

CRITICAL THINKING IN A WORLD OF FAKE NEWS. TEACHING THE PUBLIC TO MAKE GOOD CHOICES

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ABSTRACT. Fake news are a big concern for media, audiences and governments. Some journalists are engaged in finding fake news and disclose them. Fake news is also a concern to the researchers and journalism professors, but they should not focus only on the way fake news work, or how to teach future journalists about them, a big challenge would be to teach the audiences, the public to make the right choices and identify fake news. Tackling this problem of the popularization of science and teaching the public should actually be one of the key-concerns of the journalism professors today in Romania. It is the purpose of this paper to propose a list of criteria to identify fake news, by using critical thinking, a list that could be easily explained to people from the public, so they can make good choices. The core notion used hereby will be quality. A large discussion on quality in journalism raised at the end of the 1990s in Western Europe, not so in Romania. Therefore, it seems more than appropriate to start it now.

Keywords: fake news, media, critical thinking, education, public, criteria.

1. Relevance of the theme and novelty of the approach

Fake news is on the lips of journalists, scientists, politicians and members of the civil society. It is one of the key-concepts or key-concerns in communication studies today. Fake news is not a new

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phenomenon, but the level reached and the impact – both raised by the almost instantaneousness of news and the amounts of information today – make the difference in this phenomenon when comparing it to the past.

By fake news are meant quite different types of messages, from hoaxes to propaganda or what Hannah Arendt called “organized lying” (1971). These being said, the degree of potential danger and impact attached to different types of fake news is quite different. The two words have become more *en vogue* in the past three years, because the phenomenon has increased. Fake news is being used unflinchingly and powerful.

When it comes to mass media, critical thinking criteria have been used primarily in analyzing argumentative texts, editorials and commentaries. This is because critical thinking deals with argumentations. However, the largest part of journalistic articles is or should be the informative ones. Then the question comes up: How can critical thinking help in reading a non-argumentative, informative text? This is a new aspect in our approach. Informative texts contain facts, and for journalists who are producing quality content, facts are sacred.

The other new aspect is addressing the opportunity and the must of teaching the public in dealing with media content and fake news. It is aimed to help the reader/viewer/listener to ask himself questions on the reliability of the source of his information and to gain confidence in one source or another based on a critical thinking approach to that source and by critical reading the texts provided.

Journalists dealing with fake news and governments dealing with fake news are often discussed themes; the present paper points out the necessity to teach the regular individual from the public not to become or stay a victim of fake news.

Skepticism is important in staying critical, in asking questions, being vigilant, being pro-active, being a vigilant reader/viewer/listener and a vigilant citizen. On the same time, skepticism should not overwhelm the person and turn them into a person with a total lack of trust. Trustworthiness of media channels is a keyword when talking about fake news and there is a big need to build it (or rebuild it), gain

it (or regain it). Staying vigilant is different to feeling insecure. Insecurity and the mistrust are precisely the results of fake news. They are intended by those who spread fake news in an organized way, with a purpose. On the other hand, there is no recipe for a good, healthy dose of skepticism, it has to be found out by each individual.

2. Definitions

2.1. *What is fake news?*

There are several definitions of fake news. We will pick up the one given by professor Peter Gross in *Dialogues on Journalism and Media*: “Fake news has always been with us. That is the news that is misinforming, dis-informing or propaganda. Yes, this has increased because the media just about everywhere in the Western world has become increasing politicized. The media alone are not the culprits. There are significant segments of audiences that embrace this sort of fake news because it reinforces their beliefs. It is very dangerous to a democracy” (2017, 38)

2.1.1 *Old and new*

Academics agree that fake news is not a new phenomenon, but in fact as old as human communication. What is new about fake news: the dimensions of the phenomenon in a world where people are offered information not only through mainstream (traditional media), but also through new media and so-called social media. New are according to the German journalist and co-author of *Fake News machen Geschichte: Gerüchte und Falschmeldungen im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert* Sven Felix Kellerhoff “simply the extent, the speed and also the resonance space that social media gives to such discussions. Something has changed qualitatively” (Cf. Ziehn 2017).

