

# Affecting and being affected by happening: journalistic coverage about AIDS and social impacts

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## Abstract

In this article we discuss AIDS as a disruptor happening in two dimensions: on social relations and on the news coverage of it that have been made. Derives from this condition their exemplary character to explore the notion of the power of affecting of certain happenings. Our reflections about the disruptor power - and for that very emblematic - of AIDS, as a happening that affects and is affected by the social life, and the media coverage will be based on some research on the subject that we have already developed for more than two decades. When it emerged as problematic happening AIDS has forced many medical-scientific and social mobilizations in an attempt to understand it, (a) movement that significantly affected news coverage about the syndrome and the happenings it triggered.

**Keywords:** Journalism. Happening. Narrative. AIDS. Power of Affecting.

## Introduction: some premises to understand the problem

**T**hinking Journalism in its complex operations of reporting diverse events, including taking into account the many meaning negotiations with other social actors involved, has been an exercise for which many researches have resorted to the concept of event. Beyond old conceptions of fact as the raw material of Journalism, new investigations see in the concept of

event, and in all the different shades required to better discuss it, a ground of heuristic point of view – therefore involving theoretical and methodological challenges – to clarify surely more complex relations than certain journalistic theoretical traditions have been able to achieve.

The power of affecting of events, as indicated by some authors (QUÉRÉ, 2005), does not differ from the events hermeneutic feature, from their ability to shed light over themselves, as they do over the world dynamics in which they “hatch” – bringing to light past issues and prospects for the future. Thrown into the world, events are still inscribed in the dialectic of acting and suffering (RICOEUR, 1994; 1997) because while acting on people, promoting displacements of their being in the natural and social worlds, events also have their course altered, including by the same people who have experienced them. Because of this dynamic, new individual narratives are constructed, as well as the events are entangled in causal plots, in sense disputes over what are their meanings. From this perspective, events may be claimed or refused as concerning personal, institutional or other spheres, rendering themselves to power games and other social life dynamics. In the end, it seems certain that some events, especially those of greater impact, never cease to be in progress, being permanently reframed.

We take AIDS, since its public appearance in the early 1980s, as paradigmatic event of the conditions listed above. From its emergence to the present day, AIDS has moved medical and scientific truths, challenged the healing ability for some diseases, launched questions on various social discriminations, especially those related to gender relations, and particularly towards homophobia (CARVALHO, 2009; 2012, LEAL; CARVALHO, 2012), also producing a series of related events that revolve around the various issues raised by it. The proposal here is to discuss AIDS as a disruptor event in two dimensions: over social relations and over the news coverage that has been made of it. From this condition comes its exemplary feature to explore the notion of power of affecting of certain events.

Although the purpose of this study is not exactly to work with an empirical frame, our reflections on the disruptor power – and therefore iconic – of AIDS as an event that affects and that is affected by social life and by journalistic coverage will be based on some investigations over the theme that we have been developing for over two decades. Methodologically, each research dealt with their own specificities and came from different inquiries in each specific time, but they kept in common the discussion background that AIDS has brought to the universe of journalistic news production and circulation. Thus, homophobia is one of these themes AIDS brings to light since its appearance. From the event perspective, if we have restrained ourselves in other endeavors, i.e. certain possibilities to think the events through its accidental or programmed nature (CARVALHO, 2012), here what is regarded as problem is the power of affecting.

To think the journalistic event in its power of affecting, beyond the acting-suffering dialectic, and even as a condition to better understand the event in its also hermeneutic power, implies the recognition of its historicity. Here we are taking the notion of historicity from Paul Ricoeur (1994, 1995, 1997, 2007), which places the event as a dimension closely articulated to the problematic of the interconnections between time, memory and narrative. If the natural and social events affect people and people are the ones responsible for interpreting events, we face another challenge, also to be addressed from Ricoeur's propositions, which is that, to some extent, the very human being is an "event" – within the meaning developed in "O si-mesmo como um outro" (1991): the physical, moral and ethical transformations we experience in the course of a life time are best understood by the research of selfhood-sameness dialectic<sup>1</sup>.

