

TechNews

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Reno Waswil
TECHNEWS WRITER

Art and journalism have complemented each other as long as they both have lived: logos and pathos both being desirable qualities for a compelling experience. Having had the opportunity, as a member of IIT's Ethics Bowl to attend the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics' (APPE) annual conference in Orange County California and, listening to many seminars, discussing the ethics of journalism and its thorny thorniness, that fact only became more apparent. Particularly a talk by Derek Moscato of the University of Oregon, entitled Fukushima Fallout in Japanese Manga: "The Oishinbo Controversy through the Lens of Habermasian Discourse Ethics" reminds me of this and begs the question of what we should expect from our artists, many of whom seem to hold so much sway in the realms outside of art.

The talk focuses on an event that took place in 2014 when the popular Japanese comic Oishinbo by Tetsu Kariya published an issue that entertained feelings of fear and skepticism towards the conditions of the area surrounding the nuclear plant, held so much in contention after its much publicized earthquake and tsunami induced meltdown in 2011, including an infamous picture of the main character, after visiting the sight, later developing nosebleeds, a symptom which many individuals have attributed but never proven to be caused by bodily harm by people in the area.

In the light of this negative press, immediate backlash from the Japanese government, even direct criticism from the Prime Minister himself, ensued and the series was discontinued. The rekindled discussion in the media which Moscato traces back to this manga was apparently such a concern for the government that they commissioned a YouTube video to be produced to the song "Happy" by Pharrell Williams with residents of the area dancing showing that they are happy and healthy: a sort of positive advertisement of the area. Moscato argues for this sort of display of Habermasian Discourse Ethics, which is ba-

sically a journalism of the public sphere, not regulated as viciously as it was by the Japanese government who have such an investment in promoting their country in a positive light.

The problem in this case with that view of journalism is that the story in question was fake. Dostoevsky, writer of such works of literary brilliance like "Crime and Punishment" and "The Brothers Karamazov" can be as inspired that all he wants was to get into real politics in Russia in the mid-20th century, his stories can never be seen as a journalistic one. Another member of the talk even asked whether or not, in this case, Kariya might be the Fukushima fallout's equivalent to Jenny McCarthy in the Anti-Vaccination debate: a public representative of a side of a debate unfiliated with the established media who is marginalized for being scientifically on the wrong side and spreading misinformation.

I would argue that no, art is art and journalism is not art. Jenny McCarthy frames her position as the truth, whereas Kariya does not. In as much sway as it has on the public, if he is at all successful in his mission, he was not manufacturing a sentiment that was not already there, confirming its cultural relevance, so he was not betraying the goal of art, being a medium of perception rather than one of truth. I firmly believe that art cannot be judged by its factualness, only its insightfulness and ingenuity in itself, and any proactive points it may make which may cause cultural shifts are beside the point.

McCarthy on the other hand has an obligation to be factual. She is carried by her anecdotal pathos relating to her son's autism which she claims was caused by his vaccinations which she uses as evidence. Art is an invading and tainting journalism in this case, which is a real and present problem. In Kariya's case, it is obvious that he is not making any legitimate arguments. I might say that the artist's motive matters, but the acknowledgement that, what is being created is art, is revelation of motive in itself. Art is completely bias. If I may take an Aesthetic point of view, the art may even be harmed by too much reality or too little bias and I think that, what may be a helpful ex-

ercise in skepticism towards art in general, is trying to criticize it for what it is and not what it is trying to do, no matter how much it may be trying to do that thing. If artists want to be seen as legitimate journalists, they need to put the same scrutiny into what they say and imply as journalists. No matter how much you may agree with what Bob Dylan or Bob Marley say in their politically charged lyrics, the medium matters.

This fact only became more apparent in the talk given by Aaron Quinn and Mathew Blake of California State University, entitled "The Sound of Music in Multimedia Journalism." It expanded on the fact that people can be undeniably primed by, particularly music used in journalistic reporting. Not to say that freedoms such as music are absolutely off limits for a journalist trying equally as hard as an artist to make a compelling work, but journalists are required to make it clear about their motives or biases, when presenting something in that vein. Their solution has more transparency, a journalistic virtue not required by art. Journalists are obligated to state their biases in these cases and layout the choices they made and why they made them.

