



**MEDIA SOCIOLOGY
AND JOURNALISM**
Studies in Truth and
Democracy

Greg M. Nielsen



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Media Sociology and Journalism is a dialogue on contemporary society as defined through news media, politics and contemporary sociological theory. The tenacity of deeply opposing truth claims in politics and in journalism exposes the current fragility of democracy as a type of society and regime of power. Debates are reviewed on competing explanations of post truth attitudes, the rise of populism, fake news, conspiracy theories, neoliberalism, nihilism, white nationalism and the flights from and to democracy. Focus is on the tenacity of deeply opposing truth claims where each side takes the other's claim to be an existential threat. A dialogical critique of divisions in news media, politics and contemporary sociological theory provides an alternative way forward as right populism, fake news and post truth attitudes render democracy fragile. It is argued that professional journalism also contributes to this fragility when it reports or opines on the most vulnerable subjects in society but does not address them as their imagined audience. The fragility at the heart of democracy, the fine line that once crossed separates freedom from equality or rule by the people from authoritarian demagogues, are further examined through case studies of mainstream acts of journalism on the themes of immigration, urban poverty and cultural diversity.

Key selling points

- Argues that media sociology and journalism is about discovering today's social conflicts through daily news and sociological and political theory
- Reviews the effects of post-truth-driven alt right populism
- Explains many similarities and differences between sociology and journalism
- Develops an innovative dialogical approach to reframe critique toward the imaginary audiences of fake news and show the fragility of democracy when confronted with authoritarian rule.

Contents

Acknowledgments; Introduction: Between the Posts; 1 Fake Populism and News: Freedom versus Democracy; 2 Political Theory: Deliberative, Agonistic and Dialogic Democracy; 3 Contemporary Sociology, Journalism and Society; 4 Acts of Journalism: Truth, Ghosts and Migrant Subjects; 5 Writing Inequality into the Urban Commons; 6 Exotopy and Cultural Boundaries: The Secular Question in Quebec; Conclusion: Deliberative or Dialogic Democracy?; Conclusion: Is Another Journalism Possible?; References; Index

About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Greg M. Nielsen is a professor of sociology at Concordia University in Montreal. He studies contemporary society through research on media, journalism, and political and social thought.

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