

# Journalism and democracy: the role of the mediator

Francilaine Munhoz Moraes and Zélia Leal Adghirni

## Abstract

This article analyzes journalistic mediation and the universe of individuals in the Brazilian democratic process considering the influence of digital technologies. We begin from the principle that the global computer network has changed the way journalism is conducted, by incorporating citizens as producers and consumers of information. The journalistic coverage of the Ficha Limpa [Clean Record] episode by the website Congresso em Foco [Focus on Congress], produced in Brasília, was the scenario for the case study. Based in the methodological field of Depth Hermeneutics, the study revealed that the possibilities for interaction between subjects create new contours in the historic position of journalists as mediators of public debate. The study perceives a communication based on intersubjectivity, in which a common and collective situation can connect citizens and journalists.

### Keywords:

Journalism. Mediation. Democracy. Internet.

## 1 Introduction

The explosion of digital technologies has deeply transformed journalistic practices. Producing and consuming information are no longer opposite poles of communication. They are part of the same “cloud” that stores, disseminates and multiples information.

Even before Brazil’s Federal Supreme Court (STF) decreed the end of the requirement of a university diploma from a journalism school for one to work as a journalist,<sup>1</sup> in front of a computer screen, any person could exercise the right to freedom of expression through sites and blogs, and more recently, on social networks. Mobile technologies and tablets have increased the capacity to produce information in a non-professional manner. According to Gomes (2001), “the internet allows a circularity of roles in which any receiver can become a broadcaster and provider of information, producing and distributing it over the network, or simply passing along information produced by others.”

We believe that this context does not overcome journalism’s historic mediatory function. To the

**Francilaine Munhoz Moraes** | [moraesfranci@yahoo.com.br](mailto:moraesfranci@yahoo.com.br)

Doctorate Student in Social Communication at the Universidade de Brasília (UnB)

**Zélia Leal Adghirni** | [zeliadghirni@gmail.com](mailto:zeliadghirni@gmail.com)

Ph.D., Grenoble 3 (France). Professor at Brasília University – UnB

contrary, “the increasing volume of information reinforces the role of the journalist as a mediator between the world and citizens” (WOLTON, 2004, p. 311). Mediation is perhaps a current option for the survival of the profession, reviving the role of weaving narratives exposed by different social actors. The internet today perhaps represents a mediatory space par excellence. Without territorial contours, the internet promotes encounters, in a horizontal equality, between journalists, citizens and elected officials, stimulating the discussion of current themes in public space.

The purpose of this article is to debate journalistic mediation in light of the opportunities for citizens to participate in the construction of news on the web.<sup>2</sup> This study locates these practices at the confluence between journalism and the development of Brazilian democracy. The scenario we have used to investigate this phenomenon is the journalistic site Congresso em Foco [Focus on Congress],<sup>3</sup> due to the unique nature of its journalistic coverage and the self-proclaimed objectives of its editing team: “to assist voters and readers accompany the performance of elected representatives, thus contributing to improve the quality of

political representation in the country.” The attentive analysis of this site was extremely revealing for the interpretation of a new way of conducting journalism, based on speed and interactivity, thanks to the development of digital communication technologies.

The paper is supported by constructivist theories of news (TRAQUINA, 1999; SOUSA, 2002) that see news as a social construction of reality, the socio-centric paradigm (MOTTA, 2005), which considers journalism to be permeable to the contradictions and pressure of civil society; constructs about the Internet that emphasize the social use of technology (LANDOW, 1997); and the methodological field of Depth Hermeneutics (THOMPSON, 1995), which analyzes social phenomenon as significant symbolic constructions mediated by the communication media.

The article presents the context of the object in study by relating journalism to Brazilian democracy (section 2), as well as our understanding of the social actors involved (section 3) in order to study and debate these elements in the scenario in question (section 4) and in conclusion offers our considerations about the issue (section 5).

