PEACE JOURNALISM: A GOAL OR A DREAM?

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Pacific Media Centre

Peace Journalism or Just Good Journalism?

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Why do we need Peace Journalism?

- Substantial increase in number of conflicts, violence of conflicts and casualties in conflict over last 100 years.
- Exponential growth in military expenditure of governments (e.g. USA and UK)
- Increase in poverty and hunger worldwide
- Promises about dealing with poverty in their own countries not realised.

Why do we need Peace Journalism?

- Evidence of the media impact in conflict.
- Embedded journalism
- Media as propaganda instruments for United States and United Kingdom (Keeble 2004)
- Wars are ‘myths manufactured to sustain the military industrial complexes of the two nations.’ (Keeble 2004).
- Bearing witness.
What is Peace Journalism?

• Not just promoting peace and ‘good’ news.
• Professor Johan Galtung
• 1970 seminal study.
• War/violence journalism
• Peace/conflict journalism
• (see handout)

Lee (2010) War Journalism/Peace Journalism

• War Journalism
  – Reactive
  – Visible effects of war
  – Elite Oriented
  – Focus on differences
  – Focus on here and now
  – Good guys/bad guys; victims/villains

• Peace Journalism.
  – Proactive
  – Invisible effects of war
  – People Oriented
  – Focus on agreement
  – Causes and consequences
  – Avoids such labelling.

Lee (2010) War Journalism/Peace Journalism (cont.)

• War Journalism
  – Two parties: Win/lose
  – Partisan/bias
  – Zero-sum
  – Stops at peace treaty signing/ceasefire (and heads for another war)

• Peace Journalism
  – Multiparty: gives voice
  – Nonpartisan/neutral
  – Win-win
  – Stays on and reports aftermath/reconstruction/rehabilitation/implementation

Lee (2010) War Journalism/Peace Journalism (cont. language use)

• War Journalism
  – Uses victimizing language
  – Uses demonizing language
  – Uses emotive words

• Peace Journalism
  – Avoids victimizing language
  – Avoids demonizing language
  – Objective, moderate, avoids emotive words. Does not exaggerate.
Peace journalism + conflict resolution and transformation

- Annabel McGoldrick, Television reporter, University Lecturer, Journalism trainer.
- Jake Lynch, Director of Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Sydney

2005 Study.

Peace journalism + conflict resolution and transformation

- Re-examination of ethics of journalistic intervention.
- Building an awareness of non-violence.
- Revealing areas of common ground.
- Treating as equally newsworthy the suffering, fears, and grievances of all parties.
- Avoiding use of disempowering language.
- Treating allegations made by all parties as equally serious.


- Good journalism – fairness, accuracy, minimizing psychological harm to viewers.
- Need to expose war and violence propaganda.
- Give ‘cues and clues’ for readers and audience to enable them to form informed views.
- Journalists to be aware of being used as unwitting collaborators. (Boyd-Barrett 2009)
- Stop spreading misinformation.
- Stop framing events in complicity with government elites.

Cautionary Tales

- Citizen journalism = activist journalism (Rai 2009)
- Peace journalism = radical political practice (Keeble 2009)
- ‘Peace is a dangerous word in a dangerous world’ (Patindol 2009)
- ‘Conflict-sensitive journalism’???
- Reporting on ‘where the silence was’ (Zollman)
### Peace Journalism Projects

- **German Peace Counts** – promotes the professionalization of journalists as advocates for peace (Prinzing 2009).
- **The New Media Nation** – internationalisation of indigenous media audiencehood and media production – new ways of preventing, mediating, and resolving conflict (Alia 2009).
- **Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation** – gender imbalance, ridicule, blame and shame of women by the media (Soederberg Jacobson 2009).

### Peace Journalism Projects (cont.)

- **Pacifists and conscientious objectors** – marginalized by media, jeering and sarcasm (Tulloch 2009).
- **Economic theory of journalism** – wars have been ‘mediatised’, government spin, control of the media, resources to finance investigative journalism diminishing (Russ-Mohl 2009).

### Peace Journalism Projects (cont.)

- **Media Lens** – ‘The truth is so often the reverse of what has been told us by our culture that we cannot turn our heads far enough around to see it.’ (Howard Zinn cited in Edwards 2009) – the unthinkable is normalised, media is no longer the watchdog, but a propaganda system for power (Edwards 2009).
- **Photojournalism** – ethical concerns about further damage to the dignity of people already violated (Rughana 2009).

### Glimmers of Hope/Flickers of Peace

- **Bearing witness** – YouTube, Flickr, blogs, Twitter, Facebook and Second Life, cellphones – Digital technologies will ‘contribute to a broadening of global public spheres (Matheson and Allen 2009).
- **Public consternation** over brutal crimes and savage war validates ethical principle of non-violence ‘grounded in the sacredness of human life’ (Christians 2009).