

Limits and Opacities of Advertising and Public Radio Propaganda.

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Título: Limites e Opacidades da Propaganda Publicitária e de Rádio Pública

Título: Límites y Opacidades de la Publicidad y la Propaganda en Radios Públicas

Title: Limits and Opacities of Advertising and Public Radio Propaganda

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This paper examines the programming and the radial conceptions and realizations of advertising and propaganda that underlie the emissions of three public radio stations in the province of San Luis (Argentina). It seeks to problematize about the scope of the concept of advertising and propaganda in three different public media.

The research was carried out on the stations Radio Unvime 87.9, Radio Universidad in Villa Mercedes (San Luis, Argentina) - FM 97.9; FM Radio Universidad Villa Mercedes 97,9 both of Villa Mercedes, San Luis (Argentina) and Radio Municipalidad de la Punta 87.7 in La Punta (San Luis, Argentina).

The National University of Villa Mercedes designed and requested to the authorities by the community of Villa Mercedes was created in the year and currently develops its initial activities promoting careers of interest to students in the region within the framework of the new dynamics of Higher Education.

The National University of San Luis is an institution of higher education, public, free and secular and develops academic, research and extension functions; offering the community comprehensive training, revaluing its history and heritage, and guaranteeing the validity of the principles of the University Reform of 1918.

The complex nucleus proposed by traditional advertising and institutional advertising (that referring to its own institutions that manage it) in the public media of state agencies is an issue that has not received the attention of academics.

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The terms *advertising and propaganda* have been used interchangeably and are exchanged, but at a professional and academic level both terms express two different concepts. In the case of advertising, it is intended to influence the consumption behavior of a person through advertising campaigns or actions and in propaganda it is about people adhering to an ideology or belief.

Public state radios sometimes have no publicity in the strict sense, but they do have public announcements and messages that speak of themselves and of the organizations that created them. All of them are radios that depend on state public bodies, since both the University and the Municipality are organizations that have been created by the political system and that are different from each other. These media companies are not for profit, since their operation is ensured by the resources provided by the public organizations to which they belong, in one case the Municipality of La Punta, in another the National University of Villa Mercedes and in the third, two faculties of the National University of San Luis located in the city of Villa Mercedes.

Government advertising is characterized as those advertising services that the medium itself produces but which are not advertising in the strict sense, ads that do not have an economic estimate or an income for the media and that includes press releases, various official activities or governmental, among others present in the state radios of the province of San Luis.

The Rapporteur ship for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR) has defined two types of publicity. Among them, advertising "*does not pay*", these include press releases, activity and government notices and legislative meetings, among others.

The structure of every advertisement is the promise of advertising, beauty, power, security, freedom and success and in this way transmits values such as competitiveness, eroticism, consumerism, success and happiness. A traditional definition of advertising can be characterized as "*a multiple communication technique that uses paid media to obtain predetermined commercial objectives, through training, change or reinforcement of the attitude of the people subjected to its action*" (BILLOROU, 1990: 3).

O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik, authors of the book "*Publicidad*" define advertising as follows: "*advertising is a paid effort, transmitted by mass media in order to persuade*"

(O'GUINN, ALLEN and SEMENIK, 1998:7). Later the same authors O'Guinn, Allen, and Semenik (2003:19) described advertising "*as a process of communication and as a way for companies to reach diverse audiences with persuasive information. about the brand*".

The ultimate goal of advertising is to persuade the public to consume a product or service and its purpose is the sale of a product. On the one hand, advertising creates needs to subsequently sell the products that suppose the satisfaction of that need. The levels of complexity of the advertising industry described by O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (1998) are advertisers (manufacturers and service companies, resellers and government and social organizations), advertising agencies, external services (companies of marketing research, information advisors and intermediaries, other communication organizations), media organizations (radio, television, print media, interactive media, support media, media conglomerates) and the target audience.

1. Institutional advertising

Regarding state advertising, the Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (CIDH) has defined two types of publicity. In the first place, the institutional advertising "*that is not invoiced and does not pay*", may include press releases and texts of laws or on meetings or legislative issues, among others. Second, "*paid*" advertising that includes ads paid in the press, radio or television, software and video material produced by or sponsored by the government (ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES OAS, 2003).