**1** The Federal Supreme Court’s (STF) declaration in 2010 that decree-law n. 972 of 1969 was unconstitutional determined the end of the requirement of a university degree from a journalism school for one to work as a journalist.

**2** This line of investigation is part of the research project titled *Mudanças estruturais no jornalismo: identidades, práticas, rotinas, públicos e mídias* [Structural Changes in Journalism: identities, practices, routines, publics and media] registered in CNPq under the coordination of Zélia Leal Adghirni.

**3** Available at : <<http://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/>>

## 2 Journalism and democracy

To present the prism through which we see the imbrications between journalism and democracy, it is essential that we think of journalism in its relations with the social structure and in the specific historic process in which it is inscribed. In this way, we limit this study to the two final decades of journalism practiced on the Internet.<sup>5</sup>

The period is marked by liberalization and oscillation of economic markets; investments in technology; popularization in access and use of the Internet; miniaturization, mobility and multiuse of devices; the continuous rise of media interfaces, as well as new forms and modes of social use of the web.<sup>5</sup> In journalism, this context is related to the growing presence of technology in daily practices and the changes generated by this new reality. The scenario is characterized by a tremendous volume of information; an intense dispute for the market, a hyper-competition between journalistic companies, which increasingly merge with technology companies, forming communication conglomerates; new demands in relation to professional journalists, who must deal with this technology on a daily basis; simultaneous production of news for different interfaces in an environment of convergence; opportunities

for intervention of the public in the journalistic process, and other elements.

This set of references of contemporary journalism, whose phase is denominated by Brin, Charron and Bonville (2004) as journalism of communication, implies greater importance for communication with the public. According to these Canadian authors, the context marked by the competition of the media market and the superabundance of messages, leads the media and its professionals to be concerned with the preferences of the public. As a result, they affirm that journalists tend to increasingly establish with the public ties of familiarity and intersubjectivity. In the realm of discourse, the journalistic genres that give broad space to commentary are growing, given that the news is incorporating greater judgments from the public.

In Brazil, these global characteristics are combined with a few specific factors. Similar to what has occurred in the rest of the world, the country has also been exposed to the growing use and popularization of technology in the past two decades. Nevertheless, in Brazil, this reality occurs at a historic moment marked by the rise of a new public that has emerged from Brazil's democratization process, a situation that for journalism signifies, according to Porto (2010, p.

<sup>4</sup> The period under analysis includes the years from 1990, when the first experiences began in Brazil with journalism on the Internet, until today.

<sup>5</sup> We mention, as an example, the rapid migration from desktop or personal computers (PC) to notebooks and more recently to *smartphones* and tablets. These devices represent the growing miniaturization, mobility and interfaces of the technological devices used in this period, which, in a certain way, allow the popularization of the social media.

107), in addition to a new consumer market for information, the challenge of producing pluralistic and balanced content.

It is in this context that we locate the relations between journalism and democracy. In terms of this factor, the political scientists Miguel and Biroli (2010, p. 9, 17) affirm that “media has become the main tool of contact between the political elite and common citizens,” substituting, in some cases, political parties themselves, which were traditionally the mediators of this relationship. About the social practice of journalism, the authors maintain that “the interaction of the press with democratic political institutions can be considered one of the central factors of journalistic activity.”

Among the various dimensions of the study of this relationship, we are interested in the perspective that analyzes the phenomenon in the web environment. In discussing digital democracy, Gomes (2010, p. 246) defends a less idealist perception. In this sense, the author ponders:

It was believed that the intermediaries and gatekeepers, who traditionally placed themselves between civil society and the state (political parties, bureaucracy, corporations, the information industry) and among the various components of civil society itself (mass communication) can then be finally avoided in the era of communication in network. The citizen can relate directly to the state or to the political system, without the mediation of the communication media or intermediary institutions [...]. At the beginning of this century, however, the participatory democratic perspective changed in relation to the internet.

