



# MONTANA JOURNALISM REVIEW



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Montana Journalism Review 2011 staff poses in front of a historic DC-3 at the Museum of Mountain Flying in Missoula. For staff bios, please see pages 46-47.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

In tribute to American photo-journalist Chris Hondros, 41, who died in Misrata, Libya, on April 20 after being struck by shrapnel from a rocket-propelled grenade, South African photojournalist Nic Bothma wrote on the Committee to Protect Journalists' website: "It is said that photographers are the ones that go to the back of a cave with a torch and return to tell the rest of the tribe what is there. If not for your bravery, your willingness to venture to the depths of these caves, and your relentless pursuit of the truth and reality of war, so many would never see its wretched face. In bringing these images to the minds of people around the world you made a difference, expanded awareness, and brought about change."

The staff of Montana Journalism Review 2011 dedicates this issue on foreign reporting to Hondros, who was

freelancing for Getty Images, and to two other extraordinary photojournalists, both British citizens, who ventured to the back of the cave. Only one of them returned. Freelancer Tim Hetherington, 41, was mortally wounded in the same attack in Libya that killed Hondros. Giles Duley, 39, lost three limbs to an explosive device on Feb. 7, while embedded with the U.S. Army in Afghanistan.

All three were at the top of their game. All had, as one commenter to the New York Times' Lens blog said, "the eye of an artist, the responsibility of a journalist, and the raw courage of an infantryman." Hondros was a 2004 Pulitzer Prize finalist for "his powerful and courageous coverage of the bloody upheaval in Liberia" and won the 2005 Robert Capa Gold Medal from the Overseas Press Club of America for

an unforgettable series detailing the shooting of an Iraqi family by U.S. troops. Hetherington was a creative genius straining at the bounds of still photography. Two months earlier he attended the Academy Awards as a nominated director of the Afghanistan war documentary "Restrepo."

Duley, who started out as a fashion photographer, followed his heart to humanitarian photography for Doctors Without Borders and the United Nations and had been widely published.

Hondo and Hetherington were among 16 journalists killed so far in 2011, 12 in their home countries, 10 in North Africa and the Middle East. All gave their lives to illustrate, as one man on Duley's blog said, "the unity, tragedy and potential of the human condition."

We at MJR stand in awe of their courage and sacrifice. —Clem Work

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A monk walks past Buddhist prayer flags fluttering in the breeze at Sangachoeling Monastery in Sikkim.



# Freelancing: the bottom line

*Americans don't like to talk money, but we journalists must*

**I'm writing this story for free. I want to get that out of the way, right up front, because the bottom line these days is the top anxiety for any freelance journalist.**

Americans don't like to talk money, but we journalists must. It's not that we're cheap, greedy or pernicious. We need to eat. And we're slogging through a complete overhaul of this industry as we know it: dying papers (35,000 layoffs since 2007), dead magazines (428 lost in 2009; including my former employer, *Gourmet*) and blogs that ask our time and words for nothing but exposure. Freelancers can't afford to write for free—unless personal interests compel us to tell a story that must be told.

After all, that is what drives most of us into this business. But it is a business. And the trouble is, most of us J-School grads got here learning how to interview, report the news, check our facts and decide between further and farther—with not a whit of business know-how to back us up.

The traditional “separation of church and state” between the news side and the advertising side is responsible for much of this knowledge hole, writes Dan Gillmore in his new book, *“Mediactive.”* Reporters traditionally were shunned from the ad offices “as if they'd get a terminal disease” by crossing over. “But a journalist who has no idea how his industry really works from a business perspective is missing way too much of the big picture,” Gillmore writes. “The

so-called church-state wall has been one of 20th-century pro journalism's cardinal flaws.”

Normally this time of year, my photojournalist husband, Jerry Redfern (also a UM grad), and I are sweating our way through an Asian jungle, trying to dredge up stories for anyone who wants them. I am lucky to take a hiatus this year, on a well-paid Scripps Fellowship in Environmental Journalism at the University of Colorado. The other day, as I worked on campus, I overheard a conversation between two students discussing fundraising ideas for a couple of start-up projects they and their peers had in mind. I had a major “duh” moment. I realized, clearly, how much I had missed in college by missing business entirely.

Let's say you're graduating from J-School soon and you want to write from foreign lands. Everyone wants to tie a scarf around the head, hail a tuk-tuk and breeze through the choked-up streets of someplace exotic, right? I've done it for a dozen years, and I think anyone who wants to start doing it—and keep doing it successfully—must begin with a few key questions:

## How do I get paid?

It's the toughest, most pivotal question whose answer often drives freelancers away. When Jerry and I first moved to Cambodia in 1998, I worked on staff for the English-language *Cambodia Daily* and he shot freelance for papers and agencies that flew in reporters to cover big news. That rarely happens anymore. Newsrooms (if they still exist) contract locals in the absence

of travel budgets. And freelancers often look more toward grants, foundations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to pay their way. When all those fail, they quit or go commercial.

“Today, how we divide our time and do our work and get paid for it has virtually no connection to how things worked for those who started out a decade or two before us,” freelance photographer Justin Mott writes for *Nieman Reports*. He moved to Hanoi in 2007 with dreams of flying high on a newspaper's dime. He snatched a few of those gigs, shooting for *The New York Times* across Asia in 2008. “By the next year news organizations' budgets dried up; no longer was I traveling for the *Times* or anyone else.”

He hasn't resigned, but he's branched into bread-and-butter commercial photography that funds the long-term journalistic projects he really wants to do. “It was time to readjust my plans as a photographer and to market myself as a business.”

The one business concept I did learn at an early age was “don't put all your eggs in one basket.” For several years, Jerry and I survived on semi-regular checks from a few dependable, traditional sources (*Gourmet* at the top of that list.) But take a look at the diversity in a sampling of our 2010 pay stubs: *Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, *Sierra*, *GlobalPost*, *Women's eNews*, *Lonely Planet*, *Random House*, *National Geographic Books*, *OnAsia Images*, a couple of Thai travel magazines, an international media training group, the University of Colorado, the Fund for Investigative Journalism and the German government. ➤





Some of those jobs I never would have anticipated five years ago, nor would I have envisioned them as journalism outlets for my work. But today, it's essential to think broadly and creatively in deciding how and where to market yourself as a freelancer. When British photojournalists Jason Florio and Neville Elder decided to shoot a documentary for the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, they ran short of money for a promotional trailer. So they launched a page on Kickstarter (the "largest funding platform for creative projects in the world") and asked the public to meet their \$1,500 goal. It's called crowdsourcing. And it generated more money than the two journalists had sought.

## What is my job?

Your job, as a foreign freelancer, is to create your job. Just as newspapers are closing bureaus and investing far less in their newsrooms (\$1.6 billion less in 2010 than three years earlier,

according to the State of the News Media annual report), a host of "media futurists" are pouring dollars into new ideas. Innovation is paramount. So is the drive to "consume, share, create, comment, search, report, investigate, tweet, read, view, check in, bump," so say the folks at We Media who have created the PitchIt! Challenge offering two projects \$25,000 apiece to merge media, communication and technology. While traditional media outlets crumble, the organizers write, "a new generation of empowered, entrepreneurial digital creatives exchanges information, insight and knowledge on an unprecedented scale through global communications networks."

If I'd written a sentence like that in Dennis Swibold's reporting class, he'd have kicked me out the door and all the way back home to Wisconsin.

But these are people with money, funding independent journalists. PitchIt! isn't alone. The Knight News Challenge doles out \$5 million a year to people with "innovative ideas that

develop platforms, tools and services to inform and transform community news, conversations and information distribution and visualization." We can hate the language — but we need to learn it if we want money to do what we do best as freelance journalists.

## How do I tell the story?

In the age of 140-character narratives, some say readers no longer have the eyes or minds for big blocks of text. "The long feature has largely disappeared," journalist and professor Mark Lee Hunter told an audience at a 2010 European conference on the future of journalism.

I'm not sure I fully believe him, or maybe I don't want to believe him because long features are what I enjoy doing — and reading — most. Plus, I just listened to former New Yorker staffer and author Dan Baum speak at length about the eternal power of good storytelling with strong, true characters. I do believe that.



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**LEFT:**

Mau, 15, has fished every day for his family for the last three or four years—he can't remember exactly how long. He goes to school in the afternoons. The vast majority of Cambodian children work. Their labor is imperative for their survival and the survival of their families.

**TOP RIGHT:**

A mother and child greater one-horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) walk through a stand of 2-meter-tall elephant grass in Kaziranga National Park. The rhino is an endangered species as noted on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. A village home just outside the boundary of the park can be seen in the background.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:**

A one-horned rhinoceros skull at a guard house in the middle of Kaziranga National Park. Kaziranga National Park is the oldest national park in the north-east Indian state of Assam.



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But I also realize long-form journalism alone cannot sustain us. Years ago, we freelancers built a clip file. Today, we build an audience. And we do that in ways that often feel antithetical to the very nature of what we love. We tweet. We blog. We post on Facebook and gather friends who “like” the pages we’ve established entirely for the business sides of our lives. Publishers wouldn’t even think of giving us a nonfiction book deal without a ready-made core of readers.

Here’s one example of my multifaceted plans of attack:

Jerry and I are finishing a book on unexploded ordnance (UXO), which continues to kill kids and farmers in Laos nearly 40 years after the U.S. military dropped the bombs. The book deal will pay, eventually. But not a lot. We have published spinoff features in newspapers and magazines that pay as little as a few hundred dollars each, or nearly as much as the book itself. I’ve written blog posts on UXO, and then posted links on Facebook and Twitter. Jerry has exhibited his photos in Santa Fe, Los Angeles, Phnom Penh

and Boulder. We’re talking with the Asia Society about presenting in San Francisco. And we’re never closing an eye to any creative means for getting the story out.

### Why am I here?

Because the story needs to get out. People need to read it, see it and know it. These days we have infinite possibilities for that happening, though few of them fall into the scope of traditional journalism. That doesn’t matter so much to me. It’s the story that counts and the people who get it — not the means by which it happens.

If we can accept that, we have a shot at succeeding as freelancers. ♦

**Karen Coates** is a freelance journalist and author whose work for the last 15 years has focused on Southeast Asia. She will be the 2011 Pollner Professor at UM.

**Jerry Redfern**, an internationally recognized photojournalist, is married to Karen.





February in Cairo can be cold and dreary. As night falls, demonstrators attempt to set up a crude shelter with plastic and sticks.

# IN CAIRO



Protesters pause for prayers.



Effigies of President Hosni Mubarak hang from a traffic light.



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*On February 1, 24-year-old freelance photographer **Andrew Burton** flew himself to Cairo to cover the Egyptian revolution in words and photographs.*



Protesters wave the Egyptian flag.

When the Egyptian revolution started on Jan. 25, I watched closely – the Tunisian protests had started and stopped fairly quickly, and I didn't want to fly over only to have the events end while I was en route. However, by day five of the protesting in Cairo, things seemed to be in full swing, and I started emailing every editor I could think of, asking if they needed anyone working over there.

In one conversation I had with an editor the person made it clear: While my work was good, I had no serious international news experience, and I hadn't proven I could operate in a conflict zone. I had heard similar stories from some of my favorite photojournalists over the years — that they had self-funded their first few trips until they had proven themselves. Immediately after that conversation, I purchased my ticket and sent out another round of emails to editors saying I would be flying out the next day.

Once on the ground in Cairo, I worked alongside a few friends and tried to focus on giving voice to the people of the Egyptian revolution. We walked the streets and spent a lot of time talking to people and photographing events both big and little. Some events were major, like the rioting and protests that broke out in Tahrir Square. Others were smaller, like how the entrance to the Cairo subway station had been turned into a trash dump because people who were camping out in the square needed to put their trash somewhere. And while international newspapers and TV stations often only show the most graphic, violent or enticing shots, I know both my colleagues and myself made and transmitted many more photos than were shown. It's a criticism people often have of the news — to only show the most sensational images. And I have to say, I agree. Unfortunately, newspapers only have so much print space and

broadcasters so much time, though the Internet has become a wonderful platform to view larger groups of images. Numerous world-class news organizations now run photo-specific blogs, showing a wider variety of images.

Each day on the ground in Cairo was different — for two days there were coordinated attacks on journalists. I and many friends and colleagues were beaten badly and had camera gear smashed and stolen. Other days involved medieval-style fighting between people for and against Hosni Mubarak — weapons involved rocks, slingshots and catapults; protection included hard hats, homemade shields and barricades of scrap metal.

By the time Mubarak stepped down, the square had begun to feel like a state fair — a local economy emerged of people selling blankets, water, roasted sweet potatoes, cigarettes and Coca-Cola. Families were bringing their



children, couples went on dates, and as I photographed one newborn, her parents beamed shiny smiles at my camera, and the mother said in perfect English, “This is a revolution, baby.” To work in that environment, I quickly learned that you must adapt each day, trust your gut, have eyes in the back of your head, smile at people often and rely on talking to people.

Personally, I find photojournalism to be deeply satisfying work and believe it benefits people in numerous

Hopefully, people who see my photos ask themselves the same thing.

While in Cairo I was lucky enough to end up getting hired by a wire service, but I didn’t know until I was on the ground in Egypt. I was able to make the money back that I spent. I think, in total, I maybe made \$300 on the trip (for a week of work). This is, by no means, a profession to get rich from. I know I am one of many in my generation eager to work as a journalist and tell good stories. However, I can say that I feel a deep

and overseas bureaus in print, radio and TV. I will say this: The term parachute journalist carries various negative connotations with it, often suggesting that the journalists exploit those who suffer for their own stories. To this, I can only speak from my own experiences, and I can say that the vast majority of photographers and journalists I know are empathetic people who are passionate about telling stories. We do our work to improve the world, act as a societal conscience, shed light on evil things (like the



An injured protester gets treatment in a first-aid station.



Trash fills subway entrance (although trains were still running).

ways: People in front of the camera are given a voice to the world, a voice they don’t normally have. For viewers around the globe, it teaches them about world events that they would otherwise not be exposed to, and it should make them question their beliefs and think critically about whether or not they agree with the events going on and what action should be taken.

Finally, the work satisfies me personally because it allows me to return to those original questions I started to ask myself back in college about governments, economics, social movements and the human condition. When I work in a mob, for instance, I ask myself, “Why are these people screaming at their government? What has occurred that would spawn such passion? Why is the government reacting the way they are? What should be done to calm them?”

conviction for my work and find great satisfaction in knowing that in my own small way, I am acting as a mirror for society, even if I make no real money.

I received criticism for flying myself to Cairo. I was called a “parachute journalist” — a reporter or photographer who travels from hot spot to hot spot. I have found that people who call others parachute journalists are often those sitting at home, watching the events. Those people would not even be able to see or understand those events or grasp the magnitude of those situations without those journalists on the ground.

In many places, like Egypt, the journalism industry is so small that the foreign press is the only way of telling those stories in a truthful, thoughtful way. Furthermore, the journalism industry has largely cannibalized itself over the past decade, slashing budgets, jobs

Egyptian government under Mubarak) and lift up the good in the world. While the journalism world is far from perfect, I believe the world is a better place because of it.

