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Nieman Reports

TO PROMOTE AND ELEVATE THE STANDARDS OF JOURNALISM



Censored

The government blocked social media searches for this instant noodle brand
How journalists and bloggers are working around China's resurgent censorship



VINCENT YU/ASSOCIATED PRESS

To get around censors, Chinese bloggers refer to June 4, 1989, the date of a deadly government attack in Tiananmen Square, as May 35

COVER PHOTO BY JONATHAN SEITZ

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Cristian Lupsa, NF '14

Season of Dreams

The latest round of Nieman applications reveals that journalists around the world share common concerns and ambitions

Winter is Nieman's season of dreams. The applications pour in from elite newsrooms and single-person startups, from G8 nations and nearly invisible economies. Most of the international files arrive electronically, but some come to us handwritten, penned and pieced together by journalists living in places where Internet access is sporadic or unavailable. Uniting them all is a hunger for the education, support and transformation that is the Nieman Fellowship year.

When the Nieman Foundation was founded in 1938, only Americans could apply. Our archives are rich with the plans and longings of U.S. journalists who for three-quarters of a century have sought the direction promised by a year at Harvard. On the occasion of our 75th anniversary this past fall, I read one archived application typed on crisp vellum paper. The journalist's credentials included coverage of township committee meetings held in converted farmhouses and a series that placed third in the American Trucking Association's annual Award for Distinguished Public Service. He had advanced to a larger newspaper, *Newsday*, and the forces shaping Long Island compelled him to seek new reporting muscle at Harvard, studying the emerging field of urban and regional planning.

"It is to procure this education that I apply for a Nieman Fellowship," he wrote, and in sturdy black ink signed his name, Robert A. Caro. Caro's first book, "*The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*," would emerge from his Nieman studies, and he would go on to become one of the nation's preeminent biographers.

But when Nieman began accepting international journalists in 1951 a new, more urgent dimension was added to the applicant pool—journalists seeking not only edification but an escape from persecution and sometimes prosecution; relief from censorship;



ANDY WONG/ASSOCIATED PRESS

China sent its first Nieman Fellow to Harvard in 1981. The total now stands at 24

Some journalists seek not only edification but an escape from persecution and sometimes prosecution

and a set of colleagues with shared values to help them recalibrate an ambition for what journalism makes possible.

China, the subject of this issue's cover story, sent its first Nieman Fellow to Harvard in 1981. Since then, 23 more have followed. The story of their work is also the story of a changing China and, most recently, of journalists who face the same technological and commercial disruptions redefining news in the West. Layer this with the threat of repressive government actions for reporting deemed dangerous or simply inconvenient and the applications from China reflect a particular sort of longing.

"I have to admit that sometimes I feel *tu long fa shu*, or 'lacking the skill to kill the dragon,'" one Chinese applicant wrote us.

During one applicant interview, a passionate and gifted Chinese reporter began describing his hopes for his career "if" he remained a journalist. We were taken aback. "Why if?" I asked. He explained the challenge of confronting the censor's line without crossing it and wasn't certain how much longer he could stay true to his high standards. He would rather give up journalism, he said, than debase his reporting or pull a punch.

One senior editor put it this way in a letter of recommendation for the reporter: "Many newspapers humiliate themselves first before they are humiliated by the government."

Hu Shuli, the editor in chief of China's Caixin Media Co. and winner of Nieman's Louis M. Lyons Award for Conscience and Integrity in Journalism, writes in this issue about a particularly insidious form of media debasement: "rent-seeking," the taking of

bribes in exchange for writing stories. It's a bitter fruit, she says, of China's distinct media landscape.

"The problem is, in China's peculiar political and media environment, where some media companies are government-linked, excessive interference and an absence of supervision co-exist, making it easier for people to succumb to temptation, be it commercial or political," she writes. "Thus, some media firms smear companies that refuse to place ads with them, while others are happy to sell themselves as public relations tools. Such practices are no secret within the industry; some even brag about them."

While journalism in China is attracting a level of attention on scale with the country's growth as a world power, the challenges there are replicated across the globe in countries less scrutinized by American media. Chronicled in Nieman applications, the hardships and yearnings transcend geography and merge into a remarkably coherent and seemingly universal journalistic language.

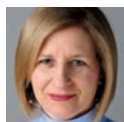
In one application, a reporter from the Middle East describes a courageous editor who resisted government pressure to fire him following an exposé that angered authorities. His response yokes him to Chinese journalists he has never met: he published another series of stories revealing government malfeasance.

His goal? To be "unsilenceable," he wrote us.

An ocean away, a young blogger in a country with state-run media and few press freedoms types her own application. Her frustrations would be familiar to other international journalists, as would her desire for journalism to help inform and shape her country's future.

She has asked a friend for advice and he has told her about Nieman—"the best opportunity in the world for any journalist," he has said. "The people who go there want to change the world."

"I want to be in a place," she wrote in this season of dreams, "where people go to change the world."



Ann Marie Lopez

Nieman's New Visiting Fellows

Five journalists have been selected as Visiting Fellows for the 2014 calendar year. Each will spend a short period of time at Harvard University to work on a project designed to enhance journalism in a unique way.



Taylor Goldenstein, a recent graduate of the University of Illinois's journalism program, will work on a website that will provide a forum for college journalists to converse and collaborate; offer advice from professional critics on topics ranging from reporting to app development; and showcase the front pages of participating college newspapers.



Samar Padmaker Halarnkar, a writer and former managing editor of the Hindustan Times, will study ways to build an inexpensive model for mobile phone-based public interest journalism in which journalists, non-journalistic organizations, and readers can collaborate on investigations.



Tina Pamintuan, the director of radio projects and initiatives at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, will research and develop a plan for a mobile app that will enable ethnic radio stations across the United States to reach more audiences and share programming.



Allissa Richardson is an assistant professor of journalism at Bowie State University. At Harvard, she will work on developing a mobile journalism MOOC project, a free online educational resource that will teach veteran journalists, citizens and journalism students how to report news using only tablets, MP3 players, or smartphones.



David Smydra, who works on Google's news partnerships team, will develop an industry-wide method for organizing future news events into structured data that will be accessible via an open, collaborative calendar. Such a calendar will enable journalists and audiences to see beyond ephemeral daily news and better comprehend stories that have a lasting impact on their lives.

The Visiting Fellowship program at Nieman was established in 2012 to invite individuals with promising research proposals to advance journalism to take advantage of the many resources at Harvard and the Nieman Foundation. Those who are welcome to apply include publishers, programmers, designers, media analysts, academics, journalists and others interested in enhancing quality, building new business models or designing programs to improve journalism.

Visiting fellows have included:

Daniel Eilemberg, who credits Harvard Business School with helping him refine and expand his plans to redesign and rebuild his Animal Politico website, a leading online news source for Mexican and U.S.-Mexican news.

Hong Qu, who used his time on campus to develop his Keepr app, which extracts credible information from raw Twitter feeds.

Paul Salopek, who prepared for Out of Eden, his epic 21,000-mile walk around the world, which was the focus of National Geographic's December 2013 cover story.

Kate Smith, who delved into the Ernest Hemingway and Martha Gellhorn archives in Boston to research the writers' war reporting. Her work focused on the role that moral truth and moral courage play in coverage of war.

"Access Is Overrated"

The New Yorker's Jane Mayer, winner of the 2013 I.F. Stone Medal for Journalistic Independence, on the adversarial nature of reporting

Before joining *The New Yorker* in 1995, Jane Mayer spent 12 years as a reporter at *The Wall Street Journal*, where she was the paper's first female White House correspondent. At *The New Yorker*, she covers politics and the war on terror. After receiving the I.F. Stone Medal for Journalistic Independence during the Nieman Foundation's 75th anniversary celebration in September, Mayer talked about challenging official narratives, the distinction between reporting and espionage, and the high price of journalistic independence. Edited excerpts:

On sources

I've got huge respect for many of the government officials I've covered, but at the same time I have to agree that the relationship between those of us in the press and the people we cover, if you do your job right, is full of tension and often downright hostility.

I.F. Stone was famous for being an outsider who disparaged some of the insiders like Walter Lippmann. While I think there's room for both kinds of coverage, I tend to agree with Stone on his skepticism about getting too cozy. I learned this lesson early on.

