

Emotions

The Driving Force Behind Journalistic Practices

The editors of this volume first met in person in 2019 at the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) conference in Madrid. During this initial encounter, we shared both a personal and professional interest in the plight of Venezuela, a country that, despite its immense challenges, remains one about which we are vibrantly passionate. We decided to explore the option of conducting joint research on Venezuelan journalism. We both have deep ties to this country, ties tinged with nostalgia for a time of peace and democracy, sorrow, fear, anxiety, and frustration over its current situation, as well as joy in the resilience of its people, their warmth, their zest for life, their openness, and their music. Our affection for many of our colleagues, friends, and fellow citizens in Venezuela also shaped our commitment to this project.

After the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2022 we began our collaborative work by designing a study on journalistic fear, focusing on data from Venezuela, a country impacted by fear in various aspects of journalistic practice, both for journalists and for the people they report on. However, as we delved deeper, we discovered that the existing literature on the relationship between journalism and not just fear, but all emotions, was just emerging and was fragmented.

Emotions have always been inherently present in journalism practice, journalistic content, and audience reactions (e.g., Danielson, this volume). However, in journalism studies, emotions were along a marginal or neglected topic, as journalism was perceived as being objective and impartial, escaping from emotional experiences and reactions. This did not derive just from epistemological premises of journalism, but also from the methodological challenges involved in studying the subjective experience of emotions, which might require empirical control over the context in which journalistic creation, transmission, and reception occur. While we delved into fear in journalism, we also noted that many studies focused on how media structures, professional norms, and external factors like politics or economics shaped journalistic practice but overlooked the emotional dimensions of journalists themselves, human beings who experience and process their work emotionally, which has consequences for the entire social system in which they operate.

We observed that much of the literature did not conceive the experience of being a human being as a whole, nor on the role emotions have on news production, decision-making, censorship, and the relationship with audiences, for instance. Despite this, we recognized that there was a growing interest in exploring the emotional dimensions of journalism, particularly in violence,

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stress, or precariousness, and times of crisis, which is a subject area touching all of us in the 2020s, since we are living in the “world-in-crisis”, using Simon Cottle’s words in this volume.

Paradoxically, as artificial intelligence threatens to replace human journalism with machines, we realized that the individuality of both those who produce the news, and those who consume it, is a vital element in understanding the realities and decisions we make today, in all areas of human life, including journalism. As a result, we determined that it was urgent and necessary to reclaim the importance of studying the relationship between journalism and emotion, and that it was time for a pioneering work to illuminate this path.

The Handbook of Journalism and Emotion is the product of an interweaving of emotional and rational aspects, which, above all, place the human being – us, our friends, colleagues, compatriots, and fellow travelers – at the center of journalism. This idea strongly resonated with the voices of the 60 contributors to the foreword and the 40 chapters of this book, which explore key aspects of theory, production, content, and responses to emotion in journalism. In one way or another, they share our belief that journalistic experience – whether human or artificial in origin – is incomplete, fragmented, and devoid of meaning if interpreted from a place that dismisses emotions, which are an essential dimension of the human experience.

Our journey, which has now reached its third year, led us down a path full of uncertainties about which directions we would take, very much in the spirit of explorers charting new lands. Consistent with this mindset, we invited researchers from all continents to join us in mapping the terrain of journalism and emotion studies, with the added goal of moving away from the typically Western perspectives that have shaped existing research (see Araujo, in this volume; Šimunjak, in this volume). As a result, the volume features authors from Africa, the America, Asia, Europe, and Oceania who, from diverse epistemologies, theoretical, and methodological perspectives, attempt to understand the multifaceted relationship between journalistic practice (the production of messages, their content, and their reception) and the emotions and affects of both journalists and audiences. As readers will discover in the following pages, the diversity of study objects is vast and highly suggestive. The methods adopted by the authors are also varied (from content analysis to digital ethnographies, qualitative interviews, surveys, experimental works, and meta-analyses), as are the theoretical approaches (sociological, socio-psychological, computational, neuroscientific, or linguistic). We hope that this book will serve as a beacon guiding the development of the field in the years to come.

Next, we would like to briefly introduce the content of this volume, which will help reaffirm its timeliness and showcase its contribution to the study of journalism and emotion. In addition to the foreword by Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, one of the foremost advocates of the recognition of emotion in journalism and its systematic study within journalism studies, our volume is divided into four sections, each containing ten chapters.

The first section, *Theory*, presents works intended to explore diverse approaches to the epistemological understanding of the role of emotions in the conception, process and reception of journalistic pieces. This section includes works reflecting both the macro and micro levels for explaining different aspects of the emotional experience of journalism. It presents academic theoretical discussions from cultural, epistemological, ethical, feminist, historical and professional angles. It examines the epistemic value of emotions in news production (Johana Kotišová and Richard Stupart), the historical approach to the study of the relationship between emotion and journalism (Rita Araújo), the need for an affect-inclusive definition of journalism that reflects the full human experience (Perry Parks), and how emotional labor shapes journalists’ work (Maja Šimunjak). The discussion also delves into theoretical debates about the emotional frames in peace journalism (Metin Ersoy, Dambo Tamar, and Ahmad Auwal), the impact of sensationalism on audiences (Josephine Lehaff), and the increasing emotionalized anti-press discourse leading to harassment of journalists (Wooyeol Shin and Changwook Kim). Additionally, it highlights

decolonial (Martin Oller Alonso) and feminist (Lambrini Papadopoulou and Eugenia Siapera) approaches delving into emotional well-being and care ethics in journalism. Finally, we conclude the section discussing how emotions and affects can guide us toward pathways of an ecologically sustainable and socially just future (Simon Cottle).

