

INTRODUCTION

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# HOW TO READ THIS EDITION

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*Brazilian Journalism Research* celebrates, in this issue, ten years of life. We have decided to mark this date with an edition especially dedicated to those who study journalism theories and are worried about central concepts. We have selected 13 articles, among those published in these ten years, and we will propose some reading journeys around certain articulating notions.

BJR, which was born in 2005 with a complex mission of connecting Brazilian researchers with the research in journalism performed in international level, had since its beginning a double ambition. On one side, the journal intended to bring forth debates that were being blocked in other parts of the world. On the other side, BJR intended to stimulate the international insertion of Brazilian and hence since the first issue was wholly published in English, in order to facilitate its circulation in several countries and investigating centers. These two goals were accomplished and all the journal content is available for cost-free access in *open access* system, which characterizes the contemporary Brazilian scientific publication.

In these ten years, the journal published 202 articles, both in dossiers and in the free thematic session, and 38 journalistic book reviews. Summing up, 253 authors have already had their articles published. 189 Brazilians and 64 foreigners. This result was possible thanks to the dedication of a large number of collaborators, member of the Editorial Board, partners and invited editors, coordinated by editors Luiz Gonzaga Motta (from 2005 to 2007), Claudia Quadros (from 2008 to 2009), Beatriz Becker (from 2010 to 2011), Kenia Maia (from 2012 to 2013) and Fabio Pereira (from 2013 to 2014).

We have prepared this issue having in mind texts with conceptual longevity, which we thought were useful for the researcher

who is also a professor, in graduation or post-graduation. Reflection about journalism demands nearing maneuvers, distinctions and articulations between concepts and perspectives and some of these maneuvers are what we are proposing with this BJR's special edition, hoping to contribute to our readers' theoretical revision work. Navigating along a decade of ideas and data, reading is lived up as a task: we seek in the texts conceptual tools that allow us to advance in the ways we experience the world and they serve us, in the future, for our writings concretization. We read and reread. As Italo Calvino poetically points out in "If a traveler in a winter's night":

Reading is a discontinuous and fragmentary operation [...]. In the immensity of writing, the reader's attention distinguishes minimum segments, word approximation, metaphors [...]. Every time I am faced with one of these meaning granulations, I have to keep excavating around so I can see if the nugget grows into a seam. Therefore, my reading never ends: I always read and reread, looking for the confirmation of a new discovery among the foldings of the phrases.

It is through this committed attitude that, as researchers, we all venture into the texts with extra care, in pursuit of prominences that allows to substantially comprehend journalism. As invited publishing houses, we elaborate some reading script suggestions that focus on contributing to the acknowledgement of conceptual ties amongst different texts.

The first reading journey gathers the **epistemological debate**. Barbie Zelizer ("What to do with journalism?", 2007) casts disciplinary perspectives that support the main types of research about journalism, indicates challenges that should be faced and discusses relations among subject communities associated to the field: journalists, professors and researchers. Martin Löffelholz and Liane Rothenberger ("Eclectic continuum, distinct discipline or subdomain of communication studies?", 2011) deal with the disciplinary character of journalism, highlighting its relation to other subjects and to the field of communication. From mapping the production of seven international scientific journals, the article raises fruitful perspectives to discuss journalism as a field of knowledge. Löffelholz and Rothenberger also raise an important question about the ideal of globalized international research. "It is an empirical question: until where have the journalistic studies been successful in the globalization of their research themes, focuses and their theoretical approaches?". The authors refer to the fact that most of the researches remain oriented by certain western notions, and Raul

Hernando Osório Vargas (“Research: comprehension of the theory of journalism”, 2013) somehow addresses this inquiry when he displays the pioneering spirit of journalism in Latin America, which remains unknown for most part of the investigators of its own continent. Osório Vargas clearly draws attention to the need to study the reality of Indo-Afro-Ibero-America and for the creation of research schedules about Latin America. Miquel Rodrigo Alsina – “The Sociosemiotics as a journalistic investigating method”, 2008) also has an epistemological concern when pointing out paradigms and working on complementary disciplinary fields. The text characterizes Sociosemiotics as a perspective that allows the work on the journalistic discourse and develops the concepts of polysemy, intertextuality and interaction. This set of texts helps to think on journalism under an epistemic, taking the field itself as an object and discussing the researching subject and their choices.

The second reading journey that we suggest relates to the **role of journalism in democracy**. Barbie Zelizer inquires about the purpose of journalism and who can speak about their singularities, bringing forth one of the main disputes that take place around this field: the authority of speech and of definition. James Curran (“Reinterpretation of democratic roles in the media”, 2007) proposes the revision of the traditional theory of the democratic function of media, tightening the classical conception of the public sphere. The article is productive for us to think about the constitution of contemporary networked journalism, the role of reference journalism and the diversity of journalistic sectors and styles that can offer different contributions to democracy. Also, his broadened vision of politics, which reserves an important place for entertainment in the consolidation of democratic values is worthy of attention. Curran debates the functions of journalism and, of course, when pointing out that reference media should display diverging points of view and interests, as the conflict is constitutive of the society. This pluralism is in the center of Claudia Lago’s text (“Anthropological teachings”, 2010), and is from this duty that the author points the responsibility of journalism in democracy. The relation of anthropology can help to viabilize the look of the journalist about the conflicts and differences, acting for the consolidation of democracy. Both journalism and anthropology build narratives about the Other, work on subjects and the discourses produced by these subjects, demand observation and

presuppose plurality.