Not long after coming to Washington in 1984 to cover the Reagan White House for *The Wall Street Journal*, I learned that Reagan's embattled national security adviser was about to resign. I quickly went to see him and asked him about this point-blank, and with warm brown eyes that kind of looked like a trustworthy Labrador retriever, he looked across the desk at me and told me that he had absolutely no plans to resign.

I may be telescoping this in memory, but as I remember it, the very next day after I had shelved my story, they announced his resignation and I was stunned. Government officials lie. They lie to reporters boldly and



Jane Mayer | *The New Yorker*

USA-ARIBOL

straight-faced. It taught me that access is overrated. Never forget that the relationship between reporters and the subjects in power that we cover is, by necessity, one that is adversarial and sometimes full of

distrust and opposition.

Small lies, like that one, seem relatively minor today now that we've seen things like a government practically manufacturing a false rationale for a war.

On independence

As we deal with the augmented powers of the growing national security state, it's worth remembering that those in power are rarely on the side of fully free and transparent coverage.

A minor brush I had in the Reagan White House alerted me to this dynamic. Eager to reveal the extensive and expansive stagecraft behind Reagan's presidency, I thought it would be great to fly to Grenada ahead of the president's visit there to celebrate the first anniversary of America's victory over leftist forces on the tiny backward Caribbean island. So I went to Grenada a week ahead of the president and I watched as his image advisers oversaw the paving of all these little dirt roads, and one Air Force cargo plane after the next landed in this little dirt patch of an airport carrying limousines and ambulances and bleachers and flags and everything else.

It made for a great story, but when the offending story was published, what I remember was sitting in the press briefing room and the president's spokesman at the time, Larry Speakes, looked across the podium at me. He was red-faced and angry and he said, "You are out of business!"

My colleagues at the time thoughtfully and generously held a going-out-of-business sale. They carried my desk and chair onto the lawn of the White House. But behind the hijinks was a serious message, which is that when reporters challenge the official narrative, those in power are going to push back, and sometimes very hard.

In that long ago minor instance, my access dried up completely and I soon found myself berated by editors for missing stories. I was unable to get a single phone call returned. The price of independence is high. They really do sometimes want to put you out of business.

On dissent and treason

Today, however, the threat isn't just about being put out of business. It's about being put in jail. The government's growing

prosecution of national security leakers under the Espionage Act is a watershed escalation of the longstanding tensions between the government and the Fourth Estate, blurring the distinction between journalism and espionage, and between dissent and treason.

I fear that vital coverage will be in peril if we allow this to become the new normal. The chill is already palpable. Several sources of mine have faced federal investigations. They've had to hire lawyers at draining personal expense. Just a few weeks ago, a new potential source asked whether his e-mails and phone calls were protected if he conversed with me. Even though I now know how to use an encrypted e-mail program, I couldn't really reassure him totally, which of course impedes news-gathering.

"It's worth remembering that those in power are rarely on the side of fully free and transparent coverage"

On withstanding pressure

I've been asked, at times, by the CIA not to publish things. We at The New Yorker, for instance, published the name of someone they asked us not to. It was not an undercover person but it was someone whose life might be in danger, they said, if we published it.

There was a very heated exchange over this. We decided to go with exposing the officer because he, first of all, had put his own name out in promotional material in some ways so it wasn't the biggest secret in the world, even though it would appear in a different context in this story. He, as far as my reporting appeared to show, had tortured somebody to death and I felt like it was important for there to be some kind of accountability.

I went to his house. I wanted to speak to him about it before we published it. I wanted to be able to show that people who end up torturing a detainee are not necessarily somebody who's completely

alien, but he was actually a family man who had been stuck in a very scared and scary position.

I thought it was important to show the larger dynamics of what happens when the government puts employees in a program where they might end up doing the wrong thing because they put so much pressure on them. In order to tell his story, I wanted to name him and we did and there were no repercussions, though he was really angry about it.

On interviewing

I think e-mail is a real problem for reporters. Among other things, people consider their answers in such a careful way that they don't just open up and hold forth. I think you get many fewer good quotes and



it's definitely degrading the final stories.

I've been meeting with people in person. On the [Thomas] Drake [whistleblower] story I flew to the other side of the country to interview someone who wouldn't stay on the phone for more than about a second.

It's very cumbersome. It's expensive. It's time-consuming. It requires people who really are committed to telling you things. In an age when every e-mail conversation produces a track record, you have to always conduct yourself as if you're in public. It makes it a little less fun, but I'd say it's still, to end with Izzy Stone, probably the most fun kind of life you could have. What was it he said famously? If he had any more fun he'd have to be arrested. I feel the same way.



The full video and transcript of Jane Mayer's talk are online at nieman.harvard.edu/mayer



JESSICA RINALDI/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Malala Yousafzai, at Harvard last fall, survived a Taliban assassination attempt on her way home from school in 2012

Telling Malala's Story

Christina Lamb, NF '94, on getting to know the girl behind "I Am Malala"

Five years ago when I interviewed a schoolmaster campaigning against Taliban who had taken over his remote mountain valley of Swat in northern Pakistan, I couldn't imagine how it would change my life. He was the father of Malala Yousafzai, the girl who was shot by the Taliban for wanting to go to school, and so when they were looking for someone to help tell her story they contacted me.

I always try to tell my stories through people but as a foreign correspondent always flitting from one conflict to another, I don't kid myself that I ever really get to know what it is like for one family to live through such nightmares. So it was an amazing experience to spend half a year listening to one girl's story and co-authoring "I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up For Education And Was Shot By the Taliban," published last fall.

Sophisticated and eloquent, Malala is also an ordinary teenager

And Malala is an astonishing 16-year-old. Not only is she the bravest girl I have ever met but she has absolutely no bitterness at what happened to her. In fact she says her only regret is that she didn't get a chance to speak to the man who shot her so she could explain why it is important that girls like his own sisters and daughters go to school.

The girl behind the story is an endearing mix of being incredibly politically sophisticated and eloquent yet also an ordinary teenager who likes listening to Justin Bieber and playing cricket in the garden.

It's been a true privilege getting to know her and her family. My son at 14 is the

same age as her younger brother and our families have become friends.

Malala has stayed down to earth considering all the adulation she has received worldwide. Every time I go to their house there is another international award or bouquet from a celebrity. Her iPod was a gift from Bono (preloaded with U2 songs she'd never heard of!) and on her study wall is a collage by Angelina Jolie's daughter.

But, sadly, in her home country, it's a very different matter. If you look at Twitter or the Pakistan media you will see astonishing abuse denouncing her.

I feel angry that Pakistan refuses to embrace the girl who puts such a different face on their country than the Taliban and terrorism now so widely associated with it. Malala shrugs it off. "They are people who have been disappointed too many times by their leaders," she says.

Keeping the Faith

George Abraham, NF '95, offers an immigrant perspective in Canada

A resident of Canada since 2002, I have been a commentator on immigration and foreign policy matters for mainstream media organizations across the country. A few years ago it dawned on me what editors were really after when they hired me: an immigrant's perspective. In 2011, I gathered three friends around my dining table to put soil around that idea of "immigrant journalism." The result was my new venture, New Canadian Media. Inspired by the San Francisco-based New America Media, we offer that immigrant perspective on current affairs in Canada, highlighting topics of particular relevance to newcomers and all Canadians whose views are influenced by memories of another part of the world.

It's a growing market. Canada welcomes new immigrants at one of the highest per-capita rates in the world. One in five Canadians today is foreign-born, according to the 2011 Census. We serve those readers with original news articles, opinion pieces, and headlines aggregated from English-language ethnic media. Done right, these stories can spread. One piece by a Filipino-Canadian journalist, headlined "Why I Resigned as Editor," found resonance among immigrants from the Philippines, but also among the journalistic community.

I know that online media are a dime-a-dozen and the failure rate is high, but whenever the odds seem overwhelming I remember the reassuring words of Bill Kovach, my Nieman curator in 1995: "Keep the faith." Journalism in the 21st century requires us to be not just good interrogators, but also savvy entrepreneurs.



