

Sighs and Strategies of Pan-Entertainment Phenomenon of Chinese News from the Perspective of New Media – Take the Tik Tok as an Example

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Abstract: With the rapid development of China's market economy and the increasing improvement of people's living standards, the pace of people's life is accelerating, and the pressure of life is also increasing. They need relaxation ways that can relieve the pressure, so entertainment seems to become the necessity of people's leisure time. In this context, in order to stand out from the huge number of news works, occupy the media market share and expand economic benefits, the major media seize the public's demand for entertainment and cater to their need of entertainment in news creation. As a result, the trend of entertainment in China's news industry is increasingly strengthened, which also leads to chaos like "Clickbait", fake news and kitschy news in the news industry. This paper laments the phenomenon of pan-entertainment of news on Tik Tok and puts forward some suggestions for these problems.

1. Introduction

In the era of new media, the phenomenon of pan-entertainment of news is increasingly strengthened. News works are becoming more and more vulgar and superficial. In terms of news expression techniques, news publishers deconstruct the public's aesthetic orientation by means of exposing gossip and teasing, making the public more and more impetuous and superficial. Under the guidance of this trend, it is difficult for the audience to have noble sentiment and to think deeply about a news event. To some extent, the pan-entertainment of news is a kind of cultural poison, so we urgently need to find an antidote to detoxify our culture and the public's mind. This paper analyzes the phenomenon of news entertainment and puts forward rectification strategies for the sustainable and healthy development of journalism.

2. The Concept of News Pan-Entertainment Phenomenon

Pan-entertainment refers to a trend of thought that takes consumerism and hedonism as the core, takes modern media as the main carrier, and uses shallow and empty contents, even vulgar and strange, and gimmicky packaging methods to relax people's nerves through dramatic performances, so as to achieve pleasure.^[1] It can be concluded that the pan-entertainment of news refers to the packaging of news in the way of entertainment, which makes news works appear shallow thinking, profitable, and even vulgar, fake or violent. The media can satisfy the audience's desire for voyeurism and curiosity by amplifying various gimmicks, to achieve the purpose of profit.

3. The Formation Reason of News Pan-Entertainment Phenomenon

3.1 Economic Factors

With the rapid development of the market economy and the increasing degree of socialization, the market competition pressure of media is increasing. Therefore, media can only attract audiences and grab market shares by catering to market demand so that they can obtain higher economic benefits. In addition, the incrementally iteration of the media industry has also caused a great impact on the traditional news industry. Media gradually began to go after the circulation and

broadcast for money, so they choose to leave the idea of “content as king” behind. In order to pursue clicks and differentiation, some reports just focus on the entertainment factors of new articles which are easier for individuals to read. However, Tik Tok is a platform that focus on entertainment, the news there have their entertainment nature. Moreover, the number of users on this platform is very large, and it is easy for the media to obtain more data traffic by releasing entertainment news, which means that the media could expand their influence on this platform and profiteer from it. Under the wave of fierce media competition, in order to maximize economic benefits, the phenomenon of news pan-entertainment in Tik Tok is constantly strengthened.

3.2 Cater to Audience Psychology

As we all know, public attention is the source of media’s data traffic and revenue. In order to win more audiences and expand the influence of media, media must grasp the audiences’ interest and demand. In recent years, there is more and more content which is available on the Internet, people can take advantage of the anonymity of the Internet to express their ideas boldly. Therefore, getting pleasant information from the Internet seems to be the most popular choice for individuals to do in their spare time. There is no doubt that audiences prefer mindless laughter rather than the serious form of news. This means that all kinds of soft news content can better meet the psychological needs of the audience. In order to attract the audience, the media will choose to increase the number of entertainment news reports, so the public will pay more attention to entertainment news. In this way, the public is easy to fall into the vicious circle of Information Cocoon Effect. At the same time, in the era of new media, the barriers to entry of news are reducing, and a large amount of soft news which is aimed at meeting the audience’s need could easily spread over the Internet platform.

