

Professional Qualities and Social Responsibility of Journalists in the New Media Era: Postprint

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Date: 2023-10-08T00:00:00+00:00

Abstract

With the continuous development of the times, new media has emerged and gradually become the most prominent term of the current era. In the new media age, the journalism industry has undergone transformative changes; journalists must adhere to the fundamental characteristics of new media, enhance their news sensitivity, and elevate their professional competence. This paper primarily analyzes the current state of journalists from a new media perspective and explores their professional competence and social responsibility from multiple dimensions.

Full Text

ChinaXiv Partner Journal

Professional Ethics and Social Responsibility of Journalists in the New Media Era

Abstract: With the continuous development of our times, new media has quietly emerged and become a dominant force. The journalism industry has undergone profound transformations in this new media era, requiring journalists to adapt to its fundamental characteristics, enhance news sensitivity, and elevate their professional ethics. This article analyzes the current state of journalists from a new media perspective and explores their professional ethics and social responsibility from multiple dimensions.

Keywords: New Media; Journalists; Professional Ethics; Social Responsibility

Chinese Library Classification: G214.2

Document Code: A

Article ID: 1671-0134(2018)01-098-02

DOI: 10.19483/j.cnki.11-4653/n.2018.01.038

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1. Overview of New Media

New media represents a product of the contemporary era, distinguished from traditional media by its unique characteristics in form, content, and dissemination methods. It encompasses network-derived platforms such as Weibo and WeChat, featuring rapid information transmission, frequent exchanges, and diverse content that truly breaks through temporal and spatial limitations. In this new media landscape, journalism must actively abandon conventional models and fully leverage these new platforms. Journalists, in particular, must fundamentally recognize the significance of new media and advance with the times to ensure innovative development and transformation of the news industry. The emergence of new media provides opportunities for sustainable development in journalism, necessitating industry reform and a clear understanding of current trends. By fundamentally linking journalists, news reporting, and new media, we can truly strengthen journalists' sense of social responsibility and achieve comprehensive news coverage.

2. Key Problems Facing Journalists in the New Media Era

Journalists in the new media era face numerous challenges from both subjective and objective factors, with three primary issues standing out:

First, **utilitarianism** has become prevalent. With traditional information dissemination methods being replaced by new internet-based interaction and sharing mechanisms, many operators create hype for profit and to attract audience attention. Some journalists even fabricate news, violating fundamental journalistic principles and resulting in a proliferation of substandard content.

Second, **emotional impulsiveness** undermines professional standards. Unlike other industries, journalism inherently requires speed and efficiency. However, many journalists today fail to fully comprehend the meaning of new media and cannot effectively control their emotions during news gathering, sometimes resorting to unscrupulous means to achieve their goals. If this pattern persists, it will lead to the emergence of fake news.

Third, **low professional ethics** erode public trust. Most journalists have not fully grasped the essence of their work, prioritizing commercial benefits over public opinion and failing to conduct multi-faceted analysis. This approach negatively impacts the entire operational model of journalism.

3. Essential Professional Qualities for Journalists in the New Media Era

Given these existing problems, journalists must actively leverage the value of new media and cultivate essential professional qualities, which manifest in sev-

eral key areas.

3.1 Ensuring News Authenticity

Authenticity represents the fundamental characteristic of news. In the new media era, journalists must guarantee news authenticity as a core professional ethic, strictly adhering to relevant principles and accurately describing events. As news has become a primary channel for people to understand social development trends, it plays a significant role in society and exerts substantial influence on the public. Only by ensuring authenticity and reducing fake and low-quality news can we achieve harmonious social development. In today's new media environment, with numerous media platforms emerging and the widespread use of Weibo and WeChat giving rise to various rumors and false information that can influence public thinking, journalists must not blindly follow trends. Reporting without investigating the facts can impact social stability. Therefore, journalists must rationally utilize various media platforms to ensure the authenticity of their reporting.