Nevertheless, analyzing older fake news is viewed as valuable, because they can give an insight on patterns. The two German journalists Lars-Broder Keil and Sven Felix Kellerhoff who have analyzed rumors, canards and fake news from the 20th and 21st century

in the above-mentioned book showed how many of the fake news they analyzed truly marked history, some of them even gave a fatal turn to history. It was the case with rumors in 1933 regarding an imminent coup d'état of the Reichswehr, the German army; these rumors helped Hitler come to power. Other fake news just shows how easy it is to spread disinformation because in a certain historical situation they seem conceivable.

“Canards and rumors taken seriously are a suitable instrument to analyze past reality. (...) To a historian a canard that was distributed publicly as a rumor and that becomes tangible because of its consequences is an evidence, a testimony that doesn't provide information about what a witness actually saw, but about what he considered to be natural or probable” (Apud Baetz 2017).

2.1.2. *Mostly negative outcome*

Fake news usually has a negative output; sometimes a catastrophic output, but Keil and Kellerhoff acknowledge that fake news doesn't necessarily have negative consequences: A case where fake news had a positive output was the joint statement of Chancellor Angela Merkel and the then Minister of Finance Peer Steinbrück regarding the guarantee of German savings at the beginning of the financial crisis. It was a general statement, but had the effect that the Germans did not clear their accounts, with a positive effect on the stability (Apud Baetz 2017).

We can add only that fake news is more aggressive and numerous in with what I called in my Master thesis “the crisis discourse” (1998), a discourse that appears before and during a crisis situation, war being the peak of a crisis situation known.

2.1.3. *How do fake news work?*

Kellerhoff underlines that “fake news has always to do with two phenomena: With real or perceived information deficit and with mistrust of the given information. Perceived information deficit is, of course, also related to the fact that, unfortunately, in the current situation, people who scream *Lügenpresse* cannot imagine anything

else but that the media would be lying and working on behalf of the government. This is of course absurd, but it is a consolidated false belief of the followers of this *Lügenpresse*-theory that we journalists get our instructions from the Federal Press Office. We are no longer believed that we gather information from our own best knowledge and conscience, process information and release it" (Cf. Ziehn, 2017).

As Kellerhoff further explains in the interview moderated by Sascha Ziehn, the current mistrust in journalists and traditional media is partly a consequence of the not quite proper way some colleagues dealt with the issue of the refugees back in 2015. As he states, over weeks there was a one-sided information. In this process, some people developed the impression of disinformation (2017).

Other specialists like the historian Habbo Knoch go even further and point out that the source of the fake news doesn't even claim that it can or will prove the news. Therefore we can say fake news has to do with the authoritarian character: "The strategy is to float an idea and not even claim that the sender can or will prove it. (...) Plausibility does not mean that we follow proof or rational arguments, but it means *I* incarnate the truth. *We*, the system, incarnate the truth" (Cf. Stänner, 2017).

2.1.4. *Different approaches in different countries*

Fake news is handled differently in different countries. This is mostly a result of historical events and of the democratic tradition (or its lack).

Reading the essay-book *China in Ten Words* by Yu Hua we find out that fake news seems to be usual and not surprising at all to the public there. The writer, who is not only a well-known novelist, but also as a contributing opinion writer for *The New York Times* covering Chinese society, culture and politics, shows how easily people oversee or even embrace fake news in his country where a totally invented story or interview seems to be common use in media. Fake news do not stir the spirits, they are seen no more than a "bamboozle" (2018, 269-273 pp.)

On the opposite side, in Europe, fake news is a concern to the EU and its member countries. In December 2017, the European Union was seeking for a solution to fight fake news and set up a High-Level-Group on Fake News and online disinformation, made up by 39 experts from the member countries, appointed by the Commission (European Commission, 2018).

France for example has gone further than other countries and wanted courts to ban fake news. In his new year's speech to journalists, President Emmanuel Macron said, "he would shortly present the new law in order to fight the spread of fake news, which he said threatened liberal democracies. New legislation for websites would include more transparency about sponsored content. Under the new law, websites would have to say who is financing them and the amount of money for sponsored content would be capped. For fake news published during election seasons, an emergency legal action could allow authorities to remove that content or even block the website, Macron said. 'If we want to protect liberal democracies, we must be strong and have clear rules,' he added" (Chrisafis, 2018).