There are no digital democracies today, according to Gomes, but pro-democracy digital initiatives in real democratic states. He affirms that we should not discard the conquests of liberal democracy, because it is the base upon which we negotiate the demands for deepening contemporary democracy, in its digital format as well. “Visibility, accountability and electoral participation are liberal requirements and remedies that can gain enormous reinforcement in the digital configuration,” he believes. In this reasoning, the emphasis on participation is more reasonable in a cumulative than in an alternative perspective.

The author’s advice is to:

incorporate the classic liberal menu (which contains information that promotes transparency, opening and accountability of political agents), important doses of other spices (opportunity for public participation and civic engagement – communication channels between citizens and intermediary institutions) (GOMES, 2010, p. 254).

The considerations presented allows us to understand the pertinence of the study of mediation, of both the media as an intermediary institution between the political arena and citizenship, as well as mediation between the social actors who are participants in this relationship, journalists and citizens, which are issues that will be discussed below.

### 3 Social Actors

The social actors involved in the relationship are

the mediator journalists and the participating citizens.

### 3.1 Mediators

At the same time it has offered countless opportunities in the field of journalism and social networks, the Internet has also created chaos in the world of communications. The excess of information creates a dispersed understanding, an insecurity of sources and the manipulation of data. It questions one of the sacred principles of journalism: the search for the truth of the facts.

The citizen is lost amid the profusion of news that arrives through all types of screens and texts recently launched in the market by digital technologies (subject to new inventions that will make today's biggest novelty obsolete tomorrow). Someone is needed to organize the chaos. In this regard, some researchers in the field (NEVEU, 2006; RINGOOT; UTARD, 2005; MACHADO; PALACIOS, 2003) affirm that the journalist can exercise the role of organizer of the traffic of affluence on the network. It is the journalist who will select (is this a new form of *gatekeeper*?), filter and establish the hierarchy of the information that pours out in a continuous flow. Adghirni (2008) highlights the Brazilian journalism in real time that was realized at the beginning of the first decade. The most important news was that which just happened, that which was triggered by a mechanical impulse of someone pressing a key. Today, ten years after the "real time

fever," news has returned to being defined by traditional criteria.

The format of the news has also changed and no longer involves sticking to a brief text in an inverted pyramid, but contemplating the information in all its textual and graphic representations, in audio and video. Journalistic routines, in this sense, imitate the social networks, bringing configurations of subjectivity and aesthetic engineering to the conventional standards of the network.

The internet is one of the most significant inventions of the current moment in history, in which the verb to be is conjugated in the present tense. It is a place of encounter and debate. The realization of citizenship is related to the constitution of places for encounter and communication to construct with the other the meanings of citizenship. Warat affirms (2001, p. 156), that citizenship means having an opinion, the right to express it and the power to decide for oneself. The object and the objective of this decision, of this power to decide, have been changing over time and history. In this way, the future of citizenship and human rights is mediation, as a culture and practice, for its realization in the daily experience of people. For Warat, "the great challenge of the Digital Age is to transform the fusion of citizenship and basic rights into existential experiences, passing from mafia-agreements to mediation processes." (WARAT, 2001, p. 157)

We understand that the production and distribution of news in network has a strong impact on the public space analyzed by Wolton (2004) who emphasizes the triumph of communication in the “infernal triangle” of: media, politics and citizenship. The web would be a specific example of this triumph to the degree to which it represents a space for expanded social and political dispute, without determined borders, or that is, a universe in permanent expansion. Those who know how to appropriate this space conquer a new territory of power.

In democracy, according to Silva (2005, p. 9), journalism is a field of mediation, which provides circulation between the different spaces that compose the public space, as defined by Wolton as: common space (the space of circulation and expression); public space (space for discussion and debate) and political space (for decision making, of established power, both government and the state) which is the lesser of the spaces, but which has the decision making power that the others do not have.