A third reading axis arises from the reflection on **time experience**. Carlos Franciscato (“Journalism and the reformulation of time experience in western societies”, 2005) supports the prerogative of journalism producing a specific kind of present time experience. His text institutes the temporality as a concept central to journalism, highlighting its power of weaving shared meanings. The existence of the journalism’s own temporality is inscribed in conceptual categories as the instantaneity, the simultaneity, the periodicity, the novelty and the public revelation. All these categories relate directly to the notion of currentness, which Muniz Sodré (“Journalism as research field”, 2010) puts at the center of research in journalism. For the author, the journalistic narrative of daily events can be comprehended as formulator of a “universal narrative of the ‘current’ in our civilization”. This present time experience mediated by journalism is also discussed by Axel Bruns (“Gatekeeping, Gatewatching, real time feedback: New challenges for journalism”, 2011), which discusses the flows of circulation of information in digital social networks. The real time production information for inter-agents (journalists or readers) who live experiences of collective interest and narrate their unfoldings in a fragmentary and, not seldom, collaborative way, in their own accord, for the elaboration of narratives about the present. Time experience and its perception are theoretical objects of incontrovertible relevance in the investigation of journalism.

One of the most important research fronts is expressed in a set of texts about **the construction of the Other in journalism**. Claudia Lago highlights the construction of othering as a function of journalism. Seeking an interface with anthropology, a science founded on the acknowledgement of the Other, the author supports the need of the journalist to let be affected by the subjects whom they narrate. Lago’s article displays an issue to be faced: the journalist, usually graduated alongside the middle and high layers of population, carries his/her class *habitus*, and this base needs to be constantly tightened so he can effectively comprehend a reality that is not his “own”. Stuart Allan’s text (“Journalism and the culture of othering”, 2010) dialogues directly with this preoccupation. The author discusses the journalists’ perceptions about professional identity, showing the dominance of white men in editorial staffs and leading positions, and highlights the need of a diversity of gender

and ethnicity in editorial staffs for the journalistic production to really become plural. Marie-Soleil Frère (“Journalistic identity and audience perceptions: paradigm and models under construction in the African Great Lakes region”, 2014) shows how the act of giving voice to diverging groups is acknowledged by the audience as a crucial value for journalism. Her text brings results of a research carried out in three African countries whose democracies are under a process of consolidation and the journalists who are considered courageous are exactly those who see othering and plurality. In the context of narrative, Fernando Resende (“Representation of difference in the journalistic discourse”, 2009) touches on the representation of the Other, highlighting that the differences can be built by journalism from the ways of saying. Of the greatest challenge in the field is precisely to represent the Other in its diversity, remembering that the journalistic discourse should foster the correlation of social forces with their asymmetries and fragmentations.

The last journey we suggest highlights **the reader and the audiences** as relevant phenomena for the research. This is the reflection proposed by Miquel Rodrigo Alsina, by highlighting the necessity for the investigations to go beyond the textual analysis, pursuing dense comprehensions about biography and the reader’s social environment. For the author, it is relevant that researchers invest on audience studies that allow the empirical acknowledgement of the real reader. This is the effort of Marie-Soleil Frère by systematizing research with listeners from three African countries (Burundi, Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo) about how the mutations of journalism have transformed the audience perception about the role of the journalist in society. The relevance of audience as a research object is also pointed out by Muniz Sodré, by suggesting that technological transformations establish a new flow that repositions the reader in relation to journalism. In the context of these transformations in the hierarchies of journalistic production, Sylvia Moretzsohn (“The ‘citizen journalism’ and the myth of the redeeming technology”, 2006) instills the debate about the concept of citizen journalism and the repercussions of the activities of readers in journalism deontology. The author highlights the mediating function of journalism and the ethical and technical limits of the reproduction of news by subjects that had so far been only under the conditions of readers. Moretzsohn’s text, although partly illustrated by cases and

bonds that have been taken out of circulation, keeps its conceptual currentness and deals with an issue of great pertinence. The responsibility about the ascertainment and disclosure of journalistic information. Finally, for Axel Bruns, readers' activities take on another role, relevant for the researches on journalism when we consider the circulation of news on websites and social networks - the curatorship as a strategy of organization of information flows. Based on the concept of *gatewatching*, the author says that in interconnected digital environments, more than mediator, journalism operates the role of mentor, suggesting readings and contextualizing events that are in circulation even without the mediation of journalism.

These were the texts we have selected among those published throughout the ten years of the journal. It was no easy choice, in view of the proposal of the edition and the range of qualified articles, but we hope we have fulfilled the task at the level of what BJR and SBPJor mean. When the SBPJor (Brazilian Association of Journalism Researchers) created the *Brazilian Journalism Research*, they established a scientific policy of incentive to the intellectual debate and internationalization, because they understood the greatness of the field. We hope we have honored this commitment.

Following the beauty of Calvino, we wish you all good readings, re-readings and excavations. And long live BJR!

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