

Media as Actors of Two-Stage Cultural Gatekeeping: Theoretical Framework and Interdisciplinary Context

Slavka Pitoňáková

Correspondence: Slavka Pitoňáková, Associate Professor, Institute of Mediamatics and Cultural Heritage, University of Žilina, Slovakia.

Received: September 18, 2025

Accepted: October 31, 2025

Online Published: November 2, 2025

doi:10.11114/smc.v13i4.8126

URL: <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v13i4.8126>

Abstract

The responsibility for the lack of media coverage of cultural heritage topics is often attributed to the media. While this attitude may be largely justified, it is also important to point out certain failures on the part of cultural institutions themselves. It is important to point out that cultural professionals (in museums, heritage offices, archives, etc.), including those in positions of cooperation with the media (PR managers), also play a key role in determining which parts of cultural heritage are considered representative, relevant or worthy of media visibility. This study presents a rather unique and hitherto unexplored systematic perspective on the role of (not only) the media in preserving, selecting and communicating cultural content. The article attempts to create a new discourse that allows for a more critical and comprehensive understanding of media and cultural institutions as examples of power and information selection in the cultural sphere. On theoretical level, it presents a new two-stage model of cultural gatekeeping that describes the mediatization of cultural values. The proposed model presents a new analytical framework for examining the selection and mediation of cultural heritage in the media. This perspective contributes not only to the theoretical extension of the gatekeeping concept, but also to the practical connection between academic reflection and the challenges of contemporary cultural and media practice. The thesis thus opens up space for more intensive interdisciplinary connections between media and cultural spaces. It suggests new perspectives for further research, as well as for education emphasizing the necessity of quality training of professionals working in media and cultural institutions, with the emphasis on the so-called cumulative skills.

Keywords: gatekeeping, two-stage model of cultural gatekeeping, media, cultural heritage

1. Introduction

The article focuses on a little (or almost not at all) unexplored issue - the role of media, but also cultural institutions in preserving, selecting and communicating cultural content to the public through the media. Most of the existing literature focuses primarily on related concepts oriented towards journalism, media or culture separately, but a direct analytical framework that perceives the connection between all these actors remains marginal in academia. This article attempts to develop a new perspective that allows for a more critical and comprehensive understanding of media and cultural institutions as examples of power in the process of information selection. The article will focus on the notions of "gatekeeper" and "gatekeeping", known primarily from journalism theory, and attempt to apply them to the making of cultural creations available to the public.

Gatekeeping is often seen primarily in the context of the media – i.e. as the editors' and journalists' decisions about what information is released to the public. But it is important to realise that this process does not start with the newsrooms or journalists. Even before information reaches journalists, any information content passes through various "filters" that decide whether the topic is processed further or not.

The accepted definition of gatekeeping was proposed by Lewin (1947) and later developed by White (1950) - both of whom focused mainly on the media space. The first gatekeeping research was conducted in the 1950s, and it was found that news selection depends on several factors (including subjective ones) at the level of newsrooms and editors. Research continued in the 1960s (Einar Östgaard - identified the most important factors of news selection) and in the 1970s when Winfried Schulz systematized these factors into six factor dimensions (time, proximity, status, dynamics, valence, identification), to which the possibility of pictorial representation was later added (Russ-Mohl & Bakičová, pp. 98-99).

Gatekeeping theory was conceived as a journalistic role, a model that describes the flow of news, and a theory that explains the news selection process. At a time when news audiences had a limited choice of news sources and journalists had limited space for their news outputs, the gatekeeping role was particularly important. However, the digitization of news coverage has weakened, if not eliminated, such constraints. News audiences are now actively involved in the production and distribution of news, eroding journalists' monopoly on news. Information about newsworthy events now flows through the channels of both journalists and audiences. This has important implications for how we understand and evaluate gatekeeping today (Tandoc, 2018, pp. 235-254).

In her 2014 article *User-generated visibility: secondary gatekeeping in a shared media space*, Singer (2014) described the so-called “secondary gatekeeping”, which discussed the two-stage gatekeeping process, with the strong emphasis on the advent of new technologies and new opportunities for information recipients (especially people operating outside the journalism profession). Information recipients, whose activity shows similarities to that of journalists in news media, are becoming more involved in the process of media communication – i.e., they can decide on the appropriateness of content as well as on the possibility of recycling texts (Singer, 2014, pp. 55-73). Thus, the period when websites and content were scarce and controlled by gatekeepers in large publishing houses is over (Singer, 2014).

