

# GATEWATCHING AND COLLECTIVE CURATION:

selecting popular radio journalism sources at *Bandnews* Rio FM

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**ABSTRACT** – The article presents the results from a systematic observation of and interviews with journalists who produce local radio news program, *BandNews FM*, in Rio de Janeiro. The objective is to analyze how the gatowatching process is applied to selecting sources from WhatsApp, and to explore the specific nature of work carried out in radio journalism newsrooms. One of the main features of this broadcaster is the large number of public voices selected from the WhatsApp instant messaging application. The data shows popular voices selected for this paper which fit into a particular theme, it shows the collaborative curation with listeners, and it shows the organizational constraints of investigation, highlighted by journalists sitting behind a desk, absent from the stage of the events. Unlike other media vehicles, radio demands continuous updating and decentralization when selecting material to be broadcast. This study points out characteristics that are demanded of journalists who work in radio and the new, newsroom strategies of involving the public via social networking platforms.

**Keywords:** Gatowatching. Curation. Sources. *Band News FM*. Radio Journalism.

## GATEWATCHING E CURADORIA COLABORATIVA NA SELEÇÃO DAS FONTES POPULARES PELO RADIOJORNALISMO DA *BANDNEWS* RIO FM

**RESUMO** – O artigo apresenta resultados de uma observação sistemática e entrevistas com jornalistas que produzem o rádiojornal local da *BandNews FM* no Rio de Janeiro. O objetivo é analisar como o processo de *gatowatching* é executado na seleção das fontes via WhatsApp na emissora e as especificidades no trabalho desenvolvido nas redações de rádiojornalismo. Uma das principais características apresentadas pela emissora é o alto número de vozes populares selecionadas por meio da interação no aplicativo de mensagens instantâneas. Os dados mostram um encaixe temático das vozes populares selecionadas, a curadoria colaborativa em conjunto com os ouvintes e os constrangimentos organizacionais na apuração com o perfil do jornalista sentado e ausente do palco dos acontecimentos. Ao contrário de outros meios, o rádio demanda

de atualização contínua e a descentralização na seleção dos materiais levados ao ar. Nesse sentido, a pesquisa aponta características que o trabalho no ambiente radiofônico demanda dos jornalistas e as novas estratégias desenvolvidas nas redações com o envolvimento dos públicos via plataformas de redes sociais.

**Palavras chave:** Gatewatching. Curadoria. Fontes. *Band News FM*. Radiojornalismo.

## GATEWATCHING Y CURADURÍA COLABORATIVA EN LA SELECCIÓN DE LAS FUENTES POPULARES POR EL RADIO PERIODISMO DE *BANDNEWS*

**RESUMEN** – El artículo presenta resultados de una observación sistemática y entrevistas con periodistas que producen el radio de periodismo local de *BandNews FM* en Río de Janeiro. El objetivo es analizar cómo el proceso de *gatewatching* se ejecuta en la selección de las fuentes vía WhatsApp en la emisora y las especificidades en el trabajo desarrollado en las redacciones de radio-periodismo. Una de las principales características presentadas por la emisora es el alto número de voces populares seleccionadas por medio de la interacción en la aplicación de mensajería instantánea. Los datos muestran un encaje temático de las voces populares seleccionadas, la curaduría colaborativa en conjunto con los oyentes y las limitaciones organizacionales en el recuento con el perfil del periodista sentado y ausente del escenario de los acontecimientos. A diferencia de otros medios, la radio demanda de actualización continua y la descentralización en la selección de los materiales llevados al aire. En ese sentido, la investigación apunta características que el trabajo en el ambiente radiofónico demanda de los periodistas y las nuevas estrategias desarrolladas en las redacciones con la participación de los públicos vía plataformas de redes sociales.

**Palabras clave:** Gatewatching. Curaduría. Fuentes. *Band News FM*. Radio periodismo.

### 1. Introduction

*BandNews Rio* is part of a group of radio broadcasters owned by the Saad family in Brazil; a media conglomerate which also controls public and paid television networks, web portals and its own radio broadcasting network. Its radio broadcast is called *talk and news*, but appears in searches on Kantar Ibope Media as *all news*, the most-listened to radio show in Rio de Janeiro<sup>1</sup>. Its headquarters is in Rio, but its license was granted in the metropolitan region of Niterói. Founded in São Paulo, 2004, after buying out Rádio Sucesso, it was the first broadcaster in the country to transmit news 24 hours a day on FM radio. In 2016 it had headquarters in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, and affiliates in Belo Horizonte, Porto Alegre, Salvador, Curitiba, Brasília, Fortaleza, João Pessoa and Vitória, including Orlando, USA, among other markets.