Talks started before the law was discussed in Parliament, regarding the freedom of speech, but the intention was not to limit freedom of speech but to have fake news (here to be understood as propaganda and malicious false information with a destructive goal) banned and to protect democracy. (Schubert, 2018)

3. A Few Words on News Writing

Facts are sacred, comment is free! This is the number one rule in Anglo-Saxon traditional journalism. It assures the public that professional media does not mix up facts and commentaries, that the public is always aware what type of text it has to deal with: news or comments. Journalists who honor their profession verify the facts and do not mix them up with comments.

Nothing has changed in this respect since London Times correspondent William Howard Russell intuitively wrote in 1854, when he dispatched his story from the Crimean War: "I shall proceed

to describe, to the best of my power, what occurred under my own eyes, and to state the facts which I have heard from men whose veracity is unimpeachable, reserving to myself the exercise of the right of private judgment in making public and in suppressing the details of what occurred on this memorable day" (1854).

He was aware of the necessity of building a trustworthy relationship with his readers back home, knowing only too well that till then the public was reached only by official news from the battlefield, news sent by the army. He was also aware of him being the first civilian (or one of the first), one of the first war correspondents to inform about an event of such a big importance.

On facts, Hannah Arendt said: "Facts need testimony to be remembered and trustworthy witnesses to be established in order to find a secure dwelling place in the domain of human affairs". The political theorist also shows what she calls "the fragility" of facts: "The deliberate falsehood deals with *contingent* facts, that is with matters which carry no inherent truth within themselves, no necessity to be as they are; factual truths are never compellingly true. The historian knows how vulnerable is the whole texture of facts in which we spend our daily lives; it is always in danger of being perforated by single lies or torn to shreds by the organized lying of groups, nations, or classes, or denied and distorted, often carefully covered up by reams of falsehoods or simply allowed to fall into oblivion". And she points out that "no factual statement can ever be beyond doubt—as secure and shielded against attack as, for instance, the statement that two and two make four" (1971). She shows the differences between rational truth, factual truth and opinions.

Journalists deal with factual truth and therefore they need to show testimonies, their own testimonies, other's testimonies, they need trustworthy, eligible sources and they need to double-check the information. On the other hand, they need to treat facts and opinions differently and also when they pass them on to the public they need to make sure the audience knows where the facts end and the opinions begin.

When it comes to writing news, there are a few very precise rules, recommended in journalism handbooks in the USA and across Europe: News has to answer to the five W-questions and the one H-question: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How? There is also a generally accepted best formula to be used, when organizing the information and this is the inverted pyramid that provides the most important piece of information at the beginning and goes backwards to the least important one. It is mostly common to have the answers to What happens/happened? and Who acted/is involved? at the very beginning and then where and when things will happen/happened. These are the commonly accepted questions. There are voices from “anthro-journalism” calling to add one more question, in order to gain a holistic perspective. It could be the question “whence” as Susan L. Allen showed in an article published in *The Journalism Educator* (1987, 21). It is not a question in a regular handbook of journalism, but it is a question of interest when we are talking about analyzing news (fake news) by means of critical thinking.

“The lesson is that to understand the meaning of news, we must understand context; journalism emerges from and responds to cultural specificities”, as Elizabeth Bird puts it in the introduction to *The Anthropology of News and Journalism. Global Perspectives* (2009, 13).

News can *in extremis* also be written by a machine. This has been proved, by providing a software with the information to be used in the news and the formula of construction. But a machine wouldn’t “think” about the context.

4. The Critical Approach

René Descartes and the Cartesian view of asking yourself questions, of doubting were the inspiration source for this chapter. “The critical thinking method developed by Descartes was based on the principle of questioning, testing and questioning systematically”, as Aura Ana Vasile shows (2012, 72).

This is how Descartes himself describes his method: “[...] instead of the great many precepts whereof Logic is composed, I thought these four following would be sufficient for me, if I took but a firm and constant resolution not once to fail in the observation of them.

The first was, never to receive any thing for true, but what I evidently knew to be so; that’s to say, Carefully to avoid Precipitation and Prevention, and to admit nothing more into my judgment, but what should so clearly and distinctly present itself to my mind, that I could have no reason to doubt of it.

The second, to divide every One of these difficulties, which I was to examine into as many parcels as could be, and, as was requisite the better to resolve them.

The third, to lead my thoughts in order, beginning by the most simple objects, and the easiest to be known; to rise by little and little, as by steps, even to the knowledge of the most mixt; and even supposing an Order among those that naturally do not precede one the other.

