Från radiofabrik till mediehus
Medieproduktion och medieförändring på MTG-radio

av

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Abstract


This thesis is a study of how the Swedish media company MTG Radio has developed new strategies and production practices in relation to technological change, new competition and media convergence during the first decade of the 2000s. During this period the media landscape in general has been marked by digitization, the rise of new media platforms and competition from new media companies. The study engages in an ethnographical perspective on media production, but also takes its starting point in political-economic theories on media work (Banks 2007, Hesmondhalgh & Baker 2011, Ryan 1992) in order to raise questions about the relation between technological and organizational changes and relations of power in production. Empirically, the thesis builds on interviews with production staff as well as an analysis of production documents and content produced by MTG Radio.

The analysis shows that digital production technologies contribute to an increased automation and centralization of control over editorial decisions, and hence to “de-skilling” (Braverman 1974/1999, Örnebring 2010). On the other hand, strategies of multiplatform production and the organizational changes taking place contribute to an “upskilling” (Edgell 2012) and give DJs and presenters more autonomy and control within production. This strengthened autonomy involves their possibilities for reflexivity and critical self-evaluation, as well as their control over content and production. Finally, the thesis connects these results to the more overarching question of alienation, arguing that upskilling and increased autonomy do not automatically create better jobs within the media house, or necessarily represent emancipatory possibilities within media work, as has been argued in previous research and theory.

Keywords: media production, media work, digitization, de-skilling, up-skilling, etnography, political economy of the media.

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