In this context, the journalist is that who circulates between the three spaces, which is the source of his or her power to influence society and to interfere in setting agendas. For Wolton (2004, p. 197), there is no democracy without communication and, communication is understood to be the media and polls, but also the cultural

model that is favorable to the exchange between elites, directors and citizens.

### 3.2 Citizens

The concept of citizenship in Brazil is linked to the effort to construct democracy, according to Carvalho (2002), who narrates the “long route” of this historic process.

He remembers that there was a certain ingenuity in the way that we perceived the issue as soon as the constitution of 1988 was promulgated, and which was even called the citizen constitution. Considering that the phenomenon is complex and historically defined, the author conducts the analysis by breaking citizenship down into rights<sup>6</sup> and perceiving its links with Brazil's democratic institutions. In this regard, Carvalho understands that the right to participation was never as widely distributed as it is in Brazil, nevertheless, the confrontation of social problems, such as urban violence, poor quality of education, the inadequate supply of healthcare services, and others, advance slowly. As a result, “the very mechanisms and agents of the democratic system, such as elections, parties, the Congress, the politicians, become worn out and lose the confidence of the citizens” (CARVALHO, 2002, p. 8). Therefore, because of the gap between the conquest of certain rights and the negligence of others, according to this author, we have the

6 “Civil rights guarantee life in society, political rights guarantee society's participation in government and social rights guarantee participation in the collective wealth.” (CARVALHO, 2002, p. 10).

“uncomfortable sensation of being incomplete” (2002, p. 219) and the way that we confront this shapes the profile of the Brazilian citizen.

García Canclini (2008, p. 217, 224) warns us that “we need to simultaneously rethink the policies and forms of participation, which means being citizens and consumers.” In this regard, the author believes that civil societies seem increasingly less to be national communities and “manifest themselves mainly as hermeneutic communities of consumers,” which are shaped as groups of individuals who share tastes and pacts as to the reading of symbolic goods by means of which they acquire common identities. Even if it is not possible, he affirms, to generalize the consequences for citizenship resulting from this growing participation through consumption, it is worth noting that on one hand the individualist organization of consumptions tends to make us disconnect as citizens, from common conditions and from solidarity, on the other hand, the expansion of the communications and consumption can also lead to social struggles that are better informed about national conditions.

We understand, in this paper, that the right to participate, one of the central elements of citizenship, gains new spaces to the degree that the internet is avidly incorporated to our daily life. Its social uses establish new forms for the concepts of citizenship, public and consumers, interlinking the three. Their meanings are

examined here in the current environment of mediatic convergence.

For journalism, the complementarity between digital and traditional medias leads the term public to simultaneously mean reader, television viewer, listener and user. This apparently simple notion leads us to more complex questionings such as understanding how this public should be understood. The director of the program of Compared Media Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Henry Jenkins (2009, p. 30), in discussing the culture of convergence, affirms:

Convergence does not occur by means of devices, no matter how sophisticated they may be. Convergence occurs within the minds of individual consumers and in their interactions with others. Each one of us constructs their own personal mythology, based on pieces and fragments of information extracted from the media flow and transformed into resources through which we understand our daily lives.

He believes that the coming transformations in news and entertainment will come from the recognition of the importance of the role that consumers can have not only accepting the convergence, but actually conducting the process. In this environment, one of the trends is “[...] to allow consumers to save, and comment on, contents, appropriate them and place them in circulation in new and powerful ways” (JENKINS, 2009, p. 46).

Based on these ideas, the meaning of citizen in this paper is linked to the universe of individuals

who have the right to participate in the historic-political process, which they are a part of and establish. The mechanisms used to study them are the ways that these individuals participate, consume and appropriate medias in their daily lives in the current context of convergence. We are thus dealing with the specific consumer public that interacts because it is aware of its right to participate.

We thus adopt the concept of citizenship as an “activity that consists in the self-construction of the social subject as a participant and co-participant in public life, understood as the civil insertion of the individual in the polemic of what is better for all” (SILVA, 2011, p. 99). These constructions will be discussed in a case study analyzed in the next section.

