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Magnolo, Talita Souza; Reis, Susana Azevedo; Musse, Christina Ferraz
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Articles

Television memory on the pages of *Intervalo* magazine: relations with the reader and the new TV culture of the 1960s and 1970s in Brazil

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Talita Souza Magnoloⁱ

📧 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6240-388X>

Susana Azevedo Reisⁱ

📧 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0162-0012>

Christina Ferraz Musseⁱ

📧 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1172-5993>

ⁱ (Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Comunicação, Juiz de Fora – MG, Brazil).

Abstract

The accelerated urbanization and technological development of the 1960s implemented the era of mass communication in Brazil, characterized by the emergence of new consumption habits of material and symbolic goods. The magazine *Intervalo* (1963-1972) is an important example, as a communication device of an enthusiastic television vehicle, responsible for developing editorial strategies that created bonds with readers and influenced the formation of the television audience. This article intends, through Cultural Studies, to present and analyze such strategies and to understand what the agencies on the part of the magazine for the construction of a television ambiance are, as well as the dissemination of standards of values, behaviors, and social characteristics that, together, represent the memory of Brazilian television and the TV consumer society.

Keywords: Magazine *Intervalo*. Media History. Reader. Viewer. Television.

¹ This article is an excerpt from the doctoral dissertation “‘Conversation Break’: letters from magazine readers and the formation of TV audience in Brazilian society in the 1960s and 1970s”, presented by Talita Souza Magnolo.

Introduction

The study of specialized television publications from the 1950s and 1960s makes us understand new reading habits and the creation of new links and loyalties within the mass media.

By creating their own identity, magazines helped readers identify themselves and become accustomed to their “way”, format, style, fixed sections, and design. The articles and reports helped the public understand the facts that affected their lives, and when leafing through their pages, readers came across things they did not know or found the information they did not even imagine they wanted to know. Like a friend, magazines were like someone who was there to bring information, keep company, entertain, and establish a relationship with the reader – familiar, intimate, engaging, and affective – that was renewed with each edition. The news and discoveries in the pages of the magazines educated and taught the reader about TV and its world.

In a way, all these aspects developed the viewer’s perspective on this new media device and made the public embrace television as a means of communication. Through various editorial strategies such as fixed sections, letters, promotions, and sweepstakes, we observed a space where readers could participate actively, consequently generating greater interaction between the magazine and its audience.

For this work, we propose an analysis of the strategies developed by *Intervalo* magazine (1963-1972), which invited the reader to occupy a place of dialogue, participation, and dialogue with the publication. We, therefore, started from the initial idea that the magazine’s content helped build consumption habits for television programming and offered a new space for readers to dialogue with the magazine and each other. Marialva Barbosa (2010) argues that, in the case of TV, the creation of the programming schedule was the broadcasters’ first attempt to understand their audience. This was reflected in the pages of *Intervalo* magazine, which, in turn, by trying to understand and imagine the needs of its readers, engaged them in the desire to watch TV and instilled in them the desire to know what was happening behind the scenes of this new medium.

It is necessary to say that the 1960s and 1970s represented the height of the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship. It was a period of exception in which citizens were arrested, tortured, and murdered. Many journalists were persecuted, and media outlets were censored. Television, in turn, had an ambiguous role. As it is a state concession and depends on the Government’s advertising revenue, perhaps it was the communication vehicle whose programming was more hostage to the dictatorial project and supported it. TV was censored and persecuted, but entertainment and journalism programs did not narrate the horrors of the dictatorship. Therefore, we draw attention to the fact that *Intervalo* magazine was an enthusiast of the world of television entertainment and did not criticize the political context at any time. The magazine remained far from this reality and built its own “fantasy world”, inviting its readers to participate.

From this context, the starting question of this article was: “How did the magazine present itself as a central materiality/textuality/device to the emergence of relations between

audiences and television in Brazilian contexts in the 1960s and 1970s?” Furthermore, we wish to understand how, from *Intervalo*, an understanding of the community of “readers-viewers” was constructed.

We consider that habits and behaviors linked to television became more prevalent in the 1960s when TV became the most important means of mass communication in Brazil (MATTO, 2010), there was a greater popularization of the habit of watching TV (BOLAÑO, 1988; SOUZA, 2004), with the use of videotape (SIMÕES, 1986), which improved the quality of television programs and the preparation of the television programming schedule (BERGAMO, 2010). In addition to these aspects, TV was fundamental to the national integration project, defended by the military, resulting in public investments in constructing microwave networks and access to international satellites. We know that the formation of this audience was not random, much less spontaneous, being part of the engagement processes, which correspond to the new social demands put into circulation by TV – through consumption, values, standards, and behaviors. Such formation is also related to the new international desires and processes put into circulation by the subjects in their relational contexts through television.

We are therefore interested in understanding, through the cultural and media context, how *Intervalo* magazine, as a product of mass communication, influenced the sale of new television sets, generated revenue through advertising, and fueled the public’s new cultural and consumption habits, and opened space for reader participation, which allowed, albeit in a very artisanal way, to identify behaviors and understand the characteristics of the audience. We believe that this article demonstrates how *Intervalo* magazine, as a product of the cultural industry, demonstrates the issue of media hybridization and, mainly, the construction of a new audience category that migrated from “reader-viewer” to “viewer-reader”.

The magazine specializes in TV from a cultural perspective.

Reflection on magazines has occupied a significant space in historiographical production, proving increasingly important for the field of cultural history (VELLOSO, 2006). In addition to expanding knowledge, these publications help us reflect on ourselves and our society and, most importantly, offer references to form our opinions and create our cultural and consumption habits. Its articles, reports, interviews, information, and news help its readers understand the facts that affect their lives and, when leafing through its pages, come across what they did not know or find what they did not even imagine they wanted to know.

Cultural Studies (WILLIAMS, 2016) show that the media act in a certain context and, therefore, collaborate, feed, create habits, and establish dialogues, which, in turn, are responses to media stimuli in a social environment and culture in which they are inserted. Escosteguy (1998) states that Cultural Studies does not necessarily constitute a new discipline but rather a field of studies where different disciplines intersect in research into the structures of contemporary society. With this, it is possible to understand the mass media, for example, as cultural products and agents of social reproduction, highlighting their complex, dynamic,

and active nature in the construction of hegemony. Thus, initially starting from a materialist conception - which aimed at profit, sales, and increasing audiences - capitalist organizations, such as TV stations in Brazil, were based on social reality and allowed, in a certain way, that it, already trained, would also become a trainer of cultural products such as specialized television publications.

