how the *institution* of journalism differs from the concept of a journalistic *profession*, as these two concepts seem to be used interchangeably. Eide, for example, distinguishes between citizen journalists and professional journalists, and the definition of the last group seems to be that they are part of the journalistic institution. But as many have asked, 'what constitutes a field?' similarly we can ask, 'what constitutes the institution?' How can we use the micro-level framework of rules and norms that new institutionalism offers to empirically examine what the journalistic institution is and if journalistic professionalism is actually a form of maintenance control? Similarly, we might ask what the relations are between the different institutions overlapping with the institution of journalism? There are thus many more theoretical questions to tackle in a sec-

ond volume. Keeping these questions in mind, I would recommend the book to both students and scholars who are not already familiar with new institutional approaches and to anyone concerned with the re-orientations of journalism in a digital age.

Jannie Møller Hartley
Associate Professor
Department of Communication and Arts
Roskilde University

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Elisabet Björklund & Mariah Larsson (eds.)
Swedish Cinema and the Sexual Revolution: Critical Essays
Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2016, 248 p.

The image of 'Swedish sin' has its roots in Swedish cinema of the 1950s and '60s, which saw the birth and success of films such as *One Summer of Happiness*, *Summer with Monika*, *I Am Curious (Yellow)*, as well as in a subsequent wave of sex films in the 1960s and early 70's. Or rather, the image of Swedish film as sexually liberal or 'dirty' (and, by extension, of Sweden as a land of sexual revolution) stems from the reception of these films, in Sweden as well as abroad. The critical essays in *Swedish Cinema and the Sexual Revolution*,

edited by Elisabet Björklund and Mariah Larsson, address the reception in the U.S. and in Sweden of a selection of these films, while also providing context, background and some of the influences to explain the sensuality and sexuality in Swedish films from this period. In so doing, the seventeen essays in the book provide a nuancing of stereotypes and misconceptions regarding the 'sinful' Swedish cinema, along with fruitful discussions of their impact on genre, gender and nationality.

The forging of an image of Sweden as sexu-

ally progressive involved the active participation of a number of institutions and individuals. Three of the essays in this volume focus on the role of the National Board of Film Censors and the Swedish Film Institute, including a closer analysis of the part played by Harry Schein. In 'Institutionalized Sexploitation? The Swedish Film Institute and Research on the Effects of Cinema in the 1960s', Per Vestertlund explores how academic research came to be involved in the liberalization of film censorship through Harry Schein's and the Film Research Group's initiative to launch studies into the impact of films on audiences – particularly the effect of sexual representations on viewers. Maaret Koskinen examines the axis of power that Schein was part of, together with other powerful men such as Ingmar Bergman and Prime Minister Olof Palme, in her essay 'P(owe)R, Sex and *Mad Men* Swedish Style'. Through her analysis of hitherto unpublished archive material, Koskinen shows how lines between personal and political power were blurred. Schein was able to influence on Swedish film politics and censorship because he did not hesitate to use his political contacts for instance when it came to assigning members to the Film Review Council. Koskinen further demonstrates how Schein used his powerful position in the cultural field to advance Bergman's career, not least in the American market. Even though Schein played the part of 'a dictator (albeit benevolent)', Koskinen concludes by stressing that he acted for the good of Swedish film culture.

Lars Diurlin examines the periodical *Film in Sweden* in his chapter 'Egrets in the Porno Swamp: The Swedish Film Institute and Swedish Sin'. He reveals and discusses the paradox in how the SFI positioned itself during the 1970s. On the one hand, it drew on the commercial potential of nudity and sexual references to brand Swedish films in the international market. On the other hand, they worked to change the perception of Swedish sex films as immoral.

The American reception played a crucial part in the construction of 'Swedish sin' as a notion, as Klara Arnberg and Carl Marklund

demonstrate in their essay 'Illegally Blond: Swedish Sin and Pornography in U.S. and Swedish Imaginations 1955-1971'. They address how the notion of 'Swedish sin' developed over time and influenced political debates about pornography in both America and Sweden. Their analysis of official documents and press debates in the U.S. and in Sweden shows how Swedish politicians handled the image of Sweden as a sexual paradise by trying to counter the misrepresentations linking social democratic politics and secular society to moral decline. As the 'sinful' image persisted, they instead tried to link it to positive trends such as women-friendly legislation, progressive politics in social matters and a free view of culture and pornography – in contrast to a suggested double standard in the U.S., where the acceptance of violence on film ran counter to Christian morals. As the feminist movement in the 1970s began to oppose pornography's sexual objectification of women, it became more difficult for pornographers and politicians alike to claim that Swedish pornography was connected to progressive Swedish female emancipation.

