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“Covering Permanent War”

Conference Draws Stars, Large Audience

— By Ron French '03

Editor's Note: *Fighting began as the Journal went to press. It made the timing of our conference look brilliant, while dating all else. Such is our business. . . .*

The worries began months before the bombs. NBC's Ashleigh Banfield fretted about decontamination. CNN's Christiane Amanpour feared the loss of good will. *National Public Radio* President Kevin Klose stressed over how to squeeze high-tech satellite phones and low-tech goats for bartering into a strained budget. And *The New York Times*' Judith Miller wondered how her job would become tougher.

The war on terror is changing the lives of journalists. New beats, strained budgets and security concerns are as uncomfortable as the chemical suits many now carry in their baggage. Those changes have been magnified by the war in Iraq, as journalists struggle to redefine their role in a new, scary world.

“We don't know what will happen,” said Klose. “Nothing is safe anymore.” Public fears, the media and the institutions they cover were the topic of “Covering Permanent War and Bio-terrorism: The Press and Public Policy,” sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. It was a timely topic in January. Now, it seems almost prescient.

The dangers and constraints facing foreign correspondents in Iraq are dramatically different from those faced by Charles Eisendrath, a correspondent for *Time* magazine in London, Paris and Buenos Aires in the 1960s and 1970s. “Then, to a level that now seems quaint, the media were protected,” said

Eisendrath, the director of the Knight-Wallace Fellows at Michigan. “There was an understanding that we were not carrying guns, we were trying to tell the truth.”

That protection doesn't exist today. Many journalists working overseas now go through a week-long boot camp to learn how

Weapons and America's Secret War, called Sept. 11 a “defining moment for American journalism.” Sensitive information is now much harder to get from the government (Miller doubts she could write *Germs* today). And reporters are much more likely to self-censor. “How much publicity do you want to give to poten-

tial threats, and give people ideas they might not otherwise have had?” Miller asked. “Anyone who tells you that the trade-off between security and democracy is an easy one has never had my job.”

Finding that balance is something reporters are now learning on the fly. “This kind of war poses questions for journalists that they've never faced before,” Jordan said.

Sometimes ethics and patriotism become intertwined, said Tom Rosenstiel, director of the Project for Excellence in



Kevin Klose, President & CEO, NPR, Maryn McKenna '99, science and medical writer, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Ashleigh Banfield, anchor and correspondent, NBC, weigh in on war and the new national stance. The conference has been widely aired on U of M's cable channel.

Journalism. The American press is less willing to print negative stories about the government during times of war, because “there is a patriotic upsurge and the public doesn't want to hear certain things.”

And during a war, the government and military are less willing to provide information to the press. Amanpour, CNN's chief international correspondent, said she believes “the American people are better served by having a broader knowledge of what is going on.” But that is increasingly difficult for correspondents like her, because the military provides little meaningful access. “There should be a balance (between security and the public's right to know), and now it is completely out of whack,” she said.

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From the Head Fellow

By Charles R. Eisendrath '75

THOSE AWFUL FRENCH AND THEIR AMERICAN POSITION

When something like the Iraqi crisis looms, people ask if I don't itch to be back near the "bang-bang." The answer is no, although with the "shock and awe" of new technology and Pentagon inclusiveness, battlefields *do* make irresistible television. Mayhem never interested me much beyond the adrenaline involved. The actual fighting in conflicts I covered for *Time* in Biafra, Northern Ireland, during the early stages of the "Dirty War" in Argentina and the gory coup that toppled Chile's Salvador Allende struck me as glorified police stories.

War issues, however, are always fascinating. Unlike bang-bang, they reveal the full panoply of reasons our species gives for dismembering one another. The difference is like that between *Sands of Iwo Jima* and *The Quiet American*. As I write this 24th day of March, 2003, the spectacular immediacy of battlefield coverage blots out the very unspectacular coverage of how we went to war.

