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-Florencia CHICANO RAMOS



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New technologies and media: The democratization of communication?

Ramiro ALBRIEU (RA) and Rocío Garré TRAVADELO (RGT):
Do you think the expansion of new forms of communication is improving people's capacity to be informed?

Florencia CHICANO RAMOS (FCR): Undoubtedly, new technologies and social networks have democratized access to information, allowing each person to become both a content creator and a consumer. This has led us to an era of over-information that has also led to the appearance of fake news -which, according to statistics, spreads seven times more than real news because they appeal to emotion. In this sense, the average user should be more critical and check the information with sources with a track record or dedicated to the subject.

New technologies have opened up the playing field. Today we see new players within journalism, such as streamers and influencers, who sometimes even put the sector in check and make us communicators have to constantly reinvent ourselves so as not to generate displacement in our jobs.

RA/RGT: Within this democratization of communication and these new users and consumers dominating the scene, do you think new hierarchies with more dominant voices will emerge? Or will we move towards a world where the crowd prevails?

FCR: The traditional media are still more important because of the whole process behind publishing news. In any case, the new actors also become communicators and challenge the most dominant voices and the way of doing journalism. I think it is essential to highlight the importance of critical consumption and to understand that everything on social

networks is not absolute and, therefore, the media guarantee that: checked and as objective information as possible, although there are always the editorial line's points of view.

RA/RGT: Do you think some skills have fallen into disuse in your daily work?

FCR: The pillars of journalism are still the same, such as journalistic judgment and checking the information. Indeed, it is not so important to have a university degree to practice journalism nowadays. These new actors who become communicators and this “opening of the game” make it much more essential to have new skills than a degree. Having a 360° vision, multitasking, not only being a writer. It is necessary to be competitive: to know how to edit videos or graphic pieces, have skills in community management, and know everything that has to do with the language of social networks. These are the most requested skills today instead of a bachelor's degree.

RA/RGT: Do you think the degree's lesser importance responds more to the fact that educational institutes could not adapt to the changes or simply because the necessary skills are not learned in traditional formal education?

FCR: A university's more traditional academic background is still relevant, but it is not enough. It is necessary to complement it with other courses and workshops. It is also vital for a worker to be self-taught and curious to incorporate other

skills that will not be given to you by the university but probably by YouTube or the internet itself or any further study or complementary you want.

The university is not going to guarantee that you will find a job or that you will dedicate yourself to this because it is clear that there are actors who do not have university studies but become excellent communicators and target an influential audience.

And while this is something positive about the advance of new technologies, on the other side, it shows the precariousness and lack of regulation of jobs in the sector and how having the same salary, you perform various tasks that are different jobs. Therefore, the new ways of doing journalism should also be reflected in the monetary level of workers' salaries.

RA/RGT: In your daily work routine, has the arrival of new technologies completely displaced offline work, or do you still keep some analogical part when it comes to journalism?

FCR: Here it is important to highlight the impacts of being online on mental health and the importance of looking for moments or places to be offline.

I spend a lot of time on social networks to learn when to use each for each purpose. For example, today, if I had to choose a platform to have a LIVE and I want to bring a wid-

er audience, I would do it live on YouTube or Twitch. Even on TV, sometimes you can see that the news is about a post on Instagram or Twitter. Many personalities born in social media are now part of the traditional media.

My work leads me to be constantly, and also for personal taste, constantly on social networks. Anyway, I need non-digital things, such as a notebook, to disconnect or take notes. I also need the paper in my hand to carry out my work. It gives me security. For me, it is important because it anchors the object to a thought or specific content.

RA/RGT: We know that you cover different tasks or topics within your work. Was that your decision to open up to other spaces, or was it a decision of the media in which you work?

FCR: There are spaces where I start conquering, showing interest, insisting, and training myself to perform better and better.

RA/RGT: How do you see gender distribution concerning your jobs?

FCR: I see equity generally in my industry, although my team has been changing a lot. It also depends a lot on the sector we are talking about. As far as the music is concerned, it is clearly led by men. The producers are mainly men, as well as the directors. We can see a little more equity in communication, but it's infrequent to find a woman

on the set. In political journalism, something similar happens with a few women working. In entertainment, the gap is smaller, but inequalities are seen anyway.