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**Journalists on the Blog:
the online discourse of news professionals**

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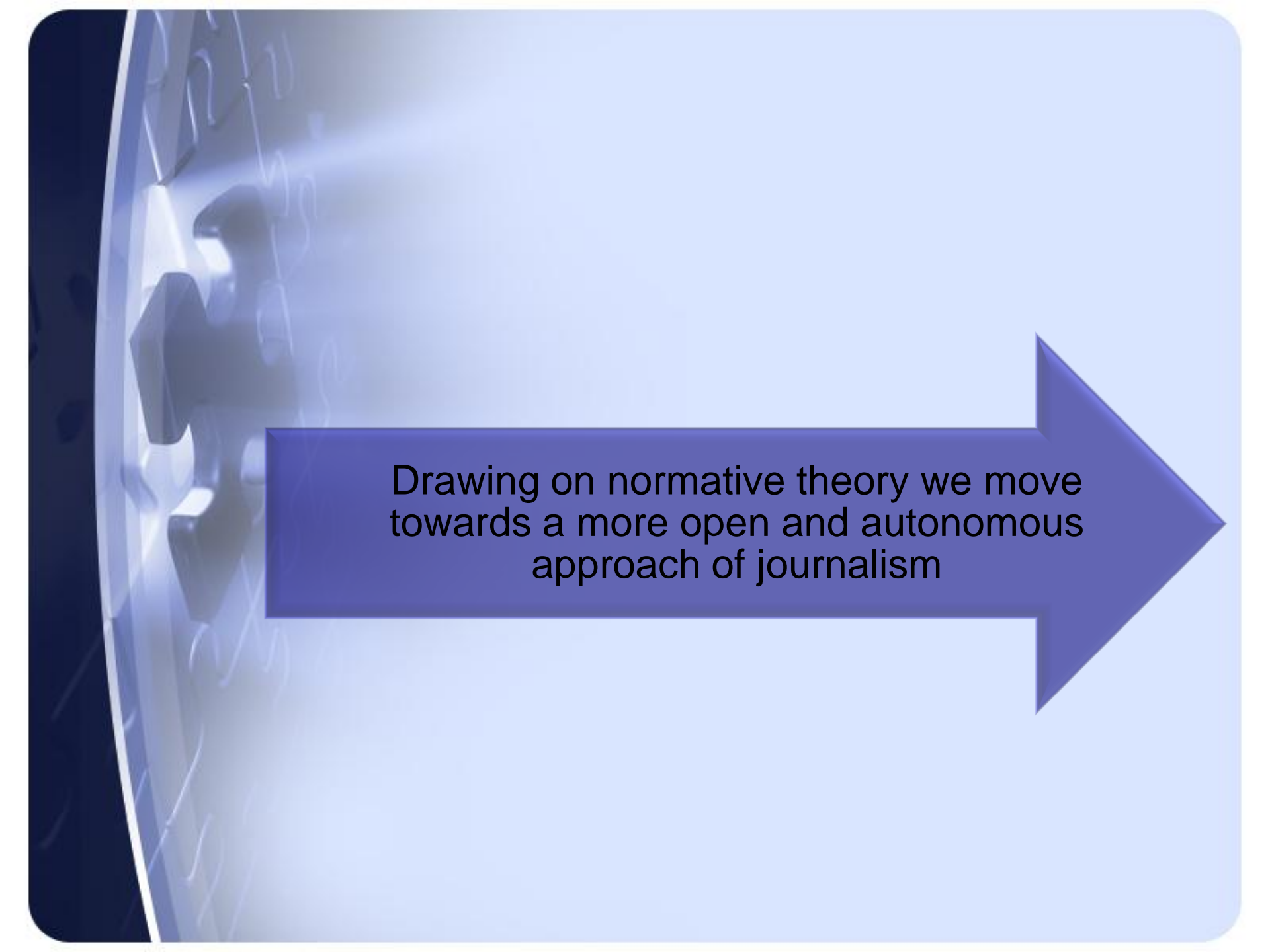
Scope of study

Weblogs as online platforms of news professionals who work in offline/traditional media

Examine the online discourse as it formed and developed in their blogs

How is the popular blog format adopted by journalists affiliated with mainstream media outlets?