"The War." For six months before the fighting, that's what everyone called it despite the demonstrable absence of war. Is perception of inevitability a management tool in statecraft? Machiavelli thought so. It is THE management tool, although that was discussed neither during the run up to invasion nor afterwards, when the administrations of George W. Bush and Saddam Hussein both availed themselves of it. Is there really an "old Europe" led by France? If so, it espouses the restraint and multilateralism the U.S. favored for 227 years, ending last fall. The position is now parodied, vilified and condemned as if France had invented something astonishingly new!

Just for reminders, the closest thing to a "special relationship" the U.S. enjoyed until Britain began losing World War II was with France, without whose troops and fleet there would have been no British surrender at Yorktown, ending the Revolutionary War. Winston Churchill coined the term when he needed a special friend—a big one.

In recent weeks the best journalism joined the worst in an orgy of name-calling

inspired by, but hardly limited to, two traditional sources of American humor: cartoons and Congress. The French, according to "The Simpsons," are "cheese-eating surrender monkeys." French fried potatoes in the House of Representatives cafeteria are now called "freedom fries." More broadly, our media explained that the French are awful because they are:

- ▶ Deluded by an insatiable desire to be "distinct." True but irrelevant. Nobody wants to be more distinct than Americans.
- ▶ Trying to counterbalance a superpower.



True again, but hardly new and certainly not a complete explanation for France picking a fight with its most important ally.

▶ Unreliable. Sometimes, but then so are we; just ask the Kurds. Also, please recall that because of U.S. military censorship, many of the tanks shown streaking towards Baghdad in 1991 were French.

Nowhere have I found even a hint that French behavior might be as rational as, say, our own. Okay, I'm a confessed Francophile. One result of a stint as Paris correspondent is a permanent friendship of a particularly French sort, with an American-trained international banker who 30 years ago was my best source on the mysteries of his country. Nothing has changed. His contacts are impeccable and go right to the top. Even better (and something unknown here) he adds the perspective of a family that has kept track of itself for 1,000 years, which is neither a misprint or exaggeration, nor an irrelevant detail. To Frenchmen like him, what the U.S. is projecting looks a lot like a Crusade—such as the one to the Middle East that bankrupted my friend's family on his

mother's side in the 12th century. As our countries drifted apart in recent weeks, my friend and I resumed an old habit of regular conversations specifically on world issues—a sort of seminar, Sundays at noon, Ann Arbor time.

Naturally, we've been talking war and, as is common, he has hit me with a thought I hadn't come across anywhere else—although it certainly would have illuminated American reporting. He had recently spent an evening with one of the most influential figures in French security circles. What are people like that discussing?

Oh, that post-war France has become nearly 10 percent Muslim, numbering about 5.5 million and severely limiting political and diplomatic options. As in so many things, the danger zones of U.S. and French cities are mirror images of one another: our black ghettos are their seething Muslim suburbs. Because of well-founded charges of discrimination, immigrants from former French colonies in North Africa form an angry minority feared by other Frenchmen the way white Americans fear the black underclass. In representative democracies, guilts, fears and numbers count. The French Jewish community, of 700,000, far smaller than the Muslim, keeps a profile far lower than its U.S. counterpart, and French electoral politics do not depend on fundraising. If you want to understand what participation in an unprovoked invasion of a Muslim nation looked like to French politicians, think of what cutting off U.S. aid to Israel, or a forcible American eviction of Jewish settlers from the West Bank, might mean in the next presidential election.

I am not arguing that the Muslim factor entirely explains French diplomacy nor that the position itself is superior to our own. I'm talking journalism here. It is simply a painful amazement to realize the extent to which platitudes, stereotypes and general official blah dumbed down the questions asked about an old ally. It's not only the French who deserve better American coverage of France.

What Are Fellowships For?

The Case of the Knighted Englishman and the Knight-Wallace Fellow from *NPR*

—By *Scott Huler '03*

My research project as a Knight-Wallace Fellow has focused on the Beaufort Scale of wind force, a remarkable 110-word gem of lucid descriptive prose that I stumbled across one day in the Merriam-Webster dictionary decades ago when I was a copy editor.