This encouraging growth in the number of re-broadcasters or affiliates and audience numbers is not represented in the hiring of journalists. According to audience studies from 2015 and 2016 performed by Kantar Ibope Media, *BandNews* was in front of *CBN* in Rio de Janeiro. During this research period *BandNews* had 35 journalists working in producing reports, selecting topics, administrating the site, and even operating the studio soundboard. There are a further six interns in the newsroom working on production and verifying information. There is a demand for radio journalism professionals who are able to multitask and work on multiple platforms, and due to budget cuts on travel costs these journalists are confined to working in the newsrooms (Lopez, 2010).

In this respect, the objective of this paper is to analyze the gatewatching process behind selecting WhatsApp sources for a local program on *BandNews* in Rio de Janeiro. One of the main features of this broadcaster is the large number of public voices shared on instant messaging applications. We spent a week systematically observing the newsroom and the data showed that these public voices were selected according to topic, the collective curation together with listeners and the constraints of journalists who are stuck in newsrooms, away from the stage of events. This radio broadcaster also provides continual updates and decentralizes the verification and inclusion of information into its program schedule.

## **2. Gatewatching and live feedback in radio journalism**

We analyze the concepts of expanded radio as described by professor and researcher, Marcelo Kischinhevsky (2016), from the Rio de Janeiro State University, and the concepts of hypermedia radio posited by Professor Débora Cristina Lopez (2010) from Ouro Preto Federal University. Both concepts have specific characteristics for updating information and production processes which build news at *all news* broadcasters. The concepts of gatekeeper and gatewatching require specific knowledge of what journalists do. The construction of live news throughout the day and the possible inclusion of information coming from various sources such as reports, reporters, editors and even program hosts lead us to re-evaluate the logic of the web, television or print media. As Shoemaker & Vos (2011) claim, gatekeepers are in a number of channels, whether assistants and agencies or functions performed in the vehicle itself.

According to the authors mentioned here, it is the third channel in which the audience performs the role of gatekeeper by the selecting, sharing and commenting that occurs between readers/listeners/viewers across new information technologies on the internet (Shoemaker & Vos, 2011). This point of view argues that the journalists' perceptions now involve what the audience receives and the news values and personal interest in the content. In a study for *New York Times* in 2008, Shoemaker, Seo & Johnson (2008) identified differences between the news criteria that journalists follow and the news criteria that the audience prefers. They gave examples like items about laws or norms, or items that give the reader an inside-look at the story and explain interests relative to the groups they belong to.

The following proposal for the longevity of the site's most accessed news still needs some attention, mainly when considering that interaction does not necessarily come from the advent of the internet. The role of the audience is important here yet fundamental criteria of the journalistic institution must be maintained. The mediating role between public interest and the interest that comes from the public is one of the bases for selecting information. This is why interaction between listeners and broadcasters is a source for what information to broadcast or what information journalists select in their production process (Lopez, 2010).

Contrary to Shoemaker & Vos (2011), Bruns (2011) argues that collaborative or citizen journalism has been used since the 1980s but it has been limited and still adheres to the traditional top to bottom production scheme. Bruns believes social media platforms have brought a radical change: interruption in the journalistic models of gatekeeping and the development of gatewatching. The shortage of media channels and the growth of participative journalism on the internet have been responsible for this change. Instead of the role of gatekeeper or selector, the new role now is curatorship; a kind of information guide or a watchman monitoring what the public highlights.

According to Bruns (2005), gatewatching is a news production process without the hierarchical structure that has traditionally been used for controlling. He argues that the public has access to different sources and do not always depend on journalists or the media to get their news. He supposes that new technologies allow for users to follow and observe a large number of news materials. Even still, he

recognizes that they are not capable of keeping and controlling the gates of available information channels based on news values which the profession establishes.

The result of this ad hoc collaborative curation of news is firstly a regular flow of updates and information that evolves inasmuch as the shared understanding of the event itself develops. This occurs nowadays with so much speed that even the channels that broadcast 24 hours a day are now regularly referencing information obtained from Twitter and other similar social media sources. (Bruns, 2011, p. 132)

Based on this argument, he reaffirms that the position of professional journalists is to provide more detailed information for media channels, trying to find a way to produce within this new model. The public participates by selecting informative materials and sharing events with a speed that demands instant dissemination of news. "This larger sharing between industrial journalists and users leaves the former more space to focus on investigative work and develop original material, which are less attainable for unpaid, non-journalist users" (Bruns, 2011, p. 130).

