

Sarah Jeong, The New York Times, and the Gamergate School of Journalism | Columbia Journalism Review

By David Uberti

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David Uberti compares the recent right-wing attacks on Sarah Jeong, the newest member of the editorial board of the *New York Times* to Gamergate. He uses this comparison to demonstrate that the digital era places journalism at a difficult crossroads for the role of objectivity and neutrality. He argues that young, outspoken journalists of color such as Jeong, are those most likely to be challenged in this transition period.

Answering such questions requires value judgments about motive, which the *Times* and many other legacy outlets tend to avoid on issues ranging from Trump's "lies" to criticism of their respective publications. The Verge pointed to its own experience on this front in its statement, comparing the way Jeong's tweets were whipped into national news with [Gamergate](#).

The 2014 harassment-campaign-masked-as-media-critique was a formative episode for many digital outlets and reporters, as critics weaponized [media norms of civility and balance](#) against journalism itself. Writers who spoke out about gaming's overwhelming whiteness or masculinity—and who often happened to be women or people of color—were met with hard-edged grievance politics from critics who were overwhelmingly white and male. Their cries about ethics in gaming journalism largely amounted to concern trolling aimed to get the media to do as they wished. You may recognize such tactics by Trump and some of his supporters online today.

Whether the *Times* and other legacy outlets can employ some of the lessons of Gamergate without drastically reorienting their values—staying neutral without validating bad-faith arguments—remains an open question. The current political environment would seem to make it all but impossible for outlets that prize the appearance of impartiality.

Source: [Sarah Jeong, The New York Times, and the Gamergate School of Journalism | Columbia Journalism Review](#)