The 1960s were expressed through diverse social, political, economic, and cultural fields. This represents the desire to open up to the world and, at the same time, turn inward. “Television changed the world” (WILLIAMS, 2016, p. 24) and, with its power to communicate entertainment and news, TV changed all previous means of communication and occupied a place alongside other paradigms, such as the increase in physical mobility, the result of newly created technologies. As an electronic means of communication, television changed the basic perception of reality and, consequently, the relationships between individuals and between them and the world. Here, we talk about a time and a place in which society changed, as well as its relationship with the media. Television, for example, came to meet a new need for concentrated entertainment, styles, and behaviors, becoming a typical “home appliance” (WILLIAMS, 2016, p. 25).

Intervalo magazine, in turn, being the product of a large communications conglomerate, Editora Abril², was an important part of consolidating the urban way of life and disseminating tastes and values idealized by advertising among its readers (BUITONI, 2009). The lifestyle model based on consumption and the increase in education levels gave impetus to the publishing market, causing some of the most relevant titles to emerge. We also draw attention to something dear to Cultural Studies: not only the market changes but also culture, which, in addition to transforming, has also been modified by the media, as Cevasco (2012, p. 51-52, our translation) rightly points out:

If culture is everything that constitutes the way of life of a specific society, in addition to the great works that codify this way of life, historical modifications of this same way of life must be valued. [...]. Humanity’s resources are considered common, and the right to access them does not pass through social class but through their abolition and dissolution into a common humanity. It can be seen that almost everything is at stake in the conceptual change from culture as the prerogative of a minority skilled in the arts to culture as a way of life.²

It was during the 1960s – despite the political and censorship context during the period of civil-military dictatorship in Brazil – that Brazilian cultural sectors underwent major

² Founded in 1950 by Victor Civita and still in operation, Abril has published several types of magazines, with different themes and target audiences. It even published other magazines that had other media as their central point, such as *Revista do Livro*. To find out more: REIS and MUSSE (2021).

transformations, where an “incipient market for symbolic goods gives way to a consolidated cultural industry” (MIRA, 1998, p. 37-38). The development and expansion of television occurred quickly and effectively, with the emergence of national broadcasters but also with many regional channels (BARBOSA, 2010). In 1950, the country had 2 broadcasters; in 1960, 18; in 1965, 35; in 1970, the number increased to 63 and in 1975, there were already 97. (BOLAÑO, 1988). Despite a context of military dictatorship (1964-1985), the 1960s were a favorable economic time for the production of television sets, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1 – Televisions in use in Brazil (1951-1975)

YEAR	B&W Devices sold	B&W Devices Unused	COLOR Devices Sold	B&W / COLOR Devices in use
1951	3.500	-	-	3.500
1955	40.000	-	-	74.000
1959	90.000	-	-	434.000
1960	164.000	-	-	598.000
1962	269.000	7.500	-	1.056.000
1965	370.000	40.000	-	1.993.000
1970	816.000	164.000	-	4.584.000
1971	958.000	200.000	-	5.342.000
1972	1.109.000	269.000	68.000	6.250.000
1973	1.345.000	249.000	152.000	7.453.000

Source: BOLAÑO, 1988, p. 53.

We also see on the TV screen that new musical genres, programs, and idols emerged, and the decade was characterized mainly by the massification of television and the definitive consolidation of the cultural industry in Brazil and, consequently, the number of people who watched TV – in the same way. In this way, the concept of “target audience” acquired a special characteristic on Brazilian television. (BERGAMO, 2010). That said, it is necessary to emphasize that *Intervalo* magazine played an important role in presenting and representing television as a device and means of communication to the viewing public, which was being formed at that time.

Figure 1 – *Intervalo* Magazine Nº 0: Cover and page 23 – January 6, 1962



Source: Talita Magnolo's personal collection

Founded in 1962 and having its circulation started in 1963, *Intervalo* was the first Brazilian printed publication that offered the reader national television programming from the states of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Paraná, and Salvador, also bringing reports, news, and fixed sections that had television as their theme. Its covers were always colorful and with photographs, first of celebrities and, later, of everyday individuals. Initially, it had a small format, 18.5 cm high by 14 cm wide, and arrived on newsstands every Thursday, see Figure 1. In 1970, the magazine changed format, measuring 31 cm high by 24.5 cm wide. From 1971 onwards, the magazine began measuring 30 cm in height and 24 cm in width (MAGNOLO, 2018).

The number of pages in the magazine varied greatly during the 20 years of its circulation. The first edition, for example, had 32 pages, but there were copies with 50, 68, and even 88 pages. The magazine's circulation was 200 to 250 thousand copies per week. The last edition was released on August 21, 1972 (MAGNOLO, 2018).³

***Intervalo* magazine's editorial strategies**

One of the ways in which *Intervalo* interacted with its audience was through fixed sections, i.e. pictures that appeared in every issue of the magazine. It is possible to think of these sections of Editora Abril's weekly from two modes of participation (MAGNOLO, 2023): the first, indirect, would be actions that cannot be quantified or qualified, such as consulting

³ Information collected through 13 interviews with former employees from different sectors of Editora Abril and *Intervalo* magazine. To find out more: MAGNOLO (2018); MUSSE and MAGNOLO (2021).

television programming and the horoscope, reading cartoons, articles, recipes, song lyrics, suggestions for programs, films and plays, among others. The second, direct participation, are actions that can be quantified and qualified, such as readers' participation in the letters section, sending in questions and photographs, requests for advice, voting, etc.

When investigating reader participation, we considered that their relationship with the magazine did not necessarily come from their understanding of the television content or the media repertoire they had but also from the desire/need to be part of this television experience, which takes us to the next aspect. We argue that "being able to participate" was one of the motivators/stimuli for readers to send letters, criticisms, compliments, and questions, among other information, who, in a certain way, were part of the collective experience of watching TV and felt like they belonged, in half.

In this sense, we argue that the public has always had a "voice", as they could comment on the contents of different media with their family, neighbors, and closest friends. However, according to the same author, magazines gave visibility to these readers, allowing them to be part of the content appearing on their pages. We reinforce that visibility is also strategically selected by editorial decisions made by printed media outlets.

Here, we draw attention to a need for the magazine to unveil and construct TV as a means and device of communication and to reveal the characters who now have a corporeality even with all the image deficiencies on television. At the same time as this novelty, the magazine uses several strategies from the long history of the press, from this relationship with its reader through established dialogues to the issue of celebrities, for example.

