

# Journalism, activism and hacker sensitivity:<sup>1</sup>

## For a situated practice that dares to say the name

### Jornalismo, ativismo e sensibilidade hacker:

#### Por uma prática situada que ousa dizer o nome

**Fabiana Moraes**

*Professor and researcher at the Center for Design and Social Communication at the Federal University of Pernambuco - Academic Center of Agreste (UFPE / CAA)*

*Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Núcleo de Design e Comunicação Social, Nova Caruaru (PE), Brasil.*

#### Introduction

This article points to a practical and theoretical search that highlights the importance of journalism, which also values its subjective dimension. In it, an activist perspective in the production of information is not perceived as something less, something that blurs a framework, that devalues a glance: rather, we understand that activism is something pertinent to journalism, whether it is located in the literary, public, investigative or other fields (questionable “drawers” that, we will see, outline significant professional and content hierarchies). Moraes (2018) recently brought up the discussion about a subjectivity journalism made by a knowing subject (VEIGA, 2019) who does not neutralize herself/himself, who demonstrates her/his situated speech (HARAWAY, 2009). This journalism that does not deny its subjective dimension can promote the breakdown of representations, rethinks the (extremely excluding) news values and, finally, opens up to

---

<sup>1</sup> Text presented at the SBPJOR (Brazilian Association of Researchers of Journalism), 17th National Meeting of Researchers of Journalism, Federal University of Goiás (UFG), in November 2019. Here, it continues with modifications.

an activist practice, not understanding it as something only possible in a digital, “alternative” and “independent” environment, as was agreed to think. This activism, a delicate action, can also be located in the daily lives of major journalistic companies, in daily articles or great reports, in cultural or political editorials, within what Russell (2016) called a “hacker sensitivity”. We expand this idea here, which we will talk about shortly.

The mixture of activism and journalism has gained in recent years an enormous relevance in the national daily life after a series of reports made by the team of the journalistic website *The Intercept Brasil* (TIB). The articles in the so-called Vaza Jato are based on files handed anonymously and which highlight, among other topics, the legally questionable or not permitted relations between the Federal Public Ministry of Curitiba and the then judge Sérgio Moro in the case of Lava Jato<sup>2</sup>. First, it is important to say that the topic of activism/journalism is not new in academic discussions: analyzes focusing on digital and/or alternative environments (Antoun, 2008; Moraes, 2007; Prudêncio, 2011) or related to issues such as the press and feminism (Woitowicz, 2014) compose the abundant literature on the subject, not to mention the classic book by Kucinski (1991) about part of the Brazilian alternative press. There is also a good production that works with notions like “citizen journalism” (TARGINO, 2009) in which there are several elements related to journalistic activism. However, in the unprecedented Brazilian political context composed by an ultra-right executive government, a press partly guarantor of the latter and another constantly attacked (although it has contributed a lot to the rise of the former), “partial” or “activist” journalism has become a common debate among millions of people. In addition to the current topic, there is another issue that mobilizes this writing: to think about activism in journalism dispersed in structures that include not only the digital or “alternative”, but also the press considered as hegemonic.

The general, common sense notion of journalism that needs to be neutral is in line with a fallacy that has been propagated for decades from the field itself. This was built as close as possible to a scientific rigour, to the verifiable (the facts, only the facts), to what can be proved (MEDINA, 2008; VEIGA, 2014), a way to

---

<sup>2</sup> Operation Lava Jato (car wash) began on March 17th, 2014 in Paraná. The corruption investigation unified four actions that investigated networks operated by black market money dealers who committed financial crimes with public resources. “The name Lava Jato was one of those initial fronts and made reference to a network of gas stations and car washes in Brasília, used to move illicit money from one of the organizations investigated initially” (<http://arte.Folha.uol.com.br/poder/operacao-lava-jato/#capitulo1>, accessed on July 23, 2019). The reports from *The Intercept*, published since June 9th, 2019 and which also show irregularities in the trial of former President Inácio Lula da Silva, were in their “part 11” at the time of writing this text, in July 2019. They can be read at <https://theintercept.com/series/mensagens-lava-jato/>. Accessed on May 25, 2020.

guarantee to the public that the passions of a journalism partisan, passionate, so much like that seen in 18th century Europe (THOMPSON, 2010) or in colonial Brazil (SODRÉ, 1998), was left behind with all its “contaminations” and lack of rigour. And it is not only the public still carries strongly the myth of the objective journalist: even experienced journalists, professionals with practice in coverages, a genre that commonly presents us with the limitations of the notions of purity, exemption and objectivity, also believe in distinction between activist journalism and exempt journalism, between a professional who is dominated by his/her passions and another who controls them and does not let them have repercussions in his/her work. As an illustration, here are four examples, all collected in June 2019 on the Twitter microblog, widely used by journalism professionals and, more than ever, by public figures of great political relevance.



