Finding Untold Stories:

Afghan Voices
What is Peace Journalism?

Peace Journalism is when editors and reporters make choices that improve the prospects for peace. These choices, including how to frame stories and carefully choosing which words are used, create an atmosphere conducive to peace and supportive of peace initiatives and peacemakers, without compromising the basic principles of good journalism. (Adapted from Lynch/McGoldrick, Peace Journalism). Peace Journalism gives peacemakers a voice while making peace initiatives and non-violent solutions more visible and viable.

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Rachel Kohn is completing her Masters in International Media at American University. Before moving to the DC area, she ran her own small business as a public relations consultant and freelance writer in Jerusalem, Israel. She graduated from Brandeis University in 2007 with Bachelors degrees in Political Science and Environmental Studies, two of her passions. While attending a religious studies program in the West Bank town of Elkana from 2002-2003, she volunteered as a foreign correspondent for her hometown paper, reporting on the Second Intifada and life in the shadow of the U.S.-Iraq War.

Recording untold stories in Afghanistan as part of Afghan Voices project.

By Rachel Kohn

Afghan journalist Emal Haidary, 31, grew up in a family imbued with a great value for education. His mother was a teacher, his father worked at Ministry of Education, and his siblings joined the ranks of pilots, doctors, and engineers. Growing up in Kabul during the years of civil war and Taliban rule, Emal says, “the only thing that gave us hope to live on was our education.”

Emal studied law and politics and says he could have entered those fields if he wanted to. Instead, in 2001 he began working informally for foreign media outlets. He describes Afghans then as hostages to the Taliban and world opinion, unable to react and in need of a voice. “From the very beginning, I wanted to change the image of my country that was unfortunately introduced to the world after 9/11,” he says.

Finding Untold Stories

In 2010, Emal co-created Afghan Voices, a six-month “peace journalism” training program for teens and people in their early 20s from different ethnic backgrounds and provinces across Afghanistan. In addition to learning to tell stories through pictures, video and text—the focus is mainly on video because Afghanistan’s media is mostly oral—the program includes seminars on conflict analysis and transformation to update the concepts of balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting. Trainees produce content that goes beyond what Emal describes as the common narrative of Afghanistan portrayed in the world media: a country newsworthy for violence only.

“For us in Afghanistan, a country in war, peace journalism is like swimming against the current. We try to do less harm in inciting violence and conflict and do more good in providing information. Through this we try to make sure right is distinguished from wrong, truth from falsehood, real from imaginary, the constructive from wrong, truth from falsehood, the moral from immoral,” he says.

“Rather than running from bombing to bombing, writing and talking almost entirely about sadness and destruction, peace journalism tells about the struggles and triumphs of a place. It tells of history, hope and happiness. That is why we started to pursue ‘peace journalism’ in Afghanistan.”

Afghans are best equipped to tell their own stories, says Emil, and the program is an opportunity for people from different ethnic backgrounds and different parts of the country to interact meaningfully while learning together. After a period of basic training at the Kabul office, participants
Finding Afghan voices

By Jake Lynch

It felt, as baseball legend Yogi Berra once famously remarked, ‘like déjà vu all over again’. Here was the London Sunday Times, reporting that Britain’s participation in a military strike on Syria was assured – all that remained to be finalised was the military hardware that would be involved.

How did the paper claim to know this? Its front-page lead story was attributed to ‘a Downing Street source’, one of those euphemisms that seems to imply involvement by the Prime Minister himself, but almost certainly indicates a briefing from a Special Adviser. Further confirmation was supplied by other old favourites: ‘a US military source’ and ‘Washington sources’.

It all had the most uncanny ring of familiarity. A piece of video I have used in peace journalism classes and training courses all over the world is from the BBC’s main television news bulletin, one evening in December 2002. Claims about Saddam Hussein’s ‘weapons of mass destruction’ are being transmuted, before the viewer’s very eyes, into apparent facts – by the use of unnamed ‘officials’ and ‘diplomats’.

There’s something fundamentally misleading in this style of reporting. As Anabel McGilldrid and I explain in our book, Peace Journalism, the sources are modelled as passive – custodians of privileged knowledge about something that already exists, which sufficiently well-placed journalists can chisel out, as it were, from the newsface – and present to readers and audiences.

A much more persuasive way of regarding what is underway in such cases is that the sources are active, trying to bring about a state of affairs that is as yet unformed – the transformation, in both cases, of the climate of public opinion and expectations, and the delimitation of possible dissent. It is, Gaye Tuchman declares in a famous piece of research on newsrooms procedures, the willingness of journalists to ‘mistake reporting conventions for facticity [that] renders reality vulnerable to manipulation’.

Perhaps we should have expected the push for military action to come when it did. The edition of the Sunday Times that led on the ‘Syria strikes’ story came at the end of the silly season, when business-as-usual goes on holiday leaving journalists in the UK to fill pages and programme slots with skateboarding ducks and men who impersonate trombones. As the weekend news cycle passed on the initiative to Monday morning, however, a few more experienced hacks started to filter back into the office and mutter that this time-honoured phrase, ‘hang on a minute’.

The UK’s present Coalition government has never had the unequivocal support from its own side – whether in parliament or the press – for joining in US-led military adventures that its Blair-led predecessor sometimes enjoyed. The Daily Telegraph, seen as the ruling Conservative Party’s ‘house journal’, led its Tuesday edition with an opinion poll showing the British public decidedly cool on military action in Syria. Words like ‘alleged’ and ‘suspected’ began to reappear in BBC News bulletins in connection with the chemical attack widely blamed, by politicians in Washington and supportive capitals, on the Assad ‘regime’.

The House of Commons Speaker reminded everyone of the Prime Minister’s promise to give MPs a chance to vote on such a move – clearly, David Cameron was not going to get away with hiding behind another of Berra’s storied bons mots: ‘I really didn’t say everything I said’.