We used extracts from copies of the Digital Newspaper Library of the National Library to show the different relationships the magazine established and how it, as an amplifier, voice, and enthusiast of Brazilian television, positioned itself before its readers/viewers. We argue that *Intervalo* magazine is a historical document (BARBOSA, 2020) that portrays the ambiance experienced at that time. In issue N° 1, *Intervalo* introduced itself to its reader and brought the text below, signed by Victor Civita, founder of Editora Abril and creator, editor, and director of the weekly:

A HORA DE INTERVALO. INTERVALO saúda o grande público da Televisão Brasileira. Esta nova revista da Editôra Abril surge com o desejo e empenho de cobrir todo o fascinante mundo da TV, com o propósito de divertir, de ser útil – de tornar-se companheira fiel de milhões de telespectadores. Inicialmente, INTERVALO é publicada em duas edições regionais abrangendo, além de São Paulo e Guanabara, toda a área de alcance dos canais paulistas a cariocas. Em breve, porém, novas edições regionais cobrirão a nação inteira. Hoje, com este primeiro número com que nos apresentamos ao público, queremos dar nossos sinceros parabéns a todos os Canais de TV de São Paulo e Rio.⁴ [...] (CIVITA, 1963, p. 2)

4 BREAK TIME. INTERVALO salutes the general public of Brazilian Television. This new magazine from Editôra Abril appears with the desire and commitment to cover the entire fascinating world of TV, to entertain,

Through a welcome message, Civita explains some of the main characteristics of the magazine, thus building the first bond with its audience, and the main one is presented right at the beginning of the text: “covering the entire fascinating world of TV, with the purpose of entertaining, being useful – of becoming a faithful companion for millions of viewers” (CIVITA, 1963, p. 2, emphasis added). We draw attention to a more critical reading since, as we previously pointed out, the magazine, as much as it wanted to build a somewhat affective relationship with its reader, hid in its fixed sections and promotional actions a commercial interest that responded to the logic editorial of the time, as well as the new economic order that was established in that period (BUIIONI, 2013; SCALZO, 2014).

Figure 2 – Ads from *Intervalo* magazine about television as a device⁵

The figure contains three distinct advertisements. The leftmost ad is for 'ACOPLADOR DE ANTENAS COSMOSON', with a headline 'AGORA SIM FANTASMAS VÃO SUMIR MESMO!' and text describing its benefits for TV reception. The middle ad is for 'TELEVOLT', a voltage regulator, with a headline 'CUSTA MENOS DE 10%' and an illustration of the device. The rightmost ad is for 'Decasa', featuring a headline 'é hora de trocar!' and a comparison of costs for a new TV versus a used one, along with an illustration of a woman and a television set.

Source: Digital Newspaper Library of the National Library

Thus, the magazine devised strategies to establish bonds and dialogues with its readers. Some of these editorial decisions reveal that people did not know how to use the TV, consume its content, or were not clear about investing their money in purchasing another appliance. The magazine then acquires the function of, in addition to informing and entertaining, teaching

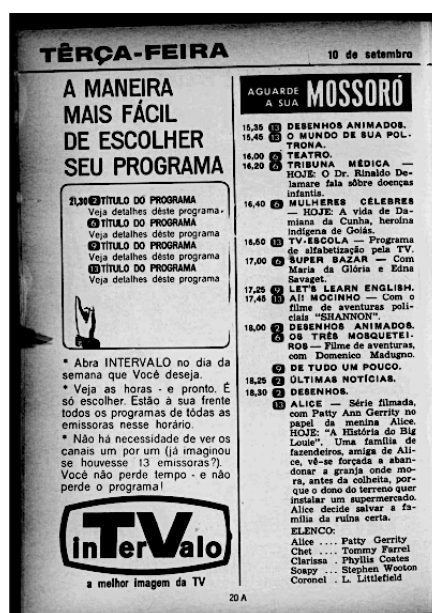
be useful – to become a faithful companion for millions of viewers. Initially, *INTERVALO* was published in two regional editions covering, in addition to São Paulo and Guanabara, the entire coverage area of channels from São Paulo to Rio de Janeiro. Soon, however, new regional editions will cover the entire nation. Today, with this first issue with which we present ourselves to the public, we want to give our sincere congratulations to all the TV Channels in São Paulo and Rio (Our translation)

⁵ From left to right: *Intervalo* magazine, n. 50, 1963; the other two images are n. 95, 1964.

and educating consumers about TV, bringing them closer to this device and its programming, creating fascination and the desire to become viewers.

We observed that *Intervalo*, when introducing itself to the reader, also presented television - mainly through advertisements - which explained the new appliance and justified its need (Figure 2). Little by little, individuals gained enough purchasing power to have a device in their homes and learned to deal with this new technology. Knowing this, something that caught our attention was the large amount of advertising about the TV set. Interestingly, television is sometimes seen as a character with feelings and personality.

Figure 3 – *Intervalo*, Nº 91, p. 20A⁶ - 1964



Source: Digital Newspaper Library of the National Library

We know that the magazine established a relationship with TV stations and their employees (VAREJÃO, 2017). However, what interests us, and we will explain below, is precisely the relationship and dialogue built with the reader. Since its first edition, *Intervalo* has brought weekly television programming organized in the “Programs” section. Initially, the magazine had only two regional versions that covered Rio and São Paulo broadcasters, and

⁶ The text says: “The easiest way to choose your program. Open BREAK on the day of the week you want. Check the time – and that’s it. Just choose. All programs from all broadcasters at this time are in front of you. There is no need to watch the channels one by one (can you imagine if there were 13 stations?). You don’t waste time – and you don’t miss the program!” The quotations are faithful to their original spelling.

later, it started to cover other states. It is important to say that how *Intervalo* guided the reader on how to use the section is, to say the least, curious since, in addition to introducing the reader to television, it also helped him to use the magazine to follow his favorite programs, as we present in Figure 3.

By addressing its reader as “you”, the magazine created a bond of intimacy (STORCH, 2013), becoming, in fact, a companion and friend who gave advice and had ownership over what it was saying. This also happened in issue No. 239 of 1967, when the publication reminded its readers how to use the magazine to consult television programming. In addition to the text, the magazine presented the image of a man who, consulting *Intervalo*, chose which program to watch.