**Images 1 and 2** – exchange of messages between journalists on Twitter. Images extracted by the author and translated from the originals.



**Images 3 and 4** - exchange of messages between journalists on Twitter. Images extracted by the author and translated from the originals.

The first two images were taken from the public accounts of journalists from Piauí magazine, while the third and fourth images show messages exchanged publicly between a reporter from *Correio Braziliense* and a journalist and researcher (identities were preserved). In the first posts, irrationality and activism are aligned as pairs: in the post that regrets the death of journalist Clóvis Rossi (June 14th, 2019), the background was the revelations about Lava Jato published in *The Intercept Brasil*. The second, a response to a discomfort from the first reporter (who had previously written “The question is: is it worth committing an immoral act - disclosing conversations obtained illegally by a hacker - to expose immoral acts by public people? That disturbs me as a journalist”), follows the same course and asks the key question that animates this text. In the last image (4), we have the suggestion, again, that there is an “ideological” as well as a “pure” journalism. The words used in all are revealing: ideological passion; irrationality; activism; ideology; common sense; truth. Some of the classic dichotomies of journalism studies are expressed, objectivity versus subjectivity, purity versus contamination.

Based on a reflective study of her own practices in newsrooms, Moraes (2015) spoke about what she calls subjectivity journalism, a term that does not deny journalistic objectivity, but that recognizes subjective aspects as necessary for a more upstanding and integral practice. Thus, subjectivity is seen as a fundamental gain in reports and even in everyday news. In it, elements that escape the “technical network” of this area of knowledge are considered and not denied. This network includes: 1. Adoption of the news-value criteria as relevant characters, prominence of facts, geographic location, all extremely hierarchical in telling us that some people and places deserve to be seen, others not; 2. the certainty in a single truth, presented by the fact, without taking into account that these are constructed; that is: the events are not seen as a symptom, and their reports do not seek the factors that cause the explosion; 3. guidelines based on unquestioned social phenomena or binarisms such as terrible or “funny” poverty; violent or victimized blackness; the fragile or warrior woman; etc.; 4. the belief that the journalist “gives a voice”, instead of being a channel to echo existing voices. Subjectivity journalism still seeks the non-exoticization of people and groups; the comprehension of a writing from a non-neutral place; to overcome the extraordinary element; for a production that first of all takes place by the similarities and the encounter, and not by the difference (the journalist as an index of the “normal” that reports the life of another “spectacular”).

It is necessary to underline that the subjectivity to which we refer in this journalism is linked to notably objective criteria, but which are so often misunderstood as such: the need to observe class, gender,

geographic, racial positions; the obligation to take into account the social structure surrounding the making of texts, images and other products; the crack of previously given representations (or facts previously given and not checked and investigated); a self-criticism of the field itself. Needless to say, the subjective dimension is also conducted alongside rigorous investigation, data analysis, bibliographic and field research, direct or indirect observation, etc.

### **Investigative journalism - exempt? - as maximum consecration**

The binary distinctions observed in journalistic production (which refer to a Cartesian logic of neutral / contaminated; objective / subjective; reason / emotion) were established not only in the general public and in newsrooms, but are taught and expanded in the academic sphere. In journalism / communication programs, there are courses focused, for example, on community journalism, popular journalism, independent journalism, public journalism, literary journalism. Certainly, there are issues, strategies and approaches that characterize the different ways of doing journalism - here, however, we want to draw attention to the fact that such nominations (community, independent, literary, etc.) deal with places where the existence of practices considered “activists” or “subjective” are to some extent allowed.

They are important journalisms, but they are not what is seen as significant, investigative journalism. Thus, the space is created for another way of doing journalism, another place, in which – now, yes – passions and “ideologies” must be set aside in order to produce this pure, free, neutral news / report. One can think: what would be the name of this “other” course, the objective, the untainted?