In the context of a study that links media issues to cultural heritage issues, it is also interesting to examine whether, to what extent and in what ways the media present cultural heritage. This is a complex question that is difficult to answer comprehensively, not least because the state of contemporary journalism, marked by commercialisation, media globalisation, infantilisation and infotainment, means that the media space is not very sympathetic to cultural heritage issues.

The concept of gatekeeping originates and is mainly linked to research in the field of journalism. However, there are several studies that build on this theory and apply it to other areas of cultural production. E.g., there are discussions about the power of so-called cultural mediators” who, as part of one of their gatekeeping roles, can make a certain work not/not accessible to the public (e.g., reviewers, publishers, music companies, curators, co-producers, etc.). E.g., Janssen & Verboord (2015, pp. 440-446), in their publication *Cultural Mediators and Gatekeepers* employ the term “gatekeeping” to refer to the possibilities of “mediators” to exclude or support the process of not/selecting works.

Cultural practitioners – i.e. curators, museum and gallery staff, but also cultural event organisers or PR managers play a significant role in what, and if anything, comes to the attention of journalists. These actors decide which cultural monuments, pieces of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, cultural and memory institutions, creative creators or artists will be supported, made visible and therefore made available to the media.

The media often rely on the input that comes to them from outside the newsrooms. If they do not obtain it – e.g., because cultural intermediaries do not find the content valuable or interesting enough - the cultural issue will not reach journalists (and consequently audiences) at all. For this reason, it is important to examine gatekeeping not only in an editorial context, but also in a broader cultural and social context. And for the same reason, we can talk about the so far almost unexplored phenomenon of the so-called “cultural gatekeeping”, which is practically absent in a comprehensive theory, but it is semantically partially covered by some authors' concepts. Pierre Bourdieu - his theory of cultural capital and symbolic power explains how cultural elites determine what is “valuable” art or culture. Howard Becker's work *Art Worlds* (1982) describes the collective action in the production of art, where curators, gallerists, sponsors and others influence what counts as “art”.

Kyprianos, Sifaki, and Bantimaroudis (2019) in their study *Digital gatekeepers and website visitors of the Acropolis Museum: Revisiting gatekeeping theory in the cultural domain* viewed museums as providers of content and cultural news, explored the effects of digital gatekeeping that drive online visitors to museum websites, and, in light of large-scale changes in gatekeeping patterns, revisited Shoemaker and Reese's hierarchical gatekeeping model, but in the context of cultural news, where consumers have evolved as gatekeepers and gatekeepers control the gates. In examining the mass of data in this descriptive effort, they traced the various gatekeeping nodes that lead users to museum content.

Building on this information, we can speak of a new discourse of cultural gatekeeping that involves the transformation of traditional understandings of media power into a broader, cultural-media framework. The focus is on a two-level selection of information, in which content is selected by cultural actors, only then by the media.

Thus, the visibility of content depends not only on editorial decisions (which is sometimes the focus of researchers' attention, while the lack of information about cultural heritage in the media is often associated only with a lack of media interest), but also on primary cultural selection.

2. Materials and Methods

The aim of the article is to reflect on a hitherto little explored aspect of cultural heritage presentation through the prism of the proposed model of two-stage cultural gatekeeping. The paper seeks to provide a more comprehensive perspective of how cultural heritage topics are selected and communicated to the media. A secondary aim was to reveal the limits and potential of both stages of selection (expert and media), while suggesting ways of linking them more effectively in

order to increase media interest in valuable cultural heritage topics.

The study has a theoretical-analytical character, thus focusing on a systematic reflection on the existing processes and relations between the cultural and media spheres. The research focuses on the ways in which content is selected and mediated, which influences what ultimately reaches the public space through the media.

The research is also oriented towards the pre-media selection phase that precedes the media processing itself – that is, the decision-making of cultural actors who filter and shape the selection of appropriate content from the cultural heritage environment prior to its entry into the media.

The study describes in a previously undescribed way a complex system of selection and mediation that often appears natural or neutrally organizational, but is in fact the result of many decisions, interests, and priorities that ultimately influence the creation of narratives presenting culture in terms of both thematic and formal aspects.

The methodological approach is based on a critical reflection on existing structures in cultural and media practice. It draws on scholarly texts, media outputs and empirical experience of working in the media, as well as interviews with cultural practitioners. The analysis is divided into three linked perspectives.