Ulf Jonas Björk and Kevin Heffernan discuss the impact of Swedish films on the American and the international erotic film industry in their respective essays. In 'A Modicum of Social Value? The Critical and Legal Discussion of *I Am Curious (Yellow)* in America', Björk places the reception of Vilgot Sjöman's film in the context of the changing legal definition of obscenity that started in the U.S. in the 1950s and that made courts consider not only isolated sexually explicit scenes or passages, but the work in its entirety. Graphical depictions were to be judged in the overall context of the film, and balanced against the artistic, educational or social value of the work. With its mix of political satire, of fictional and documentary material and the story of a sexual affair, *I Am Curious (Yellow)* provided an interesting test case for this new legal praxis. Kevin Heffernan discusses two of Joe Sarno's films (*Butterfly*, 1975, and *Come and Blow the Horn*, 1978), focusing on the relationship between a contested and am-

bivalent 'Swedish' erotic cinema and the role of international finance and distribution in the essay 'Many of Your Finer Nudie Films: Saga Film, Swedish National Cinema and Seventies Transnational Erotic Film'. The Swedish film industry was involved in crucial changes in international adult cinema through films produced in Sweden as well as in investment in international production and distribution. Hefferman concludes that the Swedish sex films of the hardcore era display hybrid and contradictory discourses of genre, national identity and the star system.

Institutions and powerful people aside, the films themselves and their depictions of sexuality did of course play an important role for the 'Swedish sin' concept. The theme of Swedish summer is particularly productive when it comes to the construction of a certain 'brand' of filmic sensuality and sexuality. Arne Lunde and Anders Marklund provide analyses of the iconic Swedish summer in their respective essays; the former focusing on the reception of the erotic films of Ingmar Bergman in the U.S., the latter on representations of sexual encounters in films from 1951 including the norm-breaching *One Summer of Happiness*.

Discussing films of a later date, five essays focus on art, sexploitation and pornography. Maria Larsson discusses *Weekend in Stockholm*, by Anne-Marie Berglund, a film that stands out both among the Swedish porn films and among female-authored films. As Larsson demonstrates, it also distinguishes itself from Berglund's subsequent work as a poet and novelist, by its format as well as its genre, even though sexuality is a recurring theme in her oeuvre. Considering Berglund's artistic work as a whole, and the persona connected to it, Larsson convincingly argues that *Weekend in Stockholm* blurs the otherwise quite clear line between art and porn, as it forms part of an authorial repertoire situated within 'high-brow' culture. Another kind of high/low cultural clash led to the professional suicide of the director of the iconic *One Summer of Happiness*, Arne Mattsson. Through careful contextualization and a nuanced reading of his sexploitation film *Ann and Eve* (1970), Bengt

Bengtsson highlights a shift in Swedish critical discourse that had severe consequences for Mattsson's career, in 'Ann and Eve: A Filmmaker Strikes Back'. He shows how *Ann and Eve* is Mattsson's artistic revenge to the critics who favoured auteurs and art films over entertainment films made by skillful craftsmen such as Mattsson.

Anu Koivunen addresses other changes in the media landscape in her discussion of Jörn Donner's film *To Love* (1964), in her essay 'Pillow Talk, Swedish Style'. Donner's film mixes intimate chamber drama with sex parody. Starting out with a funeral scene, it develops into a depiction of the playful erotic games the young widow Louise engages in with Fredrik, an international travel agency clerk. *To Love* both employed and rejected the legacy of 'Swedish sin', and was likewise torn between art cinema and sex film, Koivunen argues. As such, it was symptomatic of wider transformations of the public sphere and the encounters between cinema culture and the mediatized sex scene in Sweden as well as in other countries.

Turning to the personal and the psychological, Anders Wilhelm Åberg focuses on the filmmaker Vilgot Sjöman in his essay 'Her Body, His Self: Authorship and Gender in *I Am Curious (Yellow)* and *I Am Curious (Blue)*'. He reads Sjöman's *I Am Curious* diptych through a psychoanalytical lens, arguing that the actor Lena Nyman can be seen as a proxy for the male author-subject. This creative play with shifting roles would in part explain why Nyman's performance in the films have been belittled and underrated.

