Editorial

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Biographical notes: María T. Soto-Sanfiel is a Professor of Audiovisual Communication, Journalism and Advertising at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain). Her research activity has focused on the study of voice (synthetic and natural) in media communication, multimedia content (production and reception), popularisation of science and interactive television. She also performs as Audiovisual Producer and Journalist.

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This volume is a Special Issue of the *Journal of International Arts and Technology* that offers nine of the social science contributions by participants in the international seminar *Entertainment = Emotion* (E = E), selected by a group of evaluators in the related research areas. The event was held from 21 to 26 November 2009, at the Centro de Ciencias de Benasque Pedro Pascual (CCBPP), was supported by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science and was conceived as the first edition of a series of meetings designed to deal with the most relevant issues in present day communication studies. Before presenting the contributions, we would like to briefly share with our readers our impressions, as the organisers of the event.

E = E was created when we received from Dr. José Ignacio Latorre, Director of the CCBPP, a request to choose a topic and organise a preliminary seminar on a subject of unquestionable scientific importance to communication sciences which would be extremely current and would have the potential for extensive repercussions in the field.

After evaluating several options, we settled on the relation between media entertainment and audiences' experiences of emotions as a topic. It is a subject of relevance to various academic disciplines, to the different industries related with the audiovisual world, to the institutions that regulate communication policies and to the consumers of media themselves. We believe there to be few subjects that, at present, are susceptible to arousing the interest of so many actors. On the one hand, there is a need to experience the different views of the phenomenon of media entertainment, and to do so in depth. It is evident that, particularly due to proliferating technology, myriad instances of entertainment now saturate the lives of the citizens of developed countries; both the offer of entertainment and our exposure to it are continually increasing. Nowadays, we dedicate more and more of our time to relaxation, to getting away from the daily grind and to forgetting about the more mundane aspects of our lives by consuming audiovisual products. On the other hand, a high proportion, if not all, of the present day audiovisual offer is constructed to exploit human emotions. The most successful television programmes, popular videogames and the biggest box office hits at the cinema seek to produce diverse and intense emotional experiences in order to guarantee that they are enjoyable and, therefore, commercially successful. So, we need to ask to what degree is entertainment appreciated, construed and evaluated by the emotional experience it generates: Entertainment = emotion? Further, what are the characteristics and peculiarities of the relationship, and, most importantly, what are its effects on the attitudes, motivations, desires, thoughts and action of human beings: Where is entertainment driving us? Where is so much emotion taking us? Where does media reality end?

With that in mind, we sought to design a meeting that was, most of all, a workspace that reflected the state of the most relevant academic research on the subject and that made it possible to stimulate the generation of new problems and study perspectives. We felt the need for junior and senior researchers, from different traditions and origins, to actively exchange ideas and experiences. Benasque was the perfect place to propose a ground-breaking meeting; a space to think peacefully and profoundly. In this setting, we conceived a highly innovative and relaxed format for the encounter, one which was far removed from the usual academic settings, and which combined presentations of impeccable scientific relevance with performances and exhibitions of object of study. In the new elegant CCBPP building, thanks to its efficient staff, we enjoyed five days of intense, productive work experienced beautiful mountaintop scenery and an early snow, and were delightfully entertained. We achieved our objectives for the seminar: to generate joint projects; to develop networks; to exchange reflections and to reveal new ideas and research talent engaged with entertainment and emotions.

The papers contained in this Special Issue provide testimony of the seminar's productivity. The volume contains work that explores aspects of the relationship between entertainment and emotions, both in conventional media and content (e.g. theatrical films, print narratives, popular music and television series and commercials) and interactive forms (e.g. internet, virtual platforms and gaming platforms). These studies advance our understanding of the effects of interactivity on the emotional experience of entertainment. They also present research that deepens the analysis of what are considered to be the preeminent aspects of preceding studies (e.g. identification with characters, immersion, familiarity with the content and the perception of reality-fantasy). Generally, this research follows on from the ideas of Dolf Zillmann and colleagues. The papers also present studies that analyse content from the perspectives of gender; and emotional sociology.

In addition, the reader will find studies of morality and consumption which reflect the research activity of senior researchers of the subject (e.g. Art Raney and Ronald Tamborini) and their colleagues. Finally, it will be observed that most of the studies contained in this volume use experimental methodology, although they also include content analyses and surveys. We shall now briefly present each of these studies and provide a global vision of the volume's content.

Sue Aran Ramspott (Universitat Ramon Llul), Pilar Medina Bravo and Miquel Rodrigo Alsina (Universitat Pompeu Fabra) present 'Management of emotions in US fiction series: when being (and feeling like) a woman sells', a study anchored in emotional psychology and sociology that seeks to analyse the most representative models of femininity in western fictional television series. The investigation sought to analyse the narrative structures that supported these representations and find out whether their plots were able to reveal the new social forms of femininity that exist in modern society. To do this, the researchers applied a model for the analysis of fiction, which had been developed in previous studies, to two USA and two Spanish series. Among other results, Aran, Medina and Rodrigo found that fictional female characters reflected the concerns, contradictions and realities of modern day women in their difficulties dealing with public and private spheres. In addition, that humour acts as a barrier for the construction of complex characters.