The first perspective is based on well-known theories in the field of journalism. The second perspective develops these theoretical concepts in the context of making cultural creations accessible – looking at how different elements of cultural heritage come to the attention of the media and ultimately to the target audiences.

The third perspective focuses on the role of the media and cultural workers as gatekeepers who decide what cultural heritage topics are presented to the public in the media.

Such a multi-layered approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the logic of (not only media) selection that takes place prior to the media production itself, but also its consequences for the presentation of cultural heritage.

Qualitative interviews with selected representatives of the cultural sector and the media were also a partial part of the research. These were mainly managers working in the field of culture and media (in the Slovak environment) who are involved in the shaping and selection of the content presented to the public. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured form in order to provide room for individual interpretations and experiences of the respondents (partial results are presented in the article). Partial parts of the interviews serve as illustrative material that supports or develops the main thesis of the study. The research does not aim to draw general unambiguous conclusions, but rather to highlight what actually shapes the form of media presentation of the topic of cultural heritage.

The study thus combines theoretical interpretation with empirical insights, with the main aim of contributing to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of selection of cultural heritage information reaching the public through the media.

3. Results

This article addresses an under-researched issue - the role of the media in the selection, mediation and visibility of cultural content. It draws on gatekeeping theory, known from journalism and it applies the theory in an innovative way to the field of cultural heritage. It stresses that the selection of cultural heritage topics already takes place before the content enters the media - cultural workers play a key role as the first gatekeepers, which is very important to emphasise, as the media often only work with what is communicated to them. This creates a two-level filter - cultural and media. The article therefore develops a (new) analytical framework – two-tier cultural gatekeeping – as a hitherto under-researched phenomenon. Moreover, at present, non-professional actors – recipients of information – also enter the process, which consequently creates secondary gatekeeping.

Certain studies, such as Caves & Hesmondhalgh (2012) in line with Janssen & Verboord (pp. 440-446) discuss the so-called cultural mediators who play a significant role in the culture industry (determining which creations are transformed into marketable commodities and what products eventually reach the audience (Hirsch, 1972, p. 4). They add symbolic value to culture by participating in its material production (e.g. publishers), distribution (e.g. art galleries) or evaluation (e.g. critics). According to Bourdieu, critics, in turn, through their selective and evaluative activities, contribute to “the creation of the value of the work or (and this amounts to the same thing) to the belief in the value of the work” – according to Janssen & Verboord (2015, pp. 440-446) - through the symbolic capital or prestige they have acquired as cultural experts (the power relations in the culture industry markets and the whole production of culture must also be taken into account). Cultural mediators have multiple roles, and one of the aspects examined is gatekeeping, which relates to the most fundamental dilemma in their work - of all the artists who approach cultural organisations or sponsors for financial assistance in order to get closer to their audiences, only a very small number actually select those who actually do receive this assistance. Publishers, but also museum curators, for example, are responsible for the first selection of artists deemed worthy of "production" - they are the imaginary gatekeepers of the artistic field, deciding whether the selected persons and works will, so to speak, enter the cultural mainstream. The

processing is based on a prediction of what the next “gatekeeper” in the chain will think, and the key is the overall image of the product - according to Janssen & Verboord (2015, pp. 440-446). In the context of cultural heritage, gatekeeping takes a specific form - it is not only about selecting elements of cultural heritage, but also about deciding what will be preserved from the past, interpreted (and in what way) and mediated to current and future generations. Cultural professionals (in museums, heritage offices, archives, etc.), including those in positions working with the media (PR managers), thus play a key role in determining which parts of cultural heritage are considered representative, relevant or worthy of media visibility.

Their decision-making can ultimately have a major impact on the formation of a society's cultural identity, as it is they who filter which stories, artefacts and symbols will be preserved and made available to the public. Gatekeeping in cultural heritage thus takes on a power dimension - determining what will be understood as a visible part of culture and what is or is not part of cultural identity. In this way, cultural heritage can actively shape and become a credible part of virtually any narrative and context (including the possible misuse of heritage themes), which is particularly important since, according to Lowenthal, we live in an era of the cult of heritage, where heritage cannot be questioned or dismissed and the heritage label is found all around us. "Heritage has burgeoned over the past quarter of a century from a small elite preoccupation into a major popular crusade. Everything from Disneyland to the Holocaust Museum, from the Balkan wars to the Northern Irish Troubles, from Elvis memorabilia to the Elgin Marbles bears the marks of the cult of heritage (Lowenthal, 1998, p. 1).