There can be something to be said about mixing art with journalism to create a more compelling form of each, but one cannot compromise either. In Kariya's case, I was so blatantly illogical that it doesn't matter; may the art be judged on its own and may it not be held as anything more. It does not ask the questions—it may compel others to ask the questions when art could sway them with such a lack of argument, they wanted to ask them in the first place. McCarthy is asking the questions to report on them, putting her in the journalist realm, putting her up to that level of scrutiny. Those that want to do both must be willing to be scrutinized in both realms and cannot hide behind the fact that they are rooted in either. If, at later point, Kariya decided to take what he is implying and make a claim with the appropriate evidence, then he could be torn down to whatever level he may deserves.

Chapel Hill shooting prompts reflection

Shireen Gul
COPY EDITOR

I have been trying to write about the shooting at Chapel Hill for quite a while now, but each time I sat down to write about it, all I could do was relate the tragedy with myself. I lost my older brother to cancer four years ago and I still cannot overcome his death. The day my brother left us was the day my heart wanted to stop beating but I had to stay here and keep his memory alive. I know I'll see him again one day, but still I miss him so much. I saw my brother suffering and I knew he is going to die but still, when he left us for good, we couldn't accept the truth easily. We still sit and think about how it happened all of a sudden. So it's hard to just imagine the pain the families of the Chapel Hill victims are going through, where someone else decided to kill them because they thought they didn't deserve to live.

On the evening of Tuesday, February 10, something really unusual happened in a quiet neighborhood. Everything seemed to be quite okay until two women called 911 to report multiple gunshots and screams echoing through a condominium complex near the University of North Carolina (UNC).

By the time the police arrived, three people were dead. The victims were identified as Chapel Hill residents Deah Shaddy Barakat, 23, his wife Yusor Abu Salha, 21, and her sister Razan Abu Salha, 19, of Raleigh. They were young university students, Muslims of Arab descent, and high achievers who regularly volunteered in the area.

A neighbor, a middle-aged white man, went missing on the same evening and was later under arrest when he turned himself in after the shooting in Chapel Hill, just outside the UNC campus and was charged with three counts of murder. The shooter, identified as Craig Stephen Hicks, 46, was being held in Durham County Jail, the Chapel Hill News

and Observer newspaper and other news outlets said.

The victims' families described it as a hate crime. The police said that the shooting appeared to have been motivated by "an ongoing neighbor dispute over parking," but that they were investigating whether religious hatred had contributed to the killings. I just don't understand how you can decide to kill someone just because you don't like the way they look. You are not the Lord, you have no right to decide either who will live or die. When they never questioned you over your appearance, who are you to decide to end their lives over their appearance?

Mohammad Yousif Abu-Salha, the father of the two women who were killed, said that daughter Yusor Abu-Salha had told him that she and her husband had been harassed for their appearance by a neighbor who was wearing a gun on his belt. As mentioned in NY Times, "A friend of Yusor said she knew that Mr. Hicks had complained to the couple before about making noise and the use of parking spaces by their visitors, and that he once came to their door carrying a rifle. It is not clear whether they ever called the police about the altercations."

Following the murder of three Muslim students in the university town of Chapel Hill in North Carolina, many questioned the kind of coverage the gruesome incident received from mainstream US media in comparison to similar incidents involving members of other faiths. President Obama took four days to offer his and first lady Michelle Obama's condolences to the victims' loved ones, and stated, "We are all one American family."

I liked that President Obama added to his statement regarding the debate over the crime's motive that, "No one in the United States of America should ever be targeted because of who they are, what they look like or how they worship." But then again, are people

really following the laws regarding the hate crime?

While #ChapelHillShooting was the top most trend around the world, many gathered under #MuslimLivesMatter to combat racism and the creeping scepter of Islamophobia.

Haya Barakat, cousin of one of the victims Deah Barakat, tweeted that her cousin and his wife, her sister-in-law, were murdered for being Muslims, questioning growing racism/hate crime in the society. My question is whether anyone even knows what hate crime is and what its laws are? The FBI defines a hate crime as one with an added element of bias against a person's race, religion, disability, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. The agency says: "Hate itself is not a crime - and the FBI is mindful of protecting freedom of speech and other civil liberties." Proving whether something is a hate crime can be extremely difficult because you have to show that someone committed the crime as he had certain beliefs regarding some issue.

This will be very prolonged and many people will forget this sooner or later, but their families will have to live with this pain forever. My humble request to everyone out there is that if you ever had any negative vibes against anything then try to work on it and talk it out to someone who can help you because you never know when that negative feeling will change into hatred and you might end up doing something which you will repent your entire life. Everything can be sorted out except for the death because when someone dies, everything comes to an end and that person can never come back, no matter how hard you try.

If you have any questions regarding any religion then please attend an interfaith talk where you can talk it out and remove your misconception because it's never too late.