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The Portrayal of New Media in The Simpsons through Kent Brockman's Cases: A Solution or a Return to Traditional Journalism?

Abstract
This study examines the relationship between traditional and new media, using the character of Kent Brockman from The Simpsons as a case study. It investigates why new media are seen as potential solutions to the challenges facing traditional journalism, and whether they are suited to Kent Brockman's situation. Methods used include semiotic and linguistic analysis, as well as text interpretation, to examine how traditional and new media, along with their respective problems and solutions, are portrayed. The results show that new media are depicted as remedies for issues such as low audience interest and irrelevance in traditional journalism. The advantages of new media – freedom, lack of censorship, large audiences, instant broadcasting and economic benefits – make them a promising alternative. In the episodes, new media help Kent Brockman regain his fame and relevance, enabling him to speak freely without censorship. Despite these benefits, Brockman repeatedly returns to traditional television. This suggests that, while new media offer potential for change, Brockman, as a figure of traditional journalism, prioritises his personal status and security over permanently adopting new media. In conclusion, new media present significant opportunities to address the problems of traditional journalism, but individual reluctance, as demonstrated by Brockman, can limit their transformative impact.

Key words
Internet. Journalism. Kent Brockman. New Media. Podcasts. The Simpsons. Traditional Media.

Introduction: Mass Media in The Simpsons

Given that various forms of mass media still have the power to teach us how to fit in with the dominant norms, values, and practices of ycontemporary American society, it is imperative that we develop a media literacy; this crucial skill is a means of coping with a seductive cultural environment, a method for resisting media manipulation, and an invitation to create forms of emancipatory popular culture (Henry, 2012).

Matthew A. Henry in his book *The Simpsons, Satire, and American Culture* indicates the importance of media literacy in the context of *The Simpsons* (Brooks et al., 1989 – present), making us realize that one of the most important roles in *The Simpsons* is played by mass media. The relationship of the series with the media is like its relationship with popular culture. On the one hand, the sitcom itself is a product of popular culture, and on the other hand, its creators parody various aspects of popular culture in every episode. Furthermore, as Tim Delaney stated, "The Simpsons both reflects and shapes popular culture" (2008, no pagination). One of the main methods of reflecting and shaping popular culture is parody. Parody of the mass media, especially television, is one of the most important pillars of the show. According to Simone Knox, "The Simpsons proposes that a mainstream television show is able to be both commercial and critical" (2006, p. 80). Chris Turner (2004) emphasized that the sitcom "most detailed social commentary is about itself: about the show's own conventions, [...] the machinations of the mass media, the nature of TV as a medium" (p. 388), and that "Simpsonian satire is a mirror held up to society, and that mirror is frequently set opposite a TV screen – itself a kind of cultural mirror" (Turner, 2004, pp. 388-389).

The importance of mass media in the sitcom is undebatable. The special position is attributed to television. Krusty, the clown, said: "Would it really be worth living in a world without television? I think the survivors would envy the dead"[1] (s07e09; Feresten & Polcino, 1995). And there is also the well-known quote from Homer Simpson: "Television! Teacher, Mother, Secret Lover"[2] from the fifth *Treehouse of Horror* episode (s06e06; Kushell et al., 1994). Although we can understand Homer's strong and positive relationship with television, there are more problematic approaches from other family members (critically thinking Lisa and prudish Marge), or from other media (e.g., critical and ironical remarks on national broadcast). David L. G. Arnold wrote: "On The Simpsons, television is both excoriated as a subversive, culturally corrosive force and praised as a teacher, a democratizer" (2004, p. 27).