Two-stage model of gatekeeping of cultural heritage

Building on the theories presented above, we can consider who decides, under what circumstances and why, that heritage themes are not/are not made public and, if they are made public, how they are portrayed. The concepts mentioned above encourage us to consider a two-stage model of gatekeeping of cultural heritage (in the broadest expression of culture in general).

The first tier of the model refers to the actors dealing with the topic in question. They have a comprehensive and holistic overview of the existing cultural heritage. They use a selective approach to identify the historical, cultural potential of such objects, elements and they also determine the themes that become more dominant. Their interest in the process of further, public visibility of this information, as well as their ability to adequately communicate the above in the relevant contexts (legislative, media, marketing, etc.) have an impact on the degree of "attractiveness" of the topic, which is manifested in professional, public and possibly also media interest.

The second level of presentation relates exclusively to the media space. Taking gatekeeping theory (tied to journalism) into account, it turns out that the factors influencing the selection of topics for news coverage in practice determine the “position of the topic” in a metaphorically constructed ranking of journalists, in which each news item (even in the context of) a particular media outlet has a certain value. This takes into account the factors that derive from their status in the media market (public/commercial), that derive from their target audiences, and thus that are ultimately important to their existence.

In the context of the two-tiered presentation of cultural heritage, we can extend the gatekeeping of journalists to the gatekeeping of script editors, editors, scriptwriters, programme directors..., all of whom in practice decide what topics and to what extent a particular media outlet is given space.

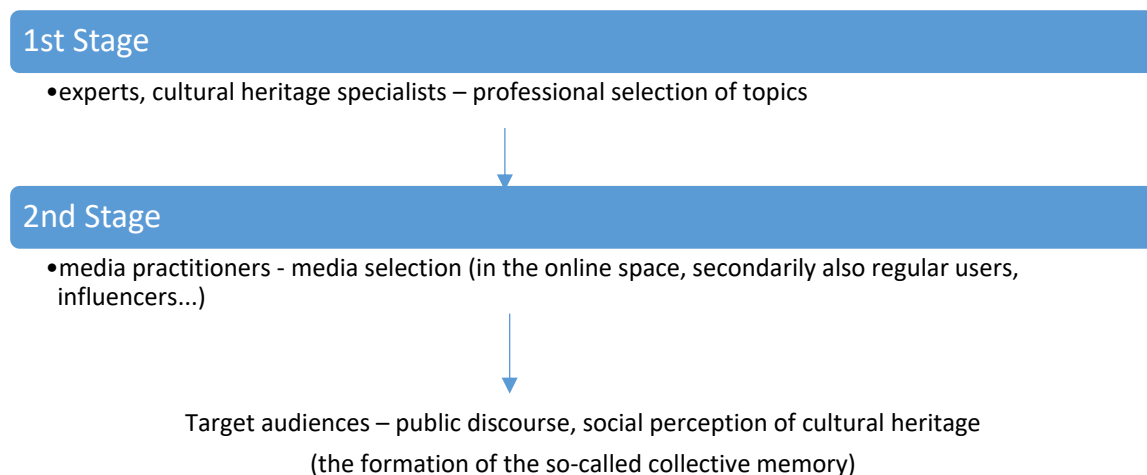


Figure 1. Two-stage gatekeeping model for cultural heritage (source: own elaboration)

The two-stage cultural gatekeeping model represents a new analytical framework for exploring the selection and communication of cultural heritage to the general public through the media. It clearly describes the process of selecting, shaping and communicating cultural heritage themes to the public through two interrelated levels of selection. The model identifies two basic levels of actors (primarily the professional and then the media community) that together influence what information about cultural heritage (culture in general) enters the public discourse and also how it is interpreted.

The stages of cultural gatekeeping can be characterised as follows:

1. Stage:

Within the pre-media gatekeeping, expert selection of topics is carried out by experts in the field of cultural heritage (professional staff of institutions managing cultural heritage). They have a comprehensive overview of existing cultural heritage objects and phenomena and evaluate their historical and symbolic potential in the context of the specific time, situation and social or media needs. As part of their professional selection, they identify themes and objects that might be suitable for wider presentation, while deciding what is/is not “worthy” of media attention.

