

Impact of Yellow Journalism on Society

Talk by Shafqat Munir

Yellow Journalism is a term used for the use of negligent and flamboyant newspaper reporting, without regard to facts.

With yellow journalism the truth is usually misrepresented or concealed, more often than not, there may be no truth to the story at all.

In its infancy, the term yellow journalism was used to describe the writing tactics used by William Hearst's New York Morning Journal and Joseph Pulitzer's New York World. Both were rival newspaper groups in the United States.

These men used yellow journalism to exaggerate and misguide the American public on happenings in Cuba; such reporting may have even sparked the Spanish-American war.

Joseph Pulitzer's critics accused him of yellow journalism referring to one of his paper's comic strips "The Yellow Kids" while generally he was known for insisting on accuracy and high ideals that live on even now through his own established Pulitzer Prizes.

Yellow journalism is by no means a memory in America's distant past; even the most conservative newspapers still practice it in a refined form today.

Tabloids such as the Star and the Inquirer are notorious for sensationalizing and even falsifying headlines.

Additionally, every once in a while straight edged newspapers, such as the Wall Street Journal, may get into the act as well.

In 1996, ABC News was singled out for reporting that Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu had called the then Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin a traitor, further investigation revealed that the accusation was false.

Examples from Pakistani media: Khabreen newspaper emerged as rival group of the two existing big groups Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt. It covered a lot of sensationalized stories and with its yellow journalistic trends grabbed the attention of the people.

Khabreen emerged by that time a big newspaper and then it started becoming a balanced paper though it still continues with sensationalization.

Several other newspapers tried to follow the suit but cannot be popular as by that time the people were aware of yellow journalism promoted by Khabreen.

Similarly tabloids in Pakistan appear as eveningers. They are not taken serious by the general public though they have a little circulation due to their sensational headlines.

Journalism

It is a discipline of writing. News-oriented journalism is sometimes described as the "first rough draft of history" (attributed to Phil Graham), because journalists often did record important events, however producing news articles on short deadlines.

While under pressure to be first with their stories, news media organizations usually edit and proofread their reports prior to publication, adhering to each organization's standards of accuracy, quality, and style.

Many news organizations claim proud traditions of holding government officials and institutions accountable to the public, while media critics (due to yellow journalism practices) have raised questions about holding the press itself accountable.

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Culture of sensationalization

Politics and Economy

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Conflicts: Human security issues

Mass Media and Public Interest: Norms and Ethics of Media

Mass Media and Democracy

Media Change and Social Change- Promoting Violent Behaviours