1 Author's note: The speech occurs in the time frame 00:12:59 – 00:13:06.

2 Author's note: The speech occurs in the time frame 00:08:09 – 00:08:12.

During its thirty-seven-year run, *The Simpsons* has featured numerous journalists, anchors, hosts, media owners and other people connected to journalism, including Ellen DeGeneres, Jay Leno and Jerry Springer. *The Simpsons*' creators have also produced a few fictional characters based on famous journalists, such as the host of the Opal Show, who is a parody of Oprah Winfrey, and the sports commentator Anger Watkins, who is a parody of Stephen A. Smith. However, one journalist occupies a special position in Springfield and its mass media system. The star of Channel 6, Kent Brockman, is the subject of this study, which presents the ongoing battle between traditional journalism and new media[3] through three case studies from his life. The aim of the study is to find out how new media can solve the problems of traditional journalism and whether they are appropriate in specific Kent Brockman cases.

1 The Simpsons and Media. Literature Review

Over the last three decades, we have seen relatively huge and regular attention paid to

3 Author's note: In this paper, I use the term new media in the meaning "products and services that provide information or entertainment using computers or the internet, and not by traditional methods such as television and newspapers" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.), however I am aware of the strong and passionate discussion about the term. For the studied case of Kent Brockman and *The Simpsons*, new media in this context are mainly internet, social media and podcasts.

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The Simpsons – it is attention paid by scholars, media, politicians, artists, and TV viewers. For example, during the worldwide pandemic, there were voices about *The Simpsons* predictions of the virus (Saab et al., 2022).
When Donald Trump started his first campaign for US president, it was nothing new – the world "knew" about his presidency 15 years ago from the episode *Bart to the Future* (s11e17; Greaney & Marcandel, 2000). The predictions of *The Simpsons* are quite popular in the mass media and in popular culture discourse overall (see, e.g., Wafa et al., 2025; Wafa & Abdullah, 2024).

As expected, researchers in media studies and other scientific fields are interested in more specific topics, primarily related to the social sciences and humanities. For this paper, the most relevant works are those centred on media studies and cultural studies, as these two subjects underpin nearly all academic analyses of *The Simpsons* — mass media and popular culture being central to the show. Douglas Rushkoff (1994) characterizes *The Simpsons* as a kind of "media virus", arguing that its widespread appeal to young viewers enables its subversive elements to reach a broad audience under the guise of popular entertainment. Rushkoff's term was also used by David L. G. Arnold (2004) in the study "Use a Pen, Sideshow Bob", in which he explains how and why Bart and Bob stand in opposition when it comes to television. Valerie Weillun Chow studies Homer Simpson's relationship with television and declares: "television is really the Head of the Household; Homer just plays one on TV. Thus, Homer Simpson's subservience to the television set reveals the contradiction within consumer culture" (2004, p. 119). Simone Knox stressed the high degree of media literacy required by *The Simpsons* audience, because "the series works to construct an expert puzzle of intertexts and in-jokes" (2006, p. 75). In the newer work, Restrepo Londoño finds that *The Simpsons* employs satire and popular culture references to critique American and Western societal values with an intentionally ambiguous stance that invites diverse audience interpretations. In an educational context, the series effectively fosters critical media literacy by revealing hidden messages and ideologies within seemingly superficial content, encouraging viewers to analyse media authorship, format, and purpose (Restrepo Londoño, 2023).

Matthew A. Henry (2012) in his book *The Simpsons, Satire, and American Culture* provides many insights into the relevance of mass media in the sitcom, focusing on the satire, feminism, queer culture, or socioeconomical aspects of *The Simpsons*. In the book *Watching with the Simpsons: Television, Parody, and Intertextuality*, Jonathan Gray offers information about *The Simpsons* and the parody. He studies mainly the parody of mass media (ad parody/news parody in the context of public sphere). In his words *The Simpsons* "serves as a mouthpiece of what we call 'public theory'" (Gray, 2006, p. 103). He also points out how *The Simpsons* criticizes the news, when he names two tactics: "reveal the news' strategies of reembedding trust" and "disembed the trust" (Gray, 2006, p. 97).

