


## LOCAL CULTURE ON THE SCENE: independent productions in the news coverage of the website *Cultura Plural*

CULTURA LOCAL EM CENA: produções independentes na cobertura jornalística do site *Cultura Plural*  
CULTURA LOCAL EN ESCENA: producciones independientes en la cobertura periodística del sitio web *Cultura Plural*


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### ABSTRACT

The article discusses the representativeness of cultural groups in Ponta Grossa/PR on the website *Cultura Plural* - the result of a university outreach project of the Journalism course at the State University of Ponta Grossa in operation since 2011 - to identify local culture marks and characteristics of the journalistic production. Based on studies of cultural journalism and the notion of culture supported by the theoretical framework of folk communication, the work aims to problematize the space dedicated to cultural manifestations of an independent and community character that were published by the website between 2018 and 2019. From this reflection, we seek to analyze the most represented cultural groups in reports published by the project, from aspects such as agendas approaches and cultural themes.

**KEYWORDS:** Folk communication; Culture; Cultural journalism; University Outreach.

## Introduction

This work proposes a reflection on the representativeness of artists and cultural groups from Ponta Grossa/PR on the *Cultura Plural* website, to identify local cultural marks and cultural journalism characteristics present in the reports<sup>1</sup>. *Cultura Plural* is an outreach project of the Journalism course at the State University of Ponta Grossa (UEPG) created in 2011, supported by Funarte (Ministry of Culture). As a product of the outreach project, the site provides a space of memory and visibility of popular manifestations promoted by artists and cultural groups from Ponta Grossa and region, through outreach and journalistic practice in the cultural area. The project publishes reports, videos,

<sup>1</sup> The research used as the basis for this article was carried out with the support of the State University of Ponta Grossa and the Araucária Foundation, through the Institutional Scientific Initiation Program and the Productivity Scholarship Program in Technological Development/Extension.

photos, and multimedia content that address cultural themes, in addition to promoting actions in the culture area.

Based on the analysis of the *Cultura Plural* journalistic production, the work proposes to discuss the space dedicated to cultural manifestations of an independent and community character that were guided by the website between the years 2018 and 2019. It also seeks to identify the most represented cultural groups in articles published by the project, identifying characteristics of content related to a local culture based on approaches, sources, and themes.

To assess the representativeness of artists and cultural groups and also reflect on the performance of the project, cultural journalism studies provided the theoretical background (PIZA, 2009; GADINI, 2009), as well as the notion of culture supported by the reference to Folk communication (BELTRÃO, 2001; MELO, 2008; WOITOWICZ, GADINI, 2017), which contributes to the problematization of aspects of popular manifestations and their insertion in media spaces.

## **Interfaces between cultural journalism and the perspective of Folk communication**

In the cultural journalism practiced in the country, the agendas do not usually prioritize regional or local issues and are often guided by a kind of daily agenda. Gadini (2009, p. 199) emphasizes that the agendas unfold in journalistic formats in which the informative discursive structure is distinguished from other editorials, as they have “a more openly interpretive perspective of information”<sup>2</sup>. Piza (2009, p. 65) considers that cultural journalism, throughout its evolution, has changed its main characteristics, such as the “sensitive decrease in plurality and creativity”<sup>3</sup>. With that, the interpretive characteristic pointed out by Gadini (2009) as a differential, loses presence in the texts.

Concerning journalistic coverage in the cultural area, Cunha and Teixeira (2008) observe that the scheduling of cultural products overlaps that of cultural processes, which would involve, in addition to cultural creation, aspects of the economy and cultural policy. Likewise, there is also the influence of cultural industries on the visibility of certain artists and cultural products and, consequently, the erasure of popular manifestations, especially those of an independent character and without institutional support.

Folk communication, by focusing on agents and popular media, reveals its relevance for the study of cultural journalism, as it seeks to understand and give visibility

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<sup>2</sup> From the original: “Uma perspectiva de informação mais assumidamente interpretativa”.

<sup>3</sup> From the original: “diminuição sensível na pluralidade e criatividade”.

to what is transmitted through manifestations of popular culture. For Amphilo (2013, p. 92), this theory “analyzes popular communication processes and their critical and ideological message”<sup>4</sup>.