Here, we understand official advertising as all advertising placed on the media by the State, including production and dissemination expenses. There are two main mechanisms that convert this legitimate power of the State to communicate, in a tool of political pressure and proselytism: on the one hand, the discretionary assignment and on the other, the dissemination of messages of electoral content, support or propaganda. It is known that within these "sensitive and subtle" forms of censorship the pressures by means of the distribution of official advertising take first place. It basically consists of assigning or withdrawing advertising guidelines to benefit media and related journalists or to punish critics.

In this paper we seek to examine the issue of government advertising diffused in two public media that is not billed (is it publicity?) And therefore does not constitute a genuine economic income for the medium, that which diffuses in public media, in its own means, a universe of notices, messages and announcements about the public organization itself or about its management. The service for the medium of this type of messages is to position or improve the image of the medium in front of the audience.

Institutional advertising is constituted conceptually by the set of communication actions carried out in the space of the medium itself and where advertising resources are used in which the audience clearly identifies that the media is talking about itself and whose objective is different to the sale of products and services. This institutional publicity would fulfill a double function: to socialize and educate the citizenship and, in addition, it makes visible and characterizes the existence of the own means of communication.

Also, this type of advertising can be used by companies or another type of organization in campaigns of social content that try to achieve awareness on certain issues such as drugs, education, domestic violence, piracy, child exploitation, good food, the benefits of sports, etc.

Cortez González (2008) points out that institutional advertising refers to the publicity that is made from public institutions and administrations, which include information campaigns where institutions and public administration formulate public announcements such as tax payments, other types of publicity such as institutional campaigns against violence against women, etc. and that they have a socializing vocation and in third type of campaigns oriented to propaganda as the propagation of the achievements of the government with clear electoral intentions.

Cortez Gonzales emphasizes that:

"Institutional advertising is one in which the AA.PP. (Advertising Agencies) act as advertisers, and whose product is aimed at being a service to society. This service to society cannot be understood as manifesting the achievements of an administration in a partisan way, nor as a mere propaganda instrument, 5 but it must be oriented towards the collective social benefit, over parties or opinions, to try to build, strengthen or create a series of values and ideas that will help us create better societies, and why not, perhaps happier (CORTEZ GONZÁLEZ, 2008: 5).

In the permanence and repetition in the media of advertising messages lies the great power of attraction, homogenization and persuasion that advertising has.

2. The Law № 26.522 of Audiovisual Communication Services

The Law № 26.522 of Audiovisual Communication Services that governed since 2009 in the Argentine democracy allowed NGOs, universities and municipal and provincial states to have and manage their media with the idea of increasing the plurality of voices and opinions. The public media constitute a central portion of a developed media system, together with private media, must have constitutional protection and must be guaranteed their financing so that they can exercise their central functions for the consolidation of democracy. Through them, citizens can be informed and entertained. Often, in Argentina, public organizations have created their own means, not always with adequate financing and with the necessary resources that these means need to develop.

After the irruption of the military in Argentina in March 1976 and the breakdown of the Argentine democratic continuity, the Law N ° 22.285 of the Military Dictatorship was enforced until 2009. The Law № 26.522 of Audiovisual Communication Services was enacted and enacted on October 10, 2009. In this context, an Argentine state agency was created, such as the Federal Audiovisual Communication Services Authority (AFSCA) in charge of the application of the new Law on Audiovisual Communication Services. (AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION SERVICES N° 26,522 (MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS, 2009).

Later, a few months after the inauguration of President Mauricio Macri, a decree of necessity and urgency was issued on 267/2015, ordering the dissolution of the organization and its merger with the AFTIC into a new body called the National Communications Agency (ENACOM). . Although two precautionary measures were filed on January 11, the dissolution was temporarily annulled, for violating the current media law, although the precautionary measures were later revoked, creating a new body that was called the National Communications Agency (ENACOM).

The public and alternative media in Argentina characterized by Law No. 26,522 have the possibility and the challenge of offering citizens a different programming, alternative and different content aimed at particular audiences, the development of public debate and the service of institutional transparency. These media can (or should) generate

different agendas and opposed to private media and focus their attention on issues that generate attention and concerns of citizens from a different point of view.