At the end of the day, I am a firm believer that photojournalism acts as a force of good. It opens people’s eyes to social issues and communities they would otherwise not be conscious of, and it makes people explore their own beliefs. I believe that photographers act as historians. Through photography, visual records are created to act as references for future generations. I believe this improves the world — good photographs can remind societies of our past mistakes and encourage us towards better decision-making. ♦

*(Editor’s note: Andrew sent this from a tiny airport in Japan, where he had flown to cover the next big story.)*

## Q&A

# Mehrdad Kia on foreign reporting

*Dr. Mehrdad Kia is the Associate Provost for International Programs at The University of Montana. He teaches students about the Middle East and Central Asia and has strong opinions about reporting from the United States on those regions:*

- There is a general sense of ignorance about other cultures and the complexities of these societies.
- We tend to resort to very simple adjectives and oversimplify foreign news.
- Iran is a country of about 73 million people with three thousand years of history. All of that becomes a square of only hundreds or maybe thousands when there is a gathering or protest.

### Mistakes:

- Foreign journalists don't learn the native languages. Learning the language could break down walls, bring understanding and even respect to the reporter and those they report on.
- News creates "others" rather than looking at them as equally human with the same issues we are facing. These wrong versions of news stories "dehumanize" people.

### United States vs. Middle East:

- The Islamic media is far worse than American media because it is government controlled and there is a very strict censorship mechanism. Being a journalist in these types of countries is like being a "mouthpiece of a government."
- The government will spin the media to show their attitude about the United States and will show only the best or worst news depending on their stance.

### Coverage of Egypt's uprising:

- Many United States reporters equated it with Tunisia, and few voices in print reminded us that each country is very different.



Photo by Sally Finneran

- They were caught with fears about [Hosni] Mubarak failing and the Muslim Brotherhood seizing power. What they did not know is that the Brotherhood supports democracy.

### Quality of foreign reporting:

- The Internet has greatly helped in providing audiences with correct news. We have many more options to look at. In this case, the more the merrier, but we do need to watch out for trash coming through the floodgates.
- Despite budget cuts, print media is also increasingly doing a much better job.
- There also needs to be more in-depth coverage so these complex areas can be much better understood.
- Future journalists need to be serious, conscientious, committed and have courage. ♦



# The *advantages* of being a female foreign correspondent



A woman covered in a burqa rides a donkey across northern Afghanistan.

Two scenes from Pakistan: I'm at a wedding in Islamabad, elaborate henna patterns wrapping my hands, bangles stacked on my forearms, a gauzy pink veil thrown over my head and shoulders. Women press close around me, voicing their anger at how the American bombing of neighboring Afghanistan has diminished this happiest of occasions — oh, and wouldn't I please have some more gulab jamun?

And another: This time I'm in Peshawar, near the Khyber Pass that crosses into Afghanistan, sitting at one end of a room attached to a mosque, almost in the doorway, as far as humanly possible from where a mullah addresses a circle of men. I can't understand what they're saying — the male interpreter and photographer are across the room with the other men — and know only by the furious tone and the occasional "Amreeka" that the conversation is very much something I'd like to write about. And yet, even my presence in the room was a huge concession from a mullah appalled that I'd asked to be there at all.

I think back to those two scenes when people ask whether being a woman makes it more difficult to report from Muslim countries, especially very conservative ones.

My answer? Yes.

And, no. In fact, in many ways it makes it easier. Not that it's ever easy. If I'd been a man, I'd never have been allowed to mingle with the women in the wedding in the first scene. But I would have been included in the conversation in the second. In both instances, people were upset at how the United States was

handling things, and my stories reflected as much.

So which story was more important? Was the opinion of the men — some of whom ran a madrasa that educated boys and certainly influenced their attitudes — any more newsworthy than that of the women, who both influence and reflect the opinions of the men in their families?

While we're at it, any chance that we might ditch the gender thing and talk about people?

Yeah. I'm a dreamer.

If the reaction to the assault of CBS reporter Lara Logan in Cairo's Tahrir Square (see following story) is any indication, there's only the thinnest veneer of acceptance for women as foreign correspondents, one that peels away like cheap paneling the minute it's

subjected to the heat of scrutiny.

Which ticks me off. Because as long as I can remember, I'd wanted to report from combat zones, and when I finally got to do it, it made for some the most rewarding — albeit some of the most challenging and, yes, thanks to harassment, some of the most frightening — work of my career.

**B**lame Life. I must have come across the photographs of Margaret Bourke-White as I paged through old copies (she left the magazine when I was only 2) as a child. However I found them, I read everything by and about her that I could. There was that great self-portrait of Bourke-White standing in a leather flight suit in front of a prop plane, hair flying, heavy camera in hand. Who wouldn't want to do that?

But I wanted to be a writer, not a photographer. About the same time, I was reading collections of Ernie Pyle's dispatches from World War II (another "I want to do that" moment). I hadn't heard then of Martha Gellhorn or Marguerite Higgins. I didn't know that women could go to war and write about it.

By the time I started at The Associated Press in 1976, however, I did know about Tad Bartimus, who'd reported from Vietnam and who was still working for the wire service as a foreign and then a national correspondent. I'd stand in front of the noisy old black teletype machines and read her stories as they printed out line by line and think, yet again, "I want to do that."

Even then, it still didn't seem possible. Bartimus was the exception. ►



Police officers beat a man with sticks as they break up a pro-Taliban demonstration in Peshwar, Pakistan.



A decade later, I was at The Philadelphia Inquirer, a newsroom full of exceptions. Catherine Manegold was stationed in the Philippines covering the downfall of the Marcos regime; Carol Morello was based in Cairo and covered the endless Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Barb Demick went to the Balkans, as did Fawn Vrazo from her base in London. This time, my role models' stories were scrolling across the in-house computer screens.

By the time I finally went overseas in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, many foreign correspondents for U.S. newspapers were women.

Nonetheless, the vast majority of reporters and photographers I encountered overseas were men, as were most of my sources.

The latter wasn't a complete surprise, given that I was reporting mostly from conservative Muslim countries. What I hadn't expected was that the incident at the mosque in Peshawar would prove the exception rather than the rule. By and large, men — even extremely conservative religious leaders — talked with me. The down side? The groping that escalated into something worse for Logan was a frequent occurrence that leaves me nervous in crowds to this day.

But it was more than balanced out by the fact that being a woman let me go into people's homes and talk to other women about the effects of the conflict on the civilians who bear the brunt of modern warfare. That kind of access was difficult and sometimes impossible for male reporters. It was easier for me, as a woman, to talk to men than for them to commit the unpardonable offense of approaching women. In fact, I often found myself treated as a sort of honorary man, invited on one occasion to eat dinner with the men of a household, while the women dined in a smaller room in the back of the house (to



Northern Alliance fighters move across the Panj River following retreating Taliban forces.

which, feeling just as cut out as I had in the mosque, I retreated after dinner).

That kind of access to women made my own reporting fuller, richer, more balanced. Even if a fellow journalist did say to me one day: "What, another story about women?"

"Yes," I replied, "another story about 50 percent of the population."

I didn't find out until after I'd returned from that first trip to Afghanistan that my editors had debated whether to send me. Not because of the expense, which was astronomical. But because I'm a woman.

Reports on Logan's assault, in which the phrase "attractive blonde" popped up all too often, spurred instant debates on whether women (presumably even unattractive non-blondes) should cover conflict. Whether mothers of young children should go to war. Whether Logan had essentially "asked for it" by doing her job.

The insults are stunning. They ignore the fact that for many years now some of the best work in conflict zones has been, and continues to be done, by women — the AP's Kathy Gannon,

Carlotta Gall of The New York Times, Robin Wright of The Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times — the list is very long and there's no way to do justice to all of the fine work by all of the fine journalists who happen to be women. Which is not to say that men can't do thorough, inclusive coverage of issues that disproportionately affect women (thank you, Nicholas Kristof).

And it ignores the nuances of gender issues in other societies, nuances that can often be more easily reported by those most affected by them.

Fifty percent of the population. Giving women short shrift makes for incomplete coverage. No news organization can afford that these days.

Besides, if all those women over all those decades have proven anything, it's that women are going to find ways to get to the story. Foreign correspondents face all sorts of barriers. Those obstacles shouldn't arise before they even leave home. ♦

**Gwen Florio** is the Missoulian crime & courts reporter and a former foreign correspondent for The Denver Post after 9/11.

# The *risks* of being a female foreign correspondent

**A**re human rights violated if a woman correspondent is sexually assaulted and beaten in a brutal, sustained fashion while reporting on the streets of Cairo, Egypt? Yes, but if there is no report of it who will care?

On Feb. 11, Lara Logan, chief foreign correspondent for CBS News, was violated, in the middle of a crowd celebrating a human rights triumph — the resignation of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. CBS and Logan did report the beating and the sexual assault.

Because she reported the act, Logan became a heroine to many women worldwide. She did what women are generally reluctant to do because the very act of yelling sexual assault or rape can be humiliating to women and subjects them to the ridicule that usually follows, as her case sadly proved.

In a world largely run by men, women's complaints of sexual violence are usually ridiculed or ignored. The result is a great deal of sexual violence, committed with impunity.

A 2008 study by the Egyptian Center for Women's Rights found that 83 percent of 1,000 Egyptian women surveyed and 98 percent of more than 100 foreign women surveyed experience public sexual harassment, from groping to assault. Nearly 97 percent of Egyptian women and 87 percent of foreigners do not alert police after an assault, the study noted.

Until the Logan incident, the extent of sexual violence toward women foreign correspondents was not spoken about much. According to former foreign correspondent Judith Matloff (whose 2007 article "Unspoken," appeared in the *Columbia Journalism Review*), women international correspondents are reluctant to report incidents of sexual violence.

"It's a vicious circle," she told MJR. "You don't want to mention [a sexual

assault] to colleagues and bosses because you might get sent back or pulled out. There's a lack of awareness or a lack of care by male supervisors."

As a foreign correspondent for 20 years, "specializing in areas of turmoil," Matloff covered 62 countries, heading up the African and Moscow bureaus for *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Matloff said she personally heard of as many as 20 cases within 20 years.

"[Female correspondents] usually don't talk about it. As a major American news figure, it's brave of [Logan] to come forward."

Sexual harassment is nothing new to women correspondents, according to Kim Barker, a former international reporter for the *Chicago Tribune* in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

It may not be acceptable, but women correspondents are "just going to get grabbed." She said after handing out her cards at a meeting, she would "get calls from those guys at 2 or 3 in the morning saying 'I love you' — the only English words they knew."

Barker said foreign women are considered "exotic" and often "seen as a weird 'third sex.' Men were curious to meet you, and women gave me different stories, smaller stories," she said.

She said she encourages women to aspire to be correspondents if they are interested in other cultures. She suggests moving to the next big story country, studying Arabic and Islam and getting a job as an English language reporter in a newspaper there.

That way, the journalist could start developing her "brand." Increasingly, it is up to each journalist to build a career with enough experience to attract grants, which can be cobbled together to pay \$250-a-day translators and \$50-a-day drivers. Barker said journalists are now creating their own news services.

"It's all about hustle," she said.

With journalists increasingly on their own, there is still the reality of violence and sexual assault against women correspondents. Unfortunately, it happened again in mid-March when four New York Times journalists were captured in Libya and held for six days by Col. Muammar Gaddafi's forces.

One of the journalists, photographer Lynsey Addario, a woman, was treated differently than her three fellow journalists, who were men. Once her ankles were bound with her shoelaces, she was punched in the face and her batterer laughed.

Addario, in a New York Times article, said, "Then I started crying and he was laughing more." The groping began with a man grabbing her breasts. "There was a lot of groping. Every man who came in contact with us basically felt every inch of my body short of what was under my clothes."

This went on for 48 hours.

**T**here are several handbooks now on how to safely report in foreign countries. However, industry leaders need to better address safety issues like sexual assault, which may come up while reporting in other countries, Matloff said.

"[The Committee to Protect Journalists] manual has absolutely nothing on this. They tell you how to protect your wallet but not your virtue," she said.

The CPJ safety guide, however, has recently been edited to add information on sexual assault.

"[Not going public about sexual assault] is endemic in society," Matloff said. "We've got to get women to talk about it and not paper it over. There used to be a stigma about the trauma of sexual assault. I'm hoping after this horrible incident, women won't have to suffer in silence." ♦





## EMBEDDED REPORTING: ASSET OR LIABILITY?

### In today's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan,

the neutrality of the Western press is rarely respected by insurgent forces, rendering independent reporting very difficult, dangerous and prohibitively expensive. However, it is still necessary for media outlets to cover the war. One widely used solution is the practice implemented by the U.S. military called embedded reporting. Reporters and photographers live and work with troops in the war zones, covering operations directly, as they happen. While this mitigates the dangers of war reporting somewhat, it has drawn significant fire from critics who argue that it is impossible for reporters living and working in such close quarters to maintain a neutral and unbiased perspective or to give any kind of larger perspective in their reports.

It is difficult to argue with the access and opportunities presented by the embed process to facilitate widespread coverage of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Significant pitfalls exist for the unwary journalist, however. The two most significant drawbacks are the close living quarters and the narrow perspective of the embedded journalist. They can only report on a small portion of the situation in which they find themselves, and the close living quarters and difficult situations pose a very real hazard to objective reporting.

“Living in such close quarters — and the intensity of being shoulder-to-shoulder during combat — forges a rare level of kinship and loyalty among men. As a journalist, you are not exempt from this bond, which makes remaining entirely objective difficult,” wrote Finbarr O'Reilly, a Reuters photographer, in The New York Times' Lens photography blog

while embedded with U.S. Marines in Afghanistan.

Others don't feel it is possible to take a truly neutral perspective while embedded. “We were embedded. We were embedded with military units. I'm very much against embedding because that's not our job — to be embedded. Our job is to report on them with no obligations, none whatsoever,” said Seymour Hersh, an investigative journalist who has written exposés on the My Lai massacre and the Abu Ghraib scandal, in an address at the Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Geneva, as quoted in The New York Times' At War blog. “And I know that puts me in a minority with a lot of people, but when you are embedded with a military unit, the inevitable instinct is to not report everything you see, because you get to know them, they are protecting you, etc.,” he continued. ➤

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*“Embedded reporters must tread a thin line, striving constantly to maintain their objectivity and to provide balanced and full coverage of their stories.”*

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**PREVIOUS PAGE:** Pfc. John Nolan, member of the 511th Military Police Company from Fort Drum, N.Y., bounces a soccer ball to a crowd of Iraqi children in Al Kut, Iraq, May 10, 2008.

**TOP LEFT:** A soldier of El Salvador's Battalion Cuscatlan works to pacify crowds of people waiting at an Iraqi displaced persons camp near the Anwar District of Al Kut, Aug. 14, 2008.

**MIDDLE:** Cabo Jorge Molina, member of El Salvador's Batallón Cuscatlán, peers into a crowded room at the Numaniyah, Iraq, Handicap Association's new facility, Aug. 8, 2008.

**BOTTOM:** Pfc. Anthony Oddo, 511th Military Police Company, searches through brush on an island during a combined patrol with Iraqi police on the Tigris River in Al Kut, Nov. 24, 2008.

**TOP RIGHT:** A Lithuanian soldier of Lithuanian Contingent 10 stands guard over the Lithuanian compound at Forward Operating Base Delta, Iraq, May 29, 2008.



Ashley Gilbertson, who worked as a photographer in Iraq, first as a freelancer, then for The New York Times, described a similar situation with a real-world example from his experience embedded with the Army. In Samarra, he encountered a situation where things got out of control after the discovery of some incriminating booklets.