3.3 Negligence of Gatekeepers

The “gatekeeper” theory is the classical theory of communication, which originates from news selection in journalism. The concept of “gatekeeper” was first proposed by Kurt Lewin, an American social psychologist and one of the founders of communication studies. Lewin found that there are some “gatekeepers” in the process of group communication, and the role of “gatekeepers” can be summarized as information collection, filtering, processing and dissemination.^[2] In the era of traditional media, the release of news has a very strict check procedure, and every piece of information is processed through strict audit. But in today's new media era, everyone has speaking right, and everyone can publish what they want to spread in Tik Tok. These massive amounts of information have brought great difficulties to news supervision, which in time leads to the weakening of news control. With the absence of news gatekeepers, all kinds of negative and eye-catching news are more likely to flow into Tik Tok and other platforms like that. As a result, the phenomenon of pan-entertainment of news is intensifying day by day.

4. The Problems Caused by News Pan-Entertainment Phenomenon

4.1 Poison the Mind of Younger Generation

The youth is regarded as the future of a country and they play an important role in the development of the country. However, individuals at this age have immature values and are easily influenced by bad news. On new media platforms such as Tik Tok, there is mixed information, especially too much entertainment news, crime news and kitsch news. The news, which abandon the bottom line for the sake of profit, are likely to cause wrong guidance to teenagers' thoughts and make them fall into the trap of money worship, hedonism and individualism. On Tik Tok, for example, we often see news about celebrities, most of which deliberately enlarge their merits. As a result, the news makes young people believe that a certain star is an almost perfect person, and then it will lead them to engage in star-chasing behaviors, which will disrupt their daily life. In this context, young people begin to support their idols in the form of high consumption. What is more, it is common to see the flaming war between the two stars’ fans. We are surprised to find that the main force of these flaming wars is mostly the youth. In short, the phenomenon of news

pan-entertainment has brought a lot of trouble to the youth.

4.2 The Creation of Fake News

The essence of false news is that the disseminators spread news reports with false components that fail to reflect the true appearance of objective things with some purpose. Under the background of increasing pan-entertainment of news, many journalists' awareness of media responsibility has been weakened. In order to write eye-catching reports, they ignore the truth of news and pursue timeliness and readability without limit. This behavior leads to the flood of fake news on the Internet. For instance, when the China Eastern MU5735 crash happened in March 2022, some journalists had disguised videos of wildfires which caused by the ceremony to worship ancestors in other village as the crash site to attract data traffic. Also, in order to be the first to publish news, some media released information that the second black box has been found in advance. Such false information, to a certain extent, disrupted the normal aftermath settlement. Such careless reporting of disaster reports makes it difficult for the audience to truly understand the real situation of the disaster, and therefore, the news value of the report itself cannot effectively play its role.

At the same time, in recent years, the reverse news produced for the pursuit of timeliness has brought new problems to the society. Reverse news, also known as news reversal drama or reverse news, refers to the phenomenon that the report of the same news event has one or more significant changes or even reverse changes in the aspects of fact, value, emotion and so on.^[3] Reversal news is characterized by dramatic reversal and reversal of public attitudes. In order to cater to the audience's anxiety of learning the truth, some journalists ignore objective authenticity of news and focus on social anxiety when reporting, in order to achieve the reporting effect of attracting attention of public and maximizing the communication effect by constantly stimulating people's anxiety. In January 2022, there is a China Newsweek reporter Zhao Xiang reported a news about a father looking for his son in Beijing, which has attracted public attention widely. The news said that during the pandemic, a father decided to come to Beijing to look for his son because he had been lost contact with his son for several days. When his own search for his son proved fruitless, he chose to call the police for help. In the report, the father claimed that the police do nothing for him. But after a few days, the police told him to reclaim his son's corpse and refuse to provide them with DNA testing. The news went viral as soon as it was released, and even the mainstream media like The Legal Daily and Xinhua News Agency reposted it. For a time, public opinion has been rapidly ferment, netizens have publicly blamed the police, and expressed deep sympathy for the father. But a few days later, things took a swift turn. In an official announcement, the police said they launched an investigation immediately after reporting the case and confirmed the identity of the body through DNA testing after it was found. But the drama began when the father refused to accept this result. After the truth came out, the reporter who earned enough data traffic changed his nickname and deleted relevant information on the social media, and then he quietly went into hiding. It shows that the use of public attention to create a reversal for data traffic not only causes a waste of public resources, but also destroys journalists' own careers.