According to José Marques de Melo (2008, p. 90), Folk communication “acquires more and more importance, due to its nature of measuring instance between mass culture and popular culture, leading bi-directional flows and sedimenting symbolic hybridization processes”.<sup>5</sup> The growing process of mediatization of social practices, accentuated by the appropriation of technologies by individuals and social groups, has contributed to the spread of different flows of communication. The coexistence of such processes, originating from popular to massive culture, leads to thinking about how culture is produced within social groups.

It is understood that there is a constant process of incorporation of elements of popular culture in the media and mediatization of culture (TRIGUEIRO, 2007; 2006). However, it is important to reflect on the limitations of journalistic productions in the representation of the country's cultural diversity and in the treatment given to popular manifestations, which often take on a stigmatized or exotic character (FARIAS JÚNIOR, 2008).

From this observation, it seems pertinent to observe the process of thematization of culture in journalism and the possibilities of valuing local and regional manifestations. According to José Marques de Melo (2008, p. 70),

On the threshold of the 21st century, we live in a period marked by the rebirth of local and regional cultures. This particular episode of resistance to unipolar globalization is a reflection of the struggle of peripheral cultures to occupy appropriate spaces in the multicultural mosaic provided by new technologies of symbolic diffusion.<sup>6</sup>

The perspective of Folk communication, as it directs the gaze to groups that are located outside the hegemonic culture and the logic of the political and economic system, constitutes a central reference for the analysis proposed in this work, which aims to identify the representativeness of cultural actions of independent local groups. Through the analysis of publications on the site, it is possible to highlight the diversity

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<sup>4</sup> Front he original: “analisa os processos comunicacionais populares e sua mensagem crítica e ideológica”.

<sup>5</sup> From the original: “adquire cada vez mais importância, pela sua natureza de instância medidora entre a cultura de massa e a cultura popular, protagonizando fluxos bi-direcionais e sedimentando processos de hibridação simbólica”.

<sup>6</sup> From the original: “No limiar do século XXI vivemos um período marcado pelo reflorescimento das culturas locais e regionais. Este episódio particular da resistência à globalização unipolar é reflexo da luta das culturas periféricas no sentido de ocupar espaços apropriados no mosaico multicultural propiciado pelas novas tecnologias de difusão simbólica”.

present in the cultural field and the possibilities of carrying out an inclusive and, above all, plural journalistic practice.

### **Cultural groups in the journalistic production of *Cultura Plural***

Based on the theoretical bases mentioned, which comprise journalistic production in culture and the appreciation of cultural manifestations of groups in the local scenario, methodological procedures were developed to systematize and analyze the data. The analysis of this work considered all journalistic production in the form of a report published on the *Cultura Plural* website in 2018 and 2019. A total of 347 publications were made in this period in various formats, such as a report, press release, column, image gallery, and video. It is noteworthy that the main objective is to map, from the outreach production, cultural agents in Ponta Grossa that promote independent and community actions, without institutional or financial support.

All content referring to the two years of analysis was systematized in a table. Filtering criteria helped to identify materials that did not match the proposal of the work<sup>7</sup>. After the initial selection, new filtering criteria were established, this time to characterize the activities present in the reports produced by the team. Thus, the analysis sought to identify whether cultural actions were free, of a community nature, of independent realization, and/or if they received some type of support. A final decision was to value the analysis of reports that guide activities promoted only by groups and collectives, considering that these actions impact a greater number of people when compared to events held by individual artists.

Through the methods and criteria used, it was possible to identify that 48 reports published on the *Cultura Plural* website, between 2018 and 2019, portrayed cultural manifestations of an independent or community character. All publications referring to events carried out by institutions such as the City Hall, the University, or those promoted by private agents were disregarded since this work focuses on the valorization of the role of informal agents that integrate the cultural field.