The scale categorizes the wind based on its force, breaking it into 13 categories from 0, calm, to 12, hurricane. Beaufort, a 19th-century British admiral, developed the scale to improve the information in ships' logs. Instead of a sailor writing that the wind blew "a light breeze," for example, which was open to interpretation, Beaufort devised a scale that gave that sailor something according to which he could measure—and quantify—his observation. As it has come down to us (you can find it in many dictionaries), the Beaufort Scale definition of "light breeze," which is number 2 on the scale, is "wind felt on face; leaves rustle; ordinary vane moved by wind." Each of the 13 designations of the scale has an equally lovely—and simple description.

To copy editors, of course, such simple, direct language is the Holy Grail, and when I found this beautiful description I fell in love with it. At the time, I was editing unbelievably dull prose about computers, and this little scale served as a constant reminder that prose, though simple, need not be dry. I returned to it regularly for

inspiration, like a favorite poem. A rather genteel, slow-motion pursuit of the scale's history over the last 15 years or so suddenly turned into full-fledged research when I received my Knight-Wallace Fellowship.

To understand the scale and its history, of course, I've researched, among other things, Sir Francis Beaufort, the general man of science for whom the scale is named. Because I was making my project into a book (for Crown, an imprint of Random House), I feared that the fellowship trip to Buenos Aires in December might conflict with the time I needed to spend in libraries and at the keyboard. Then I learned that Beaufort was most famous in his own day as a hydrographer, and that he took surveys, and drew the maps that made his reputation off Montevideo, Uruguay—a quick two-and-a-half hour ferry ride from Buenos Aires, where, of course, the Fellowship planned to take me. As ever, I'd rather be lucky than good.

So while Birgit Rieck, Lori Scott, and Wendy Palms planned our trip to Buenos

Aires, I contacted the Admiralty in England and got copies of Beaufort's charts and notes from Montevideo. Beaufort, I learned, did a lot more than read his sextant and take harbor soundings. To supplement that purely quantitative work he made incessant sketches—lovely sketches of coastlines the world over dot his journals and the charts he produced. The drawings, I thought, were analogous to the crisp prose of the scale itself: the simplest and purest way to get information across.

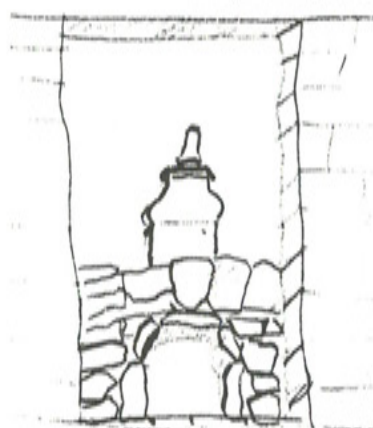
I thought they were exquisite, and I wanted to do the same.

To learn to see the world in something like the way Beaufort saw it, I took a drawing course at the UM School of Art. I learned to make quick pencil and charcoal sketches. I used Wallace House's copier and made sketchbook-size copies of Beaufort's drawings and charts of Montevideo. I packed a few pencils and erasers, enjoyed Buenos Aires with the Fellowship group, and then grabbed a bag, my sketchbook, my partner, and two patient other

Fellows and jumped the ferry *Juan Patricio* to see what Sir Francis saw.

Fellow Einat Fishbein and I were inexplicably able to use our week-long familiarity with Spanish to stammer our way onto the bridge with the captain, and from that vantage point I sketched away. Here are the results.

Scott Huler is a reporter and producer for Nashville Public Radio.



The apex of the old gate to the Ciudad Vieja, which was there in Beaufort's time, caught Huler's eye.



Beaufort focused on something more useful to sailors.