Almaaroof and Al-Din Jabin (2023) stated that *The Simpsons* takes a postmodern approach to the world, based on intertextuality and hyper-reality. This is because the sitcom acts as a unifying medium, fostering social interaction by sparking conversations and connecting audiences through visual narratives. The series is also renowned for its recurring 'predictions', which frequently attract public attention when fictional events seem to predict real-world occurrences. This phenomenon has contributed to the perception of the show as a cultural touchstone that keeps viewers 'one step ahead' of other sitcoms, as they try to guess which future plotlines might come true (Almaaroof & Al-Din Jabin, 2023).

Chris Turner in his *Planet Simpson* describes the critical approach of *The Simpsons* writers, and he states that critique leads to the result: "the mass media is a horrible mindless trap" (2012, p. 409). He mentions Troy McClure infomercials, McBain movies, also Kent Brockman, and all of it "combines into a great hypnotic kaleidoscope in which nothing is permanent and anything of any real value is instantly drained of meaning and then crushed into pretty shards to feed new colour to the machine" (Turner, 2012, p. 409).

Over the past three decades, *The Simpsons* has attracted sustained interdisciplinary scholarly attention as a satirical and culturally significant media text. It critiques mass media, politics, consumer culture and societal values while promoting media literacy through its use of satire, parody and references to popular culture. These elements, along with the concept of public theory, are particularly important for analysing Kent Brockman's cases.

2 The Kent Brockman Cases

This study is based on the content analysis of three episodes of *The Simpsons*: You Kent Always Say What You Want (s18e22; Long & Nastuk, 2007), Trust, but Clarify (s28e5; Shearer & Polcino, 2016), and Podcast News (s32e6; Cohen & Faughnan, 2020). The analysis employed semiotic analysis, linguistic analysis, and text interpretation. Semiotic analysis was selected to interpret various signs – verbal and non-verbal communication, speech, writing, and images (see, e.g., Stanková 2020) – using the three orders of signification described by John Fiske and John Hartley (2003). The linguistic analysis focused on the language used, particularly Kent Brockman's statements about television. Text interpretation formed the final stage of the process, synthesizing the collected data into coherent results. This approach draws on both the classical structuralist method and the semiotic perspective, treating *The Simpsons* as a text composed of diverse types of signs. The analysis therefore considers not only the characters' speech, but also other signs present in the episodes, such as images and captions. For David L. G. Arnold *The Simpsons* "is precisely an 'irresponsible' text, one rich in associations and connotations and perversely unwilling to have those connotations pinned down. It is 'postmodern' in the sense that it comes together as a self-parodic, self-referential pastiche of previous texts" (2013, p. 264).

The research focuses on specific aspects of the episodes, as identified through semiotic and linguistic analysis: the problem, the solution, the outcome, the role of new media, the depiction of new media, and the depiction of traditional media (TV).

The study is looking for the answers to two research questions:
RQ1: Why are new media taken as a potential cure for traditional journalism problems?
RQ2: Can we consider the new media as proper help for Kent Brockman's problems?

The three analysed episodes were chosen deliberately because of Kent Brockman's significant role in them and their profoundly similar plots, which are based on his approach to journalism and unexpected plot twists. Also, all three episodes are built on two basic binary oppositions:

- **old (journalism) versus new (journalism)** (see Table 1);
- **professional (journalism) versus laic (journalism)** (see Table 2).

These aspects provide a helping hand during the analysis.

