

Reparative Journalism Video Series: Video #1

A Journey Toward Reparative Journalism

Watch the video:  A Journey Toward Reparative Journalism

Transcript

[00:00:00]	<p>In the United States, the journalism industry has a legacy of harming Black communities and other communities of color.</p> <p>Not all of us have learned this history.</p> <p>Even those of us who practice as journalists know only portions of this story.</p> <p>Let’s take a look back at three historic examples of media harm.</p>
[00:00:30]	<p>First: The Boston News-Letter</p> <p>The Boston News-Letter¹, our nation’s first continuously published newspaper, ran its first slave ad less than a month after its founding in 1704². The paper’s publisher served as a broker with enslavers, publishing at least 66 slave ads with “enquire of the printer” in the notice. These ads resulted in the sale and trafficking of as many as 100 enslaved African and Indigenous people³.</p>
[00:00:57]	<p>Second: The Rocky Mountain News</p> <p>In 1864, U.S. cavalry troops slaughtered nearly 200 Cheyenne and Arapaho people in what became known as the Sand Creek Massacre⁴.</p>

¹ Newspaper image credit: “The Boston News-Letter,” number 1, April 17–24, 1704: https://www.masshist.org/database/viewer.php?item_id=186

² Website credit: “Enquire of the Printer: The Slave Trade and Early American Newspaper Advertising,” Jordan E. Taylor, Early American Studies, July 21, 2020: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/7d6dcdc8d7a24d34a08f1605e64c292e>

³ Media 2070: An Invitation to Dream Up Media Reparations, Media 2070 project, pp. 26–27: <https://mediareparations.org/essay/>

⁴ Tony Horwitz, “The Horrific Sand Creek Massacre Will Be Forgotten No More,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, December 2014:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/horrific-sand-creek-massacre-will-be-forgotten-no-more-180953403/>

	The Rocky Mountain News framed the massacre as a “military victory” and applauded soldiers for defeating what the newspaper had portrayed as a dangerous Indigenous community ⁵ . Only later did the truth surface: This was a mass murder of mostly women and children ⁶ .
[00:01:30]	Third: The Hearst and McClatchy newspaper empires and other West Coast papers Newspapermen William Randolph Hearst ⁷ and V.S. McClatchy ⁸ fueled anti-Japanese sentiment in the early 1900s ⁹ . Their papers created and amplified vicious stereotypes that over time cultivated acceptance of Japanese American incarceration during World War II ¹⁰ .
[00:01:51]	These are only three of the countless examples of journalism’s history of harm. It’s taken the work of many scholars and journalists of color to piece together the industry’s roots in oppression and anti-Black racism ¹¹ . Joe Torres ¹² : “As someone who’s been studying history and working on media history and working on the Media 2070 project, we have seen the long history of anti-Black racism in the media system, how the media system itself is a part like any other system that was created in our country was created to uphold a white racial hierarchy.”
[00:02:30]	Joe Torres cont.: “I was fortunate enough working on the book several years ago with Juan Gonzalez now that we talked a little a little bit about the history [of] anti-Asian,

⁵ Juan González and Joseph Torres, *News for All the People: The Epic Story of Race and the American People*, Verso Books, 2011, p. 143

⁶ “Sand Creek Massacre: History & Culture,” National Park Service: <https://www.nps.gov/sand/learn/historyculture/index.htm>

⁷ Photo credit, picture of William Randolph Hearst, Harris & Ewing, between 1905 and 1945, Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2016858735/>

⁸ Photo credit, picture of V.S. McClatchy, Modest Stein, 1918, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:V._S._McClatchy.jpg

⁹ Website credit: “The 1920 Anti-Japanese Crusade and Congressional Hearings,” Doug Blair, *The Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History Project*, 2006: https://depts.washington.edu/civilr/Japanese_restriction.htm

¹⁰ Website credit: “How a Public Media Campaign Led to Japanese Incarceration During WWII,” Patricia Miye Wakida, *American Experience*, PBS, Sept. 23, 2021: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/citizen-hearst-japanese-incarceration/>

¹¹ Armistead S. Pride and Clint C. Wilson, *A History of the Black Press*, Howard University Press, 1987; Pamela Newkirk, *Within the Veil: Black Journalists, White Media*, NYU Press, 2002; Clint C. Wilson, Felix Gutierrez and Lena M. Chao, *Racism, Sexism, and the Media: Multicultural Issues Into the New Communications Age*, SAGE Publications, 2012; Juan González and Joseph Torres, *News for All the People: The Epic Story of Race and the American People*, Verso Books, 2011; Mark N. Trahan, *Pictures of Our Nobler Selves: A History of Native American Contributions to News Media*, The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, 1995; Gerald Horne, *The Rise and Fall of the Associated Negro Press: Claude Barnett’s Pan-African News and the Jim Crow Paradox*, University of Illinois Press, 2017; Jeff Chang, *Can’t Stop Won’t Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*, Picador, St. Martin’s Press, 2005; William Barlow, *Voiceover: The Making of Black Radio*, Temple University Press, 1999