In the event, the debate and votes were equivocal, but one principle emerged loud and clear: as Opposition leader Ed Miliband – ‘the responsibility with the chemical attack widely blamed, by politicians in Washington and supportive capitals, on the Assad ‘regime’.

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The fate of Colonel Gaddafi, shot in a Libyan ditch with a rocket-propelled grenade, put an end to that. The US and its allies, including the UK government, which through its Foreign and Commonwealth Office, agreed to fund a London-based agency, the Transnational Crisis Project, to run a Syrian Media Development Initiative.

The twin aims of the program are to foster ‘The development and professionalisation of the Syrian media landscape’ and (thereby) to contribute to ‘The reduction of inter-community violence and the transformation of the Syrian conflict’. It TCP invited a 15-week intensive training course in London to its program team, which gave rise to some interesting thoughts and discussions.

The web-based media whose journalists largely make up the initiative’s target participants are, as expected at the inception of the program, now reporting in a post-Assad transition, but in a situation where most of them, at least, are openly aligned with some or other element of the opposition forces.

What, then, does peace journalism mean for them? Perhaps, I spent the course suggesting, the aims should be modest. One problem in the reporting of the conflict has been the over-simplified model of a ‘sectarian divide’ – ascribed by President Obama himself as he attempted to manage perceptions of what military action could achieve. Avoiding such easy stereotypes, and perhaps enquiring more deeply into people’s motives for their positions in the conflict, could only help.

The case of personifying the Syrian conflict in the person of President Bashar al-Assad, the study referenced earlier concludes that this personification – the use of terms like ‘Assad’s chemicals’, ‘Assad’s army’, ‘his military’ – increased more than ten-fold in the two week period before the chemical attacks compared to the same period after the attacks. (See study details in sidebar).

One question unanswered in this study is whether these were terms that originated in quotes by administration spokespeople, or whether journalists themselves generated these phrases.

The personification of a perceived threat is as old as war itself. Alexander Nickolaev from Drexel University writes in “Personification in the First Gulf War” that substitution “is a notion that journalists make one person the symbol of the conflict – whether openly or implicitly – are, at best, mixed. Both the public and the news media are prone to personify the enemy. And this is not a new phenomenon.”

One example of personification was Saddam Hussein, who upon invading Kuwait in 1990 was a familiar character. As the US marched towards a seemingly inevitable (but now postponed) involvement in Syria, the media increasingly used words that personified the alleged threat posed by Syria, according to a recent study. This means that after the chemical attack on Aug. 21 more stories were published that substituted “Assad’s army” or “Assad’s chemicals” for the terms “Syrian army” or “Syrian chemicals”.

In other words, media framed the possible war increasingly as being the U.S. vs. Bashar Al-Assad himself. Why? Many would argue that personification makes it easier to sell to conflict to the public. My colleague Professor John Lofflin prefers the term personalization to describe this notion that journalists make one person the symbol of the war. Whatever it’s called, the danger in this approach is the misconceptions that are created, along with the mistaken notion that eliminating one bad guy would easily end the war. Certainly, that didn’t happen with Saddam Hussein or with Osama bin Laden.

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**MAP hosts PJ projects, discussions in Beirut**

By MAP

The Media Association for Peace (MAP), hosted a two week peace journalism project in Beirut, Lebanon in May featuring two seminars, a training for professional journalists, and a public forum.

The first seminar was held at UNESCO Palace from May 19 -21 was advanced, as it approached media students and young journalists that have previously participated in Peace Journalism Workshops in 2011 and 2012 who were already a part of the MAP team, according to MAP Founder & President, Vanessa Bassil.

This seminar was taught by Steven Youngblood of the Center for Global Peace Journalism and Bassil, who taught a session on evaluating peace in Lebanese media. The hands-on portion of the seminar was coverage of Syrian refugees in Beirut that "served as practice on Peace Journalism principles that digress from prejudices and stereotypes," said Bassil.

One participant, Aisha Habli, said that the Syrian refugee reporting project was especially useful. "I loved going out to the streets of Beirut and interviewing misplaced and refugee Syrians. The information I gathered was much more than the sound bites and a proof of how we as peace journalists can reduce the sectorianism by putting their hands together to work out something constructive for their country can also be considered a "scope", in journalistic terms. Basically, the conference experiment proved that peace journalism is not about utopian news, but rather about constructive action plans and promising initiatives that can really change something about the way we live."

Manl Nasr agreed. She said, "The most valuable part in the seminar was the common ground found between two different Lebanese political parties that never sat together to discuss any common projects for better Lebanon. As peace journalists, we managed to gather them in a press conference and end up with new common projects related to women's rights and better education. The cooperation shown by these two parties in the end of the conference was a great achievement and a proof of how we as peace journalists can reduce the sectorianism by seeking common ground."

The project, co-organized by Master-Peace Club-Lebanon, concluded with a Peace Journalism public discussion at AltCity, Beirut. The public discussion was attended by journalists and activists in civil society, in addition to journalism and media students from several universities in Lebanon who participated in the two seminars.

The seminar participants displayed their articles in front of the audience at AltCity, public discussion, highlighting that both representatives of the political parties agree on giving women their rights in Lebanon, as well as their agreement on many economic and social issues like road regulations, free education, social security, and civil law for personal status. The students also mentioned Samya's initiative in inviting Nehme to a panel discussion between the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and the Lebanese Phalangist Party aiming to find solutions to "common" issues and concerns. The peace journalists announced that they will personally follow up in achieving this discussion and covering it, in addition to publishing the media material they produced in the seminars in an exclusive blog to the Lebanese Peace Journalists.

Also at the public discussion, Youngblood shared with the audience his first experience in teaching peace journalism in Lebanon after his visits to Uganda, Turkey, Jordan, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kyrgyzstan, noting the fruitful interaction between him and the peace journalism students and journalists in which he visited at their media institutions. When discussing the context of the application of peace journalism, Youngblood addressed social media tools and its important role in spreading a peace culture, as well as its risks.