JONATHAN SEITZ

Johnston Gate, Harvard's main entrance to the Yard, has been neglected

Make an Entrance

"The Gates of Harvard Yard," an iBook by Blair Kamin, NF '13, profiles Harvard's 25 portals

I think I should just come right out and admit it: I've become obsessed with gates. I don't dream of them, but I fixate on them. Even when the word "gate" isn't in italics or boldface type, it jumps out as though it is. This obsession even intrudes at synagogue, where the world of work is supposed to be left at (ahem) the gates. "Open the gates for us, even now, even now, when the gates are closing," goes the plaintive liturgy at the end of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Such is the aftermath of what unexpectedly became the focus of my Nieman year: an e-book called "The Gates of Harvard Yard." The e-book's central themes are the visual glory of the 25 gates that enclose the Yard and Harvard's neglect of some of these historic portals, which largely were built between 1889 and 1936. The project, I'm pleased to report, has prompted concerned alumni to take action.

In a talk to the Harvard Club of Chicago, I showed images of gates covered with rust or surrounded by patches of dirt where there once were swaths of grass. A sapling was growing in one gate. A delicate wrought-iron leaf had fallen off another.

The message resonated with my audience because one of the neglected gates—the main entry to the Yard, Johnston Gate—was donated by a Chicagoan, Samuel Johnston, Class of 1855. A financier and real estate entrepreneur, Johnston suffered from bad eyesight, but he had an eye for beauty. When he died in 1886, he left \$10,000 "for the erection of a gate at the main entrance of the college yard, Harvard University."

At the end of my talk, a club member threw me a softball question: Should we raise funds to beautify the gate? "Sure," I replied, "and I pledge the first five dollars." The crowd of more than 100 laughed, accepting my explanation that a journalist, especially one who works for a company just emerging from bankruptcy, can't also be a philanthropist. Since then, I've joined with a club member who's a landscape architect to confer with Harvard staff on alternative designs and budgets for a freshly landscaped Johnston Gate. We've even got a peg for finishing the work: 2014, when Harvard's main gate will be exactly 125 years old.



Master of the Craft

At the Nieman Foundation's 75th anniversary reunion, Robert A. Caro discussed the art of political biography with fellow Nieman Anne Hull

THROUGH HIS SCRUPULOUSLY researched books chronicling the rise to power of President Lyndon Johnson and New York urban planner Robert Moses, Robert A. Caro, NF '66, set a new standard for political

biography. Almost 40 years into his multi-volume Johnson biography and now at work on the fifth book, Caro remains fascinated by his subject.



As part of the Nieman

Foundation's 75th anniversary celebration in September, The Washington Post's Anne Hull, NF '95, conducted a Q&A with Caro about reporting rigor, interviewing techniques, and unreliable memories. Edited excerpts:

ANNE HULL: How did your newspaper reporting prepare you for your life as a biographer?

ROBERT A. CARO: I was thrown into investigative reporting. I was 23 years old, and I told my editor that I didn't know anything about it, and he said, "Just never assume a damn thing." He said, "Turn every page." That's really what I've tried to do.

When you get down to the [LBJ Presidential] Library, there's this glass wall, four stories high. You see all these boxes there with the presidential seal in 24-karat gold; they are the papers of Lyndon Johnson. The last time they released the figures they said they had 44 million documents there. You can't actually think of turning every page—it would take many lifetimes.

When I was doing the first volume ["The Path to Power"], which was about Lyndon Johnson as a congressman, I realized that the number of boxes that dealt with his congressional career was manageable. I said, "I'm going to do what I was taught and turn every page in there."

People are always asking me, "How did you find out about how Lyndon Johnson used money in his political career?" There's a point where Johnson suddenly gets national political power. He's a junior congressman, he's in his third year in Congress. It's October 1940.

When Johnson writes a committee chairman or another senior member of Congress, he's writing in the tone of a junior to a senior, very deferential. "Can I have a few minutes of your time?" All of a sudden, in November 1940, it's the other way around. The senior congressmen are writing him: "Can I have a few minutes of your time?"

I was asking all the people who remembered Johnson at that time, what happened in October 1940? I asked a guy named Thomas G. Corcoran, who was a political fundraiser and fixer, what happened in October 1940, and he said, “Money, kid.” He used to call me kid. “Money, kid, money. But you’re never going to be able to write about it.”

I asked why, and he said, “Because Lyndon Johnson never put anything in writing.” And of course, he was right. Johnson was a political genius, and he had thought of something: Although he was a junior congressman, there was one thing he had that no other congressman had. He was the only congressman who knew the big Texas oilmen and contractors who wanted all these favors and contracts from the government and were willing to give campaign contributions to get them. And he also knew all the liberal Northern congressmen who needed campaign contributions.

He persuaded the Texas oilmen to give money only

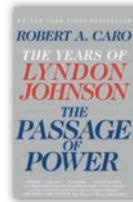
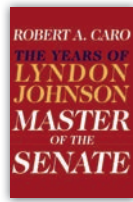
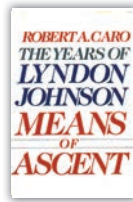
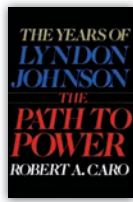
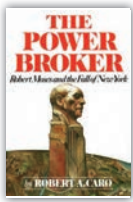
one more round of ads, I can win this.” “Lyndon, we need poll watchers. They’re trying to steal the election.” Whatever.

In the third column was how much the congressman had asked for. The amounts were so small then, \$1,000 or \$1,500.

In the lefthand margin, Lyndon Johnson had written something next to each name. Again, next to some of the names, it said, “OK.” I asked Connally what “OK” meant. He said that meant that Johnson was giving the amount the congressman had asked for.

Sometimes, in that lefthand column, Johnson had written “No,” which meant he was giving no money. But sometimes, he had written, “No. Out.” I asked Connally, “What did ‘No. Out.’ mean?” He said, “That guy was never going to get money.” [laughter]

You never crossed Lyndon Johnson. If I hadn’t been doing that simple thing and trying to turn every page, I never would have found that out.



From Robert Moses, the urban planner who never held elective office but wielded enormous power, Caro moved on to Lyndon Johnson, who made the U.S. Senate work

It takes a lot of work to get to that box with that one document. Back up the process a bit. How did you come to seize on Robert Moses as your first big subject? You were a Nieman then, in '65, '66. How did you spend your year at Harvard?

I had been covering politics in New York. It had gradually sunk in on me that although we all believed that power comes from being elected, here was a guy who was never elected to anything.

through him, and it became known in Congress that you had to go to him to get money, and that’s what happened. But I thought I was not going to be able to write about that in any detail.

Then I was going through all these boxes, and there were all these file folders that seemed to have nothing to do with anything you’re interested in. I was going through one, which seemed to have nothing to do with the label on it, but all of a sudden, there was a telegram from George Brown of Brown and Root, which was the firm that was really financing most of this. And the telegram began, “Lyndon, hope you received the checks.” [laughter]

I was going through other boxes. All of a sudden, I came across a list that was compiled by John Connally, Lyndon Johnson’s administrative assistant.

The list contained three columns. In the lefthand column was the name of the congressman who had asked Johnson for money. In the center column was what he wanted the money for. “Lyndon, if I just have

He had more power than any governor, more than any mayor, more than any governor and mayor combined. He had held this power for 44 years.

I had no idea where this power came from, and I was supposed to be writing about political power. I had realized that when I was at Newsday. The reason I was coming up here was to learn more about urban planning, which I didn’t know anything about. I spent a lot of evenings thinking.

What I realized was I couldn’t possibly do this in the context of daily journalism. I would have to do a book [“The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York,” published in 1974]. I wrote a book proposal, and that got the world’s smallest contract. [laughter]

You and your wife ended up selling your house to subsidize this project. How did you decide to pursue something at that cost?

That’s a good question. Part of it was simply I had no idea how long it was going to take. The contract was too



MARTINE FOUGERON/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

Robert A. Caro, in his New York City office, writes the first three or four drafts of his books in longhand

small. I couldn't quit so for some months I was trying to start the book while I was still at Newsday. I wasn't getting anywhere at all with that.

