The idea for this book emerged in spring 1998 when, during an internship at the national television news program in the Netherlands, I was dazzled by a seeming paradox: On the one hand, journalists, politicians, and citizens alike rated European integration as one of the most important and wide-reaching changes in post-war Europe. On the other hand, journalists, politicians, and citizens alike also thought about European integration as complex, bureaucratic, inefficient, and decidedly dull. This was enough to intrigue me to undertake the research endeavor reported in this book.

The research was completed as a PhD project in the period 1998-2002 at The Amsterdam School of Communications Research, ASCoR, University of Amsterdam. The project was supported by research grants from the The Dutch Organization for Scientific Research [Nederlands Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, NWO], the Danish Research Academy [Det danske forskerkådemi], the University of Amsterdam, and the Nordic Film Foundation [Nordisk Film Fonden]. I am thankful to all of these institutions.

The book has three key features: interviews with newsmakers in Britain, Denmark, and the Netherlands, content analyses of news in the three countries, and experiments with television news. The latter were conducted in cooperation with the national news program of the Dutch public broadcaster, NOS [Nederlandse Omroep Stichting]. This cooperation was exceptional and I am particularly thankful to the (former and current) Editors in Chief Nico Haasbroek, Hans Laroes, and Bernadette Slotboom who granted me the best possible setting for carrying out my research. During the production of the experimental news programs several people were very helpful. From the NOS Journaal Jan Talens, Pia Dijkstra, Paul Sneijder, Gijs Wanders, Maryse Ducheine, and Marije Alma all made time and energy available in the midst of their daily work to contribute to the research.

From the Audience Research Department (NOS-KLO), I would like to thank in particular Allerd Peeters for a great cooperation and many insights with regard to the logistics of the experimental studies. Several persons contributed to the television stories by providing quotes for the experimental stimulus material. For this I am thankful to Nout Wellink, President of the Dutch National Bank, Dick Benschop, former Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Frank Timmermans, MP, and Frans Weisglas, former MP and President of the Dutch...
Parliament. Finally, I would like to thank Roland Snoeijer for our cooperation during the first experiment. Without him, this experiment would not have taken place, nor would it have been half the fun to do it.

A second key feature is a series of interviews with newsmakers at the *BBC* and *ITN* (Britain), *DR* and *TV2* (Denmark), and *NOS* (the Netherlands). Editors, journalists, and political correspondents made time available for interviews during hectic periods such as the 1999 European election campaign. In addition, these persons granted me access to the newsroom, making it possible to get an insider’s view. I am thankful to all of them for making this possible.

The third key feature of the book is a content analysis of news about European integration in different countries. Several persons in Britain, Denmark, and the Netherlands helped collecting the material and in Amsterdam, I was privileged to work with diligent and meticulous student assistants from the EU member states without whom the content analyses could never have been carried out.

Several persons provided invaluable help without which this Ph.D. project would never have been completed. Most importantly my friends and colleagues at The Amsterdam School of Communications Research provided excellent company, valuable inspiration, and useful feedback. Angela, Herry, Jochen, Kim, Marjolein, Martin, Moniek, and Roderick all stand out for also being such great persons to be with. Throughout the project, Jay Blumler, Ann Crigler, Wolfgang Donsbach, Esteban Lopez-Escobar, Doris Graber, Stig Hjarvard, Denis McQuail, Paolo Mancini, Tom Patterson, Stephen Reese, and David Weaver all provided input on the ideas and theoretical concepts addressed in the book.

My project resided as part of a larger collaborative research effort directed from the University of Amsterdam. I had the privilege to work together in a team of researchers including Holli Semetko, Klaus Schönbach, Cees van der Eijk, Edmund Lauf, Susan Banducci, and Jeff Karp which was exciting. Member of this group was also my Ph.D. colleague Jochen Peter who has become a much appreciated collaborator and intellectual exemplar. I thank Jochen in particular for inspiring and challenging discussions and for sharing his many insightful comments with me.

The project was supervised by Holli A. Semetko, Professor and Chair of Audience and Public Opinion Research at The Amsterdam School of Communications Research ASCoR. In many respects I could not have wished for a better supervisor: Generous, stimulating, challenging, and supportive. Many doors usually closed for a young researcher were made wide open for me. I thank Holli for these qualities that oftentimes made the four years of work a very pleasurable experience. Any shortcomings in the book are, of course, entirely my responsibility.

*Claes H. de Vreese*

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