Citizenship in the Age of the Internet

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ABSTRACT

New information and communication technologies (ICTs) have allowed for changes in media content and in practices of media reception. How these changes have impacted on practices of citizenship, is the key question for this article. It starts by showing how notions of citizenship are closely related to public opinion formation, which, in turn is felt to be nurtured by journalism. The demise in newspaper readership is in that regard a worrying phenomenon. By first looking more closely at how the news itself has changed (the inclusion of vox pop segments; the wide use of polls) and by then turning to how practices of representing ordinary people point to the possibility of more inclusive notions of citizenship, the article proposes ‘cultural’ citizenship as a sensitizing concept. As ICTs are most visibly embodied by the Internet, a number of examples are discussed from this perspective. The article concludes that ICTs do not necessarily produce new citizens but that they do provide for new and important citizenship practices.

Key Words audiences, cultural citizenship, Internet practices, ordinary people, public opinion formation

We understand citizenship to derive from and to be intimately connected with public opinion formation. Discussion about what is best for all of us is understood to be supported by and take place predominantly in (news) media. Journalism functions as democracy’s watchdog and as a mediator for citizenship. Somewhat simplified, this is the enduringly dominant view of the relation between the media, citizens and governments,

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embodied primarily by the newspaper from the mid-18th century onwards (McQuail, 2000). The fate and quality of democracy is in the hands of the reading public. The fact that newspapers are read less and less (Schoenbach et al., 2005), and that young people regard news as important but boring (Meijer et al., 2006) is, therefore, a matter of concern. Questions of what we expect from the news as a citizenship medium, and questions of how citizenship is nurtured and bolstered more generally are of evident importance now that new technologies are taken up and are changing the media landscape.

How processes of change as a result of new ICTs impact on practices of 'being a citizen' is the key question in this article. First, it focuses on news media and how the relationship between news, 'the citizen' and ordinary people has changed as a consequence of new possibilities enabled by technological innovation. In the second part of the article, the conceptualization of citizenship is discussed and broadened to include a wider range of media content and genres in relation to what has been called 'cultural citizenship'. The result of such a reconceptualization is that it becomes clear how, despite the strong reputation of the newspaper, in fact a broader domain of media content is feeding diverse citizenship practices. Specifically, it allows for formulating an answer to questions of audiencehood and citizenship in the age of the Internet. There are, for instance, web communities that have all the hallmarks of the ‘public’ of old.

The news – where we expect to find citizenship

New technology over the past 25 years has led to an increasing volume of more and more lavishly illustrated news via new and old media. Digital video and photography have developed quickly and speeded up processes of news dissemination. Recently, consumer digital cameras, new forms of mobile phone communication that include sending photographs and the Internet gave us shocking insider images from within the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq in 2004. Institutional control over news content has thus been weakened. 'Ordinary people' appear in new roles both as producers and actors in the news. One could be mistaken for thinking that ordinary people have won the final battle for emancipation. Whether in the Big Brother house (Corner and Pels, 2003) or in news media, we encounter people other than the professionals and experts who used to dominate screens and pages. Although letters to the editor, and discussion and forum pages in newspapers are still mostly for those who have titles and functions that legitimate their opinions, vox pop segments and frequent
references to opinion polls in newspapers and news programmes on radio and television make other voices heard.

Both forms are enabled by technological change. Vox pop segments are easily gathered; computer time and power have become so cheap and accessible that the cost of polling has gone down considerably. Technology did not dictate either the form, content or the mode of address in usage for these news reporting techniques. Both, in their own way, discipline audiences. The ordinary men and women we see appearing do so under conditions dictated by the media. Vox pop news segments, for instance, frame those shown as impacted by events they had no control over, either directly as victims, or as bystanders. Seldom are they asked for a political opinion or analysis of what has happened. Neither deliberation nor reflection are at stake in their construction as witnesses (Couldry, 2000). To weigh technological change and innovation against its possible citizenship benefits, I focus on the implied meaning of the vox pop segment and the use of opinion polls as outstanding features of how television news and newspapers, home of the citizen, have changed.