There used to be this wonderful grant called the Carnegie Fellow in Journalism at Columbia University. They paid a reporter his salary for one year and gave him an office there while he wrote a book. I was sure I could finish this book in this year.

In fact, I told [my wife] Ina ... We had always wanted to go to France. I said, "I have this schedule. I'm going to be done in nine months. We're going to get three months in France." [laughter] At the end of the year, of course, I had hardly started. [laughter]

We were really broke. I came home one day, and Ina said, "I sold the house." This was before the real estate boom. We hadn't paid very much for the house, but after selling it, after the mortgage was paid off, we cleared about \$25,000. That was enough to live a year. But then I was still only starting ... [laughter]

After "The Power Broker" was published, how did you then seize on Johnson as a subject? Why LBJ?

I never thought of "The Power Broker" as being a biography of Robert Moses. I never had any interest in writing a book just to tell the life of a great man. I wanted to explain how political power worked in New York and really all the cities of America, how urban political power worked. That's what "The Power Broker" is supposed to be.

I had thought, while I was doing the Moses book, that if I could ever do another book, I'd have to pick the right man, like Moses, who had thought of ways to get power that nobody had thought of before.

I wanted to do national political power, and Johnson was the right man to do it because he made the Senate work. That was the thing I first focused on. When he was majority leader, the Senate actually worked and created legislation. Hard to believe, but it's true.

In the hundred years before Lyndon Johnson, the Senate was the same dysfunctional mess that it is today. Johnson becomes majority leader in January 1955 and for six years, the Senate works. It is the center of governmental energy, creativity and ingenuity in Washington. They write their own bills. The civil rights bill of '57 is Johnson's bill; it's not



MARTINE FOUGERON/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

Caro, now working on the fifth volume of his LBJ biography, sets himself a goal of writing 1,000 words a day

[President Dwight] Eisenhower's bill. Johnson leaves to become vice president, and in one instant, the Senate is back in the same mess that it was and has continued to this day.

If you could figure out how Johnson did it—what did he do that no one else did before or since?—then you would find out something about how power really works in Washington.

How did you approach that kind of reporting?

The great thing was, Johnson had died so young. He died in 1973. I was starting this book in '76 so the people who grew up with Johnson were still around. I would work in the Johnson Library from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and then I'd drive out into the Hill Country to interview one of these people.

I came to realize that there was something that they weren't telling me. They had seen reporters come, and they'd call them "portable journalists." Ever since Johnson's presidency, these reporters would come down for a week, and go back and write the true story of the Hill Country or the true story of Lyndon Johnson.

I finally said to Ina, "I'm not getting through to these people. I don't understand them, and I don't understand the Hill Country so I don't understand Lyndon Johnson." I said, "We're going to have to ... How do you feel about moving?" [laughter] Of course, she said, "Yes," and we rented a house for three years. We were probably there eight or nine or 10 months of each year.

As soon as the people realized that we were living there, that we had come to stay to try and understand them, the interviews became different, instantly. They started to tell me all the stories about Lyndon Johnson,

terrible stories about his ruthlessness.

Then you came to understand that the Hill Country was a big part of him. His favorite cousin Ava said to me, "Hey, you're a city boy. You don't understand the land, and if you don't understand the land you're never going to understand Lyndon Johnson."

She took me out to the Johnson ranch. Those of you who have read the book know that the central thing in Johnson's life was that his father, who he idolized, went broke and lost the Johnson ranch. The reason he went broke was he thought that the ranch could support a certain amount of mortgage because it would grow a certain amount of cotton. He didn't understand what the land was like.

She took me out there and said, "Now get out of the car and kneel down and put your fingers in the ground." There was almost no soil there. It's rock underneath.

She said, "You see, you can't make a mistake here. This isn't like a city where there are safety nets and things. Out here if you make a mistake, you lose your home." I suddenly thought about Lyndon Johnson, how he was the greatest vote counter in the Senate.

If you go down to the Johnson Library, one of the fascinating things that you see are the tally sheets when he was Senate majority leader. When you look at these tally sheets, the pencil marks are smudged. The reason they're smudged, I found out, is that Lyndon Johnson would go down these sheets. That was his thumb mark, and his thumb wouldn't move on to the next senator until he knew how the senator would vote.

He would send his staff out to talk to senators and they would say, "I think he's going to vote." Johnson would

just become infuriated. He said, “What good is ‘thinking’ to me? I have to know.” He never lost a close vote.

I thought back to, “You can’t make a mistake in life.” You know, that’s part of what made Johnson what he was.

Your excitement creates the narrative. Most of us would say, “Yeah, so,” but you’re still going at it. How do you maintain that sense of excitement, and what does a bad day look like for you?

I have a lot of really bad writing days. The first thing every morning, I read what I wrote the day before. I write the first three or four drafts in longhand, and then I type. I try to write a thousand words a day.

You have an office outside of the house, right?

Yeah. I get up every morning. I put on a coat and tie. People laugh at it, but the reason is my publisher is really wonderful. He never asks me when I’m going to be done. There is no deadline. My books take seven or eight years. You’re really in a vacuum, and it’s really easy to fool yourself that you’re working hard and you’re not. I wear a coat and a tie because when I was a reporter I wore a coat and a tie. It’s a trick to remind yourself you’re going to a job. You have to work.

How do you minimize distraction in your life?

I get phone calls, but I turn my machine off so I don’t get any during the day. I don’t have e-mail.

What about future Robert Caros who will have to deal with Twitter, Facebook, e-mail?

I think every technological change is significant at the time. Like when Johnson first got elected to Congress, long-distance telephone calls were very expensive so the phone wasn’t used that much. You get all these telegrams, “Call me, Lyndon. Something’s happened. Call me tonight.”

Johnson makes John Connally his administrative aide. His job is to go around to the courthouses in the 10 counties in Johnson’s district, and write Johnson a letter every week about what’s happening politically back in the district. They are masterpieces because John Connally is really a brilliant guy. These letters are like nine and 10 single-spaced pages. It’s like a course in rural politics.

Then, all of a sudden, long-distance telephone calls become more common. You have telegrams saying, “Call me. Big trouble down in this bay. Call me tonight.” You have to find a way of finding out what happened in that telephone call. You try and interview Johnson and you try and interview Johnson’s staff and you try and interview John Connally.

I’m sure there are going to be ways to find out stuff. It will just be ways I don’t know yet.

TYLER BRIDGES, NF ‘12: How do you get people to open up and tell you the truth?

I never talk to people off the record. I don’t know that I have any techniques, except the things I learned as a reporter. One is so obvious: I never interview by telephone. You learn so much from people’s faces. I don’t tape anything. I take notes on every interview.

One rule I have is, no matter how late it is, I will type up that interview before I go to sleep because I want to have it in my mind as fresh as possible, what my impressions were, how he acted when he was saying things.

I learned when I was a reporter if you just keep going back to people, interviewing them over and over again, the interviews just become completely different.

What have you learned about the reliability of people’s memories?

[Laughs.] Totally unreliable. You try to keep looking

“[LBJ’s] favorite cousin Ava said to me, ‘Hey, you’re a city boy. You don’t understand the land, and if you don’t understand the land you’re never going to understand Lyndon Johnson’ ”

for more records to show stuff or interview people over and over again.

I became great friends with Edward A. Clark, who was known as the secret boss of Texas. He ran Texas for like 25 years. I must have asked him about the stolen election of 1948. He said, “The one thing I won’t talk to you about is that stolen election.”

Clark would say, “Would you like to meet this guy? I’ll go with you.” He was really saying, “So the guy will talk to you.”

One time we were driving up to see a guy. I said to him, “You know, Ed. I’m about to write it now. If you don’t tell me now, no one will ever know.” Without another word, he just started telling me basically what is the story in “Means of Ascent,” of how Johnson stole that election. I pulled over to the side of the road and took out my notepad.



The full video and transcript of the interview are online at niemanstoryboard.org/caro

A Conversation and a Box of Kleenex

Lea Thau explains the editorial and emotional processes behind live storytelling

By Lea Thau

If a story echoes in the woods and no one hears it, is it still a story? Well, if it's a written story, perhaps yes, but a spoken story needs an audience, not just to affirm its existence but to become what it is. Until the moment when the storyteller steps out on stage, the story is but an idea.