“Before a semicircle of American soldiers, Money Mike [the platoon’s interpreter] grabbed the suspect, threw him against a wall and shouted him to the ground until the man cowered below him like a scared dog. Mike took a baton he had looted and beat the man hitting his arms

and stabbing his ribs and stomach.

He then drew a bayonet from his belt and started threatening the man with renewed fury. Lt. Tabankin finally stopped him with the words, ‘I hate

to say this Mike, but put the knife away ... I mean, I have to be frank: There’s a reporter here.’ I looked the lieutenant in the eyes and lied, ‘Don’t worry, I didn’t photograph it.’”

In that case, Gilbertson had actually not taken the picture. When he realized it later, he described his feelings this way: “I had grown too close to the platoon and had unintentionally protected them. I was incredibly upset. I most certainly would have filed the image to the paper. ... That failure to photograph Mike with the bayonet was the first and last time I allowed camaraderie in war to obstruct my work as a photojournalist — on an embed or anywhere.”

Marc Santora has covered Iraq from both the embedded perspective and the unilateral perspective. Of the unilateral perspective, he writes: “As the name suggests, we were most definitely on our own. That was the point. While embedding provided one view of the war as it was waged — from the command on down — being outside the confines

of the military allowed us to tell the story from the perspective of the Iraqi civilians.”

On the other hand, he states: “I have been back to Iraq many times since those early, chaotic days . . . I have also embedded with the military on many occasions, and it is obvious that the ability to travel side by side with the young men and women fighting the war is essential. We needed to be with them not only to tell their stories but also because as Iraq descended into anarchy, traveling in certain parts of the country was only possible if embedded.”

A reporter on the ground only

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*“The military would often like more control, as when objective media members present a story, ‘warts and all,’ but in the end, the arrangement is mutually beneficial.”*

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sees a small slice of the war. However, with some ingenuity, courage and perseverance, reporters can get through to the meat of the story, and in some cases get all sides — even from an embed. Take the example of New York Times reporter Sam Dagher, who covered a story in Mosul, initially from a military embed. He first used his embed to cover the military perspective of the story, but in order to cover it fully, he needed the political facet as well. To gain that, he wrote, he had to use some contacts and take some risks. He finally was able to reach both Sunni Arab and Kurdish factions in the city, in order to fully cover the story.

That type of effort may provide the template for those reporters covering stories that are best served by covering all perspectives.

Again, those who have actually spent time embedded argue that, even though the perspective may be somewhat limited, it is quite valuable. Each small slice of the picture represented by an embedded reporter is part of the whole,

and when they are pieced together, they have the potential to provide a fairly accurate representation of events in Iraq and Afghanistan. The contributions made by independent journalists are also key ingredients for any news outlet that seeks to fully cover the wars.

Another criticism of embedded journalism lies in the military control over an embedded journalist. Popular perception likens the military’s role to that of a censor.

Looking back to his early embeds, New York Times’ Steven Lee Myers said, “Embedding then, as now, imposed restrictions on reporters. We were not

allowed to report exact location and size of units, their planned operations or the names of those killed. ... In the end, I never encountered an effort to restrict anything

I wrote, though an officer complained that I described how two American tanks had been destroyed. I felt I never compromised my obligation to be fair and honest. And some of what I wrote as a result was hardly flattering to the American war effort.”

Sebastian Junger, in his book, “War,” written after a series of embeds in Afghanistan’s Korengal Valley, relates an instance of misunderstanding: “Once at a dinner party back home I was asked, with a kind of knowing wink, how much the military had ‘censored’ my reporting. I answered that I’d never been censored at all and that once I’d asked a public affairs officer to help me fact-check an article and he’d answered, ‘Sure, but you can’t actually show it to me — that would be illegal.’”

The media and the military are brought together on an embed and are often uneasy companions with wildly different goals. However, both sides gain from the arrangement — the media through strong content and the military through some measure of control. The

military would often like more control, as when objective media members present a story, “warts and all,” but in the end, the arrangement is mutually beneficial. The military understands that, and the media ground rules state very specifically what may not be covered in the interest of security.

Besides, as Myers states in his blog, “If the military tries too hard to control the message, as my colleague Tim Arango and I have experienced on recent embeds, that’s just one more obstacle to overcome in the reporting, one more thing to report.”

Embedded reporters must tread a thin line, striving constantly to maintain their objectivity and to provide balanced and full coverage of their stories. The ethical and professional considerations are many, and the potential for abuse is very real. However, with the extreme hazards and costs inherent in independent journalism in an area where journalists are not recognized as neutral, it is the best option available.

In the end, journalists are responsible for their own work. They must be able to recognize when their objectivity may become compromised and take steps to prevent that. They must recognize when the perspective they are offered is not deep enough. If journalists do not have the integrity and the professional pride to do so, they will not provide neutral, balanced coverage anywhere — much less in a combat zone. The embed process provides a valuable opportunity for direct access to the troops on the ground during the longest war in American history. This cannot be ignored. The tool is not a perfect one, but it is the best one available right now. ♦

**Dan West** is a 2010 J-School photo graduate and U.S. Army veteran.

Children wait with their mothers for food to be distributed by soldiers of El Salvador’s Battalion Cuscatlan near the Anwar district of al Kut.



# THANK YOU, UM

Great Falls Tribune newsroom employees thank the University of Montana School of Journalism



I knew I wanted to be a journalist when I “grew up,” and UM’s School of Journalism gave me the tools I needed to succeed in my goal.

I spent countless nights at the J-School either working at the Kaimin or finishing a project on deadline. Without the Kaimin I wouldn’t have found my strength in design. I had the opportunity to express my creativity, collaborate with others and learn the ins and outs of life in the newspaper world.

My journalism degree gave me life lessons. Don’t be afraid to talk to people you don’t know. If you’re curious, ask. Don’t stop until you’ve got the whole story. Learning those lessons at UM gave me a tremendous advantage and helped me make some of my closest friends.

— Ashley Klein, copyeditor



It’s hard for me to think of a time when strong, dedicated journalists are needed more than right now. The UM School of Journalism gets that, and has done an outstanding job of preparing its students for the rapidly changing journalism industry that awaits them after graduation.

Students like me were taught by actual professionals who helped us learn key skills by practice until, by the time I graduated, I found myself surrounded with some of the most talented journalists in the country. There’s a rhythm of professionalism that every journalism student needs to learn in order to be competitive in this industry and the J-School had me instinctively tapping it on my keyboard long before my first job interview.

— Kimball Bennion, police and courts reporter

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# A drowning rice bowl

| STORY & PHOTOS BY KEVIN RADLEY |

**Top:** Young rice grows in An Giang province near the border of Cambodia.

**Left:** Bagged rice is transported by motor-bikes or trucks to the nearest section of river where boats await.

**Right:** Farmers dry their grains for one to two days after harvest to prepare the grain for milling and shelling.

The developing countries that depend on southern Vietnam's inexpensive rice exports could face starvation with the onset of rising sea levels due to climate change.

The low-lying landscape of Vietnam's "rice bowl," the Mekong Delta, will likely be able to only produce rice for domestic consumption if sea levels continue to rise, a global concern considering the country's worldwide rice exports.

"Maybe in the future we will likely be able to feed ourselves," said Dr. Nguyen Van Be, referring to Vietnam's rice production, "but many other people will be starving."

Dr. Be is a professor at Vietnam's Can Tho University's Department of Environmental and Natural Resource Management. He and many other CTU professors have researched this potential global issue.

Vietnam is one of the world's leading producers and exporters of rice, coming in second to Thailand, its usual competitor, in 2010, according to the International Rice Research Institute. The country produced close to 38 million tons of rice — roughly half of which was grown in the Mekong Delta.

Dr. Be said the delta produces a lower quality of rice than countries like Thailand and India. He the lower quality — and therefore lower cost — product allows Vietnam to export around 6 million tons of cheap rice to a niche market of underdeveloped countries around the world. Yet 90 percent of those rice exports from Vietnam are cultivated in the Mekong Delta, which sits only two meters above sea level.

Thus southern Vietnam's vertically challenged countryside is facing an enormous problem. There is scientific consensus that by the end of the century sea levels will rise about 1 meter. With more saltwater inland, soils will become increasingly saline, which, in turn, will drastically reduce rice yields in the delta.

This could change the entire hydrology of the Mekong Delta, affecting not only the area's 18 million Vietnamese

people and their livelihoods but also reducing Vietnam's cheap rice export, creating a global food shortage.

Coastal areas, like the Mekong Delta, are also predicted to have an increased intensity of tropical storms, which could flood the "rice bowl" and possibly drown most of the production in some areas. Ironically, rice is a crop that grows in ample amounts of water but cannot survive if submerged for a long period.

Further adverse weather conditions, including Vietnam's most recent severe drought in 2010, are only predicted to get worse. Last spring, the National Hydro-

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*"Vietnamese rice farmers are increasingly forced to look for alternative growing techniques or a new livelihood."*

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Meteorological Forecasting Centre for southern Vietnam recorded water levels in the Mekong River at around a 20-year low. The center blamed the record drought on an unusually short rainy season teamed with less upstream flow.

These conditions led to a longer dry season, which strangled farmers' available fresh water and allowed seawater to reportedly creep as far as 60 kilometers inland. During a typical dry season, saltwater invades around 30 kilometers inland.

In these changing environments, Vietnamese rice farmers are increasingly forced to look for alternative growing techniques or a new livelihood.

Rather than growing rice, some farmers channel their land into saltwater ponds for shrimp cultivation. The result is larger profits and greater viability given the saltier conditions.

Yet shrimp farming may not be the sustainable answer the delta needs. Given the amount of excess carbon in our atmosphere, it is predicted that the oceans' pH levels will decline. Producing healthy shrimp requires saltwater with

a relatively high pH to regulate the spread of disease and pests. A lower pH can weaken a shrimp's exoskeleton, decreasing its immunity to disease.

Dr. Be said rice farmers might also be able to adapt to the consequences of saltwater intrusion by using new rice varieties the International Rice Research Institute is currently researching. As of now, one variety of rice is able to grow in brackish waters containing up to 6 grams of salt per liter, while another variety is able to grow submerged in fresh water for up to 20 days.

The institute hopes to blend these two varieties, creating a single saltwater and flood-tolerant rice to help the delta's rice farmers maintain production and adapt to climate change in a sustainable manner.

Another solution for Vietnam's future is to stop the saltwater altogether. A proposal backed by many politicians is to build a U-shaped dike that stretches 700 kilometers from the southernmost provinces on the East Sea of Vietnam to just south of Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnam must now weigh its options and decide what is best for the future in a changing climate.

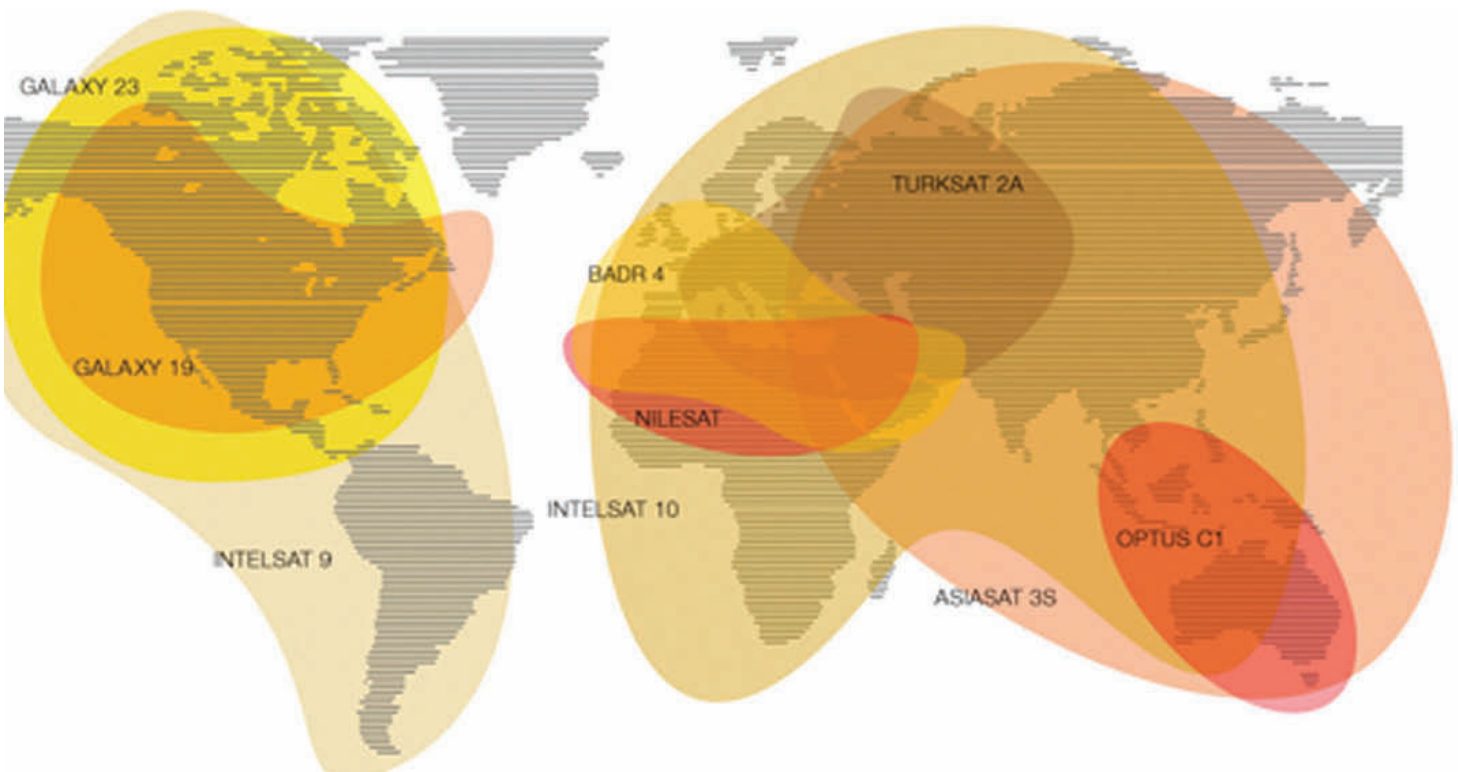
A massive dike will create new jobs, much needed infrastructure and probably maintain the majority of rice production, but it may also cost Vietnam the already decreasing natural environment and the safety of the vulnerable people living in the delta.

Whatever the country's decision, rice should continue to be the staple of Vietnam and the heart of its agricultural economy. The crop is not just a segment of the Vietnamese diet and GDP, it is deeply embedded in the cultural values of the country's growing population of 88 million people. ♦

**Kevin Radley** is a graduate student at the UM School of Journalism and plans to be a photojournalist specializing in environmental issues.



# The world of Al-Jazeera English



Map showing Al-Jazeera's satellite coverage.

When Pacifica Radio entered negotiations to become the first network in the United States to carry Al-Jazeera English on its airwaves, Tony Bates went to work, doing what he does best. He listened.

Not that he calls it a premonition. But when Pacifica became the first network to carry AJE last November, just three months before the controversial Qatar-based outfit would simultaneously explode in popularity while civil strife imploded the Middle East, it was Bates who knew his station had just cashed in. As the program director of Pacifica's New York branch, he had started to listen to AJE every day when he caught wind of the negotiations.