Youngblood also answered the audiences' questions at the public discussion and listened to their comments and opinions on all discussed matters.

At the end of the discussion, highlighting the end of the peace journalism project, Youngblood and Bassil distributed certificates to the participants of the seminars, encouraging them to spread peace in Lebanon through their journalistic work.

**the PEACE JOURNALIST**

**Lebanon from Pg 8**

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In mid 2006, being a post-grad student of the Escuela de Cultura de Pau (Cultural School of Peace), at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, I decided to write my thesis on the violence in Mexico.

It was a very painful job tacking together the many tissures of horror that are entertained in my country, but, above all, it was an illuminating labour in my profession as a journalist, because, whilst studying digital newspapers, governmental reports and reports on national and international civil organizations, I came to realize that violence also has semantics and a syntax. It is precisely with an ‘arsenal of images and words’ that we get the ‘portrait of the world’ through mass media, and this ‘portrayal’, this manipulated photograph, is a global constant.

Creating the truth: the business of mediatised war

A well-accepted cliché in the global newsrooms is that ‘good news is bad news’. In my experience, of over fifteen years in several international media, in reality, ‘good news’ seldom becomes news at all. The media presents us with a succession of images and texts about the collapsed world: conflicted, blood-stained, in constant revolts that seem to arise from one

But, do we really live in the frenzied world that mass media presents us with today? The answer is no. But it is a nuance answer. Without doubt, we live in a complex world, however, the media (specifically the Mainstream-mass media), are particularly interested in not flexing their message and presenting us with a fragmentation of reality, where hate seems to be the constant that defines us.

In order to understand this ‘mediatised war discourse’, it is necessary, in the first instance, to know who the ‘mass media’ are, through whom this arsenal of words and images is delivered to us. This ‘mass media’, as Amy Goodman says, “make the war drums sound”.

Currently, five press agencies distribute the 96% of global news: Reuters (England), Associated Press (US), France Press (France), EFE (Spain) and DPA (Germany). Yes: for every one hundred informative words that we read, ninety come from these official agencies, and, increasingly so, from the Chinese news agency, Xinhua. Interestingly, of these six States that control the information, four of them belong to the Permanent Security Council of the United Nations.

In the private sector, the outlook is no different: the large information monopolies – print, electronic and cyber – are in the hands of no more than ten private capitals, whose power is even greater than that enjoyed by the States themselves; according to a Forbes interview, four hundred of the richest men on the planet made their fortunes through the telecommunications and culture motivated by the – false – idea that ‘violence sells’, or, in other words: that this is what the readers, receptors and media users want and expect from the news.

It is not only economic factors that weigh down the semantics related to ‘entertainment’ (including entertainment news business) and software.

An emblematic example of how, and how much the States’ and the major information media’s interests are related, is the American company, General Electric (GE), which is one of the leading producers and exporters of weapons, and, at the same time, owner of National Broadcasting Company (NBC), one of the most important American television channels which also has a global reach. But this is far from be the only case: the ‘CNN model’, which from its tendentious - and successful - coverage of the First Golf War (1991), is a model which converts war into spectacle; one which is infinitely imitated to date, not only by other television channels around the globe, but also by the ‘short and de-contextualized’ formats of daily global online sites.

Therefore, with this network of ‘dangerous relations’ between the media and governments, it’s not surprising that the image of the South, and, at times, the North, would, today, be a black and white photograph: violence, catastrophe, poverty, hunger, war and ignorance. The wars which are ‘interesting’ are magnified, whilst other conflicts – armed or not – are completely ignored.

Yes, peace journalism requires more work in terms of space and time, because this vision puts a lot of emphasis on context: in the ‘before and after’ and in the deep motivations and consequences behind, because, at the end of the day, let’s remember here that: violence is an event, conflict is always an opportunity, and peace is a process. In summary, the peace journalists had a distinct rhythm: not only they speak out differently, but also, and above all, they show the pros and cons of peace directly to the conflict.

A Peace Correspondent as the antithesis of the War Correspondent

I began this article explaining the way in which a thesis about the violence in Mexico illuminated my journalistic work.

Today, more than ever, and six years on, my country has fully entered into the maelstrom of war, not only into one that is particularly real and destructive, but also into one in which the media insist on mythologizing with that ‘arsenal of images and words’ stained red.

At one time, Ryszard Kapuscinski, probably the greatest ‘war reporter’ of our time, said in an interview that the first thing he looked for upon arrival in a country steeped in violence was “the place where hope is reborn”.

This same search for hope is what we proposed in 2009 with the creation of a means of digital communication called “Corresponsal de Paz” (Correspondent of Peace) (www.corresponsaldepaz.org) in clear opposition of the ‘war correspondents’. This is, evidently, a non-profit organization outside of the economic fabric described above, since we have the premise that a new informative model needs to be put into a new financial model. Since its creation, this website has proved that a more human and more purposeful world with more solidarity exists: a world that is at odds with the ‘distorted portrait’ of the reality that major media sends us.

Our self-imposed work now consists not just in improving the focus of this ‘photo of the world’, but also, and in addition, in empowering the peaceful initiatives that arise for every conflict and every war. At Corresponsal de Paz, we are certain that the absence of information about the resolution of conflicts, in turn, stimulates the absence of peace.

The Spanish author and educator, Rogelio Blanco Martínez, once stated that “the greatest crime against man is to kill his hope”. For this reason, this informative proposal of ‘the media vision of a positive world’, created with a grant from the Swiss-Catalan NGO I-With (www.iwith.org), is determined to restore hope in the human being, and in our creative potential above our undoubted destructive facet.
PJ debunks myths in The Bronx, NY

By Peace Aisogun

In the modern world, sensationalized media appears to be the fastest way to get a message across. By utilizing inflammatory language and stirring people’s emotions beyond the point of reason into irrationality, the media creates an under informed and unbalanced public. The sensationalism feeds into inaccurate stereotypes which only adds to the fear and hype of today’s culture.

