Recensioner

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Collaborative Media
Production, Consumption, and Design Interventions
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With new media come new use practices, which, in turn, have consequences for individual media users as well as for established media producers and societal institutions. Several concepts have been offered as ways of approaching the changes to practices of communication in the contemporary media landscape: cross-media, participatory media and – as with this book – *collaborative media*. These media concepts have mainly been associated with the production of media content to multiple platforms. This goes for the term collaborative media, which dates back to e.g. LaRose and Rafaeli's concept of *collaborative mass media* in which the audience functions as both the source and the receiver of the message. However, it is clear that media users also cross media and collaborate with and through media; they combine, juggle and move almost seamlessly between various media platforms and services to pursue information and entertainment and to communicate about and act on tasks and demands in their everyday lives. This insight has important consequences both methodologically and theoretically. In terms of methodology, analyses focusing on technological platforms, mediated content or contexts of production and use as isolated phenomena fall short in a present day media perspective, as each analysis paints only part of the larger picture. Consequently, methods are needed that may help researchers study in a more holistic and transdisciplinary manner the interactions among platforms, content, users and producers. In terms of theory, this approach to the study of the contemporary media landscape implies an increased sensitivity to the interconnectedness and interactions of communication practices, platforms, users and institutions. This perspective thus may affect and challenge our understandings of key concept such as media, communication, participation, users and institutions. Furthermore, it raises questions about the consequences of collaborative communication for users, producers and institutions.

It is this book's intention to take on this task: 'With many new forms of digital media – including popular social media as Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr – the people formerly known as the audience no longer only consume but also produce and even design media'. The book falls in three parts, as stated by the overview (p. 11-12): The first part – Starting Points – defines collaborative media and positions the authors' work in the landscape of new media scholarship and design. The media in focus and the user practices they enable have some distinct characteristics (p.14): 1) The practices are based on media services and tools that are a) easy to use; b) can be used creatively and pleasurably in many different ways. 2) The practices are to a great extent collaborative. People work together to create things that are not possible for the lone user to create. And this occurs not only face to face; to a great extent, the collaborations take place online on a potentially global scale. The first part of the book also outlines a transdisciplinary research approach to collaborative media, where analysis and design are combined. The method described here is termed design intervention and relates to e.g. participatory design, but with a specific focus on the interventions set up from the point of view of the researcher/research team. This methodological approach is exemplified in the second part of the book – Interventions – which consists of ten case studies, demonstrating research projects in collaborative media either carried out by the au-

thors themselves or made accessible to the authors by close colleagues. The final part of the book – Insights and Conclusions – reflects the experiences made in the various cases and situates it in the contemporary scholarly landscape. It includes reflections on the specificities of collaborative media practices and addressing the practice of transdisciplinary collaborative media research.

The book adds – with its concept of collaborative media – to the ongoing discussions and reflections within present day's media and communication studies. As the book points out (in accordance to similar publications (e.g. Ibrus/Scolari (Eds.) *Crossmedia* Innovations) and projects (e.g. the University of Copenhagen based project *Meaning Across Media*[1]), the vast spread of the internet and mobile media over the last two decades has generated optimism and pessimism – in public debate as well as in research. To one side, Henry Jenkins represents a utopian view of a *participatory culture* in which everybody will be not just famous for fifteen minutes, but exposed and active 24/7. To the other side, Andrew Keen has expounded a dystopian perspective on a *cult of the amateur* in which standards of scientific and aesthetic quality come to be disregarded. Digital media and especially so-called 'social media' (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Instagram and YouTube being among the most prominent today) have, on the one hand, been ascribed the power to change societies and empower democratic movements, following the thinking of, e.g., Howard Rheingold. This position has been fueled by movements like Occupy Wall Street as well as the democratic uprisings in Arab countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, Iran and Libya that created headlines like 'the Facebook revolution.' On the other hand, scholars have argued that it is naive to believe that social media in themselves create change: they may at best facilitate existing social and political movements. Internet sociologists such as Morozov point out that the same media which were used to mobilize the 'Twitter revolution' in Iran in 2009 also were used by the regime to infiltrate and strike down this democratic movement.