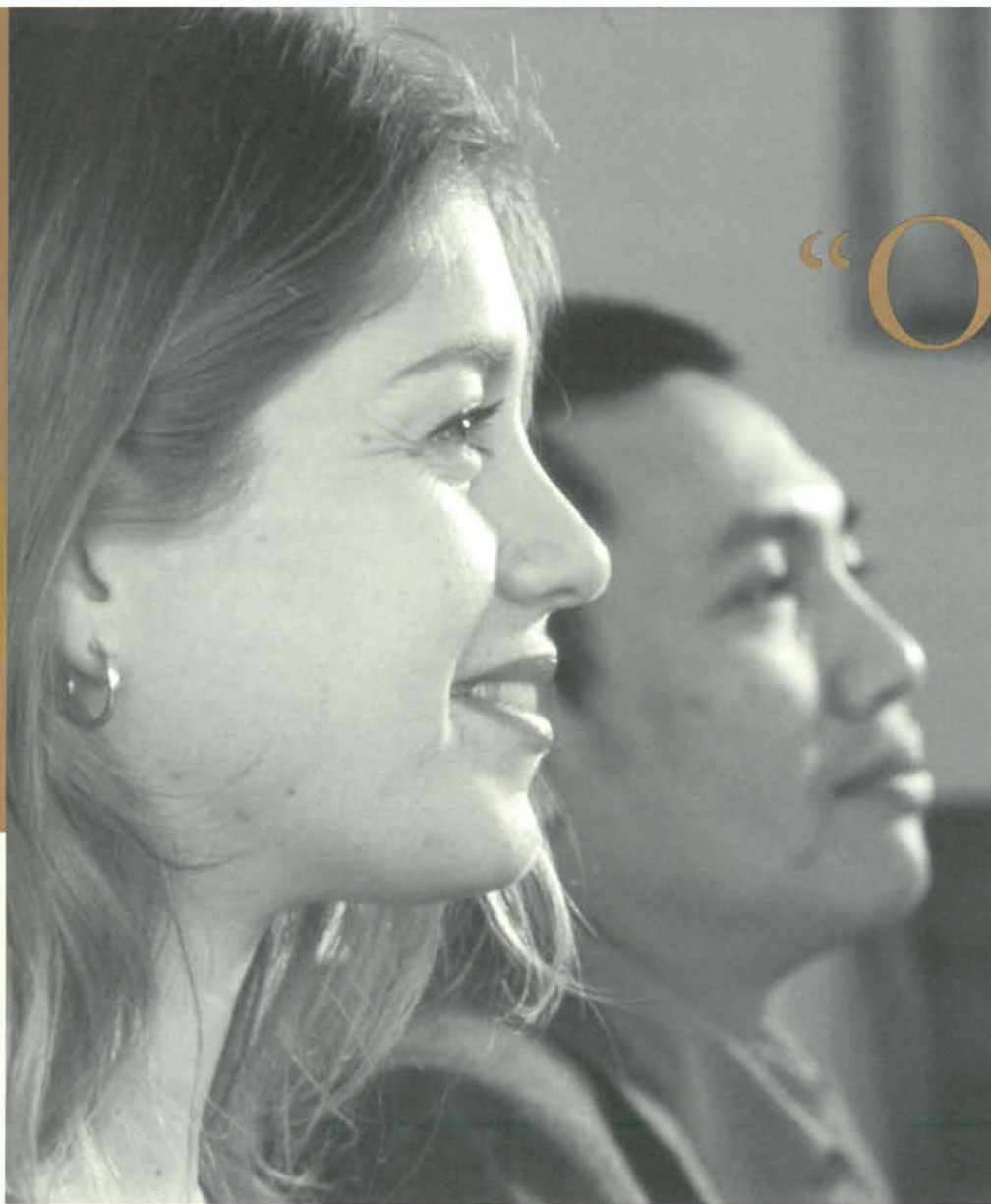
Beaufort ▼

Huler ▼



Sir Francis anchored off Montevideo for a month in 1807 and sketched the shoreline.