Speaking in different terms, the events with power of affecting appear as an engine for the physical and psychosocial changes

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<sup>1</sup> Briefly, the selfhood-sameness dialectic is inscribed in the reflections of Paul Ricoeur on what would remain the same in us, such as a character trait, and what changes in the confrontation between our experiences and the recognition of Alterity, of the Other. Ethically we are bound to Always perceive ourselves as an Other, commitment status with our and others trajectories.

we experience in our individual and social trajectories, as it is soon going to be explored in this study, regarding movements that AIDS helped to trigger and/or strengthen. So our bodies, in their inevitable transformation over the years, constitute an important narrative about our experiences. A photograph of a young, athletic body, when we focus only on what is apparent, shows us potentially health, vanity, hedonism, a certain socially constructed beauty standard and other social, ethical and moral values involved. Likewise the superficial glance over a photo of an old body, “worn” by time, tells us potentially a story of suffering, losses and achievements, life experience and also social, ethical and moral values of old age. In short, selfhood-sameness dialectic is crossed by the narrative potentialities enclosed in our bodies, which, in the beginning of AIDS event was one of the most dramatic aspects among other narratives that were constructed from the bodies, always taking into account the dialectic of acting and suffering and the power of affecting of the event.

From what was above exposed, the event in its power of affecting will be addressed here avoiding any stuffiness of certain deterministic traits that often emerge from “effects” produced by events over individual and social dimensions. Likewise, does not concern us to think life trajectories as events taken by the bias of dichotomies that oppose what is psychological and what is social. Inspired by Paul Ricoeur, we think the intersections between natural and social events with life in its eventual dimension as what involves, dialectically, social and psychological extensions outside the frames of over determinations. It is only from this possibility we will understand how AIDS establishes, simultaneously, grounds for the spread of homophobic discourses and practices and grounds to challenge those same power regimes.

Our reflections on the power of affecting of events will cover two theoretical paths to finally make considerations about media coverage that take AIDS – the major event – and its related events as broadcast objects. A first step will be to understand how the event, in its power of affecting, puts into action multiple social actors in an attempt to unravel the event itself. After

that, we remember some of the key moments that constitute the historicity of AIDS, with special attention to homophobia. When analyzing the ways how Journalism has been stressed we will not focus specifically in a classic analysis of narratives. We are going to use some examples, which are explored in several of our studies, in order to illustrate AIDS as an event paradigmatically understood as an enlightening agent over the power of affecting. In a sense, we will try, in circularity, to indicate a set of questions, more than insights.

### **Power of affecting and the dialectic of acting and suffering**

A first question is asked in the wake of Ricoeur's contributions (1997) about "historical consciousness": is it possible to have a notion of changes that, in the future, a specific event that strongly rises in the present is going to promote? Far from any ordinary futurology exercise, the question establishes a complex problematic: in face of events that emerge jeopardizing apparently fixed and consolidated structures, or so seeming to be, it is possible to observe a more immediate articulation of social actors in search of interpretations about the events, as condition to ensure that their positions on such events develops into the positions that mainly will be said about what has happened for future generations.

It is clear that some precautions are in order to avoid determinism. First, events cannot be of exclusive responsibility of prominent figures, i.e. assigning Hitler with the "historical responsibility" of Nazism, forgetting about all the conjuncture factors that, during that period, led Germany to endorse the dictator's adopted policy. In second place, even when a leadership is considered "responsible" for some event, there is no possibility that this leadership holds absolute control over the unfolding of events, because these events will take part in a broader social debate, condition for their survival or extinction. Third, an event may contain within itself, right at the time of its first appearance, indications for its potential and for the threats it poses to social positions, but for former reasons, its absolute control is never

possible. The three conditions are not alone in composing the acting-suffering dialectic, connected to the birth and course of an event, but they serve us as illustration for the purposes here pursued.

Seen as a problem for the historian, the event poses challenges that are not just in the order of its reconstitution: the event especially presents itself as a theoretical and methodological challenge. According to Ricoeur (1994, p.140),

[...] to the extent that the historian is involved in the understanding and in the explanation of past events, an absolute event cannot be attested by historical narrative. Understanding – even the understanding of a singular another in everyday life – is never a direct intuition, but a reconstruction. Understanding is always more than pure sympathy.

Speaking of the challenge to the historian in these terms, we have that the events actually do not even belong exclusively to the past. Once an event is brought to the present, though by the hands of a researcher, it is possible that the actual challenge will be the sustaining of the event. In other words, not only to the craft of the historian, but probably to a larger social group, those events subjected to scrutiny continue to maintain their power of affecting. Not by chance, the slogan “to know the past so to avoid making the same mistakes in the present, thus ensuring a less misdirected future” is well known. But there is still a prior aspect to be explored: the non-existence of an absolute event points to the always transitory feature of any interpretations about events meanings. This does not only concern the impossibility to rescue the totality of an event, though it may have been widely documented, but concerns the fact that an interpretation tends to call another interpretation, being said that giving sense to past events goes through present conditions and through future projections. The common saying “to know the past to avoid mistakes” may be also read as an attempt to, from an event, prescribe standards for the present and to design actions for the future, pointing to the infinity of the acting-suffering dialectic related to events.