The fact is that business journalism, the one proper of the most established networks and conglomerates, contains, for the public and part of the journalists, a celebrated and fragile idea of universality, constituting itself as the norm. Everything that is not in this universal journalism would thus be a deviation, a situated abnormality (VEIGA, 2019) that is revealed in the question of a colleague from the Piauí magazine: “Is it journalism or is it activism?”. This issue has a strong relation, even, with the way in which *The Intercept Brasil* itself was treated by the press at the first moment of the leaks, when it preferred to call the vehicle simply “website” as a way to mark a distinction and a distance. This anachronistic perspective started to change from the moment the largest and already solid companies in the national culture, such as *Veja*, *Folha de S. Paulo* and *BandNews*, became associated to the TIB and started to

<https://doi.org/10.46391/ALCEU.v21.ed44.2021.244>

ALCEU (Rio de Janeiro, online), V. 21, Nº 44, p.115-131, mai./ago. 2021

disseminate the content of the messages from the application Telegram in partnership with the vehicle team. It is important to bring forward that this professional dispute reveals questions regarding investigative journalism itself, an indefinite term that, according to Melo (2015), also means professional success, with the very term “investigative” underpinning “imaginary of 'crusades', risks, meticulous work” (MELO, 2015, p. 145).

In her research, the author identifies at least three different uses of this journalistic specialty, which appears as a synonym for great reporting, or identified with police journalism or, more recently, related to the political scandal. Melo notes that the different appropriations reveal internal and external disputes in the journalistic field, something that is evident in the case of the TIB (and as we will see in Russell, later on).

It is also important to call attention to another issue that permeates the hierarchies present in “journalism” (literary, investigative, etc.): the distinction of guidelines and themes based on genre. This phenomenon was deeply addressed by Veiga (2014), who observed the daily lives of journalists in doing daily news and, there, she saw that “the agenda for men is one thing, for women, another” (VEIGA, 2014, p. 253).

Articles related to social dramas, the so-called 'softnews', jokes and humor in general were designed for female reporters, or for men who did not have a profile associated with attributes considered to be masculine (active, strong, autonomous, *investigative*) [...] In the news hierarchy, the main stories were the strong ones, related to the investigative, to risk, etc., that is, to “serious” subjects. And for this type of news, the proposed journalists were preferably male, and with certain gender characteristics consolidated and recognized by their peers (2014, p. 254, our emphasis).

As Veiga indicated, women (or men without the attributes socially perceived as masculine), in journalism (as well as in the social imaginary itself), will be more related to the emotional, the delicate, the ludic. The term “coldness”, by the way, is one of those raised by journalist Leandro Fortes in his book on investigative journalism, as pointed out by Melo (2015). It is clear that there are dozens of female journalists in Brazil recognized for their investigations, but here we call attention to both male prevalence in this practice as well as the themes acknowledged as “investigative” and “masculine” (politics, economics) to the detriment of others, “feminine” (culture, leisure, health) (VEIGA, 2014).

In this sense, and extending these distinctions-hierarchies a little further, there are also, both in academia and in newsrooms, different ways of dealing with the notion of what is political. In general, journalists (and the public) will not consider as such issues that do not circulate specifically in the editorials that cover political parties, institutional politics, matters relating to the capital Brasilia and to the

government headquarters, the halls of the judiciary, the legislative assemblies, city halls, etc. Distinctions that follow the tradition of dividing journalistic themes into areas/sessions such as: Culture, Sports, Beauty, Travel, Daily Life, Economy, etc. There is, of course, a hierarchy between such editorials, a hierarchy that also includes those who are reporters considered "investigative" and "others". At first, this division caused some kind of disregard in a huge number of subjects that are of the daily political order (in the limit, what would not be?), but that were agendas built as "social", "human rights", "ludic", of entertainment". Thus, investigative journalism that is understood as such is one that generally addresses institutional policy issues; that presents maximum objectivity; that interviews / investigates prominent names on the political agenda. Therefore, a more "masculine" journalism (VEIGA, 2014).

### **Activism and subjectivity**

The idea of an "exempt" journalism as opposed to journalism contaminated by activism is a fallacy that hides mainly the practices permeated by the interests of the former, which stands as a neutral, strong discourse in the journalism of large companies. Here the premise of objectivity is placed, as Christofolletti (2008) notes, "as a strategic ritual that preserves the professional from criticism of the quality of his work, from questions about its legitimacy, from accusations of partiality in a coverage" (CHRISTOFOLLETTI, 2008, p. 92). Thus, a notion was conceived that there is good journalism and an "engaged journalism", with the first occupying a higher hierarchical position, the second having to be disregarded. This is done by people who are too passionate about their causes, which leads them to not perform a good job – the emotion, understood as a feminine characteristic, again appearing as a weed in journalistic practice. However, a journalism that gathers information, good investigation, fair frameworks and urgent social issues (whether they are in institutional politics, in the rich penthouses by the sea, in the favelas, in the municipal schools, in the music listened by young people, etc.) is something to be avoided or chased?

The question of a lack of objectivity related to activist practices frequently arises among several of those professionals already established in the field, as Russell (2016) points out and as we saw in the criticisms of the experienced professionals of the Piauí magazine.

