

EDITORIAL

JOURNALISM RESEARCH: FOCUS AND PLURALISM

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Brazil is definitely entering the international journalism research academic environment. There are many concrete signs indicating the entry of Brazilian journalism research into the world circuit. The most evident is the holding of the "Brazil Conference" in Porto Alegre in November 2006. The meeting is co-sponsored by the Brazilian Association of Journalism Researchers (SBPJor) and the Journalism Studies Interest Group at the International Communication Association. Many of the world's most famous journalism researchers will be delivering lectures in the Porto Alegre meeting, including Barbie Zelizer, Kaarle Nordestreng, Daniel Hallin, Thomas Hanitsch, Dennis Ruellan, as well as many Brazilian journalism researchers.

This issue of *Brazilian Journalism Research (BJR)* is also a significant indication of the presence of Brazilian journalism research in the international academic circuit. *BJR* is consolidating its position among the international academic journals in the field of journalism and mass communication research. For the first time *BJR* is publishing three articles from foreigner researchers in its "Dossier" section which offer an up-to-date evaluation of journalism research in different countries of the world. One of these articles discusses journalism research in Germany and another one presents an overview of research in Spain. A third article in this section discusses journalism research in general. The varied articles that follow are all from Brazilian journalism researchers.

All this reveals the vitality of journalism as a professional activity in Brazil and all over the world. One single data item illustrates this vitality: in the last few years the number of 24-hour television channels entirely devoted to new stories has more than doubled. They are now seventy 24-hour news channels in the world, including two in Brazil. This professional vitality has been coupled with the expansion of journalism schools. In Brazil they have surpassed a total of 600 schools all over the country. Although some of them are not technically equipped nor offer minimum quality requirements, this significant total number reveals the vigor of journalism as an academic discipline in the country. The doctoral programs in mass communication in Brazil have recently exceeded 12 academic courses in which 325 researchers have been working full time. There are presently 67 journalism research groups registered at the Brazilian National Technical and Scientific Development Council (CNPq).

These astonishing numbers indicate that journalism research has surpassed both the first phase (the individual studies of the 1960's and 70's) and the second phase (studies included in specific sociological areas such as functionalism, structuralism, Marxism and cultural studies, among others). The area is now entering what researchers have classified as a phase in which the focus is specifically on journalism and generates specific journalism theories, although with varied points of view. This results in more elegant journalism theories and more specific research methodologies.

There is still a long way to go before journalism research completes its childhood. In Brazil particularly there are many problems researchers should face seriously in the next few years in order to make the country more respected and recognized in the international research community, as recommended by Marcia B. Machado. Firstly, there is a great necessity for better quality research, abandoning the essay tradition and going more deeply into empirical research projects. Secondly, there is a strong need for uniform research designs which are still extremely generic. Thirdly, there is an urgent need to develop specific research methods and techniques. Research should be systematized into comprehensive state-of-the-art efforts. Finally, we have to institutionalize research projects and groups and make them more visible, both internally in our own country and abroad.

Brazilian Journalism Research is proud of being a common vehicle for visibility and interchange of journalism research projects and findings. In its third edition, the journal continues to be both a channel for exposition of Brazilian research internally and abroad as well as an opportunity for globalizing journalism research and methods. We believe that research results and methods should be more internationally publicized and criticized in order to build a democratic global academic community. Our efforts will always be in that direction.

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BJR Executive Editor

