

Abstract

Alternative media are a diverse media category, containing several different types of media organizations that in various ways position themselves against mainstream media. This study aims to explore how should alternative media be defined. Specifically, it provides a comprehensive and complex framework to distinguish them not only from mainstream media, but also from extremist, propaganda or fake news outlets. In this context, the possibility of using alternative media as tools for political activism is also explored.

To effectively illustrate the use of alternative media as an activist tool, this thesis uses the American media company Crooked Media as an example. To show the audience's attitudes to partisan content, an online survey was distributed to the followers of the company. Furthermore, a content analysis of podcast episodes released by the company were analyzed to provide an overview of the specifics of politically engaged content. Lastly, this study examines the specific results of the activist initiatives initiated by the company.

The results show that alternative media are an useful tool to act in an activist manner, especially when the media organization establishes a connection with its audiences. However, while audiences may respond positively to the politically engaged nature of the medium, they want to be aware of its biases and highlight the need for an impartial journalism as well.