## 4 Analysis and discussion

Based on the ideas raised in this discussion, the purpose of this qualitative analysis is to interpret, based on the methodology developed by Thompson (1995), the sociodiscursive practices of mediation located in the context and presumptions that have been presented until this point in this article.

The journalistic site Congresso em Foco is the scenery chosen for our observations. The empiric body of this study is composed of interviews

with professionals<sup>7</sup> and journalistic material published by the site, with an emphasis on the series of reporting *Sinal Amarelo* [Yellow Sign or Warning Signal].

### 4.1 Scenario

With offices just a few kilometers from the national Congress, the Congresso em Foco can be considered a privileged observer of what takes place in the Brazilian legislature. On the Internet since 2004, the site had more than one million visit from January to May 2011, 42% more than the same period in the previous year.

Under the slogan “journalism for change,” the site’s peculiar nature, as its name reveals, is that is exclusively covers the Congress. Another specificity is its mediatic environment: it originated and consolidated itself on the web. It was included on the UOL site in May 2010, when it earned recognition from the market as a producer of specialized content, as indicated by the Esso Award for Best Contribution to the Press in 2009. Based on investigative journalism, its professional credibility came, in large part, from the work of accountability surveys. This line of work continues to be its current specialty such as, for example the elements that are included among the most accessed in the first four months of 2011: “See the wealth of each parliamentarian”

**7** This study interviewed the general director Sylvio Costa and the editors Gustavo Lago and Edson Sardinha, on May 6, 2011, at the site’s editorial offices.

**8** According to data from Google Analytics (<http://www.google.com/analytics/>), Congresso em Foco accumulated 1,011,204 visits between Jan. 1 and May 5, 2011 (COSTA, 2011).

and “21 Senators have more than one year of absences.”<sup>9</sup>

The site content gives priority to special coverage with the same proposal, such as that found in the section “Mapa da Mina,” [Treasure Map], like “Farra das Passagens” [Festival of airfares] “Políticos Processados” [politicians who are defendants], “Doações de Campanha” [Campaign Donations] and “Concessões de Rádio e TV” [Radio and TV Concessions]. In the “Espaço do leitor,” [Readers Space] there is a clear appeal to participation in “A palavra é sua” [Your turn to speak] and “Faça a sua parte” [Do your part], in addition to “Mande uma notícia” [Send news] and “Envie sua imagem” [Send an image].

The audience profile reveals the specificity of its public. Among the 27 thousand registered users, most are college graduates (44%), and 25% have conducted graduate studies, while the remaining 31% finished high school. The high level of education of the readers is revealed when it is compared with the universe of Brazilian voters, among whom, according to data of the Superior Electoral Court, only 14% have some college education. Nearly 60% of the registered users are from 40-69 years old and the largest groups live in Brasília (16%) and São Paulo (15%). On the

social networks (Facebook and Twitter), the profile is similar, with more than 13,000 followers.

The staff has 8 professionals, most of them journalists with experience in political coverage. During an interview, site General Director Sylvio Costa summarized the Congresso em Foco: “We are on the internet and dedicated to transparency of government and public data.”

## 4.2 Sociodiscursive Practices

Among the ways of analyzing the mediation between journalists and citizens, we opted for a focus on the sociodiscursive practices of the phenomenon. First, it is interesting to note the positions of the citizens.<sup>10</sup> The main objective announced by the site is to “assist the reader-voter to accompany the performance of [political] representatives.” We understand that, as a subject of enunciation, the site takes on a commitment and makes a civic promise to the reader. On the other hand, it limits its desired public to the reader-voter, that is, not any reader. The content is aimed at those who not only have the political right to vote, but mainly those who are interested in accompanying their representatives in Parliament, and therefore, committed to exercising this right during the mandate. This characteristic qualifies them as citizen-readers. In this way,

<sup>9</sup> Available at [http://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/noticia.asp?cod\\_publicacao=36694&cod\\_canal=21](http://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/noticia.asp?cod_publicacao=36694&cod_canal=21) and [http://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/noticia.asp?cod\\_canal=21&cod\\_publicacao=35895](http://congressoemfoco.uol.com.br/noticia.asp?cod_canal=21&cod_publicacao=35895), respectively.