Youngblood believes heavily in accurate reporting and to call the issue by name. "Words matter. From the time of our youth, every child is taught the difference between a good word and a bad word. The child then grows into an adult who understands that words have power," Youngblood said. This belief, Peace Journalism is not journalism to intentionally feed into the established narratives. "By the time the week-long class concluded, the students were convinced that the truth is worth the effort. At the end of the Peace Journalism course, students agreed that telling the truth is far more original than relying on established narratives. Instead of spreading inflammatory language, they now choose to allow themselves to establish an atmosphere where peace is welcomed.

Youngblood opened the first day of the boot camp by defining Peace Journalism as "when reporters and journalist make choices in their words, attitudes and so forth to allow peace to enter the atmosphere." Contrary to belief, Peace Journalism is not journalism with an agenda. It is not an advocacy for peace. However, it does not intentionally feed into the established media narratives that are dominating the media at this present moment. Whether it is racial, social, economical or regional, good writers understand that word choice is everything. Youngblood pushes the students to ask themselves how they chose to report an issue and what kind of response do they want to elicit from the word to the media. The selected words will affect them. Take for instance the word "massacre". Youngblood urged the class to define when a murder case qualified as a massacre. He then transitions from the word to the motive behind the word. In what kind of situation is it appropriate to use words as heavy as massacre? He inspired the class to swim upstream by thinking analytically. The job of a reporter or journalist is not to sensationalize a story or incite fear in the public. The job of journalist is to present the facts. By steering the class away from propaganda and vague attacks on a specific group, the students were able to cut through the excess layers and dig deep into what it means to be a good reporter.

After the initial reports were done, students compiled them into a peace-themed program on BronxNet.

Defining PJ

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By Betty Mujungu

We choose Peace, Justice and transformation as we do our work as journalists. In Uganda radio is one of the strongest mediums of communication because it is cheap to maintain, affordable, has wider coverage and appeals to both literate and illiterate. This therefore means that our well packaged peace sensitive programs/news on radio play a greater role in conflict transformation.

Rwenzori region of western Uganda has had a series of wars and conflicts ranging from rebel attacks, cultural, tribal, land conflicts etc for more than 30 years. These conflicts up to date still exist although the government works hard to keep law and order in the communities which keeps the people calm and silent.

The media as always said 4th arm of the government is one of the actors that best serve to de-escalate some of the conflicts especially those that threaten to tear communities apart in this region.

In the conflict sensitive programming we look beyond the conflict itself and do not focus on just writing a report like other reporters and programmers,

Betty Mujungu is a broadcaster of Ugandan descent. She works with 101FM Voice Of Toro as reporter/anchor and radio show host.

The Peace Journalist

October 2013

Vol 2, No 2

By James Okolie-Osemene

The emergence of the Boko Haram Islamist sect in Nigeria’s political landscape marked a watershed in the country’s security sector. The faceless and systemic sophistication of the group continues to challenge the security agencies.

What does Boko Haram mean?

It is pertinent to Nigerian media to interrogate the real meaning of Boko Haram, and go beyond describing the group as being against western education and demanding for full implementation of Sharia law. This oversimplification is also the assumption of western media, especially those in the global north. The Islamic sect Jama’atu Ahlisunnah Waljihad, globally known as Boko Haram, is a name which remains unacceptable to the group. It is worthy of note that the word ‘boko’ is often mistaken as a book.

In his work on the etymology of Hausa Boko, Newman (2013:11) avers that ‘boko’ is a native Hausa word, originally meaning sham, fraud, unimportance, and that it has nothing to do with ‘book’. In essence, Boko Haram is a violent non-state armed group which does not have a specific grievance. It wants a radical structural change at the detriment of Nigerian state and intergroup relations.

It is also the responsibility of journalists to stop portraying Nigeria’s Northern region as hotspots of insurgency or corridors of armed conflicts which has grave political, socio-economic and global implications for Nigeria. Working towards de-radicalisation of insurgents by enlightening them that life is sacred and should not be wasted through their broadcasts and press reports would be a landmark achievement of media practice in Nigeria.

For instance, in their study on ‘Broadcast Media and Teaching-Learning Process’, Olomun and Fasasi (2009:213) examined how airtime is allocated to a subject or topic to be taught by a teacher, as regard to instructional programme on radio or television. Similarly, media organisations need to allocate more time to issues of peace and security, gender-mainstreaming with emphasis on conflict prevention, conflict management, and conflict transformation especially now that the country desires sustainable peace and ways of

Biased reporting exacerbates Nigerian conflict

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It is obvious that Boko Haram means different things to different people. To some, it is anti-western and anti-government, while some Nigerians see the group as mirror effect of decades of deprivation, economic marginalisation or exclusion, while to others it remains a group that upholds the principles of Islam.

Involvement of Journalists/Media

The Boko Haram insurgency has impacted Nigeria for over a decade and remains the major threat to Nigeria’s existence. Nigeria, being a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nation, the sect has made the north synonymous with a torrent of battles and damaged households and properties. The people are living in fear and to experience tragedy and loss.

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Media ethics, PJ take stage at Park U.

A symposium, “Doing the Wrong Thing: The Struggle for an Ethical Media,” was held on Friday, September 27 at Park University in Parkville, Missouri. USA.

The event included three speakers. John Lofflin, a Park University professor, spoke on the topic of objectivity and how it is not the same thing as being fair. Lewis Diuguid, a columnist for the Kansas City Star, discussed the recent Trayvon Martin case that was heavily covered in the media. Steven Youngblood, director of the Center for Global Peace Journalism, then finished off the symposium by speaking about media narratives and stereotypes.

