

the PEACE JOURNALIST

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Finding Untold Stories:



Afghan Voices

the PEACE JOURNALIST

The Peace Journalist is a semi-annual publication of the Center for Global Peace Journalism at Park University in Parkville, Missouri.

The Peace Journalist is dedicated to disseminating news and information for and about teachers, students, and practitioners of peace and conflict sensitive journalism.

Submissions are welcome from all. We are seeking shorter submissions (300-500 words) detailing peace journalism projects, classes, proposals, etc. We also welcome longer submissions (800-1200 words) about peace or conflict sensitive journalism projects or programs, as well as academic works from the field.

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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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Journalists seek untold Afghan stories

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 unfor-



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

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.



tunately 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 the destructive, and the moral from the 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 Emal, 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

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go home and return to the capital once a month to share their work and hone their skills. Content is produced in Dari and Pashto with English subtitles, or entirely in English.

“We sent them back to their home provinces to search and find their untold stories,” says Emal, “They would come back with stunning and genuine stories that I, as a journalist who have been in this business for over a decade now, never knew about.”

As director of Afghan Voices and also the senior trainer, Emal oversees the program while preparing the curriculum, leading trainings, and approving story proposals. This year the program accepted 15 applicants out of 400, and the four instructors working under Emal are graduates of the first cycle.

Afghan Voices operates under the auspices of the Afghanistan New Generation Organization, and has

been funded by the U.S. embassy in Kabul since its inception. While the latter relationship may raise the eyebrows of an American cynic, Haidary is blunt at the suggestion of any editorial oversight. “The embassy has no and zero influence on the stories we make,” he says. The trainees know where the funding comes from “and they are happy about it, because a lot of good projects are funded by the U.S.” The work of Afghan Voices trainees and alums is featured in media outlets such as Global Post, National Geographic, and TV 1, the second most popular TV station in Afghanistan, and their short films have received acclaim at domestic and international film festivals.

A visit to the Afghan Voices website reveals content as eclectic as it is engrossing. There is a segment about the change in popular fashion since the fall of the Taliban, set to catchy beats; stories of children working from morning to night to provide for

their families; and documentaries celebrating the innovation and courage of individuals overcoming challenges and breaking down barriers to change.

Going through the website, one also realizes that while the focus the program is on positive portrayals of Afghanistan and civic-minded stories, these teens do not whitewash life in their country and somehow shed the scars of a life lived in the shadow of conflict. Short documentaries dealing with poverty or the brutal repression of the Taliban however, serve as a vehicle for raising social awareness and exploring the national psyche through the experiences of individuals.

Jalaluddin “Jalal” Jamshidy, a 19-year old from Herat, speaks from the heart in a blog post written two months into the training program:

“I believe in happy and prosperous future for Afghanistan, because I have seen potentials in young generation. The only thing they need is educating and guiding these talents. After more than four decades, hearing just the sounds of gun fire and panzer, being witness of suicide attacks and killing a lot in this country, yet we, the young generation are much more energetic and ready to grow up and make changes in this community. This is all not all about Afghanistan and Afghans that you see the pictures daily, there are extremely fabulous things with great and prideful characters. (So) let’s just make it appear, let’s just take step through, let’s just expand our purpose, just show it, just thunder it up.”

His words capture the spirit of Afghan Voices: the infectious hope and determination to tell a new story about a beloved country.

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Reporters use multimedia tools as part of Afghan Voices project.

Jake Lynch: Circularity on Syria

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

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http://routledge-ny.com/catalogs/routledge_research_media_and_communication/1/10/



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 Annabel McGoldrick 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 stories 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 newsroom 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 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 put it, any responsible decision on military strikes would have to follow the evidence from UN inspectors on the ground in Damascus – not the other way round. The situation before the 2003 invasion of Iraq, that – in the words of a leaked memo from Sir Richard Dearlove, the head of MI6 – ‘the intelligence and the facts are being fixed around the policy’, had been effectively reversed.

When the Obama Administration, too, announced that legislators would get their say, the satirical magazine, *Private Eye*, couldn’t resist: ‘Huge

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Lynch: PJ and Syria

from Pg 5

crowds spilled out on to the streets of cities throughout the Middle East last night declaring that the American Spring was well and truly underway, with democracy taking hold in backward countries where it was long thought dead'.