Vox pop segments

The appearance of ordinary people in the media dates back most obviously to the introduction of television, in which audiences became visible around sports fields or in theatres. In the Netherlands, it was the introduction of commercial television at the end of the 1980s that allowed ordinary people a voice of their own. Everyday experience and observation were foregrounded in new reality formats and chat shows (Leurdijk, 1999; Livingstone and Lunt, 1994). Oprah Winfrey, Jerry Springer and other talk shows were aired and given their Dutch counterparts. With amazing openness, a huge range of subjects was introduced, from fashion to incest (Masciarotte, 1991). Often denounced as ‘women’s television’ (emotional and unruly according to male interviewees, see Livingstone, 1994), reality television paved the way for current practices of introducing and illustrating shocking subject matter via the accounts of those involved in what happened. Experience, what life feels like, has become part of the domain of the news.

There is little against the use of the vox pop as a practice of referencing what events mean to people. Emotion is part of how we come to interpret the world around us and form opinions about it. Anger, hatred, grief and sorrow point to how we understand the relation between individuals and collectivities, and what standards we feel should prevail. However, vox pop segments offer little sense of a wider orientation or
reflection on responsibilities. There is no link from the individual to what turns individuals into members of a public. Moreover, the direct appeal to emotion and gut feeling by populist political parties has made this type of knowledge extremely difficult to use in processes of understanding what our common good, or common responsibility, would be.

Unsurprisingly then, despite the fact that ordinary citizens have made their way onto the national stage, this has had little political impact. Although helped by developments in media content and technology and strengthened in a good many European countries by populist tendencies and movements in politics in the late 20th century, this produced national successes for a small number of politicians but not political agency or public opinion formation for those outside the domain of politics. Not unsurprisingly, the political establishment (including politicians, journalists and public servants) have remained fans of the old and trusted technology of polling.

**Polls in the news**

Opinion polls are now used on an unprecedented scale. News media like to report on them. But do they provide a conduit for audiences to become publics? The utopia of such early pollsters as George Gallup was exactly that. The use of scientific method would deliver true knowledge and democracy (Glynn et al., 2004: 68–9). Citizens and government officials would be perfectly informed about each other via the press. Technically, such consultation of citizens has come within easy reach. There is no need to organize national voting over individual issues. Such information is readily gathered and delivered. But this is hardly what happens. Taking my cue from Dutch practice, opinion polls appear to have little political meaning or impact. They may inform citizens about each others’ views and ideas but only in the most cursory of manners, and with few visible results.

Three major opinion polls conducted and reported on in 2004 and 2005 in the Netherlands showed shockingly low levels of trust in the Dutch government. This includes a poll by the government’s Public Relations Institute (Voorlichtingsinstituut, 2005).¹ No more than 35 percent of respondents said they had any confidence in the sitting cabinet and prime minister. Statistical measures were not made available; it was taken on faith that the respectable research agencies involved were indeed delivering a representation of the Dutch population. Despite this massive vote of distrust, the same cabinet, prime minister and parliament remained in office. Parliamentary democracy has not been widely
questioned. The legitimacy of the system appears not to be at stake. If that indeed is the case, why conduct opinion research at all?

Public scepticism about polling is rife. High levels of non-response have made this clear, as has everyday experience of being bothered at inopportune moments by market research companies. From this perspective, the very high response to the 21-minute poll is of interest. One-hundred-and-fifty thousand people spent 21 minutes filling out the online questionnaire during the seven weeks the Internet module was available. While Internet polls are by definition not representative and cannot qualify as acceptable evidence of ‘public opinion’ by scientific standards, the technology is used to forge a new bond between publics, market researchers and journalists. A high number of questions involved concrete policy decisions. The overwhelming negative judgement by respondents of the Dutch government’s actions was read as an intentional critique. Rather than the unintended consequence of a cynical state of mind among the general population, distrust of government and the state was set as the new standard. Furthermore, the poll results also showed that business and enterprise were not regarded with either worry or pessimism.²

To read polls as describing a given state of reality, argues Justin Lewis (2001), is to allow them to continue to be a cultural practice that confirms a conservative hegemony. Understanding them as constructing that reality (as a research format), and of being put to specific purposes in professional media practice is more useful. Polls can help, when read attentively, to show how the democratic contract is changing. Currently, we can see that at the heart of parliamentary democracy hegemony is a cynical disengagement from bureaucratic government fed by individualist ideology that governments themselves like to promote. Such a paradoxical result makes any notion of everyday citizenship, defined as a reciprocal relationship of responsibility and trust between the nation-state and its nationals, patently ludicrous.