Table 1: Old Journalism versus New Journalism

old (journalism)	new (journalism)
Kent Brockman–Dinosaur; old newshound no one is watching (low popularity) low ethical standards /lies exhaustion TV	internet celebrities more possibilities quick popularity bigger audience internet free choice economic benefits

Source: own processing, 2025

Table 2: Professional (Journalism) versus Laic (Journalism)

professional	laic
Kent Brockman TV news	Lisa Simpson / podcasters internet

Source: own processing, 2025

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3 The Kent Brockman Cases

In this section, I will provide a brief introduction to three selected episodes of *The Simpsons*, focusing on the aforementioned issues. For each episode, I will provide a brief summary of the plot and explain the aspects examined (the problem, the solution, the outcome, the role of new and traditional media, and how they are depicted). The selection of analysed aspects was guided by the need to examine the relationship between traditional and new journalism comprehensively through the character of Kent Brockman in *The Simpsons*. The "problem" aspect identifies the initial crisis in each episode, such as job loss, ethical failure or professional dissatisfaction, reflecting the broader challenges of traditional journalism. The "solution" aspect explores how new media — primarily the internet, social media, and podcasts — are presented as tools for regaining relevance, freedom, and audience engagement. The "outcome" aspect then evaluates whether these tools lead to lasting transformation or merely temporary success, revealing the limits of new media's impact when confronted with individual reluctance. The "role of new media" is analysed as a mechanism for "returning to the game", offering Kent Brockman opportunities for fame, economic benefit, and uncensored expression. By contrast, the "role of traditional media" is considered as a symbol of stability, status and professional identity. Despite its limitations, Brockman repeatedly chooses this option. This helps to explain his reluctance to permanently embrace new platforms and highlights the institutional power and cultural prestige that television still holds. The "depiction of new media" highlights its characteristics, such as sensationalism, accessibility, and popularity, while also pointing to misunderstandings and ethical risks. Finally, the "portrayal of traditional media" reveals systemic issues, including censorship, political and corporate influence, low audience interest and superficial content. These issues ultimately explain why Brockman repeatedly returns to television, despite the advantages of new platforms. Together, these aspects form a structured framework that enables a nuanced interpretation of the media dynamics portrayed in the selected episodes. This section should provide answers to the research questions and consequently offer insights into the relationship between traditional and new media in *The Simpsons*. First, however, I will characterise Springfield's main journalist: Kent Brockman.

3.1 Who Is Kent Brockman?

Kent Brockman is an anchor-man working for Channel 6 news, but also hosts two other programs *Smartline* and *Eye on Springfield*. Jonathan Gray noticed that Kent Brockman's programs (*Eye on Springfield* and *Smartline*) "are shows, and, as such, operate under the same logic as any other entertainment program: get an audience and keep that audience" (2006, p. 98). Kent Brockman "is shown to be an entertainer, not an educator, nor the great midwife of Springfields's own Habermasian public sphere" and he is "is depicted as a bad-tempered, spoilt, overweight, and overpaid prima donna" (Gray, 2006, p. 98). Low-quality journalism, focusing on celebrities and unimportant topics[4], superficial attitude to his work, and his arrogancy are the main aspects of this character.

Kent uses exaggeration and lies as a journalistic method, for example: "Ladies and gentlemen, I've been to Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq, and I can say without hyperbole, that this is a million times worse than all of them put together"5 (s04e01; Stern & Kirkland, 1992).

However, Kent Brockman from time to time also shows dissatisfaction with his job. For example, in the episode *Four Regrettings and a Funeral* he is contemplating his career, and meets his old co-host, successful journalist Rachel Maddow. Kent regrets the missed opportunities to become a better and more serious journalist (s25e03; Wilmore & Kirkland, 2013). On the other hand, Kent Brockman is the one who teaches Bart how to prepare emotional stories for *Kidz Newz* in the *Girly Edition episode* (s09e21; Doyle & Kirkland, 1998).