The delay to US-led military action – for, at the time of writing, it looked likely to be just that, a delay – left space for non-mainstream media to raise alternative perspectives, including a wide range of suggestions in the rare peace journalism category of 'solution-oriented'.

The *New Scientist* applied some much-needed specialist knowledge to the question, editorialising: 'It is highly improbable that the threat [from chemical weapons] can be reduced by bombing the stockpiles'. Instead, outsiders concerned to help should supply 'antidotes to nerve agents – mainly atropine and pralidoxime injected into?muscle [which] in the hours and days after a sarin attack can save lives and reduce the chances of chronic symptoms in survivors'.

The Avaaz social media network rallied its members and supporters to urge an upgrade in diplomacy: 'Iran's new moderate president condemned the gassing and Obama signalled he'd work with "anybody" to resolve the conflict. Let's urgently call on both leaders to sit down to talks and bring the warring parties together before any more lives are lost'.

Up to now, the interventions already underway have encouraged the parties to the Syria conflict to prolong it – with the aim, among the anti-Assad forces, of prompting western military intervention on their side. A cornerstone of diplomatic approaches from the US, its allies and friends has been to assume that President Assad must go, as the pre-requisite of any substantive talks.

This has had the effect of incentivising the government to intensify its own efforts for a military 'victory', since the only alternative is defeat and destruction: 'to resign is to flee', Assad told an interviewer from an Argentine newspaper, with everything that implies for his family and friends. The fate of Colonel Gaddafi, shot in a Libyan ditch with scarcely a murmur of protest from countries that supposedly value the rule of law, must feel like a grim augury.

So, the Assad regime has defied widespread expectations by hanging on in power, for now at least. Those were certainly the expectations of 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'. The TCP invited me to offer a short 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 not, 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.

Avoiding easy stereotypes and perhaps inquiring more deeply into people's motives could only help.

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' – adduced 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.

Then, one distressing – and intriguing – aspect of the conflict is the sheer movement of people it has brought about. News audiences all over the world are now familiar with the plight of refugees in neighbouring countries, but their numbers are far exceeded by those who've had to decamp to other areas of Syria itself. How have they been welcomed in by host communities? Who is working to maintain an orderly and civil society, and how? There might be tales of forbearance, generosity, even heroism, in the everyday reality.

Syria will need journalists who are willing and able to seek out such stories and show alternatives to conceiving of one's situation in terms of a tug of war. The political changes needed to instill peace with justice can only be brought about through non-violent means. The actions and motives of outside parties who've already intervened – whether openly or implicitly – are, at best, mixed. Both inside the country and further afield, there is an urgent need for good, professional journalism to hold power to account by enabling critical scrutiny of dominant accounts. In that, peace journalism has its part to play.

Turning Assad into the enemy

By Steven Youngblood

As the U.S. 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 misperceptions 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.

In 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 as 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 about this in, "Why media go along with government war plans." One of his main contentions is that war is easier to sell when it is presented as "good guys vs. bad" and when there is a "vilified" enemy. (Critical Sociology, 2009).

One example of personification was Saddam Hussein, who upon invading Kuwait in 1990 went from a little-known dictator to the embodiment of evil. This narrative, of course, was embraced by the George H.W. Bush administration as an easy way to convince the public of the necessity of the first gulf war. However, when evil is personified and thus oversimplified, as it was with Saddam, it leaves the public with little understanding of the real conflict or about the countries in the conflict



Steven Youngblood is director of the Center for Global Peace Journalism at Park University in Parkville, Missouri and author of "Professor Komagum."

Study: Personification of Bashar Al-Assad in English language media

8/1-8/15 pre chemical attack

9547 articles on Syria
Search on Lexis-Nexis database, under "all English media": The word Syria plus search terms Assad's army, Assad's troops, Assad's forces, Assad's military, Assad's soldiers, Assad's armed forces, Assad's aggression, "his army", "his chemicals", "Assad's chemicals"
Total mentions=111 (72 under "his chemicals", 34 under "his army")
Percentage 111/9574= Personification in .011 % of stories

8/28-9/11 post chemical attack

43,329 articles (minimum) on Syria –more than quadruple after the chemical attack. (MINIMUM—Lexis-Nexis maxes out at 3,000 search hits per day. 12/15 days studied hit the maximum).
Same search conducted
Total mentions=6022 (5613 under "his chemicals", 175 under "Assad's chemicals", 168 are under "his army")
Percentage 6022/43,329=Personification in .13% of stories – More than 10 times the previous personification mentions.