And the last, to make everywhere such exact calculations, and such general reviews, that I might be confident to have omitted Nothing” (2008, originally printed in 1649, 12-13).

5. Being Critical about the News

The question this paper raises is whether critical thinking can be used not only in analyzing the argumentations in a text, but also the facts or the information presented as a fact.

This is how philosophy professor Gheorghe Clitan defines critical thinking: “[It] refers to a reasonable, reflective way of thinking, allowing one to determine what makes him believe or act” (2003, 68).

One of the abilities of critical thinking enumerated by Anne Thomson and cited by Gheorghe Clitan as abilities that can conduct to critical evaluation is “the effort to be as well informed as possible” (2003, p. 69). So not only can critical thinking evaluate the news, but by comparing the news and asking oneself questions about them the whole process grows the ability of the reader/viewer to keep informed and to exercise critical thinking. It is a two-way-process.

As Clitan points out, critical thinking is preceded by critical reading: "Critical reading [the news - we would add] understood as the activity to discover the information and ideas in a text precedes critical thinking meaning the evaluation activity of the information and ideas to decide what can be accepted and believed in the text" (2003, p. 71).

This is exactly what makes critical reading of the news so important: The public can evaluate the quality of the news and discover fake news. There is a much bigger need of media literacy today than ever before.

As we see it, there are several possible breaches in fake news and in badly handled news, badly constructed news:

A. at the level of the facts

Remember "facts are sacred" to journalists who respect their work. Factual information in the news is at least double-checked from two independent sources. It is equally important to the public to identify and discern between facts and arguments in the text. The questions are: Are the facts double-checked? Are the facts really facts or does the journalist try to present opinions as facts? What do I know about the sources of information the journalist used (his own presence at the place where the event takes place, a news agency, an unnamed source)? How often does he use unnamed sources?

The public must put the journalist under pressure by demanding good craftsmanship, good quality: double-checked information, named sources, absence of opinions in the news, sticking to the facts.

The public should learn to discover what the theorists in critical thinking like Tracy Bowell and Gary Kemp call "unsupported claims" (2005, 7). News should for the sake of complete and correct information contain only "supported claims".

B. at the level of the language used

The language of the news should be neutral and clear. The text should be clear of figures of speech and the vocabulary used should be rapidly understood and unambiguous.

C. at the level of construction

Is the most important element at the top of the news? If not, why? Doesn't the journalist know how to construct it or is he trying to focus the attention of his reader on something less important, is he trying to rewrite the story, to reconstruct it, emphasizing something that isn't so important and why.

D. at the level of context

Is the public well informed about the context in which an event has occurred or not.

Using critical thinking when reading/watching the news means in my view to have a set of questions formulated (looking at the Cartesian method) and to try to answer them.

Here are some questions, which in my opinion, a reader (viewer/listener) should ask himself/herself when trying to ask about the rightfulness, the correctness of the information in the news, a raster for anyone who wants to ask himself: Am I well informed? And also: Who (dis)informs me?

The "questionnaire" has as starting point the same 5W and one H-question a journalist has to answer to in order to have a complete piece of news and bearing in mind the different levels where a breach can appear in a piece of news transforming it into a fake news.

First and above all: Who (or what) is/are my source(s)? Followed by questions like: What do I know about the media channel? Who is the owner? Who pays for the advertising? Who is the source of power and the source of money? "Follow the money" is not just a rule in investigative journalism.

The next questions to be asked and answered to start with "What?": What type of media is it? When using a traditional media channel to get information, there is usually a long history behind it. What is its reputation? What does its history say about the media channel? What are its strengths? Where and when was it wrong and about what? And: How often was it mistaken in the past few years? What kind of mistakes have been made? How did the editorial staff react to them? How did they deal with the mistakes: Did they correct

them straightaway or not? What do other people say/write about it? What is your own experience with it?

Who signs the articles? News are often not signed, but often we find the initials of the reporter and being a member of the staff, we can find out the name. What type of articles does he usually write? Does he write only news or also commentaries? What is his point of view then, his position? Is he experienced/unexperienced? Is he a professional? What about his reputation? How often was he mistaken? What kind of mistakes did he do (content, context, lack of information, not answering to one or several questions etc.)? Did he/she correct them in any form?