In this path we take the notion of “hermeneutics of a historical consciousness” from Ricoeur (1997, p.359 and next ones), stressing that it is of this study interest to think about the possibility to a “hermeneutics of a present consciousness”, which of course would be closely linked to the previous notion. Always consistent with his “action philosophy”, Ricoeur tells us:

About the reality of the past, we can barely exceed, in direct view of what was the previous game of fragmented perspectives between reeffectuation in the Self, the acknowledgment of Alterity and the assumption of Analogue. Going further, it is needed to take the problem from the other end, and to explore the idea that these fragmented perspectives can rediscover a kind of plural unit, if we bring it together under the idea of a perception of the past, led to the perception of a person affected by the past. Now, this idea only makes sense and strength when opposed to the making history idea. Because being affected is also a category of doing. [...] It is therefore in the dimension of acting (and suffering, which is its corollary) that the thought of history will cross its prospects under the horizon of the idea of *imperfect mediation* (RICOEUR, 1997, p.359-360, with emphasis of the author).

Although our reflections do not fall within the framework of the theoretical and methodological historian craft concerns, they are strongly committed to the notion of historicity previously alluded to, which leads us to think the acting-suffering correlated to the power of affecting perspective present at all events, which we hold as an important intelligibility condition to the very forces that work on interpreting the events. To resume our focus in this study, if AIDS was “news” by the time of its appearance, the possible harmful consequences stored in individual and collective memories over exclusion caused by diseases, such as leprosy, were not new (SONTAG, 1989). This “hermeneutics of historical consciousness” arises, as well as part of the acting-suffering dialectic, leading to a “hermeneutics of present consciousness” which caused AIDS to mobilize social actors that suffered directly or indirectly towards action to avoid the horrors of a past related to other diseases that also generated exclusion and prejudice. In this sense, what effectively is always at stake is the future, because it is in the future we will dwell – in this Sísifo activity in which the past is also the immediate

second before now and in which the future is the immediate second after now.

Ricoeur's theoretical and methodological concerns with the historiographical work warn us of events nature as potentialities, at all times. Going to extremes, the happening that does not fall under the acting-suffering dialectic does not reach the proper *status* of event, once it is difficult to assert any power of affecting from this type of happening. Pursuing new leads on the event in its power of affecting, we find in the work of Louis Quéré (2005) a more sociological contribution, though equally focused in an action perspective. Quéré's contribution also presents the dialectic of acting and suffering as essential:

A part of understanding an event comes from the passivity we own to the event. Passivity as we use it here is not in the ordinary sense of the term. [...] Rather, it is the passivity that leads the confrontation with an event to assume ordeal dimensions, i.e. the one to whom the event happens, whether an individual or a collective force, exposes itself, take chances, live dangers and calls into question its own identity (QUÉRÉ, 2005, p.66).

From these terms, it seems possible the resumed idea of what is pursued here: events with power of affecting rely precisely in the fact that, by affecting individuals and/or collectivities, events trigger memories and awareness, making the suffering the driving force that leads to action. For Quéré (2005), narrative is not a central issue, what is different in Ricoeur's analysis. Narrative is a fundamental guide to the Ricoeur's works, so we refer to the author in our reflexive exercise. As result, other synthesis is required: every event demands a narration and the narrative gesture itself is definitely a constituting part of the acting-suffering dialectic; also, the narrative gesture is indicative of the event's power of affecting. As said by Ricoeur, still within the framework of the issues debated by historians, "so, because of the fact that they are narrated, events are unique and typical, contingent and expected, deviants and accredited to paradigms, even in an ironic way" (RICOEUR, 1994, p.295).