NOTE: Even if there were twice as many articles on Syria not found because of the 3,000 daily limit on the Lexis Nexis search, there would still be 5 times the personification mentions as before the chemical attack.

region. Sociologist Todd Gitlin told the Washington Post in 1990 that "personalizing evil makes it difficult to learn about a country most Americans know little about. When I see 'Eyes of the killer,' I know this is hysteria. But when I see 'Dictator' who will stop at nothing to control the price of oil,' I don't know if it's true. I rather assume that it is."

There are close parallels between Saddam and with Assad and Syria, which is, after all, a country Americans know little about. Certainly, demonizing an opponent is easier, cleaner, and perhaps more effective than attempting to explain the eccentricities of global diplomacy.

As peace journalists, it's important that we are aware of personification tactics and how they are used to sell conflicts. Journalists need to more carefully consider the

verbiage we use, whether it is in quotes or not. Are they really "Assad's chemicals?" We need to lead a discussion about the dangers inherent in personification as we ask tough questions that expose oversimplifications. It's our job to help the public understand that the 'good guys vs. bad' model doesn't reflect reality.

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 I recorded for the radio report we did. The interviews taught me to value the stories behind the faces and voices, and how they each carry a unique message, and I, the journalist, am the messenger," Habli noted.

The second seminar was held from May 24 – 26 for three days also, and it targeted a new group of media students and young journalists that "aim to change the reality through changing the media that reflects it," according to Bassil. "The main focus of peace journalism in Lebanon is to find common ground between all sides that are in conflict with one another and staying away from propaganda that every side seeks to promote," she said.

Bassil and Youngblood, the instructor for the second seminar as well, indicated that the beginning peace journalism seminar was unique in that it assembled a press conference simulation that gathered the Syrian Social Nationalist Party general executive for university students, Wissam Smaya, with Lebanese Phalangist Party activist, young lawyer Michele Nehme; exclusively for MAP.

Seminar participants were intrigued by the press conference. Maya Majzoub noted, "The politicians' press conference...demonstrated that, unlike the general misconception, peace journalism can indeed create and sell a good story. That is, having two opposing politicians publicly agree on 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



(Above, right) Participants in the May Lebanon peace journalism project.

lame utopian news, but rather about constructive action plans and promising initiatives that can really change something about the way we live."

Mani Nasr agreed. She said, "The most valuable part in the seminar was the common ground found between two different Lebanese political parties who 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 MasterPeace 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.

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The seminar participants displayed their articles in front of the audience at AltCity's 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.



MAP- Media Association for Peace (info@maplebanon.org) is the first non-profit organization in Lebanon, the Middle East and North Africa region dedicated to work on Peace Journalism through training, networking, publishing and researching. It was launched in Beirut, in June 2013. MAP was founded by its current director Vanessa Bassil.

Mexican peace journalists seek better world

By *Cristina Avila-Zesatti*

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 tissues 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 'portrayal 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 day to the next, and which tones down the headlines only to make room for another 'new and inexplicable conflict.'

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 (specially 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 thanks to the businesses 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



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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.

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Mexico's peace correspondent *from Pg 10*

War journalism vs. peace journalism

It is not only economic factors that weigh down the semantics and syntax that the media use in order to transmit this violent image of reality today, it is also a question of semantics 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.

This mistaken sensationalism has historic grounds which have not been updated. When the first 'war correspondents', which emerged around 1850 , began to transmit their reports in a systematic manner through the telegraph, they decided that it was much better to exalt the belligerent discourse with a heroic overtone.

Naief Yehya, author of the book *War and Propaganda* stated that, "The myth of war was blown up without the slightest decency; the public developed an appetite for this type of narration, which has evolved today into belligerent entertainment", and has "spread the immoral perception of war like a video game".

Johan Galtung identifies the existence of a 'journalism oriented towards violence' and another 'orientated towards peace and possibilities'. So-called 'peace journalism' is not, as many believe, the reporting and coverage of 'good news', but a follow-up to our present form from another perspective, another view, and with different ethical motivations. For this kind of journalism, in a world where 'supposedly' war is the daily routine, the noticeable event is markedly 'peace'.

