

Journalistic Essay:

Most know of a journalist, have definitely read, heard or watched something a journalist has produced, but little know exactly what a journalist does and their role in society. Journalists have an overall democratic role to spread news to their audiences and ensure that all sides of a story are represented. A journalist must produce news that is recent and relevant to its audience in an ethical matter. There is a lot of misconception about exactly what a journalist does or should do, a lot of journalists do not work ethically, but what a journalist does not necessarily define Journalism.

The book 'Journalism - the democratic craft' discusses that the first thing a journalist must do is "News judgement" (G Stuart Adam, Roy Peter Clark & Oxford University Press 2006). A journalist must first identify when they're discovering new news and if it is important or interesting to its audience. Once decided a journalist must always disseminate this news timely, human interest follows closely behind events and a journalist must try being the most initial news source. If a journalist can do these things, then they hold great importance to the public sphere. Journalism gives a voice to this societal communication and enables a democratic society. 'Hard News' and 'Soft News' are different news writing styles that enable "fairness for all", between these styles all sides of news hypothetically should be able to be covered.

Journalism no longer has a sole role to cover problems, but rather "covering actionable solutions" as said in study, *The Constructive Role of Journalism* (Aitamurto & Varma 2018). Journalists have the opportunity through this to show their positive impacts on society. Journalism can be seen as a very negative craft, and at times it can be, but Journalism aims to produce every side of a story, it can only do this by showing all positive and negative news. Every ethical journalist has a role not only to the public sphere but also to the next generation of journalists. The harder journalists work to spread news that is considered fair the more "It strengthens coverage in terms of providing a more accurate portrayal of the world; engaging audiences more effectively; and holding power to account by asking them to solve, collaborate, seek a civil debate—instead of usual conflicts, disagreeing, polarization." (Aitamurto & Varma 2018). These goals will allow the next generation of journalists to work fairly, especially in the world of social media, which can be an instant news source.

Journalism is supposed to emulate the most real version of a society, but with this comes the battle of ethics. In the book, *Journalism Ethics and Society* it is discussed that "above all else" the news and media's main role is to "maintain democracy, not erode it" (Berry 2008). The book also discussed the high standards Journalism was held at and describes them as "lowered" stating that "the benefits no longer flow from the sight of production to the benefit of consumption". Once a journalist no longer adheres to producing fair news it has an impact on the way journalists are perceived as a whole, this can allow a lot of ethical journalism to be overlooked ultimately lessening its role to a democratic society. However, while unethical journalists work in journalism, they do not define or determine what a journalist does and what their role in democratic society is.

While the main values of journalism will always be imperative to the role, The study, suggests a new role within constructive journalism which "aims to represent examples of effective problem-solving and thus act as a positive force in society" (Aitamurto & Varma 2018). While social media is having positive implications on Journalism, it comes with a lot of negative too, however these positive forces within constructive Journalism allow the industry to mould into the ever-changing ways we consume our media. It cannot be argued that Journalism will always be vital in keeping society balanced and equal and it is up to future Journalists to work at keeping these values.

Bibliography

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