In 2018, the project published 17 reports on independent cultural actions, and, in the following year, 31 texts<sup>8</sup> were published. From the survey, it was possible to identify

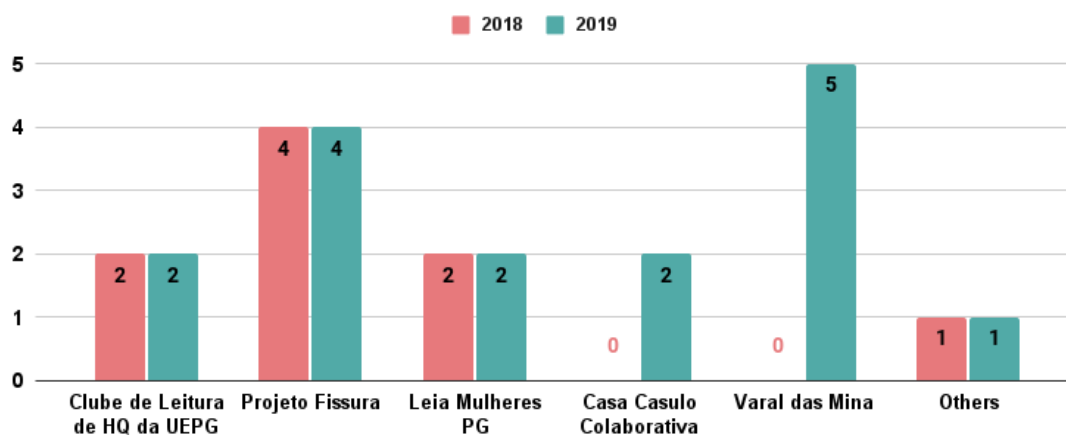
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<sup>7</sup> Initially, publications in profile format and productions sent by project columnists and collaborators were excluded. It was also decided to exclude content that didn't portray any group or artist; that guided cultural agents from other municipalities; or even texts that didn't report cultural actions. In the end, it was defined that only publications in the report format would be part of the analysis.

<sup>8</sup> The lower number of publications in the first year analyzed is a result of the interruption in the activities of the extension project, caused by changes in coordination on the second half of 2018.

28 cultural groups and collectives in Ponta Grossa<sup>9</sup>. Graph 1 shows the groups that received the greatest coverage on the *Cultura Plural* website in the period analyzed.

**Graph 1** Number of reports by group.



Source: The authors, 2020.

In the first year of analysis, nine groups and collectives in Ponta Grossa promoting independent activities were identified. The Fissura Project was the most present in the coverage of the journalistic portal *Cultura Plural*, with four articles published. It was followed by the *Clube de Leitura de HQ da UEPG* (Comics Reading Club) and *Leia Mulheres PG* (Read Women), with two publications each. The other six groups<sup>10</sup> identified had their actions reported only once.

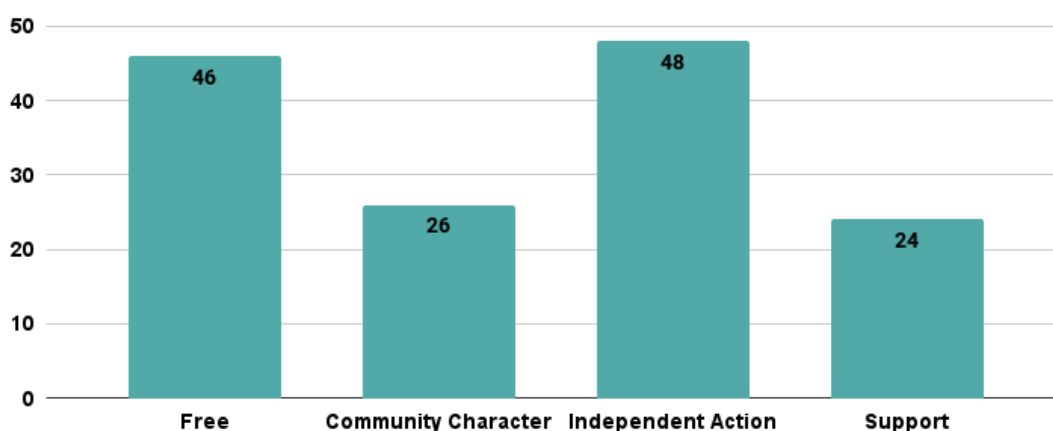
In the following year, the trend toward increased publications is also accompanied by the expansion of the total number of cultural groups present in the outreach project reports, which totals 22. Among the articles published in the second half of the analyzed period, five of them guided activities promoted by the collective *Varal das Mina* (Girls' clothesline). Next, the *Fissura* Project (Rift Project) appeared with four publications. This group was the most guided in 2018, which reveals a tendency of the Plural Culture project to follow cultural initiatives promoted by independent agents. *Leia Mulheres PG*,