According to the author, critics of new forms of journalism easily appeal to "the notion of objectivity to argue that professionalism is being violated, pointing the finger at what they see as vague standards for

new actors in the field of journalism” (RUSSELL, 2016, p. 112). The author delved, among other examples, into movements such as Occupy NY and the reports published by Laura Poitras and Glenn Greenwald in the British newspaper *The Guardian* regarding the US National Security Agency (NSA) secret surveillance programs leaked by Edward Snowden (it is still a very interesting coincidence that the same journalist, Greenwald, is at the heart of the discussion about Brazilian journalistic practice a few years later). Russell (2016) realizes that, in spite of the disputes in the field - here, we call attention to think about salary losses, layoffs and other aspects that make this dispute more dramatic -, it is possible to detect a “hacker sensitivity” not only in journalists but also in an extensive layer of the networked population:

Although the hacktivist label is still reserved for an elite and technologically sophisticated brand of activism, the sensitivities of hacktivism<sup>3</sup> are much more common and significantly shape today's political and social action. When the public publishes a review or corrects a news story or circulates information - a photo, video, audio file, tweet, link - related to a news event, they are executed at a basic level with hacker sensitivity. When they provide comments that change the meaning of a piece, or add a soundtrack, or incorporate comments or alternative links to a file and send it to their own networks of people and not to traditional production and distribution channels, they are hackers. When activists remix political speeches or commercial content to criticize them, create a solution to communication barriers, or mask their location to protect themselves, they are acting based on the sensibilities of hacktivism (RUSSELL, 2016, p. 16-17)

She conceives this sensitivity as a set of values of a hacker ethic<sup>4</sup> and the norms and practices that this ethic feeds (2016, p.15). This sensitivity has an intense relationship with the collectivity, sharing and engagement, actions established in a network in favor of democratic movements. On the other hand, it is important to say that the word “hacker” itself carries a whole stigma (exposed also in the case of Vaza Jato): “the hacker practice, judged as piracy, is often marginalized or misunderstood in popular culture as a group sub-culturally separated or diametrically opposed to society in general” (DIAZ, 2017, p. 36).

<sup>3</sup> In the research “The role of WikiLeaks, hacktivist groups and the Cyberpunk Movement in reconfiguring investigative journalism”, Albuquerque (2016) informs the origin of the nomination: “Antônio (2013) and Knappenberger (2012) state that the term Hacktivism was launched by the Cult of Dead Cow group and it is a mix of 'hacker' with 'activism', being also considered a form of cyber activism. Hacktivists have and use technical knowledge to engage in hacking activities, such as hacking systems and capturing confidential information to act for a non-personal purpose” (ALBUQUERQUE, 2016, p. 16)

<sup>4</sup> “Hacker ethics is the term that describes the moral and philosophical values in the hacker community. The term 'Hacker-Ethics' was attributed to journalist Steven Levy as described in his book entitled 'Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution' (published in 1984) to which he reformulates some of the principles already described in other texts, as in 'Computer Lib/Dream Machines' by Theodor Nelson in 1974. The guidelines of this hacker ethic accompany the 'evolution' of computers to the personal devices we use and trust today, developing technologies that allow them to be improved, adapted or reused in other projects. The key point of this ethical aspect is the free access to information and the social production of free knowledge, due to a collaborative production of the shared code, social technology and open science” (DINIZ, 2017, p. 26)



Specifically in relation to journalists, Russell understands that, by problematizing journalism and democracy, by understanding them as spaces that require constant adjustments, the information professional, the news producer, start to work combining opportunities presented by the new expanded media environment with the journalistic practices already perpetrated. These traditional journalists are also activists in connecting with hacker journalists with the same motivations: search for a truth (something Russell could complexify in his work), in interpretations based on evidence. Everyone is determined to serve the interests of networked audiences (RUSSELL, 2016). The idea is best presented (in spite of a certain essentialism) in the synthesis sentence of journalist and lawyer Glenn Greenwald, one of the professionals studied in the researcher's book: "It is not a question of being an activist or a journalist, this is a false dichotomy. It is a matter of being honest or dishonest. Not every activist is a journalist, but every real journalist is an activist" (RUSSELL, 2016, p. 109).

Here we call attention to the need to expand the idea of a hacker sensitivity that may be, as we understand, beyond the use of technological supports. A possible activist practice even in newsrooms more oriented to conservatism; a way of doing politics within editorials that are not seen as places for this type of practice (sports, culture, tourism, etc.).

