

BOOK REVIEW

Jornalismo comunitário em cidades do interior

BEATRIZ DORNELES

Porto Alegre : Ed. Sagra Luzzato, 2004, 164 pgs.

REVIEWED BY **Alfredo Vizeu**

At a time when Globalization pervades all relations in society, the book *Jornalismo Comunitário em Cidades do Interior* (Community journalism in inland towns) shows the importance of *local journalism* as an expression of the community. It is a very relevant piece not only to Mass Communication professors and students, but also to the public in general. The author demonstrates and analyzes the developments of the inland press in the state of Rio Grande do Sul through very detailed and thorough research.

This research also deals with the influence of journalism on the system of relations, behavior expectations, attitudes and customs of the participants in the community, that is, the impact of this kind of journalism on the values and the cultural system of the community. Inland press seeks to understand and show with regularity the peculiar conditions and evolution of their communities in order to help it play its role effectively. Themes like the origin of families, the role of parenthood in the community, neighborhood relations, birth rates, among others, are part of the daily news in these papers.

The concept of community in inland press does not seem to be that found in dictionaries and traditional bibliography in our field. This study reveals itself, then, as an invitation to rethink the concept through the realms of journalistic practices in the countryside of Rio Grande do Sul. As the author observes, to the owners of newspapers the concept of inland press is often mingled with that of community journalism. The data presented in the investigation confirm this posture. About 65.5% of the readers are subscribers of local papers to read about what happens in town. In this sense, it is possible to identify community aspects in them.

To perform her research, Dornelles used representative samples of the inland press in Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost state in Brazil. Among the criteria adopted, there was a concern of including one periodical from each of one of the state 'mega-regions' as classified by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE).

Other two criteria were to guarantee the inclusion of papers with different periodicities (daily papers, weekly papers) and different circulations – large (forty thousand per issue), medium (between sixteen thousand e twenty-five thousand per issue) and small (between two thousand and five thousand per issue). In addition, the investigation showed the journalistic nature of the periodicals (genres, themes and morphology), its business stature (management, sales and edition), and the readers' opinions on the diverse aspects of the inland press. The author also conducted interviews and administered questionnaires to the papers' owners, journalists and the public.

This mapping of Rio Grande do Sul's inland press is an excellent contribution to new studies in the field of journalism, an important reference for those interested in knowing more about the journalism practiced in Brazil's countryside and its influence on the consolidation of community bonds and the strengthening of citizenship.

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