¹² “The Media’s Role in Anti-Asian Hate,” Free Press Live, 2021: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb_0GHqGeq&list=PL1UTbOyWvkgTULcdOuf-j8fSRdu7XUKD&index=6

	<p>anti-Chinese, anti-Japanese racism and the media system and the same is like that the same kind of harms of violence perpetrated against the community it was done just like it has you know the Indigenous community in the Latinx community and so forth so on so this is history white supremacy in the media system and the function it plays.”</p>
<p>[00:03:00]</p>	<p>It’s important for us to recognize that “anti-Blackness is the fulcrum of white supremacy,”¹³ and our failure to address our media’s anti-Blackness impacts all communities of color.</p> <p>And research shows that media harm continues today¹⁴ ... with detrimental impacts on Black communities and other communities of color¹⁵.</p> <p>News outlets still act as stenographers for the police¹⁶, failing to question law enforcement’s talking points and repeating outright lies¹⁷.</p>
<p>[00:03:30]</p>	<p>Newsrooms still amplify racist and xenophobic narratives that result in harmful policies¹⁸, and they still profit from perpetuating oppression¹⁹.</p> <p>We can’t change journalism’s past. But we can be part of writing its future.</p> <p>A growing number of journalists, media outlets and constituents are joining a longstanding movement working to transform journalism²⁰.</p>

¹³ Scot Nakagawa, “Blackness Is The Fulcrum,” Race Files, May 4, 2012: <https://www.racefiles.com/2012/05/04/blackness-is-the-fulcrum/>

¹⁴ Jessica H. Beard, Jennifer Midberry, Iman N. Afif, Elizabeth Dauer, Jim MacMillan and Sara F. Jacoby, “Like I’m a Nobody:” Firearm-Injured Peoples’ Perspectives on News Media Reporting About Firearm Violence, SSM - Qualitative Research in Health, June 2023: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667321522001743?via%3Dihub>

¹⁵ Cassie Owens, “How Misrepresentation in Media Impacts Marginalized Communities,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 12, 2021: <https://www.inquirer.com/news/misinformation-stereotypes-racism-media-20210512.html>

¹⁶ Alexandra Neason, “‘Officials Say...’” *The Columbia Journalism Review*, Fall 2019: https://www.cjr.org/special_report/officials-say-chicago-police-joshua-beal.php

¹⁷ Tweet thread, *Scalawag Magazine*, June 23, 2022: <https://twitter.com/scalawagmag/status/1540024457187696640?lang=en>; original article: Scalawag Team, “Four Headline Mistakes Newsrooms Need to Abolish,” *Scalawag Magazine*, June 23, 2022: https://scalawagmagazine.org/2022/06/write-better-headlines/?utm_campaign=scal-social&utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_content=1656005416

¹⁸ Gabriel Voiles, “On Corporate Media’s ‘Scoop’-Driven Xenophobia,” FAIR, June 1, 2009: <https://fair.org/uncategorized/on-corporate-medias-scoop-driven-xenophobia/>

¹⁹ TNG Gannett Caucus, “Study Shows Pay Disparities for Women and Journalists of Color as High as \$27,000 at Gannett,” *The NewsGuild*, April 27, 2021: <https://newsguild.org/newsguild-study-shows-gannett-newsrooms-underpay-women-and-journalists-of-color-as-much-as-27000/>

²⁰ [Baltimore Beat](#), [CUNY Black Media Initiative, Documented](#), [Five Wards Media](#), [Kansas City Defender](#), [KGNU Storytellers of Color](#), [Media 2070](#), [MLK50](#), [News Voices](#), [New York Amsterdam News](#), [Press On Media](#), [Reckon News Black Joy](#), [The Triibe](#), [USC Charlotta Bass Lab](#), [Yes! Magazine Realizing Reparations series](#)

[00:04:00]	<p>The directive is to push the industry to live up to its highest ideals of being the first draft of history²¹, a service that provides care and information to community²² — and a field willing to hold power accountable²³.</p> <p>To bridge our past to our future, we need to embrace reparative actions in journalism to get to a liberated tomorrow.</p> <p>In our next video, we'll share what the media can learn from global repair movements — and embark on a journey toward reparative journalism.</p>
------------	---

²¹ Lewis Wallace, "To Rebuild Trust, We Need to Change Journalistic Process," *The Columbia Journalism Review*, July 3, 2018: <https://www.cjr.org/opinion/trust-journalism-process.php>

²² SRCCON CARE Conference, OpenNews, 2022: <https://www.cjr.org/opinion/trust-journalism-process.php>

²³ The Media Insight Project, "Chapter 2: Holding Power Accountable: The Press and the Public," American Press Institute, Dec. 18, 2019: <https://www.cjr.org/opinion/trust-journalism-process.php>