The selection of topics by experts is increasingly influenced by their knowledge of cultural marketing. This knowledge enables them to identify topics that have the potential to appeal to a wide audience. Practitioners should also consider the media appeal of the topic, its potential to reach audiences and to generate public interest in protecting or promoting cultural heritage (e.g. through cultural tourism). Thus, preferences in selection are not only determined by professional criteria, but also by the anticipated media coverage. Their knowledge of marketing, specifically public relations, helps them to propose themes that are in line with current trends and expectations in society. These skills lead to the foregrounding of topics that are not only valuable but also media-attractive, and their decisions have an impact on shaping public discourse. Experts thus balance between the professional value and the marketing utility of content. The resulting selection therefore increasingly reflects not only the historical relevance but also the communication potential of the topic.

This is true if we assume that cultural professionals have experience and training in marketing. If this condition is not fulfilled, a situation often arises (in practice) where valuable heritage topics do not reach the media (the experts do not know how to place the topic in the media).

Level 2: Media selection (media gatekeeping)

This stage focuses mainly on media actors – gatekeepers of media content. In accordance with the theory of journalistic gatekeeping, these gatekeepers select from the topics offered those that are relevant, attractive or profitable for a particular media outlet. They decide in the context of the media value of the topic, the target group, the format, the available space, as well as economic and other (already described in the literature) factors. Cultural heritage topics thus undergo a second selection process in which the specific form, scope and presentation of their verifiability are decided.

However, the problem may be the lack of engagement of the media and selected journalists with these topics - their consequent reluctance, inability to cover them or, worst of all, their ignorance of them.

In view of the above, it should be emphasised that in contemporary society it is necessary to educate both cultural professionals who have the skills to work with the media and, conversely, media workers who not only have a relationship with culture in general, but also the knowledge of this field that will enable them to identify topics of value and social importance and to give them appropriate media attention in an appropriate manner. According to Modrovský (quoted in Pitoňáková, 2022), this is a specific area that journalists do not primarily deal with and is only a supplementary activity. However, from the point of view of cultural traditions, landmarks and capturing cultural changes in our territory, it is necessary to start with gradual steps aimed at educating the young generation towards applying themselves also in such an area as culture (Pitoňáková, 2022). University study programmes combining media, history (cultural heritage) and applied informatics in an interdisciplinary way seem to be suitable to provide such education.

The new model of two-stage cultural gatekeeping emphasizes that the transmission and presentation of cultural heritage is not straightforward, but takes place through two successive filters:

- expert selection (expert selection and its institutional approval)
- media selection (journalistic and dramaturgical selection according to media logic)

The two stages co-determine which elements of cultural heritage will receive social attention, in what form and with what social impact.

Often, the responsibility for the lack of media coverage of cultural heritage topics is attributed to the media, which ignore them or consider them uninteresting. While this attitude may be justified to some extent, it is also important to point out failures on the part of cultural institutions themselves. Many of them communicate only minimally to the public, do not sufficiently address the topic of cultural heritage and have no systematic media or marketing strategy. In many cases, they do not have qualified staff with knowledge of marketing, PR and media communication, or such

experts do not play a significant role in the functioning of the institutions. E.g., in the context of the Slovak Republic, according to Jurecký (quoted in Pitoňáková, 2022), it is complicated: culture as a whole and also the institutions working with the topic of cultural heritage are generally understaffed not only in terms of marketing, media, but above all, in terms of professional staff (Pitoňáková, 2022). The task of these institutions is to cope with this undesirable phenomenon and nevertheless to start working on innovations and improving the functioning of individual processes, whether media or professional. As a result, valuable topics remain without media attention - not because they do not exist, but because they are not known, not talked about, or not presented in an appropriate way to the media and the public. The problem is therefore not only on the side of the recipient (the media) but also on the side of the broadcaster (the cultural sphere), which often fails to communicate its content effectively externally. However, it is important to realise that cultural institutions hold considerable cultural gatekeeping power - they make the initial expert selection, determining which topics will be offered to the media and in what form. If they have knowledge of marketing, media communication and if they can present a topic in a way that is in line with current communication trends, their selection can significantly influence the social discourse as well as the public's attitude towards cultural heritage topics. In the context of the two-tier model of cultural gatekeeping, they thus play a key role - they form the first filter through which only certain parts of cultural heritage pass. With a good selection and targeted presentation, they can not only increase the chances that a topic will also pass the media selection (the second filter), but also promote public awareness, interest and respect for cultural values. In this sense, they bear not only a professional but also a social responsibility.