A key theoretical and empirical issue addressed by this book is the redefinition of 'users' (the people formerly known as audience) and the relationship between 'users' and 'producers': in one sense, every user of collaborative media is potentially a producer of content for other users. However, there are important aspects that could have been discussed in a more elaborated way: Most ordinary users lack the resources and competences to match those of established media organizations. As pointed out by Jenkins, *not all consumers are created equal*: some

have greater abilities to make use of the possibilities for participation provided by the internet and various types of creative software tools. It is also important to acknowledge that corporate media still exert much greater power than any individual consumer. The media, in their turn, seek to involve and recruit users in 'user-driven' production and innovation – for corporate purposes.

In order to examine the juncture of 'users' and 'producers', it is imperative to distinguish analytically between different kinds of content *production* – from the millions of users who daily update their Facebook profiles and post on their time lines, to those far fewer users who take part in user-driven content production, whether initiated by companies (e.g., developing dramatic content for the TV series *Bar Karma*) or by users themselves (e.g., creating home-made videos for YouTube, or using games like *World of Warcraft* for creating their own 'machinima' films). Here the concept of collaborative media appears somewhat limiting in order to grasp complexity of user behavior and patterns characterizing 'the people formerly known as the audience'. It may be argued that present day media uses include several modes of user engagement and practice: *Communication as composition* (the recombination of media contents by established media (the book, the movie, the game, the website) and/or the combined use of various media and applications by audiences (using a media player to watch a TV program, using a browser to monitor its website, and using news applications to get updates)); *Communication as collaboration* (e.g., distributing (sharing, spreading) media content or participating in debates relating to media content (chats, blogs, forums)); *Communication as participation* (e.g., influencing the content of television, such as using text messaging (SMS) to vote for one's favorite in a talent show); *Communication as content curation* (i.e. compiling and organising existing bits of material, rather than necessarily creating new content; prominent in sites from del.icio. us to Reddit, or in retweeting patterns around crisis events); and *Communication as co-creation* (the independent creation of media content, e.g., designing new features on Facebook).

Audience and reception studies have traditionally asked not only what media do to users, but also what users do with media: how do people use, interpret, and otherwise engage different types of media. Some users may just employ one of the modes above, some all five of them. Important research, which is mentioned in the book but at the same time somewhat disregarded, has attempted to specify the nature of media use in the digital media environment. Axel

Bruns, for one, has coined the term *produsage* to capture the ongoing reconfiguration of use vis-à-vis production. As such, current work is specifying and clarifying early suggestions by, for instance, Alvin Toffler, that *prosumers* – a more critical and particularly active consumer – were replacing traditional, passive consumers. However, as pointed out by Bruns, Toffler's ideas were firmly grounded in the mass media age, and his prosumer does not capture the kind of self-motivated creative participant and co-creator which may be observed in projects ranging from open source software through *Wikipedia* to *Second Life*. As Bruns has it, terms like production and consumption are no longer of much use even in labored constructions such as *commons-based peer-production* or *p2p production*, when it comes to projects such as *Wikipedia*. As Bruns points out: "In collaborative communities the creation of shared content takes place in a networked, participatory environment which breaks down the boundaries between producers and consumers and instead enables all participants to be users as well as producers of information and knowledge – frequently in a hybrid role of produser where usage is necessarily also productive. Producers engage not in a traditional form of content production, but are instead involved in produsage – the collaborative and continuous building and extending of existing content in pursuit of further improvement. Participants in such activities are not producers in a conventional, industrial sense, as that term implies a distinction between producers and consumers which no longer exists; the artifacts of their work are not products existing as discrete, complete packages; and their activities are not a form of production because they proceed based on a set of preconditions and principles that are markedly at odds with the conventional industrial model". An important task in grasping the user perspective today is to consider the diverse modes of engagement and various degrees of participation and co-creation taking place – by individual users and through networks of users in which media content is being shared, distributed, commented upon, edited and added to.