Professor Lofflin started off the discussion by stating, “Objectivity is not biblical, it is not in the constitution and it is not in the bill of rights.” He elaborated on this statement by explaining that pure objectivity is not possible in a journalistic setting, solely because everyone holds certain biases and stereotypes that they cannot leave behind. Lofflin argued that stereotypes are not all necessarily negative, because they help us to categorize and understand our world. Lofflin also stated, “Objectivity is not the same as being fair.” He also observed that there is more to objectivity than just interviewing both sides—that this can be, in fact, a convenient excuse for not behaving ethically.

To prove his point about the impossibility of objectivity, Lofflin asked the audience to write down a stereotype we had about another race or an unpleasant event we have encountered with another race. Doing this proved the point that there are many different stereotypes about all races and genders, and that many of these misperceptions are media-generated.

Stereotypes, positive or negative, are a construct through which we see the world, and through which media report the world. These stereotypes are reinforced by the media whenever a story is run. Because we have these stereotypes in our minds, the audience uses them as a frame of reference, a tool, to decide the truth.

Lofflin then proposed what he called a radical idea—that all journalists be Lewis Diuguid, Kansas City Star come columnists in order to completely eliminate the illusion of objectivity. Crystal Hill, Park student and attendee, agrees with Lofflin’s idea about all journalists becoming columnists. She said, “Being up-front and acknowledging your own writing is the only way to be truthful.”

Lofflin and his symposium colleagues aren’t the only ones discussing objectivity. The New York Times published a story titled “The War on Objectivity” analyzing the attacks on Nate Silver. Silver is a sports statistician turned political statistician. The article says that some members of society, if things don’t go their way, feel that someone must be “cooking the books”, which, for his critics, is the only explanation of how Silver so accurately hand-capped the last election. The article states that “if it isn’t what the right wants to hear, the messenger (Silver) is subjected to a smear campaign.”

Rosie Jasinski, symposium attendee, said, “Diuguid really helped to solidify and clarify what I know to be objectivity in the media. I think what he said about stereotypes is dead on. Schemas are how we all function.”

The second speaker was Lewis Diuguid, a columnist from the Kansas City Star. He commented on the history of journalism’s mistreatment of African-Americans. He said it has been slanted towards white males, and he observed that past coverage of African Americans was sometimes “monstrous.” He also discussed how the civil rights movement changed the media narrative for African-Americans.

Diuguid elaborated on the challenges that persons of color face in the media, such as the Trayvon Martin case. He commented that it seemed that Trayvon Martin himself was the one on trial, not George Zimmerman, simply because Martin was an adolescent black male. The media could have done a much better job covering this case if they did not have a “white male, middle-class” slant. Diuguid boldly stated that the American media can be “the stenographer for the Power Elite,” because newsrooms are, or once were, predominantly white middle-class males. He referenced the unfortunate murders of Emmett Till and Oscar Grant, and claimed that these kinds of stories get under or mis-reported because the media lack the diversity to be able to see stories in a different perspective.

Symposium attendee James Maurer agreed. He said, “Diuguid’s presentation showed the importance of a diverse news crew and media.” Youngblood finished off the symposium by addressing the issue of stereotypes in the media. He asked the audience about the origin of stereotypes. He said stereotypes come from the media and are reinforced when stories are covered. Media narratives, related events that reinforce common notions about a group, underlie audience stereotypes and negativity towards a given group. Each time a story is presented about that group, the stereotype is revisited and people continue to have negative thoughts towards the group. He noted that the narratives of the Bronx and Lebanon are that they are only violent, dangerous places. Youngblood also showed the audience examples of negative narratives about Latinos. He said these negative narratives only tell part a much more complex story.

The media must break from these narratives if we wish to eliminate stereotypes, and the only way to do that is to practice peace journalism, Youngblood said. When reporting a story, we have to look at the consequences of how we frame the story. In order to be an ethical reporter, Youngblood said we must step away from one perspective stories and instead report from many angles.

One attendee sees the value in the peace journalism approach. Sarah Stout asked, “Are we going to write about these issues or take action because actions speak louder than words? Peace journalists take action through their words by staying true to ethics and objectivity.”

Summarizing the event, attendee Min- dy McQuerry said, “The best thing we can do is realize and understand that people have different minds and instead of just saying they are wrong we need to get both sides of the story.”

Ethics symposium from Pg 16

This fits hand in hand with what Lofflin said about objectivity not being the same thing as fairness. Silver was perceived as not being objective because he told Republicans what they didn’t want to hear. Because people have stereotypes, and these stereotypes are fed by notions of the lack of objectivity, the only way to get rid of them, and to center the ethical debate instead on fairness, is to eliminate the idea of objectivity completely. For Lofflin, this would mean making all reporters columnists.

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Nigeria

from Pg 15

containing insurgency. Invitations should be extended to peace scholars and practitioners to present crucial issues in peace education and early warning systems. Articles on ways of mitigating peace and security challenges should also be requested from scholars for knowledge sharing. Again, through such programmes, media organisations are expected to inform government on the need to appoint those experts trained as conflicts managers to head ministries and various committees that address intergroup relations and intercommunal conflicts.

De-radicalising insurgents demands that media practitioners become peace education oriented media rather than functioning only as channels of information dissemination especially breaking the news. The focus in this context which is critical to intergroup relations, should be to mainstream peace culture into the various daily programmes with emphasis on tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

“Doing the wrong thing”, a media ethics symposium, drew a full house at Park University on Sept. 27.
**Peace criminal justice**

**From Pg 18**

Fighting ‘wars’

Fighting the war on crime changed concepts of intervention and treatment to a justice model. Thus, if you do the crime, you do the time or pain should be inflicted on criminals because they deserve it. Fixed sentences and the mandatory ones which followed in the war on crime caused a prison population to quadruple between the mid 1980s and 2000. Politicians ran for office on the platform of getting tough on crime. The public who became fixated with crime stories easily accepted the idea of incarceration without rehabilitation. The language of the politicians and press convinced the public to accept the changes without regard to the consequences of changed language and concepts.