"I found it to be the best, most

unbiased news I'd heard in years and years and years," Bates said. "Things kept going wrong within our network that kept pushing the start date back. In November, however, at my insistence, on a network meeting with all of the managers, I insisted that there had been too many delays and that we really needed to begin to carry it."

WBAI in New York became the first Pacifica station to broadcast AJE — something Bates said he was initially criticized in-house for but nonetheless called a coup when it came to covering the spread of revolutions in the Middle East this past winter. What is clear is that AJE wasn't just spearheading coverage from Egypt, or Tunisia or Yemen, but the network was drilling international

competition with smothering boots-on-the-ground reporting, complemented with context and commentary.

The managing director of Al-Jazeera English, Al Anstey, told National Public Radio in February that the website's traffic had increased by 2,500 percent in the opening days of the Egyptian protests, adding that 50 percent of that traffic was in the United States. It's a testament to the foothold Al-Jazeera has established in 2011. For AJE, this is the year that is evoking memories of the Gulf War, when a small and hungry outfit named CNN capitalized on front-line reporting. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton rocked the media landscape in a speech to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 2, when she said, "You may not

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agree with [Al-Jazeera], but you feel like you're getting real news around the clock instead of a million commercials and, you know, arguments between talking heads and the kind of stuff that we do on our news, which is not particularly informative to us."

"The way thought leaders are discussing Jazeera English has changed dramatically," said Lawrence Pintak, a former CBS News Middle East correspondent and the founding dean of the Edward R. Murrow College of Communication at Washington State University. "The fact that Hillary Clinton is dissing the American media and saying Jazeera English is providing the news, the fact that Jazeera English is being watched in the White House, the fact that people like Sam Donaldson said on 'This Week,' 'Thank God for Al-Jazeera' — that changes people's perceptions."

The coverage, most notably in Cairo, was praised by many media pundits as versatile — from striking images and video being broadcast with print news reports and interactive blogging alike — and it was beginning to expose young stars, such as Ayman Mohyeldin, who is becoming a media darling after his gritty reporting from Tahrir Square. Mohyeldin spoke to Pintak's students at Washington State in late March.

"When we asked the students 'How many of you have watched Jazeera English? And how many of you have seen Ayman? It was maybe, you know, 20 or 25 percent of the audience,' said Pintak. "But they were there because of the star power, the drawing power, the intrigue of Al-Jazeera English."

Intriguing or not, AJE has yet to make inroads with American radio and television audiences. Bates said Pacifica's popularity grew during the Egyptian uprisings but only because of the exclusivity. Only three cities — Washington, D.C., Burlington, Vt., and Toledo, Ohio — currently broadcast AJE on cable and satellite providers.

A University of Michigan report released in March, considered to be the

first study to "evaluate attitudes toward AJE in an experimental context," deems it unlikely that the network will break into the American television market. The study focuses on 177 viewers from an online survey community called Amazon's Mechanical Turk, who were assigned to watch an AJE news report online regarding the Taliban and its "position towards peace talks with the government in Kabul."

The viewers were divided into three groups: AJE, CNN International and a control group, which didn't watch a segment. For those in the CNNI group, the

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*"Jazeera English's strength is that it has Al-Jazeera in the name, and its Achilles Heel has been the fact that it has Al Jazeera in the name."*

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study removed the AJE branding from the story and replaced it with the CNNI insignia, and all viewers rated the report on a seven-point Lichter scale to screen for views on bias.

Following the viewing, the pool was asked a series of questions, including whether or not they would directly pressure a company in support of carrying Al-Jazeera English, as well as questions of whether the clip they viewed was laced with bias.

The pool that viewed the report marked AJE believed the station was less biased than those in the control and CNNI pools, but according to the authors of the report, William Youmans and Katie Brown, "the differences were non-significant."

While the report doesn't necessarily depict a concrete sentiment of American television viewers, its significance rests in the news consumers in the Western world and how preconceived perceptions of AJE may be too much for the network to overcome in the war to win cable deals in the United States.

University of Oxford professor Walter Armbrust, who teaches Middle East studies, has contributed several political commentaries to AJE since the uprisings, suggests that where AJE is picking up the most ground in the 2011 American media market is through its Web traffic. He said one of his stories picked up 150,000 reads and that statistics point to American college students increasingly visiting the website. But the web platform is distinctly different from American television audiences.

"It's hard to imagine that AJE will ever be in the American market on an equal footing with its American counterparts. For one thing, AJE's focus is relatively regional, hence Americans are only likely to notice it when dramatic events are taking place in the Middle East," said Armbrust, who is from Omaha, Neb. "I have no doubt that for many family members and high school classmates in the place I grew up Al-Jazeera is as toxic as ever. But those are people whose opinions are quite hardened and unlikely to change."

Small victories have been won in the United States for AJE, such as with Pacifica. And Pintak believes that despite preconceived notions of the network that were planted by the Bush administration, AJE has a fighting chance to win legitimacy among American news consumers. Through the comments of Donaldson and Clinton, for example, cable and satellite providers now have an incentive to broadcast AJE, a pressure that didn't previously exist, he said.

"Jazeera English's strength is that it has Al-Jazeera in the name," said Pintak, "and its Achilles' heel has been the fact that it has Al-Jazeera in the name." ♦

**Roman Stubbs** was the 2011 editor of the *Montana Kaimin*. He graduated with majors in journalism and history.





## ANONYMOUS in Burma

Children picking through garbage in Sittwe, western Myanmar.

**I**n the interest of full disclosure, my name is not Timothy Chase.

I write this story, indeed any story about Myanmar, under a pseudonym. This is absolutely essential because I want to go back there to continue documenting, writing and talking about the struggles and perseverance of people living under one of the world's most oppressive regimes.

Myanmar, also known as Burma, sits between India and China in Southeast Asia. It has been ruled by a military dictatorship since 1962. The generals put a civilian face on their regime in elections last November, but as friends in Myanmar say, "same wine, new bottle."

The generals, their families and their cronies have become fabulously wealthy selling the country's natural resources — teak, natural gas, oil, minerals. The

general population has been left to fend for itself. The average annual income is estimated at \$500.

Human Rights Watch calls Myanmar one of the worst human rights abusers. Transparency International ranks it as the second most corrupt nation, behind Somalia. Reporters Without Borders puts it fifth from the bottom for press freedom. The Committee to Protect Journalists says it's the worst place in the world to be a blogger.

Heavy-handed government censors screen every story that appears in the Burmese press or on local television. A journalist there toes the line or becomes another of the regime's nearly 2,200 political prisoners. At this writing, 27 reporters, photographers or bloggers are behind bars.

Foreign journalists are not welcome. To get in, you have to lie about your occupation on the visa application and pose as a tourist. Once you're there, you do everything possible to avoid a

security apparatus said to employ one in every four Burmese.

Several foreign newsmen penetrated the bamboo curtain last November to cover the release from house arrest of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Seven were rounded up and expelled. Others were inexplicably allowed to stay and interview Suu Kyi. Perhaps the generals felt stories about her freedom would reflect favorably on them, for a change.

Myanmar is a place that can enthrall you with enchantment one moment and paralyze you with paranoia the next.

"There are eyes and ears everywhere" is the constant reminder from one of my guide friends there. I wouldn't dare tell her I'm a photojournalist. But I know she knows. She takes the risk of helping me as her way of fighting back.

I've been hassled a few times by officious local policemen wanting to know why I was taking pictures of, say, kids scavenging in garbage piles, or why

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I'm spending so much time at a pagoda, or why I'm talking with monks at a monastery. The "I'm just a stupid tourist" ploy has always served me well. So far.

**M**y colleagues Karen Coates, Jerry Redfern and Jacob Baynham, all University of Montana J-School grads, haven't been so lucky. Their experiences as journalists in Myanmar left them spooked.

In 2009, Karen, an author and freelance writer, and her husband, Jerry, a photographer, had been invited by the U.S. Embassy to conduct workshops for Burmese writers and photographers in Mandalay. This was their second such trip. The curricula had been cleared by the government. They knew better than to talk politics with their students.

On the side, Karen and Jerry were working on a story about laphet thote, a tangy Burmese delicacy made of fermented tea leaves mixed with sesame seeds and peanuts. (Karen is a food writer of some renown.)

The night the workshops ended, Karen and Jerry returned to their hotel from dinner to find a group of plainclothes and uniformed policemen waiting for them.

"They told us we needed to go with them," Karen says. "They didn't tell us why. I don't think they knew why. They just said they had orders."

The policemen would entertain no appeals. Nor would they let Karen and Jerry make a phone call.

The two Americans had 20 minutes to pack. Then they would be taken on the overnight train to Yangon. There, after hours of bureaucratic confusion and futile embassy attempts to free them, they would be put on a plane to Bangkok. Karen and Jerry were being expelled.

"We were both terrified, especially for the people we had worked with," Karen says now. "As we pulled away from the hotel, I remember seeing one of our friends standing there. All the color

was drained from his face. We had no idea what would happen to him or the others."

They learned later that there were no ramifications for their Burmese friends or students. But to this day, Karen wonders why she and Jerry were thrown out and may never be allowed back in.

They were sent packing the same day that John Yettaw, a Bible-carrying Missourian, swam across a lake in Yangon to the home of Suu Kyi, who was then still under house arrest for opposing the regime. The bizarre incident gained international attention and cost Suu Kyi another 18 months of

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*"I wouldn't dare tell her I'm a photo-journalist. But I know she knows."*

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confinement for sheltering Yettaw. He was held for a few weeks and then sent home.

**C**ould Karen and Jerry somehow have been caught up in the Yettaw case? Could their interest in laphet thote have been seen as an investigation into how some exported laphet thote had been tainted with toxic food dye? Did they say something "wrong" in their classes? What about the published rumors later (all denied) that they were with the CIA, that they had been consorting with dissident monks, that they had attended a skit for foreigners that poked fun at the regime?

"Who knows?" Karen says.

What she does know is that she and Jerry got a serious taste of the intimidation and fear imposed on Burmese journalists and photographers, some of whom secretly work for exile opposition media or for the BBC Burmese Service, Voice of America or Radio Free Asia.

"They take huge risks every day," she says. "It's hard to think about what they go through."

Who can forget the reportage and images of monks leading the "Saffron

Revolution" of 2007 and Burmese troops opening fire on them? All of it came from Burmese journalists using digital cameras, cell phones and the Internet. Many were rounded up later and given long prison terms.

**J**acob Baynham, just out of the School of Journalism, headed for Myanmar after the uprising had been crushed. Years earlier, as a high school graduate, he had traveled there, seen the realities of oppression and decided to make journalism his calling.

"After the monks protested in September, I wanted to get there as soon as possible," he says. "I really wanted to tell the stories of that place."

Now, early in 2008, he was in central Myanmar posing as a backpacker who just wanted to see a river known for good

fishing. What he was really after was a story about a secret jungle construction site where, rumor had it, the regime was ramping up some sort of nuclear installation.

A guide named Kyaw Kyaw had agreed to go along. The effusive man, who called himself Jo Jo, bragged to villagers along the way that Jacob was "an American! An American! First to the moon and now first to your village!"

After a day of hiking and hitching, the two found themselves in a remote village where Jacob reckons he was the first white man many of the children had seen. The villagers were friendly but nervous. They said they had heard explosions from just across the next mountain range and seen helicopters. The army had warned them never to go there. They advised the two hikers to go back.

Jacob and Kyaw Kyaw chose discretion over valor. The next morning, they returned to the town of Maymyo. There, as they were about to part ways, plainclothes policemen on motorbikes appeared, told them "get on," whisked them off to a police station on the edge of town, sat them down and began peppering them with questions. They



wanted Jacob's passport — "now!"

"That's when I realized this was a bad situation," Jacob says. "There were 11 of them, some with walkie-talkies. One of them was very aggressive and angry toward Kyaw Kyaw."

The interrogators gave no indication they spoke English. They used Kyaw Kyaw as a translator to question Jacob. Who was he? Why was he in Myanmar? What did he study in school? Why did he want to go where he had gone? On and on. Jacob stuck to the back-packer story.

A sign on the otherwise bare wall read "All respect, all suspect." You don't get to call an attorney in Myanmar.

"I was trying to stay focused," Jacob says. "But the situation was escalating."

The interrogators wanted to see the pictures in his digital camera. The photos of the hike and village were harmless enough. But then there were shots of teak logs being trucked to Yangon, of the Moustache Brothers troupe that makes fun of the regime for foreigners in Mandalay, of the work and tattoos of dissident artists and rappers — all indicating a curious photojournalist at work.

"They knew they had something there," Jacob says. "That's when I started panicking. My heart started pounding. I'd never felt that kind of panic before. ... There was nothing I could do."

Jacob was tempted to hit the delete button as the police took him to a computer shop to make copies of the photos. But he knew that would only make things worse. The last thing he wanted was for them to start searching for more incriminating evidence. For in his backpack were two notebooks with the names and numbers of the dissidents he had interviewed in Yangon.

"I was distraught and worried and feeling foolish that I hadn't been safer,"



The Moustache Brothers troupe is allowed to perform political satire, but only for foreigners.

he says. "I should have hidden those pictures and encoded that notebook."

Kyaw Kyaw knew the owner of the computer shop. Quietly, Jacob told his guide "I need some of those photos to disappear." Kyaw Kyaw said he would see what he could do. The owner was already copying the photos from Jacob's card to a computer. The owner told the police he would make them a CD.

Then, as suddenly as the frightening episode had begun, it was over. The police returned Jacob's passport and bundled him into a truck bound for nearby Mandalay.

"Thank you very much," the senior policeman told him. "Have a wonderful stay in our country."

Kyaw Kyaw came to the truck window and shook Jacob's hand.

"Don't worry about the photos," he whispered. "I have taken care of them."

As the truck pulled away, Jacob glanced in the rear-view mirror. There was Kyaw Kyaw in the grip of the most fearsome interrogator.

Jacob talked with Kyaw Kyaw on the phone a couple of days later. The guide said he was all right but needed money.

"I don't know what happened to him after that," Jacob says.

From Mandalay, Jacob went to Yangon but sensed he was being followed everywhere.

"I've never felt so paranoid in my life," he says.

Then he went to see one of his artist friends. Awaiting him there was a man who introduced himself as being from the tourism ministry.

"You shouldn't have hired that guide," the man said.

The paranoia spiked. How did this man know about Kyaw Kyaw? And how did he know where to find Jacob? And when?

A few days later, Jacob flew to Bangkok.

Now, three years later, he wants to go back to Myanmar someday.

"What happened to me didn't put me off the country," he says. "It just made me realize how important it is to be smart about doing journalism there."

In the meantime, he is asking me to do him a favor:

"If you get to Maymyo, can you see if Kyaw Kyaw is still there?" ♦

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# Risky business

| BY NEIL C. LIVINGSTONE |



I was picked up in a black sedan in Moscow and driven around through the Russian capital's crowded streets for more than an hour to throw off any tail or surveillance. Finally, we arrived at the Ukraina Hotel, located at a bend on the Moskva River, opposite the House of Government of the Russian Federation (White House). A familiar landmark, the Ukraina is one of the seven "wedding cake" skyscrapers (so known for their distinctive over-wrought designs) built by Joseph Stalin in the early 1950s.