Figure 4 – *Intervalo*, N° 239, n/p – 1967



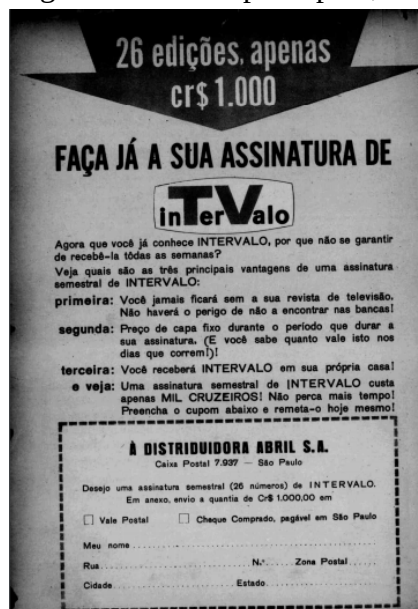
Source: Digital Newspaper Library of the National Library

In this example (Figure 4), the magazine positions itself as a guide for the viewer and, in this way, dialogues with changes in consumption behavior of media content, knowing that its reader probably used the magazine to stay informed and updated on the programs they would like to watch. This reinforces new consumption habits (SIMÕES, 1986) and the reorganization of the family routine around television programming (BERGAMO, 2010). The topics covered so far have shown how important it was for the magazine to develop communication strategies and how they also interacted with the social and economic situation of the 1960s. However, such strategies would be worthless without the main thing: the reader.

The public would start to buy copies and become loyal over the years. We know that the sale of copies and subscription plans financially represent a small part of raising money

for the magazine, which, possibly, had the largest amount obtained through advertising (BOLAÑO, 1988). However, if we look from the affective side and, automatically, towards building a relationship with the reader, the disclosure of subscription plans would symbolize the first “concrete bond” between the magazine and them. Below, we present an example of an advertisement for the semi-annual subscription plan:

Figure 5 – Announcement of the magazine’s subscription plan, Nº 1, p. 4 – 1963



Source: Digital Newspaper Library of the National Library

To attract the reader’s interest and convert subscription sales, the text presents the three main advantages of subscription:

Primeira: Você jamais ficará sem a sua revista de televisão. Não haverá o perigo de não a encontrar nas bancas! Segunda: Preço de capa fixo durante o período que durar a sua assinatura, (E você sabe quanto vale isto nos dias que correm!). Terceira: você receberá INTERVALO na sua própria casa! E veja: uma assinatura semestral de INTERVALO custa apenas MIL CRUZEIROS! Não perca mais tempo! Preencha o cupom abaixo e remeta-o hoje mesmo!⁷ (INTERVALO, 1963d, p. 4).

⁷ First: You will never be without your television magazine. There will be no danger of not finding it on the newsstands! Second: Fixed cover price for the duration of your subscription (And you know how much this is worth these days!). Third: you will receive BREAK in your own home! And look: a half-yearly subscription to INTERVAL only costs THOUSAND CRUISES! Don’t waste any more time! Fill out the coupon below and send it in today! (Our translation).

The strategy envisaged the loyalty of these readers and the guarantee of “a contract” of at least six months. According to the magazine’s editors, purchasing individual copies at newsstands was possible for Cr\$40.00. We also believe that the subscription was in line with the commercial logic of the TV stations themselves, who were thinking in the long term about geographic expansion, in terms of coverage, but also about the growth of their audience.

“Intervalo para Conversa”: the development of the “viewer-reader”

We will now present the fixed sections of the magazine, with comments that we consider relevant to understand what the magazine’s agencies are as a vehicle for the construction of a television world, as well as the dissemination of standards of values, behaviors and social characteristics, which together, represent a possible memory of Brazilian television and TV-consuming society.

The survey was carried out using the digitized collection in the Digital Newspaper Library of the National Library between January 10, 2021, and July 28, 2021. We chose to work with the Microsoft Excel program, which made it possible to organize the information and subsequently categorize it. Furthermore, the program allowed markings, insertion of filters, and creation of graphs that helped us “read” the magazine through quantitative data. The 441 editions were analyzed in search of fixed sections of the magazine.

In the end, we created two tables: the first with all the years and editions as well as all the fixed sections present in each issue and, subsequently, a table with all 111 fixed sections mapped with the explanation and categorization of each one.

For this article, we will only present the fixed sections with “Reader” as their theme, as we believe they were responsible for creating different relationships, interactions, and dialogues, whether through more subtle forms or more active participation. They can be seen below in Table 2:

Table 2 - Sections on the “Reader” theme

Chico Anísio Responds	Chico Anísio answered questions sent by the magazine’s readers.	1963
Conversation Break	This section was for readers’ letters, one of the spaces for the greatest interaction between the magazine and its audience. The magazine had a habit of always responding to its readers. The section lasted the longest in the magazine and carried through all phases until the last issue of <i>Intervalo</i> .	1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972
Musical Almanac	This section referenced an action carried out by the magazine on the creation of the Musical Almanac, a mini-notebook with information about a singer. There were 12 editions, one per week, always with a different artist.	1968
Interview your idol	In this section, the <i>Intervalo</i> reader was put in the journalist’s shoes and could interview his idol. An excellent tactic for interacting and bringing readers/viewers closer to the magazine, but also behind the scenes of news and television	1968, 1969

Idol's gift	This section reflected an action carried out by <i>Intervalo</i> magazine, together with some TV personalities, which aimed to present readers with items characteristic of celebrities. This possibly generated engagement and great public participation.	1969
Reader's opinion	Similar to the "Conversation Break" section, this section featured opinionated letters from readers. The main difference is that there was no dialogue/conversation between the magazine and the reader in this section.	1969, 1970
Maysa - Bummed out corner	Playing with the world of Bossa Nova and Fossa music, this section, named after the singer Maysa, provided advice for readers suffering or disillusioned with love.	1970
Cup blunders	Sports section, created for the 1970 World Cup.	Nº378 a Nº416 – 1970
Readers' Letters	Despite having different names, it is believed that both "Readers' Letter" and "Readers' Opinion" brought letters from readers with a more opinionated character without a dialogue between the magazine and the reader.	1970, 1971
Sentimental SOS	The column was signed by Zsu-Zsu Vieira and provided advice for complaints and questions from readers experiencing love problems.	1971
Rudy and Nalva	This section was divided into three subsections, all authored by Rudy and Nalva: 1) Dreams, 2) Graphology, and 3) Psychogram. The first brought the interpretation of the readers' dreams; the second brought interpretations of drawings made by the readers, and the third, the interpretation of the readers' lyrics.	1971
Sunday Reporters	It was a section that gave the reporter's place to <i>Intervalo</i> readers. The section encouraged readers to send photographs to appear in this section: "Keep trying: there is always a tender, curious or dramatic scene that deserves to be photographed."	1971, 1972
Our problems	Column signed by Lucita Bicudo. She brought advice for problems sent by the magazine's readers.	1971, 1972

Source: Prepared by Magnolo (2023)

For a more in-depth analysis, we decided to use the "Conversation Break" section as the corpus, as it is the one that lasts the longest in the magazine. Considered an argumentative textual genre present in various media, reader letters are, by definition, "an initiative by the user receiving the newspaper, directed in the opposite direction of the initial message. They are, therefore, a response" (BRAGA, 2006, p. 135). They are used as a space for the publication to establish a dialogue with the public to which its productions are intended (MEDEIROS,

2009), and, in addition, it has a relevant function for the media, as it ensures a response from its readers.