This path was taken by Moraes (2015) in a series of reports carried out for twenty years in a newsroom, works that brought themes such as racism, femicide, transphobia, machismo, classism. The author observed, in practice, that urgent and emerging issues could be managed from an activist perspective without prejudice to the so-called "good journalism" – in fact, in seeking to rethink the production of news and reports from around her, the journalist has already carried out a form of activism.

The choice of the mentioned themes was the result of reflection on the field itself. A strong issue was maintaining the violent forms of exposure of people and groups. What led colleagues - and the journalist herself - to carry out repetitive framing? Moreover, what paths could be taken to rethink such representations? Such reflections, aligned with basic journalism strategies, were the formula for exercising this engagement. Reports like *Ave Maria* (2013), about femicide seen from the murder of women baptized with the name of the mother of Christ, and *Almost white, almost black* (2011), about racism, were made from an intense investigation, reading of police reports, interviews, research in processes, videos. Such reports showed that it was also possible to carry out these efforts even within a large company (it is clear that there are different times and managements in these issues that prevent or encourage such practices.

Still, it is possible to find fissure strategies). The two supposedly antagonistic models - commercial journalism versus activist journalism - thus showed that they did not need to be disconnected. It is important to say that analyzing the own production should not sound like a self-reference here: theory cannot be separated from practice, and reflecting on action is vital to understand what journalism is being carried out. It is rather an ethical exercise, in which the journalist does not neutralize herself/himself, but thinks about the power and limits of her/his own production. The technique, after all, is performed, as Veiga (2019) recalls, by a knowing subject. We are all ideologically oriented.

This activist practice that, here, we understand as contaminated by a hacker sensitivity was observed in the work of several North American journalists by Boynton (2005), who named the production as of 2000 of North American nonfiction authors as *new new journalism*. The reference to the new journalism of Tom Wolfe, Gay Talese and others is explicit, but the difference between these and those is also clear and has to do with an engaged or not engaged form of news practice: in the book, Boynton brings historian Alan Trachtenberg's harsh speech about Wolfe, "who did not have a single activist bone in his body": "For Wolfe, what mattered was style, not politics; pleasure, not power; status, not class" (2005, p. 14). Speaking of the scribes from the turn of the century, Boynton says:

Society is a more complex phenomenon for these new journalists than it was for their immediate predecessors. They consider class and race, not status, the primary indexes of the social hierarchy. Ethnic and/or ideological subcultures ("incognito land", as Wolfe called them) - once perceived as bizarre tribes that were studied anthropologically - are now considered different in degree, not in kind, from the rest of the American culture (BOYNTON, 2005, p. 12)<sup>5</sup>.

In the subjectivity that understands the activist practice as pertinent to good journalism - the one that seeks to inform beyond the common sense - the picking of "one side" is not denied, as suggested by the post from the *Correio Braziliense* reporter. Furthermore, this notion distances us from the idea of an intersubjectivity in journalism, a path proposed by De Melo (2007): according to it, this journalism seeks to "not take sides", something that would hurt ethical technical conduct. The point is that "taking sides" is something that is in the DNA of journalism, and if that was ever declared (as, for example, in opinionated

---

<sup>5</sup> This consideration also links, as said, to one of the foundations of what we call subjectivity journalism: the common overcoming in the birth of anthropology itself, also in journalism, of seeing groups, people and cultures as "the other", the out of the ordinary, the extraordinary exotic. Such a framework has already supported small and racist representations, as, for example, National Geographic magazine recognized when analyzing its production over decades <https://www.nationalgeographicbrasil.com/cultura/2018/04/por-decadas-our-coverage-was-racist-to-overcome-our-past-we-have-to>. Accessed on July 24, 2019.

newspapers of the 19th century), it started to be covered precisely by the cloak of objectivity. Purity is a myth, as the artist Hélio Oiticica synthesized in the 1960s. This issue was already explored from the three necessary movements for journalism and caused by the assumed subjective dimension:

Since its birth, mass journalism has been permeated by economic interests, that is, exemption has never been a characteristic of this area of knowledge. Despite this, there is an insistence on making absurd separations between "pure" practices while others, by making clear the purposes of their productions, are less reliable. We could think just the opposite: preferentially believe in those who reveal themselves and look with serious restrictions on those who face common places like "I just reported the facts" to hide specific interests. An activist practice does not mean giving up vital tools and procedures (investigation, research, polyphonic production), but rather using them in approaches that, when well done, respect and enhance the most powerful aspects of journalism: illuminating what is under the shadows. It is vital to comprehend that the path of objectivity in journalism, in addition to technical procedures, must also be guided by the perception of sub representation, which affects different social groups, a sub representation, I repeat, also caused by journalism. In this context, accusing the presence and place from where the reporter speaks is also another subjective strategy assumed in this method, since it provides a better understanding of the own construction that journalism performs of its characters. Whoever is filtering that life for readers is not wiped out, on the contrary. It is not about emphasizing a testimony, but accusing a construction process (that is, one truth among many) (MORAES, 2018).