In our perspective, to narrate an event, to wrap it in an intrigue, is component part of attempts to unravel the event. Also,

to narrate an event is to put it under interpretive frameworks based on which individuals and/or groups are able to seek connections with the past, (the) understanding of the present and the construction of possible futures. It is made clear in the analysis by Jose Rebelo:

In 'Événement et sens', an essay published in the second number of *Raisons Pratiques* magazine, Paul Ricoeur sets out three phases in the genesis and in the development of the event. The first phase corresponds to the emergence of the happening itself. The second phase corresponds to the search for meaning. The third phase speaks of the dilution of the event in the narrative constructed revolving the event. The narrative does not appear, because as a past restitution device, but as a last treatment to which the event is subject and for which the event, with what it causes, is incorporated into the living world. More extreme, Jocelyne Arquemburg estimates that the narrative is present in every stage of the process. The narrative is present in the emergence of the event through actors, witnesses and the media, who give us a first definition of the event. The narrative is present in the controversy raised by the event, through all who try to take ownership of the event's meaning. The narrative is present in the outburst of consequences, through those individuals or groups who invest in their management (REBELO, 2005, p.56).

We fully agree with Jocelyne Arquemburg's proposition and we see in it what actually makes events carriers of affecting potential, especially problematic events (QUÉRÉ, 2005) – such as we understand AIDS. A look over the historicity of AIDS emergence and evolution, including the ways in which AIDS was an agent of discussion for news coverage, may lead us to a better outlined understanding of power of affecting and acting-suffering dialectic. Thus we will be able to see power of affecting and acting-suffering dialectic as challenging equations in the clarification of some events through concrete situations experienced in the "living world", as indicated by José Rabelo.

### **AIDS in its historicity: social impacts and media coverage**

AIDS was probably the first greatly discussed disease that appeared and had its first evolving – or the social and medical discursive formation about its meanings, as rightly indicated

by Keneth Rochel de Camargo Jr. (1994) – under the careful watching of media coverage. A watching that never stopped being careful because the major event HIV/AIDS extended itself as a problem-discussing agent since its beginning, capturing all the events triggered from the epidemic. If, at first, AIDS impact was associated to the lack of knowledge about this “mysterious disease” and its overlooked origins, since the discovery of the infecting virus and the initial mistake – which hasn’t been left behind by a wide layer in the social imaginary – that the disease was restricted to some “risk groups”, it now comprehends an impressive entanglement of questions. Trying to overcome stigmas and the need of public policies in prevention, in conjunction with guarantees of universal treatment and patent infringement for medications are just a few challenges that we understand as events triggered by AIDS.

An attempt of organizing discussion about AIDS and the events it triggers can be traced from identifying topics that prevail in many stages of the disease’s comprehension, as indicated by Vanda Lúcia Vitoriano do Nascimento:

Its first stage, from 1970s to 1981, comprehends the virus’ silent spreading. The second one concerns the epidemic itself, and ranges from 1981 to 1985. Third stage (1985 to 1988) was named by him [Jonathan Mann] as “*an epidemic of social, cultural and economic responses to AIDS*”. It was defined by exceptionally high levels of stigmatizing, preconception, discrimination, and sometimes collective repulsiveness. These characteristics of the third stage remain present to these days. The Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS - UNAIDS [...] considers that stigmas, preconceptions and discrimination related to the epidemic are a universal phenomena that occurs in political, institutional, social and psychological levels, in every region and country of the world (NASCIMENTO, 2009, p.23, with emphasis given by the author).

In spite of risking the loss of details and subtleties in choosing criterions for historicizing AIDS in a timeline or in stages, what we found is a revealing prospect of the syndrome’s affectation and engagement power. It wasn’t possible to be indifferent to AIDS, even when you were supposedly protected for being outside the “risk groups”, since contagion could happen from

contaminated blood in medical routines or in dental treatment, for example. If initial panic turned out to be exaggerated, once it was even said that humanity could meet its end because of the fast global spread of this disease (O'NEILL, 1994), it didn't result only in negative consequences. Paradoxically, that panic also resulted as a reason (in the acting suffering dialectic in the event logics) for creating a consciousness, one that is also global, of the existence of sexist, sexual, racial and economic discrimination, among others. As AIDS evolved, it not only sparked discussion in medical and scientific fields but also made it possible to see social engagement coming from communities unrelated to institutionalized knowledge's, even though they became allies in strategic moments.