Mr. Huler had a few minutes to sketch the same scene from the deck of a ferry in 2003.



New “Opposite Sides”

Knight Foundation
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Major World
Conflicts

We begin with Islam and Israel—both journalists were asked, “How does the conflict look from Ann Arbor?”

—By *Muchlis Ainur Rofik '03*

“The campaign is failing. The perception of the U.S. effort, shopkeepers and scholars alike say, ranges from insincere at best to hypocritical at worst.”

Those words, written by Julie Chao of Cox News Service and published by Pacific Currents, show how the United States has failed to win support among Indonesian Muslims for its war against terrorism.

For a long time, Indonesia has been recognized as a moderate Muslim nation and key ally of the United States. With the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, especially after September 11, Indonesia—the largest Muslim country in population—was expected to play a key role in the war against terrorism.

The mainstream media in the United States has pointed out many times since September 11 that Indonesia is a haven for Islamic terrorist cells. And many commentators are disappointed that Indonesia has been reluctant to take a decisive stand against those accused as key figures of Islamic terrorism networks.

As the United State began bombing in

Afghanistan and trying to break up Taliban cells throughout the world, anti-Americanism grew broadly—not only among Islamic fundamentalists but also among moderate Muslims and secular human-rights activists. Religious solidarity mixed here with the issue of human rights and nationalism.

The U.S. government, actually, has been



working hard to counter anti-Americanism. It has aired television ads, sponsored scholarships and student visits to the United States, and even organized a town hall-style exchange between Indonesian and U.S. studio audiences using satellite hookups.

But as far as I know, and as Chao has pointed out, the campaign is failing. U.S. actions speak louder than words. Many of its actions, such as restrictions on men from certain Middle Eastern and Muslim countries, including Indonesia, and its foreign policy, especially its unwavering support for Israel, disappoint many Indonesian people. A worldwide survey released in December by the Pew Research Center found that the number of Indonesians with a favorable view of the United States fell to 61 percent last year from 75 percent in 1999.

With a war in Iraq, such anti-Americanism could have troubling political and social consequences. Not only could a war cost the United States the support of moderate Islamic leaders, but it could also destabilize the Indonesian government and help radical groups gain more members.

As a graduate of Islamic institutions, I

entered journalism with a clear idealism. Before, I was an activist with a religious-based NGO (non-government organization). I was involved with many groups which promoted transformation—modernization, moderation, and tolerance—within Islamic society in Indonesia. With its powerful impact, I thought journalism could effectively promote to a powerful and wide audience the idea of Islamic moderation and tolerance.

With the tensions surrounding religious radicalism nowadays, not only in Indonesia, but all over the world, I am more curious about what should and could be done by journalism to promote a peaceful and moderate religious belief. Being here at Ann Arbor is, for me, a great blessing, because the entire Knight-Wallace Fellowship program really satisfies my curiosity. The program not only gives me a larger context for the problem, but more examples of good journalism.

One such example is Samantha M. Shapiro's article, "The Unsettlers," published recently in *The New York Times Magazine*. In the piece, Shapiro raised the very critical source of religious radicalism: Arab-Israeli conflict. Her article was about militant Jewish people who settled the hilltops of the West Bank and who have no interest in compromise or peace plans.

Islamic radicalism, with its effect today everywhere in the world, is, of course, a very serious problem. But, by reporting on these other radicals, Shapiro gave a balanced perspective, a dissenting voice within mainstream media which prefer to focus mainly on the Islamic radicalism. Shapiro also gave me an important example of how media should understand the larger context of the so-called "war against terrorism."

As for the worsening circumstances of anti-Americanism and the rise of religious radicalism—as are now happening in Indonesia and in many Muslim countries—I thought it actually could be avoided. Anti-Americanism and the growing tension surrounding religious radicalism—as was pointed out by Shapiro's piece—is to some extent a result of misrepresentations in U.S. mainstream media. Having been in the States for more than six months, I found that mainstream media tend to misrepresent "the tree" for "the forest," by focusing on the U.S. Administration and the domestic agenda.