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 proposals in front of the conflict reported.

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.



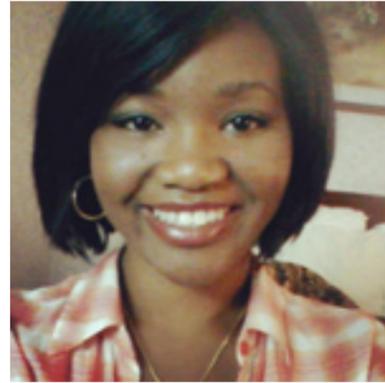
Peace Journalist Cristina Avila-Zesatti (left) discusses the state of journalism in Mexico.

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 and their 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.

Peace Aisogun is a graduate of the Academy of Mount Saint Ursula in the Bronx, NY. The oldest of five siblings, she was born in Nigeria and moved to the U.S. at the age of four. She is an activist for the prevention of bullying and human trafficking, and advocates for girls' and women's rights with the Grail Link to the United Nations. As an intern for the community television station BronxNet, Peace has zeroed in on various empowering inner city events and activities for youth and young adults.



BronxNet Television is not ignorant of this rising issue and as a result chose to deal with the problem from its source, which in this case may have just been the lack of knowledge. From June 10-15, 2013, BronxNet invited Steven Youngblood, an influential and instructive Peace Journalist from Park University in Parkville, Missouri to

share with students from the Bronx what good journalism really is.

Youngblood taught a week-long Peace Journalism boot camp, which featured the theory of peace journalism followed by practical reporting exercises. Each afternoon, the students were sent out to produce peace-themed

video reports. Participants went out into the Bronx and interviewed the community on issues such as terrorism, racial stereotypes, education, religion and so much more. The students covered each topic extensively, edited packages and most importantly, they told the truth. These students were able to dig deeper than

the surface and looked beyond the stereotypes. They sought evidence; they put the story together and presented an authentic final project without propaganda. By preserving the dignity of the interviewees, they were able to keep the story respectful without losing sight of the validity of the news item.

Marisa White, BronxNet youth coordinator, said, "We decided to go with the hands-on format because we find that students learn very quickly when they are actually doing camera and conducting interviews. After learning theory in their classes, they look to us for that hands-on exposure they cannot get in the

Continued on next page



Preparing for a shoot during the peace journalism boot camp in The Bronx, New York.

Bronx youths practice PJ *from Pg 12*



Recording a peace program for BronxNet TV as part of a PJ project in June.

classroom or even at other stations. " public to be misinformed.

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

Defining PJ

Prof. 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 they were hoping to obtain. He also motivates the class to be as specific as possible and to call the issue by name. Youngblood believes heavily in accuracy because he does not want the

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. So what would cause a good journalist to doubt that his or her word choice does not possess the ability to affect their audience? The answer is nothing. Peace Journalists understand that words are everything.

The class held many discussions about the role of journalists in doing the right thing. When writing an article it is good to consider the audience and how 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.

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 an established narratives. Instead of spreading inflammatory language, they now choose to allow themselves to establish an atmosphere where peace is welcomed.

Marisa White concurred, noting how the boot camp was consistent with the values that have long been preached by BronxNet. "We are encouraging our students to look at issues more closely, and dig deeper for the real story, while using integrity and professionalism. The tenets of Peace Journalism will help them choose the right language, the right approach and build connections with people as they cover the important issues of our community," she said.



PJ seminar participants run the studio cameras as part of a PJ project in June in The Bronx.

Ugandan media hope to 'Let Peace Prevail'

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.



we explore the conflict, make the conflict transparent, give voice to all parties and we aim at finding a solution to the conflict.

This approach has de-escalated a number of conflicts. The recent one is the cultural and tribal conflicts between Bakonjo-Bamba, Bakonjo-Basongora, Bakonjo Banyabindi, Batooro-Batuuku, and Batooro- Bakonjo all tribes in the Rwenzori region.

Searching for Peace in the Region.

'Let Peace Prevail', a campaign for peace and transformation in communities, is being implemented by Toro Media Practitioners Association with the help of some volunteer members of the community who possess a love of peace and transformation. We educate communities about change of attitude which helps them to accommodate their differences away from win- lose approaches to win-win problem solving through Music Dance and Drama outreaches. We stage free drama shows at least once every two months in different places where we show different play themes all related to peace, reconciliation and transformation.