The reporter's creative capacity needs to be underlined, and each meeting, unique, produces what Medina (1986) calls creative social interaction; after all, dialogue takes place mainly at the level of sensitivity. As the Austrian scientist Heinz von Foerster brilliantly synthesized, objectivity is the illusion that observations can be made without an observer (CHRISTOFOLETTI, 2008). This subjective and activist path needs to be discussed, debated and densified, of course. However, in the face of a dismantling of credibility in a field that insists on not reflecting on itself, it is no longer possible to continue using anachronistic frames to account for a society that is also rethinking itself. There is something very wrong with a journalistic practice that does not absorb the movements around it in the name of an "exemption".

This practice, which favors declaratory journalism, is virtually based on "I just reported the facts" as if this reporting, without any filter, was also not a form of endorsement<sup>6</sup>. The question is to think, in order to conclude this article, on what objectivity, exemption and an alleged distancing from press activism has caused in the Brazilian democratic fabric. The paths of strong substance of authoritarian and anti-democratic that have marked the political and social life of Brazil in recent years have questioned, in a more explicit

---

<sup>6</sup> On September 4, 2018, the Brazilian press reported, in video, the then presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro saying, in a rally in Acre, that he would "gun down the PT party supporters" while holding a microphone stand imitating a gun. As well as Exame magazine, whose link is in this footer, a series of other vehicles published the same news, bringing the sentence as a title, without any analysis, in the name of the "exemption". In <https://exame.abril.com.br/brasil/amos-fuzilar-apetralhada-diz-bolsonaro-em-campanha-no-acre/>. Accessed on July 24, 2019.

manner, the journalistic exemption of the so-called major press. This is not exactly a new observation: research has been carried out for decades to investigate the ideological propensities of modern national journalism, which was born strongly under the sponsorship of private companies (SODRÉ, 1998). But there is undoubtedly a uniqueness in the present that is related to the spread of this discussion, a popularization of the role and discourse of the press among a non-academic population, which is good news. This phenomenon gained strength mainly from 2013, when millions of people took to the streets, in the protests known as June Journey. There, as well as in the impeachment of ex-president Dilma Rousseff (PT) and, mainly, in the 2018 presidential elections, in which Jair Bolsonaro (PSL) was elected, the press, its coverage and its positions (almost always without daring to say the name) became a daily agenda for discussions that went beyond the walls of specialized knowledge.

It was also in these moments that the discursive strategies of the press became more evident in search of, for example, softening speeches of violence, discrimination, prejudice - in fact, the press itself historically produced them, see a famous cover of *Placar* magazine with the goalkeeper Bruno, in which it was preferred to speak of the “death” and not murder of Eliza Samudio. All in the name of selling a cover with a “controversial” character<sup>7</sup>. The word polemic, it is necessary to say, was one of the press's favorites in recent years, in which political intensification unveiled speeches of hatred and intolerance, including in the institutional field. The current President of the Republic Jair Bolsonaro is one of the stars of that moment, being treated as an almost folk figure, despite the misogynistic and racist phrases that the press did not dare to name. With this scenario, we understand that the moment is important to claim what journalism is, to make complex its deontology, not to simplify it. Showing procedures, limits, rescuing the knowing subject<sup>8</sup>, not understanding oneself as neutral, assuming interpretations. A greater asset than individualism: to assume that what we do has an impact on people's lives. You either become aware of it or continue to play as if values taken as universal were not, rather, company values (VEIGA, 2019).

---

<sup>7</sup> <https://blogueirasfeministas.com/2014/04/28/a-cap-a-da-placar-com-bruno-faz-parte-da-normalidade-dofeminicidio-no-brasil/>. Accessed in May 24, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Cognitive individual, individualism within the masculine-capitalist regime of truth; recognition of subjectivity in the interpretation of reality, which is fundamental for a responsive ethical exercise (VEIGA, 2015)

**Fabiana Moraes**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8035-0163>*Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Núcleo de Design e Comunicação Social, Nova Caruaru (PE), Brasil.*

PhD in Sociology / UFPE

E-mail: [fabimoraes@gmail.com](mailto:fabimoraes@gmail.com)

Received on: May 31, 2020.

Approved on: September 4, 2020.

