

Book Review



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Technology, consumption, and communication: media and advertising studies from a Brazilian perspective

Tecnologia, consumo e comunicação: estudos de mídia e publicidade sob um ponto de vista brasileiro

Tecnología, consumo y comunicación: estudios de medios y publicidad desde una perspectiva brasileña

Book Review of:

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Abstract

Mídia, publicidade e desafios do contemporâneo (ECA-USP, 2024) is edited by Eneus Trindade, Maria Cristina Dias Alves, and Clotilde Perez. The work aims to consolidate advertising studies in Brazil from a native epistemological perspective, bringing together research on the sector's transformations. The critical analysis, while acknowledging the book as a milestone in the field, notes that its analytical potential would be enhanced by an explicit theoretical framework crossing the investigations, which would confer greater epistemological cohesion.

Keywords: Advertising; Mediatization; Consumption.

Resumo

Mídia, publicidade e desafios do contemporâneo (ECA-USP, 2024) é organizada por Eneus Trindade, Maria Cristina Dias Alves e Clotilde Perez. A obra busca consolidar os estudos do campo publicitário no Brasil a partir de uma perspectiva epistemológica nativa, congregando trabalhos sobre as metamorfoses do setor. A análise crítica, ainda que reconheça o livro como um marco para a área, pondera que sua potência analítica seria amplificada por uma articulação teórica explícita que pudesse atravessar as investigações, o que lhe conferiria maior coesão epistemológica.

Palavras-chave: Publicidade; Mídia; Consumo.

Resumen

Mídia, publicidade e desafios do contemporâneo (ECA-USP, 2024) está organizada por Eneus Trindade, Maria Cristina Dias Alves y Clotilde Perez. La obra busca consolidar los estudios sobre publicidad en Brasil desde una perspectiva epistemológica autóctona, reuniendo trabajos sobre las metamorfosis del sector. El análisis crítico, aunque reconoce el libro como un hito en el área, considera que su potencia analítica se vería amplificada por una articulación teórica explícita que atravesara las investigaciones, lo que le conferiría una mayor cohesión epistemológica.

Palabras clave: Publicidad; Mediatización; Consumo.



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Advertising functions as a discursive system that, in a dialectical relationship, simultaneously constitutes and is constituted by social formations, operating as a central mechanism in the production and circulation of cultural meanings (Baudrillard, 1981; Williams, 1980). Within this interactive landscape, the collection *Mídia, publicidade e desafios do contemporâneo* (ECA-USP, 2024)¹ emerges as a substantial contribution to field debates. Organized by Eneus Trindade, Maria Cristina Dias Alves, and Clotilde Perez—researchers from the School of Communications and Arts at the University of São Paulo—the work brings together thirteen studies analyzing the metamorphoses of the advertising ecosystem. The chapters are articulated around thematic axes encompassing technological connections, such as cyber-advertising and algorithmic mediations, emerging issues of social relevance, strategic manifestations, and new research perspectives in advertising and propaganda. The volume marks a moment of consolidation for advertising studies within the Brazilian context and proposes a native epistemological viewpoint for understanding the advertising phenomenon.

“Mídia, publicidade e tecnologia” is the title of the first part of this collection. It examines the reconfigurations of advertising communication in the face of digital innovations. For instance, the text by Azevedo and Atem utilizes the concept of cyber-advertising to investigate its discursive, semiotic, and political ramifications, demonstrating how the “datafication”² of life is articulated with the maintenance of power structures. Subsequently, the research by Trindade and colleagues deepens the analysis of algorithmic mediations across distinct spheres of consumption—with an emphasis on food and fashion applications—identifying new advertising assemblages that develop beyond traditional actors. The chapter by Burrowes, Machado, and Rett problematizes the figure of the *prosumer*³ within the Artificial Intelligence (AI) ecosystem, arguing that the apparent freedom of production and consumption is managed by sophisticated control mechanisms. These reflections can be further extended through the perspective of a progressively mediatized culture (Hjarvard; Petersen, 2013), in which consumer goods operate within a dense “commercial intertextuality” (Jansson, 2002). In this conjuncture, artificial intelligence systems can be understood, in the view of Roumbanis (2025), as “vampire-objects” that absorb human action and “frozen voices” that mediate relations, potentially restructuring subjectivities and social life.

Part two, “Mídia, publicidade e questões emergentes,” establishes four investigations into the reconfigurations of the communication field. The first text promotes a differentiation between the communicative mediations of mediatization, examining advertising literacy in the Avon case. The second analyzes political consumerism and its manifestations (*buycott* and *boycott*),⁴ questioning cause-related advertising and the market’s response—a phenomenon that exposes the paradoxes of mediatized ethical consumption (Eskjær, 2013). The third investigation proposes an expansion of the concept of conscious consumption beyond environmental issues toward a cultural turn. The final chapter establishes a dichotomy between social advertising as a tactic of resistance and sensory advertising as a mechanism of domination. Such dynamics, structured under an image culture (Jansson, 2002), are understood through processes of the extension and accommodation of social institutions to media logic (Schulz, 2004), thereby demonstrating the complexity of interactions in contemporary society.