Mats Björkin discusses the most famous porn film of the 1970s in 'Come and Blow the Horn: Sound, Sex and Cultural Heritage'. Interestingly, the most Swedish of all 'Swedish sin' films was directed by an American, Joe Sarno, who firmly positions the film as precisely 'Swedish' by situating it at one of the most Swedish locations one could possibly imagine, the *fäbod* (traditional summer farm) in a region that represents the cultural and historical heart of Swedishness, Dalarna. Sarno however mixes cultural history with popular

images thereof, for instance by having the protagonist blow not a traditional wooden *fåbod* horn but a metal one, which is more redolent of a Viking context. Furthermore, Sarno mixes the complex web of gender relations that involves male sexualization of a pre-industrial culture of relatively independent women. Old traditions are combined with modern ones to better fit the changing perceptions of Sweden and its history. Björkin suggests that hardcore pornographic aesthetics are perhaps what is needed in order to reveal the consequences of urbanization and modern tourism, environmentalism, the revival of folk culture and nationalism.

In a section devoted to 'Obscenity and Censorship', controversies and censorship are discussed from different vantage points: that of a pre-legalization era, in Tommy Gustafsson's essay 'Illegal Screenings of Pornographic Films for Public Audiences in Sweden, 1921-1943', as well as that of the 1960's and its crucial debates and public inquiries into film censorship and freedom of speech. Gustafsson examines a phenomenon that has hitherto received little scholarly attention: the semi-public, after-hour screenings of illegal pornographic films in movie theatres and the informal distribution system connected to them. His primary material consists of three court cases, from 1921, 1931 and 1943 – a rather rare corpus, as pornographic screenings were seldom reported to the authorities. Nevertheless, the semi-public screenings were less protected from the forces of order than the private, closed setting of stag parties in which upper middle class men had previously viewed pornographic films. With the move from private settings to semi-public venues, the producers, distributors and exhibitors of the illegal films became more vulnerable. Significantly, Gustafsson notes, they were lower class and working class, just like the audience in these public venues. His analysis of the court cases reveals a clear societal rejection of pornographic films. Yet, at the same time, the screenings of such films were an 'open secret', and thus tolerated at some level. His study further suggests a change in attitude during

the studied period, as the sentences got milder with time. Gustafsson reads this development as a foreshadowing of the sexual revolution in the 1960s.

Lena Lennerhed's essay '491 and the Censorship Controversy' addresses the debate around Vilgot Sjöman's controversial film and its impact on the liberalization of film censorship. She shows how the 491 debate was one of the reasons the authorities commissioned a public inquiry into film censorship in 1964. The report proposed that censorship of films for adults be abolished, which was however not realized until 2011. Nevertheless, censorship practice changed considerably after the debate sparked by 491, and the boundaries of what could be depicted in films were pushed. Elisabet Björklund also discusses the 1964 public inquiry, as well as the inquiry in 1965 on the boundaries of free speech, in her chapter on 'The Limits of Sexual Depictions in the Late 1960s'. Björklund examines what was understood as pornographic, and what kinds of sexuality were considered problematic in the films reviewed by the National Board of Film Censors between 1965 and 1971. She convincingly demonstrates that the path towards the liberalization of Swedish films involved a number of negotiations of what was acceptable or not in filmic representations of sexuality. Drawing on Gayle Rubin's concepts of the 'inner circle' of 'good' sex versus the 'outer limits' of 'bad' sex, Björklund demonstrates how sexual liberalism regarding film was valid only for what was seen as 'good' sex. This excluded representations of rape as well as of BDSM sex, while portrayals of sexuality connected to love and equality were increasingly accepted even as they became more graphic. Björklund makes the important point that even after the legalization of pornography in 1971, depictions of sex could be controlled through censorship: representations that were considered 'brutalizing' or 'harmfully exciting' would be censored. Björklund thus challenges the idea that liberalization of film censorship in Sweden was a straightforward process.

Swedish Cinema and the Sexual Revolution debunks myths about the origins and the

evolution of the notion of 'Swedish sin' that is linked to a number of Swedish films depicting sensuality and sexuality, from art film to sex-exploitation cinema. The anthology's wide range of analytical perspectives and material results in a collection that provides a nuanced portrait of the sexual revolution in and through

Swedish (and 'Swedish') cinema, both in Sweden and in the United States.

*Malin Isaksson,
Senior Lecturer
Department of Language Studies
Umeå University*

Peter Simonson & David W. Park (eds.)
The International History of Communication Study
Routledge, 2016, 528 p.

The edited volume with 23 contributions by authors from diverse national backgrounds is an ambitious project. With seven sections addressing 'New Theories', 'Transnational Organizations', 'Europe', 'North America', 'Latin America', 'Asia' as well as 'Africa and the Middle East', the editors aim not only to present an inclusive and comprehensive representation of the study of communication as a field but also to break with old stereotypes and dominant ways of writing its complex history. Each of the sections is introduced with a short note presenting the main arguments and many chapters include sections with further readings beyond the referenced literature, contributing to the richness of the collection.

