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Call for papers

*Training for Journalisms:
Current Challenges, Innovations, and Reinventions in Contexts*

Deadline: April 15th, 2025

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This special issue explores academic training of journalists in contexts of social, political, economic, technological, and cultural change (Pavlik et al., 2020). Prioritizing international and critical perspectives of journalism studies, it aims to analyze the role of education and training in the structuration of pluralistic journalism models as well as in representations and professional practices.

In the research literature, numerous works have revealed the crises of western journalism and the implications of taking it as an ideal model, in particular its narrow link with democracy – a perspective sometimes considered to be conceptually reductionist (Zelizer, 2013). Others emphasize the urgency of deeply rethinking definitions, norms, and values historically associated with journalistic activity insofar as their concrete translations reveal a complexity and diversity that belies their widespread universal conceptions, even amidst transnational models (Le Cam & Pereira, 2022). These concerns need to serve as a context for thinking about journalistic training. Thus, some works insist on the obligation to de-Westernize journalism studies, advocating decolonial and postcolonial readings capable of accounting for the plurality of existing journalisms (Hanitzsch *et al.*, 2019; Mutsvauro *et al.*, 2023).

In addition, some critiques are taking place through feminist, antiracist, and ethnic struggles, which since the end of the 1970s have never ceased to rekindle debate about the capacity of journalists to report the world accurately. Duly recording the effects of domination that journalism can produce and convey in its processes of newsmaking, certain authors call for adopting more inclusive theoretical and practical models (Zelizer, 2017; Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2021; Glück, 2018; Mohammed, 2021), and invite us to rethink key aspects of journalistic work such as relationship to sources, professional norms, and knowing one's audience (Zelizer, Boczkowski & Anderson, 2021).

The academic literature on journalistic training is itself contentious. Certain authors insist on the importance of professionalization (Donbash, 2014), as well as on the necessity of training students capable of adapting to technological innovations and transformations of the job market. In the United States, for example, this manifests itself in the “teaching hospital” model (Creech & Mendelson, 2015), which links theory and practice, and by the development of “entrepreneurial journalism” (Mensing & Ryle, 2013). Others call for a more radical approach to training, aiming to reform journalistic practice (Anderson, 2014; Solkin, 2022) and exploring opportunities offered by

alternatives to dominant Western methodological, theoretical, and epistemological perspectives (Mutsvairo *et al.*, 2023).

This issue aims to examine the adaptations and transformations, from the perspective of training but also of students, confronted with the questioning, at once Western and non-Western, of the hegemonic model of journalism. The international comparative approach here has a double objective. On the one hand, it aims to reveal cultural and historical aspects of national journalistic models, thus contributing to the comparative journalism literature (Mellado, 2021; Hanitzsch *et al.*, 2019; Mutsvairo, Bebawi & Borges-Rey, 2023; Solkin, 2022). On the other hand, it invites authors to propose retheorizations around journalism training, further putting in perspective different approaches to journalistic training as well as the different visions of the profession that are favored in different countries.

Contributions may focus on training in journalism in one country or may compare it between different national situations. They should be within the scope of at least one of the three axes below, which are provided as a guide.

Axis 1: Which normative vision of journalism?

Proposals for this axis examine the normative visions of journalism represented by training. The profession of journalism, while difficult to define, is often described as having “blurred boundaries” (Ruellan, 1992), in perpetual crisis, marked by a professional ideology of self-legitimation (Deuze, 2004). Despite these uncertainties, professional training must engage with roles of journalism to avoid unthinking reproduction of existing practices or adaptation to new technologies and policies. Often out of sync with professional practice (Mellado, 2021), expectations of future journalists are themselves geographically situated and subject to change. The proposals for this axis will examine how to redefine journalistic roles regarding counter-hegemonic roles, yet without defending a singular model, which tends to favor dominant points of view (Banda, 2007). They could equally study the fundamental principles capable of guiding international journalistic training without extending residual colonial power relations and the hypotheses according to which traditional models of Western journalism (and politics) are intrinsically the norm to which everyone should aspire (Aujla-Sidhu, 2022; Zelizer, Boczkowski & Anderson, 2021; Glück, 2018; Garissi & Kuang, 2022). Particularly welcome are contributions examining the nature and place of professional roles in the assimilation and concrete student learning of these norms and in their application in the job market.

Axis 2: Rethinking professional practices of journalism

This axis invites contributors to examine the ways in which journalistic training inculcates professional norms to future journalists. In liberal democracies, for example, objectivity and neutrality constitute dominant values (Le Bohec, 2000; Schudson, 2001) but often lead to assuming a detached hegemonic point of view (Gans, 1979). In these countries, that issue has been revived after events such as the murder of George Floyd (Schmidt, 2024), nationalist rallies (Perreault, Brett & Klein, 2020), and the resurgence of far-right populism (Pickard, 2018; Brown & Mondon, 2021). Moreover, the systematic recourse to institutional sources raises questions about the absence of pluralism and their consideration as “neutral” speech (Hall *et al.*, 1978). These issues take on other significations within authoritarian regimes, where journalistic ethics and professional practices are forged around constraining systems of values that reinvent rules of journalism and affect the profession’s educational context (Garrisi & Huang, 2022).

The proposals submitted to this axis might explore how training adapts to professional norms confronted by conflictual dynamics of public space, especially regarding objectivity and journalistic ethics, perhaps entailing a major reimagining of those very norms. Others might interrogate the place of media partnerships in the training programs, as well as the ways in which the latter integrate critical analysis of journalism into their curriculum. Contributions might also explore the way programs meet challenges and seize them as opportunities for teaching journalism in constraining contexts.

Axis 3: Toward new pedagogical approaches?

Journalism education is influenced by specific socio-economic and cultural factors that structure the profession in each country. The public or private nature of institutions, educators' profiles, and links with the press shape the students' socialization. Contributions around this axis will examine these issues and the ways in which programs match their curricula and readings with their more diverse student profiles. Certain studies call for enriching programs to be sensitive to systemic inequalities (Gurvinder, 2022). Others advocate deeper reforms of methods for teaching journalism, underlining the importance of de-Westernizing the learning process (Mutsvauro *et al.*, 2023) and integrating feminist and intersectionalist perspectives (Steiner, 2018; Rodney-Gumede *et al.*, 2022; Rodriguez, 2022). In addition to recognizing the diversity of possible "journalisms," these initiatives participate in a larger movement aiming to reconnect the teaching of journalism with the human and social sciences, presenting it as a "toolbox" (Hermann, 2015). The proposals at this axis will be able to approach innovative pedagogical projects, feedback on journalism teaching experiences or on studies of training curricula. The contributions bearing on renewal of students' professional expectations as well as their ideals of journalism are equally appreciated.

The deadline for submitting complete manuscripts (5,000-8,000 words maximum, including footnotes and bibliographical references) directly on the journal's website is **April 15th, 2025**: <https://revue.surlejournalisme.com/slj/about/submissions>. You will likewise find there details regarding editorial style.

Manuscripts can be written in English, French, Portuguese, or Spanish. The articles will undergo double-blind review.

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