Law No. 26,522 on Audiovisual Services establishes characteristics of advertising in Chap. VIII, Art. N ° 81:

"The licensees or authorized of the services of audio-visual communication will be able to emit publicity according to the following provisions:

a) Advertisements must be of national production when issued by the open broadcasting services or in the channels or signals characteristic of subscription services or inserted in national signals;

b) In the case of subscription television services, they may only insert advertisements in the signal corresponding to the self-generated channel;

c) In the case of the retransmission of the open TV signals, advertising may not be included except for those subscription services located in the primary coverage area of the open signal;

d) The signals transmitted by subscription services will only be able to dispose of the advertising bursts referred to in article 82 by direct contracting with each licensee and / or authorized party;

e) They will be broadcast with the same audio volume and must be separated from the rest of the programming;

f) Subliminal advertising understood by such that possesses aptitude to produce unconscious stimuli presented below the absolute sensory threshold will not be issued;

g) The stipulated for the use of the language and the protection of the minor will be fulfilled;

h) Advertising aimed at girls and boys should not encourage the purchase of products exploiting their inexperience and credulity;

i) Advertisements will not import discrimination of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ideological, socio-economic or nationality, among others; they will not diminish human dignity, they will not offend moral or religious convictions, they will not induce behaviors that are harmful to the environment or the physical and moral health of children and adolescents;

j) Advertising that stimulates the consumption of alcoholic beverages or tobacco or its manufacturers may only be carried out in accordance with the legal restrictions that affect those products;

k) *Programs dedicated exclusively to the promotion or sale of products may only be issued on the audiovisual communication services signals expressly authorized for such purpose by the application authority and in accordance with the corresponding regulations;*

l) *Advertisements, advertisements and advertising messages promoting aesthetic treatments and / or activities related to professional practice in the health area, must have the authorization of the competent authority to be disseminated and be in accordance with the legal restrictions that affect those products or services;*

m) *The advertising of games of chance must have the prior authorization of the competent authority;*

n) *The implementation of a systematized control mechanism that facilitates the verification of its effective issuance;*

ñ) *Each television advertising batch shall be initiated and concluded with the sign identifying the channel or signal, in order to distinguish it from the rest of the programming;*

o) *The publication of advertising must respect the professional responsibilities;*

p) *Advertising programs for products, infomercials and others of a similar nature cannot be accounted for the purposes of complying with their own programming fees and must comply with the guidelines set by the application authority for their issuance.*

The issuance of messages of public interest arranged by the Federal Audiovisual Communication Services Authority and the issuance of the distinctive sign, as well as the legal conditions of sale or portion required by the consumer's defense law, shall not be counted as publicity.

In our initial observations, it has been established that the media do not comply with clause ñ of art. 82 which establishes that "*each television advertising round shall be initiated and concluded with the sign identifying the channel or signal, in order to distinguish it from the rest of the programming*". Therefore, as happened in the past, the media do not distinguish in their scheduled broadcasts the content of their programs in the strict sense, advertising and institutional announcements. In as much, the article 82 that establishes the times of emission of the publicity according to means:

Article 82. - Advertising broadcasting time. The time of issuance of advertising is subject to the following conditions:

a) *Sound broadcasting: up to a maximum of fourteen (14) minutes per broadcast hour;*

b) *Open television: up to a maximum of twelve (12) minutes per broadcast hour;*

c) *Television by subscription; Licensees may insert advertisements in their own generation signal, up to a maximum of eight (8) minutes per hour.*

Signal registration holders may insert up to a maximum of six (6) minutes per hour. Advertising can only be inserted in the signals that make up the basic subscription of subscription services. The holders of signals must agree with the holders of the services by subscription the consideration for said publicity;

d) *In the audiovisual communication services by subscription, in the case of signals that reach the public by means of devices that require an additional payment not included in the basic service, advertising may not be inserted;*

e) *The application authority may determine the conditions for the insertion of advertising in the audiovisual artistic works of the plot unit; respecting the integrality of narrational unity;*

f) *The licensees and rights holders of the signals may accumulate the maximum time limit set in blocks of up to four (4) hours per day of programming.*

In audiovisual communication services, the maximum authorized time does not include the promotion of its own programming. These contents will not be computed within the percentages of own production required by this law.