Thus, readers' opinions, suggestions, criticisms, questions, compliments, and complaints are published and can be viewed by anyone. Added to this, the reader can suggest a topic to be covered. For this reason, it is an important agenda-production tool for media outlets (BRAGA, 2004). Letters are a kind of meeting, recognition, and refuge for the reader.

In the "Break for conversation" section, the magazine invites its reader to take a break in their day to talk. Like a friend with the latest news and gossip, the weekly newspaper approaches the reader, bringing information and revealing the most diverse curiosities. The following results were obtained through Content Analysis (SAMPAIO and LYCARIÃO, 2021) of the material. There were 15 categories applied to 1,254 entries using the Composite Week⁸ method. Once we organized and selected the data, we began transcribing the texts and, subsequently, listed the analytical categories.

The categories chosen were: "Letter code", "Edition", "Year", "Date", "Excerpt code", "Who speaks", "State from which the reader speaks", "Reader's gender", "Did you talk about Television?", "Did you talk about a TV program?", "Did you talk about TV personalities?", "Type of action", "Did the magazine answer the question?", "The main subject of the text", "Did you talk about the magazine?"

To answer our main question, we will seek to understand how the reader related to TV through the "Conversation Break" section, using the results of our Content Analysis. We also want to know if the way the reader sees television has changed over the years.

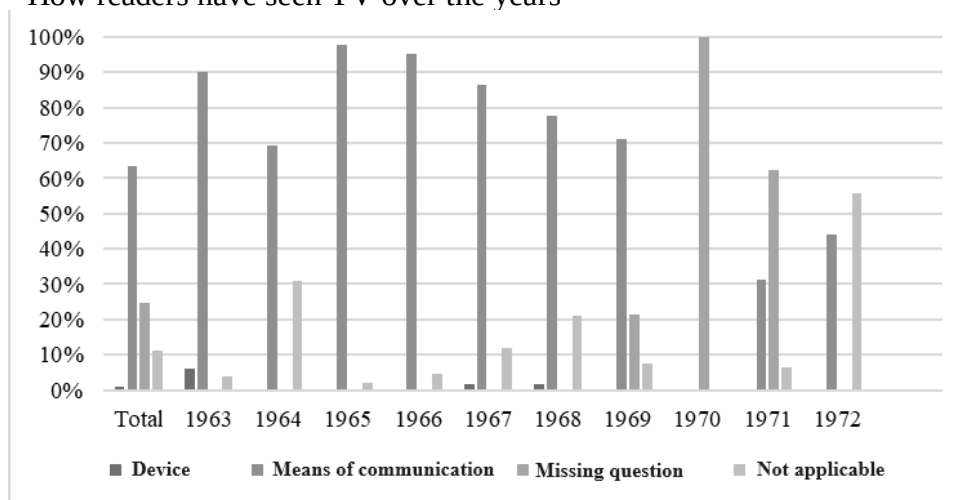
Thus, we sought to identify whether, when the reader questioned issues related to television, he was referring to the television set or TV as a means of communication, therefore dealing with programs, artists, singers, and characters, among others. In the following graph, we present how the categories – "TV as a device" and "TV as a means of communication" – were approached over the years (Graph 1).

The theme with the highest occurrences was "TV as a means of communication", demonstrating the strong relationship between *Intervalo* readers and the world of television entertainment. Interestingly, we got similar results when we looked at the genders of readers and their way of watching TV. In the case of readers, there was no incident regarding TV as a device, with 65% of cases for TV as a means of communication, 24% for missing questions, and 11% in cases that did not talk about TV. For men, there was an occurrence of TV as a device in

8 Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998) argue that the Composite Week is a sampling strategy frequently used to obtain a representative sample of an object with large quantities of texts that uses a continuous week – from Monday to Sunday – combined with the week composite – rolling week or composite week – which analyzes the material broadcast on Monday of the first week, Tuesday of the second week, Wednesday of the third week and so on. In our case, as *Intervalo* magazine was weekly, we used weeks instead of days.

2% of entries, 62% in the TV as a means of communication category, 23% missing questions, and 13% in which TV was not mentioned.

Graph 1 - How readers have seen TV over the years



Source: Prepared by Magnolo (2023)

In sections where readers treat “TV as a means of communication”, the reader’s opinion becomes more evident, as well as their tastes and favorite programs. We observed the familiarity and proximity (SODRÉ, 1975) that readers had with TV: they knew the names of the stations, channel numbers, and titles of series, films, and soap operas, among others. In the following excerpt, the reader vents about the last chapter of the soap opera “Ambição”. It is possible to observe that, besides knowing the name of the soap opera, the reader knows the channel on which it was broadcast and the names of the main actors.

Fiquei revoltadíssima ao assistir ao último capítulo da novela “Ambição”, que era apresentada pelo Canal 9 de São Paulo. Na minha opinião, foi uma verdadeira profanação o que aconteceu na igreja da Consolação onde se realizou o suposto casamento de Tarcísio Meira e Lolita Rodrigues. Afinal de contas, a igreja é a casa de Deus e não palco para exibições daquela natureza. Espero que, doravante, a referida emissora adquira maior senso de responsabilidade, a fim de que não se repitam coisas assim. – ESPERANÇA ESPOSITO – SÃO PAULO

Embora nossa discordância em relação ao acontecimento não chegue ao extremo da indignação atingido por inúmeros leitores que nos escreveram, somos de opinião que determinados assuntos (notadamente a Religião) são por demais sérios

e melindrosos para serem abordados em programas dessa natureza, ainda que se revistem de um máximo de boa intenção e discrição.⁹ (INTERVALO, 1964, p. 65).