Reading and understanding opinion poll results is not easy. It requires specialized social scientific training and it requires discipline. Neither of these seem in sufficient supply among journalists today.³ Nor, for clarity’s sake, are all polls political in nature. Although discussion of citizenship points to political polling, the majority of polls are of a different nature, which requires yet another type of ‘decoding’ skill.

A small inventory of news items that mentioned ‘poll’ or ‘opinion measurement’ delivered over 1000 hits in three national newspapers for the year 2004 in the Netherlands.⁴ Most newspapers refer to at least one poll a day, and the more populist newspapers are more likely to use poll
results as independent news items. The polls referred to here cover a great many more topics than the ‘horse race’ statistics for upcoming elections or policy issues (McNair, 2000). They merge into conventional marketing research and tell us about such amazing subjects as one’s conversational behaviour while going to a public toilet. Women, the newspaper item tells us, on average will keep on talking, while men don’t (Volkskrant, 2004). Such polls may make us more aware as newspaper readers of the commercial nature of this type of research. They show how polls are used by journalists as a device to tell stories. They also help broaden the category of ‘the citizen’. As clients especially of government agencies, citizens have long figured in newspaper print, but they are present in other roles as well. They are there as consumers who make choices, who construct identities. In itself this points to the need to redefine citizenship in relation to being a consumer or a client (Cronin, 2000). Such a broad notion of citizenship may help revitalize journalism as a separate and critical professional force in democratic society by rooting it much more firmly in everyday life worlds.

**Citizenship – but not where we usually look for it**

If we want to understand how and when audiences turn into publics, we need to find out where and how they form opinions. Public opinion formation, in terms of a shared analysis or agenda for a common future, is ultimately the key ingredient of the type of bonding that we call citizenship. Two major strains can be found in discussion of citizenship for the purposes of my argument here. On the one hand, political theory has mostly taken Marshall’s (1950) tripartite definition of citizenship as its point of departure. Marshall argued that citizenship developed historically from a quest for civic rights (18th century French and American revolutions), which subsequently broadened to include political and social rights. The relationship between the *individual* citizen and the nation-state as it was to develop over the last two centuries is central to this argument.

The other strain in discussion of citizenship understands it in terms of a cultural agreement among groups, which partly coincides with the coming into being of nation-states but can no longer be defined solely in this framework. Bryan Turner (1994), for example, argues that processes of globalization are diminishing the bonding power of the nation-state in favour of newer, transnational forms of community building. He defines citizenship as competent membership of a community. He thus combines the older republican discussion of citizenship, in which, apart from
rights, certain virtues were always felt to be required in citizens (autonomy, discernment and independent means are examples; see van Gunsteren, 1994: 22) with the appreciation of shared codes, commitments, competences and possibly a canon as well.

While influential political science research has narrowed citizenship down to voting, which leads, predictably, to an interest in a particular type of opinion polling, culturally inclined scholars have taken up citizenship in terms of community building and bonding. Of interest here is how, within cultural studies, citizenship is used to understand everyday constructions of subjectivity. Toby Miller (1993, 1998) understands (cultural) citizenship as the disciplining of subjects in the cultural realm of capitalist social formations. He sums up his *The Well-Tempered Self* by stating that ‘culture is a significant area in the daily organisation of fealty to the cultural-capitalist state’ (Miller, 1993: 218).

I take from his book the notion that citizenship is a realm of subjection rather than freedom, in which disciplining and seduction both hold sway. However aware we are, in ironical or postmodern mode, that we are fooled, tied down and regulated by the different types of invitation that come our way to be included and to belong – to be a selfless, responsible citizen or just a witness, to be a happy consumer – we also take them up, enjoy them, live them. Miller concludes that: ‘the civic cultural subject – the citizen – is produced as a polite and obedient servant of etiquette, within limited definitions of acceptable behaviour’ (Miller, 1993: 223).

Neither culture nor politics are domains of freedom but nor are they governed by totalitarian rule. While we are hailed to understand ourselves as worthy or unworthy citizens via the types of culture we prefer and consume, we may use and redefine culture in unexpected ways. John Hartley (1996, 1999) describes how ‘the knowledge class’ has mostly been in the business of guarding their terrain and exclusive knowledge against the lack of taste and insight of the multitudes. ‘The knowledge class’ has preferred to understand drama, literature and indeed popular culture as areas of determination (in that they reflect deeper structures or truths) rather than as areas of production. In full knowledge of the status of television and other popular media, audiences have, however, made use of capitalist logic to protest class difference while ‘selling out’ to global media conglomerates. This double-edged practice has been referred to both as resistance (Fiske, 1989) and as submission (Curran, 1990).