<sup>10</sup> The interpretive model of Depth Hermeneutics (THOMPSON, 1995), the methodology adopted in this study, calls for a discursive analysis, the use of tools and methods from Discourse Analysis, like that undertaken by Porto (2010). The intention is to look for the positions of the subjects of enunciation.

the self-proclaimed responsibility of the site to “improve the quality of the political representation of our country” is shared with the citizen-reader. The strategy is to fulfill the promise of being a producer of “independent” information as long as readers comply with their responsibility to “accompany” the content published. It is thus a shared responsibility.

We are interested in perceiving in this discourse up to what point the citizens share their visions of the political world with the journalists. To do so, we elected the series *Sinal Amarelo* [Warning Sign] about the Ficha Limpa [Clean Record] episode,<sup>11</sup> which symbolizes, according to the professionals, “the adhesion of the Congresso em Foco to causes that will improve the performance of Brazilian democracy” and, in our view, exemplify an experience of interaction with the citizens.

The name *Sinal Amarelo* [which literally means yellow sign] is the result of a graphic change in the site that colored its pages yellow from Sept 24 – Oct. 3, 2010, as a warning sign of the history of candidates for election that year. According to editor Edson Sardinha, the intention was to amplify the focus on the eve of elections, given that “the accompaniment of the criminal record

of parliamentarians is in the DNA of the site.”

The series began on Sept. 13, with the publication of the list of candidates who are defendants in suits in the Federal Supreme Court. Two weeks later, on Sept. 24, they “painted” the site yellow “to warn voters that they must pay careful attention to the history of the candidates before they go to the polls,” he added. A panel was mounted on Sept. 27 with the candidates who would be impeded from running by the Clean Record Law or were defendants in criminal suits in the STF or who were arrested in civil or federal police actions.

In the presentation of the list, the readers of the site were invited to improve it<sup>12</sup> with information about the candidates. Sardinha said that the response from the readers was immediate. “By e-mail, twitter, telephone and comments posted on the reports, we received various suggestions for inclusion of new names.” The readers’ contributions resulted in the inclusion of eight names on the list of *Sinal Amarelo* and also in the adoption of a new criteria: that of parliamentarians who had been targets of a report calling for their removal by the Ethics Councils of the House of Representatives or the Senate. We note here that the readers interventions not only expanded the content of the reporting, but

<sup>11</sup> Stemming from a proposed law that was a popular initiative, coordinated by the Movement to Combat Corruption, the Clean Record Law impedes the candidacy of politicians pronounced guilty by a court.

<sup>12</sup> The complete announcement published by the site on Sept. 27, 2010 was: “This list, which, we know well, can be improved. We thank those who can contribute with information or suggestions in this regard, and are here to receive them. Simply write to [redacao@congressoemfoco.com.br](mailto:redacao@congressoemfoco.com.br). The same address can be used by candidates who have any clarifications to make.”

also modified the originally established criteria. The editor declared “it was a rich experience in interactivity and citizenship that will be improved in the next edition.”

On the other hand, we noted that the journalistic mediation also takes place through decisions to refuse suggestions made by readers, whether because they do not meet the site’s criteria for objectivity, or to avoid inaccuracies. We believe that, in this episode, the site was a space where readers could influence the development of the news, and thus the development of the conflict and the defense of their opinions and ideas about the elections.