As I have learned that radicalism usually stems from this kind of one-sided perspective, I believe journalism now is in need of a broadened and enlarged coverage.

Muchlis Ainur Rofik is an assignment editor for Metro-TV in Jakarta.

—By Einat Fishbain '03

People say that living all your life in a small place may not be the best way to know and understand things about the world. I guess they could be right, but as far as I can see, living your entire life in a big place, even one as huge as the United States, is no guarantee for understanding the world, either. Maybe the best way is to move between locations, listening to people, collecting information as well as a lot of disinformation, and trying to find out what the truth is. The only useful thing you can take with you is common sense.

Common sense always told me that there are not many essential differences between Jews and Muslims, nor in the only model I know, Israelis and Palestinians (by "Israelis" I refer to Jewish Israelis, and by "Palestinians" both to citizens of Israel and to the inhabitants of the Palestinian authority). I thought that the "one-hundred-year-old-hatred" was no more than a political slogan, a way of helping our leaders justify their incitement of anger and violence. I thought that only a psychological process of acknowledging each other's (both Israeli and Palestinian) memories, fears, and hopes would give us a future. Common sense told me that we would need a lot of time and patience until we were ready to change our leaders (no more generals, veterans, or war-lovers) and to make life in that land possible for all of us.

There have been moments while being here, in Ann Arbor, that it all seemed so simple and almost within reach. In last October's national student conference of the Palestine Solidarity Movement, I saw American Jews and Palestinians standing side by side, sharing the same vision, the same language, and the same status. They called for economic divestment from Israel, but behind those words I thought I could hear young people talking about peace and their wish to live together in peace.

That was an optimistic moment. Since then my feelings have changed. My understanding of how people here wish to see our conflict, and how much impact they have on it, has come in small steps (and after a lot of seminars at Wallace House). The pictures from Israel on television almost always look the same—bombs from each side, nothing like the life there as I know it. Nothing about the daily routine of two societies, both divided, multi-dimensional, economically broken, and morally destroyed after 30 years of occupation. Such information is crucially influential and

yet is, in many cases, partial and distorted. Israel is represented as part of American interests in the Middle East, while the Palestinians are identified with the "Muslim terror."

Right now, from my vantage point here in Ann Arbor, it seems like both sides, Israelis and Palestinians, are little more than puppets being controlled by greater powers and interests. Our conflict is actually about land rights, but it may be in the U.S. interest to redefine it as a rift between Jews and Muslims, or worse, Muslims and non-Muslims. Meanwhile, an American president leads a war that is supposed to make the world a safer place, and my



friends back home tell me about their new gas masks. The next few months in Israel will be filled with fear and uncertainty for both Israelis and Palestinians; our future may well be determined by other interests.

But I can't believe that people are unable to control their own future, or at least I don't want to believe it. Therefore, I no longer want to discuss the Jewish-Muslim conflict in the terms that this part of the world wants to use. I want to go home and deal with a problem, deep and complicated as it is, that is ours and that can only be solved by the two peoples who have to live together in that place that is our home.

Einat Fishbain is a freelance journalist, based in Tel Aviv, who specializes in social issues.

All photos this page: Philip Dattilo

Our Great Geniuses

Mike Baker '00, education correspondent for the *BBC*, recently won the Edexcel/Linney UK Education Journalist of the Year Award for 2002, the only award in Britain for education journalism. The award was given for a body of work — Baker's network television reports, including a special on education in Jamaica, and his weekly column on the *BBC News* website.



Mike Baker

Not long after returning from his Michigan stint, Baker gave a lecture on "Does Education Get the Media It Deserves?" as Visiting Professor at the Institute of Education at London University. His talk was later published as a pamphlet by the university.

case. They are continuing the investigation and when finished will decide whether or not there is evidence to have the case reopened. I am hopeful, as are the men and their families."