In this other excerpt, the reader also demonstrates familiarity with TV, naming the program “As Confissões de Penélope” – a television series shown on TV Tupi from April 1969 to April 1970 – as well as the name of the main actress and, also, knows the name of the other main actor:

É verdade que Eva Wilma, que faz as “Confissões de Penélope”, no Canal 4 de São Paulo, já foi bailarina? Ela já não teve um programa com John Herbert na televisão, anos atrás? Aqui a Maria Rita diz que não, e eu digo que sim – Jorge Assumpção Gomes — São Paulo, SP.

Eva foi bailarina, sim, do Corpo de Bailado do Teatro Municipal de São Paulo. Diga a Maria Rita que a atriz fazia o programa “Alô, Doçura”, com John Herbert, seu marido, anos atrás, na mesma emissora de agora¹⁰ (INTERVALO, 1969, p. 40)

Now, we present below examples of excerpts from letters that deal with television as a device. The fragment highlights the curiosity of the reader who wants to know who was the “father of television” as a technology and, to this end, exemplifies other media such as the press, radio, and cinema:

Na imprensa, Gutenberg. No rádio, Marconi. No cinema irmãos Lumiere. E com referência à televisão, quem é o pai da coisa? — ANTONI CARLOS COUTINHO DE FREITAS — São Paulo.

⁹ I was extremely angry when I watched the last chapter of the soap opera “Ambição,” presented by Canal 9 in São Paulo. In my opinion, what happened in the Consolação church where the supposed wedding of Tarcísio Meira and Lolita Rodrigues took place was a true desecration. After all, the church is the house of God and not the stage for displays of that nature. I hope that, from now on, the broadcaster acquires a greater sense of responsibility so that things like this do not happen again. – HOPE ESPOSITO – SÃO PAULO

Although our disagreement with the event does not reach the extreme of indignation reached by countless readers who wrote to us, we believe that certain subjects (notably Religion) are too serious and sensitive to be addressed in programs of this nature, even if they are reviewed with a maximum of good intention and discretion (Our translation).

¹⁰ Is it true that Eva Wilma, who performs “Confessions of Penélope”, on Channel 4 in São Paulo, was once a dancer? Didn’t she already have a show with John Herbert on television years ago? Here Maria Rita says no, and I say yes – Jorge Assumpção Gomes — São Paulo, SP.

Eva was a dancer, yes, in the Ballet Corps of the Municipal Theater of São Paulo. Tell Maria Rita that the actress used to do the program “Alô, Doçura”, with John Herbert, her husband, years ago, on the same channel as now (Our translation)

— Em novembro de 1843 o governo inglês concedeu ao professor escocês Alexander Bain uma patente “para tirar cópias, de superfícies à distância, através da eletricidade”. É este o primeiro processo conhecido: de transmissão de imagens à distância, embora ainda se referisse apenas a imagens estáticas. A invenção da válvula amplificadora, em 1907, e a do tubo de raios catódicos, em 1934, tornaram uma realidade o advento da televisão, as primeiras transmissões (INTERVALO, 1963b, p. 10).

In the magazine’s response above, it is possible to understand this more educational side of the section, which also provided information in addition to being entertaining and humorous. In this other example from 1963, it is possible to see the reader’s curiosity regarding color TV receivers. We know that the first color broadcast would be on February 19, 1972, marking the opening of the Grape Festival in Caxias do Sul, home of the then President of the time, General Garrastazu Médici (SIMÕES, 1986); therefore, both the reader and The Brazilian population would wait for another nine years for this to happen.

Será que as fábricas nacionais de televisores lançarão receptor para imagens coloridas no próximo ano? - Rafael Souza Silva – Santos

– Quase impossível. Em nossa edição nº 21 (Junho 63), a AFRATE, Associação dos Fabricantes de rádio e televisão demonstrou as dificuldades para a produção do receptor a cores (que deverá custar por volta dos 800 bagarotes). Entretanto como no Brasil os milagres que fazem na hora e o impossível demora um pouco mais, aguardemos mais um pouquinho¹¹ (INTERVALO, 1963c, p. 8).

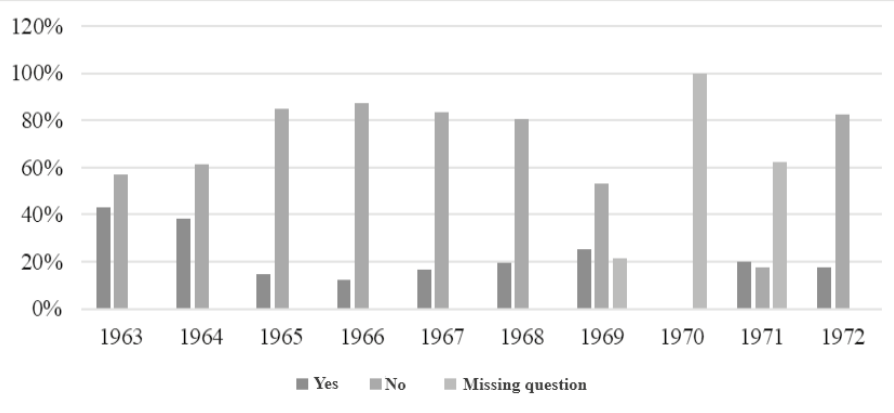
From 1969 onwards, it is possible to observe a decline, possibly justified by the change in the magazine’s themes and editorial strategies, which began to address everyday issues and left TV in the background (MAGNOLO, 2018). In 1971 and 1972, with the theme change in the weekly editorial line, the code “Does not apply” grew considerably, indicating the change in themes addressed in readers’ letters. There are letters, for example, in which the reader talks about a new diet with no connection to television.

Knowing, therefore, that from the beginning, readers wrote about TV as a means of communication, we also asked ourselves: how well did they know TV programs? This first

¹¹ **Will national television manufacturers launch receivers for color images next year? - Rafael Souza Silva – Santos** - Almost impossible. In our issue nº 21 (June 63), AFRATE, the Association of Radio and Television Manufacturers, demonstrated the difficulties in producing the color receiver (which should cost around 800 pence). However, as in Brazil miracles are performed immediately and the impossible takes a little longer, let’s wait a little longer (Our translation).

question generated the following graph, in which we observe whether the reader mentioned a TV program over the years:

Graph 2 – Readers who talked about TV shows over the years



Source: Prepared by Magnolo (2023)

We exclusively analyzed readers who talked about television as a means of mass communication. Surprisingly, only 19.5% of readers wrote down the program’s name. This does not mean, however, that they did not watch TV, but rather that they spoke about programs in a more general way and not about a specific program, for example. In the letter below, the reader requests that the “Conversation Break” section provide the address of an actor from the American series “Dr. Kildare.”