The issuance of programs dedicated exclusively to teleshopping, promotion or advertising of products and services must be authorized by the application authority.

The regulations will establish the conditions for the insertion of promotions, sponsorships and advertising within the programs².

In the middle of the game and the tensions between publicity and propaganda in these public media, there are citizens and their rights to know government actions and the management of public resources originated in the taxes that citizens pay. The three public radios seek to differentiate themselves with little success from commercial radio stations in their programming and artisanal contents in general, not knowing well who their audiences are.

The university radio does not have advertisements while the municipal radio has it. The publicity of the Radio *Municipalidad de la Punta* 87.7 is characterized by notices,

² In then note of articles 81 and 82 expresses the norm quoted that *"the forecasts linked to the diffusion of publicity are linked to the need to guarantee the subsistence of the stations of open television of the interior of the country. In the same order of ideas, a tax is envisaged as a taxable event for advertising inserted in non-national signals and the impossibility of deducting, in accordance with the forecasts of income tax, investments in foreign advertising or non-national signals that could make Argentine advertisers"*.

messages and institutional announcements disseminated in the form of news and information and which are not subject to commercial invoicing in the media organization itself. Public radios, at least philosophically, have sought to differentiate themselves from commercial radios with a program and content according to their audiences.

3. Three Public Radios

The university radio does not have advertisements while the municipal radio does. The publicity of Radio Municipalidad de la Punta 87,7 is characterized by notices, messages and institutional announcements disseminated in the form of news and municipal information and that are not subject to commercial invoicing in the media organization itself. The medium serves as "self-advertising" of municipal works and achievements.

In the university radios, there are large spaces for music. Approximately almost 80 percent in FM 87.9 Radio Unvime, and 60 percent in FM 97.9 radio of the National University of San Luis in Villa Mercedes.

As a general rule, public radios have sought to differentiate themselves from commercial radios with a programming and content according to their audiences. These media seek with great effort, their own identity and are managed by officials of the organizations that support them. Organizations such as the Municipality (governmental administrative body) or Universities (institutions whose traditional mission is teaching, extension and research) that do not know exactly why they have a means of communication and what should be the purpose of owning it. What does a municipality want to communicate? Why do universities have to have their means of communication and what messages should be privileged in it?

The first radio station Radio Universidad in Villa Mercedes (San Luis) FM 97.9 was created in June 2015, the second Radio Municipality of La Punta (SL) - FM 97.9 on October 19, 2016. Both broadcasters are financed by public funds, in the first case by two faculties (FCJES) and (FICA) of the National University of San Luis in the city of Villa Mercedes and the second by a budget of the Municipality of La Punta (SL) - FM 97.9 .

What do these media know about their audiences?

These media do not know exactly the characteristics of their audiences. There are no studies of their own and research on their audiences and the setting of their programming

and content, often limited, is based on a perception that the media has about it. Some of the characteristics that public media should have is to have a varied programming, breadth and diversity of opinions, and have content aimed at a heterogeneous audience. In the municipal radio should privilege a program oriented to the citizen and its urban problems, apart from giving an account of where the municipal administration invests the money of citizens' taxes. Meanwhile, in the university radios, the dissemination of teaching, the activity of the research groups and the management bodies themselves, the tasks of extension and what and how science is built in the university should be privileged.

Radio Universidad affirms that its programming is directed to the university community in particular, with all the information of the Faculties of the National University of San Luis, located in Villa Mercedes (San Luis) Argentina and also conformed for a general audience with programs that deal with varied themes.