<sup>9</sup> Their names are: Associação Germânica dos Campos Gerais, Bando da Leitura, Banzai Discos, Bloco do Tranca-Rua, Bloco dxs Polacxs, Casa Casulo Colaborativa, Centro de Línguas Germania, Cia Artheiros, Clube de Leitura de HQ da UEPG, Coletivo Crucolab, Conselho Jedi do Paraná – base PG, Croquis Urbanos, Diálogos Culturais, Escola de Artes Bianca Almeida, Grupo Kombissauros, Grupo Renascer, Leia Mulheres PG, Liga das Escolas de Samba de PG, Mulheres Que TransBordam, Paróquia Nossa Senhora da Medianeira, Paróquia Nossa Senhora do Rosário, Passio Christi, Projeto Fissura, Retrogamers PG, Samba do Trilho, Sinagoga Anussim, Tangerine Records and Varal das Mina. In addition to these, three activities were carried out by university students and professors, rap groups from Ponta Grossa and also by residents of a neighborhood in the city.

<sup>10</sup> Bando da Leitura, Coletivo Crucolab, Croquis Urbanos, Diálogos Culturais, Passio Christi and Tangerine Records.

UEPG *Clube de Leitura de HQ*, and *Casa Casulo Colaborativa* (Collaborative Cocoon House) were also in the list of frequently followed groups, with two reports each. Actions organized by the remaining 17 groups<sup>11</sup> were portrayed at least once in the productions of the journalistic portal in 2019. The research work also identified some characteristics of the events in the coverage of the *Cultura Plural* website. These aspects helped the identification and selection of reports that portrayed independent cultural actions carried out in Ponta Grossa, as shown in Graph 2.

**Graph 2** Characteristics of events.



Source: The authors, 2020.

Regarding the events held between 2018 and 2019, the first item analyzed was free of charge. Only two activities had an entrance fee, with a value between R\$5 and R\$10. The wide offer of free cultural actions contributes to democratizing access to culture, even though most of the activities take place in the central region of the city, far from the peripheral regions.

The second aspect observed was the community character, identified in 26 events. This type of activity is elaborated as a collaborative action and involves the interested public. Then, it was found that all cultural actions portrayed in the 48 reports were carried out independently, that is, the initiative was taken by the group itself and did not depend on financial assistance from third parties. This was the main feature that guided the selection of materials published by the *Cultura Plural* website for two years.

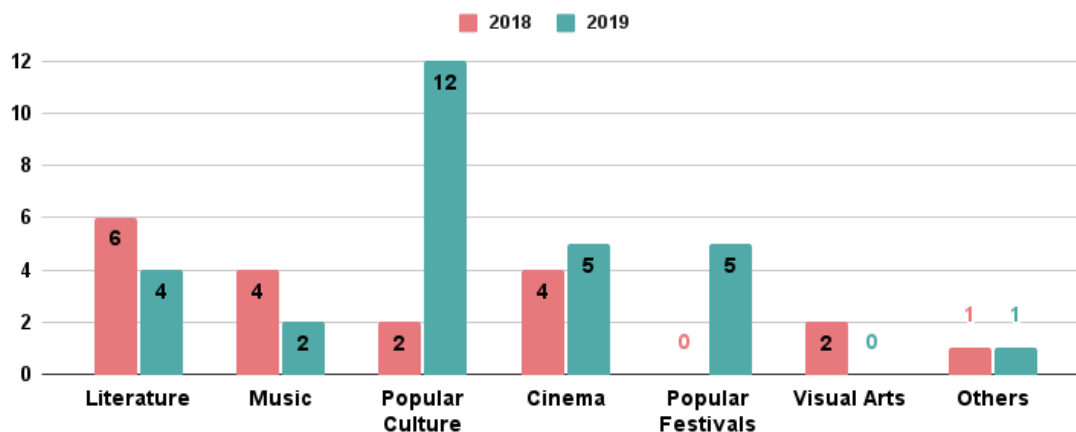
<sup>11</sup> Associação Germânica dos Campos Gerais, Banzai Discos, Bloco do Tranca-Rua, Bloco Dxs Polacxs, Centro de Línguas Germania, Cia Artheiros, Conselho Jedi do Paraná – base PG, Escola de Artes Bianca Almeida, Grupo Kombissauros, Grupo Renascer, Liga das Escolas de Samba de PG, Mulheres Que TransBordam, Paróquia Nossa Senhora de Medianeira, Paróquia Nossa Senhora do Rosário, Retrogamers PG, Samba do Trilho and Sinagoga Anussim.

