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The Nordic Media Model

Characteristics, Challenges & Opportunities

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About Course

Learning outcomes

The students shall develop an understanding of the key characteristics of Nordic Media, and how the region relates to the international media landscape in terms of media history, media policy and media industry. Students will learn to analyze and critically examine the idea of a Nordic Media Model, and to what degree this model stands out in relation to international overarching trends. Comparative perspectives will be central, and the students will, after taking the course, be able to discuss and analyze Nordic media in an international context.

Reading list

<http://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/mk/MEVIT4100/h11/pensumliste.xml>

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The Welfare State

- 'The Welfare State' was introduced as a term in the 1930s, but a single, commonly agreed definition still does not exist (Greve 2007).
- Three different ways of organizing the welfare state (Esping-Andersen 1990):
 1. The state is primarily concerned with directing money to the people most in need. Requires bureaucratic control.
 2. The state distributes welfare with as little bureaucratic interference as possible, to all the people who fulfill established criteria. This requires high taxation. This model is dominant in Scandinavia.
 3. Similar to the one found in Britain (Beveridge model) based more on citizenship and a certain level of welfare as a right.

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The Nordic Welfare State

The core of the Scandinavian or Nordic model:

To improve the ability of society to master its problems and to enrich and equalize the living conditions of individuals and families. In social policy, the cornerstone of the model is universalism.

(Erikson et al (eds.) 1987)

• Key distinctive characteristics:

- Full employment
- High degree of equality
- A high level of taxes
- A high level of public spending on welfare

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The Media Welfare State

- ...how does this relate to the media system?
- 'The Media Welfare State': Reflects the nordic societies ability to unite economic growth and competitiveness with a strong public sector, and a broad participation in the economic and social spheres of society.
- 'The media welfare state supports the public media sector through support mechanisms such as license fees and press subsidies, while at the same time it represents a commercially attractive media market for the commercial sector.

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The Nordic Model anno 2011

Newspaper reading

The Nordic countries have for decades had some of the world's highest numbers of commercial newspaper readers and buyers, and press subsidies have preserved a diverse local and national newspaper sector.

A Digital Showcase

The region's population is among the world's early adopters of technology, and Nordic societies have one of the world's highest mobile and Internet penetration and number of personal computers per citizens.

Nordic Public Service Broadcasting

- Norwegian NRK, Swedish SVT and Danish DR and Finnish YLE.
- Strong players in the audience-market. High public support.
- Supported by licence-fee, no commercials/advertising
- State regulated, but operates as corporate units.
- Political aims: democracy & equality, national identity & language.

The Big Players in Norwegian Media Market

Schibsted: Newspapers, broadcasting, online media.

NRK: Public service broadcasting, online media.

TV 2: Hybrid (Commercial/PSB) television company

MTG: Radio, commercial television (TV 3), Swedish owned.

Telenor: Telecom, former monopoly, global player.

The Age of Digitalisation: challenges to The Nordic Media Model

- The increasing competition and globalisation.
 - access to online media outside the Nordic region.
 - more global tv-channels, international media companies.
- The questioning of the media welfare states.
 - pbs: seeking new streams of online revenue - harder to justify the license fee.
 - commercial competitors are protesting against press subsidies (EU versus Sweden).
- The undermining of the commercial business models.
 - the death of printed newspapers and problems transferring analogue business models online.
 - challenges for press subsidies to be distributed efficiently in the chaotic landscape of the Internet.

Challenges = Opportunities?

- Nordic Entrepreneurship & innovation

Examples:

- Norwegian media company *Schibsted*.

online classified advertisements (Finn, Bocklet etc.).

- Finnish mobile phone supplier *Nokia*.

global success, international best-seller (recent decline)

- Swedish broadcast company *MTG*

viasat: largest free-tv and satellite premium operator in scandinavia, baltics etc.



Nordic Media in the Digital Age

Inward and outward-facing responses to digital challenges:

1. High degree of concentration, national strategies
2. Cross-national ownerships, expansion strategies

Next seminars & lectures

This week:

Seminar 25.8: The Nordic Model

Homework: Prepare (in pairs) a 5-10 min presentation of the main arguments in the book (or one chapter), Mary Hilson (2008/2010) *The Nordic Model. Scandinavia since 1945*.

Next week

Lecture 29.8: The Nordic Welfare State (Terje Rasmussen)