**References:**

ALBUQUERQUE, D. A. **A atuação do WikiLeaks, de grupos hacktivistas e do Movimento Cypherpunk na reconfiguração do jornalismo investigativo.** 2016. 109 p. Dissertação (Mestrado em Ciência da Computação) - Pós Graduação em Ciência da Computação, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Recife, 2016. Disponível em:

<<https://repositorio.ufpe.br/bitstream/123456789/27079/1/DISSERTA%c3%87%c3%83O%20Dayane%20A%20morim%20Gon%c3%a7alves%20de%20Albuquerque.pdf>> Acesso em: 15 set. 2020.

ANTOUN, H. Jornalismo e ativismo na hipermídia: em que se pode reconhecer a nova mídia. **Revista FAMECOS**, Porto Alegre, v. 8, n. 16, p. 135-148, 2008. Disponível em: <<https://revistaseletronicas.pucrs.br/ojs/index.php/revistafamecos/article/view/3144>> Acesso em: 15 set. 2020.

BOYNTON, R. **The New New Journalism:** conversations with Americas's Best Nonfiction Writers on Their Craft. New York: Vintage Books, 2005.

CHRISTOFOLETTI, R. **A Medida do Olhar:** objetividade e autoria na reportagem. 2008. 275 p. Tese (Doutorado em Ciências da Comunicação) - Escola de Comunicações e Arte, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2008.

DE MELO, I. A. A defesa de uma nova objetividade jornalística: a intersubjetividade. **Biblioteca On-line de Ciências da Comunicação**, [s.l.]. 2007. Disponível em: <<http://www.bocc.ubi.pt/pag/melo-isabelle-intersubjectividade.pdf>>. Acesso em: 20 jun. 2018

DIAZ, P. V. **Devir-Hacker: empirismo, ética e ontologia na era informacional.** 2017. 158 p. Dissertação (Mestrado em Ciência da Informação) – Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia, Escola de Comunicação, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2017. Disponível em: <[https://ridi.ibict.br/bitstream/123456789/959/1/IBICT\\_Pedro\\_DIAZ\\_Dissertacao\\_Mestrado\\_.pdf](https://ridi.ibict.br/bitstream/123456789/959/1/IBICT_Pedro_DIAZ_Dissertacao_Mestrado_.pdf)> Acesso em: 15 set. 2020.

<https://doi.org/10.46391/ALCEU.v21.ed44.2021.244>

ALCEU (Rio de Janeiro, online), V. 21, Nº 44, p.115-131, mai./ago. 2021

GOUVEIA, D; MORAES, F. Para além do robô, a reportagem: pavimentando uma metodologia do jornalismo de subjetividade. In: MAIA, Marta; MARTINEZ, Monica (Orgs.). **Narrativas midiáticas contemporâneas: perspectivas metodológicas**. Rio Grande do Sul: Editora Catarse, 2018.

HARAWAY, D. Saberes localizados: a questão da ciência para o feminismo e o privilégio da perspectiva parcial. **Cadernos Pagu**, Campinas, n. 5, 7-41, 1995. Disponível em: <<https://periodicos.sbu.unicamp.br/ojs/index.php/cadpagu/article/view/1773/1828>> Acesso em: 15 set. 2020.

KUCINSK. B. **Jornalistas e revolucionários: nos tempos da imprensa alternativa**. Edusp: São Paulo, 2001.

MEDINA, C. **Ciência e jornalismo: da herança positivista ao diálogo dos afetos**. São Paulo: Summus Editora, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_. **Entrevista: o diálogo possível**. São Paulo: Ática, 1986.

MELO, S. **Discursos e práticas: um estudo do jornalismo investigativo no Brasil**. 2015. 150 p. Dissertação (Mestrado em Ciências da Comunicação) – Escola de Comunicação e Artes, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2015. Disponível em: <<http://teses.usp.br/teses/disponiveis/27/27152/tde-19092016-155529/publico/SEANEALVESMELO.pdf>> Acesso em: 15 set. 2020.

MORAES, F. **O nascimento de Joicy: transexualidade, jornalismo e os limites entre repórter e personagem**. Porto Alegre: Arquipelago Editorial, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_. Para que serve um jornalismo de subjetividade? In: ENCONTRO ANUAL DA ASSOCIAÇÃO BRASILEIRA DE PESQUISADORES EM JORNALISMO, 16., 2018, São Paulo. **Anais [...]** São Paulo: Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores em Jornalismo, 2018. Disponível em: <<http://sbpior.org.br/congresso/index.php/sbpior/sbpior2018/paper/viewFile/1344/899>>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2019.

