Editorial 3

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Emotions and discourses in public controversies

Emociones y discursos en las controversias públicas

The emergence of the "Affective Turn" in Social Sciences (Arfuch, 2016) has allowed academia to revisit the Arendtian approach to constructing public issues and common affairs, by incorporating the question of emotions and affections into the configuration of public life.

Research into the role of socio-affective experiences in shaping the common world has advanced in parallel with a growing interest in hypotheses relating to the processes of deep mediatisation that define today's societies (Hjarvard, 2017). This approach refers to a constitutive interdependence, in which media activities merge with those of socio-political, economic, cultural or religious institutions, producing far-reaching structural transformations at the macro level. This mediatisation process operates according to specific media logics, which also entail an affective dimension.

This special issue explores the point at which both perspectives converge; that is, socio-affective experiences in the context of mediatisation. To do so, it aims for a more comprehensive, interdisciplinary reflection of communicative phenomena in the public sphere. It also follows in the footsteps of Martin Barbero: shifting away from a media-centric perspective towards one that fosters dialogue across a diverse range of disciplinary and methodological perspectives.

Contributors were called upon to exchange viewpoints on forms of emotional expression in the public sphere and, in particular, to explore their relationship with exercises of power, the bearing they have on shaping common affairs, and on the different stances and actors involved in controversies; to delve into the affective assemblages that block a particular issue or bring it into the limelight; to examine how audiences, together with political and cultural communities, are constructed; to observe the feelings and emotional impulses that give rise to forms of participation and communicative practices across mediatised platforms, including traditional and social media. To look, in short, at the various degrees of affective intensity triggered within public arenas to identify, engage and mobilise democratic audiences in constructing a common world.

The six articles that comprise this special edition deal with the imaginaries and socio-affective aspects of media discourse. They also reflect on the frameworks of meaning (and feeling) conveyed by the media, drawing on a content study that defines objects, subjects, positions and strategies in public controversies.

The issue opens with "Toxic emotions in the new public sphere: media controversies and hate speech," an article by Rafael Alcácer-Guirao and Héctor Fouce, which explains how public discourse provides a space for mediation between emotions and action. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, they present the case for a diverse public sphere, in which the destructive potential of hate speeches is lessened, not by repressive measures or exclusive safe spaces, but via the media, by guaranteeing spaces for democratic mediation. These serve as a participatory model, facilitating conversation between communities and allowing for the safe expression of counter responses.

In public controversies, not only is the media a public arena, but it also plays an active role in delineating affective communities. Zaira García-calahorra and Cristina Peñamarín adopt this perspective in their

analysis of "Audience emotions in journalistic texts during the Catalan-Spanish confrontation". They look at how the newspapers, El País and Ara, give a moral and affective assessment of the situation, the opposition and its allies, mobilising complex affective assemblages that draw on both negative emotions (anger, fear, contempt) and positive emotions (enthusiasm, satisfaction, pride). These are presented in the article as the basic components of affective communities shared with their target audiences.

Marta Castillo-González goes on to explore how media representation of affective dispositions among young people is in the service of a "cool precariousness". In "The discursive trendisation of youthful precariousness in the Spanish digital press", Castillo traces the way in which hegemonic media discourse portrays this youthful precariousness in a positive light, recasting it as a fashion experience (coliving, nesting, freeganism, etc.). In this regard, it assumes a performative aspect, transcending negative emotions associated with poverty, such as guilt and shame.

Josep Pedro and Begoña Gutiérrez-Martínez examine a way of life for a community of Afro-descendants in Spain, whose relations and ties to one another stem from a series of political and cultural arrangements combined with affective dynamics. "Women artists in the Spanish scene of African American music: identities, speeches, and emotions in the public sphere" adopts an ethnographic approach to the study of musical interpretation, its spaces, practices, and performers. It is a kind of public sphere that, not only welcomes diversity, but also accentuates what is common in terms of shared roles, sensitivities, and purpose.

The issue closes with two articles exploring the social network Twitter as one of the best venues for recording contemporary public disputes. In the "Sentiment Analysis of Twitter's agenda-setting regarding Spanish political parties during the 2018 Motion of Censure. A Compositional Data Approach", Marc Blasco-Duatis and Germà Coenders move beyond traditional research in this area to include sentiment analysis in their proposal. By applying compositional data analysis (CoDa) to political agenda-setting on Twitter, alongside sentiment analysis, they demonstrate the feasibility of a method that constitutes "the first proven experience of a CoDa study of two compositions in the field of political communication".

Also taking a methodological approach, in "#Impeachment of Donald Trump: Emotions and Speeches in the Virtual Twitter Communities", Karines Rodríguez-Díaz and Yamile Haber-Guerra propose using multimodal discourse and data mining to explore feelings in virtual communities. In their essay, they emphasise the usefulness of techniques for processing a relevant corpus and analysing materials with varied content.

To close, we would like to thank Victoria Tur-Viñes, Carmen Marta-Lazo and Jesús Segarra-Saavedra for their generous support in putting together this special issue, as well as the Spanish Association of Communication Research (AEIC) for all their work on the subject.

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