

## **The (In-)Transparency of Data Journalism: The Role of Code Repositories in Data Storytelling**

*Transparency has been established as a normative ideal of data journalism. As data-driven stories draw on vast amounts of data and practitioners deploy journalistic code to exploit and communicate such data, measures need to be taken to warrant transparency, and refrain from obscuring news work through code. Drawing upon the concept of transparency as verifiability and transparency as performativity, this mixed-method study analyzes to what extent prime examples of data stories enact transparency measures. First, we quantitatively analyzed a sample of data stories to examine to what extent they provide code repositories, documentation, and data. Secondly, we conducted an interpretative code reading based on critical code studies (CCS) of two data stories (from small and large news organizations) to inspect how these transparency rituals are reflected in the code and data repositories. Results show that transparency in codes and data repositories manifests to a certain level but is still insufficient. While transparency as verifiability does not seem to be an essential value of these organizations, the performativity transparency could be seen in some of these stories. Our study contributes to extending the debate of transparency in data journalism, discussing paths for it, and downplaying the myth of its broad adoption.*

**Keywords** data journalism; code; programming languages; transparency; digital journalism; critical code studies