4.3 Desecration of National Culture

In the fierce media competition, some reporters turn their attention to celebrities or heroes in order to attract attention from the public. Under the trend of pan-entertainment, the reporters try to get hits by means of spoofing, spreading rumors or digging tidbits about people with high attention. Such bottomless reporting not only harms the reputation of celebrities, but also distorts the public's understanding of Chinese national culture. If serious public dialogue becomes childish infantile language, if the public degenerate into a passive audience, and all public affairs will become an empty talk. Then the nation will find itself at stake, and the fate of its culture will also be doomed.

5. Development Strategies of News Pan-Entertainment Phenomenon

5.1 Improve the Quality of Journalists

New media is a media form developed based on modern digital information, Internet and other emerging science and technology. In concept, it corresponds to traditional media. New media generally provides interactive information transmission services for users by means of mobile phones, computers and other terminals.^[4] In this context, journalists as the main body of information transmission services, the quality of the content they spread is closely related to social development and people's quality of life. This means that journalists have more speaking right and influence than ordinary people. While possessing certain power, they should also improve their sense of responsibility and stick to the bottom line of journalistic ethics. In the era of new media, the entry threshold of news communicators is reduced, and the level of news communicators is uneven. On Tik Tok, everyone can post their photos or videos online. At this time, professional journalists are more needed to provide more accurate information so that the public can understand the whole picture, and they should actively create a positive and healthy environment on the platform. Therefore, journalists should take the initiative to take their responsibilities and improve their own quality. In this era of diversification, journalists are becoming the multidisciplinary scholars since news information involves all walks of life. In order to accurately report information and provide the public with correct and true news reports, journalists should learn more knowledge in various aspects, broaden their knowledge, so that they have a broader vision and bring new views to the audience. Professional journalists should be mindful of their mission and raise their moral standards, rather than becoming instigators of a mindless orgy of public opinion. This requires journalists to enhance their professional quality while improving their news performance, bring more positive energy to the network, and contribute their own strength to clean up the network environment.

5.2 Give Play to the Role of Mainstream Media in Guiding Public Opinion

In this over-entertainment society, impetuous seems to become the undercurrent of the network world, and mainstream media should play a mainstay role in this time. When facing with some sudden news events, the mainstream media lost the opportunity to guide public opinion because they did not grasp the initiative at the first time. After obtaining first-hand information, some we-media might win public attention by malicious editing. It makes the things become uncontrollable. After that, mainstream media just went through a series of internal processes such as interviewing, writing, reviewing and publishing information. At this point, the mainstream media seems too late to report and clarify the news event. Also, the mainstream media should improve its internal mechanism to release accurate news works quickly. Only by taking the initiative and being ahead of others can its public opinion guidance function play a good role. In addition, due to the political or authoritative nature of mainstream media, information from mainstream media is more serious and has a sense of teaching. It's easy to trigger a backlash. Therefore, while leading public opinion, mainstream media should also pay attention to their words and content which ought to be friendly and close to the public, and avoid indoctrination education mode. In order to attract audiences, mainstream media can strengthen the construction of "holographic media". "Holographic media" refers to the use of new media technology to make the presentation of information more diversified, to bring users a richer reading experience.^[5] In this way, mainstream media can not only expand their influence and gain more attention, but also avoid cultural risks brought by pan-entertainment. Mainstream media can influence the masses by creating excellent news works, infuse socialist core values into news works, nourish and guide people silently.