New communicative practices are of importance not just to the media but to all types of institutions, organizations and businesses – from banks to tax authorities. Especially with the emergence of so-called social or participatory media and Web 2.0 technologies, communication perceived as dynamic processes and as continuously changing formats that are subject to collaboration, participation and co-creation. One of the concepts seeking to capture the resulting creative and economic logics – and which could have added to the descriptions of collaborative

practices in this book – is *the perpetual beta*: web applications may no longer primarily be monolithic software artifacts, but instead they are services that are adjusted and reworked on a regular basis as part of the normal user experience. In *Collaborative Media* these new production logics are embedded in the idea the that collaborative media not only enable the user to produce media content but also to modify or even (re)design the very infrastructure of the media: the programs, software components and web services that can be used for media production. It is stated that collaborative media is 'open to infrastructural modifications due to the prevalence of open source media software, open APIs, and components that can be combined at will into constellations known as mashups. This infrastructural modifiability have been part of digital technologies for many years e.g. within computer games where dedicated gamers have engaged in creating game characters, game levels, or even entire new games working with existing source code (the development of Counter-Strike is an iconic example here). Computer games as collaborative media can be open to player modification, or 'opensourced' at two different levels: 1) they can be open sourced at the level of graphics and visuals, allowing players to import themes and architecture, while at the bottom the code is a closed source or 2) the game can be closed sourced at the level of graphics, visuals and so on, and open sourced at the game engine or source code level. But as stated by Jenkins above, it is well-advised to be skeptical towards the users' possibilities for appropriating the media production. It is fair to say – as the authors do – that features like the hashtag and retweet-function in Twitter, is the product of users rather than by the original producers. Still, it is the producers that decides what will be implemented (in Twitter, Facebook, Google) and set the terms for use thus claiming ownership over user contributions, a fact that is addressed in a quite limited way by the book (even though issues concerning intellectual property rights are touch upon in some of the case studies).

Collaborative media is primarily assigned to the user proper, but could also in a more extended way be applied to the fact that present day media in themselves are collaborating through various cross-media strategies (from the average second screen production inherent in present day TV productions to rich media universes such as Harry Potter). Cross-media is mentioned several times in the book, but not really defined and addressed as an important element in collaborative media. For the last two decades (at least), our media landscape has been characterized both by convergence and divergence. The first inher-

ent in new media's ability to connect and include all media forms in the same platform and the same technology; be it pc, tablets or smart phones, they all run TV, radio, movies, music either in Internet browsers or stand-alone applications. The second is inherent in the ways in which different media still have their own format: the printed book and newspaper are still around, audiences still flock in movie theatres, and even though the signal or even the entire set has been digitized, the TV is still centerpiece in most homes. What combines these two characteristics is the phenomenon of cross-media: the interconnected communication on several media platforms and through several media formats, simultaneously or in series and circuits. The same media content (or versions of the same media content) is communicated across media. Political communication is moving from social media into traditional news media and back again, news production is performed on Twitter as well as in the newsrooms of newpapers and broadcast companies. Entertainment consists of content communicated through books, movies, TV series, computer games, fan websites, and so on. Even if the phenomenon of cross-media dates back at least two decades, the affordances of digital networked media have radically enriched the nature of cross-media strategies of both users and producers. The book would have benefited from takes these aspects into consideration.