I was led upstairs to a small bar overlooking the cityscape where I was introduced to three people: an Armenian man and woman and a slightly built middle-aged man who resembled the late Austrian actor Oskar Werner. The Armenian couple remained silent while the third member of their party described his career as a terrorist, first with the German Red Army Faction (RAF aka Baader Meinhof Gang) and later as the RAF's representative to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) based in Beirut, despite the fact he was Jewish. He was also known as the "best bomb builder west of Amman (Jordan)."

My clandestine meeting with a terrorist turned out all right, although it is clear that once I stepped into the car that took me to the rendezvous

anything could have happened. I no longer had any control of the situation and was placing my well-being in the hands of people I didn't know. So it is when meeting with terrorists and other criminals, whether reporter or on other business.

American journalist Daniel Pearl discovered this the hard way. An al-Qaida-affiliated group named the National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty in 2002 abducted Pearl, who worked for The Wall Street Journal. He was under the impression that he was going to meet a local sheikh at a restaurant in downtown Karachi, Pakistan, as a part of a story he was researching involving the so-called shoe bomber, Richard Reid. He was beheaded nine days later and his captors videotaped the actual event. During his interrogation at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind behind the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, admitted that he was the one who had wielded the knife.

In 2009, a record 121 journalists around the globe were killed by terrorists, criminals, governments and armed groups, both on the left and the right. Since 1992, the number of journalists killed in the line of the duty exceeds 850. More were lost in Iraq than any other country, followed by the

Philippines, Algeria, Russia, Colombia and Pakistan. The largest number of victims were covering wars, then politics by public corruption.

Among those seriously injured in Iraq were Bob Woodruff, the co-anchor of ABC's "World News Tonight," and his cameraman, Doug Vogt. They were embedded with the 4th Infantry Division in Iraq when their convoy was attacked by an IED (improvised explosive device) and small arms fire. Both men suffered traumatic head injuries and other wounds to their upper bodies, and Woodruff was kept in a medically induced coma for 36 days to aid in his recovery. He had just succeeded longtime ABC evening news anchor Peter Jennings when the incident occurred, but his recovery was slow and painful, and he never returned to the anchor chair.

My good friend Kimberly Dozier, who was working for CBS at the time, was also one of those who narrowly survived a terrorist bomb attack in Iraq. When the IED went off, it killed the rest of her crew. She writes of the 2006 incident: "I was flung into the air, but I don't remember landing. By the time I did, both legs were smashed from the sheer force of being knocked back, and the explosion had scorched much of my right leg, some of my left and parts of my



arms. I was peppered with bits of molten metal and car parts, which were embedded in me from head to toe.”

Kimberly died five times on the operating table, and she has had, to date, 23 operations to address her extensive wounds. She is now working as a print journalist for The Associated Press, covering intelligence issues.

Another risk is that of being kidnapped and held for a long period of time. During the 1980s, State Department official Terry Arnold and I were tasked with initiating meetings with various terrorists, brigands and other criminals who claimed to be holding U.S. hostages in Lebanon and thereby assessing the credibility of their claims. Jeremy Levin, CNN’s Beirut bureau chief, was one such hostage, but the best known hostage was surely AP correspondent Terry Anderson, who was held six years and nine months by Hezbollah terrorists before being released.

While Terry Arnold and I were not involved in either man’s release, we did encounter one bona fide hostage taker. He was a Jabba the Hutt look-alike, so obese that a button actually popped off his shirt as he eased his formidable figure into his chair and produced from his pocket a wallet belonging to American University of Beirut librarian Peter Kilburn. The U.S. government ultimately made a deal to secure Kilburn’s freedom, but before he could be released the United States bombed Libya, in retaliation for various terrorist attacks, on April 14 (April 15 in Tripoli), 1986. The Libyan government dispatched a Maj. Khalifa from its embassy in Damascus to Beirut. Khalifa bought Kilburn and two British hostages from the brigands holding them, presumably by offering more money than the United States. Their bodies were found on a garbage dump in Beirut on April 17.

In 2007, BBC correspondent Alan Johnston was kidnapped on a street in

the Gaza Strip and held for nearly four months. During that time, he became a familiar figure on the news as the British network sought to keep his story in the public eye. Jill Carroll was another prominent kidnap victim. A stringer for the Christian Science Monitor, she was abducted in Iraq in early 2008 and not released until March 30.

Thus, it is clear that reporting on the front lines of wars and terrorist conflicts is a dangerous business and not for the faint of heart. Terrorists are particularly disdainful of the protections ordinarily extended to the media and often view members of the press corps as

writes Carroll, “but that’s precisely what dozens of journalists have done. The result is a motley group of freelance reporters taking up residence in Baghdad’s seediest hotels — including a former brothel — and churning out stories on shoestring budgets in a country the Committee to Protect Journalists ranked the most dangerous in the world for journalists.”

A small portion of those who thrive in war zones are there not just for professional advancement but because they are action junkies. One Emmy Award-winning journalist friend of mine delighted in skateboarding on the roof of

one of Saddam’s palaces in Iraq, skiing in the disputed Swat Valley of Pakistan and generally pursues a variety of extreme sports in war zones around the globe.

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*“The irony, of course, is that publicity is the mother’s milk of terrorism.”*

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legitimate targets. The irony, of course, is that publicity is the mother’s milk of terrorism, consistent with the old axiom, “kill one, frighten a million.” Terrorists need the media to report on their depredations because, in its most elemental form, terrorism is a form of communication. It’s not about destroying armies or seizing cities but, instead, about terrifying their enemies into submission or into implementing unwise or heavy-handed policies, which undermine their popular support.

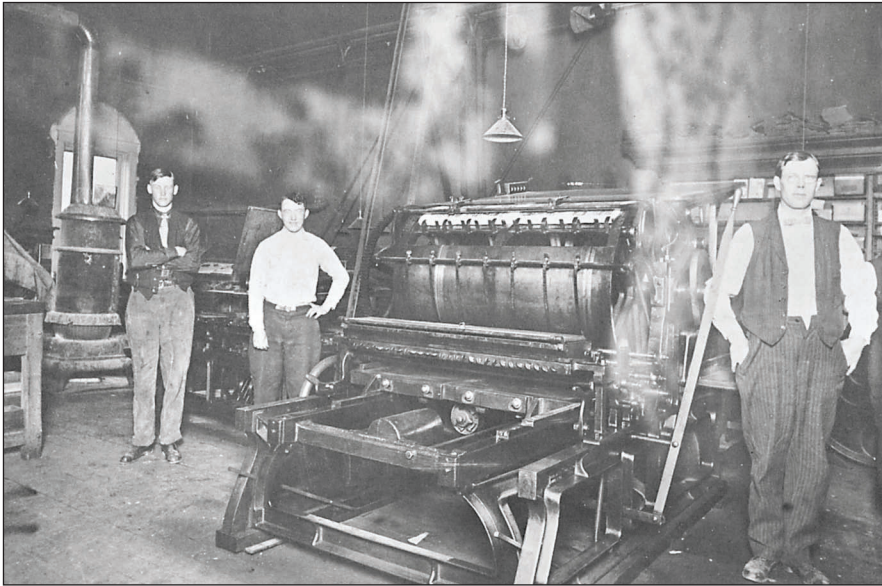
Spanish terrorists used to say, “the worse, the better,” because the bloodier the terrorist attack, the more likely it was to garner headlines. But individual targets, if significant enough like Pope John Paul II, who was shot in 1981 by a Turkish terrorist, also can produce the headlines terrorists are looking for.

Many journalists say that reporting on wars and terrorism is a sure way to jumpstart their careers. According to Jill Carroll, the stringer kidnapped in Iraq, journalists — often at their own expense — flocked to Iraq in hopes that their reporting could land them jobs with major newspapers or television networks. “It may sound like lunacy,”

In the final analysis, journalism schools should consider offering their students who want to report from overseas courses in self-protection, survival and even basic medical skills. This might help to address some of the frivolous and unprepared journalists like the correspondent from a major U.S. publication who arrived in Iraq not knowing how to dig a slit trench latrine and with her backpack stuffed full of old issues of Cosmopolitan magazine instead of water (or water purification tablets), insect repellent, medications, a poncho and other survival gear.

Top government officials working for the State Department and the Pentagon often are required to attend courses designed to minimize their risks as terrorist targets while overseas, and some courses even include a section on how to survive as a hostage if taken captive. ♦

**Neil Livingstone** is an expert on terrorism and national security and is CEO of ExecutiveAction, LLC, an international risk management company.



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# From Quarterbacks to Quakes

(Reprinted with permission from the National Sports Journalism Center website and edited for space)

What does a sportswriter say when his vacation is interrupted by an earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster?

This: “Hello, friends. Just quick update. My Japan vacation has turned into bit of a work trip.”

It’s Rick Maese tweeting: “Not sure what we’ll find, but currently making our way north toward area damaged by quake and tsunami.”

Maese works the Redskins beat for The Washington Post. He and his wife, Erin Cox, a reporter for the Annapolis Capital, were in Hiroshima when the earth moved, an ocean spilled over, and a nuclear plant went ker-boom. So they did what reporters do. They went to see.

Tweet: “Not simple. 5 hrs last night on road 2 so far today. And still maybe halfway there.”

They looked like highway bandits – if highway bandits rode in the back seat of a taxi and traded wisecracks about radiation poisoning. They wore red knit caps tugged to their eyebrows. They tucked white tissue under their glasses and let it hang past their chins. They were in this get-up in a taxi on a mountainside road. They had brought the knit caps because a friend wanted a picture of a Washington Capitals’ cap in Japan. Intending to buy the surgical masks worn by Japanese as safeguard against disease, they had mis-translated a word and wound up with facial tissue, after warnings to cover their skin. Well, yes. Of course. For sure. When I’m in danger of being lit up by radiation, I want the impenetrable protection of Kleenex.

There was gallows humor born of radiation’s fearsome possibilities. “An extra finger or two,” Maese said to his wife, “and I’d be the world’s fastest-typing sportswriter.”

“Maybe our future children will have flippers, not tails,” Cox said.

Her husband held in his hand a bag of peanuts, meant for breakfast and dinner, bought as a last resort after grocery shelves had been stripped bare. But now, with invisible peril in the air, a life decision had to be made: to eat or not to eat?

Discretion being the better part of radioactive valor, Maese tossed away the bag. He said, “Nuke nuts!”

And they motored on toward the story that began for them four days earlier in southern Japan, 700 miles from the tsunami damage. There they walked on ground once incinerated by an atomic bomb that killed perhaps 90,000 people by shock wave and radiation poisoning. Maese and Cox were at Hiroshima’s train station when they saw people crowding

in knit caps and tissues, they chased north. Their taxi driver, a woman named Yoskiko, sometimes peeked in her rear-view mirror at the masked duo and giggled. This while her radio reported 4,000 dead and 10,000 missing. This while running low on gas with no gas stations open. This on empty roads through ghostly towns. This with warnings of another tsunami, three meters high. This after an announcement of a hydrogen explosion at the Fukushima nuclear plant.

Another Maese tweet: “Total car time: 11 hrs. Still ways to go. Just got detoured off the North-South artery cuz of landslides. Good news: I’m not radioactive yet.”

The first time Rick Maese walked into the Albuquerque Tribune’s newsroom, he knew he wanted to be a sportswriter. His first by-line came on a story about New Mexico high school football players going to Australia. With some pain, he remembers his lede: “Care for a game of football, mate?” He was 14 years old. Today, a star at 31, Maese has been a metro columnist for the Orlando Sentinel and a sports columnist for the Baltimore Sun.

He has written the space shuttle Columbia tragedy and the Cal Ripken triumph, the Olympics and a presidential campaign. It took the Post about five minutes to hire him when the Sun was dismembered by its owner, Sam Zell, a loon. Maese can do anything you want done any way you want it – from basketball to tsunami survivors, this on March 1, this on March 13.

So can all the good sportswriters. They come to the business as reporters, not fans, as writers, not fans.

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*“Just got detoured off the North-South artery cuz of landslides. Good news: I’m not radioactive yet.”*  
–Maese tweet

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around televisions. They saw images of the tsunami rushing ashore in northeast Japan. In a story for her newspaper a week later, Cox wrote that they saw cars floating upside-down, “joined by sheds, then fishing boats, then entire buildings that rose, bobbed and were swept into a nearby bridge.”

When Maese woke the next morning, he heard from editors at the Post. “I was already on the ground,” he said this week. “So the decision was, do we end our vacation and chase the story?”

They chased, together. Armored-up

See *Quarterbacks*, page 40

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# AGAINST THE WALL: REPORTING ON



CHINA

| BY KATHLEEN E. MCLAUGHLIN |

**W**e are both loved and loathed by Chinese sources and colleagues, chastened by the country's top leaders for being biased, and at the same time criticized by international human rights workers for complaining too much, when Chinese journalists suffer so much more than we do.

Oftentimes, it seems there is no comfortable middle ground for foreign correspondents in China. Even as nationalistic youth build anti-foreign media websites, petitioners with nothing left to lose look to foreign journalists as their only hope to getting justice.

It creates a situation that can be at once exhilarating and depressing. One longtime correspondent said, "We're not supposed to feel anxious like this. It's not like we're covering a war."

She, of course, did not want her name used. Speaking ill of the reporting situation in China can lead to complaints from all sides and potential problems down the road. In other words, China's

approach to pressure on journalists is extremely effective.

Caught between the global hunger for news about China, now the world's second-largest economy, and ongoing problematic reporting conditions, correspondents here are often called upon to make difficult choices. When the pendulum swings toward a

the trend will move toward increasing flexibility and access," Daverio said. "But when the Chinese authorities perceive signs of possible political turmoil, such as the Jasmine Revolution or Tibetan protests in 2008, they quickly blame 'Western forces' and therefore foreign journalists, too."

Still, we are far more protected than

our Chinese colleagues, who are frequently subjected to lengthy detentions or criminal charges. China leads the world in the number of journalists it has jailed, but foreign reporters who have ticked off the regime are typically just tossed out.

In fact, it has been more than a decade since the last time China kicked a

credentialed foreign journalist out of the country.

Today, the People's Republic of China uses far more sophisticated and potentially effective means to manage its message and control who gets permission to work as a reporter here in the first place. Lengthy visa delays and nonanswers have grown increasingly common in recent years, while pressure

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*"The current climate is chillier  
for foreign correspondents  
than during the Olympics."*

*—Jocelyn Ford*

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crackdown on Chinese dissent, as it has in the beginning of 2011, the first people caught in the tightening noose are often foreign correspondents.

Laura Daverio, a longtime Italian correspondent in China, said she believes the situation is generally getting better, but setbacks like this year's can be difficult to navigate.

"For nonsensitive stories, I believe



remains constant on the sources, employees and associates of foreign correspondents — all Chinese nationals who associate themselves with non-Chinese journalists.

This strange, uncomfortable back-and-forth came to a head, once again, this February, when unknown online forces called for Jasmine Revolution in China, hoping to capitalize upon the success of uprisings in the Arab world. However, small protests that materialized in mid-February in Beijing and Shanghai were crushed swiftly and efficiently by the country's massive security apparatus.

Yet again, foreign journalists were caught up in the middle. Following the first Sunday of protests, police in Beijing began calling individual foreign correspondents and warning them not to attend any protests and to stay away from certain parts of the city. Of course, to journalists, this was a veritable invitation.