Besides the out reaches we air a radio serial drama which airs on 101 Voice Of Toro 4 days a week. The 30min Serial drama is educating, transforming and entertaining because it tells stories about believable people who have difficult conflicts in their lives/ communities, engages the emotions of the listeners and gives them the chance to love, to hate, to laugh, to be afraid and to experience tragedy and triumph.



Actors show how to "Let Peace Prevail" in Western Uganda.

The educational drama is composed with much humor, satire and suspense, designed to castigate social evils and conflicts, promote good morals and champion transformation thus a peaceful society. The play brings out the irony of Life in a local set up characterized by unbecoming behaviors of individual characters in a serialized package.

The drama has been prepared to be in the local set up of "Mukijwiga" as micro -cosmic depiction representing the larger social setup.

This approach has so far been appreciated by leaders and the community itself because people turn up in big numbers for our drama outreaches and we have got some leaders sometimes supporting the media association for the 'Let Peace Prevail Campaign' financially.

For the 30min Radio serial drama where we use 15min for the pre-recorded episodes and 15 for feedback from the listeners via phone calls and messages, we already have a listeners team of not less than 1000 members of the community for this specific peace and reconciliation feature .

My greatest wish is that every human being understands that Peace is just one thing that the entire world requires to make this world a better place to live.

Biased reporting exacerbates Nigerian conflict

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 facelessness 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 Islamist sect Jama'atu Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda'Awati Wal Jihad, 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) averred that 'boko' is a native Hausa word, originally meaning sham, fraud, inauthenticity, education of sham/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.

James Okolie-Osemene is a Research Fellow, French Institute for Research in Africa and Associate Member of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice. He is an Alumnus of Nigeria's Premier University, University of Ibadan, where he studied Peace and Conflict Studies.



It is obvious that Boko Haram means different things to different people. To some, it is anti-western and anti-government group, 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 intergroup relations with attendant hostility perception at the detriment of supposedly mutual interethnic exchanges.

This is where media's involvement is critical and demands peace journalism. Although Boko Haram accused media organisations of biased reports and favouring the government, how to effectively disarm the group has become pressing national question and challenge to the media and policy makers. Bruhn (2003) posits that journalists are not only persons who tell us stories, and that they are natural narrators in crisis situations who have to analyse, investigate, give opinions and propose solutions on a reality that may be very complex and difficult.

Journalists and media organisations alike should shape people's perceptions on the ongoing counterinsurgency in Nigeria's Northern region, as general good rather than government's war against Islam. This is premised on the truism that no responsible government wishes to annihilate its people, but rather has a responsibility to protect them based on social contract theory as propounded by John Locke, that government in every society is an organisation of consent by the people.



Boko Haram sect, Nigeria.

In addition, it is believed that counterinsurgency would be successful only when the media disseminates timely information that could enhance conflict early warning and response mechanisms. In essence, journalists have a task of not only shaping perceptions but also reducing the psychological strength of insurgents whose activities continue to undermine public peace, security and intergroup relations in Nigeria.

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', Olumorin 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

Media ethics, PJ take stage at Park U.

By Kendra Kenney and Katelyn Knoche

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 handicapped 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."

Continued on next page

Kendra Kenney (right) is a senior at Park University majoring in Business Administration and Management. After graduation, she plans to manage her own business.



Katelyn Knoche is a resident of Holt, Missouri, and a junior at Park University majoring in Social Psychology.

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 internecine 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.

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.

Rosie Jasinski, symposium attendee, said, "Lofflin 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 mentioned 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, predominately 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 objectivity, and newsrooms lack the diversity to be able to see stories 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 Mindy McQueery said, "The best thing we can do is realize and understand that people have different mindsets and instead of just saying they are wrong we need to get both sides of the story."



"Doing the wrong thing", a media ethics symposium, drew a full house at Park University on Sept. 27.

PJ 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 use 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 humanly 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 will respond to what viewers watch, listen to. What peace journalists can do is think about the consequences of their words and act responsibly and be

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.

careful about portraying vengeance, violence, and retaliation. Peace journalism trains the media to create an atmosphere which is conducive to peace. Can media and politicians appreciate that language matters and create an atmosphere around criminal justice that is conducive to solutions rather than to fighting wars on crime, drugs, and terrorism?