Sanders LaMont '78, ombudsman for *The Sacramento Bee*, has been made president of the Organization of News Ombudsmen, an international group of about 100 ombudsmen from approximately 17 countries. He was elected at the group's annual meeting in Salt Lake City last year and will preside at this year's conference in Istanbul. "The group serves as something of a professional self-help (or is it therapy?) group for those of us privileged to serve as ombudsmen, reader representatives, and various other titles," LaMont says.

A series on mentally ill juvenile offenders by **Steve Twedt '99** will receive Amnesty International USA's only newspaper award this year. Twedt, a reporter for the *Pittsburgh*

Post-Gazette, was invited to the group's Media Spotlight banquet in New York in April, but the event was canceled due to budget and war concerns.

In the four-part "It's a Crime" series, Twedt followed the stories of three teens for more than a year, documenting how mentally ill and emotionally disturbed teens languish in detention centers and corrections facilities for months and even years. After the series was published, Pennsylvania state officials mandated uniform mental-health screening in all state juvenile corrections facilities.

Barry Yeoman '95 has recently published two major articles: a piece in the February '03 issue of *Discover*, about efforts to link abortion and breast cancer, and an article in the March '03 debut issue of *AARP: The Magazine* (a relaunch of *Modern Maturity*) about physician-assisted suicide.

Milton Priggee '01 won first prize in the "First International Internet Cartoon and Caricature Contest in Iran." The contest, which drew 475 entries from 34 countries on the topic of "Palestinians are homeless," interested Priggee specifically because it was an Internet competition emphasizing "graphic commentary."

"For the general public the biggest difference was being able to see not only all the award winners' work but to see and compare the entire field of 475 entries from 34 countries," Priggee writes. "All these different cultures commenting on the same subject. The Palestinians are a subject that most of the world is aware of yet views from many different positions." Priggee's winning entries, including the one below, can be viewed at <http://www.irancartoon.com/cartooncontest/index.htm>



Patrice Gains

Patrice Gaines '90 spent a significant part of the last six years of her time at *The Washington Post* investigating a 1984 murder, becoming convinced that eight men incarcerated for murder were innocent. She says she found major evidence police never told defense attorneys about that would have shed substantial doubt on the guilt of the men.

"Since leaving the *Post* I continued my 'crusade for justice,' persuading others and organizations to offer their support (including the Center on Wrongful Convictions at Northwestern University)," she says. "At my urging, early in February the Innocence Project in Washington D.C. decided to accept the

BOOK CORNER

Frank Cammuso '98

has recently published two books: *2007-Eleven* (Villard, 2000), a collection of his humor pieces done with writing partner Hart Seely, and *Max Hamm, Fairy Tale Detective*, "a cross-genre graphic novel."

Max Hamm, which parodies the classic Little Golden Books, is part "children's book, part comic book, and all hard-boiled mystery," he says.

Cammuso decided to self-publish the book because he wanted complete control of the project. "Because of technological advances in printing and desktop publishing, producing a book is relatively affordable," he says. "And since this is basically a comic book, distribution was simple because one company (Diamond Comics) handles 90 percent of the market." A second book based on the Max Hamm character is due out in the summer.



John Fountain

In June, Public Affairs Books (led by Peter Osnos '74) will publish **John W. Fountain's** memoir, *True Vine: A Young Black Man's Journey of Faith, Hope, and Clarity*. Fountain '01 is a national correspondent for *The New York Times*

based in Chicago.

True Vine is Fountain's story of how he grew up in one of Chicago's toughest neighborhoods, becoming a father at 17 and a welfare case not long after, and the religious awakening that saved him. According to the Public Affairs website, Fountain wrote the book in every spare moment he had during the last two years on assignment for the *Times*, including many days and nights at his local Starbucks.