Is there a distinction between the discourse of news professionals who work in the traditional, mainstream media and of their discourse as bloggers?



Drawing on normative theory we move towards a more open and autonomous approach of journalism

Our approach

Do news professionals challenge their professional standard values & practices when they are engaged into blogging?



Are journalists 'normalizing' the blog as a component/enhancement, of traditional journalistic norms and practices?



Do they use it as an opportunity to form an online platform deliberation with citizens?



What linking patterns do they follow?

A magnifying glass with a black handle and silver rim is positioned over a white rectangular area. Inside the lens of the magnifying glass, the text "What Is a BLOG?" is displayed. "What" and "Is a" are in black, and "BLOG?" is in a larger, bold, blue font. The background of the slide is light blue with a subtle pattern of white lines and a dark blue vertical strip on the left side.

**What
Is a
BLOG?**

Blogs

Forms of websites that feature hyperlinked, journal-kind posts and entries

Users get involved into online discussion and deliberation

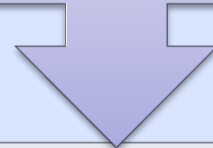
Can be frequently updated, are multilinked and interactive

Revolutionary features

transforms the blog into a debate arena in which the author initiates a conversation with an informative or an opinion text that the readers can comment on and follow up actively



dialogical nature of weblogs is what makes them an appropriate tool with which to develop new kinds of participatory journalism projects



hypertext links to websites and online documents the author refers to in the text resulting to a level of accountability not found in traditional media”

Even more...

they also have certain distinctive cultural and behavioral features

personality or intimacy, communality, and specific style are key aspects of blogging

blogs are a set of socially defined habits

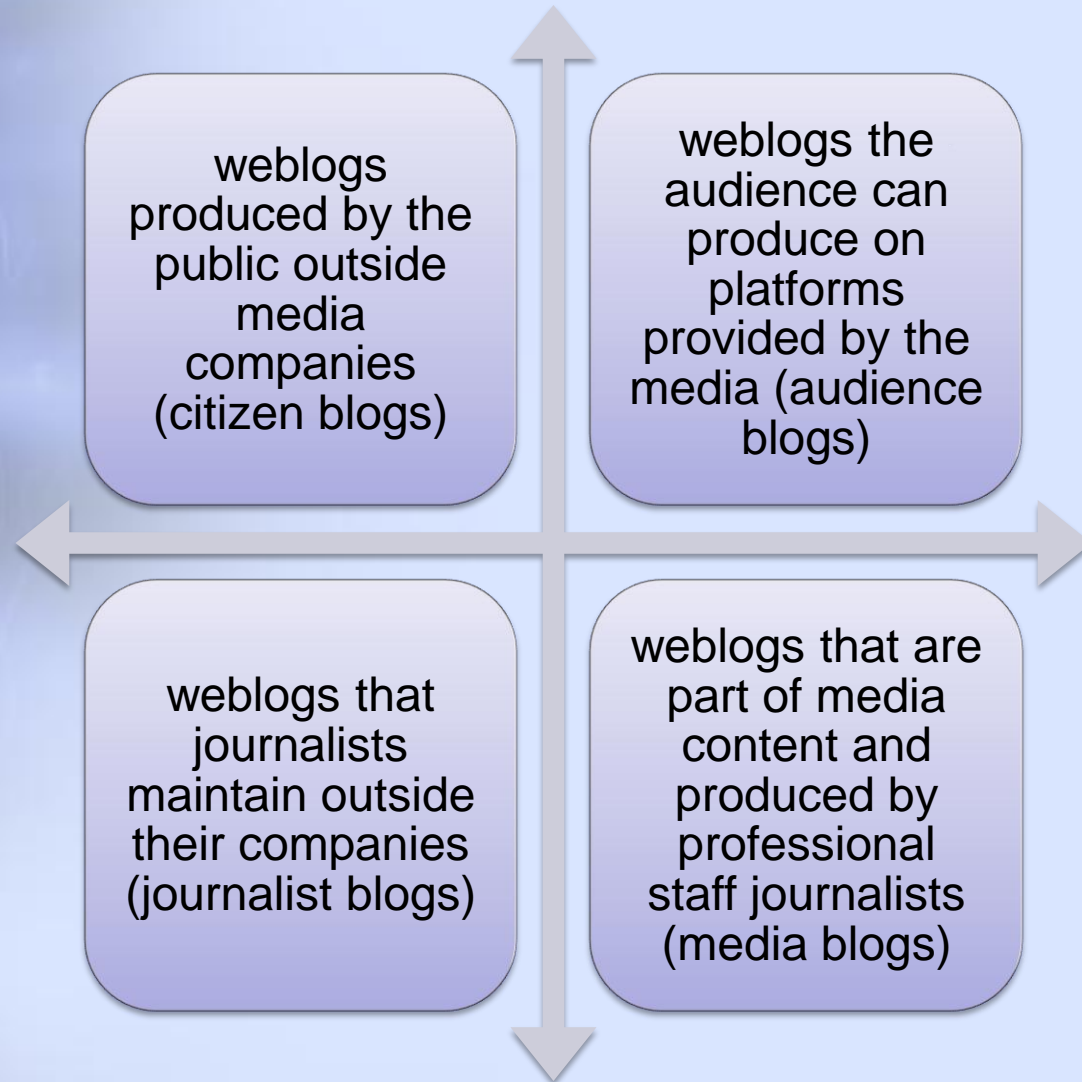
bloggers perceive themselves as part of a community that shares values, rituals and language