The last aspect considered concerns support. Twenty-four cultural events received some kind of assistance for their accomplishment. Higher education institutions, private establishments, and the Municipal Foundation of Culture were responsible for supporting the 24 events that made up the sample, usually providing spaces for the development of the activities.

### Aspects of journalistic coverage of cultural events

This work also evaluated the most addressed themes in the project's reports. This survey was based on the existing categories on the *Cultura Plural* website and which are attributed to journalistic productions at the time of publication. Scholarship students are responsible for posting materials on the outreach portal and updating social networks<sup>12</sup>. There are cases in which a report was classified into more than one category, which reflects the multi-thematic character identified in some independent cultural activities carried out in Ponta Grossa. Graph 3 shows the themes that received the greatest coverage on the *Cultura Plural* website in 2018 and 2019.

Graph 3 Number of reports by theme.



Source: The authors, 2020.

In the first year analyzed, cultural activities focusing on Literature, Film and Music were the most portrayed by the project. The first category was covered in six reports. The following two themes appeared in four publications each. Four other categories<sup>13</sup> were used only once to classify content posted on the portal.

<sup>12</sup> Facebook: [fb.com/culturaplural](https://www.facebook.com/culturaplural) | Instagram e Twitter: @culturaplural

<sup>13</sup> Performing Arts, Citizenship, Religion and Politics.

A large number of articles on literature were related to the groups Leia Mulheres PG and the UEPG Clube de leitura de HQ. Both were among the most portrayed in *Cultura Plural* reports in 2018. The former debates exclusively work written by women, to increase the visibility of authors, while the latter promotes meetings for discussion and appreciation of comics and cartoons.

The reports involving the cinema theme reflect the representativeness of the Fissura Project in productions on the journalistic portal. The group is made up of students from the Philosophy course at a college in Ponta Grossa and promotes philosophical reflections based on the exhibition of cinematographic works.

In 2019, an increase was observed in the production of agendas aimed at popular culture in comparison to the previous year. In 2018, only two articles on this theme were published. The 12 articles represent just over 1/3 of the publications made in the second year analyzed, which totaled 31. This growth is a reflection of the greater number of texts published in the period and also of one of the purposes of the outreach project, namely, to spread culture through the registration of popular manifestations in Ponta Grossa and the Campos Gerais region of Paraná.

Most reports linked to the popular culture category referred to the Varal das Mina group, the most portrayed by *Cultura Plural* that year. The collective encourages female empowerment and conscientious consumption through the sale of clothing and crafts. In addition, it promotes artistic actions, such as exhibitions and musical performances. The event takes place in cultural spaces in the city, such as the Culture Center and Estação Arte (a former train station now converted into a cultural space).

Also, in 2019, the cinema and popular festival categories were among the most listed, with five publications each. The texts in the first category were related to the Fissura Project. Those categories were followed by the literature theme. The four articles with this theme represented the groups Leia Mulheres PG and Clube de Leitura de HQ from UEPG. The three collectives were the most represented in the previous year, which reinforces the tendency of the outreach project to accompany certain cultural groups. Five categories<sup>14</sup> were used only once to classify content posted on the site. The results presented indicate the presence of independent cultural groups that work in different areas to promote cultural actions.

