

About Journalism – Sur le journalisme – Sobre jornalismo
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Call for papers

Journalism, Dangers and Risks

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Decision on the selected abstracts: **15 January 2016**

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Many studies on journalism, or "news" (Charron and Bonville, 2004), focus on a single legal-cultural aspect of journalistic practice: the citizen's freedom of expression and opinion.

This issue focuses on journalism as an extension of the right to report news freely, implying not only the freedom to inform, but also the freedom to seek information in a systematic manner and make a professional activity out of it. Reporting as a professional practice has always entailed risks, and yet today seems fraught with new dangers.

These dangers reflect the concerns that are emerging about the democratic state itself, and the reality of freedom of expression and freedom of the press in particular. The assumption that democracy is growing steadily worldwide, and improving in quality within each liberal democratic state, is contradicted by the facts. The issues facing media and news is an indicator in itself.

Three features of the contemporary world raise relevant, if not urgent, questions related to the relationship between journalism, dangers and risks.

The most visible is the state's decline, made apparent by its inability (and the masking of this impotence) to intervene in many transnational activities that render daily life highly unstable: capital volatility leading to sudden closures or relocations of sources of employment and disastrous inventory shortages; criminal international trade in arms, prostitution, organs and

children; and the proliferation of low-intensity conflicts between states and civil wars. This unstable environment increases, stimulates or causes in many parts of the world, socio-political environments replete with corruption, illegal and immoral trafficking, impunity of violence, and physical insecurity for all – not the least for the journalists who report on these issues.

A second feature is the global reorganization of labour (including in the media houses) in a transnational economy that imposes both regional specialization and corporate labour management practices also characterized by instability: outsourcing, temporary contracts, part-time employment and piecework. Journalism also becomes a theatre of freelancers, autonomous or entrepreneurial, but still less protected, plunged into insecurity and professional isolation (as theorized by Ulrich Beck, 2001 and Anthony Giddens, 1991).

A third is the expansion of surveillance of individual's activities beyond traditional information and intelligence gathering through the deployment of digital monitoring and profiling systems whose observation loci are occupied, not only by states, but also by private mega-corporations. This produces public and private "sources" armed with more and more information about journalists themselves, and the increased likelihood that this information be used to pressure them more or less openly, or punish them.

This new context calls for an examination of journalism from new perspectives. We suggest three:

1) What counter-strategies is journalism deploying or developing to compensate for the decline (and corruption) of states challenged by the international banditry and armed conflicts sprouting up everywhere? For example, do journalists create alliances with other actors, themselves confronted with these problems, to enable them to report without undue risk?

2) What strategies are being implemented to alleviate the precariousness of the journalist in an organization of labour which transfers on him or her alone the management and the consequences of business risks, trials, errors and failures, as well as professional future and security?

3) What use do journalists make of the electronic monitoring means at their disposal: drones, GPS, databases, etc? And how do they defend against the use of such tools against them? For example, how do they negotiate with institutional sources (governments and organizations) which manage the communication of risk in order to prevent/manage events by neutralizing the effects of critical journalism?

Proposals may provide full or partial answers to any of these questions. Case studies are welcome. Studies of what journalists wish for, believe, relate and dream about any of these topics could be relevant. Reminders of procedures and practices journalists developed in the past to "deal with" certain risks and dangers may be illuminating. Treatises addressing the relevancy of any of these issues in a country or in a geographic area are perfectly suited.

Bibliography:

- BECK, Ulric (2001). *La société du risque. Sur la voie d'une autre modernité*. Paris, Éditions Aubier.
- CHARRON, Jean et DE BONVILLE, Jean (1996). "Le paradigme du journalisme de communication: essai de définition." *Communication*. Vol. 17, no 2. P. 51-97.

GIDDENS, Anthony (1991). *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Stanford University Press.

Manuscripts may be written in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese.

Please **let us know of your interest** in this special issue by sending a **two-page (maximum) abstract** of your proposed manuscript **before 30 November 2015** to the coordinators:
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We will inform the authors of our decision on **15 January 2016**.

The deadline for submitting the final manuscripts (30 to 50,000 characters, including notes and bibliography) is **15 April 2016**.

Double-blind evaluation. All manuscripts must include a theoretical framework, a research method and empirical analysis.

About Journalism – Sur le journalisme – Sobre jornalismo...

... is a space where historically shaped intellectual traditions and interests in journalism studies meet. The field of journalism studies has developed with different epistemologies, approaches and methods that inform national research traditions. The journal fosters the encounter of these divergent approaches via an international editorial board and active solicitation of submissions from international scholars. In a context of globalization and relative homogenization of media systems and journalistic practices, the journal also focuses on the similarities and differences between journalistic and scholarly cultures.

The journal is dedicated to research. A committee of four editors responsible for facilitating exchanges works with editorial boards that include scholars from Europe, Latin America, and North America. The members of the editorial boards are figures widely known for the quality of their research and the international and intercultural orientation of their approaches to journalism studies.

The journal is a springboard for the publication of innovative works in transdisciplinary perspectives; it publishes the research not only of established scholars but also of students. Published online and on paper, the journal's issues are organized around precise themes. Results of graduate theses, field and research notes, and scholarly reports may also be included in any given issue.

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