Introducing this new model, according to Bruns, came from rationalization within news production processes which meant layoffs and a reduced number of journalists in media companies. Continual cutbacks in newsrooms, alongside the multiplicity of informative channels and growing audience interaction on social media have led to a repositioning of media markets, to lobbying the competition, supporters and investors, and to reassessing the classic concept of gatekeeper. Bruns (2011) defends that the domain of journalists as gatekeepers and central spaces for covering and disseminating information is gone.

Another argument on gatwatching is that organizations may continue to control news agenda but it is unlikely that they encourage public debate in current media (Bruns, 2011). Within this panorama, he recognizes that journalism continues to be an institution that should succeed through its quality in news building, especially its investigative character, yet it still does not quite recognize advantages and disadvantages of the concept and of public participation on the internet.

Brazilian researcher Adriana Barsotti (2014), in her book *Jornalista em mutação: Do cão de guarda ao mobilizador de audiência*, which she wrote after her Master's dissertation was awarded by the National Association of Post-Graduation Programs in Communication, proposes caution and states that the concepts still

run parallel to each other yet they do overlap in some cases. In an interview with the O Globo front page editor, she draws attention to a contextualization of what they call *Mr. Web Gates* as a journalist and mobilizer of internet audiences. She argues that gatewatching overlaps into gatekeeping because journalists, even on the web, are still responsible for selecting and verifying the information that is to be communicated, and both cases cannot handle the changes made to the mediator role between news and the public.

In one way or another, in all cases, the mediums condition journalistic production in specific characteristics. From printed form to online, maintaining news values and its criteria for newsworthiness are based on the information selected by the gatekeeper or the gatewatcher. It is necessary to maintain the approaches about reshaping previous selection processes, including the period of the internet. On the other hand it is still necessary to reallocate the concept to radio journalism and its dynamics for news building.

On the definition of sources, Pinto (2000) offers a timely debate on the interests and the form that is presented in journalistic work. He believes that authors, people, groups, social institutions, documents, and data that is prepared, built or deliberately left out are all sources. The agents or institutions that journalists use refer to social positions and relations “for interests and points of view, for spatial-temporal frameworks. In short, sources (...) are willing entities, or, are implied and develop their activity through well-focused strategies and tactics” (Pinto, 2000, p. 278).

The logic stems from the question of what sources want when they search out journalism. So, we go back to the original discussion of how the term is used because it is a metaphor for a place where there is fresh water, the origin of something, of life, of conception in which someone searches for a source to collect something. Pinto (2000) believes this logic is inverted due to the sophistication of the information being distributed, especially because of the professionalization of these agents. Neveu (2006) also talks of misunderstandings on the part of journalists when they look to add data, speech and resources to news. The mistake here is in recognizing that these sources are fundamentally active, but not necessarily because professionals do not have the spirit of liberty or initiative: “If there is one metaphor with water that makes sense, it is the one about journalists being submerged in a flood of information offered by sources” (Neveu, 2006, p. 95).

Even though these authors recognize this situation, professionalization does not necessarily stop placing the different sources in a journalistic program. The selection process carried out by the gatekeeper or gatewatcher continues to be based on news value and even on the journalists' own pathways, on the utilization of off or even on producing materials that the sources are not interested in. Pinto (2000) highlights a series of objectives which sources and journalists strive for:

The sources look at: 1. visibility and attention from media; 2. a public agenda and certain themes as a collective focus of attention; 3. soliciting help or adopting ideas or products and services; 4. preventing or repairing losses and damages; 5. neutralizing the competition's interests; 6. creating a positive public image.

Journalists look at: 1. Obtaining new information; 2. Confirming or refuting information obtained from other sources; 3. Dispelling doubts and developing material; 4. Releasing ideas or debates; 5. Providing recommendations and assessments from specialists; 6. Attributing credibility and legitimacy to information collected by the reporter (Pinto, 2000, p. 280).