3.2 Developing New Media Communication Capacity

Establishing proper communication capabilities in the new media era has become paramount—a fundamental mission entrusted by new media. Journalists must master network information dissemination skills, keep pace with the times, and strengthen their application of platforms like WeChat and Weibo, using wireless networks to receive and disseminate information. Additionally, journalists need to actively participate in online news dissemination processes. According to relevant literature, domestic news consumption has shown rapid growth in recent years, largely due to the timeliness of the internet. The public now uses online platforms to receive information faster than through traditional media. Consequently, journalists must actively master communication skills, engage in online news dissemination, and conduct in-depth analysis and research on diverse media information to lay a foundation for innovative new media development.

3.3 Enhancing Judgment Capacity

From a journalistic perspective, news possesses freedom, and citizens have the right to know. Therefore, journalists must maintain overall awareness and adopt a comprehensive perspective when reporting, avoiding the disclosure of important content or causing negative impacts on the public through inappropriate reporting. As qualified journalists, they must understand the current landscape of the new media era, enhance their judgment during interviews, clarify their positioning, and ensure objective and fair news reporting. They must not excessively embellish their personal emotions or confuse their roles, as this is essential for providing authentic news information to the public. Simultaneously, journalists must discern information authenticity to avoid reporting false information that could adversely affect social development.

3.4 Embodying Humanistic Morality

Qualified journalists must uphold humanistic moral values in their reporting, analyzing issues from multiple perspectives. They must ensure news authenticity and use reporting to regulate people's behavior, avoiding negative impacts on the public. For sensitive topics, journalists must analyze actual situations from various angles or use appropriate language in their reporting; otherwise, they may cause adverse effects on their audience. Therefore, in the new media era, journalists must actively adhere to humanistic principles, demonstrate authenticity in reporting, and fully exert their role and value. Only in this way can they ensure authoritative reporting and gain public respect.

4. Social Responsibilities of Journalists in the New Media Era

4.1 Guiding Public Opinion Direction

From both macro and micro perspectives, public opinion is a double-edged sword that serves as a primary guide for the public. If not properly controlled, it can cause significant consequences. Therefore, in the new media era, journalists must strictly follow relevant values and ethical norms, work to ensure social harmony, and use news to guide public opinion, avoiding various disputes driven by ratings competition. Moreover, the internet in the new media era presents both opportunities and challenges. Without proper control, public opinion can deteriorate, and social audiences often express their emotions online. In response, journalists must master the correct direction of public opinion and perform their reporting duties effectively.

4.2 Establishing Correct Values

Journalists must establish correct values when reporting news, recognize current trends in new media, deliver positive content, and set proper value concepts to investigate negative or unacceptable phenomena. However, from another perspective, many journalists in the new media era lack constraints on free platforms and are easily influenced by online platforms. Only by establishing correct value concepts can they guide public opinion in the right direction.

4.3 Maintaining Overall Awareness

Whether in traditional or new media, journalists' fundamental duty is to report news. However, some news is unsuitable for reporting or for audience consumption, often creating dilemmas for journalists. They must maintain overall awareness to avoid reporting content that could negatively impact society.

4.4 Ensuring Evaluation Neutrality

Regardless of news type, journalists must adopt a neutral perspective in their reporting. When journalists insert themselves into a particular angle, they

often lose direction and fail to grasp other aspects, resulting in one-sided news articles. Additionally, journalists must maintain neutrality when evaluating issues. Biased evaluations can seriously affect readers' thinking, causing them to place their own ideas into opposing camps and creating confrontation. Over time, this undermines the authority of journalists' reporting and impacts social audiences' judgment.

In summary, journalists in the new media era must advance with the times, deepen their understanding of their profession, adapt to new media development needs, and provide better services to the public. They must establish correct professional ethics, follow the laws of new media development, strengthen humanistic reporting, and achieve news authenticity. Journalists must also accurately position themselves, understand their responsibilities, correctly guide public opinion, maintain overall awareness, provide neutral evaluations, and ultimately achieve comprehensive and authentic news reporting that fully demonstrates their role and value.

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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