

Disruptive Media Practices: Understanding the Adaption of Media Practices to Changes in the Sociopolitical Context

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The past decades have seen a multitude of changes in the way people relate to media, be as professional journalists, bloggers, citizen journalists, social media users, readers, listeners, viewers – roles that are also now constantly interchangeable in our everyday lives. We can attribute many of these developments to the rise of new technologies, which brought about a reduction of production costs and made media more intuitive and pervasive. But technology alone doesn't explain the occurrence of new media practices. Instead, I suggest we look at the broader sociopolitical context – and, more specifically, at decisive moments that transform this context –, for a more complex grasp of such processes. In short, how do moments of sociopolitical disruption contribute to create or change media practices?

I will answer this question through a qualitative approach that seeks not only to analyze the case of the 2013 and 2014 protests in the Brazilian city of Fortaleza, but also to make patterns and processes in it visible, generating a theoretical model that can then be applied to similar cases. I will draw from the methodological resources of Grounded Theory, such as expert interviews and their subsequent coding, which aims at generating categories from the experiences relayed by the interviewees. In addition, in a multi-layered qualitative content analysis, I will look at the coverage produced by the actors who were interviewed and trace parallels between their experience on the ground and the output generated by this experience. That way, we can also see how media practices shape the discourse in counter public spheres.

I hope to collaborate to the scholarship on media practices by providing an approach that goes beyond the consequences of technological developments and takes into account changes in the broader sociopolitical reality of societies, through the lens of some of their most pivotal moments.