The current room for maneuver in news networks, as Pinto (2000) and Tuchman (1983) point out, is one of the bases for questioning the relationship and selection of sources. Journalists act on logic, they create and redirect information which is a power that should not be undervalued (Pinto, 2000). There is a need to differentiate between the different levels of access to journalistic agenda (Molotch & Lester, 1999) and new possibilities of contextualization within this process for agents who perform gatewatching. There is a gray area around the capacity of social movements and unprofessional popular sources which are separate from the economic power that educates these professionals. Additionally, the voices that do not actually appear in media but help professionals to cover certain issues is not addressed in the taxonomic study we will present.

Pinto (2000) uses the "word pink" when referring to this complexification, which involves a diversity and multiplicity of voices in media. The first base is that no source goes public with anything that might be considered inconvenient to itself or to the organization it belongs to. It is the journalist's job to search, to select and to build news. Pinto recognizes that the growth of data and information within this multiplicity express interventions from different social actors, strengthening the argument put forth here that journalism is a space for disputing.

On one side we have the increasingly professionalized sources of journalists; on the other, we have possible new selections through popular agents and their daily interactions. The process of gatewatching is an example of this kind of collaborative construction of news with public contributions. In the case presented by Bruns (2005; 2011), reader interaction from *The Guardian* was important in its coverage of congressmen spending. This interaction does not invalidate or remove the role of professionals when mediating between information and news value. However, a further look at the conceptual differences in this curating process or the public's selection of material is necessary, especially because of access through interaction (Molotch & Lester, 1999).

For *BandNews*, which has a specific structure for selecting voices and information via WhatsApp, recognizing the role of the public as a source requires a debate on the conceptual marks in this process. The differences between the concepts of participation, interaction and access, often considered synonyms, cause erroneous analyses on the audience presence on media content. Discourse on interactivity as a product of participative culture does not allow for further studies on the relationship between new actors and society (Primo, 2007). There were even strategies for training the popular sectors on how to include outside content into traditional newspapers, like the program “*Parceiro do Rj*” from *TV Globo* in Rio de Janeiro. These strategies were new approaches and did not necessarily contain the most diverse or innovative content (Becker, 2012).

### 3. Gatewatching at Bandnews

The sample period for this study was August 14 to 18 at *BandNews Rio*, focusing on the radio stations *BandNews Rio* 1<sup>st</sup> Edition in the mornings and *BandNews Rio* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition in the afternoons. As Gil (2008) points out, systematic observation is always selective and fits within this sample that provides access to essential data used in the semi-structured interviews. One week was reasonable to uncover questions and situations that structure the debate on the gatewatching selection process for radio programs. The popular sources, via WhatsApp, are described here as common people who are victims of a particular situation – a crime, an injustice, an ineffective public policy – or who resort to spectacularization to attract attention

and demand improvements to their lives (Schimitz, 2011; Lage, 2001; Pinto, 2000; Kischinhevsky & Chagas, 2017).

The goal of the interviews was to explore the spectrum of opinions among broadcast newsroom journalists through different representations of daily coverage and selecting sources (Gaskel, 2002; Paterson, 2008; Cruz Neto, 2002). Six journalists from *BandNews Rio* were interviewed in August: Rodolfo Schneider, director of journalism; Taís Dias, newsroom editor; Mário Dias, editor-in-chief; Carlos Briggs, production coordinator and reporter; Tatiana Campbell, reporter for WhatsApp; and Marcus Lacerda, site reporter. We wanted to understand issues like professional performance for selecting, their criteria for newsworthiness and the organizational obstacles in the gatewatching process.

WhatsApp is the main platform for sources at the *BandNews Rio* newsroom and involves a lot of work verifying listener data. Some journalists claim that the newsroom has become dependent on this data since listening to this type of source is the “broadcaster’s main priority”. Phrases like “radio for listeners” and “built for listeners” are common when selecting information.

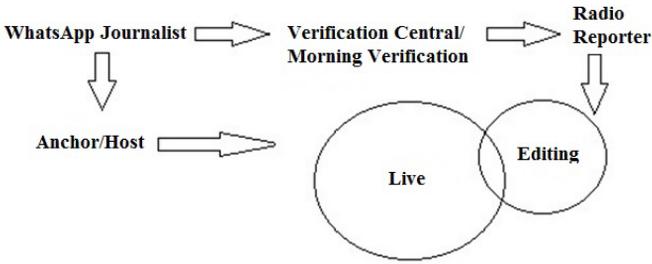
Carlos Briggs, producer, explains that coverage of the Car Wash scandal in Rio de Janeiro or actions of specific official sources in politics ends up costing the broadcaster because it is only catering to listeners. On the other hand, it fails to mention the possible ways these listeners can be used, and goes back to themes like transit and safety. There is a direct dependency on material that comes from WhatsApp.