Gordon Calleja (IT University Copenhagen) presents 'Emotional involvement in digital games', which contains the results of a qualitative analysis that he used to illustrate some of the ways in which digital games emotionally engage their players. The study involves complex theorisation as it considers the relationship between the game, medium and player. Calleja categorises six frames of involvement in his own Player Involvement Model, which he created in order to understand immersion and the emotional experience of gaming: spatial, narrative, performative, shared, ludic and affective involvement.

Allison Eden, Matthew Grizzard and Robert Lewis (Michigan State University) present 'Disposition development in drama: the role of moral, immoral and ambiguously moral characters', a study that aimed to explore how affective dispositions towards the characters change over six weeks of a TV drama serial. The researchers found that liking was strongly related to the morality of a character and that dispositions could change overtime in a predictable manner. They also found that morally ambiguous characters, despite not being a determinant factor of enjoyment, played critical roles in the narrative involvement or engagement of audiences. The researchers state that, in order to understand audiences' emotional responses, there is a need to observe the role of morally ambiguous characters in the narrative.

Matthew Grizzard, Robert J. Lewis, Seungcheol Austin Lee and Allison Eden (Michigan State University) present 'Predicting popularity of mass-market films using the tenets of disposition theory', a study that sought to find the extent to which dispositional considerations predicted the popularity of films. The research was based on *Disposition theory*, as proposed by Dolf Zillmann (audiences enjoy themselves when the good characters in fiction are rewarded, and when the baddies are punished), and applied a content analysis to the content of summaries of the plots of the most popular films. The results led the researchers to conclude that dispositional considerations, although prevalent, were not a significant predictor of popularity when confronted with other important variables such as budget. They were also led to suggest that there is a need for

academics to incorporate a greater understanding of the predictive power of theoretical models in real applications.

Nicoleta Groza and Jordi Fernández Cuesta (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona) present 'Sexist humour in advertising: just a joke or marketing strategy?', an experimental study that aimed to observe the effect of the inclusion of humour and sexism in advertising discourse. The study observed the relationship between the positive sentiments of the receivers, the perception of offensiveness and its influence on the credibility of commercials. Its main results showed that the more positive the sentiments generated, the less offensive receivers considered commercials containing sexist humour to be.

Jiyoun Kim (Florida State University) presents 'Affective states, familiarity and music selection: power of familiarity'. In this experimental study, the researcher examined the influence of familiarity on media content (music) and affective states (sadness or happiness) in the selection of music. The study found evidence that familiarity was a more important factor in musical selection than the receivers' feelings (happy or unhappy). She also found that both the participants in her study with happy feelings and those with sad feelings showed little preference for unfamiliar music. However, unfamiliar energetic and joyful music produced happy and energetic effects on her sad participants. Kim found, finally, that although familiar energetic and joyful music were enjoyed more, both types of music were favourably evaluated by their receivers.

K. Maja Krakowiak (University of Colorado at Colorado Springs) and Mina Tsay (Boston University) present 'The role of moral disengagement in the enjoyment of real and fictional characters', an experimental study that sought to further our understanding of the psychological processes by which individuals enjoy morally ambiguous fictional characters. Specifically, the study aims to observe the extent to which the tendency towards moral disengagement (the process, identified by Albert Bandura, that leads one to accept or defend the morality of reproachable behaviours), and the fictionality of a story, influence approval of characters' immoral behaviours and the readers' overall enjoyment. After applying an online questionnaire, in two experimental conditions (fiction or true story), Krakowiak and Tsay concluded that character liking mediated the relationship between moral disengagement and enjoyment. Also, although the tendency towards moral disengagement predicted its manifestation, the reality or fictionality of the narrative did not affect moral disengagement.

The same researchers (Mina Tsay and K. Maja Krakowiak) present 'The impact of perceived character similarity and identification on moral disengagement', a text that explores how identification with and similarity to characters predicted the degree to which audiences morally disengage or accept antisocial behaviours. Through the application of an online questionnaire, the researchers found that the perception of similarity with a character mediated the relationship between identification and moral disengagement, and this also affected the affective enjoyment of the narrative.

Finally, María T. Soto-Sanfiel, Laura Aymerich-Franch, F. Xavier Ribes-Guàrdia and J. Reinaldo Martínez-Fernández (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona) present an experimental study titled 'Influence of interactivity on emotions and enjoyment during consumption of audiovisual fiction'. The study aimed to determine the effect of interaction with the plot of a film on the emotions manifested depending on the content (a happy or sad ending) and the type of instructions for interaction (operative or affective). The researchers' main results show the influence of interactivity on interest, surprise and

guilt with respect to non-interactive consumption of the narrative. They also found that interaction in itself did not affect enjoyment, which essentially depends on the content.