

New responsibilities of the media in China

The appearance of covid-19 disrupted our life at the beginning of 2020. Though everything begins to resume normalcy, we can still learn much from the fight against the pandemic. While the virus has taken many lives, rumors and misinformation online were preying on our mind. Not knowing who had been withholding information, we common people were dominated by fear and suspicion. For that, the media are to blame. They are expected to take on new duties in today's society.

I am using the word “new” broadly here. Firstly, it means duty in the “new era”. Last December, the very beginning of this epidemic, all the reports we saw were convincing us that there were no human-to-human transmission cases, ignoring the warning from some doctors. The media were devoted to placating the public instead of uncovering truths in time. That sounds like the deeds in the last century, when people demanded a sense of safety more than truths. However, in 2020, a new era of science, we prioritize truths. In China, the nine-year compulsory education is benefiting over 90% of school-age children now. With the average educational level enhanced significantly / **rising levels of education**, people can understand what is happening and the majority of them are able to distinguish truth from falsehood. Moreover, if someone found that he had been cheated, more panic would ensue. **So**, what is the optimal solution in this new era? When there are problems, we just face them. Reporting the hidden problems truthfully is the new duty of the media. A case in point is the failure to disseminate large volumes of donations in Wuhan. Thanks to the journalist who reported on the incompetence of the Red Cross Society in the city, obstacles were removed and logistics teams joined the effort.

Secondly, the word “new” refers to “new forms of media”, such as We media and digital journals, which are very different from the traditional ones. They shall **undertake** the same responsibility as well. However, to maximize profits and garner attention, some of them used eye-catching titles and fake content **during the pandemic** ~~just to increase the click rate, regardless of the results~~. Because of them, people rushed to purchase useless medicine, or ~~trusted~~ **believed** that Wuhan had become a dead city ~~and so forth~~. Spreading such information is the betrayal of the media's ethical responsibilities. New media are supposed to make the best of the convenience of technology to convey information more quickly and accurately, instead of just making more money, especially in such a crisis.

To sum up, **the** media should bear new responsibilities in this new and special era, regardless of their forms. When it comes to their influence, there's no middle ground: positive or otherwise, which should never be overlooked.

What Makes a Hero

COVID-19 has made 2020 a tough year for everyone. However, we can always learn something from a disaster as we can always find the other side of the coin. The disaster challenges everyone and the choices we make can tell the world who we actually are. During this pandemic, I got to know someone, who taught me that to be a hero merely requires a brave and selfless heart.

During the pandemic my community was isolated just like the others. We locked ourselves in our houses and when we went out, we hid our faces behind masks. Out of fear, we avoided meeting others. We believed that in face of a disaster, people like us couldn't be heroes. We'd better consider only ourselves.

One day I stepped out of my house as we were running out of disinfectant. I spotted one of my neighbors, a thin old lady, who was staring at the bulletin board. She waved to me as she noticed me. "They are in need of volunteers," she said, pointing at the poster. "It is too dangerous," I responded coolly, "especially for elders like you. Let's leave the job to those so-called heroes." Obviously, this was none of our business—I said to myself and turned away from her shinning eyes.

The next day, when I found that it was the same old lady who knocked on my door, I was extremely confused. Before I could ask, she handed me several boxes of disinfectant and said, "We are going door to door to deliver these boxes. I hope they can be helpful." She did become a volunteer! But why? Despite her poor immunity, this must be pretty tiring for her. "This job shouldn't be done by elderly people. It's for young adults! Why don't you just go home? You don't have to do so." With a broad smile, she explained, "Well, I think everyone should do their bit to overcome the hard times. Besides, I'm tired of being told that I should be protected just because I'm old and weak. I got to prove that it's our heart that decides who we are instead of our body."

Then she got down to work once again, but her words seemed to stay in my head. Without those words, I could never understand why someone at her age would like to be a protector instead of being protected and I will never be able to realize we should admire the heart of a hero instead of their bodies. Now I know that everyone can be a hero and how to do it, so next time when I face a disaster, I won't let my chance slip away.