4 Author's note: "Not only does the news in The Simpsons pander to silly, tabloid material, but also it is incapable of drawing a distinction between matters of real importance (the collapse of Soviet Union) and slightly amusing trivialities (canines with credit cards)." (Gray, 2006, p. 98)

5 Author's note: The speech occurs in the time frame 00:19:08 - 00:19:19.

3.2 You Kent Always Say What You Want

In this episode, Kent Brockman swears during his live program *Smartline* after Homer spills hot coffee on his lap. At the beginning of *Smartline*, Kent Brockman shows his discontent with the topic and guest on the show and these critical words on Channel 6 imply the upcoming problems. Kent is first moved to the position of "*weekend weatherman*" and shortly after loses his job due to "*the powder in his coffee*", which Lindsey Naegle considers to be cocaine. Later, after initial protests from Homer, Kent moves into *The Simpsons'* house. He explains to Lisa the nature of the Fox News approach, and she advises him to prepare his own online news programme. After Kent's new online programme, in which he openly discusses the true state of the media system, he becomes famous again. Shortly afterwards, he accepts Channel 6's offer to return to his job with a 50% pay increase.

The problem: Kent Brockman swears during his live program, he loses his job (under false pretence), he is down.
The solution: Lisa Simpson suggests the possibility of using new media (online news program) to remain a relevant journalist.
The outcome: Kent Brockman becomes famous and relevant for new and bigger target group of online-news viewers, and poses a threat for Republican Party, so they decided to offer him his old job.
The role of new media: the tool for "return to the game", the help to reach a larger audience without censorship.

The depiction of new media:
- no censorship, neither words, ideas, nor style (e.g., Kent is smoking during his online program).
- large audience (world wide web).
- quick and honest feedback,
- rated by "stars", not people meters.

The depiction of traditional media:
- low interest.
- low quality content, censorship – no willingness or opportunity to tell the truth.
- simple rules for employees.
- political and corporate background.

3.3 Trust, but Clarify

In this episode, Kent Brockman loses his job due to exaggeration and lies regarding his journalistic experience. The contrast between traditional and online media is evident at the start of the episode, with Kent, a symbol of traditional media, appearing as a guest on the online show The Late Late Late Show with Jimmy Jimmy. When Kent Brockman describes his experiences in Basra, a veteran of the Iraq War who is watching the show immediately denies his version of events. In the next scene, Kent Brockman returns to the TV studio, where he apologises during his programme. Then Arnie Pye[6] takes over his position. After that, Kent tries to prepare his own news content, then he tries to get a job in the online media called BizzFad, but the company went bankrupt four days after his interview. Kent starts to attend the "Former Anchor Support Group Meeting" and there, he admits that he was offered "a scoop on a platter" (by Lisa Simpson). Finally, he agrees to help Lisa and Milhouse prove that Krusty the Clown is guilty by preparing an online news report about toxic additives found in Krusty's product, Krustaceans. At the end of the episode, Kent is back on Jimmy's show, recounting his journey back to the top. He gets his job back.

The problem: Kent Brockman lies about his journalistic experience and loses his job.
The solution: Lisa Simpsons asks him to help her with her online reporting about Krusty's toxic chips.
The outcome: Kent proves his relevance and gets his job back.
The role of new media: the tool to "return to the game", the opportunity to tell the truth.

The depiction of new media:
- sensational online shows.
- nonserious and nonsense head titles.
- special genre: listicles.
- misunderstanding – problems with communication between "old journalist" and "new journalist".

6 Author's note: The second TV journalist in Springfield, who mainly reports the news from a helicopter. He is also a potential rival of Kent Brockman.

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- parody of BuzzFeed, short-lasting, very modern
- author rights as a potential risk.

The depiction of traditional media:
- disloyalty (to employees).
- "wrong" reasons to become journalist. (For Kent Brockman: "Money, women, free coffee. The usual".)
- untrustworthy.
- close relation to politics and corporations.
- shallowness and emphasis on image.

3.4 Podcast News

In this episode, Kent Brockman voluntarily leaves his TV news job because he realises that it is no longer as relevant or popular as podcasts. While reporting live on a missing woman case, he decides to start his own crime podcast. His new podcast quickly becomes popular, he becomes a well-known podcaster and starts selling merchandise, but he is not aware of his responsibilities. After Doctor Hibbert presents evidence of Grampa's innocence, Kent finally realises that he is not cut out to be a podcaster. The end of this story is narrated by podcaster Tabitha Shingle in the form of a podcast called *Sunken Anchor. The Last Days of Kent Brockman*.