Vimos solicitar por intermédio de INTERVALO PARA CONVERSA o endereço do veterano ator Raymond Massey, pois desejamos cumprimentá-lo pelo seu brilhante desempenho na série “Dr. Kildare” - NILDA LEME DUARTE e várias leitoras de São Paulo.

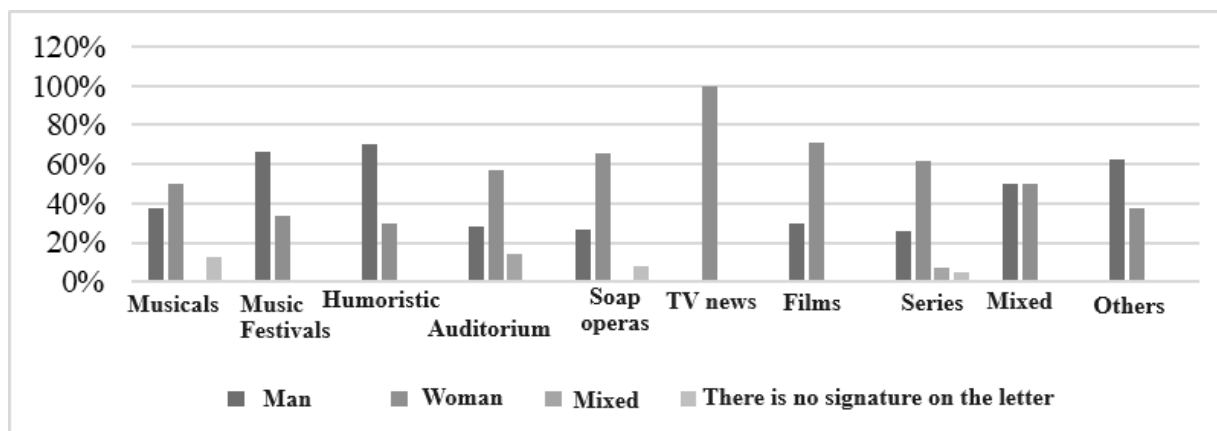
Como foi que vocês conseguiram desviar a atenção da figura de Dick Chamberlain e notar que Massey “também” faz parte do seriado? Estará o Dr. Kildare perdendo a popularidade? Ou será que o objetivo é saber algum “segredo” de Chamberlain por intermédio do Dr. Gillespie? Seja como fôr, aí vai o endereço de Massey: NBC Television — 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y., USA¹² (INTERVALO, 1964, p. 62).

¹² **We have come to request, through CHAT BREAK, the address of veteran actor Raymond Massey, as we would like to congratulate him on his brilliant performance in the series “Dr. Kildare” - NILDA LEME DUARTE and several readers from São Paulo.**

How did you manage to divert attention from Dick Chamberlain and notice that Massey is “also” part of the series? Is Dr. Kildare losing popularity? Or is the objective to learn some of Chamberlain’s “secrets” through

We also observed the mention of different television genres. Below, it is possible to see the approach of television genres by male and female readers separately.

Graph 3 – Television genres according to the gender of the readers¹³



Source: Prepared by Magnolo (2023)

We found that interests were different: while men were more interested in music festivals, comedy programs, and other genres, women were more curious about musical programs, auditorium programs, soap operas, television news, films, and series. Below, we present examples illustrating how readers commented and mentioned television genres. In the following excerpt, the reader comments on the musical program “Astros do Disco”, broadcast on TV Record in São Paulo.

Por que “Astros do Disco” não apresenta os sucessos do momento? Aquelas músicas e aqueles cantores nem mesmo estão na praça. Parei. Que marmelada!
- SUELI APARECIDA DOMINGUES — S. Paulo.

O programa faz desfilar os discos mais vendidos, conforme pesquisas do IBOPE. Nem sempre, porém, pode apresentar os cantores que lançaram as gravações, por serem contratados de outras emissoras. E então o programa vale-se de “astros” atrás do disco. O que é atroz (INTERVALO, 1963b).¹⁴

Dr. Gillespie? Anyway, here’s Massey’s address: NBC Television — 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y., USA (Our translation).

¹³ In the graph, the “Mixed” category encompasses two or more television genres mentioned in a single letter excerpt and the “Other” category contains other television genres that were not listed for analysis.

¹⁴ Why doesn’t “Astros do Disco” present the hits of the moment? Those songs and those singers aren’t even in the square. I stopped. What marmalade! - SUELI APARECIDA DOMINGUES — S. Paulo.

In this other letter, the reader brings an outburst about the auditorium program presented by Chacrinha. She reports the difficulty in watching the program from the audience and states that she only managed to enter the studios on her second attempt.

O Chacrinha é um grosseiro e bem grosseiro. Fiquei na fila do programa dele das 15 às 20,30 horas. Mas, na hora de entrar, apareceu um porteiro e pôs para dentro quem ele quis. Fiquei de fora. Na segunda vez consegui entrar, mas ele tomou as flores que eu levava para minha queridinha Inês Jordan – Sônia Maria – São Paulo

Não condene o Chacrinha por atos que não são dele, Sônia. Provavelmente o porteiro não fez mais do que cumprir ordens que não devem ter partido do apresentador do programa – embora, sem dúvida, sejam criticáveis suas maneiras ocasionalmente rudes. O pedido de reportagem com Inês Jordan já entrou na agenda, aguarde (INTERVALO, 1968, p. 43).¹⁵

In the magazine's response above, it is possible to perceive a more appeasing tone and defense of presenter Chacrinha. At times, it is possible to see that the weekly magazine behaves, in fact, like a friend who tries to calm down and bring lucidity to "complaining" readers.

The television genres covered were varied. This leads us to infer, for example, that this diversity of programs present in the excerpts of the letters over the years dialogued with the changes made by TV itself (BERGAMO, 2010) but also with the new technological and cultural reality of the time (WILLIAMS, 2016).

We found that the magazine's initial years were marked by many themes related to series, musical programs, and soap operas. In 1967, a change occurred that reflects the great popularization of music festivals, especially the 1967 MPB Festival, considered a watershed in Brazilian popular music (MAGNOLO, 2018).