While we may rightly be critical of how particular economic logics dictate what is culturally available, there is merit in understanding how
audiences make fuller use of what is possible than the disdain the elite has for popular media suggests. In this light, John Hartley has suggested that television is in fact a ‘transmodern’ teacher that combines oral logic, information and entertainment (Hartley, 1999: 41). Television has taught us to understand ‘difference’, he claims, as well as neighbourliness (Hartley, 1999: 41). Against Miller’s more pessimistic analysis, Hartley suggests that in The Well-Tempered Self Miller has hidden a call to arms: to be untempered and to resist disciplining by the corporate-capitalist state, in favour of parodic politics and incivility (Hartley, 1996: 62). Hartley summarizes in Popular Reality: ‘In other words, Miller’s analysis (against the grain of his main thesis) describes not only the formation of a “postmodern subject”, but also what I’d call a postmodern politics of reading, centred on “the actions of living persons” in relation and reaction to popular media and powerful truth-discourses; his incivility is my media citizenship’ (Hartley, 1996: 62). Media citizenship, for Hartley, is grounded in his intent to undo the intellectual-made divide between ‘the knowledge class’ and ordinary people. Intellectual and popular culture are understood as ‘mutual, reciprocal and interdependent sites of knowledge production’ (Hartley, 1996: 58–9). Hence Hartley’s use of ‘reading’ and ‘readerships’ to describe media audiences as a taunt to how intellectuals like to describe themselves:

‘Readerships’ are the audiences, consumers, users, viewers, listeners or readers called into being by any medium, whether verbal, audio-visual or visual, journalistic or fictional; ‘reading’ is the discursive practice of making sense of any semiotic material whatever, and would include not only decoding but also the cultural and critical work of responding, interpreting, talking about or talking back – the whole array of sense-making practices that are proper to a given medium in its situation. (Hartley, 1996: 58)

Moreover, reading for Hartley is a practice not a subjectivity, part of the cultural repertoire of actions that people may undertake (Hartley, 1996: 66). Shared cultural frameworks and how they are (continuously) built and rebuilt are at stake. Rigorous investigation of the core values in using both journalism and popular culture should therefore include examination of how it fascinates and binds, how it is incremental in community building as well as in practices of exclusion. Cultural citizenship is the consequence of actions and debates in the range of contexts that make up the (semi) public sphere of mass media consumption. We should neither overestimate the public sphere of political science nor underestimate the realm of popular entertainment.
Studying cultural citizenship is a project of understanding public opinion and the building of shared identities among audiences. It includes a number of ‘rights’ (to belong to a community, to offer one’s views, to express preferences) as well as responsibilities (such as respecting other people’s tastes, or how they are different from oneself). It is how we use (popular) media texts and everyday culture generally to understand, take up, reflect on and reform identities that are embedded in communities of different kinds (ranging from virtual, interpretative communities to membership of sports clubs or fan groups). Implicitly, part of this ongoing activity of purposeful everyday meaning-making in relation to mediated culture is the production of distinctions, norms and rules. Cultural citizenship offers both the ground rules of interpretation and evaluation and the space to be excited, frightened, enthralled, committed or any of the huge range of states of mind and feelings that we connect with the use of popular media, rather than just to be concerned or pleased as becomes the informed citizen, the newspaper reader of old. Cultural citizenship thus refers to processes of bonding and community building, and reflection on that bonding, which we are well familiar with but have failed to understand nevertheless as the unruly but necessary input for more formally defined citizenships. While intentionally focusing on political citizenship, Liesbet van Zoonen (2005) shows in her *Entertaining the Citizen* how publics are constituted, politically and socially in more places and in more ways than a focus on parliamentary politics would allow for.