4. Discussion

The article presents an innovative view on the issue of presentation of cultural heritage through media. Based on gatekeeping theory, originally rooted in journalism, it focuses on the complex process of selecting cultural heritage topics that reach the public through the media. The most significant contribution is the recognition and systematic treatment of the two stages of selection - that is, not only media selection but also expert selection of topics. Both stages ultimately determine what will be communicated to the public and in what way.

The findings of the paper show that the power to determine cultural representation is divided between two professional groups: cultural professionals and media actors. Cultural professionals act as the first gatekeepers who decide which elements of cultural heritage have the potential to be presented. Increasingly, however, their choice is also influenced by their knowledge of marketing and PR, which places new demands on their competences. The lack of these skills leads to the fact that valuable topics are not covered by the media at all - not because they are uninteresting, but because they cannot be communicated effectively.

In the second stage of gatekeeping, the media represent a second level of filtering, which decides on the basis of media criteria not to publish a topic in the media space. Here, obligatory factors play a role – e.g., the target group, media logic or subjective interest of editors. The article also draws attention to the limits of education of some journalists in the field of culture and their lack of relation to this issue.

The discussed model of two-stage gatekeeping also has wider implications - first of all, in terms of the formation of the cultural identity of society. Deciding what will be preserved, interpreted and communicated. Such a view emphasises the significant power dimension of cultural institutions, which thus bear not only professional but also social (in this context, one can also say media) responsibility in the context of popularising cultural heritage topics. For this reason, the article also draws attention to the current need for interdisciplinary training - cultural professionals should acquire communication and media skills, while media professionals should be better acquainted with the value and significance of cultural heritage.

In terms of future research, it would be beneficial to extend further analyses with case studies from media practice, to follow decision-making mechanisms in cultural institutions and to investigate how the decision-making of cultural gatekeepers (stage 1 of cultural gatekeeping) translates into the selection of cultural topics. There is also a need to map new forms of secondary gatekeeping that emerge in the digital environment, for example through social networks, where the recipients of the content themselves enter the process.

In conclusion, the presented model of two-stage cultural gatekeeping provides not only a theoretical framework, but also practical recommendations for improving communication between the cultural and media sectors, which can help to improve the quality of media presentation of cultural heritage.

5. Conclusions

The article provides an innovative perspective on the issue of media presentation of cultural heritage through the model of two-stage cultural gatekeeping. It highlights the fact that cultural heritage in many cases enters the public discourse only after two selection stages – professional (cultural) and media. This two-stage selection has a major impact on which topics are presented to the public and in what form.

Findings show that cultural experts, as first gatekeepers, have a strong influence on the selection of topics, but often face

constraints due to a lack of marketing and media skills. On the other hand, the media often underestimate or ignore the topic of cultural heritage if it is not presented in an attractive and media-appropriate way. This mismatch between the professional and media spheres means that many valuable topics remain outside the media and consequently, outside public interest. At the level of media and cultural practice, there is a need to promote the training of cultural professionals in media and marketing communication, and at the same time to cultivate journalists' interest in the field of cultural heritage.

The two-stage cultural gatekeeping model offers an analytical framework for future research, which could focus, for example, on specific case studies, media strategies of cultural institutions, or more generally on the frequency of cultural themes in different types of media (prospectively in different countries of the world). From the perspective of the existence of secondary gatekeeping, it is also important to investigate the role of non-professional actors and their influence on the frequency of cultural heritage topics in the digital space. A major challenge is to investigate the media presentation of the above-mentioned topics exclusively in the online space – through influencers.

Cultural heritage receives only a small part of the media space and is only marginally covered by a limited circle of people. This situation was confirmed by our interviews with experts in the field of non/material cultural heritage, according to whom cultural heritage receives attention when it is an attractive, sensational topic (fire of a monument, damage to a monument, a case related to funding, a significant find, loss, an interesting event - for example, the case related to the Donatello bust in Levoča (Slovakia). The primary impulse for the treatment of a topic is therefore often not the cultural heritage *eo ipso*, but an event connected with it (damage, vandalism, disrepair, theft, fire, transfer of the work, etc.).