The book's strengths lie primarily in its case- and practice-based chapters making the collaborative aspects of today's media as well as design interventions as methodology for studying the characteristics of said media concrete and clarifying. Here the authors' contributions when it comes to useful conceptual and methodological rethinking – rather than in their general argumentation for introducing the concept of collaborative media in the first section of the book – is embedded in elaborated analyses of ten cases, which are examples of projects in collaborative media that range from small research experiments to big commercial projects. These analyses give insights into the potential of design intervention as research method and to its design-oriented mode of knowledge production, integrating analysis and intervention in collaborative media research embedded in e.g. the legacy from MIT's Living Lab. The book contributes with productive insights and perspectives to media studies (2.0, 3.0…) by performing these case studies at three different levels of analysis: Chapter 4 addresses the level of society and particularly the role of collaborative media in societal changes. Chapter 5 focuses on existing media structures and their relations to collaborative media. And finally, chapter 6 – which is one of the most inspiring parts of the book – introduces a 'level of tribes (in the line of Maffesoli's thinking) to highlight the potential of collaborative media to nurture communality within a plethora of social structures coexisting on top of the same technical infrastructure. As such *Collaborative Media* adds important food for thought to media and communication studies constantly challenged by an ever changing media landscape.

Note

1. http://meaningacrossmedia.mcc.ku.dk/

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Boken *Entreprenørskap og Ledelse i Media* er en kompott av 19 kapitler som spenner over et vidt felt innenfor ulike mediespørsmål og -disipliner og representerer et interessant tidsbilde slik det er nå ved årsskiftet 2014-2015. En del av verdien i boken ligger nettopp i det at den 'fryser' et situasjonsbilde innenfor et område som stadig er i endring. I alt 25 personer har vært bidragsytere til boken.

Boken er delt i to hoveddeler: Del 1 handler om entreprenørskap og omfatter kapitlene 2 til og med 9. Del 2 omfatter kapitlene 11 til og med 19 hvor medieledelse er overskriften.

I den første delen om entreprenørskap er det casebeskrivelser og mer analytisk teoretiske beskrivelser rundt entreprenørskap. For eksempel er gjennomgangen av utviklingen i VGTV interessant med konklusjonene rundt de fasene som ble gjennomført over tid og hvordan det hele ble etablert. Videre har vi eksempler på bruk av Youtube og en analyse av hvordan kreativitet kan læres og hvor det også er et avsnitt om hva som hemmer og hva som fremmer kreativitet. Her gjør forfatteren (Jon Petter Evensen) noen interessante betraktninger om kreativitet i en situasjon med sterke omstillinger. Og evnen til å skape noe nytt når mange ting endrer seg kan være vanskelig nok.

I kapitel 5 beskrives en studentbedrift som entreprenørskap. I dette kapitlet er det en del 'prat' men det er også noen nyttige oversikter som det kan være verd å tenke over, og som oppsummerer erfaringer som studentene har gjort seg. Avsnittet om sosiale medier i slutten av valgkampen gir et innblikk i bruk av sosiale medier, men hemmes sannsynligvis av en rekke begrensninger i datautvalg, men gir allikevel et innblikk i et område som er i stadig utvikling.

Kapitel 7 om apper for demokrati og menneskerettigheter gir en fremstilling av mer filosofisk karakter. Take-home verdien i dette kapitlet ligger etter min mening i det at sosiale medier gir muligheter for påvirkning og utvikling som vi bare har sett begynnelsen av – på godt og vondt.

Kapitel 8 beskriver et EU-prosjekt om virtuell redaksjon og knytter dette opp mot bokens hovedtema. Ikke så interessant dersom man er interessert ut over det undervisningsorienterte, selv om det inneholder drypp om medieutviklingen som er nyttige.

Kapitel 9, for øvrig på dansk, handler om WOW og peker på at entreprenørskap kan være veien å gå for oppbygging av kompetanse. Dette kapitlet er vel

av mindre interesse for oss som er nærmere den forretningsmessige utvikling av mediene.

I del 2 – Medieledelse – tar man for seg ulike aspekter av medieledelse blant annet gjennom kapitel 10 som peker på journalistikk som selger basert på Barlands avhandling om *VG* og *Aftonbladet*. Disse avisene viser på en markedsorientering av journalistikken og et mer tverrfaglig internt samarbeid. Det peker på viktige kulturendringer også.