## The representativeness of cultural groups in the outreach production

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<sup>14</sup> Citizenship, Performing Arts, Religion, Dance and Human Rights.



The journalistic coverage of the *Cultura Plural* website is carried out by students from the Journalism course at UEPG with the support and coordination of professors. Through news, reports, videos, photographs, and multimedia content, the project seeks to register and make visible, mainly, the manifestations of popular culture in Ponta Grossa and the region. In its development, some of the 48 articles analyzed sought to deepen the proposal and the work developed by informal agents in the cultural area. Briefly, this characteristic can be identified in a text released in 2018, which introduced a collective focused on visual arts:

The “Croquis Urbanos” project brings together plastic artists and art, architecture and heritage enthusiasts every Sunday at 9 am, at a specific venue, to produce drawings. Each week, a new location is chosen that has relevance or that is attractive for its beauty. The meetings have been held for three years in Ponta Grossa and edition 107 was held in front of a house at 1313, Ermelino de Leão Street. (*Cultura Plural*, 24/04/2018)<sup>15</sup>

In addition to highlighting the group's proposal, some textual productions of the outreach project are dedicated to presenting a report on the development of the cultural action portrayed. The opening excerpt of the article “Sarau promotes discussions of culture and politics” demonstrates this aspect:

The first Sarau Inverno organized by Companhia Diálogos Culturais took place on Sunday 2/9, from 6 pm, at the Garden snack bar. Focusing on the second phase of the modernist movement in Brazil, the regionalist phase, the event paid tribute to the work “Vidas Secas”, by Graciliano Ramos (1892-1953). The soiree brought together theater, music, poetry with local writers, talks about culture, a DJ, and screening of the documentary “Tocando a vida” which deals with country music from its roots in Ponta Grossa. In addition to cultural presentations, the event provided discussions on culture, politics and access to art. (*Cultura Plural*, 12/09/2018)<sup>16</sup>

Another important feature present in the coverage of *Cultura Plural* is the multimedia nature of the journalistic production. Through Facebook, Instagram and

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<sup>15</sup> From the original: “O projeto “Croquis Urbanos” reúne artistas plásticos e entusiastas da arte, da arquitetura e do patrimônio todos os domingos, às 9h, em um local determinado, para produzir desenhos. A cada semana, escolhe-se um novo local que tenha relevância ou que seja atrativo pela beleza. Os encontros ocorrem há três anos em Ponta Grossa e a edição 107 foi realizada em frente à casa 1313 na Rua Ermelino de Leão”. Available at: <https://culturaplural.sites.uepg.br/?p=2763>. Accessed on: 09/28/2020.

<sup>16</sup> From the original: “O primeiro Sarau Inverno organizado pela Companhia Diálogos Culturais aconteceu no domingo 2/9, a partir das 18h, no bar e petiscaria Garden. Com foco na segunda fase do movimento modernista no Brasil, a fase regionalista, o evento homenageou a obra “Vidas Secas”, de Graciliano Ramos (1892-1953). O sarau reuniu teatro, música, poesia com escritores locais, conversa sobre cultura, DJ e exibição do documentário “Tocando a vida” que trata da música sertaneja de raiz em Ponta Grossa. Além de apresentações culturais, o evento proporcionou discussões sobre cultura, política e acesso à arte”. Available at: <https://culturaplural.sites.uepg.br/?p=3169>. Accessed on: 09/28/2020.

Twitter, the outreach team expands the dissemination of content published on the project website, especially photographs and videos.

At the 2019 Carnival, the project carried out a special coverage of the parades, which generated productions for the website<sup>17</sup> and social networks. On the occasion, project members registered the parade held on an avenue in Ponta Grossa and also guided the event based on popular tradition, with the publication of texts and interviews with characters linked to Carnival. Records in audiovisual format were published in the stories<sup>18</sup> of *Cultura Plural* on Instagram.