We conclude by putting our reflections and conclusions in the context of Hatagalung's research that media coverage can have a strong influence on the perception of cultural heritage (Hatagalung, 2015, p. 1), and also in the context of *The Model of Value of a Media Product*, in which we point out that "the evaluation of media products has traditionally been linked to the perspectives of the consumer and producer. The functional, emotional, social and economic value of media products is appreciated and media production (i.e. content and form preferences) is then adapted to this factor. However, there is also a wide scope for issues related to the value and cultural standard of a media product. These standards are related not only to ratings/ readership/ listenership/engagement rates (the number of likes, comments, shares) and they are related not only to economic benefits either. Finally, they are not related to global positioning on the media market. Values related to, e.g., culture (in the narrower sense of cultural identity) are also included" (Pitoňáková, 2023, p. 21). It is essential to take the above into account when working with the topic of cultural heritage and to develop activities towards the media that create an appropriate framework for media presentation so that the topic of cultural heritage (in the broadest sense of culture in general) is positioned in the media in an appropriate way. This requires the training of professionals, the education of selected practitioners and cooperation with the media community. These practitioners should be able to interpret, create and use media products to enhance the cultural heritage literacy of society (Pitoňáková, 2024, p. 1).

Note: The article was created with the assistance of the ChatGPT language model (version 4.5, OpenAI), which was used as support for language and stylistic editing, as well as for the translation of selected parts of the text.

Acknowledgments

Not applicable.

Authors contributions

Assoc. Prof. Slavka Pitoňáková, who conducted the study, was responsible for the design, revision of the study, and data collection. The author read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Funding

This article is published as an output of the project supported and financed by the Cultural and Educational Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic (KEGA) entitled "CultureMind: Innovative Education for Media and Cultural Heritage" [project number 017ŽU-4/2024].

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Redfame Publishing.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

Open access

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

References

- Becker, H. S. (1982). *Art Worlds*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1973). Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction. In R. Brown (Ed.), *Knowledge, Education, and Cultural Change: Papers in the Sociology of Education* (pp. 71-112). Oxon: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351018142-3>
- Hatagalung, I. (2015). Media and Cultural Heritage. *Journal Sampurasun: Interdisciplinary Studies for Cultural Heritage*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.23969/sampurasun.v1i1.21>
- Hirsch, P. M. (1972). Processing Fads and Fashions: An Organization-Set Analysis of Cultural Industry Systems. *American Journal of Sociology*, 77(4). Retrieved September 30, 2025, from <https://doi.org/10.1086/225192>
- Janssen, S., & Verboord, M. (2015). Cultural Mediators and Gatekeepers. In J.D. Wright (Ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, Vol.5 (pp.440-446). Oxford: Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.10424-6>
- Kuna, F. (2017). How can Facebook inspire online media? Mediaguru.cz. Retrieved September 30, 2025, from <https://www.mediaguru.cz/clanky/2017/07/jak-muze-facebook-inspirovat-online-media>
- Kyprianos, K., Sifaki, E., & Bantimaroudis, P. (2019). Digital gatekeepers and website visitors of the Acropolis Museum: revisiting gatekeeping theory in the cultural domain. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 35(4), 409-423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09647775.2019.1630851>
- Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in Group Dynamics: Concept, Method and Reality. Social Science; Social Equilibria and Social Change. *Human Relations*, 1(1), 5-41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872674700100103>
- Lowenthal, D. (1998). *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511523809>
- Pitoňáková, S. (2022). Metamorphoses of the presentation of cultural heritage in the media space (Unpublished habilitation thesis). Bratislava: Pan-European University.
- Pitoňáková, S. (2023). The Model of Value of a Media product. *Communication Today*, 14(2), 16-26. <https://doi.org/10.34135/communicationtoday.2023>
- Pitoňáková, S. (2024). Media Production as an Option for Enhancing Cultural (Heritage) Literacy. *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 7(2), 242-256. <https://doi.org/10.34135/mlar-24-02-15>
- Russ-Mohl, R., & Bakičová, H. (2005). *Journalism: A Comprehensive Guide to Practical Journalism*. Praha: Grada.
- Singer, J. B. (2014). User-generated visibility: Secondary gatekeeping in a shared media space 2013. *New Media & Society*, 16(1), 55-73. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444813477833> (Original work published 2014)
- Tandoc, E. C. (2018). Journalism as Gatekeeping. In T.P. Vos (Ed.), *Journalism* (pp. 235-254). Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501500084-012>
- White, D. M. (1950). The "Gate Keeper": A Case Study in the Selection of News. *Journalism Quarterly*, 27(4), 383-390. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769905002700403>