And what a terrifying moment that is—to step out with no script or podium to hide behind and share something often deeply personal. The single biggest factor in the success of the story resides in the storyteller's ability to meet that challenge, to take in the audience, be in their presence, commune with them. If the storyteller succumbs to fear and shuts out the audience, the story dies. She may have a beautiful piece and recite it perfectly, yet fail to connect, precisely because she is reciting. She's performing at the audience rather than talking to them.

So how do you prepare a storyteller for that? How do you rehearse a story without turning it into a mere performance?

You start by mining for the emotional core. Before you can figure out how to tell a story, you must figure out what the story is. And because we all have blind spots when it comes to our innermost feelings and motivations, that “what” is often different from what the storyteller thinks it is. Many times, the point a storyteller wants to make doesn't match her emotional reality.

She thinks she's forgiven the man who left her in the lurch, but she is, in fact, still angry. Or she leaves out information that seems obviously relevant. (You're telling a story about saving orphans and only after hours of conversation do you reveal that you, too, were abandoned as a child. Do you think there's a connection?) Among directors we sometimes talk about the need to “break the storytellers,” to strip them of



DON BAYLEY/GETTY IMAGES

For journalists used to writing, speaking before an audience requires a new set of skills

their preconceived notions and of everything that's neat and pretty and clean in order to make them get real.

That's how it starts—with a conversation and a box of Kleenex. You ask all sorts of questions, looking for a live nerve, searching for what is at stake for the storyteller, what does she stand to lose or gain. For there must be stakes and they must be high, not objectively speaking, but in the context of her subjective reality. Stealing a cookie

is not as high-stakes as stealing the crown jewels, but inside the mind of the kid who might get caught, it very well could be. The storyteller must make those stakes palpable for the audience. She must provide the context that will make us sweat for her and know her. She must ask herself what we, the audience, need to know in order to understand not just what happened but what it meant. While the first step in the process is highly introspective—“How did

Stand and Deliver

Telling a story on the stage, not the page

By Alfredo Corchado

So, what's your story?" asked Lea Thau, creator of "The Moth Radio Hour." "I understand you came from Mexico as a young kid." Thus began a series of questions to figure out whether I had a story to tell on stage during the Nieman Foundation's 75th anniversary weekend.

Lea kept returning to one detail I had mentioned—the death of my sister Lupita when I was 4 and she was 2, and what the loss meant not just for me but for my entire family. Lupita's accidental drowning transformed our lives, ultimately forcing us to leave Mexico for the United States to start anew. "You have a compelling, powerful story to tell," Lea said. "Make that



LISA ABITBOL

Alfredo Corchado incorporates into his live storytelling the art of the pause

the tree, find the branches to decorate it with the right anecdotes. Watch it grow."

During subsequent conversations, Lea guided me through the story, picking spots through which to weave the narrative. Her

ear was set not so much to the facts of the story as to finding the climactic moments, teaching me the art of pausing, speaking clearly and firmly. I practiced by going around my neighborhood in Mexico City, with notes, reciting the story to myself.

Weeks later, during our last chat, Lea and I went through the story one last time. I had my notes close at hand. She said the talk sounded stilted, hollow, empty. "Your notes have become your worst enemy," she said. "Get rid of them." I put the notes away and practiced in elevators, during walks through Parque Mexico, with complete strangers—cabbies, the person sitting next to me on a flight to Boston. Each time, depending on the reaction of my audience, I learned where to pause, what lines worked best, which words to stress.

Something I instinctively knew as a journalist—that a good story is universal, whether you tell it in Spanish or English—was reaffirmed, and Lea taught me a new way of connecting with an audience.

Alfredo Corchado, a 2009 Nieman Fellow, is Mexico bureau chief for the Dallas Morning News

Often, the point a storyteller wants to make doesn't match her emotional reality. She thinks she's forgiven the man who left her in the lurch, but she's still angry

I truly feel?"—the next, equally important, step is to ask why anyone should give a damn or, more pointedly, "How can I make them give a damn?"

We shouldn't tell the story until we can say in one sentence what it is about—in the deepest sense. If you're telling a skydiving story, the answer is not "skydiving," because as awesome as that was for you, it is utterly un-moving for someone who wasn't there. Something deeper must be found to make it a story. In the process, you might discover that it was really about your relationship with your macho paratrooper father whom you'd always failed to impress, or about the midlife crisis you had after your wife left. By framing it in the context of a bigger theme, you take

the audience where the true suspense lies, which is never in the skydive. We know you survived that.

Sometimes, we uncover multiple themes and stakes, and then we must choose. A story can touch on multiple topics, but one must rule as its organizing principle. Listeners will take different things from the story, but the storyteller must know what the story is most about for him. Then he owns the story, and then he can face an audience. More work needs to be done before he goes on stage—building, editing, finessing the story, work that resembles the traditional relationship between writer and editor—but the first all-important step toward being fluid yet in control, prepared yet loose, and scared yet present once you take the stage is

to have walked the emotional minefield and uncovered every falsity, fantasy and dead end that the story is not until you know exactly what it is.

The first moments on stage are often ones of sheer terror. But if the storyteller stays open with the audience, it will reward him with a flow of attention and love that lifts him and makes him infinitely better than any director could have made him. The job of the director is merely to create the conditions where this is possible.



Lea Thau is producer and host of the public radio show "Strangers." She created "The Moth Radio Hour"



The Future Is Ours

How Hispanic media have moved out of niche markets and into the mainstream

By Laura Wides-Muñoz



JAE C. HONG/ASSOCIATED PRESS

In 1808, as Napoleon's forces marched across southern Spain, a group of Spanish exiles set up shop across the Atlantic in New Orleans. There, they capitalized on Louisiana's newly acquired First Amendment rights and churned out a four-page bilingual record of events back home, blasting the French occupation.

El Misisipí, the United States' first Spanish-language newspaper, lasted only two years, but it inaugurated more than two centuries of robust Hispanic media. From exiled Cuban poet José Martí's demand in the pages of Patria that Spain give his island independence to La

Opinión's coverage of the 1943 Zoot Suit Riots in Los Angeles to radio host Piolín's on-air promotion of the 2006 national immigrant marches, Spanish-language media have served as a voice and a life vessel for millions of immigrants and exiles in the United States.

For nearly as long as Hispanic media have existed, there has been an invisible wall between what was written on their pages (and later spoken on their newscasts and posted on their blogs) and what was seen and heard in the general market. Today that wall is rapidly crumbling. Changing demographics in the U.S. and global technological advances have induced once segregated

The concentration of Hispanics in major U.S. cities, such as Los Angeles, the site of a May Day rally last year, gives them outsized market influence



WILFREDO LEE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cesar Conde, an executive vice president at NBCUniversal, is among the few Hispanics who hold top jobs in general market media

markets to begin blending. Having covered Hispanic media for more than half a decade, I am often asked about its future. Increasingly, my answer is this: The future of Hispanic media is the future of U.S. media.

The numbers tell a good chunk of the story. The nearly 52 million Hispanics in the U.S. represent just 17 percent of the nation's population. Yet they are heavily concentrated in the nation's largest cities, including Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and Miami, giving them outsized market influence. In addition, two-thirds of these Latinos are native born, meaning English is their dominant, if not their first, language.

So what does this new blending look like? One example is the English-language Fusion cable and digital network, a collaboration between Univision and ABC News that launched in October. As I wrote for The Associated Press, Fusion is a bit of a grab bag: "Think Comedy Central, the hipster online magazine Vice.com, ABC and Univision, all in one."

ABC and Univision are on to something. They both need to hook the 18- to 35-year-old demographic so coveted by advertisers. The average Latino in the U.S. is 27 years old, the average non-Hispanic white American is 42. And yet market research has demonstrated that while second- and third-generation Latinos want content that reflects their experience, they don't want to be walled off from the mainstream.

So Fusion is also looking beyond Latinos to attract other millennials. The network remains in its infancy. And capturing a generation that views television as a quaint vestige from childhood is no small task. Still, Fusion's very existence is an acknowledgement by the general market and Spanish-language media giants that they need to keep up with this new generation.