The book is thus not only ambitious in its sheer size – 527 pages – but also in its scope and aim of revising the field of communication history. The editors argue that 'the collection offers genealogies of our presents, charting flows and transnational interactions mediated through institutions, individuals, networks, texts, and broader geopolitical landscapes over the past century' (p. 8). Following a mainly regional division, most of the chapters develop a history of the com-

munication field by considering key people, institutions such as departments and schools, funding bodies, as well as professional associations and concepts from a primarily national perspective. At the same time, many of the chapters show border crossings and the international character of the field. In that sense, the contributions in many ways apply the suggested theoretical approach of *histoire croisée* developed by Maria Löblich and Stefanie Auerbeck-Lietz in the chapter *The Transnational Flow of Ideas* and operationalise the entanglement of ideas, biographies and institutions.

While I was working on this review, I attended a research seminar on the history of software. The speaker suggested the notion of cultural techniques (Siegart 2013, Winthrop-Young 2013) for bringing together discussions on materiality, practices as well as signs and text into the historical analysis of software. Using the example of business games, he suggested that practices often preclude discourse. In this case, that meant that the business games of the 1950s and 1960s brought playful aspects to the field of management, predating changes that Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello addressed in the *New*

Spirit of Capitalism in the 1970s (Boltanski & Chiapello 2005). If we draw a parallel to the *International History of Communication Study*, one could argue that doing communication research as a practice exists before the discourse on how the field of communication evolved is produced. The book is thus an attempt to reflect not only on the field of communication, but also on the practices of doing historical research. The introduction addresses this meta-analytical aim as “A History of Histories of Communication Study” (p. 3). Similarly, the two chapters by Löblich and Averbek-Lietz as well as that by Ashcraft and Simonson in the ‘New Theories’ section present theoretical approaches to writing history and address flaws of earlier approaches. The second section addresses ‘Transnational Organizations’ as central agents in the field’s development. The subsequent sections are dedicated to regional histories. The strongest and most interesting part of the volume are the chapters that transcend regional divisions, presenting truly transnational attempts of history writing. The structure focusing on regions has the effect of reproducing old divisions within the communications field in particular because often marginalised countries are gathered in the very back of the book while European and American histories are placed centrally. At the same time this regional division is difficult to uphold, since many of the chapters address figures, institutions and concepts that transcend or move between regions. For example, Elisabeth Klaus and Josef Seethaler’s chapter entitled ‘Crossing the Borders: Herta Herzog’s Work in Communication and Marketing Research’ could have easily been placed in the section on Europe. Similarly, the chapter by Chunfeng Lin and John Nerone on the role of Wilbur Schramm in the development of communication studies in China speaks to developments of the field in North America. Other concepts and scholars are similarly presented as moving between different regions. In that sense, the organizational principles maybe as well have been ‘institutions, individuals, networks, [and] texts’ (p. 8) moving from

an international towards a transnational approach of the history of communication. This also addresses a second challenge that the book faces. Its ambition to write *the* history of communication study in the singular that the title suggests does not do justice to the rich multiplicity of histories gathered in the volume. While publishers often push authors and editors towards certain formulations when it comes to titles, this issue could be addressed in the introduction.

Interestingly, the book argues for the broad and interdisciplinary character of the rather young field of communication studies. At the same time, all of the 24 contributors – with one or two exceptions – have their disciplinary base in communication departments of various kinds. This is an indicator that the field has reached stabilization with academics being exclusively trained and working within communication studies, but it also opens up the question of who is allowed to write the history of the field as such and what parts of the history are still excluded, not only in terms of marginalised people, concepts and institutions, but also in terms of transdisciplinary border crossings. I am now hoping for a new volume that presents the interdisciplinary history of communication study that shows more clearly the history of different disciplines influencing the study of communication and how interdisciplinary the field is today.

As a side note, from a Nordic perspective it is interesting to see Kaarle Nordenstreng emerging in many of the chapters as both an agent who had a strong impact on the development of the field and also as its chronicler, who is very much aware of the importance of writing a history of the discipline. I hope we do not have to wait too long for an analysis of Kaarle’s role in the development of the field.

In conclusion, the short section introductions, the theoretical and transnational sections as well as the regional sections and in addition the accessible style of most of the chapters makes this volume a very rich resource for advanced students and scholars

with an interest in the history of the communication studies field. The volume reflects the breath and richness of the field, while remaining very specific and specialised in its scope, which is a difficult task to master.

Anne Kaun

Senior Lecturer

School of Culture and Education

Södertörn University

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