represent a newly collaborative news product that hosts both the journalist and his/her audience in a sharing platform for possible online deliberation

Blog typology



Our focus...



Effective
Blog Posts
Ahead



journalistic weblogs
written by journalists
outside media
institutions

they become
extremely appealing
to news professionals
as they offer
uncontrolled and
unlimited self-
publishing space

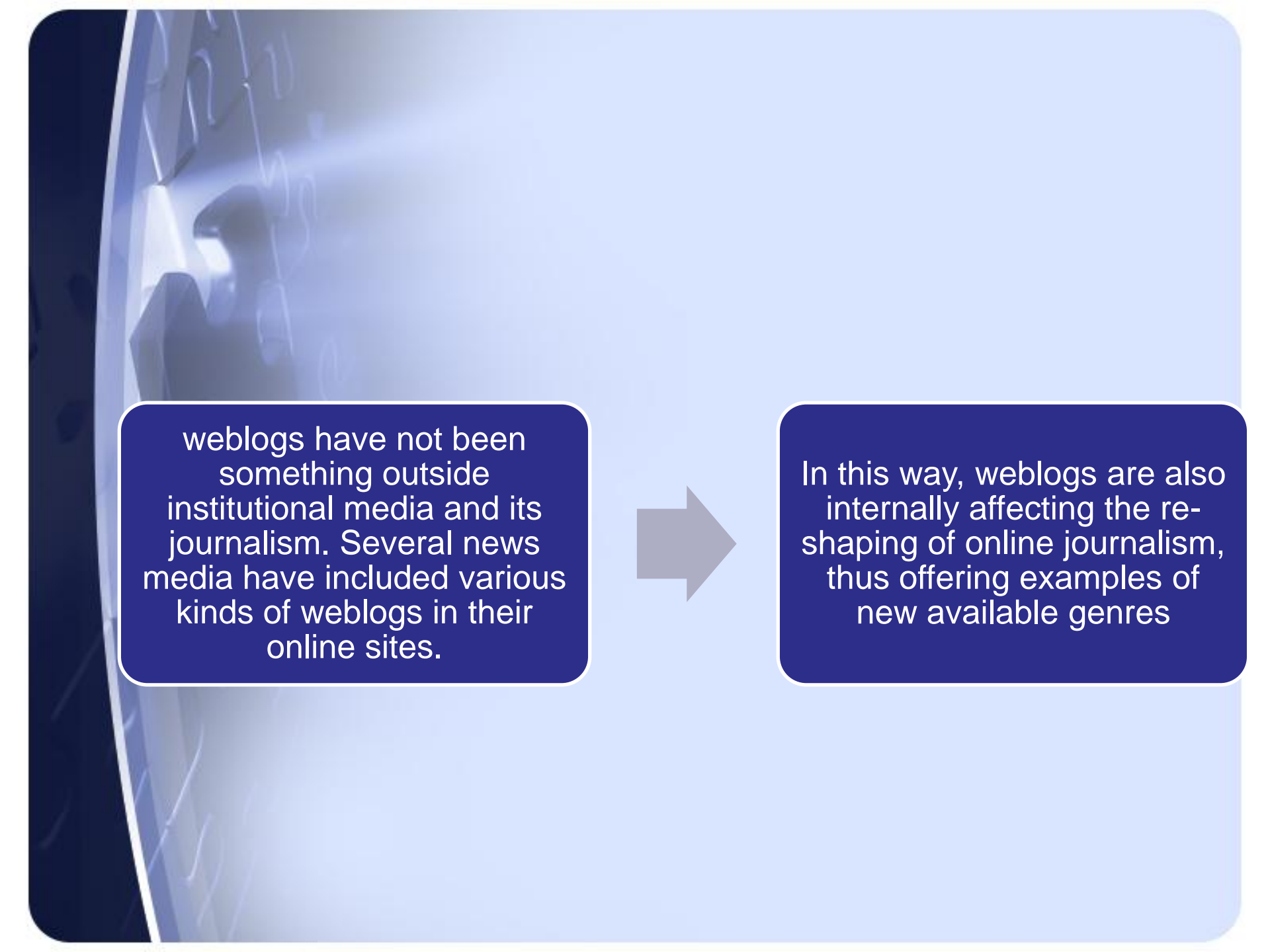
allow complete
editorial freedom and
adoption of critical and
opinionated position in
comparison to the
standards of
mainstream media