In addition, other themes gained more space, such as films, soap operas, and series. In 1969, another interesting movement took place: series gave way to telenovelas thanks to the rise of numerous productions, mainly by TV Globo. In 1972, for example, telenovelas shared the largest percentages with auditorium programs and other genres.

The program parades the best-selling albums, according to IBOPE research. However, it cannot always feature the singers who released the recordings, as they were hired from other broadcasters. And then the program uses "stars" behind the record. What is atrocious (INTERVALO, 1963b).

15 Chacrinha is rude and very rude. I stood in line for his program from 3 pm to 8:30 pm. But, when it was time to enter, a doorman appeared and let in whoever he wanted. I stayed out. The second time I managed to get in, but he took the flowers I was taking for my sweetheart Inês Jordan – Sônia Maria – São Paulo
Don't condemn Chacrinha for actions that aren't his, Sônia. The doorman probably did nothing more than carry out orders that should not have come from the program presenter – although, without a doubt, his occasionally rude manners can be criticized. The request for a report with Inês Jordan has already been added to the agenda, please wait (INTERVALO, 1968, p. 43).

Final considerations: what emerges from these relationships?

Intervalo, as an editorial format, was part of a decisive historical moment for the Brazilian mass media and began to disseminate habits, products, information, behaviors, and culture from the TV world. We can see that the magazine sought to create various spaces to dialogue and interact with the reader, including opening a section for readers to share their opinions on TV: “Intervalo para Conversa.”

We argue in this work that this fixed section offers memorial documents, which allow us to understand that period of Brazilian television. After all, they mention the names of personalities, TV programs, and broadcasters, highlight the new technologies of the time, they offer notes on certain behaviors, opinions, and beliefs of readers, in addition to highlighting geographical issues that were related to the process of internalization of TV since the signatures of the letters were accompanied by the place from where the readers wrote. Thus, we observe the countless ways the reader related to television, whether as a device or a means of communication.

We verified with our statistical data and qualitative analysis that most readers referred to television as a means of communication; that is, they highlighted in their letters subjects related to programs, artists, singers, films, and soap operas, among others. This demonstrates how the magazine was helping its audience to understand television programming and, in this way, sharpen their curiosity about the behind-the-scenes of the TV universe. It is worth mentioning that the interest was not exclusively in national content but also international, as broadcasters imported films, series, and musicals, mostly from the United States. We were also surprised that only 2% of the letters dealt with “TV as a device” issues. We believe this may have happened because, from the first issue, *Intervalo* brought programming-related themes that inserted the reader into the TV world, leaving technical issues aside. Another aspect to which we draw attention is that the magazine has assumed an ostensible pedagogical role through training on Brazilian TV, its production logic, and teaching its reader how to deal with this new media scenario within a context and with a discourse authorized by the State.

Observing the reader’s attitude during the years the magazine was distributed is also interesting. In the early years, mention of any television programs was greater than the others, representing, in 1963, 43% and, in 1964, 38%. We believe that, in the early 1960s, the reader was not familiar with the characters nor the actors who played them, and, therefore, instead of mentioning proper names, they mentioned the programs. However, from 1965 onwards, there was a drastic change in the approach to this issue when, in 1966, 88% and 1967, 84% of the cases analyzed mentioned TV celebrities. From this, it is possible to affirm that the reports with artists, the gossip sections, the giveaways for gifts from idols, the sticker albums, and other strategies adopted by *Intervalo* magazine helped the reader to get to know “the face” of the TV personalities, acquire familiarity and, consequently, intimacy with those people and begin to develop their likes and dislikes, participating more and more actively in the letters section, asking questions, clarifying doubts and asking for photos and addresses.

In this way, the editorial strategies created by *Intervalo* magazine helped to build a new television audience and a new type of reader, whose emotional bonds were reinforced weekly through a new copy. The magazine was actively involved in forming this new audience, fulfilling several functions in its pages; after all, it taught about TV, brought technical information, presented and reinforced television programming, and related to its audience that was overflowing with curiosities about the new television universe. Furthermore, its central role, in addition to creating a fantasy world that did not exist, was to consolidate and build a panel of celebrities that brought the reader closer to television.

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About the authors

Talita Souza Magnolo

Substitute Professor at the Faculty of Communication at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora. Ph.D. from the Postgraduate Program in Communication at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora, in the line “Media Competence, Aesthetics, and Temporality.” International Visiting Research Fellow at Brown University, in Providence, United States, in the History department, under the guidance of Professor James N. Green. Coordinator of the José Marques de Melo Award from Rede Alcar (2023-2027). Postgraduate from the Federal University of Juiz de Fora in 2014, on the MBA course in Marketing and Business. Graduated in Social Communication, specializing in Advertising from the Juiz de Fora Higher Education Center in 2012. Vice-leader of the Research Group (CNPQ) “Communication, City and Memory.” Email: talita.magnolo@yahoo.com.br.

Susana Azevedo Reis

Ph.D. student in the Postgraduate Program in Communication at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora, in the line “Media Competence, Aesthetics, and Temporality.” Director of Documentation at the Brazilian Association of Media History (ALCAR) for the 2023-2027 term and Capes scholarship holder. She has a degree in Journalism from the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (2015), a master’s degree in Communication from the Postgraduate Program in Communication at UFJF (2018), and an MBA in Digital Marketing from Unopar (2019). Member of the Research Group (CNPQ) “Communication, City and Memory”. Email: susanareis.academico@gmail.com.

Christina Ferraz Musse

She is a professor of the Journalism Course at the Faculty of Communication at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF) and a permanent professor at the Postgraduate Program in Communication at UFJF. She has a master’s degree (2001), a doctorate in Communication and Culture from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (2006), and a post-doctorate from the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (2017). She is a visiting professor at the University of Paris VIII, Saint-Denis, France, where she taught classes and worked alongside professors Anne-Marie Autissier and Alain Sinou from the Institute of European Studies. She was president of the Alcar Network-Brazilian Association of Media History Researchers from 2019 to 2023, having been elected director of International Relations of the Association for the 2023-2027 term. She is a member of the Connected Stories Network, with researchers from Latin America. Vice-coordinator of the Journalism Studies GT of the Latin American Association of Communication Researchers - Alaic. Leader of the Research Group (CNPQ) “Communication, City and Memory.” Email: cferrazmusse@gmail.com.

Authors' contribution

Magnolo, T. S.: conceptualization - investigation, methodology, data analysis - original draft – translation; Reis, S. A.: conceptualization – writing - proofreading and editing – translation; Musse, C. F.: supervision – proofreading and editing.

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