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Call for Papers
Scientific engagement and reflexivity
of journalism researchers

Articles must be submitted by: February 1st, 2024

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This edition of the journal is a continuation of the ["Fights of Journalism" conference held in Bordeaux, in December 2022](#), as part of the International Conference of Research in Journalism. This edition focuses more on the round of studies on the “struggles of journalism researchers”, held after the day which presented journalism as a “struggling profession”.

This call for papers particularly focuses on the engagement of researchers who work with journalistic objects and fields of study, inviting them to question norms, practices and research methods implemented in their studies either supported by or confronted with their engaged positions. In addition to the general issues of the place of social sciences in society or the political role and social responsibility of researchers, the objective is to bring to light and question the engagement of researchers in journalism. This will allow case studies to focus on different specific and circumstantial characteristics that characterize journalism researchers and their engagements. Several factors such as the research trajectory, personal experience, and construction of the journalistic empirical object can be considered, as well as the choice of approach and research theme, or even the adoption of an activist position, the management of the political challenges of the theme of study, or its possible politicization.

We encourage participants to reflect on their position as a researcher (whether academic, specialist, engaged, activist, neutral observer, or involved observer) and to explore the forms and methods of reflection regarding their engagement with research and their journalistic object. The tools of the social sciences can be both resources and instruments for building and understanding the object of study, and the engagement of researchers can be seen as an advantage (it allows them to get as close as possible to the social world they are studying) or a disadvantage to the research (the person must be able to distance themselves from reality).

Several theories and works can be used to question the researchers' positions, such as: epistemology from the point of view or situated knowledge by Harding (1992) and Haraway (2007); feminist epistemologies and research subjectivity, with a particular focus on the work of Flores Espinola (2012) or Steiner (2021); the constructivist approach, with the classic works of Bourdieu (1987), including Neveu (2003), Delforce (2004) and Frère and Jacquemain (2008); or the engagement in social sciences, more specifically in journalism, with works from Stengers and Schlanger (1989), and the links between journalism and social sciences (Bastin, 2016). For example, the objectifying dimension of the interactionist concept of career will allow us to implement the tricks of the trade as a practice of revelation (Becker, 2002), and to focus on the successive positions occupied within a world in a dynamic and procedural perspective.

This call for papers is open to researchers, whatever phase or stage of research they may be at (emerging, intermediate, consolidated), who wish to problematize the relationship between engagement (or even activism) and research on journalism and put their work in perspective from the point of view of reflexivity and commitment. This debate raises the fundamental issue of potential cooperation, limitations, or tensions between journalism researchers and journalists in terms of shared or unshared engagements and struggles. How do both groups engage in a common cause (for example, academic research on news coverage of a social mobilization) while also developing borders that build distinct legitimacies? Conversely, how do they manage antagonistic commitments? The three lines proposed below are based on these transversal issues, directed by specific guidelines.

Double Position?

In order to analyze the specificities of researchers in journalism, the following paths can be explored: competition between the discourses of researchers and journalism professionals, notably on issues of reflexivity; the norms of researchers arising from previous professional experiences (in journalism or otherwise); activism and the engagement of journalism researchers in the public and media and, on a broader scope, the place of journalism researchers in society; the working conditions of journalism researchers and their place in scientific research (their age, their *status*, etc.)

Process, evolution, stages of scientific work, research paths

We think of the researchers' engagement as a dynamic, constantly evolving process, and we invite participants for this call to question their positions during the different stages of research: building the object of study; choice, access and relationship with the field; the methodological approach; the history and narrative of the research; mediation and mediatization of scientific production. The potential evolution of these positions can also be highlighted, as well as the interweaving or differentiation of the careers of activists and researchers.

Commitment structures and models

This issue will therefore be an opportunity to look at current engagements in different topics and streams of research: studies on innovations in digital journalism, studies on the discourses of the oppressed and on poverty framed by journalism, studies on participatory journalism and the public, feminist and intersectional approaches, framing of climate issues. It is also about addressing the

engagement models adopted by the researchers. In fact, we observe the legitimization of certain fields, objects and research methods that delimit the contours of what can or should be considered journalism, through movements of retraction or extension of the frontiers of journalism, particularly with regard to communication or activist practices.

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The deadline for submitting the full manuscripts (30 to 50,000 characters, including notes and bibliography) is February 1st, 2024 at slj@ulb.be or directly on the website <https://revue.surlejournalisme.com/slj/about/submissions>

Manuscripts may be written in English, French, Portuguese, or Spanish. Double-blind review. You can contact the editors in charge for any information request.

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