Levels of influence between weblogs & journalism

Journalism's privilege in agenda-setting is being challenged as the blogosphere is developing alternative agendas

newcomers are performing largely the same routines as professional journalists

Unlike institutional journalism, weblogs are essentially participatory



weblogs have not been something outside institutional media and its journalism. Several news media have included various kinds of weblogs in their online sites.

In this way, weblogs are also internally affecting the re-shaping of online journalism, thus offering examples of new available genres

Major challenges



Non-partisanship



Gatekeeper
role



Our research



Methods: discourse and content analysis



10 blogs whose creator is a journalist associated with a print or broadcasting media outlet

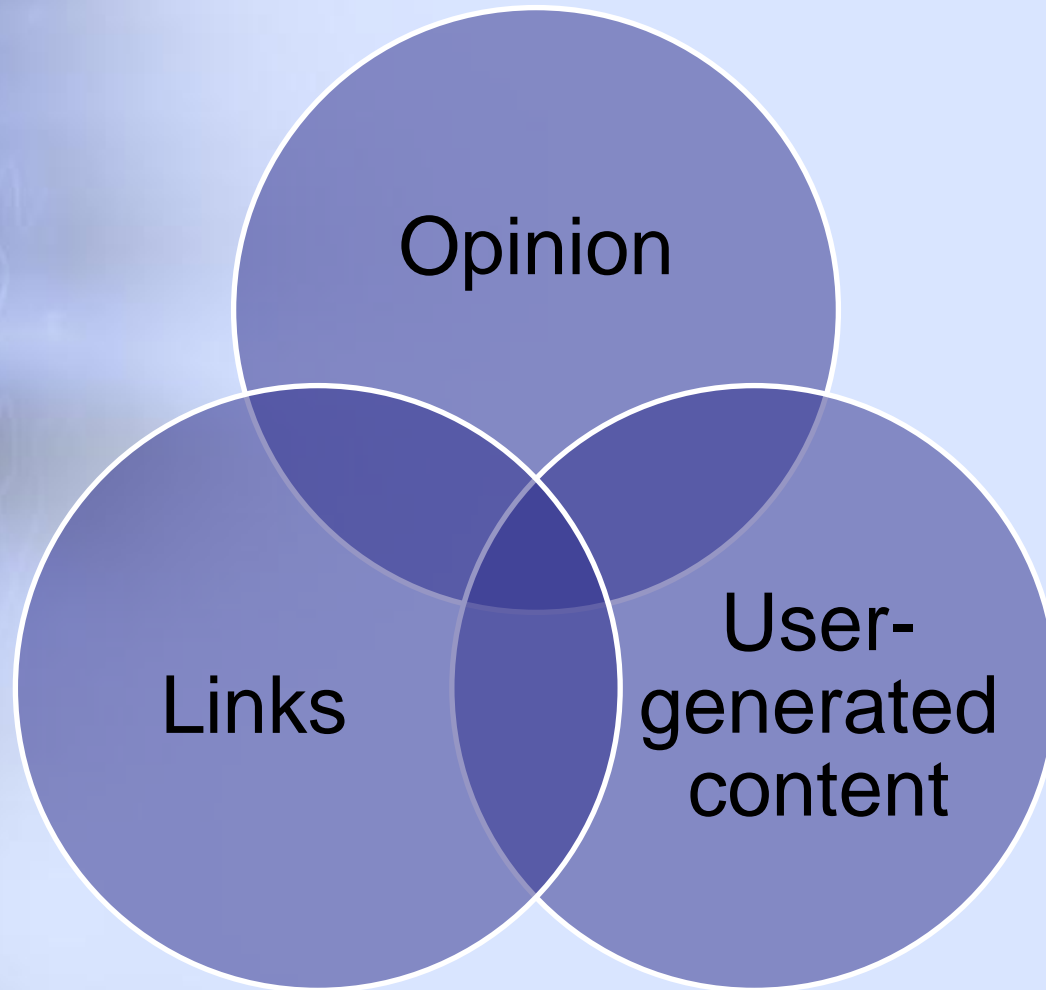


The blogs were purposively chosen as widely cited and visited j-blogs



Unit of our analysis: individual blog item

Further classification of the variables



Archived web journals of journalists



9 out of 10 blogs are a combination of expressions of personal opinions and articles related to the journalists' work



Mainly used as a collective online platform, an archived web journal of journalists sporadically enhanced by original material produced for the blog



It is also notable that blogs provided by columnists were more likely to contain opinions

Anonymity rules...



Journalists share their blog space with unedited input from users



The blogging format is, however, not evolved into a truly participatory experience



When it comes to user-generated items, the majority of them (87%) are made either under a pseudonym (65%) or anonymously (22%)

Mainstream & alternative linking patterns



The majority (7 out of 10) offered links to other j-bloggers, while 9 out of 10 provided links to users-bloggers.




Few j-bloggers sent users directly to government or institutional sites