Crime coverage

When crime happens, journalists covering crime can report four people were killed rather than a bloody massacre occurred. They needn't sensationalize and misrepresent criminal occurrences. Yet examples of over-reporting causing riots or dramatic responses are prevalent. Crime has been the most popular subject over time so that it is rare without a prominent crime story preferably locally but nationally especially if the story is unusual or weird. Local news most frequently leads with crime, especially if there is blood or guts involved and/or dramatic video.

Peace criminal justice

The time to consider peace criminal justice was several decades ago but now is another pregnant moment. For three quarters of the 20th century American society assumed some responsibility for criminal behavior and developed programs to assist those who lived in poverty, were uneducated, jobless, and even those who had committed crimes. Suspended sentences and probation were systems used for minor criminals. If convicted and sentenced, criminals had the key to their own cells and could be released for changed behavior under a parole system. Prisons offered programs which inmates could participate in to potentially improve their lives when released.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries some felons were given suspend-

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 (massacre, slaughter, blood bath) used? Victimized 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 the theater shooting?
5. Missing context: Are crimes only reported as individual, isolated incidents? Are meaningful trends reported?

--Steven Youngblood, Center for Global Peace Journalism. Blog: *Peace Journalism Insights*

ed sentences until the U S Supreme Court declared this practice unconstitutional, *Ex parte United States*, 245 U.S. 27, and suggested the use of probation as a substitute. Probation was first used successfully in Massachusetts and then the usage spread to all 48 states by the early 1930s. While parole was used in the British system of criminal justice in 1840, it was not adopted as a practice in the US until 1870; by the 1930s it had been adopted in all 48 states and the federal government.

The war on crime began in the late 1960s and the war on drugs began in the early 1980s. In the 1960s Sena-

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www.park.edu/peacecenter

Center for Global Peace Journalism at Park University, Parkville, MO



WHO WE ARE: The Center for Global Peace Journalism is a resource for Park University students (courses, seminars, service and service learning opportunities, research, study abroad, opportunities for publication of articles), Park faculty (publication opportunities, research, travel, international collaboration), professional journalists and students worldwide (seminars, resource materials, website, collaboration), and like-minded organizations (collaborative projects/initiatives, research).



MISSION: The Center for Global Peace Journalism at Park University promotes the concepts of peace and peace journalism. The center does this through seminars, courses, and projects both in the U.S. and abroad, through its website and semi-annual magazine, and through partnerships with like-minded organizations and individuals.

Peace criminal justice *from Pg 18*

tor Barry Goldwater ran for President using language supporting a war on crime. This language continued to be used and eventually the concepts of indeterminate 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.

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. Then the real war on drugs began. Coincidentally in 1986 with the American population 84% white and 13% black, more black than white people were 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 now 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.

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 10, 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 culprit 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 protect 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 a easy task for judiciary too.

Siromani Dhungana is a media scholar in Nepal. He's an economic journalist, researcher and academic. Dhungana has been appointed by the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Development Center to revise the journalism syllabus for grades 9-10 as well as to rewrite journalism textbooks for the secondary level. Lecturer of Journalism and Mass Communication (JMC) at Tribhuvan Univ. He received a Gold Medal from Nepal's Prime Minister for journalism education. Contact: meshiro-mani@gmail.com .



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, Bam Bahadur Khadka, Bam Bahadur Khadka, Keshav Khadka -- who have been implicated by Thapa's wife -- are still at large, among two others. 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 Ramesh Kumar Neupane. "And for that, journalists should continue their peaceful protest until justice is ensured."

University course connects Gaza and U.S.

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-Street, 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 in the Holy Land?

Australian anthropologist **Ian McIntosh PhD** (also pictured above right) is a faculty member in the School of Liberal Arts at Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI) where he teaches peace and reconciliation studies in global perspective, and also a 'virtual study abroad' class to the Gaza Strip. An applied social scientist, Dr. McIntosh is a former Managing Director of the Harvard-based indigenous rights organization Cultural Survival Inc., and the former senior editorial advisor for



the Cultural Survival Quarterly, the world's premier journal focusing on the rights, voices, and visions of indigenous peoples. Dr. McIntosh has published two books and over 100 articles on indigenous issues and conflict resolution. Dr. McIntosh has worked extensively in Aboriginal Australia on land rights issues, and also in the Republic of Armenia on reforestation and poverty reduction projects.