Am I well enough informed about the sources the journalist used? Which are these sources? Is it a public person, a PR-officer, a news agency, a governmental institution, another media etc.? What do I know about the trustworthiness of this source? Does the journalist fully inform me about the sources used? Is there a statement included with quotation marks? Is there a name given of a person or an institution? Does he use other formulas to protect the source or why does he use formulas like “pe surse” (“using anonymous sources” – overused in Romanian media) or “from a highly positioned person who doesn’t want to be named”? How often are these formulas being used in the media he/she is watching/reading/listening to?

Does this particular piece of news appear in a similar form in other media (especially in competing media)? What is the common source of information? This might be a very difficult question to answer to. Governmental sources and sources from the civil society are very common ones to be used by journalists: How do I know if journalists have been critical when gathering it?

How is the news constructed? Does the public have the most important answers in the beginning or does the journalist point to another detail (and why: does he not know how to construct the news or does he do it on purpose)? Here a clue how anyone can find out the most important piece of information: Imagine you are Pheidippides, the legendary runner from Marathon, and have to deliver to the

Athenians the news of their victory. What words would you utter first, using your last energy? These words should be the lead of your piece of news.

The most important questions regard the content of the news. Ask again: Are the journalists well informed or were they misinformed? Or are they spreading fake news?

What kind of language has been used? Is it the simple, neutral, clear language that is necessary in the news? Or is the journalist or simply the news provider sloppy about language?

Fake news says that red is green and *vice versa* and often make it in a way that does not seem to be questionable. It seems probable. It seems likely. It seems a fact. But facts should be sacred. For the journalist it means to have checked the information from at least two independent sources. Has he done it? Does the reader trust him? Do I as a reader prefer to be informed a little bit later and receive better, more qualitative news, rather than receive them as quickly as possible, almost instantly, but not double-checked? Does the media channel/the journalist warn me it wasn't double checked yet, but I am informed timely, instantly, and become later the result of the double-checking and I can read it, however it would come out in the end? It is often the case with breaking news and developing stories where the media channel sometimes wants to be in time with the news but warns the public that it hasn't been double-checked yet (e.g. in the car accident of Princess Diana, TV channels grabbed the news in the morning, but underlined that they have no confirmation yet).

It probably seems a utopia that a reader will go through all these questions. It takes time to find out the answers and the news reader today is more than ever a fast consumer, news is consumed "to go", not necessarily with time and patience as the time of reading cabinets has gone and so has the time when the newspaper was consumed during a large breakfast or the TV news with the whole family watching. But it makes sense to take your time to think about these questions at least when deciding to invest your trust into one media channel or another. When the reader/viewer/listener found "his" or "her" media

channels, he/she will see that the trust invested brings comfort. Journalists should learn about this trust, but the public should stay vigilant and let the journalists know about this too, since trustworthiness is not gained once and for all. Things can change: The channel once trusted could have been bought out and have another owner. This can have a good or bad impact on the content.

The reader/viewer/listener should also get information from various sources, from various media channels, should be ready to experiment and to experience. Should be open, but critical as well; vigilant, active, a good citizen. And also: Time is precious not only to journalists, but also to the public. It should not be wasted with channels, either traditional or new, if they have been repeatedly disappointing.

On the other hand: Using only the channels that are confirming once one viewpoint is not good either. They might be wrong, the reader (viewer/listener) might be wrong. It would be better to come out of the comfort zone and try something new: Try to understand a different viewpoint. This also makes a good citizen.

Media is the watchdog of democracy. "Media plays the role of the watch dog of democracy only as long as critical thinking is not avoided. Without critical thinking this role as an outpost held by the mass media in defending the values of democracy is inconceivable", as Aurelia Ana Vasile points out (2012, 74).

Further on: *An instructed public can be a watchdog of the media.* Cogito, ergo sum a good citizen. Cogito ergo sum well informed. Cogito ergo sum. "Just" this.

6. Media Quality

Quality was a concept *en vogue* in communication sciences during the 1990s. Looking at the evidence of the disturbances in communication today quality should raise interest again. Peter Gross argues: "It is always timely to talk about quality in journalism, no less than the need for a constant dialogue about democracy and liberal values" (2017, 27).

There are for sure aspects that can be reiterated, one does not have to reinvent the wheel. Other aspects would be new, because media has changed (since the growth of the internet), the information sources have changed (the alternatives offered by bloggers or vloggers) and the context is different (more and more aggressive fake news).