Cultural studies offer more examples of how popular culture constitutes ‘publics’ by offering frames of reference. John Mepham suggests we understand the provision of ‘usable stories’ in popular drama as a mark of quality (Mepham, 1990: 57). Ien Ang coined the term ‘emotional realism’ to underline the value of the prime-time soap opera *Dallas* for its viewers in reflecting on among other things gender roles and relations (Ang, 1985). Stuart Hall speaks of a ‘fictional rehearsal’ in watching soaps (Hall, cited in Miller, 1993: 79). I found similar mechanisms in interviews with readers of women’s magazines, who described the pleasure of temporary imagined ideal identities while reading (Hermes, 1995). To call this ‘cultural citizenship’ helps make visible not just the construction of identity and difference, but how the construction of the willingness to engage with the political needs grounding. Now that ‘being informed’ has lost its lustre for many (the decline in newspaper reading), to be replaced by the supply of and demand for more experiential accounts, a broadened notion of citizenship is needed to see where there is democratic potential as yet unrecognized.
Although it is not to be laid at technology’s door that we now have an ‘experience economy’ (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), it is surely the uses to which technological change has been put that now force a rethinking of how political and democratic commitment can be grounded.

**Internet citizenship practices**

Having raised the question of how to do research on public opinion (that is the transformation of audiences into publics) from the perspective that it is the ways in which we bond that counts, a number of Internet-related forms of communication require our attention. The Internet is but one modality built with new technology but it encapsulates various tendencies that define the cultural usage of new ICTs: it bridges public and private spaces, it is used for entertainment, for consultation and information and for communication. It offers new means to connect information and experience. It may serve as exemplary for future uses of multi-media content, but is not necessarily clearly defined as either fact or fiction. Web communities serve different types of citizenship goals. They can be marked as political, national and cultural. All, however, should be understood from the broad, cultural definition of citizenship given earlier. They involve a great variety of knowledges and activities; they include emotion, sensation and experience and deliver, in varying degrees, a state of being informed and of commitment to larger communities.

It may come as a surprise that the Internet serves old-fashioned political citizenship goals. But that is exactly what Peter Dahlgren and Tobias Olsson (2005) found in their research on the media use of different groups of young people in Sweden. Among those researched were youth members of political parties and extra-parliamentary activists. While keeping informed by referring to a range of media sources (including newspapers), the Internet allows them to visit the websites of rival political parties and engage in discussion with them. They are just training their debating skills, is what they claim. But also, from a citizenship perspective, they are building their own community by defining what for them is competent membership, and building bridges to others who hold similar convictions about competences but differ in political outlook.

Spectacular examples also exist of spontaneous action by groups of ‘civilians’ on the web. Christine Hine (2000) describes the example of the Louise Woodward case in 1997. Woodward was a British au-pair charged in the United States with shaking the baby in her charge to death.

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Although building a website in 1997 was hardly as easy as it is today, a sizeable number of sites appeared in support of Woodward, mostly, notes Hine, springing from strong nationalist feelings (Hine, 2000: 113–14).

Less than a decade later, we see news travelling even faster, and leading to intense ‘outbursts’ of national feeling. Unexpected shocking events are such an example. In the Netherlands, the murder of filmmaker and Islam critic Theo van Gogh on 2 November 2004 was such an occasion. Internet sites carried the news before the national media were ready to go to press. But mostly this murder raised the profile of a Dutch Moroccan web community, called Marokko.nl. For Moroccan and Dutch young people especially, it provided a space to which they could turn to check their sense of the seriousness and implications of unfolding events and to debate their views, often forcefully (Qrius, 2005). Although the webmasters did shut the website down temporarily to regroup, they provided a meeting point that continues to be very popular. Although in many ways exceptional, this website supports the thesis that new technology may facilitate a new type of citizenship commitment that combines exchange of information and evaluation, in which emotion and experience are not discounted but an accepted part of the processes of opinion formation.

Internet technology is used by web communities to support, for instance, the almost immediate and coinciding deployment of different nationalisms. Louisa Stein offers the example of the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers in New York in 2001. Stein was living and working in New York at the time, building fan websites for her research on American teen television, on series such as Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1997–2003) and Roswell (1999–2002). While television, land line and mobile telephony took a long time to be restored, her new broadband modem came to life again fairly quickly. It provided a lifeline to the rest of the world and it brought her a stream of emails from her Roswell contacts via an usually carefully guarded Internet list.