MORAES, D. Comunicação alternativa, redes virtuais e ativismo: avanços e dilemas. **Revista de Economía Política de las Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación**, São Cristóvão-SE, v.9, n. 2, p. 1-20, 2007. Disponível em: <[http://www.observatoriodaimprensa.com.br/download/Comunicacao alternativa.pdf](http://www.observatoriodaimprensa.com.br/download/Comunicacao%20alternativa.pdf)> Acesso em: 15 set. 2020.

PRUDENCIO, K. Jornativismo: CMI e o ativismo online. **Aurora Revista de Arte, Mídia e Política**, [s.l.], n. 2, p. 68-79, jul. 2011. ISSN 1982-6672. Disponível em: <<https://revistas.pucsp.br/aurora/article/view/6358>> Acesso em: 15 set. 2020.

RUSSELL, A. **Journalism as activism: recoding media power**. Polity Press: Cambridge, 2016.

SODRÉ, N. W. **História da imprensa no Brasil**. Rio de Janeiro: Mauad Editora, 1998.

TARGINO, M. G. **Jornalismo cidadão: informa ou deforma?** Brasília: IBICT: UNESCO, 2009. 258 p.

THOMPSON, JB. **A mídia e a modernidade: uma teoria social da mídia.** Petrópolis: Vozes, 1998

VEIGA, M. **Entrevista concedida a Fabiana Moraes.** Porto Alegre, 11 de junho de 2019.

\_\_\_\_\_. **Masculino, o gênero do jornalismo: modos de produção das notícias.** Florianópolis: Insular: 2014.

## Abstract

The activist perspective has historically been refuted by what has become known as “good journalism”, which is imbued with the idea of objectivity. According to what is conceived as common sense, activism ideologically tarnishes news content, a perception also expressed in journalists' publications on social networks. Departing from the idea of subjectivity journalism, we propose here a reflection on an activist practice that does not hide itself as such and that can be present not only in what is understood as independent/alternative journalism, but also in large news companies. This position is argued, among other markers, through a reflection on the field itself, the non-exoticization of the other and the performance of a professional who understands herself as not neutral. We also make an analysis of the journalistic practices associated with a “hacker sensitivity” (RUSSEL, 2017), which can and must be present in addition to the use of technological devices.

**Keywords:** Subjectivity. Activism. Journalism. Hacker sensitivity. Practices.

## Resumo

A perspectiva ativista foi historicamente refutada por aquele que se notabilizou como o “bom jornalismo”, este embebido pela ideia de objetividade. De acordo com o que é considerado senso comum, o ativismo macula ideologicamente o conteúdo noticioso, percepção também expressada nas publicações de jornalistas em redes sociais. A partir da ideia de um jornalismo de subjetividade, fazemos aqui uma reflexão sobre uma prática ativista que não se esconde como tal e que pode estar presente não só no que se entende como jornalismo independente/alternativo, mas ainda nas grandes empresas. Esta tomada de posição se dá, entre outros marcadores, pela reflexão sobre o próprio campo, pela não exotificação do outro e pela atuação de uma profissional que se sabe não

neutra. Fazemos ainda uma análise das práticas jornalísticas associadas a uma “sensibilidade hacker” (RUSSEL, 2017), que pode e deve estar presente para além do uso de aparatos tecnológicos.

**Palavras-chave:** Subjetividade. Ativismo. Jornalismo. Sensibilidade hacker. Práticas.

## Resumen

La perspectiva activista ha sido históricamente refutada por lo que se conoce como "buen periodismo", imbuido de la idea de objetividad. Según lo que se considera sentido común, el activismo empaña ideológicamente el contenido de las noticias, una percepción también expresada en las publicaciones de los periodistas en las redes sociales. Basado en la idea del periodismo subjetivo, reflexionamos aquí sobre una práctica activista que no se esconde como tal y que puede estar presente no solo en lo que se entiende como periodismo independiente / alternativo, sino también en grandes empresas. Este posicionamiento se lleva a cabo, entre otros marcadores, debido a la reflexión sobre el campo en sí, la no exotización del otro y el desempeño de un profesional que sabe que no es neutral. También hacemos un análisis de las prácticas periodísticas asociadas con una "sensibilidad hacker" (Russel, 2017), que puede y debe estar presente además del uso de dispositivos tecnológicos.

**Palabras clave:** Subjetividad. Activismo. Periodismo. Sensibilidad de hacker. Práticas.

*Este artigo é publicado em acesso aberto (Open Access) sob a licença Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial (CC-BY-NC 4.0), que permite que outros remixem, adaptem e criem a partir do seu trabalho para fins não comerciais, e embora os novos trabalhos tenham de lhe atribuir o devido crédito e não possam ser usados para fins comerciais, os usuários não têm de licenciar esses trabalhos derivados sob os mesmos termos.*