The problem: Kent Brockman realizes the pointlessness of his job on television (professional journalism) and the popularity of podcasts (laic journalism).

The solution: Kent Brockman starts his own podcast *Guilty Grampa*.
The outcome: Kent Brockman became a well-known and popular podcaster, but soon realizes the responsibility of journalistic work.
The role of new media: a tool to become famous, rich, and popular.

The depiction of new media:
- sensational titles of podcasts.
- powerful journalism.
- relevant and popular for listeners, connected to pop culture.
- attractive format available anytime and anywhere (Lisa and Marge spend all night listening to crime podcasts) with the opportunity to stop whenever the listener wants.
- special image.
- misunderstood by the older generation, who cannot see the marketing potential of podcasts.

The depiction of traditional media:
- irrelevant and low interest.
- disregard for new media.
- salary dissatisfaction.
- moral and work standards.

4 Results

As we can see from the plot scheme (Figure 1), all three episodes have quite a similar structure. Episodes You Kent Always Say What You Want and Trust, but Clarify are based on the same story plot: Kent Brockman has a crisis, he loses his job on TV, to protect himself as a journalist, he starts using new media, he regains his fame and relevancy, and he returns to TV. The newest episode of the research sample differs from the two older episodes in just one aspect: Kent Brockman decides to leave job on TV voluntarily (the grey part in the scheme), because he feels like TV is no longer relevant, his work is not important, and he can achieve more (money, fame...) as a podcaster. The structures used in the analysis revealed that the problems, solutions, outcomes, and roles of new media are the same in all three episodes.

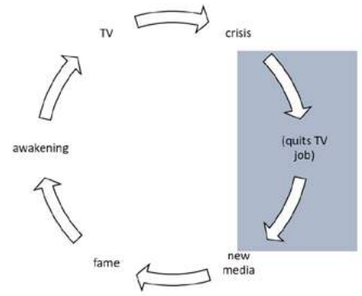

Figure 1: The Plot Scheme
Source: own processing, 2025

It could be argued that new media are seen as a potential solution to the problems facing traditional journalism. These problems include low audience engagement and relevance, as well as dissatisfaction with salaries. New media are widely regarded as a potential remedy for the challenges facing traditional journalism, such as declining audience engagement, perceived irrelevance and dissatisfaction with remuneration. The reasons for this "healing potential" lie in the specific benefits offered by new media: freedom from censorship, access to large and diverse audiences, the ability to broadcast instantly without temporal or spatial constraints, and notable economic advantages, particularly for successful podcasters. These characteristics directly address the weaknesses of traditional journalism, offering greater reach, flexibility and sustainability. Together, the innovative possibilities and structural advantages of new media present a viable way to revitalise journalism and overcome the limitations of conventional media institutions. Regarding Research Question 2, the analysis shows that new media benefited Kent Brockman in all the episodes examined, by restoring his fame, enhancing his relevance and enabling him to speak freely without censorship. However, he ultimately returned to traditional television, so these advantages did not lead to a lasting shift. This reluctance stems from his prioritisation of personal status and security over innovation, his lack of interest in adapting to new forms of 21st-century journalism and his unwillingness to commit to the long-term potential of digital platforms such as the internet and podcasts. While new media offer significant opportunities to address the shortcomings of traditional journalism, Brockman's individual choices limit their transformative impact, maintaining his alignment with conventional broadcast media. However, this help is short-term because Kent Brockman always chooses to return to television. This raises the question: Why does Kent Brockman continually choose to come back? Do the creators of *The Simpsons* have faith in traditional professional journalism? Or is it related only to Kent Brockman's personality and his willingness to settle for less? In the words of Tim Delaney, "it seems he cares more about his own personal status and security than he cares about fighting the good fight" (2008, p. 396).