In turn, the third part, “Mídia, publicidade e estratégias,” addresses contemporary communicational tactics. The first text, by one of the organizers, Clotilde Perez, studies the collaboration between Louis Vuitton and Yayoi Kusama, treating aestheticization as a central mechanism in luxury consumption. The author’s analysis indicates that the articulation between art and the market institutes a sign universe that supersedes the product, organizing a set of practices and worldviews, in line with researchers such as Warde (2014). Next, Castro and Andres document the reconfigurations of television media during the COVID-19 pandemic,

¹ The title of this book can be translated as *Media, advertising, and contemporary challenges*. An English version of this work is not yet available.

² A phenomenon that translates aspects of social life (such as behaviors, interactions, and emotions) into digital data amenable to measurement, algorithmic analysis, and predictive inference. This continuous commensuration, fueled by platform affordances, grounds the logic of the society of control and feeds dynamics of algorithmic monetization.

³ A neologism coined by A. Toffler designating individuals who simultaneously consume and produce, whether content, reviews, or influences within the supply chain. In the approach of the reviewed work, the prosumer is an agent of brand co-construction, actively participating in the symbolic production of contemporary consumption.

⁴ Consumer activism strategies defined as opposing yet complementary forms of political consumption: the *boycott* refers to the voluntary and assertive abstention from purchasing products or services from brands representing practices deemed morally, politically, or environmentally improper, with the aim of pressuring them toward change. Conversely, the *buycott* constitutes a deliberate act of purchasing from companies aligned with desirable values, principles, or practices; that is, it serves as a form of moral and economic incentive, highlighting activism through positive engagement.



describing alterations in the programming and commercial breaks of Rede Globo as a strategic response to a medical-sanitary and social crisis. Finally, Correa, Andres, and Petermann recover the historical trajectory of integrated communication, proposing a transversal model that incorporates consumer culture and digital dynamics as vectors, which redefines interactions between brands and publics on platforms that engender new forms of serial reciprocity (Roumbanis, 2025).

“Mídia, publicidade e perspectivas de pesquisa” is the final part of this collection of texts, directing focus toward reflection on the field of knowledge and its future lines of inquiry. Santos presents an analysis of the Spanish film *The occupant* (Hogar, 2020),⁵ seeking to understand the cinematic representation of the advertising professional and the ethical implications of their conduct—a point that dialogues with the need for a balance between power and responsibility in the industry, as defended by Murphy (1998). Toaldo and Hansen, in turn, conduct a mapping of scientific production at the interface of advertising and ethics, exposing a scarcity of in-depth studies on the theme and an absence of consolidated frameworks, which underlines the pertinence of moral principles for the field. Finally, Pompeu’s text employs a bibliometric survey to identify themes and interests in recent advertising research, pointing out the growth of objects such as algorithms and influencers, indicating the emergence of new mediation systems (Roumbanis, 2025) as investigative horizons.

Mídia, publicidade e desafios do contemporâneo, as the reader will attest, is a compilation of studies representing a landmark in the consolidation of advertising research in Brazil, as it systematizes a native and updated scientific perspective. The articles, distributed across pertinent thematic axes, rigorously discuss some of the phenomena characterizing the mediatization of consumption (Jansson, 2002). It is believed, however, that the analytical potency of the collection could be amplified by an explicit theoretical articulation that unified the investigations. The work would gain cohesion if, for example, the processes of amalgamation—in which advertising logics intrude into everyday life—and accommodation—in which other social spheres adapt to media imperatives—were utilized as an integrating axis for the distinct chapters (Schulz, 2004). This would situate, more evidently, technological transformations as facets of a social metaprocess rather than as isolated events.

It must be mentioned that dedication to reflecting on the impact of new digital technologies, especially regarding algorithmic mediations and artificial intelligence, is one of the most relevant aspects of the work. It is posited, however, that an analysis of greater depth could be achieved by surpassing the purely communicational plane. The collection, undeniably, prepares the ground for future investigations into the agency properties of digital information and communication technologies, which, as seen, can be conceived as “vampire-objects” due to their insatiable need for data, capable of provoking unforeseen systemic ruptures (Roumbanis, 2025). This framing points to the existential and material consequences of new power arrangements. Consequently, the publication’s importance rests not only on the analyses it gathers but on its potential to catalyze advanced theoretical dialogues. As it competently sketches the contemporary scenario, the work stands as a highly recommended reference, given that it establishes a starting point for the next generation of research in the field of social communication and, by extension, advertising in Brazil.

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⁵ *The occupant*, by brothers Àlex and David Pastor, centers the narrative on Javier Muñoz, a former advertising executive who became famous producing idealized commercials under the slogan “the life you deserve,” a symbol of his authority over the consumerist imaginary. Upon being fired and ostracized by a market voracious for creative youth, he comes to embody the crisis of professional identity in contemporary advertising, whose vaporous status rhetoric is detached from social reality. Divested not only of material goods but of a symbolic image, Javier becomes the protagonist of a psychological thriller that dramatizes the collapse of the subject configured by the logic of advertising.



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