Concern about drug usage became a dominant topic in the 1980s especially with the media and politicians portrayal of crack usage including a false portrayal of crack babies. In 1986 a basketball hero named Len Bias signed a contract with the Boston Celtics and then apparently partied hard with his friends. On the evening of June 18th, he said he didn’t feel well and lay down; he never got up. The Maryland medical examiner concluded that cocaine had killed him. The real war on drugs began. Coincidentally in 1986 with the American population 84% white and 13% black, more black than white people where in prison, and the dominance of African Americans in prisons continued.

By the time sentencing had changed and the determinate sentencing had been implemented, 1987, nationally and in the early 1990s, the Boston Celtics and then apparently partied hard with his friends. On the evening of June 18th, he said he didn’t feel well and lay down; he never got up. The Maryland medical examiner concluded that cocaine had killed him. The real war on drugs began. Coincidentally in 1986 with the American population 84% white and 13% black, more black than white people where in prison, and the dominance of African Americans in prisons continued.

By the time sentencing had changed and the determinate sentencing had been implemented, 1987, nationally and in some jurisdictions, the supposed crack epidemic had subsided, but the war on drugs continued with draconian legislation. The new federal sentencing guideline rated an ounce of crack cocaine 100 times more severely than powdered cocaine. Prison populations exploded and the fighting of crime and drugs and new terrorism continues.

Let’s use peace journalism principles to solve crime problems instead of borrowing the sensational language of traditional media to fight ineffectual wars on drugs and terrorism.

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**Evaluating crime coverage**

Peace journalism can be used as a way to evaluate and moderate coverage of any conflict or violent incident—everything from daily crime to mass shootings. As advocates of peace journalism, we can scrutinize media crime coverage using these criteria:

1. Sensational reporting: Inflammatory language (masacør, slaughter, blood bath) used? Victimizing language (defenseless, pathetic, helpless) used?
2. Summary judgment: Is the arrested suspect tried, convicted, and executed by the press?
3. Political grandstanding: Do media allow politicians to use their media platforms to score political points using this incident?
4. Historical hysteria: Do media dredge up past incidents to dramatize and sensationalize their coverage of current sentences which had been prevalent in the 20th century were replaced with determinate or fixed sentences. Senator Edward F. Kennedy tried to pass legislation for seven years and finally succeeded with the passage of the comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984. This act established a Sentencing Commission charged with creating a fixed, determinate justice system for the federal government. Some states accepted federal money and changed to a fixed sentencing system, which required prisoners to serve 85% of the given sentence.

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**Peace ideas useful for criminal justice**

By Carol Getty

Language impacts how we think and is used to effect change. In this article I propose changing some of the language used in criminal justice to more peaceful versions (like those employed by peace journalists) and hopefully influence policies associated with the war ideas which have been prevalent for four decades. If policy makers talk about fighting wars on crime and drugs rather than solving problems connected to criminals and criminal activities, we can end up incarcerating more people per capita than any other country in the world. And yes, we now have the world record and most recent reports indicate crime is increasing; thus, the costs of our expensive criminal justice system will continue to increase hypermally and monetarily.

Peace Journalism is about being aware of language used in reporting and sometimes changing it by making choices that improve the prospects for peace without compromising the basic principles of journalism. While society and I must realize that the media is a business and also that journalists, editors, media owners and decision makers talk about fighting wars on crime is increasing; thus, the costs of our expensive criminal justice system will continue to increase hypermally and monetarily.

Carol P. Getty, PhD is an emeritus professor of criminal justice, Park University. She taught at Park University for 14 years after completing two six year Presidential appointed terms as a Commissioner and/or Chair of the US Parole Commission. She was also a Gubernatorial appointed member of the five member Arizona Board of Pardons and Paroles.
In Nepal, seeking justice for 35 colleagues

By Siromani Dhungana

Nepal’s incumbent Prime Minister Dr Baburam Bhattarai publicly expressed his anger over the arrests of individuals (cadres of his own party) allegedly involved in the 2004 murder of journalist Dekendra Thapa in Dailekh, in mid-western Nepal. But, journalists continued their peaceful protest and succeeded to formally bring the case at Dailekh District Court.

And the success has made Nepalese journalists optimistic that they can ensure justice to 35 journalists who have been killed since the conflict began in 1996.

On January 4, District Police Office Dailekh had decided to prosecute suspects allegedly involved in the 2004 abduction and subsequent killing of Dailekh-based journalist Dekendra Thapa after eight years of heinous crime. Thapa was a reporter for Radio Nepal -- a state-owned national radio in Nepal -- in Dailekh when he was abducted on June 4, 2004. He was found murdered on August 30, 2004. According to police source, the accused have admitted to burying journalists Thapa alive after beating mercilessly.

Evidence pertaining to Thapa’s murder was collected after the Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ) and National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) exhumed the journalist’s body in the presence of a team of forensic experts in 2008.

Family members of journalist Thapa has started process of bringing charges four years later of the incident. Thapa’s wife Laxmi Thapa on August 28, 2008, had filed an FIR at District Police Office, Dailekh, against five persons. However, the case could not take a logical end due to political pressure.

This time, journalists from across the country united and piled up peaceful pressure to the government against impunity. Journalists wrote extensively on government’s attempt of protecting culprits and urged the government to end the culture of impunity.

The case has now formally reached to the court. But it is worth to mention here that Investigation into the case had hit a snag following Nepal’s Attorney General Mukti Pradhan’s order on January 11 to stop interrogation of the murder accused.