*BandNews* created a mindset that it cannot escape from, and doesn’t want to. The broadcaster is the listener, 99% of material comes from listeners. So our relationship with official sources is not the same as other broadcasters. For example, the Car Wash operations broadcast on TV Globo usually have inside sources, but we don’t. In this aspect, we are far behind because we do not have any relation with these closer official sources (C. Briggs, personal communication, August 22, 2017).

In addition to the data obtained from WhatsApp listeners, the relationship with professionalized sources like transit data mediators are also frequently used in matching information in groups, which organs send directly through instant messaging applications. Social networks like Facebook and Twitter are often used as official sources and the profiles on these networks are consulted about certain issues. There are also crowdsourcing applications like OTT, *Fogo Cruzado* and Waze which are also used for checking safety and transit. Figure 1

shows the flow of verifying news and the dependency on interactions for covering agendas due to the low number of professionals covering the news. The difference with programmed or scheduled news is that the editor-in-chief gives the early indication of which stories covered from the agenda will be published.

**Figure 1:** Verification's Flow/ Sources' Selection



Source: elaborated by the author.

In many cases where there is a lack of response from the other side or official organs cannot be reached the listener is recorded and this recording is broadcast as is. In the case of groups, journalists can still indicate new sources about certain issues. On Wednesday, around 10:30am, four reporters were on the streets covering three scheduled stories and one from WhatsApp listeners. There was a truck driver who used the platform to report an assault on a truck on Avenida Brasil, this, as well as transit and safety, are reported on throughout the day. Editing texts is the only task assigned to the integrated correction system composed of production coordinators and the editor-in-chief. In addition, all interactions are maintained between the journalist responsible for the platform and the program listeners.

The journalists select their sources in various ways. The news anchors, even while on the air, use WhatsApp and telephone to receive information and suggestions from people from a wide range of institutions. Rodolfo Schneider uses email and the internet to research the issues being discussed as well as data from the newsroom on issues of safety, shootings or the number of police killed. Boechat works with two journalists in the newsroom, selecting audio and information from sources, and using data from listeners and other sectors such as communication departments from official organs. In both these cases, Schneider received information on his

cellular phone during a program on a police prison in São Gonçalo that was asking drug traffickers for money.

All reporters work directly from the newsroom, yet professionals responsible for WhatsApp build news live in studio from the issues that listeners send in. Between 9:30 and 11:30am is when the largest number of messages comes in; during the exact time slot for the program *BandNews Rio* 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. In cases where verification is needed, the messages are sent to two groups: the verification center which is comprised of the newsroom and *BandNews TV* and *TV Bandeirantes* from Rio de Janeiro; and the Morning Verification with radio journalists.

In most cases when three listeners send in the same information it is usually broadcast. Also during this process, a notepad is used to write down extra information while interacting with listeners, matching that information with traffic information from applications like Waze and official and institutional transit sources. The journalists who receive this data try to verify the information from listeners by selecting other sources like specialists and officials to contextualize and add to the data.

Listener comments on the news are filtered, and in many cases, are not used if they refer to politics or safety. The reason for this is that broadcasters are interested in the intensity or productivity of information, according to Traquina (2005), and not random listener comments. Thus, the main criteria for selecting news revolve around how impactful or how applicable the information is. The WhatsApp journalist also selects sources that can add to the reports. In the case of the truck driver who was assaulted on a Tuesday, that call was made into a report on assaults on a street called Avenida Brasil. Interns help in selecting official and specialized agents that can also add to the data.

Even though working from a desk (Neveu, 2006; Pereira, 2004) and interacting with listeners (Carpentier, 2012), journalists have to add a considerable amount of news from these popular sources to the radio stations. One example is from what happened on Wednesday, around 6am, when a journalist received a photo, sent in by listeners, of a statue of Michael Jackson holding a rifle in a community in Rio de Janeiro. In less than an hour this journalist had already spoken to more than 20 listeners who confirmed this information. After disposing of any rumors or gossip and analyzing the reports sent in with new data on traffic in the region, the information is sent on to the Verification Center and Morning Verification, and a reporter is then sent out to examine the story from other sources. The story is confirmed at 10am

and is broadcast live on *BandNews Rio* 1<sup>st</sup> Edition with new reports sent about the opinion of the residents who live in the area.