The second section, *Production*, presents current research on emotion in news making. Like the previous section, it incorporates a range of micro and macro theoretical approaches to understanding how emotions influence journalistic practices and news production. However, it particularly examines the emotional challenges journalists face due to the emotional sphere surrounding the systems affecting news making. Topics include strategies for managing trauma (Stephen Juke), the emotional toll of covering crises, conflicts, and war (Kristin Skare Orgeret), the collective dimension of fear in journalistic environments (Virpi Salojärvi and María T. Soto-Sanfiel), and mental health impacts of job insecurity (Dolors Palau-Sampio and Maria Iranzo-Cabrera). The chapters included in this section also explore how sociopolitical experiences shape journalists' perceptions of crisis in transformative media landscapes (Shangyuan Wu), the role of emotions in engagement journalism (Antje Glück), reflection on the *emosphere* in journalism, the emotional aura surrounding human emotional communication (Teija Waaramaa), and the role of emotions in citizen journalism during social movements (Şahika Doğan). The section ends with chapters on emotional intensity as a factor driving journalists to leave the field (T.J. Thomson and Albertus Prestianta), and the emotional labor of women journalists facing violence (Bruno Frutuosa-Costa).

The third section, *Contents*, examines the relationship between emotions and journalistic information, focusing on how journalists' emotions shape different narratives, sources, subjects, and media formats. It also explores emotions as a journalistic tool. Specifically, it analyzes emotions in journalism through linguistic and multimodal perspectives (Isabel Alonso-Belmonte), including their expression across various media formats. The section also addresses historical commercial strategies leveraging emotion (Magnus Danielson), and visual representations, such as emotional authority in atrocity reporting (Noora Kotilainen). The discussion further explores emotional expressions by female journalists who have experienced abuse (Dinfin Mulupi and Linda Steiner), the emotional dynamics that turn journalists into activists in critical environments (Marta Milena Barrios), expectations regarding emotional expression in specific news systems (Nassir Bouali and Jairo Lugo-Ocando), and humor as a form of resistance in war reporting (Nataliia Steblyna and Dvořák Jaroslav). Additionally, the section highlights affective news strategies in radio journalism across different cultural contexts (Nkoala Sisanda, Christina Chan-Metoo and Modestus Fosu), emotional display in AI news anchors (Bibo Lin and Tingyu Zou), and the influence of voice and emphasis in news delivery (Emma Roderó).

The fourth and final section of the book, *Responses*, showcases state-of-the-art research on the emotional responses of diverse audiences to journalism, drawing from traditional media effects scholarship. In addition, journalists are integral members of these audiences and targets of the audience's emotional reactions, embedded in social contexts where emotions act as collective forces shaping shared understandings of reality. Consequently, this section examines the emotional responses to journalism of both audiences and journalists. It explores how emotions influence audience engagement and interaction with news (Juan-José Igartua), reactions to expectancy violations in reporting (Robin Blom), and the emotional toll on journalists, particularly in relation to online harassment of women journalists (Luqiu Luwei Rose). The discussion also addresses news avoidance driven by negative emotions (Javier Serrano-Puche and María Fernanda Novoa-Jaso), and journalists experiencing trolling (Mphathisi Ndlovu and Mbongeni Msimanga), and memories of traumatic events (Ola Ogunyeni and Benjamin Muindi), in addition to the ethical potential of care in documentary filmmaking (Erika T. Walukiewicz). Additionally, the section discusses information disorders and hateful discourse (David Blanco-Herrero and Javier Amores), and the role of

emotions in experiencing immersive journalism (Kamilla Bergsnev and Ana Luisa Sánchez Laws). The book closes with a hopeful perspective, emphasizing the importance of empathy training as a vital tool for future journalists (Janet Blank-Libra) and humanity. We place our faith in it.

As readers will discover, this volume brings together groundbreaking research on the profound relationship between emotions and journalism, featuring pivotal studies from across the globe – for example, Colombia, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, Mainland China, Singapore, Spain, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and Zimbabwe. Reflecting the expanding and diverse body of interdisciplinary knowledge, this collection weaves together a rich array of theoretical approaches and cultural insights, offering fresh perspectives on this increasingly vital subject. As the first comprehensive collection of its kind, it fills a significant gap in the existing literature, providing an in-depth exploration of the critical issues and methodologies that resonate with academics, media practitioners, and students alike. By mapping the emotional terrain of journalism, this book contributes to the ongoing academic discourse while laying the foundation for future research, stimulating interest from scholars, educators, media professionals, and policymakers. We are confident that it will serve as an essential reference for researchers, media creators, and professionals across television, cinema, radio, print, and digital platforms, all of whom seek to understand how emotions shape both the practice and portrayal of journalism. Ultimately, this book will inspire deeper reflection on the emotional forces driving journalism, aspiring to become an indispensable resource for anyone seeking to comprehend the emotional dynamics shaping not only the media, but humanity itself today.

From its very inception, this volume has been shaped by affection, feelings, and emotions. Guided by this spirit, recognizing that emotions are the essential tools that enable us to connect with and understand one another, regardless of language, cultural context, or individual experience, we aim to shed light on the deep, inseparable bond between journalism and emotion. This connection reveals the journalist as a human being, experiencing and communicating with others who share similar internal struggles, hopes, and joys. With this understanding, we seek to reframe journalistic practice as a reflection of human desires, motivations, and aspirations, contributing to meaningful progress in fostering more inclusive, democratic, just, and authentic societies.

The editors express their sincere gratitude to Wiley and the IAMCR, an organization in which we both actively participate and whose values resonate with our own, for recognizing the importance of this topic and supporting our proposal. This work has now come to fruition, thanks to the effort and collaboration of this dedicated group of engaged scholars.

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Editors