Blogs provide links to alternative media (6 out of 10), while the linkage patterns to mainstream news media are limited (4 out of 10)




Not surprisingly, the pattern shows that the mainstream media mentioned are the ones the j-bloggers work for



Research shows that weblog writers do not challenge mainstream news media's narrow range of topics...

...however, this is not supported in our study



There are cases where blogs set the agenda for neglected or omitted by the mainstream media stories, which attract the attention of the audience and thus serve as pressure tools towards the mainstream news outlets to deal with them

Inter-weblog agenda-setters

A small number of bloggers have become highly influential within the blogosphere, a phenomenon commonly referred to as “inter-media agenda-setting” (inter-weblog agenda-setters)

To the extent that these weblog writers take their cues from mainstream news media coverage rather than vice versa, they serve as intermediaries or “opinion leaders,” channeling information from the mainstream news media to the blogosphere at large

Perspectives for research

The j-weblog phenomenon marks an excellent subject for additional research

Conduct personal interviews with j-bloggers in order to understand the processes and their rationales at which a content and discourse analysis can only on a first level indicate

Comparisons: blogs of journalists/users-bloggers with journalistic activity, j-blogs with what the same journalists write as 'offline' columnists or reporters

The value of such studies...

further our knowledge of the extent to which journalistic norms and practices are being applied to j-blogs

study the extent to which j-bloggers are adapting nontraditional approaches and the extent to which journalistic practices are used by bloggers who have do not belong in a newsroom

'who is a journalist' online? = roles, norms and practices become increasingly fluid and blur



Thank you for your
attention!

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