This understanding comes close to Habermas’ concept of the public sphere, which in the media, according to Silva (2011, p. 104), is “the locus of debate.” Silva affirms that in a democratic and plural society, “the true public sphere would be the very institutionalized exercise of the polemic.” We believe that it is precisely through polemic and debate that the intersubjectivity<sup>13</sup> in contemporary journalism mentioned by Brin, Charron and Bonville (2004) – see item 2 of this text – can occur. The common or collective situation connects citizens and journalists in a communicative interaction, which can be based on an interpersonal relationship. In this aspect, it is interesting to mention the comment of editor Rudolfo Lago about his interactive experience with

readers of the site, in which he affirmed, there is both “catharsis” and “conversation.” These elements should be explored, in future studies, from the perspective of theories of Argumentation and Rhetoric.

Through an analysis of the site Congresso em Foco we perceive the journalist as a mediator in the process of interactivity, which is one of the main characteristics of digital journalism. We see the initiative of this group of journalists as a way of using the network to strengthen debate in the public space.

## 5 Final considerations

The empiric study perceived that journalistic practices can migrate from the concept of “news for the public” towards “news with the public.” The mediation exercised by Congresso em Foco in the articulation of the journalistic narrative not only incorporated suggestions from readers in the series of reports, but also changed the originally established criteria. In the weeks before the 2010 elections, the site became a space in which readers influenced the development of the news and, in a certain way, the political arena itself, by defending their ideas about the Clean Record episode.

In the sociodiscursive practice, we noted that the ties of intersubjectivity between journalists and

**13** We adopt this term in its elementary meaning: “communication of individual consciences, among each other, conducted with a basis in reciprocity .” (INTERSUBJETIVIDADE, 2001, p. 1.637)

citizens occur in the locus of the debate. The case study revealed that a communication of mutual recognition between the social actors can be underway in the current media scenario.

We believe that these possibilities for interaction create new contours for the historic position of the journalist as mediator of the public debate. It is in this perspective that we locate the contribution of journalism in the development of democracy. The idea is to reinforce, by means of socio-discursive practices of interaction, the conquests of democracy, given that the citizen readers' right to participate is the main one observed in this study.

To continue this study, we suggest an analysis of journalistic objectivity, given the subjectivity of the citizens and the intersubjectivity of this relationship.

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## Jornalismo e democracia: o papel do mediador

### Resumo:

Pensar a mediação jornalística e o universo dos sujeitos no processo democrático brasileiro a partir das tecnologias digitais é a proposta deste artigo. Partimos do princípio de que a rede mundial de computadores alterou o modo de fazer jornalístico, incorporando o cidadão como produtor e consumidor de informação. A cobertura do episódio Ficha Limpa pelo site Congresso em Foco, produzido em Brasília, foi o cenário do estudo de caso. Com base no campo metodológico da Hermenêutica de Profundidade, a pesquisa revelou que as possibilidades de interação entre sujeitos criam novos contornos à posição histórica do jornalista como mediador do debate público. O estudo percebeu uma comunicação baseada na intersubjetividade, em que uma situação comum e coletiva pode conectar cidadãos e jornalistas.

### Palavras-chave:

Jornalismo. Mediação. Democracia. Internet.

## Periodismo y Democracia: el papel del mediador

### Resumen:

Pensar la mediación periodística y el universo de sujetos en el proceso democrático brasileño desde las tecnologías digitales es el propósito de este artículo. Suponemos que la World Wide Web ha cambiado la forma de hacer periodismo, incorporando los ciudadanos como productores y consumidores de información. La cobertura del episodio "Ficha Limpa" por el sitio Congreso em Foco, producido en Brasilia, fue el escenario del estudio de caso. Con base en el campo metodológico de la Hermenêutica de Profundidad, el estudio demostró que las posibilidades de interacción entre los individuos crean nuevas formas en la posición histórica del periodista como mediador del debate público. El estudio señaló una comunicación basada en la intersubjetividad, en que una situación común y colectiva puede conectar ciudadanos y periodistas.

### Palabras clave:

Periodismo. Mediación. Democracia. Internet.

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