4. Political Context of the Province of San Luis

San Luis is an Argentine province located in the Region of Cuyo, which borders the province of La Rioja to the north, Córdoba to the east, La Pampa to the south, Mendoza to the west and San Juan to the northwest, and is governed hegemonically by the Justicialist Party, since the arrival of democracy in Argentina in December 1983. The province of San Luis has a little more than 450,000 inhabitants, the most important cities being the capital San Luis and Villa Mercedes. The Justicialist Party led by the Rodríguez Saá brothers, Adolfo (former president of Argentina in 2002) and Alberto, have been repeatedly governors of the province of San Luis. That political group only lost two elections, the 1985 legislative ones and the PASO (Open, Mandatory Internships) in August of 2017.

This administration that governs from December of 1983, a long period with almost three governors, has had in its step, certain limitations of the freedom of expression in the exercise of the journalism and discretion manifested in the distribution of the official guideline (publicity). There have also been attacks on San Luis journalists by different social actors, which have been reported by media and journalists such as the Forum of Argentine Journalism, Claudia San Martín in the newspaper *La Nación* (2004) and for the journalist Nino Romero (2016).

5. Media of the Province of San Luis

The media context of the province of San Luis, Argentina, is characterized by the existence of more than a hundred media; most of them are located in the two most important cities of the province, such as the capital city San Luis and the city of Villa Mercedes. The greater amounts of means are of private characteristics, the majority does not have provincial reach. State media such as Canal 13 San Luis and News Agency San Luis Noticias (ANSL) have a greater geographical reach in the interior of the province. Even so, the exercise of journalism is still incipient, artisan and hard-working, on everyone in the private media, the majority directed by people with good intentions who lack the necessary training and preparation.

The group of governmental media is made up among others by Channel 13 San Luis (provincial state television), the News Agency San Luis (ANSL) (digital media of the provincial state) and the Diario de la República, the only private graphic medium of provincial coverage) and also Planet Xillium - FM Lafinur FM 90.9 (<http://www.planetxillium.net/rlasp/index.asp>) where Dr. Alberto Rodríguez Saá acted as journalist and driver since leaving the government of San Luis in the year 2011, until he took over again in December 2015.

On different occasions, the government of the province of San Luis and other social actors has tried to limit freedom of expression and the exercise of journalism, based on the aggression against journalists. These facts have been repudiated by the media, critical journalism and the San Luis community. It has also practiced some abuse and discretion in the distribution of the official guideline by the authorities to the various media outlets in the province.

Despite the increasingly prominent presence of journalists and communicators in the province of San Luis with university training, there are still few means that employ these professionals and even less, those who offer legal employment or fair compensation for services that they lend. In these conditions the journalistic and informative work is lent in many opportunities by unskilled workers or without university formation. A social dilemma is to think about how to train professionals in the university, if then they do not have employment opportunities or work in other areas such as secondary and university teaching. Also as a society, you should not miss the idea that better means and better

journalism, greater and better democracy. The informative quality and the possibility of the citizens to know the reality influences the democratic development of a society.

6. FM Radio University Villa Mercedes 97, 9

Since June 2015 Radio Universidad in Villa Mercedes (San Luis, Argentina) has its programming in FM 97.9. The contents are aimed at the university community in particular, with all the information of the Faculties that are located in the city of Villa Mercedes (SL), but that make up the National University of San Luis (Argentina) and also seeking to attract and attract a general audience, with programs of varied themes.

Radio Universidad at Villa Mercedes during 2014 incorporated new equipment that has allowed it to improve its transmission quality and its reach. Later, three new speakers / journalists, professionals in radio and television joined the staff. The station has a live program with broadcast from studios and exteriors from 07:00 to 20:00 from Monday to Friday. The music that the station broadcasts does not have much diversity, but places the emphasis on the pops rhythms, progressive rock, and alternative and international rock. Not all the spaces of the radio are covered with "programs" and at different times when the radio does not have organized programs, it only broadcasts music.

7. Radio Municipalidad de La Punta 87.7

The station has as slogan "*a new air*", was inaugurated on October 19, 2016 by the mayor of La Punta, Martin Olivero and is located in the commercial battery "A", on Boulevard Tobar Garcia and East 30th Street. From that moment, seven people who would not have university training but experience in media make up the station's plant, and who also are not municipal employees.

At the time of the inauguration, Mayor Olivero expressed that "*the microphone will be open for any type of opinion, provided it is done with respect*", and proposed that the medium should have a critical vision on all aspects of reality of the country, the province and the city of La Punta (El Punteño, 2016).