From the initial idea of "risk groups", wrongly created because AIDS was first identified in homosexuals, prostitutes, injectable (drug users, hemophiliacs and Haitians, the greatest social and symbolic prejudice reflected on masculine homosexuality, thus making homophobia a more visible problem, when it was mostly shrouded between physical and symbolic violence. If the identifying of homosexuals as "risk group" was somewhat fortunate, because some of these people were examined by the same physician in the beginning of a more widespread AIDS' dissemination (CARVALHO, 2009), it wasn't a coincidence that homophobia was aggravated. And we can also say that this exposure demanded creation of strategies for fighting discrimination and stimulated the search for healthcare rights, which were mostly delegated to groups in defense of gay rights, at least in a first moment. In its power of affecting, the AIDS event paradoxically generated the homophobic feeling of finally promoting a "gay holocaust" (SEDGWICK, 1990), and the rise in awareness for gay rights struggles, as well as the recognition of homosexuality itself as a component of human diversity (GIDDENS, 2005).

As we have been saying, because of its formidable power of affecting and ability for activating the acting-suffering dialectic, AIDS reached many actors in the worlds of medicine and science, fields traditionally associated to social control of diseases, as well as actors from other fields of knowledge that are almost

always disregarded when the topic was the mitigation of damaging effects of social impact diseases. These actors are psychologists, sociologists, social workers, and other groups not associated to these institutionalized fields. In Brazil, HIV/AIDS support and prevention groups scattered all over the country since the beginning. By the same time, it became consensual between everyone involved that only prevention by the mass disclosure of suitable methods would be capable of containing the advance of the epidemic.

The use of advertising by the epidemiological surveillance system to track and prevent AIDS' spread shifts the discussion to a place where usually other desires and interests are expressed. Many historical subjects and elements participate in expanding the universe of people who talk about the virus and the disease. It is an information epidemic in social communication space (LIMA, 2006, p.24).

The idea of an information epidemic reflects not only the positive side in the search for solutions as medications, prevention methods or even cure itself but, also the wildfire spreading of all types of discrimination against seropositive people. From our involvement with HIV/AIDS and homophobia in several studies made in the last two decades, we can see the power of affecting of AIDS as a major event and of the smaller events that originated from it clarifies how troublesome events not only persist in their searches for meanings and re-significations but also permanently stresses news coverage. As we can see in studies about the AIDS coverage in Brazilian newspapers, from the moment AIDS appeared publically it oscillated between trying to avoid panic, in an attempt of finding balance and soberness, and publishing scandalous headlines such as “gay plague” or “pink cancer” (FAUSTO NETO, 1999). By analyzing newspapers from four different countries, Nelson Traquina (2005) affirms that, in AIDS coverage of 1993, the likeliness of finding similar strategies between them, such as calling upon official sources and adopting the same newsmaking criteria, reinforces the idea of the journalistic activity as an “interpretive community”.

When we analyzed *Folha de S.Paulo*'s AIDS coverage between 1983 and 1987, the power of affecting of this event in Journalism

became clear. The power of affecting didn't happen only because of *Folha's* own concern but also in light of pressure inflicted by other social actors, demanding the treatment given to seropositives avoided discrimination and dehumanizing. In an editorial published in 1985, a crucial moment in the definition of medical-scientific and social discourses about AIDS, *Folha* assumes the following stand:

Mass media conglomerate's responsibility is magnified in this context. The importance of seeking all information cannot be underestimated, no matter how strong and discriminating are the forces at play. If the topic is controversial, all sources should be valued and listened to, with no distinction of institutional, academic or communitarian groups. It is up to the press, in all its forms, to strive that nothing remains hidden, but also to reassure that revelations are made in an atmosphere of enlightenment and calmness, avoiding panic and sensationalism (CARVALHO, 2009, p.104).

Classified by *Folha* as a "social disease", AIDS turns out to be an event that was impossible to be ignored or impassible to. If homophobia was an important aspect of the coverage since the very beginning, even though it was rarely called in these terms, narratives activated social movements, NGOs, physicians and other specialists as voices authorized to speak of the syndrome, its consequences and the ways of fighting it. However, for reasons that range from discrimination to invisibility determined by risk of a "social contagion", there were few occasions in which the seropositives had an actual voice in narratives of *Folha's* coverage. In a subsequent research (MÍDIA E HOMOFÓBIA, 2008), even though AIDS was not elected as the only subject of investigation, we noticed a structural change in AIDS coverage, in which less importance was conceded to NGOs and other ways of activism, and more technical voices like doctors and scientists prevailed at the journalistic narratives. We also noticed that coverage was still "silencing" the people who live with HIV in their bodies.