Contempt of court case was jointly filed by advocate Kamal Prasad Itani and journalist Santosh Neupane, on behalf of Democratic Lawyers’ Association and Nepal Press Union, respectively, on January 13 against the prime minister and attorney general’s move in the Supreme Court seeking court intervention. The investigation then had resumed after a Supreme Court order on January 15 to district attorney and police not to halt the justice process.

It is a good example that frequent peaceful protest can help in ending impunity, says Kathmandu-based journalist Janak Raj Sapkota, adding that prosecution against cadres of ruling party Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) was not an easy task for judiciary too.

Laxmi Ram Gharti Magar, Bir Bahadur KC, Nirak Bahadur Gharti Magar, Harilal Pun Magar, Jay Bahadur Shahi — all are cadres of UCPN (Maoist) — have been arrested by the police. However, Barm Bahadur Khadka, Bam Bahadur Khadka, Keshav Khadka — who have been implicated by Thapa’s wife — are still at large, among other arrests. The arrest of the alleged murderers has provided relief to the journalist’s family as well as to media workers across the country, adds Sapkota.

According to Federation of Nepali Journalists, 35 journalists have been killed since the conflict began in 1996, while three are still missing.

Even after ending Maoist insurgency in 2006, self censorship has been common phenomenon due to emergence of armed outfit in various parts of the country. The government should ensure justice to all 35 killed and three missing journalists, says journalists Rashem Kumar Neupane. “And for that, journalists should continue their peaceful protest until justice is ensured.”

From this class, all students gained a newfound appreciation for freedom of speech, for it is not a feature of Gaza life. Only in the classroom could our Gaza colleagues truly express themselves and this left a deep impression on the US students. Teaching contested narratives in this manner was a learning experience for us all. At the very least it has provided our students with the skills necessary to approach those critical issues that divide us, not just those in the Middle East, but everywhere.

By Ian McIntosh

In Spring 2012, a novel new course offered to liberal arts majors at IUPUI focused on the teaching of contested narratives in an area noted for intractable conflict; the Gaza Strip. The class was advertised across the campus as a ‘virtual study abroad’ experience.

Entitled ‘Pathways to Peace,’ the course was delivered in two parts: one exploring contested Jewish and Palestinian narratives, and the other focused on argumentation, where students debated the major areas of division.

The class attracted an enrollment of 16 students from IUPUI and 16 from Gaza University, with professors from both institutions team-teaching via Skype. At Gaza, host families were enlisted to introduce US students to the Palestinian culture.

Back in Indiana, IUPUI, students embarked on mosque visits, enjoyed meals at Middle Eastern restaurants, and had an opportunity to meet with Palestinians from different walks of life. But they also heard from Jewish voices, including a Rabbi, a member of J-Sreet, a Holocaust survivor, and an Israeli military officer.

Students from IUPUI included men and women, blacks, whites and Latinos, gay and straight students, Republican and Democrat, Hoosiers and immigrants, including refugees from South America and Central Europe. The Gaza students were predominantly Muslim women, some married with children, and conservative. All were suffering from PTSD as a consequence of the conflict with Israel, the ongoing siege of Gaza, and the hardships of life under a Hamas dictatorship.

Surveys were conducted to gauge the US student’s understandings of the conflict in the Middle East at the start and end of the class. In Gaza, there was resistance to undertaking these surveys and of bringing Jewish or Israeli voices into the classroom.

Students from both Gaza and Indiana exchanged personal profiles describing their background and interests. They also made eight minute videos describing their lives which were shared on YouTube. Through Facebook, Skype, and email, they were encouraged to really get to know each other. And together they searched for answers to the long term problems that divide the peoples, in particular borders, refugees, settlements and Jerusalem.

Students also explored those inspiring grass roots initiatives where people are actually coming together across the political divide, like Football 4 Peace, Chefs for Peace, or Ex-Combatants for Peace. We watched documentaries where friendships developed between Israelis and Palestinians as they climbed Mt Everest, or trekked to the South Pole, and we wondered why not the Holy Land?

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Surveys were conducted to gauge the US student’s understandings of the conflict in the Middle East at the start and end of the class. In Gaza, there was resistance to undertaking these surveys and of bringing Jewish or Israeli voices into the classroom.

Students from both Gaza and Indiana exchanged personal profiles describing their background and interests. They also made eight minute videos describing their lives which were shared on YouTube. Through Facebook, Skype, and email, they were encouraged to really get to know each other. And together they searched for answers to the long term problems that divide the peoples, in particular borders, refugees, settlements and Jerusalem.

Students also explored those inspiring grass roots initiatives where people are actually coming together across the political divide, like Football 4 Peace, Chefs for Peace, or Ex-Combatants for Peace. We watched documentaries where friendships developed between Israelis and Palestinians as they climbed Mt Everest, or trekked to the South Pole, and we wondered why not the Holy Land?

By Ian McIntosh

In Spring 2012, a novel new course offered to liberal arts majors at IUPUI focused on the teaching of contested narratives in an area noted for intractable conflict; the Gaza Strip. The class was advertised across the campus as a ‘virtual study abroad’ experience.

Entitled ‘Pathways to Peace,’ the course was delivered in two parts: one exploring contested Jewish and Palestinian narratives, and the other focused on argumentation, where students debated the major areas of division.

The class attracted an enrollment of 16 students from IUPUI and 16 from Gaza University, with professors from both institutions team-teaching via Skype. At Gaza, host families were enlisted to introduce US students to the Palestinian culture.

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From this class, all students gained a newfound appreciation for freedom of speech, for it is not a feature of Gaza life. Only in the classroom could our Gaza colleagues truly express themselves and this left a deep impression on the US students. Teaching contested narratives in this manner was a learning experience for us all. At the very least it has provided our students with the skills necessary to approach those critical issues that divide us, not just those in the Middle East, but everywhere.
Journals must master conflict analysis

By Steve Sharp

Journalists are often the first to attempt to interpret violent events to a wider public. Rather than just relaying uncontroversial facts, heavy intellectual demands are placed on journalists to tell stories that are not just balanced but reveal why people fight and what is at stake.