It took **Stephen Franklin '85** four years to write his book, *Three Strikes: Labor's Heartland Losses*

and *What They Mean For Working Americans*, published in 2001 by Guilford Press. Franklin is labor and workplace reporter for *The Chicago Tribune*, and his book chronicles three strikes in Decatur, Illinois in the 1990s and the lasting scars they left on the community. The work really began, Franklin says, "way back when I was at Michigan and meandered about, thinking about how to deal with laid-off workers." Studs Terkel gave the book a blurb, calling it "labor reporting at its best."

What You See in Clear Water: Life on the Wind River Reservation is the latest book by **Geoffrey O'Gara '88**. *What You See* recounts the history of the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, including a recent battle for water rights between the Indians of the reservation and neighboring white farmers. The book, which came out in paperback last year, won an award for best nonfiction from the Western Writers of America. O'Gara is serving this year as a visiting writer at the University of Wyoming.

Robert Press '86 says his book on Africa is "a direct outgrowth" of his Michigan fellowship year. *The New Africa: Dispatches from a Changing Continent* came out in 1999 from the University of



Robert Press

Florida Press, with 90 photographs by Robert's wife, Betty (who got started in photography through courses at Michigan). Based on hundreds of interviews, the book charts the surge of democracy in Africa in the early 1990s, often from the point of view of activists and ordinary people.

Press, a former correspondent for *The Christian Science Monitor*, has started a website, The New Africa Concept (<http://www.stetson.edu/~bhpress/index.html>), "for people who care about Africa and the people of Africa."

Michele Stanush '95 has written a fact-based novel with her father, Claude Stanush, called *All Honest Men*, coming out in April from Permanent Press. The novel, which received a starred review in Kirkus Reviews, is based on the true story of J. Willis Newton, a Texas sharecropper's son who became one of the most successful bank robbers ever.

Stanush also won a screenwriting contest in Texas for her script, "The Hole Thing" (loosely based on a short story by her father), "an oddball dramedy" about a guy with a passion for all kinds of holes (sink-holes, gravel pits, mole holes, rigatoni, etc.) Stanush says she is revising the script, which already has generated interest.



Michele Stanush

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Christiane Amanpour, chief international correspondent live from Tel Aviv via a satellite hookup provided by CNN.

After the attacks of Sept. 11, "The world came together in a sense of communal outrage," Amanpour said. "That good will has dissipated at an alarming rate." Today, much of the world views America as pursuing a unilateral foreign policy "willing to conduct one war after another in the Muslim world. The rest of the world and the U.S. are talking past each other to a degree that hasn't been seen in years," Amanpour said.

Meanwhile, those who remain in the main offices are shifting beats and budgets to meet the new reality. *National Public Radio* created a national security desk of reporters and editors, as well as beefing up its science and health coverage. Reporters have had to become instant experts on things like anthrax and smallpox—a job made more difficult by a tight-jawed administration and scientists unaccustomed to communicating to the media.

Maryn McKenna '99, science and medicine writer for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, talked about the difficulties of finding experts on anthrax in the fall of 2001.

Those who were willing to talk to the press knew little; those who understood anthrax were instructed by the FBI not to talk.

The result was sometimes inaccurate, often sensationalized reports on the danger to the public. "When people are frightened, they don't process information as quickly," said McKenna. "We should be extraordinarily careful not to scaremonger."

In the aftermath, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention added more press officers. "Until (the anthrax attacks), people in public health considered journalists as an interruption to our real work," said F.E. Thompson Jr., deputy director for public health programs at the

CDC. "Now, many of us realize that it is only through the media that we can effectively communicate to the public."

The war in Iraq and the constant drumbeat of potential terrorist attacks in the U.S. are straining the budgets of media outlets. With additional reporters in the field in the Middle East, "satellite phone costs are through the roof," said *NPR's* Klose.

No one was willing to predict when the changes would end, and what journalism would look like by then. "When the battle front is your home," said Miller, "your jobs as journalists are going to be very different."

Ron French is a reporter for The Detroit News.

For more information on the conference and video highlights go to www.kwfellows.org



Panelists address half the crowd; overflow attendees watched a big screen monitor.



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