It's easy to gloss over how quickly things have changed. It wasn't till the late 1990s that companies like Times Mirror Co. and Belo Corp. began publishing or buying Spanish-language papers in Los Angeles and Dallas to tap into the growing Hispanic market, says Felix Gutierrez, a University of Southern California journalism professor

and curator of a traveling exhibit about Latino newspapers in the U.S. And it wasn't until the 2000 Census showed Latinos moving into the South and Midwest that Spanish-language newspapers began popping up across Georgia and Kentucky.

Still, media experiments like Fusion were mostly unthinkable as recently as 2005 when I arrived in Miami to cover Hispanic affairs for The Associated Press. Back then Latinos were barely on the political radar. George W. Bush's success with Hispanic voters in 2004—he garnered as much as 44 percent of the Latino vote nationally and more than half in the swing state of Florida—drew fleeting attention from Washington politicians. The mainstream media was taken by surprise when in 2006 millions of Latinos took to the streets to protest congressional immigration bills.

Then came the election two years later of Barack Obama, who won more than two-thirds of the Latino vote in an unprecedented turnout. Spanish-language outlets had orchestrated massive Hispanic voter registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns. Suddenly, the story wasn't just about the changing demographics of the country; it was about the changing demographics of the media. By

The same bloggers who are breaking down mainstream media empires are also breaking down the barriers between Spanish and English

the time the 2010 Census was released, the mainstream had finally discovered Hispanic media.

I've lost count of the flurry of new Hispanic media outlets and websites that have launched in the last three years, most of them in English, often partnerships with or spawns of general market media. There's CNN en Español, NBCLatino.com, and a Fox News Latino website in English as well as its cousin MundoFox in Spanish. The Huffington Post unveiled HuffPost Latino Voices.

Part of this trend reflects the increasingly fragmented media industry. To some extent these Latino-themed sites allow news about Hispanics to remain segregated, or at least off general market front pages. And they haven't all succeeded. NBC canceled NBCLatino in November, promising to roll the content into its NBC News site.

Yet they also provide more avenues and more resources not only for Latino-focused stories, but also for Latino journalists, to rise in the corporate ranks. While top brass from general market media organizations have often gone on to lead Hispanic media companies, this fall Cesar Conde, the former president of Univision Networks who helped pave the way for Fusion, became an executive vice president at NBCUniversal.

Hispanic media have long proven they can serve as an ally and guide for often overlooked audiences, particularly

when it comes to immigration. Now the question is to what extent these news sites will go beyond this box to provide more accountability reporting on other issues.

For example, Latinos were disproportionately hit by the foreclosure crisis, but the story is not just about the struggles they face in the housing market. It's also about the structures of Wall Street and Washington, and about the policymakers whose actions—or lack thereof—created the foreclosure crisis, as well as what these players are now doing to truly address the problems.

That kind of reporting requires more resources and maybe even a general media partner. But this is also the kind of story that could keep second- and third-generation Latinos and even policymakers paying attention. It is, in a sense, a shift from covering Latinos as a minority to covering Latinos as part of the majority.

At the same time, major news outlets must rethink the artificial walls between coverage of immigration and Hispanic affairs and other subjects such as trade tariffs, labor policy, and the arts. Part of that shift means putting more people who look like the rest of America in the field, in the editor's chair, and in the corporate news boardroom. Conde notwithstanding, Latinos, like other minorities, remain woefully underrepresented in most newsrooms and media boardrooms.

Latino media in Spanish aren't likely to fade away any time soon. They will retain a healthy market as long as demand continues for cheap labor, and as long as drug violence, economic stagnation, and political upheaval propel families to head north. The recent Federal Communications Commission proposal to relax rules barring foreign companies from owning more than a quarter share of U.S. radio and TV stations could even herald Spanish-language media expansion.

What is fading away is the notion that politicians and other leaders can get away with saying different things in different languages. As recently as a few years ago, you could turn on the Cuban exile-supported Spanish-language Radio Mambí in Miami and hear a local politician call an opponent a rabid communist, then hear the candidate switch to English a few hours later and extol the virtues of civil dialogue. These days, though, what plays in Spanish no longer stays in Spanish.

During a heated 2010 campaign, U.S. Representative Loretta Sanchez, a Democrat from Southern California, railed against her Republican opponent Van Tran, a Vietnamese-American businessman, on Spanish-language television. Sanchez called him "very anti-immigrant and very anti-Hispanic." Within hours, a GOP blogger had picked up her comments, and the national Republican Party demanded she apologize to her immigrant opponent. Sanchez won the election but endured charges of racism.

Interestingly, it wasn't the California Republican Party that picked up her comments, but a lone, albeit partisan, blogger. As futurist Nicco Mele writes in "The End of Big," "Not long ago three big television networks and a



JULIE JACOBSON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

handful of big newspapers dominated the news; now, thanks to the Internet, less than 40% of people get news from traditional sources, with many turning to upstart blogs." It seems the same bloggers who are breaking down the mainstream media empires are also breaking down the barriers between Spanish and English.

It's still unclear where second- and third-generation Hispanic Americans will turn for their news. Gutierrez believes people turn to the fastest, most accurate report for breaking news. "But for consistent news consumption, people generally pay attention to people who pay attention to them," he says.

Fusion is betting the two aren't mutually exclusive—that it can direct content to Hispanic America and be part of the mainstream conversation as well. "We want to follow what's popular in social media," veteran Spanish-language journalist and now Fusion news anchor Jorge Ramos said on his inaugural show back in October. "But also, as journalists, we want to report on issues that we care about deeply, too. We want to be a bridge between those two Americas."

As the border between Hispanic and mainstream media blurs, new formats and outlets are rising up that look and sound unlike their predecessors. The change may be jarring to some, and the recipe remains a work in progress, but the result will likely be an industry better poised to cover the news and to adapt to a new generation of media consumers.

Immigration reform, the focus of a protest last May in Las Vegas, is covered thoroughly by Hispanic media. They now face the challenge of expanding their reporting to other issues that affect Latinos



Laura Wides-Muñoz covers immigration and Hispanic affairs for The Associated Press. Based in Miami, she has reported from Cuba and Guatemala



Videos from a conference at the Nieman Foundation about covering immigration are online at nieman.harvard.edu/immigration

Command



and Control

A deadly crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, at right, continues to reverberate. In the photo illustration above, Pavel Maria Smejkal removed the tanks and bus from the iconic image, a visual nod to censorship

The state of journalism in China, 25 years after Tiananmen



STUART FRANKLIN/MAGNUM

By Paul Mooney

On the afternoon of December 24, popular Chinese author Hao Qun, writing under the pen name Murong Xuecun, blogged that the average lifespan of a microblog account in China is now just about 10 hours. Exactly 26

minutes and 17 seconds later, censors had already wiped the posting from the Internet.

The speed with which posts are deleted is just one indicator of the Chinese government's ability to muzzle freedom of expression, a trend that has sharply worsened in the year since President Xi Jinping came to power in November 2012. Xi took office at a time when people were becoming dissatisfied with the state

of society and hopeful for political reform. Instead, the opposite has happened, with crackdowns on Chinese and foreign journalists becoming more frequent and online censorship increasing. People need to be on guard against "Western anti-China forces," Xi warned in a speech in August, that "constantly strive in vain to use the Internet to overwhelm China." "The new administration thinks the Internet is especially a threat

Eluding the "Ministry of Truth"

By Anne Henochowicz

1 Use a word that shares a character with a censored word

One target of censors over the past two years has been Zhou Yongkang, once China's security chief and general manager of the China National Petroleum Corporation, a state-owned enterprise. After the detention of Communist Party leader Bo Xilai in March 2012, it was rumored that Zhou and Bo were plotting a coup. He has been under investigation since September 2013 on corruption charges.

Netizens get around the ban on mentioning his name by referring to him as Kāng Shīfu ("Master Kang," 康师傅), an instant noodle brand that shares a character with Zhōu Yǒngkāng (周永康).



2 When the new term is banned, substitute a word close to it in meaning

When censors caught on and any mention online of "Kāng Shīfu" ("Master Kang," 康师傅) was banned, references to Zhōu Yǒngkāng morphed into the generic term for instant noodles: *fāngbiànmiàn* 方便面. Some keywords are unblocked after the issue to which they relate has quieted down. "Master Kang" is now searchable on Weibo.