It could be argued that Kent Brockman is not suited to short-term solutions. However, setting aside the ethical and legal aspects of new media, he is not interested in searching for proper forms of 21st-century journalism; his choices are based primarily on his interests and needs. Kent Brockman demonstrates the infinite possibilities of both the internet and podcasts.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

This study explored the relationship between traditional and new media through the character of Kent Brockman in *The Simpsons*. The aim was to assess whether new media could solve the problems facing traditional journalism, and whether they would be appropriate in Brockman's case. The analysis of three episodes — You Kent Always Say What You Want, Trust, but Clarify, and Podcast News — confirmed the initial hypothesis: new media offer significant advantages that directly address the shortcomings of traditional journalism, such as low audience engagement, censorship, and limited reach. In all three cases, Kent Brockman successfully used new media to regain relevance, fame and freedom of expression. This supports the idea that digital platforms can revitalise journalistic practice.

In response to Research Question 1 (*Why are new media seen as a potential solution to the problems of traditional journalism?*), the study shows that new media are presented as instruments of liberation and innovation. They offer instant broadcasting, access to large and diverse audiences, economic benefits and freedom from editorial constraints. This contrasts sharply with the depiction of traditional media as politically influenced, ethically compromised and increasingly irrelevant. The analysis confirms that not only are new media technically superior in terms of reach and flexibility, but they are also symbolically positioned as being more democratic and transparent than traditional media, especially in contrast to the corporate and censored environment of television journalism.

The answer to Research Question 2 (*Can we consider new media as proper help for Kent Brockman's problems?*) is

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more complex. While new media help Brockman to overcome professional crises and restore his public image, they do not lead to permanent transformation. Ultimately, he always returns to traditional television, suggesting that personal motivation such as status, security and familiarity outweigh the structural benefits of new media. This recurring pattern indicates that individual reluctance and institutional inertia can limit the transformative potential of digital platforms, even when their advantages are clearly demonstrated. Thus, Brockman's character reflects a broader tension in contemporary journalism: the coexistence of innovation with resistance; of progress with nostalgia.

The study also sheds light on how *The Simpsons* functions as a satirical reflection of media culture. Through parody and exaggeration, the show critiques traditional and new media, exposing their flaws and contradictions. Brockman's exaggerated persona, which blends arrogance, superficiality and insecurity, serves as a vehicle for this critique. His brief success in new media, followed by his return to television, highlights the satirical message that entrenched habits and institutional structures often prevail, even when alternatives exist. This aligns with Jonathan Gray's concept of *The Simpsons* as a "mouthpiece of public theory", in which media critique is embedded in entertainment. Furthermore, the study emphasises the significance of ethical awareness and accountability in journalism, particularly in the context of new media. Despite his lack of accountability, Brockman's success as a podcaster raises questions about the standards and risks associated with lax journalism. The episodes suggest that while new media democratise access and amplify voices, they also require a new kind of literacy and responsibility — one that Brockman is not always willing to embrace. This insight is particularly relevant in the context of media education and the development of critical media literacy, as emphasised by scholars such as Henry and Londoño.

In conclusion, the study fulfils its main objective of demonstrating that new media can solve many of the problems associated with traditional journalism. However, their long-term impact depends on individuals and institutions being willing to embrace change. Kent Brockman's repeated return to television reflects a broader cultural and professional dilemma: the tension between the promise of innovation and the comfort of established norms. Although new media offer a viable path forward for 21st-century journalism, their success hinges not only on technological capabilities, but also on cultural, ethical and personal factors. *The Simpsons*' portrayal of Brockman offers a satirical yet insightful commentary on this dynamic, emphasising the opportunities and limitations of media evolution. For journalism to undergo sustainable transformation, new media practices must be integrated not as temporary fixes, but as foundational elements of a reimagined media landscape.

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