Stein (2002) notes how the Roswell fans used their expertise as viewers of the series, which deals with aliens in the small American town that witnessed a UFO attack in the 1950s, to make sense of the attack. The series deals with such topics as difference, alienation, community and problematic patriotism. This made the Roswell viewers well-prepared observers and critics of what had happened. What is most striking of all in Stein’s account is how her virtual contacts connected seamlessly with her real-life family and friends and became an online family. Through their cultural connection (shared love for a television show), a citizen-type connection came into being. After sharing concern and grief, the Roswell
fans moved to political discussion of terrorism but also of American foreign policy, until the moderators decided that it was time to close down that debate and Roswell was again the main topic of discussion.

We may feel that the Internet especially facilitates small, enclosed communities, but its power to facilitate and intensify connection and communication between large groups of people is impressive. News in this context becomes another type of ‘commodity’, linked more directly and more intensely to emotion than to reflection. In the short term, reflection is not what Internet users want. Nor is it what these sites provide in the long run. Websites, whether the Roswell lists or Marokko.nl, at some point return to ‘business as usual’. Meanwhile, however temporarily, publics have been formed. What we are witnessing is not the coming together of groups of friends, but groups of strangers who aim to connect to others based on shared and disputed agendas and goals. Media events make clear that cultural bonds may be as strong as those forged in political arenas and perhaps even more valuable in the sense that they reconnect political issues and answers to worlds outside the in-crowd domain that politics still is.

Some answers

New ICTs are not necessarily producing ‘new’ citizens but they do provide for new citizen practices. Rather disconcertingly, these new practices are not easy to square with older notions and ideals of ‘being informed’. Moreover, the Net sits more easily with incidental than with structural citizen practices. The transition from audience member to belonging to a public is not a permanent elevation but a temporary one. However, the enthusiasm and energy that is invested in Internet discussion and in blogs underscores the deep need for community and the exchange of ideas and interpretation that people do have.

Meanwhile, news content is changing steadily, with possibly, at some point, dramatic consequences. Quality newspapers are flirting with citizen journalism and web logs. They mine the blogs and have started providing email addresses of journalists and columnists to set store by their reputation as mediators of public discussion among the citizenry. While vox pop segments and much of the use of opinion polls in newspapers appears to offer a fake imagery of inclusion of ordinary people, this may yet change. Perhaps they bode the arrival of a voice for those outside the circles of political elites, which, paradoxically, will require a critical effort on the part of those same elites who have invested
so much more in citizenship ideals than other (professional) groups, including notably journalists themselves (see Golding, 1994).

Old practices and identities may yet survive another two centuries, while new practices take on some of the qualities or position of older forms while developing their own defining characteristics. In any case, it makes sense to understand citizenship more broadly than directly related to politics, with the newspaper its key medium. Most of all, Internet-based communities make clear that new communication forms do allow for (new) citizenships and new groups to take up citizen identities: it is up to us to realize that that is what is happening. Nigel Pocklington of the Financial Times pointed out that: ‘We are in the middle of a rather uncomfortable generational shift. . . . We are dealing with online and digital worlds, where people get news from screens and mobile devices’.6

Most uncomfortably, however, is that these are not the only sites where they form their opinions. To understand the multiplication of forums and to devise new ways of encouraging informed political engagement is the real challenge.

Notes

1. The other two polls are a NIPO/TNS poll, reported on in all the major newspapers in 2004 and the so-called 21-minute poll, a widely advertised Internet initiative of McKinsey operating in the Netherlands in cooperation with a popular and a quality newspaper and companies involved in the use of the Internet.

2. At: www.21minuten.nl, Summer 2005. Poll results were reweighed to minimize effects of overrepresentation of groups because of the self-selection inherent in the method used.

3. This argument tends to be voiced informally and in debates. For example, Sjoerd de Jong, deputy editor-in-chief of the Dutch quality newspaper NRC, lamented in a debate with journalism students at the University of Amsterdam (24 October 2005), that he wished for more beta-trained journalists who would be able to understand and value research results. See also Lewis (2005).

4. The national online newspaper archive LexisNexis was used to sample two quality (Volkskrant and NRC) and one popular newspaper (Telegraaf), as well as the online edition of one of the newspapers for 2004 to check the validity of search terms.

5. A year after the murder of van Gogh the site had 85,000 members (data provided by Marokko.nl), while the Dutch Moroccan community consisted at that time of no more than 330,000 people.

References


