

Abstracts

*Guido Zurstiege: Genre Picture of Consumer Society.
Advertising Ethics in Times of Voluntary Relinquishment of our Basic Rights*

Concerning the practice of advertising there is a considerable need for ethical reflection. This need is due to the following developments within the media system: In the context of digital media environments existing advertising-related normative standards mingle with new professional standards formerly outside the industry. Due to this fact the redefinition of ethical standards as well as inter and intra role conflicts within the advertising business become more likely. Moreover, new forms of advertising in digital media environments pose new ethical problems (such as privacy issues with a special focus on vulnerable target groups like children and adolescents). To explore and evaluate the potential for ethical problems resulting from these developments, it is necessary that the ethical analysis does not exclusively focus on advertising content, but also on the values and norms of practitioners in the field of advertising.

*Nina Köberer: Pubescent Product Testing by Adolescents for Adolescents:
A Media Ethical Look at Haul-Videos*

Particularly under the conditions of the digital age and the changing role of the recipients new forms of interaction and participation are found in the digital society. This paper sketches out from a normative perspective which challenges arise with regard to hybrid media formats such as haul-videos on YouTube and how those new forms of “personal product recommendations” are problematic in a media ethical view. It becomes apparent that it is also important for semi-professional content production to orientate on normative criteria like for example the transparent representation of interests – which has the effect of ensuring the recipient knows where personal product recommendation ends and advertising begins.

*Irene Raster/Alexander Godulla: Religious Stereotypes in Advertising.
A Cross-Section Analysis of Advertisements in the Magazine „Der Spiegel“
(2009-2013)*

Religion has become ever further removed from modern society and is increasingly losing its relevance – such is the widely prevalent view concerning the significance of religion. However, this does not apply to all areas of society; the advertising industry remains fully aware of the expressive power of religion and makes advantageous use of it in various ways. This article investigates the employment of religious motifs in

advertisements, which appeared in the German news magazine “Der Spiegel” between 2009 and 2013. It deals with the frequency of religious motifs, their sector-dependent use as well as a differentiated inspection of functional and substantive religious stereotypes in advertising.

Felix Krebber/Markus Wiesenberg: The Limits of Participation – Increased Acceptance of the Catholic Church Through Influential Dialogue

Based on the discussion process launched by the German Bishops’ Conference in 2011, this article discusses to what extent the Roman Catholic Church has responded, on both national and diocesan levels, to societal expectations concerning lay involvement and participation. On the basis of its organizational neo-institutionalism, as well as works concerning theoretical discourse, the Catholic Church is understood to be an official institution, itself conducting strategic communications. The understandings derived from the theoretical background are transferred onto the discussion process utilizing a participation model. It is thereby shown that within the discussion process, through traditional set beliefs on the part of church dignitaries and administration, the way decision-making takes place in the Catholic church and through legal-hierarchical parameters narrow borders are set, by which the influence of the laity is strictly limited. In the communications of churches with their members these factors should be taken into account and made transparent.

Christian Ströder/Nikolaus Jakob: Violent Images in the Media: Acceptable or Reprehensible? Argumentation in the Communication Sciences, between Journalists and at the German Press Council

Violent images from across the entire world arrive daily at editorial offices. As gatekeepers, journalists must consider: Can, should, may we or must we publish these pictures? If they decide for publication they are quickly accused of sensationalism. However, the journalistic mandate also requires that violence, suffering and death be reported upon using pictures. Journalists are confronted with a pictorial-ethical dilemma. The following contribution addresses this issue and questions the arguments which speak for and against the publication of violent images by the mass media. Thereto, the pictorial-ethical dialogue within the communication sciences is considered, between journalists and at the German Press Council. In a short excursus the position of the (Catholic) Church is also looked into. It becomes clear, that for the moral acceptability of their publication the context and function of violent images apply as decisive factors. Thereby, a pattern of argumentation stands out: the pro arguments claim the societal value of violent images while the contra arguments insist in view of the depicted, their immediate family and users, on the protection of the individual.