

**BOOK  
REVIEW**

***O destino do jornal:  
a Folha de S. Paulo, O  
Globo e O Estado de S.  
Paulo na sociedade da  
informação***

*(The newspaper's destiny: the Folha de S. Paulo, O Globo and O Estado de S. Paulo in the information society)*

LOURIVAL SANT'ANNA

Rio de Janeiro, Editora Record Ltda., 2008, 270pgs.

Reviewed by **Carlos Pernisa Júnior**

Where is the newspaper going? Is it doomed to disappear? Are the major Brazilian newspapers following the same course as the international press? Will the digital era put an end to journalism? Trying to answer these questions, Lourival Sant'Anna developed a research project for his master course in the Communication and Arts School of the University of São Paulo (ECA/USP), starting in 2003, having concluded his research in March 2007. The result is *O destino do jornal: a Folha de S. Paulo, O Globo e O Estado de S. Paulo na sociedade da informação* (The newspaper's destiny: the *Folha de S. Paulo, O Globo* and *O Estado de S. Paulo* in the information society), published in 2008 by Editora Record in Rio de Janeiro.

Sant'Anna shows how the three main Brazilian newspapers - *Folha de S. Paulo, O Globo* and *O Estado de S. Paulo* – faced their difficulties beginning with the turn of the century and how they are preparing themselves for these new times, with the great changes which are being announced for those who work with print media. The tripod underlying his research is “the newspapers' reaction to the change in reading habits, to the intensification of the competition with other media and to the technological innovations”. In order to deal with this matter, the author had recourse to various research works on the subject and also

interviewed the managing editors of the three newspapers mentioned and scholars who work with the media.

The text is well prepared, despite being clearly an academic work, written for this purpose and which did not undergo much alteration with a view toward its publication. The major reservation which could be made is perhaps that it is a dated book in certain aspects. It can be noted that some of its observations sound “antiquated” compared with the avalanche of events which have occurred in recent years, which have rapidly transformed the performance of journalism, such as, for example, the data relating to the Internet and also regarding how the newspapers are seeking alternatives for their online versions. It is clear that today’s reality is different and that the simple transposition of news from paper to the network is not the way chosen by the large companies in this sector to performing journalism on the Internet, currently, despite the fact that there still is publication of entire paper editions by means of PDF files for users of the Web.

In other aspects, the author seeks reference points in the United States to talk about situations which are different in Brazil. Unfortunately, these examples and data from Brazil are either not available or simply do not exist, for the lack of reliable surveys concerning them, which forces these comparisons. Even so, Sant’Anna’s effort to try to show how the Brazilian newspapers are structuring themselves faced with the changes that are occurring nowadays is laudable.

The analysis has a wealth of details and extends its range by means of data collected to provide a basis for it, which shows the rigorous nature of the research and the attempt to link the ideas by means of a well-drawn connection between all that which was worked on. The resource utilized is not merely a parade of graphs and figures to impress the reader. Here the author presents himself as a serious researcher rather than someone who, because he works with the print media – he has been a journalist for *O Estado de S. Paulo* since 1990 – takes the easy way out when treating a subject which is closer to him and which, in some people’s opinion, could be easier to study due to this closeness.

One can say that Sant’Anna also seeks to focus on journalistic activity, more than just the newspaper as a media printed on paper. This represents an advance in the discussion, in which the business of journalism is no longer seen as just a support and can be shown in another dimension, in which the journalist’s work appears more. In this connection it points to new important questions to be answered both by those who deal with the management of the journalistic companies as

well as by the theoreticians who deal with the subject. The interviews included, conducted with the managing editors of the three newspapers studied, Sandro Vaia from *O Estado de S.Paulo*, Otavio Frias Filho from *Folha de S. Paulo* and Rodolfo Fernandes from *O Globo*, and with Ramon Salaverria from the University of Navarre in Pamplona, Spain, and Nicholas Negroponte from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Boston, USA, also form a panorama of this subject and collaborate in helping the readers understand better what the newspaper's destiny could be.

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