Under a change in law made, in part, so China could win the 2008 Olympics, foreign correspondents have the right to travel freely anywhere in the country, needing only consent of an interviewee to conduct reporting.

More than 100 foreign correspondents showed up at the Oriental Malls in the center of town that Sunday, walking, watching and waiting for any signs of Chinese protests. There were none.

Instead, the massive security presence began turning on journalists, dragging several away off the main streets into detention and beating up at least three, including one severely. The BBC complained vociferously and published video clips of its own incidents, as did CNN. Others who had trouble made different decisions and did not go entirely public with the details. In other words, pressure from China to keep silent does work.

Some international outcry followed, with statements from the U.S. government and the European Union. But the world's attention remained focused

squarely on Egypt, Libya and elsewhere — where journalists were being killed, tortured and assaulted. China, it seems in the eyes of the world, has evolved beyond needing as much attention.

But the fact is, China may have rolled back its own reporting regulations this year without drawing much attention. The question on the minds of reporters now: Is this just another passing phase or are we working again in a climate where authorities can interfere at will?

"The current climate is chillier for foreign correspondents than during the Olympics," said Jocelyn Ford, a longtime U.S. radio correspondent. "During the Olympics China was trying to make a positive PR splash around the world."

"The population, for the most part, supported the Olympics and was proud of their government's achievements," said Ford. "Media restrictions were more about saving face and suppressing known sources of dissidence. The Olympic media controls were imposed for a short-term goal."

Ford has been active in the Foreign Correspondents' Club of China for several years. The FCCC's own experience is a good illustration of the way things work in China. (Full disclosure: I'm on the FCCC board and head of its media freedoms committee.) The FCCC is technically illegal in China, because there is no mechanism by which we can register. Up until just a few years ago, the American Chamber of Commerce in China was in exactly the same boat but managed to negotiate a way to legalize. The FCCC never did, but it was never a real problem — in years past, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs came to the club's Christmas party.

But when China began tightening up on criticism in the past two years, the FCCC's legal status

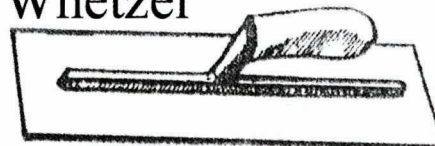
became an issue. Late last year, during the six-week period during which every journalist in China has to renew his or her visa, all board members of the FCCC were asked about their involvement and warned against taking part in illegal activities. Several, myself included, had visa renewals delayed. The message? Stop complaining about reporting conditions in China and stick to social functions.

Given that the message is often coming not just from the Chinese government but also from employers and even critics of the regime, what's a journalist in China to do? Ford suggests emulating Google, which went public last year when it decided to stop censoring search results here after a hacking attack.

"In an ideal world, competing international information companies would band together and speak out when they come under pressure to suppress information or self-censor," said Ford. "At the very least, they should follow Google's lead and be public with the information they refrain from publishing, be it in English or Chinese, or stories they decide not to pursue due to pressure." ♦

**Kathy McLaughlin** is a freelance journalist and the Global Post's senior correspondent for China, based in Beijing. She has lived in China for the past decade.

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# Lessons on foreign reporting

**Marcus Brauchli**, *executive editor, The Washington Post*

(Editor's Note: Brauchli spent much of his career as a foreign correspondent for *The Wall Street Journal*. He was based in Hong Kong, Stockholm, Tokyo and Shanghai.)

## What did you love and hate as a foreign correspondent?

I think the opportunity to see so much of how the rest of the world operates is always fascinating, and it's kind of an adventure to be in a place where you don't know what's going to happen every day. In part because you maybe don't know the culture, are new to a country or place or may not speak the language. It's kind of exhilarating to be in a place where you're constantly being challenged like that. I think that Americans in general don't have a deep enough understanding of how the rest of the world works or thinks, and the chance to be able to try to understand the world and convey that understanding back is really extraordinary.

## How is the United States doing in reporting foreign journalism?

I think the number of people in the U.S. who deal with the rest of the world is increasing, and the U.S. does have a fairly sophisticated understanding of the world. As a government, we have a pretty sophisticated understanding of the world. It's impossible for the U.S. not to pay attention to the world because the U.S. gets pulled into almost anything in the world by virtue of its status as what Madeleine Albright, I think, called the "essential power."

So, in terms of how I see foreign correspondents today in comparison to the past, the truth is — and this is something

that's widely overlooked — there are more foreign correspondents today; there are more correspondents in the world reporting information at a more granular level today than there have ever been in the past. The volume and quality of information coming to interested readers is far better than it's ever been. That is because countries have opened up, the global economy has integrated more tightly, the ability to communicate and to travel is superior to what it's ever been and the fact that the economy and the markets are so much more global means that there is great demand for information in one part of the world about another part of the world. ...

I think that the level of information that's available in the world today is better than it's ever been. The quality of journalism in the world is actually quite high, the quality of international correspondents. ... I think the world has changed and the kind of information people want and the kind of information that's available is superior to what existed before.

## What if you don't have a foreign correspondent in an important country?

Our approach to covering the world is not the same as AP or Reuters or Bloomberg, who think they have to cover basically everything that moves. Our view is: We're not going to be a paper of record; we're not going to cover everything that happens. We're going to try and identify those stories that matter most to our audience. We know that our audience comes to us expecting us to be authoritative on things Washington.



Marcus Brauchli speaks to UM students.

Either seeing the world a bit from a Washington prism, not entirely, but at least trying to write about things in a way that makes sense for an audience in Washington that would include policymakers and legislators and the World Bank and the [International Monetary Fund] and the people working the Pentagon or federal agencies in Washington but also for people who come wanting to understand what is important in Washington.

We can't cover everything, but we don't think we have to cover everything. ... We're looking for stories that will, as much as possible, anticipate the news rather than simply report what happened in the news. ...

We spend a lot of time trying to anticipate and address larger questions



to give people more context and understanding, and we worry a little bit less about covering minute-to-minute developments because we think we can get a lot of that from news services and, frankly, we think a lot of people follow that online or on television in a way that we're not going to necessarily bring any value to it.

So we focus on our journalism in a way that we think we can bring more understanding rather than just bringing back the same facts that everybody else is delivering.

### How do you determine what aspects of a story you should cover?

For example, an earthquake strikes Christchurch, New Zealand. Devastating earthquake. A large number of people are killed; it's a national tragedy in New Zealand. I don't think we would have seen any real reason to send a correspondent to that because there was no obvious way in which we were going to add any value, and there were no longer effects of that earthquake outside of New Zealand, as tragic as it was.

By contrast, when the earthquake and tsunami hit Japan, we understood immediately this was, first of all, a much larger tragedy, both in terms of loss of life and economic damage.

But Japan is a country that is a close U.S. ally, the third largest economy in the world — or by some counts the second largest economy in the world still — and this was going to be a highly disruptive event for the economy. It was going to require interesting responses of a Japanese government that has been challenged in recent years and has not been a strong government in recent decades.

And then overlaid on top of that very quickly was this nuclear power plant debacle, and again we saw that as something that does have a lot of repercussions for the rest of the world because it goes directly to the question whether nuclear power is safe and sustainable. Again it goes to the question of whether

Japan is going to be able to maintain its economy and whether the government is able to respond to a crisis like this. It goes to whether the government itself is going to be able to survive or perhaps even if their system or approach to government is going to survive.

There are a lot of really large questions that come into play very quickly that do have big implications for the U.S. and the rest of the world, and so we try to get on that. ... It has a lot of dimensions that immediately matter to us and to our readers so we put more people on that story.

So the calculus every time is: Do we have something to add, how essential and relevant is this to our readers to know and then what do we have to contribute to it to make it a broader, more ambitious and essential story for our readers?

### How would you improve U.S. foreign reporting?

I think if you actually had the time to look at all the foreign coverage that appears every day in American media outlets, you would find that it's pretty robust. The challenge remains telling people about things they don't know about, not just doing your version of what everybody else is doing.

This is true of all journalism, not just international coverage. I think too much of journalism remains a sort of "me too" enterprise, where everybody is sort of traveling in a pack and covering the same story and delivering their version of it. That to me is somewhat unnecessary because, as we all know now, it's all visible to all of us and there's probably greater advantage in doing not just your version of the same story everybody else is doing, unless you truly can add something significant and some real value to it.

But in finding stories that people aren't aware of and telling people things that they need to know but they don't know and in bringing places and people and things to light and to life in a way

that will be compelling and engaging so that our audience will learn about issues and places and subjects that they don't know about.

So perhaps what I'm saying is that American journalism probably would be slightly better served if it was a bit more adventurous in what it covered and if it didn't so often just move in a pack in the same direction.

### How has globalization affected foreign reporting?

Well there are certain advantages in being able to see what everybody else is writing. I mean, if something happens during the uprisings recently in the Middle East and North Africa, I found myself often watching Al-Jazeera's English-language streaming video website, which was great. I mean, it was really interesting and took you there in a way that CNN and MSNBC and broadcast networks in this country just didn't — just much more detailed and granular journalism.

What the Internet has done though is it has also torn down a lot of the walls that protected newspapers or other news organizations because they served a community and that community had only access to what information the community news organization was providing it. Today, if your local paper doesn't cover international news well but you're interested in the world, it doesn't matter to you. You can find plenty of international news that you could never have found before.

That sort of raises the challenge for all of us: How do we ensure that we remain the primary providers of news and information to our core audiences? That requires much more awareness of what the competitive landscape is and much closer focus on what it is that we know and have and can produce that they won't get elsewhere. ♦

For an extended interview with **Marcus Brauchli** visit: [www.mjrmag.com](http://www.mjrmag.com).

## How to break into international reporting today:

# PACK YOUR BAGS AND GO

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When Swedish anthropologist Ulf Hannerz (“Foreign News: Exploring the World of Foreign Correspondents”) asked Bill Keller, now executive editor of The New York Times, what he was looking for in recruits when he served as foreign editor of his paper in the second half of the 1990s, Keller said that he would want to fill an opening with someone who was adaptable, open-minded, willing to endure inconveniences and able to talk himself through a military checkpoint.

Today, for those contemplating a career in international reporting, it is equally important to develop a personal brand: a way to distinguish yourself, whether by cultural background, expert knowledge in a particular field or a combination of writing and multimedia skills.

For your first freelance reporting mission, don’t pick a place that’s already saturated by foreign coverage; pick a place that is likely to become relevant in the future and get there early. Start covering India before it becomes the world’s third largest economy (now predicted for 2032).

Settle down for a while, establish a hub, get to know the people and then explore the region, recommends University of Montana alum Jacob Baynham, who recently told UM journalism students about his reporting mission to Burma and Thailand in 2007.

“I found sheer perseverance goes a long way,” he said.

Preparation for an international reporting mission goes far beyond packing for an adventure trip. Budding freelancers need to sound out potential publishing venues and sources of funding, from their local paper to charitable foundations, from

trade publications to the websites of nongovernmental organizations and English-language media around the globe.

“Before you go out, meet as many people as possible,” Jamie Tarabay, a NPR correspondent of Lebanese heritage told veteran foreign reporter Mort Rosenblum in an interview for “Little Bunch of Madmen,” his 2010 book on global reporting. “Go to networks, talk to foreign editors. Of course, they won’t give you a job. If you are going there on faith, they’re not going to pay you. But

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*“For those contemplating a career in international reporting, it is equally important to develop a personal brand.”*

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at least when they see your email they’re not going to delete it.”

Identify Web publications that have the potential to become profitable and thus able to pay for stories in the foreseeable future. Instead of bemoaning the decline of the regional newspaper, invest in relationships with news organizations that are on their way up.

When I told a panel of journalists selecting students for Deutsche Journalistenschule, my alma mater in Munich, that my life goal was to become a foreign correspondent, I earned condescending chuckles.

It was 1986, and back then, foreign correspondence was the domain of mostly male veteran journalists who crowned their careers with a posting in Paris, London or Washington, D.C.

I got my break because, after graduation, I joined the German service of AFP, a subsidiary of the Paris-based news agency that was undergoing a relaunch, clearly on its way up. (And yes, they only hired me because I spoke French.)

I started out as a lowly copy editor on the foreign desk. Two years later, I was dispatched to the Brussels bureau, to cover NATO and the European Union. Another three years later, I became the first German-language AFP correspondent in the United States.

Besides working for a news organization that was expanding its network of foreign correspondents, I was chosen for what my bosses considered an accurate sense of what German audiences wanted and needed to learn about the United States.

Journalism, after all, is not about what writers, photographers or broadcasters want out of life.

Readers, viewers and listeners are the ones who matter.

International reporting never has been, and never will be, the right career for those mainly interested in their own comfort. Foreign correspondence is an exercise in humility.

But in a time when the media industry is changing, with few well-paid positions available for rookie reporters in your home state, you might as well take your savings, pack your bags and go. ♦

**Henriette Löwisch** teaches at the UM School of Journalism and heads its graduate program. She was a foreign correspondent for Agence France-Presse.



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## **BEYOND CONFLICT:**

# **Reporting sanely in occupied Palestine**



*Story & photos by Brendan Work*

Israel-Palestine is where seven of the eight news values go to die, and the eighth feeds happily on the carcasses. If that seems an unnecessarily cynical way to begin, consider the ugly advantage “conflict” has had over its siblings “proximity” or “entertainment,” and especially “currency,” in the 63-year history of reporting here. No story gets in or out without running a hackneyed interpretation gauntlet — what is the Palestinian view? What is Israeli view? — so by the time the consumer comes across it, any human interest or novelty in the story is essentially left for dead, blotted out by an enormous “vs.” in the center of the page.

It is, appropriately, an occupation.  
It's the kind of occupation, however,

that journalists can and should fix, perhaps as a model for the occupation that they cannot and should not. I have spent six months doing my small part as a reporter and translator of the Palestine News Network (PNN), a shoestring independent agency that works out of the basement of a hotel in Bethlehem, in the West Bank, and I can say it's not easy. But here is an optimistic note to readers and writers of Israel-Palestine news and information: It is possible to engage Israel-Palestine without getting bored, depressed or otherwise less likely to engage with Israel-Palestine.

The first step is learning. Like any story, this one is 90 percent homework, the only difference here being that there's 90 percent more homework than before. The yearly production of literature produced on Israel-Palestine is

not counted, but between books, articles and propaganda leaflets of all languages it must nearly double that of the next most notorious hot spot (if United Nations Security Council resolutions are a reliable indicator, Israel-Palestine accounts for one-third of the global conflict interest).

A journalist who can parse information well, discriminate between sources, and read Arabic and Hebrew is still likely to be swamped. So of course the intrepid learner should be prepared to read long books, watch documentaries and memorize dates — but it's my assertion that he or she should do none of this tirelessly, for two reasons. One, homework fatigue begets the far more dangerous condition of conflict fatigue, burden of predictable cynics and ideological freaks everywhere; and two,



**Left:** A boy prays before an Israeli wall in the central West Bank village of Ni'lin.

**Right:** An Orthodox Jew walks along the walls of Jerusalem's Old City.

like much homework, it may not even matter.