5.3 Drive the Development of Media Integration

Accelerating the development of media integration is conducive to broaden the channels of news. Due to the different characteristics of each platform, different sides of the same news can be released based on these characteristics, and the audience can strengthen the overall understanding of an event. Compared with traditional media, the most significant feature of financial media in news

communication is to excavate the same news event from different dimensions and in different ways, and to carry out three-dimensional reporting system through different platforms and forms or media matrix.^[6] Promoting the development of media integration can combine the advantages of traditional media and new media. Meanwhile, news reports or information resources collected can be integrated to maximize their benefits. All kinds of radio and television stations can release different types of news works according to the attributes of different platforms by strengthening the construction of Weibo, WeChat, Wesee and clients to enhance the three-dimensional degree of news works and better meet the audience's demand for news works. At the same time, traditional media should accelerate the pace of media integration development by changing ideas, optimizing organizational structure, reconstructing business processes, and comprehensively integrating resources such as content, technology and talent. For example, CCTV has followed the trend of media convergence development by registering its own account on Tik Tok. Different from news works released on other platforms, CCTV's news on Tik Tok is dominated by relaxing short videos. In this way, CCTV strengthens its value orientation and takes an active part in market competition. As a mainstream media, CCTV's professionalism is beyond doubt. But because of its political and seriousness, audience hard to have a great interest in the news which are released by it. However, after CCTV opened an account on Tik Tok, there is a very big change in their use of words, the style of that is becoming more populist and intelligible. CCTV opened a new situation for its own development with the new style of word using and injected new development momentum, which is worth learning from other media. In the tide of media convergence development, news works have high-quality content and faster update speed. Meanwhile, media convergence also promotes the enhancement of user stickiness and the expansion of media influence, which is conducive to alleviating the wrong practice of news disseminators filling news with excessive entertaining information in order to win public attention.

5.4 Strengthen Press Supervision

In order to improve the efficiency of network supervision, almost all kinds of platforms adopt big data algorithm to recommend information and screen platform content. In view of the increasing phenomenon of pan-entertainment news, all kinds of platforms should try their best to improve the algorithm and strengthen the manual supervision to gain a better supervision result. On the one hand, each platform should not only use a single algorithm, but should use a combination of multiple algorithms to avoid the bugs of each algorithm to the greatest extent. At the same time, the recommendation algorithm can be improved by adding keywords. The algorithm can intelligently identify more dirty words, violent words and other bad words to increase the purification of the network environment. On the other hand, the news supervision department can restrain the phenomenon of news entertainment by strengthening the supervision of four parts. First of all, relevant departments can strengthen supervision in accordance with the law, implement all press laws and regulations, hold organizations and individuals accountable for violating press requirements, crack down on lawbreakers in accordance with the law, cancel their press cards or close relevant accounts. Second, relevant departments should strengthen institutional supervision and establish and perfect public opinion guidance mechanism in the news industry. Thirdly, relevant departments should strengthen the supervision of the industry, improve the consciousness of employees in the industry, add the education courses of journalistic ethics and regulations for employees, and improve their cognition and practice level of journalistic ethics and regulations. In addition, it is also possible to enhance the sense of responsibility and honor of practitioners by recognizing outstanding practitioners. Finally, relevant departments can also regulate bad news works by broadening the channels of mass supervision, and encourage the masses to report and expose the news works which are bottomless and vest entertained. What is more, news disseminators should also actively accept the supervision of the masses, consciously rectify improper news content, and promote the sustainable and healthy development of the news industry.

6. Conclusion

In the era of new media, the phenomenon of pan-entertainment of news is increasingly strengthened, which brings a big shock to the news industry, but also promotes the continuous development of media and brings new vitality to the new media. On the one hand, we should always be alert to the phenomenon of pan-entertainment in news to prevent the absence of cultural education and inheritance value by making entertainment the fundamental standard to measure cultural value. Also, journalists should always remember to use the true and reliable news works to inspire people, influence people, and form a positive good atmosphere in the society. On the other hand, we should also seize the opportunity brought by the pan-entertainment of news to change the original characteristics of news with strong didacticism, and make news works more humanize and closer to the real needs of contemporary people. At the same time, we should also spare no effort to improve the existing mode of news communication, promote the integrated development of media, accelerate the establishment of a more perfect reporting system, improve the quality of practitioners, and promote positive energy of positive and rational thinking in the news industry and even in the whole society.

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