

MAXWELL MCCOMBS AND MIQUEL RODRIGO ALSINA: The influence of theirs studies in Brazil

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TWO PROFESSORS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF JOURNALISM RESEARCH are the highlights of this edition of *Brazilian Journalism Research* – BJR: Maxwell McCombs and Miquel Rodrigo Alsina. Both of them participated in the VI Encounter of *Brazilian Journalism Researchers* at the Federal University of Sergipe – UFS, in Aracaju, Brazil, covering two important topics: agenda-setting examined in the era of the Internet and socio-semiotics applied to journalism studies.

McCombs, who is currently a member of the faculty at the University of Texas, called attention to the transformations of journalism with the arrival of the Internet. From his point of view, the worldwide computer network provides many opportunities for construction of a journalism which is much more profound and closer to the public. He also maintains that the readers want quality content. Because they do not find it in print journalism, they are ceasing to read newspapers. On the Internet, they are not seeking cutting edge technology. They want content, always. Based on the *Long tail* Theory of Chris Anderson, McCombs outlines some possibilities for online journalism attracting the public more with segmented offers. Internationally renowned for his theory of agenda-setting applied to the mass communication media, McCombs has exercised a great influence on Brazilian journalism studies.

Professor McCombs had never been in Brazil before. Among the researchers present at the event of the *Brazilian Association of Journalism Researchers - SBPJor*, he commented that he would always maintain good recollections of the country, which he liked very much. In this edition, BJR brings together three researchers from two extremes of the country in order to draw the profile of Maxwell McCombs. José Afonso Junior,

a professor of the Federal University of Pernambuco – UFPE, was the coordinator of this work which included the participation of Pedro Paulo Procópio, Master of Communication from the UFPE, and Ana Paula da Rosa, a doctorate student in communication at Unisinos, in the State of Rio Grande do Sul. By means of an interview with McCombs which took place in Recife, of many other exchanges of e-mails with the researcher and of an extensive review of his work, the three present the evolution of the theory of agenda-setting after 35 years of its existence.

Miquel Rodrigo Alsina, currently at the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona, Spain, is the other researcher highlighted in this edition. The author of various books on journalism, such as *La construcción de la noticia* (The Construction of the News) (1996), *La comunicación intercultural* (Intercultural Communication) (1999), *Identitats i comunicació intercultural* (Identities and Intercultural Communication) (2000) and *Teorías de la comunicación: ámbitos, métodos y perspectivas* (Theories of Communication: areas, methods and prospects) (2001), Rodrigo Alsina is one of the international researchers who are most mentioned in *Brazilian Journalism Research*. In his article, he discusses the use of socio-semiotics as a journalism research methodology.

BJR also invited two researchers, members of the SBPJor, a Portuguese and a Brazilian, to present the profile of this Catalan theoretician. João Carlos Correia, a professor of the Beira do Interior University in Covilhã, Portugal, is in his sabbatical year at the Pompeu Fabra University and his coordinator is Miquel Rodrigo Alsina. He and Adriana Santana, a doctorate student in Communication at the Federal University of Pernambuco in Brazil, revisited Rodrigo Alsina's work and discuss his influence on Brazilian and Portuguese studies.

In the articles section, three deal with online journalism. Thais Mendonça Jorge, from the University of Brasília (UNB), shows which are the news values for two important journalistic sites: Uol (Brazil) and Clarin (Argentina). For the performance of this empirical research, Mendonça Jorge emphasizes the main points of studies on the subject. The new relation between the public and the communication media has also been responsible for changes in news values, as the UNB professor points out in her article. Leila Nogueira, who received the Adelmo Genro Award in 2006 for the best master's dissertation, given by the SBPJor, observes the audiovisual productions of Brazilian webjournalism. By means of case studies, Nogueira analyzes two pioneer online television channels in the country: *TV UOL* and *TV UERJ Online*. With the focus on narrative construction, the researcher provides a review of theoreticians

concerned with this subject, such as Lev Manovich, Vicente Gosciola and Mariano Cebrian Herreros. And she also emphasizes the fact that current audiovisual productions maintain characteristics of conventional television. Walter Teixeira Lima Junior, a professor in the Master of Communication Program at Casper Líbero, in Brazil, offers an essay regarding the use of data-mining in journalism as a technique which contributes to the elimination of distortions and vices.

Communication and information technologies have altered journalists' production processes and consequently the ways of telling a story. Mônica Martinez indicates some problems caused by the instantaneousness of the news and argues that the techniques employed in order to deliver the news rapidly are not of any use, for example, in the production of a profile in greater depth. In this case, it is better to make use of *Literary Journalism*. In the article by Martinez, the works developed by journalists Joseph Mitchel and José Hamilton Ribeiro are presented as a method for analyzing and comprehending a complex "reality".

On the other hand, Valentina Marinescu compares how newspapers in Romania and in Canada handle acts of violence against women. The coverage of the media, according to Marinescu's research, is related to the peculiarities of each society. And the last article deals with the press in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Letícia Cantarela Matheus analyzes the narratives of the special editions which marked the two hundred year anniversary of the press in Brazil.

In this edition, we could not fail to recognize the work developed by Professor Luiz Gonzaga Motta, who was executive editor of BJR since its launching. After BJR's consolidation in the academic world, Motta decided that it was time to make room for new editors, members of the SBPJor. We took upon ourselves then the editing of the magazine, certain that it would be a great challenge. Nevertheless, it will not be a solitary challenge. We shall integrate our efforts with those of researchers from various parts of the world who submit works to BJR or take part in its production process. Iluska Coutinho is the most recent Book Review Editor, together with Sonia Virginia Moreira Leite. Two new names participate in the editorial board: Kevin G. Barnhurst, from the University of Illinois, and Ramón Salaverria, from the University of Navarre. We are also grateful for the support of the president of the SBPJor, Carlos Eduardo Franciscato, who also sees in BJR a way of disseminating *Brazilian Journalism Research* in various parts of the world.