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Framing the news in the ARD? The media dispute about Guidelines for the German public broadcasting services (ARD) in 2019

An expert report by Elisabeth Wehlen was leaked by Netzpolitik in February 2019. It revealed that the mdr ("Middle German Broadcasting Services", as presiding the ARD = "General [Public] Broadcasting Services in Germany") had spend 90,000 € (120,000 € with "follow-up workshops") on "expert advice" ("Gutachten Framing Manual") on how to present themselves in a favourable light in view of the public criticism by "critical" protesters, etc. This contribution traces the public debate in the media (in translation) and questions the expert advice by a German "renowned linguist" from "Berkeley International Framing Institute", who had completed her PhD at Berkeley just three years before: It argues that the general idea of linking public communication to moral superiority (?) is academically misleading ("selling conceptual brainwashing as cognitive science") and that the few concrete examples contained in the report are too elementary or too controversial ("our free broadcasting ARD" vs. "media capitalist locusts", in DeepL translation). But the case is an interesting starting point for distinguishing between "truths" tagged as "positive objective", "negative objective" or "simply objective" (?).