3 Substitute a character that sounds the same but has a different meaning

Chinese characters that look nothing like each other can nonetheless sound the same. By changing one character, Zhōu Yǒngkāng (周永康) becomes Zhōu Yǒngkāng (粥永康), or "Rice Porridge" Yongkang.

to the regime," says Michael Anti, a Chinese journalist and blogger. "That's the reason they've cracked down more than ever before."

Journalists at Southern Weekly, one of China's most daring newspapers, went on strike in 2013 after state censors spiked a New Year's editorial calling for China to respect constitutional rights, replacing it with platitudes about the Communist Party's unique role in "the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation." In December, some two dozen journalists from The New York Times and Bloomberg News waited anxiously to see if their journalist visas would be renewed while their news organizations scrambled to draw up contingency plans to cover China from Taiwan and Hong Kong. The journalist cards needed to obtain visas came in the final days of the year, but the message was clear: China is willing to deal harshly with any foreign reporters who cross it.

The Communist Party has long striven to control freedom of speech in China. Hundreds of thousands of websites from around the world are blocked inside China. Major social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, and LinkedIn, cannot be accessed, and advanced software is used to search and destroy "sensitive" words on the Internet. "The authorities rely on secret security police to threaten individual citizens, to unceasingly harass and arrest citizens who express their freedom of expression through microblogs," says Hu Jia, a prominent rights activist in Beijing, "and to create fear among bloggers and netizens to make everyone feel insecure and to self-censor and remain silent."

The domestic media, more easily controlled, have fared even worse. Domestic journalists who step over the invisible line of what's permissible face possible punishment, being fired or even arrested. Frequent orders are issued telling news organizations what they can and

can't publish, a system that has been dubbed "Directives from the Ministry of Truth." Although the international media can't be censored, foreign journalists face various forms of government intimidation, harassment, surveillance, a barrage of malware attacks that are believed to be the work of government agents, restrictions on their reporting, and in recent years visa intimidation aimed at encouraging self-censorship. The situation worsened considerably in 2013, as the new government tightened its grip.

Murong Xuecun, who had more than 8.5 million followers before his accounts were deleted, talks of his growing frustration, constantly having to wait long periods to see items appear online or then suddenly seeing them disappear. He is also afraid, though this has not stopped him from being outspoken or from writing a blog for The New York Times's Chinese-language website. "I have no work unit, my parents have already passed away, and I have no children, and these are the biggest concerns that dissidents have when they express their opinions," he says. "Relatively

speaking, I have far fewer fears.”

More and more people are joining the so-called Reincarnation Party—bloggers who bounce back with new microblog accounts after existing ones are shut down. In some cases, a microblogger may have reincarnated himself hundreds of times in order to stay active on the Internet. “This has come to symbolize people’s resistance and struggle against censors,” says Yaxue Cao, a Washington-based China watcher and founder and editor of ChinaChange.org.

Others have not been as lucky. Charles Xue, whose blogger name was Xue Manzi, was an outspoken critic of the government on his microblog, which had 12 million followers. His blogging came to an end when Xue was arrested after allegedly being caught with a prostitute. Xue was soon paraded in front of national television audiences—despite not yet having gone to trial—to make a public confession in which he admitted he’d been irresponsible in his postings, a detail that had nothing to do with the alleged prostitution charges. The appearance of the now humble-looking Xue, wearing handcuffs and prison clothes, was taken as a warning to the Internet community.

In September, Beijing announced new measures to prevent the spread of what it called irresponsible rumors, including a three-year prison sentence if false posts were visited by 5,000 Internet users or reposted more than 500 times. Within weeks, dozens of Chinese were being investigated under the new rules, including a 16-year-old middle school student who was detained in Tianshui, Gansu province, for allegedly spreading rumors that the local police had failed to properly investigate a death.

The scare tactics are working. Murong Xuecun ticks off a long list of the names of prominent Chinese whose blogs have been shut down or who have been arrested,

all in recent months. With such news spreading quickly he says that “even the dumbest per-



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Charles Xue, an outspoken critic of the government, had 12 million followers before he was arrested last summer for allegedly soliciting a prostitute

son will reach the following conclusion: the situation is tense now, it’s better to shut up.” By the end of 2013, China’s Big Vs—influential verified microblog users, some of whom have millions of followers—had for the most part disappeared from the Internet as a result of this pressure.

Chang Ping, former chief commentator and news director of Southern Weekly, a newspaper in Guangzhou, says that the domestic media is under tremendous pressure, explaining that until recently, newspapers that dared to report truthfully pulled in more advertising, and so were willing to take greater risks. “Now there’s no economic support but more pressure,” he says. The Committee to Protect Journalists reported in December that 32 Chinese journalists—which includes online commentators as well as mainstream journalists—were in prison, placing China No. 3 on the list of the worst nations for journalists in which to work.

Some of the country’s most prominent journalists and writers have now silenced themselves, and some have even left the country. China once had a blossoming corps of investigative journalists who did groundbreaking stories, but many of them gave up their profession under pressure, with some leaving journalism to turn to other careers. Also worrisome, in August, China’s Propaganda Department ordered all journalists at state-run media—some 300,000 reporters and editors—to attend Marxism classes. While there has been a similar program since 2003, the new requirement appears to be more rigorous, and is an example of the government’s determination to firmly control journalists at a time when social media is exploding.

Foreign journalists face various forms of government intimidation, harassment, surveillance, a barrage of malware attacks, and in recent years visa intimidation

4 Use a nickname

This technique is particularly common for political figures. One nickname for Wang Lijun is “head nurse” (护士长), a term that puns on “deputy mayor” in Chinese. Wang was the deputy mayor and police chief of Chongqing under Bo Xilai. “Frisbee Hu” (飞盘胡), a nickname

for Hu Xijin, chief editor of the state-run Global Times, arose from a joke that he retrieves whatever the government throws at him.



Source: China Digital Times



GEMUNU ANARASINGHE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zhang Shihe, also known as Tiger Temple, had nine blog accounts shut down by censors in 2013

China once had a blossoming corps of investigative journalists who did pioneering stories, but many of them gave up their profession under pressure

Meanwhile foreign journalists continue to face surveillance, harassment, intimidation, restrictions of their movements, and, in extreme cases, physical danger. In surveys conducted by the Foreign Correspondents Club of China, 94 percent of respondents in 2011 felt conditions had worsened over the previous year; in 2013 that number dropped to 70 percent.

Journalists with The New York Times and Bloomberg News who had applied for visas to work in China have been waiting more than a year for visas to move to China to work. The delays were seen as retaliation for New York Times reporter David Barboza's Pulitzer Prize-winning report on the wealth obtained by the family of former Premier Wen Jiabao and Bloomberg's investigation into the wealth of the relatives of President Xi Jinping. The New York Times website is blocked in China, as is Bloomberg's, whose terminal sales in the country have fallen due to cancellations by government agencies.

On November 8, Journalists' Day in China, I was informed that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had rejected my application for a journalist visa to take up a position in Beijing with Reuters, ending an eight-month wait for a visa and an 18-year career as an accredited journalist in China. I was the second journalist in two years to be refused a visa. Al Jazeera reporter Melissa Chan was expelled from China in 2012, also believed due to her reporting on human rights.

The Ministry gave no reason for my rejection, but during a 90-minute interview at the Chinese Consulate in San Francisco, I was questioned repeatedly about my views on human rights, the Dalai Lama and Tibet, and rights lawyers. At the end of the interview, the counselor officer said to me, "If we give

you a visa to return to China, we hope your reporting will be more objective." The experience made me realize that the visa refusal was the result of my reporting on sensitive issues.

That same week, The New York Times reported that Matthew Winkler, editor in chief of Bloomberg News, killed an investigative article about connections between one of China's richest men and a senior Party official for fear of angering the government, which was already delaying the approval of visas for the news organization's journalists wishing to come to China. Winkler denied the report, saying the story needed further work and was still under consideration. Michael Forsythe, the lead writer of the article, was fired a week later on suspicion of having leaked the news to the

Times. Chang Ping says the lesson to the foreign media is clear: "Either you cooperate with them, or you get out of China."