The second step is forgetting. Diligent historians will always and obviously be valued more highly than bright-eyed newcomers. But the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt and the release of the Palestine Papers, twin reminders to question the conventional trajectory of events, prove that no one in the Middle East has so firm a grip on the narratives as to make them boring. When a dictatorship can topple in a week, the dictator's biography is liable to fall out of the Middle East Relevant Reading List as quickly as breaking news coverage climbs into it. Political fluidity challenges us to be flexible with our sources and seek out new perspectives, some of which contradict reliable wisdom.

This two-step has led me into olive groves, refugee camps, armed settlements and at least one bagpipe training camp, down to the grotto where Jesus was born, in and out of a tear gas cloud and back to the office. It requires concentration, but in the end it renews faith in the idea that primary reporting, being always rarer and more precious than secondhand analysis, can help people understand and solve conflicts.

My own pet quest — to lend a hand to “human interest” and the other scavenged Israeli-Palestinian news values — draws heavily on this faith. Living in a largely Christian community in the southern West Bank, for example, ensures that I deal with religion the way I see it rather than with the Muslims-and-Jews cookie cutter favored by many outside observers.

Similarly, a functioning knowledge of Arabic lets me hear the words that don't feature in most articles: A Christian Arab child pointing at approaching Israeli jeeps will not yell “Israelis,” he'll yell “Jews.” The point



here is not to reinforce the fact that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be hateful but to reinforce the fact that firsthand experience adds nuance to the learned narratives — in this case, the nuance being that the conflict is both incongruous with traditional religious dichotomies and still turns on classic interreligious ignorance.

Rescuing equitable news coverage from Israel-Palestine demands this appreciation of nuance, something mainstream coverage has been starved of in the last 60 years. It is no longer up for serious debate that the American media gives implicit support of Israel.

Even the standard bearers of American journalism exhibit embarrassing blindness — The New York Times' top Jerusalem correspondent, Ethan Bronner, is the father of an Israeli soldier and the next best writer, Isabel Kershner, is an Israeli citizen; Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) has repeatedly criticized NPR for failing to report Palestinian deaths or mention the illegality of Israeli settlements. The gaps that these journalistic stalwarts leave are filled by small, underfunded press houses or tilted blogs. There is no major American news source with

a dedicated reporter in the Palestinian territories. “Reporting from Palestine,” in other words, still sounds like activism or war journalism, neither of which can accurately address the complex social and religious problems of the Palestinian people.

Outside of Al-Jazeera, Arab journalism is still a world of state media and broke freelancers, in which the former make up what they like — during the beginning Egyptian revolution the daily Al-Ahram reported that people in the streets were handing out chocolates and roses to the police, while in Palestine, the state-run Wafa news wire freely called the Al-Jazeera-leaked Palestine Papers “incitement” and “slandorous lies” — and the latter get arrested. Six months of translating reports for PNN has left me clawing for the baseline: at least two quotes, please mention the principal source's name and don't steal from Wikipedia. But whereas Arabs love a poet, they loathe a sneak. Investigative journalists and whistleblowers have too often fallen in with the spies and collaborators, making it easier to earn a respectable living as a barber than as a reporter. A



recent poll claimed 68 percent of Palestinians simply don't believe the Palestine Papers are real — further evidence that for all its modernization, this is still an old land populated exclusively by the trustworthy and murderous and no one in between.

The good news is that peace and democratization are more likely to encourage journalistic maturation: It will be significantly harder to dismiss a leak like the Palestine Papers, for example, as Zionist and colonialist aggression when actual Zionist and colonialist aggression seems further away.

In the meantime, international journalists should take Palestinian stories seriously and local journalists, too, should report them from fresh angles. There is no doubt that Israel-Palestine remains a conflict zone and deserves objective coverage through a conflict lens. It is also a story that Americans can and will find timely, entertaining and touching.

Most importantly, it is a story that need not and must not be boring. As Palestinians will grimly explain, the worst part of the occupation is the day it becomes ordinary. This story has been ordinary for too long. When news readers and writers forget the established norms of Israel-Palestine journalism, the end of at least one occupation is not far off. ♦

**Brendan Work** hopes to make a career at the intersection of journalism and Arabic. He just finished a stint at Palestine News Network in Bethlehem.



A girl watches her father butcher a sheep for Eid al-Adha, the Muslim festival that commemorates the story of Abraham and Ishmael.

# THE PEARL PROJECT

## Searching for Daniel Pearl's killer

**D**aniel Pearl, a foreign correspondent for The Wall Street Journal, was abducted and murdered in Pakistan in 2002. His death was marked by millions of people across the world and inspired a class at Georgetown University to investigate and report on the truth behind his murder.

The Pearl Project was started by Asra Nomani, a colleague of Pearl's who was with him in Pakistan before his abduction, and Barbara Feinman Todd, who was at that time the associate dean of journalism in the School of Continuing Studies at Georgetown University.

The duo created a seminar class that was modeled after the Arizona Project, in which U.S. reporters joined to find the 1976 killers of reporter Don Bolles and to continue his investigative work. It was designed to give students a hands-on opportunity to practice real-world investigative journalism while at the same time uncovering the truth behind Pearl's abduction and eventual murder.

**N**ine years after Pearl was killed, the project is complete. The Pearl Project identified 27 men who were involved in his murder; at least 14 of those men are still thought to be free. The project inspired a new way of teaching foreign and investigative journalism, immersing students in a real-life newsroom setting, while at the same time doing a service to the public.

Feinman Todd emphasized the importance for journalism students to practice journalism that really matters. "What I worry about just for the future of our country is that if there's too much of an emphasis on the sort of celebrity

news and the easy stuff that our citizens won't be well informed or able to make good decisions," she said.

Foreign news coverage is being drastically cut down at many mainstream publications. "Who's going to do the foreign news coverage if all of these traditional newspapers are being downsized and if the TV stations are getting rid of their foreign news bureaus

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*"The project inspired  
a new way of  
teaching foreign  
and investigative  
journalism."*

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because of the expense?" Feinman Todd wonders.

She and Nomani think that the answer lies in classes like the Pearl Project that educate students in the best practices of reporting, and at the same time provide the public with valuable journalism that takes a lot of time, patience and resources.

"It really shows us potential, and it's also a window into the difficulties and challenges," Nomani said of the Pearl Project as a model for future investigative reporting seminar classes.

"I think we owe it to our world to keep investigative journalism alive. It's a check on powers and an accountability that our world really needs," Nomani said.

**F**einman Todd became interested in the Pearl Project when she was reaching out to minority trade groups and journalism groups to try to get more students of color and different ethnicities involved in journalism. A mutual contact brought her to Nomani because of her connection within the south Asian journalism community. After corresponding with each other, Feinman Todd offered Nomani a job teaching at Georgetown, to which she reluctantly agreed.

The product of their collaboration was more than they had both hoped for.

Feinman Todd says she wishes that the project hadn't taken so long but said it was eventually completed because they had the time and support they needed. Georgetown University provided the students and teachers, the Center for Public Integrity provided the resources that the university didn't have — like libel lawyers — and the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation provided the funding that they needed to complete the project.

**T**he three-credit class took up much of the students' time, and Feinman Todd acknowledged that the students put forth much more effort than would have been required for another class worth the same amount of credit.

But students also got more out of the seminar than they did from other classes.

"I think working on something that was bigger than themselves, that was more than just increasing their GPA or learning how to write a lede, rather than learning one isolated thing or having it look good on your resume. It was more



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than an academic exercise; it really, really mattered,” Feinman Todd said.

The students agree. “Unlike other classes, where you learn facts or theories and are tested on your ability to recollect and analyze them, the Pearl Project taught me about life itself and my role in it,” said student Margo Humphries.

The students and teachers working on the Pearl Project had to overcome the dual challenges that face both foreign reporters and college students. “I’m picturing the students sleeping on the floor of our offices so they could call Pakistan at the right time,” she said.

Feinman Todd remembers she worried about students being able to emotionally and psychologically handle the daily stress and trauma that went along with confronting the atrocities that were carried out by Pearl’s captors.

Nomani recognized the challenges associated with being thousands of miles away from the epicenter of the investigation: Karachi, Pakistan. “Ideally we’d be knocking on doors and meeting

sources in coffee shops,” she said. It was hard for the class to know who to trust, especially when they were thousands of miles away, making phone calls in the middle of the night, in Washington, D.C.

Problems weren’t limited to physical problems, though. The investigation involved uncovering layers of information, and oftentimes finding that they had been misled, backpedaling and starting again. Particularly challenging were the names. “We started with the names of four men who were convicted and the rest was just alphabet soup of aliases and initials and crazy monikers,” Nomani said. She credits having 32 people looking at the case from various angles to their eventual understanding of the identities of those involved in Pearl’s abduction and murder.

While the class implicated 27 different men involved in the case, there is a sense of uncertainty about what the outcome of the information will be. Nomani acknowledged that traditionally journalists report the truth and then leave things to higher authorities. “It’s up

to Pakistani officials to pursue those men and the U.S. to encourage them to,” she said about what the countries should do in the face of the 14 men who have yet to be charged.

Through their work on the Pearl Project, Nomani and Feinman Todd have created a permanent project at Georgetown that investigates the murders of various journalists around the world. During the fall 2010 semester, the class covered the Democratic Republic of Congo, and in spring 2011 they are covering the murders of journalists in Iraq.

Pearl Project student Kira Zazlan said, “I was part of something that I believe is incredibly important: a fight to get the inconvenient truth on record, and the statement that crimes against journalists will not go unnoticed.” ♦

**Q & A with the students of the Pearl Project can be found online at [www.mjrmag.com](http://www.mjrmag.com).**

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## Quarterbacks, *from p. 30*

Last year, Maese’s good stories often involved Clinton Portis, the eccentric Redskins running back. Now, he drove toward a real catastrophe.

“About to turn phone off again.” Another tweet. “Driving through Fukushima, which is as close as I’ll come to the nuke plant. Gonna hold breath for next 60 min.”

After his feature on survivors, Maese returned to Tokyo and for a couple days wrote the Post’s front-page story on conditions in Japan. He wrote for print from 4:30 to 6 a.m., slept some, then wrote in the night for the paper’s website.

The deadline writing at both ends of the day was nothing new for a sportswriter. Maese said, “And we jump from topic to topic, from basketball to football, accumulating new information, digesting it, and trying to write it in a thoughtful, insightful way. Almost every day, it’s a different topic. This time the topic happened to be nuclear disaster.”

He wrote from Chico Harlan’s office/apartment in Tokyo. Harlan was a Post sportswriter covering the Nationals before taking an assignment as the paper’s man in Southeast Asia. “Besides the taxi,” Maese said, “the other scary moments were in Chico’s place. He’s on the 32nd floor. Each aftershock made the building sway. We didn’t get much of that in New Mexico, and I’m wondering, ‘Is the building going to stop swaying?’”

Erin Cox flew home first.

Two days later, a Maese tweet: “At the airport in Tokyo, heading back to DC. I appreciate all kind words and well-wishes. I really hope the situation here gets better soon.”

He had done above-the-fold stories on a once-in-a-lifetime news event. He had shared a Washington Post by-line with his wife. She had made it home safely, and so would he, just in time for a surprise party planned for her 30th birthday. All good for a guy who – what,

five minutes ago? – walked into an Albuquerque newsroom knowing what he wanted. Now he’s back in the Post sports department.

“Looking for features,” he said. And sounding happy. ♦

**Dave Kindred’s latest book, “Morning Miracle,” is an inside-the-newsroom account of two years in the life of The Washington Post. Now a contributing writer at Golf Digest, Kindred is a Red Smith Award winner and member of the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association Hall of Fame.**

# Practicing journalism in a smaller, riskier world

I'm old enough to have handled moveable type — long, rectangular pieces of steel or lead with a letter, character, number, punctuation mark or space forged at one end. In 1976, at 15, I had a part-time job as a letterpress clerk at my hometown weekly. I worked the metal pieces of type into clamped blocks to fit into a letterpress machine. It sat in the basement near the newer, bigger printing presses that inked the newspaper. My old machine was about 5 feet tall and weighed maybe a ton. Each time I pulled down its handle, it inked out onto an envelope the mailing address of a college student or someone else who still wanted to read the town paper even though they lived out of town.

I'm young enough to have never used anything but a computer to file from overseas. Nearly every foreign correspondent by 1988 used a Tandy 200 from Radio Shack. A laptop before anybody coined the term. It had no hard drive and only 24 kilobytes of RAM — just enough to save one story at a time. There was no Internet. The Tandys had a built-in modem with settings for pulse or tone that we used to direct dial a newspaper's mainframe computer. Pulse was about the only setting that worked abroad. You had to pay out of pocket and hope to get reimbursed later for long distance calls, and you had to exactly match the settings of stop bits, character bits and parity each time to connect.

Printing presses inked out text in different written languages for more than 1,000 years and, in more recent centuries, gave rise to the term we still use for news outlets: the press. Computers have been around for about 30 years,

and they have revolutionized the world of news and information. The craft of journalism is the same: attempting to verify information before reporting it, being transparent about what could and could not be verified, and providing context. But many other things are different.

Technology has made the impact of reporting and other communications more immediate. Earlier this year,

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*“A local journalist is  
murdered somewhere  
around the world at least  
once every 11 days.”*

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Egyptian police and militia detained or attacked foreign correspondents from every conceivable outlet. Before he fell, President Hosni Mubarak tried to literally unplug Egypt, shutting down satellite connections, cell phone service and the Internet. Back in the 1960s it took at least a few days for film shot in Vietnam to be flown to New York, developed and broadcasted. Now what may be a fresh report to the public back home also may serve as a real-time intelligence report to combatants.

The public perception of journalists has changed, too. At home Americans have steadily lost respect for journalists over the past quarter century. Little more than a quarter of Americans say news organizations get their facts right, and about 60 percent say they are biased. Overseas actors of all kinds have grown increasingly hostile to journalists. Back in the 1980s in Central

America, journalists routinely wrote TV in large letters in masking tape on their vehicles to help deter attacks. Today few journalists would be so bold to do so in almost any region of the world.

Many journalists in the past also operated with the sense that they were journalists first. But in recent years many journalists have been targeted because of their nationality, ethnicity or religion. Everyone knows the case of then-Wall Street Journal correspondent Daniel Pearl. But Western journalists comprise only a relative handful of all journalists killed anywhere around the world. Atwar Bahjat was an Iraqi correspondent for Al-Jazeera and later Al-Arabiya, based in Doha and Dubai, respectively. In 2006, Bahjat and her TV crew were reporting

at a major Shiite shrine right after it was bombed. Gunmen in a white car arrived on the scene demanding to know the whereabouts of the on-air correspondent. Her remains and those of two crewmembers were found the following day bearing signs of torture.

One's nationality, in particular, can be a two-way street. Stephen Farrell is a British national working for The New York Times. In 2009 he and an Afghan journalist working as his fixer, Sultan Munadi, were captured by Taliban combatants. (Hostage takers, too, have learned how to Google to glean information about their captors.) British authorities told Farrell's family members and New York Times editors that they were weighing options before ordering British special forces to mount a surprise rescue operation. U.K. authorities said they did so to try and save the one British national. U.K. soldiers rescued



**16** journalists killed in 2011  
**861** journalists killed since 1992  
**145** journalists in prison worldwide

statistics from [www.cpj.org](http://www.cpj.org)

British national. U.K. soldiers rescued Farrell but the Afghan journalist Munadi was killed along with an Afghan woman and one British soldier. This and other cases show how increasingly hard it is for journalists to maintain that they are journalists first anymore.

