

## Abstracts

### **The televised political debate, a gladiatorial contest in miniature: Relational control between debating politicians**

David Gelders

This article analyzes the control patterns in televised political debates. The modified three digit model of Ericson and Rogers (1973) is used to examine the relational control between debating politicians on television. The case study (2 Flemish telecasts, 3 independent codings) reveals that competitive symmetric behaviour is the most important control pattern, while complementarity, neutralized or submissive symmetries are of little consequence. These findings support the current thesis that important televised political debates are characterized by a high degree of competition and a strong desire to dominate.

Key words: televised political debate, relational control, dominance, control pattern, competitive interaction

### **The identity of television audience: Towards the articulation of the television audience as a discursive loaded semantic field**

Nico Carpentier

The multiple meaning of the concept of 'audience' allows for a definition of this concept as a 'floating signifier' within a discursive context. On the basis of methodologies derived from Derrida's deconstructionism, an attempt is made to map the semantic field of 'audience' through the analysis of four domains: active/passive, public/private, micro/macro and Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft. This strategy leads to the development of a model of the reservoir of significations from which one draws for the articulation of the concept of 'audience'. This model allows for new questions about the dominance and absence of some audience articulations.

Key words: discourse theory, audience, deconstruction, television

### **An anti-social screen-generation? An empirical investigation into the role of the media in the use of leisure time among twelve- to fourteen-year-old students of A.S.O.-schools**

Pauline van Aarle

The purpose of this research is to investigate whether we are dealing with an 'anti-social screen-generation'. In the context of this investigation, the concept 'anti-social' refers to social isolation resulting from the fact that young people consider the electronic media as their 'electronic friend' and isolate themselves from their family and friends. There are two main questions: 1) Do young people spend all of their leisure time on electronic media or do they still have time for printed media? 2) Do young people prefer the company of the computer screen to human contact? The results show that the electronic media play an important role in the life of young people, and that printed media had to take a step back, which justifies the use of the term 'screen-generation'. However 'today's youngsters' are not anti-social according to our definition: they prefer the company of people above that of machines. This study was conducted among 320 young people, boys and girls, between 12 and 14 years old.

Key words: media use, youngsters, leisure time, loglinear analysis