Without these intellectual skills and an editorial environment that values them, it’s easy to fall back on stereotypical stories that make historical and contextual detail redundant. And the distribution of these stories can play into how the conflict unfolds. Stereotypes are not accidents. Those who have a vested interest in the prolongation of a conflict are well served by portrayals of group enmity as intractable, endless; that is, no explanation required.

The purpose of the case studies that follow is to demonstrate how central ‘conflict analysis’ is to what journalists do and what the journalism profession is all about. Although it sometimes horrifies my colleagues in

North Maluku 2000

In my book, Journalism and Conflict in Indonesia, I look at the way communal war in eastern Indonesia in the year 2000 spread from the south in Ambon to the north on Halmahera island along the Maluku archipelago. Fighting flared in the Malifut area in August between migrant (Muslim) Makianese and groups indigenous to North Halmahera – the Kao and Jailolo people. The two groups were of mixed (Christian and Muslim) faith.

The trigger was a decision to create a new subdistrict which would encompass a majority of 16 Makianese villages against a combined 11 Kao and Jailolo villages. The latter feared the new boundaries would make them a minority on their own ancestral land. The initial clashes left hundreds dead on both sides with the Kao and Jailolo coming off the worse.

With revenue from a local gold mine at stake, these changes sharpened regional rivalries as local elected officials fought to control larger shares of revenue and territory. The re-drawing of political boundaries at Malifut was interpreted as an ethnic powerplay by Makianese influential within the provincial bureaucracy.

The second wave of killings was a much more severe attack in October-November with Makianese deaths this time far greater. The exodus of refugees brought revenge attacks on Christian communities on the islands of Tidore and Ternate.

Local powerbrokers seized the moment to advance their political fortunes by taking sides and using an ancient rivalry between the ‘dominant’ Islamic kingdoms of these two islands to mobilise fighters. With the national army involved, atrocities ensued.

This was a proxy war fought on behalf of provincial powerbrokers using religious and ethnic identities to re-draw political boundaries when a power vacuum between Jakarta and north Maluku formed after the fall of the dictator Suharto.

Some time after the initial clashes, the conflict hardened into a religious opposition. However, the original dispute was not between religious groups. Belonging to a religious community in North Maluku was used to mobilise foot-soldiers to fight for political warlords who were re-positioning themselves during the national political transition.

The point here is for journalists to critically question the way conflict is described and explained, either by combatants or by those elites with a vested interest in the outcome. And these explanations will change as the conflict develops. As a conflict moves into its militarisation phase, the main game is recruitment and motivating people to fight. Troops may be motivated by religious hatred but that is rarely why they are fighting. All wars...
PJ guides 2013 Pakistani election coverage

By Mohid Iftikhar

The coming of age peace journalism provides a holistic examination towards a definite dilemma and the actors involved and their motives. So applying to the relevant case topic for general elections of 2013 in Pakistan; successful transition of democracy was the goal for all stakeholders. May it be the military, political parties or the civil society; a democratic rule was sturdily promoted. Now in liaison to peace journalism, attitude of social equality and cohesion is visible through different forms of media.

Conflicts amongst political parties will always exist, but peace journalism provides its role in understanding not the petty feuds, but rather how well the political processes take place. The win-win factor for almost all political parties could be highlighted for general elections in 2013; as where requested military security was provided in sensitive polling stations. And grievance of political parties for rigging was acknowledged by the election commission.

What was rather predicted by many pundits of politics in relationship to Pakistan’s general elections was rather an austere depiction. Peace journalism provides a clear image regarding transition of power from one political government to another, which through media coverage goes in depth to support real democracy. One of the key aims of peace journalism is to exterminate biasness and provide the truth. So both print and electronic media have highlighted a ray of hope for positive journalism by identifying major political parties’ direction post general elections; is extending their full support to fight terrorism, respect judiciary and promote national harmony. The current ruling elected party Pakistan Muslim League (N) has picked its pace for tackling a range of issues as power, infrastructure and commerce. Here optimism has been described by the media for the current rule for not holding responsible the previous political regimes. Rather media provides policies of the current ruling party, which provides hope for national consensus.

One of the true aims behind peace journalism is about conflict transformation as mentioned by Galtung, so can political rivalry end? Audible and visible what peace journalism is, as Galtung believes, so both electronic and print media in this context are producing an image of progress and political closure. Peace journalism revolves around aiming at all parties. So in respect to Pakistan’s post elections: opposition, executioner bodies and the public are being involved and being effectively communicated with the reality. It is now regularly being communicated by advocates of peace journalism; Pakistan’s rule under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif illustrates direct and open reality of all state of affairs.

An article published in The Tribune (Pakistan) August 2, 2013 Sharif: “The government has to overcome a shortfall of 3,000MW and also make policies for the next 25 to 30 years, to meet its future needs”. Peace Journalism supports the ground reality, where it is evident that Nawaz Sharif has produced the actuality for the power crisis for not being resolved in a short period. Pessimistic analysis has rather been eroded into roots of Pakistani journalism, but for once the future seems to be recognizing authenticity.

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What is the answer? With respect to localised conflict, an area’s communication infrastructure needs to be designed and managed to promote open and uncoerced dialogue and placed under the authority of the community itself, that is, those respected local representatives who have the most to lose from community breakdown. Whether it be in the provinces of Indonesia or the highlands of Papua New Guinea, key communicators like religious and community leaders, media practitioners, broadcasters working together are vital to the way a community functions in a crisis. Once this cooperation is established, they will be ready to deal with disputes and counter threats to community harmony in non-violent, conflict-sensitive ways.

This article is an abridged version of a paper presented in June to the 4th International Communication Research Conference: Culture, Conflict & Communication, hosted by the London School of Public Relations Jakarta.