Kapitel 10 tar for seg en beskrivelse av betalingsløsninger for e-aviser og dette er et område og et tidsbilde som er i en enorm forandring, og hvor det skjer nye ting hele tiden. Forfatterne peker på at de robuste digitale inntektsmodellene må forankres i et godt redaksjonelt produkt samtidig som leveransen må være tilpasset en digital virkelighet. Her pekes det på ulike utviklingstrekk og trender som viser i retning av nyere modeller. Her er intet hugget i sten – det er ulike varianter som det skrus på hele tiden. For en kunde virker det unaturlig å tenke på ordet betalingsmur – og forfatterne bruker det heller ikke – men da dette å ta betalt utviklet seg så var det betalingsmur eller 'paywall' som var begrepet. Forfatterne gir en god oversikt over feltet slik det er i 2014. Og mye av aktiviteten i Norge nå går ut på å finne den optimale modellen for å føre leserne over fra den døende papirutgaven over på ulike digitale løsninger.

I kapitel 12 finner man strategier for brukerinvolvering som inneholder en interessant typologi – de fire D'er som gir ulike strategiske utgangspunkter som det er verd å reflektere over. I kapitel 13 skrives det om relevans og kundeorientering som redaksjonell kvalitetsnorm – og det er i høyeste grad det medieledelse og -utvikling handler om. Vi kommer ingen vei dersom ikke leserne oppfatter mediene som relevante. Det pekes på brukerinvolvering, brukerinnsikt og brukertilpasning og det er nok veien å gå. Men nå ser vi også at nye dataaggregeringsformer og robotisert sammenstilling av materiale vil komme, og det vil også påvirke relevansen.

Kapitel 14 gir oss innsikt i et interessant case fra Avisa *Nordland* i Bodø og hvordan de angrep den kritiske gruppen av lesere – eller mangelen på slike – mellom 20 og 40 år. Caset viser på mange av dilemmaer som en avis i omstilling møter og peker også på hva som må være grunnfilosofien eller tenkemåten.

Kapitel 15 omhandler redaktørrollen og hvordan redaktøren i dag både er redaksjonell leder og bedriftsleder med et helhetssyn. Det pekes på tverr-

faglighet som den store trenden, og det er nok det som vil prege utviklingen i de neste kritiske årene. Den kommersielle delen kryper nærmere innpå og påvirker i større grad handlingsrommet for den journalistiske virksomheten.

Kapitel 16 gir oss innsikt i hvordan det journalistiske samfunnsoppdraget har endret seg over tid. Og også hvordan journalistene som profesjon har endret seg – og blitt mer mainstream. Kapitel 17 tar for seg nettbrett i skolen og dermed forlater vi mediene et øyeblikk. Kapitlets viktigste bidrag er å skape en forståelse av at digitaliseringen begynner tidlig og påvirker utviklingen etter hvert som tiden går. Dette er en plattform som fremdeles er meget ung. Det siste kapitlet er vel mer for de spesielt interesserte og handler om erfaringer fra Kosovo – hvorvidt medieledelse kan eksporteres. Og kapitlet sier at det er ikke helt enkelt.

Bokens sterkeste side er dens mangfold i temaer, men den er en kompott – av ulike elementer med ulik farge og smak. Videre er den god på henvisning til relevant norsk forskning på området.

Den mangler etter min mening to vesentlige ting: Det ene er en innledning som kanskje i større grad hadde beskrevet gjennom statistikk og analyser hvordan mediene har forandret seg over tid, og den andre er det nesten komplette fraværet av hva som har skjedd på inntektssiden med endrede mønstre i annonsering. Men dette har sannsynligvis med forfatternes bakgrunn å gjøre. Dessuten er det få bidrag på organisasjonenes 'indre liv' – hva som skjer i en omstilling og hvordan det påvirker organisasjon og organisering. Det må til dersom det skal bli et komplett bilde av medieentreprenørskap og medieledelse.

Som et tidsbilde er boken en interessant lesning og den vil være nyttig som referanse ved journalistikkstudier – men kanskje i mindre grad på en handelshøyskole.

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