Olivero added that "*journalism has to be critical if not propaganda, and what is happening lately in Argentina and in other parts of the world is that journalism has ceased to be ...*" (EL PUNTEÑO, 2016).

Although the three public media managed by government organizations (the case of FM Municipality of La Punta) and the other two by autarkic higher education organizations (the case of FM Radio University Villa Mercedes 97.9 and Radio Unvime 87.9 of the city of Villa Mercedes) are added to the radio universe in the province of San Luis and constitute an important contribution to the plurality of San Luis society's voices, to the construction of a possible and sustainable democracy, there is not yet a different programming of the commercial radios, although in some cases there are programs that promote the local culture.

These almost artisan radio stations, such as journalism in San Luis, could have new spaces, experiment with new aesthetics that attract public attention and serve to build bridges with citizens. They do not fight for the rating and the public body that protects them also finances them.

The institutional publicity of these media characterizes them, says "*here we are*", we are this. There should be greater efforts by the agencies that administer them to define the objectives for which the medium was created, which is not clear. We have a radio and now: What do we do?

Although the plurality of voices and the diversity of opinions is essential for the development of democracy and a journalism inspired by republican values, the managerial limitation of the media, the scarce human, economic and technological resources, the lack of strategic planning between other factors, make these media half meet their social role.

Undoubtedly, alternative media are a sensible alternative for the construction and dissemination of quality information, programs that respond to cultural, social and political diversity, with content fully linked to regional identities, which can return the images and voices of citizens. This idea should be the north of the new public media that are in the middle of the road with remarkable hybridity.

The a priori media consider that their programming by virtue of the public organization that "organizes" them must be non-alternative and differentiated from private media, but "similar" to them. Moreover, they find themselves in the most absolute hybridity between being a "public medium" and being a copy of a private mass media.

In many cases, the logic followed by these public media has many similarities to that of traditional commercial and private media. The distribution of the spaces and the organization of the programs of the stations are similar to that of the private broadcasters in terms of the distribution of the information services, the structure of the programs and the spaces of institutional advertising where the organization "sells". It refers to the fact that in certain spaces the institutional advertising refers to the services or municipal announcements, the faculties of the National University of San Luis or the activity of the National University of Villa Mercedes (Unvime).

Broadcasters carry out programming of general interest and not focused on a particular audience, such as FM Universidad 97.9 of Villa Mercedes and Radio Unvime 97.9 in Villa Mercedes (San Luis). These media could have higher academic and scientific content and more information on university actions and transparency, and in the case of FM Radio Municipality of La Punta 87.7 with more information about the city park of La Punta, the action and performance of the Municipality, his works, the transparency of his budget expenses and the neighborhood news.

It can be perceived that both the Faculties (FICA) and (FCJES) of Villa Mercedes (San Luis), belonging to the National University of San Luis, on which depends the FM radio Universidad 97.9 and the Municipality of La Punta that manages the municipal station FM 87.7, probably have not ranked the importance of having media that favors citizen dialogues. On the other hand, citizens do not perceive that these media have managed to convey information of general interest about the events and development of their institutions.

The municipal state and university institutions could use these means more efficiently to provide information and news of the institutional events, raise the hierarchy of debate and public democratic discussion and seduce and also serve the public with quality radial proposals prepared by professionals.

Having your own and public means can generate a better dialogue, a higher quality of information and a cultural breadth and diversity that favors the development of citizenship and contributes to expanding democracy.

With rare exceptions, these public media follow logic of private mass media in terms of advertising. The institutional notices referring to the activity of the organizations that have created them resemble the advertising messages.

In this sense, the challenge of generating media with trained managers that await the profound changes that are happening in the media world and that recognize the spirit and sense of the public as a social and democratic value is pending. Public means that generate actions that promote a greater plurality of voices, greater hierarchy and quality of the proposals, cultural diversity and the incorporation of different contents that allow the construction of alternative agendas, channels for the promotion of culture, promotion of traits regional cultural and where users can participate more actively in the election and discussion of "issues" that interest them.

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