

Abstracts

For Ethnography: Introduction to Ethnography as a Communication Research Method Alexander Dhoest

This article advocates for ethnographic audience research as a valuable complement to quantitative communication research. It gives an overview of the theoretical foundations of ethnography, its methodology and its internal controversies. Ethnography studies television viewers' concrete, active media use, and the meaning they attribute to it. The tension between viewer freedom and determination (by the text and the viewer's social position) is of crucial importance here. Ethnography is faced with a host of methodological problems, but it is nevertheless a valuable instrument to study the process of meaning production involved in media use.

Key words: ethnography, audience research, media use, television, cultural studies

The Evolution of Gender Imagery in Flemish Magazine Advertisements: Stereotypes of Men and Women Between 1970 and 1994 Dimitri Mortelmans

Advertising is often criticized for confirming and reinforcing existing stereotypes in society. Scientific research in the United States and Britain showed that the representation of women in advertising draws heavily on negative stereotypes, with women often being portrayed as housewives or indecisive beings. However, studies also showed a slow change in the eighties towards a more realistic, neutral and harmonious imagery of both sexes. This article discusses the way in which advertising representation evolved in Flanders (Belgium). A content analysis identifies the stereotypical portrayal of men and women in Flemish magazine advertisements between 1970 and 1994, showing a significantly different evolution from results found in other research. The developments in the eighties are splitting up in two separate ways of portraying people. On the one hand imagery follows reality and develops new stereotypes. On the other hand, however, some negative stereotypes such as the erotization of men and women show a renewed vigour.

Key words: advertising, representation, stereotypes, gender roles, content analysis

The Process of Privatization in the Telecommunications Sector in Latin America: A Political-Economic Analysis David Van Damme

The worldwide policy of privatization and liberalization within the telecommunications sector has been adopted most intensively in Latin America: on the one hand because the privatizations were done within a relatively short period of 4 years, and, on the other hand, because privatization policies were highly influenced by the industrialized world. Furthermore, the programmes of privatization which had to reform the old structures of the postal, telegraph and telephone services (PTTs), followed on a tradition of nationalization, which is why the privatization of government monopolies did not go very smoothly. Therefore the aim of this article is to reveal the main political and economic motives that were responsible for the massive privatizations of the telephone companies in Latin America in the early 1990s.

Key words: telecommunication, Latin America, liberalization, globalization, development