More than ever journalists have to defend their guild and their *métier*, adding quality to their work and defending it. This should also be pointed out: There is a demand – more than ever – for a responsible reader (viewer/listener) as a responsible citizen (the full sense is probably given by the word “*mündig*” used by the Enlightenment), one who knows what to ask for, what to demand from the journalists: good, reliable, quality content.

The tragedy of the situation is felt by many members of the journalists’ community and they tend to give up, to render in front of an alarming fake news wave and massive tabloidization. One example is picked up by Tobias Piller for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and presented in the article “Frauen und Alkohol’. Italien, Land des Postfaktischen”. After presenting examples of fake news in Italian media as well as opinions from analysts and journalists, the author turns to the “Ordine dei Giornalisti”, the Chamber of Journalists in Italy, which requests an exam so the journalist can become a member. This procedure should guarantee quality standards. The president of the “Ordine”, Enzo Jacopino, has given up his function being frustrated by the situation: “Efforts to return to the credibility of the profession have proved to be a major failure. I do not know where the unconditional respect for the truth and the dignity of the persons remained. Predominant are perverse and irresponsible games of militant opponents, sectarianism, superficiality, yelling and vulgarity” (2017).

It is not surprising that another Italian, no other than the famous Umberto Eco expressed bitterness and disillusion regarding communication today, while everybody awaited a positive outturn of the communication explosion. Regarding social media, he said after receiving the honorary degree in “Communication and Media Culture” in Turin: “Social media gives the right to speak to legions of idiots who once spoke only at the bar after a glass of wine, without

harming the community. Then they were immediately silenced, while now they have the same right to speak as a Nobel Prize winner. It's the invasion of idiots" (Apud Nicoletti, 2015).

In addition, "The TV had promoted the village idiot with respect to which the viewer felt superior. The Internet drama is that he promoted the village idiot to the bearer of truth" (*Ibidem*).

Instead, Eco invites newspapers "to filter information from the internet with a team of specialists, because nobody can understand today if a site is reliable or less" and "devote at least two pages to critical site analysis, just as teachers should teach kids to use sites to do the topics. Knowing how to copy is a virtue but we need to compare the information to understand if they are reliable or not" (*Ibidem*).

A different, happier case seems to be in France, as German journalist Jürg Altwegg found out by interviewing several French editors and journalists from daily newspapers. He cites Jérôme Fénoglio, the editorial director of *Le Monde* saying that: "We go to the schools to explain to young people how to check information for their truth" (2018). Fénoglio established a department dealing with 'fact-checking' and publishes new articles on this topic. *Le Monde* also operates the "Decodex", a search engine used for finding out about the quality of portals and their potential to lie: "'We have noticed the phenomenon Fake News long before the Brexit and the Trump election', says editor-in-chief Fénoglio" (Altwegg, 2018).

Regarding the measures proposed by Macron, a law supposed to be valid during election campaigns, having a seal of approval for information media during these periods, the German reporter observes: "Educational measures, media literacy is undoubtedly better than laws". In order to reach youngsters, 'Le Monde' is not active only on Twitter and Facebook, but also on Snapchat "'where it reaches 900,000 teenagers every day'", quoting Louis Dreyfus, the publisher of *Le Monde* (*Ibidem*).

It is a very good example of engaging in educating the public and raising a conscience generation, aware of both the qualities of media as well as possible traps. But not only journalists can get more involved in this process. Academics too can get more engaged in this process of educating the public media literacy. Or in the words of

Media professor Peter Gross: “Journalism schools should also take on the mantle of ‘public intellectuals’. That is, they must teach not only students but the whole (local, regional, national) community. They should militate for a democratic society with the appropriate values of professional journalism – accuracy, completeness of facts, context, credible sources, fair and balanced presentations and analysis, ethics, ethics, and again ethics; and help them identify media and journalists who can deliver this kind of journalism” (2017, 19).

7. Conclusions

More than ever media needs a powerful public, a public that can judge, make correct choices, a public that can talk, can analyze, and can demand quality. Only when the public is responsible and enlightened (what the Enlightenment called *mündig*: responsible, mature, can raise his voice), quality will return to media. This does not mean for journalists to stand back and wait for this moment, but rather to start teaching the public and giving evidence, showing proof that good, qualitative journalism is a need to a good working democratic society.

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