One of the issues for covering these stories is the impossibility of waiting for the reporter to arrive at the scene while the story is being broadcast. So, the sources are selected from within the newsroom where the reporter records the source and airs it. It is the responsibility of each person involved to select a source that is trustworthy. Then they have to select the parts of that source's speech that match the information from other official sectors.

Searching for stories that can be made into reports is a job performed by the program producers, but when it comes to recommending sources the reporters in the newsroom or on the streets are also consulted. In this case, journalists select from issues that generate the most discussion on WhatsApp or Facebook. From the time they select the sources until they broadcast the story has to be done quickly due to the need to get information in "real time" and before the competition.

There are different forms of selecting/communicating with a source which can vary between sending information and using an answer group from a WhatsApp reporter. It is important to mention here that broadcasters use a specific professional for selecting and verifying the data coming from popular sources on instant messaging services. Thus, the definition of "amateur journalist" does not fit the current collaborative model in the selection process.

The editor-in-chief, Taís Dias, and news director, Mário Dias Ferreira, are responsible for verifying the WhatsApp reporter's material. Even with the high speed that news has to be produced at in the *BandNews* newsroom, Ferreira highlights that there is no turning away from innovation and technology in the selection process. He believes that the efficiency of the process needs to be sustained by a commitment to not broadcasting any information which has not been verified beforehand. However, we noticed that it was practically impossible for the WhatsApp reporter to stop and reflect about certain agendas. Almost all the "everyday events" in transit and safety were broadcast, while reports went to the verification group.

With the statue of Michael Jackson, the news director is illustrating the change that the broadcaster has gone through over the last few years. For verification, a group of professionals from the broadcaster helped obtain data from official sources like the civil and military police, as well as the residents in the region, which all went towards a more in-depth coverage. M. D. Ferreira (personal

communication, August 26, 2017) highlights that the source that sent in the information does not always appear on the program. The flow went from WhatsApp to verification and from the air to the site.

As previously highlighted, the strategy for contact through telephone, email, social networking sites or old source agendas is concentrated on WhatsApp. Two professionals work morning and afternoon on this interaction. The work involves sitting at a desk selecting material from popular and official sources on the platform, keeping the messages from the *BandNews Rio* 1<sup>st</sup> Edition and forwarding them to the Verification Center. According to the center, identifying “the final telephone listener” is justified because “sources from shootings or accidents often don’t want to be identified” (T. Campbell, personal communication, August 23, 2017).

What I send from the Verification group are reports on various topics, problems with hospitals, health, hold ups [sic] with public service, I send these to be verified and produced by Boechat. Issues like the environment, with oil spills at sea, or pollution, sewage problems, issues for the municipality, as well as facts like shootings and protests that need to be covered. I do not forward comments because they will not be added to the agenda. Of course, if the comment is a denouncement, it goes on record and will be used after verification. For example, one listener comments on an in-home shooting, this comment will be broadcast and shortly afterwards a number of comments appear. I do not throw these comments in with the group, but someone's agenda will have new sources from different places in Rio (T. Campbell, personal communication, August 23, 2017).

Even with all the information provided from the interviews about WhatsApp, it is contacting and selecting sources in the traditional way (telephone, email and personal contact) which occurs most (R. Schneider, personal communication, August 29, 2017). Using technology, according to M. D. Ferreira (personal communication, August 26, 2017), does not mean an absence of daily verification, instead it opens up possibilities for facts that “are broadcast immediately”, which is different from reports that are analyzed and verified so that fake news does not get broadcast.

There is a lot of care taken when selecting ethical and professional issues, which is the main focus behind questioning how collaborations in transit and safety appear on the program. We do not intend to make a duality between the “last telephone listener” and the official sectors according to its hierarchy of credibility, as Traquina (2005) suggests. Chaparro (1994) called attention to lies coming from sources of power, like what happened with ex CBF president, João Havelange. Rodolfo

Schneider states that matching data with official sectors in order to obtain further information and to confirm data still occurs:

What we end up having with the relationship with listeners is the intensity of data that they give us, we trust listeners because when one of them calls us others are also talking about the same information, we match the data and broadcast it. We strongly believe in listeners, but that does not mean that they don't send us rumors thinking they are truths (R. Schneider, personal communication, August 29, 2017).