One aspect that grasped our attention was the fact that, even after three decades of wrongly attributing AIDS "exclusiveness" to homosexuals and other risk groups, news coverage insists at indicating direct associations between them. In a research about interconnections between HIV/AIDS and homophobia in Brazilian

newspapers *Estado de Minas*, *O Globo* e *Folha de S.Paulo*, a series of narratives in which AIDS incidence within male homosexuals and men who have sex with men sustain the wrong idea of “risk groups”, either as a problem to be solved or as an expression of what people interviewed for the narratives think. To still find these ideas in news coverage is something better understood when we look at other kind of researches, like the ones made in Spain by Fernando Villaamil Pérez (2010). Pérez’s research indicates that homophobia is a central element in determining vulnerability in some groups of male homosexuals who live in a condition of physical and symbolic violence. Even though is not that common listening to people with HIV, the study with the three newspapers shows that, in comparison to both researches we mentioned before, taboo of hiding in fear of strong discrimination towards seropositive people has been partially broken. Thus we could find narratives in which seropositive people are listened to, or even become the motivation for publishing the text (CARVALHO; LAGE, 2012).

After the medication success of the drug cocktail that restrains HIV replication, giving the patients the same medical conditions as any person with a chronic disease when they do not reject the medications’ components, the bodies no longer “expose” AIDS as in the first years of epidemic spreading. New corporal narratives are weaved in which the dialectic of selfhood and sameness follows a road almost identical to the one of any other person, considering the characteristics of each life story, obviously. Journalism, though, confronts different coverage challenges in each new treatment discovery, in each partial success in the search for a vaccine, in each progress found in the battles for prevention and human welcoming of people with HIV, and in other events triggered by AIDS.

## Conclusion

To reflect on events with power of affecting and on acting-suffering dialectic that are adjacent to events, allows us to go

further in understanding the actual events statute. But this discussion particularly interests this investigation on Journalism when it promotes relevant shifts over traditional and reductionists event conceptions in the field studies. The most obvious risk, including for being the most frequent one, is the event being reduced to the notion of fact, once fact is understood as what allegedly carries within the objectivity of what it refers to (GENRO FILHO, 1987). As we seek to point out, enhanced by contributions of historiographical and sociological tradition of studies, event's notion indicates that Journalism does not show "outbursts on a smooth surface", as said in the unfortunate Adriano Duarte Rodrigues's proposition (1993) on events. Actually, Journalism handles complex occurrences whose historicity can never be neglected. Events with power of affecting are, in this perspective, inscribed in permanent interpretation games: events refer to the past consciousness and simultaneously they shed light on a potential present consciousness, projecting possible futures.

Historicity also implies the events to be caught by the frame of intrigue, to be narrated, as condition of their meanings' intelligibility process. But not just that, as the potential of infinitely narrate an event is indicative of meaning disputes and of the meanings impacts related to acting-suffering dialectic. The event that continues to happen, including promoting related events – as we have seen in the case of AIDS –, points to action from a multiplicity of social actors. When affected by the event, this social actors act over the event, avoiding some of its possible consequences and even trying to control the consequences – here conceived not as a simple list of causalities or random games, but as event outlined strategies.

As a social practice, it is not possible for Journalism to be unmoved in face of events of that order, then revealing its status as one of the social actors strongly involved by power of affecting and by act-suffering dialectic. To the researcher, however, it is not sufficient to look at Journalism from its social practice dimension. Not if we understand this dimension simply as a set of rules of narration, as the selections of what to report procedures,

as institutional pressures involved and as other impoverishing visions that a set of “theories” about Journalism has been limited to debate.

The most fruitful question that must be asked, therefore, speaks of a new mode of analyzing Journalism, in which the practices are placed in the set of wider problems than the complex and intricate social relations surrounding the event allows us to see. The historicity of Journalism itself, in this perspective, cannot be neglected because it lies within the historicity the richest element for understanding the contradictions and idiosyncrasies of this social activity – Journalism. Historicity that calls, necessarily, the recognition that attempts to understand Journalism must be guided by the logic of temporal flows. Because Journalism always gathers events through narratives, to be aware of the narratives must be the first theoretical and methodological concern. It is necessary, therefore, to identify how the frame of intrigue is given; what are the relations triggered temporality; what are the involved characters, as information sources or as agents that help telling the story, among other elements, that based on the narrated events, are capable of clarifying these events and, dialectically, taking the events as enlightening about Journalism ways of being.

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AFFECTING AND BEING AFFECTED BY HAPPENING: JOURNALISTIC  
COVERAGE ABOUT AIDS AND SOCIAL IMPACTS

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