In addition to the real-time update of the festival, the use of the social network also enabled live interviews.

**Figure 1** Special coverage images on Instagram.



Source: Instagram/Plural Culture, 2019.

The use of social platforms and multimedia in cultural journalistic coverage allows not only the expansion of access and dissemination of content but also increased opportunities for experimenting with new informative formats, characterized by the very aspects and limits of the social network (ANDRADE et. al, 2019). Concerning Carnival (BOMFIM et. al., 2020), multimedia coverage works as a tool to rescue and value tradition in Campos Gerais in Paraná, and also contributes to the memory and dissemination of this popular manifestation, a character also observed in other *Cultura Plural* productions.

<sup>17</sup> Available at: <https://culturaplural.sites.uepg.br/?p=3389>. Accessed on 09/28/2020

<sup>18</sup> Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/17990142505246485/>. Accessed on: 09/28/2020.

## Final considerations

The analysis of the representativeness of cultural groups in Ponta Grossa on the *Cultura Plural* website was carried out to reflect on the journalistic production carried out by the project and question the space dedicated to independent and informal manifestations, which represent the diversity of the cultural field of the city. Despite recognizing a tendency to guide actions and events related to the municipal government - responsible for a regular schedule of events mainly in the areas of music and theater - , it is understood that a project carried out within the university scope must undertake the commitment to register and make visible initiatives carried out by groups and collectives that autonomously produce culture.

It is in this sense that the theoretical perspective of Folk communication reveals its pertinence and currentness since it understands culture as a social practice that expresses the values and aspirations of a particular group or community. The option to direct the gaze to the production of culture within the independent groups in Ponta Grossa is in tune with this notion of culture, which reveals itself in a broad and multifaceted way amidst manifestations that occur without institutional or financial support.

The survey carried out made it possible to highlight two main aspects: a) from the point of view of the promoters of the action, the representativeness and diversity of groups and collectives that work in different areas were observed, with greater emphasis on popular culture; b) about journalistic production, the possibilities of coverage in the cultural area and multimedia journalism were observed, with the insertion of guidelines aimed at independent actions at the local level.

Finally, this research proposes a reflection on the outreach experience of *Cultura Plural* and the search for ways to rethink the traditional trends of cultural journalism based on the appreciation of the plural character of culture.

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**RESUMO:**

O artigo discute a representatividade de grupos culturais de Ponta Grossa/PR no site *Cultura Plural* – resultado de um projeto de extensão do curso de Jornalismo da

Universidade Estadual de Ponta Grossa em atividade desde 2011 - a fim de identificar marcas da cultura local e características presentes na produção jornalística. Com base nos estudos de jornalismo cultural e na

noção de cultura sustentada pelo referencial teórico da folkcomunicação, o trabalho tem a proposta de problematizar o espaço dedicado às manifestações culturais de caráter independente e comunitário que foram pautadas pelo site entre os anos de 2018 e 2019. A partir dessa reflexão, busca-se analisar os grupos culturais mais representados em reportagens publicadas pelo projeto, a partir de aspectos como abordagens das pautas e temas da cultura.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVES:** Folkcomunicação; Cultura; Jornalismo cultural; extensão universitária.

**RESUMEN:**

El artículo analiza la representatividad de los grupos culturales en Ponta Grossa/PR en el sitio web *Cultura Plural* - resultado de un proyecto de extensión del curso de

Periodismo en la Universidad Estatal de Ponta Grossa en funcionamiento desde 2011 - con el fin de identificar las marcas de la cultura local y las características de la producción periodística. A partir de estudios de periodismo cultural y la noción de cultura sustentada en el marco teórico de la folkcomunicación, el trabajo tiene como objetivo problematizar el espacio dedicado a las manifestaciones culturales de carácter independiente y comunitario que fueron publicadas por el sitio entre los años 2018 y 2019. En esta reflexión, buscamos analizar los grupos culturales más representados en los informes publicados por el proyecto, desde aspectos como dirección de las agendas y temáticas de la cultura.

**PALABRAS-CLAVES:** Folkcomunicación; Cultura; Periodismo cultural; extensión Universitaria.