Gatewatching is used for curating material which is sent in, including answers given to listeners when a material is not true. When something is broadcast, but it turns out to not be true, this mistake is corrected: "We believe in what they are telling us, so much so that we go after this information, but not to the extent that what they send us just gets broadcast immediately" (R. Schneider personal communication, August 29, 2017). We can therefore state that, contrary to what broadcasting professionals preach, there is no particular priority given to popular sources that depend on confirmations from official sources about certain issues. This does not happen in reverse because these institutions' agendas have direct access to the program of the professionals who work on the street.

[On using WhatsApp] Every day we see that it is helping, but it is also dangerous. What if something is forwarded that turns out to be a lie and affects a lot of people? The case of the school van in São Gonçalo is another example of information we confirmed with the military police and other communication mediums. They are dynamic forms of coverage, and we were worried about the children, of course some things take time. There are listeners who become our sources, and we trust them more, almost like we do with columnists or authorities. Even other mediums call here asking for the telephone number of a listener depending on the story that is going to be broadcast. (M.D. Ferreira, personal communication, August 26, 2017).

Professionals have established a difference between "captive listeners", whose relationships are credible based on the number of times they have provided information deemed relevant or important; and long-time or first-time listeners (C. Briggs, personal communication, August 22, 2017). He highlights that the speed of information and the work performed by a small number of professionals is tenuous between news values implied in the coverage and the risk of making mistakes. The reason for searching for other material, according to the production coordinator, is the same as the other types of sources: "The question of credibility is

paramount. I won't be hypocritical here. Depending on the direction and mood in which the person has we might have to edit it because the responsibility is greater, analyzing an issue which is closer. Band news follows an editorial line, but it has never been censored" (C. Briggs, personal communication, August 22nd, 2017).

### Final considerations

The data obtained from the newsroom at *BandNews FM*, Rio de Janeiro, raises a series of questions for further debates on journalism and new professional strategies for gatewatching. The specific features of radio are in contrast with the discourses that generate demands and forms of work which, different from the web or television, are inherent in a journalist's profile and in the team that checks news 24 hours a day for a medium as accessible as radio is. The transit and safety examples strengthen this accessibility but raise problems like how they fit into certain themes. Apart from this there are two discussion points that strengthen concepts in radio journalism: the continual updating of gatewatching and the centralization of the role of journalists who verify listener information.

The first point is the specific features of gatekeeping which are demonstrated in the case of *BandNews FM* in the work of news anchors, producers, WhatsApp journalists, reporters and interns who build news due to the speed of time between verifying information and sending that information to be broadcast. As Shoemaker and Vos (2011) point out, you cannot understand the process of gatekeeping by looking at one single source when there are so many different journalistic platforms out there. Gatewatching occurs throughout the duration of an entire program, and journalists not only select listeners to be interviewed, they also curate information about transit and safety using the data sent in via instant messaging.

The audience channel ends up being one of the main elements for collecting information and selecting voices that make up the construction of news on a daily basis at the broadcaster. Professionals in the newsroom share the perception that relationships established with popular sources have changed the format of verifying news. Conversely, the diversification of agents that are actually heard in programming is still low according to the interviewees. Collaborative curation as a gatewatching process establishes itself in selecting and

building news throughout the duration of the live program, giving the work model a singularity with professionals dedicated to sources used for interacting with radio listeners.

The second point also shows how journalists select sources for building news and how this news is marked by the convergence of media and expanded radio. Using instant messaging applications from popular sources overlaps into the news selection process and clouds the way information from traditional sources is treated in the newsroom. The work model at *BandNews Rio* provides some possibilities for centralizing gatewatching for WhatsApp journalists and for the speed at which new agendas and events arrive. Even though still in its initial and exploratory stage, the study shows there is a need to debate not only new professional strategies for curation and continual updating in conjunction with the public, but also organizational obstacles like work intensity, working from a desk, away from the scene of events, and sources matching the theme that make the diversity of voices in different themes approached impossible.

\* Translated by Lee Sharp.

## NOTES

- 1 Data released by the Association of Broadcasters in Rio de Janeiro (AERJ) in March 2016. Retrieved from [www.aerj.com.br/noticia/444-disputa-pelo-topo-segue-acirrada-no-rio-de-janeiro.-jb-fm-e-super-radio-tupi-avancam](http://www.aerj.com.br/noticia/444-disputa-pelo-topo-segue-acirrada-no-rio-de-janeiro.-jb-fm-e-super-radio-tupi-avancam).

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