But one thing has stayed the same. Local journalists continue to be, and have long been, the journalists most at risk. Nearly 90 percent of journalists killed around the world are killed within the borders of their own nation. The Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya repeatedly exposed human rights abuses before she was shot to death in the elevator of her apartment building. The Sri Lankan journalist Lasantha Wickramatunga criticized his own government and foretold his own death before eight helmeted men on four motorcycles beat him with iron bars and wooden poles. He died a few hours later.

Consider these two rarely reported facts: A local journalist is murdered somewhere around the world at least once every 11 days; the murderers get away with it in nearly nine out of 10 cases. Journalists tend to be violently attacked in open states or nations that are at least nominally democratic. They include Iraq, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Afghanistan, Nepal, Russia, Mexico, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. Here's another underreported statistic: Government officials of one kind or another have killed nearly as many journalists as have terrorist groups and other armed rebel forces, according

to research by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, from which other data here not otherwise attributed is taken.

In closed societies or nations run by a single political party or another absolute entity, outright censorship and imprisonment of journalists is common. Iran, China, Eritrea and Burma each top the latest list with the most journalists in jail. About half of them are behind bars on anti-state charges like terrorist collaboration, espionage or propagandizing against the state.

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*“But one thing has stayed the same. Local journalists continue to be, and have long been, the journalists most at risk.”*

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Two more trends reflect other new changes in news and information. More online journalists are behind bars today than either print or broadcast journalists, and nearly half of all the journalists languishing in jails around the world are also freelancers.

At the same time, wars remain dangerous beats to cover. Many journalists have been killed or injured on the battlefield. More than 200 journalists and media workers have been killed in Iraq alone since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003. Fire from U.S. military forces

killed 16 journalists among them. That figure also includes two Iraqi photojournalists working for Reuters who were killed in a helicopter attack firing in an area that included armed men. The U.S. military's own video of the attack later surfaced on the anti-secrecy information network WikiLeaks. The video showed the helicopter killing or critically injuring other civilians, including children.

Sexual assaults and rapes of female journalists are another concern recently brought to light. The sustained sexual assault of CBS Chief Foreign Correspondent Lara Logan in Cairo following anti-government protests in Egypt shocked many observers, but some were less surprised.

Women who are veteran journalists came forward one after another detailing their own experiences with groping and more severe sexual assaults by crowds of men in different nations.

Technology has no doubt made the world a smaller place. But it is one at least as dangerous, if not more so, than before. “Why then do we do it?” asked Sri Lanka's Wickramatunga, a husband and a father of three children, shortly before his own murder. “But there is a calling,” he answered, “that is yet above high office, fame, lucre and security. It is the call of conscience.” ♦

**Frank Smyth** is a freelance journalist and the journalist security coordinator of the Committee to Protect Journalists. Smyth's clips are at [www.franksmyth.com](http://www.franksmyth.com). Visit CPJ at [www.cpj.org](http://www.cpj.org).

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# REVOLUTIONS & CITIZEN JOURNALISM



Mark Fonseca Rendeiro, known to his blog viewers as *bicyclemark*, reports on worldwide news, mainly through videos. To view his website and interviews, visit [www.citizenreporter.org](http://www.citizenreporter.org).

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By Mark Fonseca Rendeiro

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CNN's Anderson Cooper standing in Cairo's Tahrir Square during the Egyptian revolution didn't bring me the details of how and why these events were unfolding.

I had @ramyraoof and @Gsquare86, two Egyptian citizen journalists who were in the crowd reporting and participating in the protests every day. No, they didn't claim to be neutral as some journalists in the past may have claimed; instead they openly stated they are participants, and then went on to provide first hand observation, photos, and video on a constant basis.

When the massive earthquake, tsunami and subsequent nuclear emergencies struck Japan in early March, I didn't have to wait for Fox News to figure out what was going on and dispatch a correspondent. I had

up-to-the minute reports via Twitter, Facebook, and personal blogs from Japanese and expat citizen journalists on the ground using whatever Internet and communication tools they could manage.

In such a crisis, the kinds of images and information that the news helicopter or a well funded correspondent dropped into the scene provides can also be very important. Citizen journalists have not replaced or made mainstream media journalists useless. In fact, a glance at where many citizen journalists get their information, or how mainstream media looks to citizen journalists would reveal that these two rely on each other extensively. Political columnists in the United States still call political bloggers for details and a useful perspective into what is happening and what the public is saying. Demonstrators assembling near Bahrain's now-destroyed Pearl Roundabout still hope their video will be passed on and perhaps used by a major media outlet, in an effort to reach as many people as possible. Al-Jazeera

reporters not only appear on television with the typical two-minute on-the-scene reports, they also tweet and blog as the day goes on and events unfold around them.

It is fashionable at this moment in history to talk about social networking and citizen journalism and how it has changed the world. When you phrase it right it sounds like the plot to what will one day be an Oscar-nominated film. The truth is, citizen journalists can't change the world on their own, but long before Ben Ali fled Tunisia, or Sully landed in the Hudson river, citizen journalists were out there with limited funds and limited recognition, reporting in a manner that the mainstream media cannot.

In the early days of citizen journalism most of us were lost in the wilderness. Blogging was seen as some kind of anti-social emo-nerd activity. Nothing but people wanting to sit in their pajamas, criticize everything, and never have to face anyone in person. Trying to present yourself to someone as a journalist while



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handing them a card with your website printed in bold letters brought with it the risk of the awkward “Oh, that’s nice” or “My niece has a blog too.”

Along the way many things changed, all of them leading to a new era for the citizen journalist.

First came the collapse of corporate media conglomerates. By the late 1990’s a handful of media conglomerates owned virtually all of the mainstream media outlets that people looked to for information. Not only were there only a few media companies, often these organizations bought up the competition and made it seem like people had a choice between one channel or another.

As they acquired more outlets, they would carry out a systematic dismantling of competitors by cutting staff and costs. Reporters who did survive were required to “do more with less,” to appear local while covering as many desks as possible. The goal became to consolidate the production and reporting side while still putting out what appears to be a quality and authoritative news report.

This also led to the rise of freelancers and part-timers, as journalists grasped for whatever work they could get and news conglomerates embraced work agreements with as little fiscal commitment as possible. Many journalists hoped that by doing quality freelance work they might prove worthy of the elusive staff position.

Meanwhile the actual content became shallower. The practice of printing press releases rather than original investigative reporting became considered cost effective and acceptable journalism. Taking too long to research and follow a story that might not generate readership was declared too great a financial risk. Channels raced to copy each other, remaining committed only to themes and styles that had already succeeded in the market. Being first became a more important selling point over being detailed and critical.

Then there was the rise of mobile and self-publishing tools, such as blogger.com. While many citizen journalists were discovering blogging software and the benefits for their work, broadband Internet was entering people’s homes. For the first time video and audio would become easier to access and publish. When you add to that the growing prevalence and declining cost of mp3 players, video cameras, and portable devices for browsing the web, it was the beginning of a golden era for anyone who wanted to create content online — journalism

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*“The competition between big and small media producers also means a struggle for each to survive.”*

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students, concerned citizens and critical observers in many parts of the world.

There was also a growing list of online tools such as feed readers that would pull in updates directly from blogs or any news site with an RSS feed. While most of the world to this day doesn’t know what RSS stands for (Really Simple Syndication), many make use of home pages or mobile applications, where instead of going to a website to read information, the information comes to them directly. When it became possible to incorporate audio and video into these feeds, in 2004, the era of the podcast was born.

In the process of putting out text, audio and video content, citizen journalists also made use of new tools like Skype for keeping in touch with their audience as well as for interviewing guests. Collaborative programs with multiple hosts located in different parts of the world emerged, all for free via Skype calls. The option to have comment discussions appear on each post replaced message boards and email list discussions for many communities. It was easier, more organized, simple, new, and less intru-

sive than messages that filled our already overworked inboxes.

New options keep emerging and citizen journalists keep finding ways to make use of them for communication and publishing. For example, while many were using Paypal to buy or auction things online, independent media producers were using Paypal as a way for the audience to donate to them directly. An old idea of listener supported media now applies to an online platform.

Social bookmarking tools for not only gathering information but sharing it with friends and interested parties became a constant in the world of independent online reporting. Unlike the traditional media that only showed the finished product, it was standard practice to not only share what sources citizen journalists were looking at, but audience members could also find and recommend their own sources.

This type of symbiotic relationship where the audience was now part of the content creation was one that only years later the big media corporations would spend time and money trying to replicate. CNN’s and BBC’s initiatives asking viewers to submit their own videos or join the discussion on their websites came years after the pioneering citizen journalists on the web and were still subject to institutional filtering before they would appear anywhere.

When Twitter came along, citizen journalists began using it as part of their workflow. The same had already been true for those who were on Facebook, MySpace, and other social networks such as Orkut. They used these systems to make their work travel further and find new followers. As usual, the mainstream media corporations eventually caught up, and brought with them their long established and vast audiences.

In today’s media landscape, citizen journalists and mass media-employed reporters produce content side by side on a long list of online venues. Big and small, famous and unknown, struggle

to gain the attention of anyone and everyone looking for news and information on the Internet. Unlike in the days of a few media outlets that only granted access to a chosen group, now it is possible for the lone, inexperienced and unknown individual to record or report something that gets rapid and worldwide attention. This attention could of course turn into a larger more sustained reputation as a new legitimate voice or it could be just a flash in the virtual pan.

The competition between big and small media producers also means a struggle for each to survive. For the individual blogger who strives to retain an audience and put out daily or regular content, it could be about generating income through ads or donations. The big media companies face a different scenario. As outlets like TV channels and newspapers receive less and less ad revenue, they seek ways to integrate commercials and ads within their online content. In the meantime they continue the practice of buying up competition wherever possible, making reporters and editors do more for less, and appealing to a new pool of free labor, the individual observer or reporter in the audience who submits content in exchange for the possibility of being featured.

Realizing the power of established bloggers, media organizations have used their prestige and budget to attract and hire them. Renowned Iraq blogger Salaam Pax was later hired by western newspapers as a Middle East analyst. One of the most popular video bloggers, Ze Frank, was hired to do his show for Time Magazine's website. Ana Marie Cox, who founded the legendary political blog Wonkette, would go on to work as a correspondent for Playboy and GQ Magazine. More recently Time Warner purchased The Huffington Post, a leading example of independent citizen journalists working together on one central hub.

All this leads to a blurring of the lines. Today's citizen journalist could be tomorrow's CNN correspondent. There are those who produce content on their own in their community or using their own unique approach without any

institutional support, while others have a staff position at an established, funded, and structured news organization. Of course there are also those who fall in between, or who travel between both worlds and produce content both independently and for a major news outlet.

We are then left with the world we have today and the reporters describing and explaining it to us. Unlike in the past when we would have to wait for a correspondent from some major media organization to arrive at the scene of whatever events are unfolding, nowadays we look to people who live there or who have been focused on that region because of their interest and initiative. ♦

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**Jes Stugelmayer** is a double major in theater and journalism at The University of Montana and will (hopefully) graduate May 2012. Writing is her passion, whether it is through investigative reporting or playwriting. She sees everything around her as possible writing material. After graduation she plans to go wherever the wind takes her.



**Garrett Browne** is a senior in broadcast journalism. Garrett is a lifelong Missoulain and an avid Grizzlies fan. Garrett stepped out of his comfort zone joining the Montana Journalism Review team, as this was his first adventure into a fully produced print project. On top of the story written for the magazine, Garrett was also in charge of re-designing the MJR website. He recently accepted a full-time position as marketing director with a Missoula technology company and will start on that path following graduation.



**Anna Penner-Ray** grew up in Silverthorne, Colo., and moved to Helena at the age of 13. She is a senior studying broadcast production and will graduate in May 2012. Anna just finished a magical semester of working at Disney World, where she hopes to return after graduation.



**Ann Fleischli**, a transplanted Wisconsin lawyer, writes in Missoula, where the mountains and the different cultural experience inspire her. Her interests include writing stories that combine law and environmental issues. She will graduate from The University of Montana in May 2012 with a master's degree in print journalism.



**Joe Pavlish** is a senior studying print journalism at The University of Montana. He is currently a news editor for the Montana Kaimin, UM's school newspaper. His feature writing has appeared on multiple websites and in the Kaimin. After graduation he will spend a year overseas studying and putting off his future.



## 'Kill switches' threaten internet, foreign reporting



The global expansion of high-speed Internet and the decreasing cost of technologies that allow citizens to access it have opened up a new world of possibilities for communications, news, advocacy and social change. Internet 2.0 made it easier for opponents of the often tyrannical regimes in countries like Egypt, Libya and Iran to come together, gather information and make a stand. Social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, as well as documents from WikiLeaks, helped provide fuel for revolts throughout the Middle East. Almost instantaneously, information about the protests in Cairo, including firsthand accounts, was blasted over the Internet.

But governments and leaders wishing to stay in control quickly stomped their fire out. In a very short amount of time, the world watched as protests in Egypt led to the government shutting down all Internet service, even though this had the effect of shutting down banks and other vital commerce and industry. The Libyan government was able to do much the same thing.

The week-long Internet blackout in Egypt has raised questions about a new age of censorship: Governments no longer need to control the words their people use, so long as they can prevent them from getting the words out.

Google quickly developed one remedy: Speak-To-Tweet. The service involves

protesters — or anyone else — calling a phone number to create a tweet, which would then be sent out for the world to see and hear. Similar services emerged. Although a great innovation, it was only a Band-Aid for communications coming out of the country.

Experts point to Egypt's government-owned telecommunications as a choke point for Internet traffic, making it easier to switch off. Libya and Syria's governments also own the telecommunication companies in their countries. In much the same way that these countries can control the flow of oil through pipelines, they have almost the same amount of control over the Internet through cables that run in and out of the country.

China's systematic Internet control, ratcheted up even more in response to perceived threats of political dissent prompted by events in North Africa and the Middle East, is another case in point. Not only are Chinese citizens blocked from many sites and their Internet activities spied on by the government, but foreign correspondents in China are being increasingly harassed and restricted in their ability to gather news and transmit it to their home offices (see article by Kathy McLaughlin).

Could the same thing be done in the United States? Twice, Sen. Joseph Lieberman, I-Conn., has introduced legislation that gives the U.S. government, and more specifically the president, the ability

to access an Internet "kill switch." The switch would allow the U.S. government to cut all Internet services in the country during a "cyber emergency." The proposal has been shot down several times but continues to be a topic of debate.

Journalism today obviously depends on the free flow of communication. Foreign journalists depend on the Internet to share stories and recount events, and mainstream journalists are relying more and more on citizen journalists' reports on Internet-dependent social media. When journalists lose the ability to communicate effectively through the Internet, audiences lose the ability to receive news that is vital to them.

Foreign correspondents already face many technological and physical obstacles. Camera crews become targets. CNN's Anderson Cooper and his crew were assaulted in broad daylight; CBS News's Lara Logan was dragged away from her crew in Tahrir Square and sexually assaulted; four New York Times reporters and photographers, two Agence France-Presse journalists and three Al-Jazeera journalists were captured in Libya and treated harshly.

But the ability to tell those and all stories of global importance is imperiled if autocratic governments can so easily pull the switch. As surely as the brave protesters in Egypt and Libya died for their cause, the promise of the Internet will come to an end. ♦

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