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.

Journalists 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 storylines 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

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journalism education, I believe getting 'conflict analysis' right is a journalist's first professional duty, before accuracy, before balance. This is not an argument for factual sloppiness; if journalists don't consistently get conflict analysis right, a time will come when our professional purpose will be called into question.

Another reason 'conflict analysis' is so vital isn't just because it is more professional but because getting 'conflict analysis' right may help prevent a conflict turning violent. This is, of course, a social benefit, not just good for the profession.

So, getting 'conflict analysis' right or wrong is not neutral. It has consequences. Sometimes they are very serious consequences, as I hope the following examples demonstrate.

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 'dormant' 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 faith as a motif 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

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bring forth their own (often changing) justifications and the media are primary disseminators of these accounts.

If conflict analysis is superficial, inaccurate or non-existent, it becomes easier to justify war on the basis of permanent division – between communities, religions, ethnicities and states. They fight because they are born enemies.

Witchcraft and sorcery-related killings in Melanesia

Earlier this year, I interviewed a photographer for my website on his work in the highlands of Papua New Guinea [link: http://www.telingamedia.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=97:russian-compassionate-eye-floods-unseen-war-zone-with-light-and-humanity&catid=21:visual-art&Itemid=24].

He was drawn to the highlands because of what he had read about violence against women there. The UN and other groups had reported brutal torture and killings of women and girls, especially old women, accused of witchcraft and noted that the number of female victims was increasing.

Belief in sorcery is widespread in Papua New Guinea and other parts of Melanesia. In Papua New Guinea, committing an act of sorcery is against customary law and in 1971 the colonial administration even criminalized it.

But in the last thirty years or so, the customary regulation of sorcery has broken down in many areas and accused witches – mostly women - are tortured and killed much more frequently. Most commonly, sorcery accusations are made after an unexplained death in the village. People don't ask what caused it? They ask who caused it?

Needless to say, these cultural beliefs and practices are creating enormous problems for the Papua New Guinea state and its criminal justice system. In June this year, it repealed its Sorcery Act from colonial times and re-introduced the death penalty for certain crimes, including rape.

I use this example of Indonesia's neighbour because it shows how complex and difficult it can be for journalists to do accurate 'conflict analysis' on aspects of law, violence and development. The intellectual demands on journalists are very high. In the case of PNG, nothing is straightforward when dealing with beliefs about witchcraft. Practices differ widely across the country. The epidemic of violence against women has multiple causes, witchcraft accusations being only one. Witchcraft accusations can be used to demonise individuals for various reasons: to settle inter-clan disputes, to carry out vendettas or revenge. And they can be used against entire tribes as a prelude to tribal war.



War-scarred mosque in Indonesia.

They are also used by criminals to justify thuggery or the stealing of land. Older women who do not have male protectors seem to be targeted.

Much of the useful knowledge about these violent conflicts in the highlands and large towns has come from foreign anthropologists; but this is usually in a form that journalists find hard to access.

And what are the consequences for getting the analysis of witchcraft-related violence wrong? There are many. It is a source of great trauma and disillusionment for communities to see their productive young men get sick and die for no clear reason. With the increase in HIV cases in PNG, sorcery related killings have increased. It underscores how medical explanations for death and illness aren't accepted. So women accused of witchcraft are often the scapegoats.

Conclusions

Race, religion, ethnicity are not primary antagonisms, they are tools for mobilising support and sometimes that mobilisation takes a violent form. I don't find the concept of group hate useful as an explanation for violent conflict; but it can be and is a powerful tool for mobilising groups towards aggressive ends.

I prefer to look at conflict through the prism of groups responding to threats to and perceived violations of their sovereignty. In his book, *Religious Violence in Indonesia*, John Sidel notes that violent breakdown does not come from differences but rather the loss of difference amid heightened uncertainty about the boundaries of communal identity; acts of violence serve to re-establish boundaries leading to a decrease in the violence. The elimination of alleged sorcerers may do individuals great injustices, but it does restore order. Or so it is believed.

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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 ter-

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rorism, 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

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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.

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.