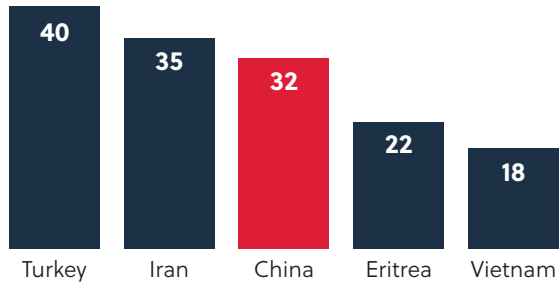
"I think the current huff in China's leadership over visas for The New York Times and Bloomberg is happening to a large extent because the wall between foreign and domestic news coverage has begun to fall," says David Bandurski, editor of the China Media Project at the University of Hong Kong. In today's networked world of Facebook, Twitter, Sina Weibo, and WeChat, the distinctions between foreign and domestic news coverage are becoming blurred. "Translated versions of foreign news can be consumed domestically almost instantaneously," he says. "The best solutions, from the standpoint of the Chinese leadership, may be the most old-fashioned ones: Cut the news off at its source, by making it impossible for foreign journalists to get close."

Wen Yunchao, a Chinese activist who uses the name Bei Feng on the Internet and a former citizen journalist who now lives in New York, says that President Xi and his predecessor Hu Jintao have two different views of the Internet. "Hu saw the Internet as just a tool, and so advocated using it for the Party's purposes," says Wen. "Xi directly understands that the Internet and totalitarianism are incompatible, and a big disaster for the Party and the nation, and so he wants to control and clean up the Internet."

Hu says further that Communist Party officials fear that China will experience a movement similar to the Arab Spring: "They worry that every single individual or mass incident could become the fluttering of a butterfly wing that could give rise to a windstorm. They're afraid that the action of one citizen could be like that of the peddler in Tunisia who self-immolated."

Jailing Journalists

The 2013 annual census by the Committee to Protect Journalists identified 211 journalists around the world jailed for their work. The number held in China was the same as in 2012, when the worldwide total was a record high of 232 jailed journalists.



The country is facing an increasing number of protests by abused migrant workers, disgruntled factory workers, farmers who have lost their land, and even unhappy urban residents. Tibetan areas have seen some 127 people set fire to themselves to protest abusive Chinese policies in the region, and there has been an increase in the incidence of violence in Xinjiang, a Muslim area in far northwest China.

“Xi Jinping & Co. feel a pressure that they don’t know how to handle,” says Perry Link, an expert on China at the University of California, Riverside. “On the surface, China is ‘rising,’ getting stronger economically, militarily, and diplomatically, but internally it’s getting more hard to handle, because complaints and demands from below are increasing and are better organized than before.”

Citizen journalists using computers, mobile phones, inexpensive cameras, and video recorders are venturing into places the mainstream media fears to go. This new technology has eased the job of both foreign and local journalists, who now have many new sources of information, learning about stories from websites, microblogs and blogs. And sources can be reached more easily via e-mail, mobile phones, Skype, QQ instant messaging, and other modern tools.

According to Chinese journalist Anti, Xi is very confident about his power and doesn’t care about negative publicity. “He’s not even concerned about the reaction of Western countries,” he says. “These countries don’t react and so Xi is more confident about using his power. My conclusion is that the crackdown comes from confidence and not from fears.”

For Bandurski of the China Media Project, the fundamental problem is that China continues to consider information control as “an imperative in maintaining stability, when in fact information has become a more crucial part than ever before of the solution to the myriad problems facing China.” He points to the problems of local corruption, land grabs, property demolition,

abuse of power, and perversion of justice. “When the media, even those that aren’t local, can’t report on these cases, and when they are scrubbed from social media, this creates an enormous undercurrent of pressure,” says Bandurski.

Chinese are also now getting information from a number of so-called citizen journalists who are able to report on news that the mainstream media has been unable to cover. A documentary released in 2012, titled “High Tech, Low Life,” introduced the work of the blogger Zhang Shihe, better known as Tiger Temple. In the video, Tiger Temple pedals his rickety bicycle, loaded with digital cameras, video recorders, and other high-tech equipment, from his home in Beijing and travels across China giving voiceless rural citizens a way to reach the outside world. He is saddened that during the space of just a few days between the end of April and the beginning of May his nine blog accounts were all shut down, including the longest-lasting one, which he worked on for 10 years, the one he and describes simply as “my pride.” He says he posted writing, photographs, video and even drawings on his microblog, unceasingly recording what was happening across the country.

The government may find it difficult to deal with the growing army of Chinese who don’t seem inclined to retreat. Murong Xuecun, for one, is optimistic. “I’m brimming with confidence for the future of the Internet as new technologies and new software are unceasingly emerging in large numbers, while the technology used by the Party to control and monitor the Internet will always lag slightly behind,” he says. “Furthermore, this regime established on a foundation of lies and violence will inevitably weaken, and even if there’s just a tiny bit of space, the peoples’ voices will be heard, making even more people wise. And more wiser people is the greatest threat to the Communist Party.”

The strong determination of Chinese citizens to overturn the controls imposed by the government can best be seen in the words that Murong Xuecun posted in the final week of December—sentences that lasted just a little more than 26 minutes before being deleted: “I will bounce back each time because my brothers have created dozens of new accounts for me. If these are not enough, we can create dozens more, and hundreds more. Let’s turn this into a battlefield, and fight it out. You point your gun at me and I stick out my chest. Let us brazenly attack each other. You abuse your power in the darkness, and you don’t stop for a single day. And I too will not give up for a single day, until one of us is dead.”



Paul Mooney is an American freelance journalist who reported on Asia for 28 years, the last 18 from Beijing. In 2013 he was denied a visa to report in China

The Secret Life of Keywords

Online and database searches as a reporting tool

By Qian Gang

I became a journalist in 1979. Back in those days, two basic skills were required of any journalist: reporting and writing. Three decades later, in an era of dramatic technological changes, these basic skills alone are no longer sufficient. Journalists now require a third basic skill: They must learn how to mine important facts and trends from the mountains of information all around them.

It was 1991 before I used a computer for the first time. We called this “giving up the pen,” which simply meant you exchanged your pen for a keyboard and mouse. It was around that time too that I heard about an ambitious project to carry out computerized analysis on the “Dream of the Red Chamber,” a work of classical Chinese literature. The idea was to arrive at different speech patterns among various characters in the novel by mapping the frequency of different types of utterances.

Ten years later, in 2001, I was serving as the deputy managing editor of *Southern Weekly*, a relatively young commercial newspaper that had carved out a reputation as a more freewheeling publication. That year, unfortunately, a number of our reports fell afoul of Communist Party censors. After I was removed as editor, I accepted an invitation for a fellowship at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, just over the border. It was in Hong Kong that I stumbled across complete historical archives on disc of the Party’s official *People’s Daily* and the *People’s Liberation Army Daily*. I was quickly obsessed. I used the archives to hone my search skills, analyzing coverage in these two papers before and during the Cultural Revolution. The result was a full-length paper called, “The

Emergence and Transformation of Red Political Terms.”

This experience was entirely new. In the past, relying purely on manual analysis, it had been virtually impossible to accurately determine how phrases like “Mao Zedong Thought” or “dictatorship of the proletariat”—terms that had had a deep impact on the course of the Cultural Revolution—had been used over time.

Now, computer technology made it possible to enter a simple keyword and arrive at these results almost instantly. All at once, the numbers hidden within a sea of language revealed themselves.

In 2003, I moved to the Journalism and Media Studies Centre at the University of Hong Kong, where we established the China Media Project, a special research initiative for the systematic study of Chinese media. The SARS epidemic struck soon after, testing a new generation of media that had emerged in China since the middle of the 1990s—commercial newspapers and magazines seeking market success and professional relevance even under stringent propaganda controls. In the early stages, as the epidemic was taking hold, there were reports in China’s media. But bans on coverage soon followed, and at a time when public health information was most critical, Chinese media were woefully silent. That year, we pioneered the use of news databases such as WiseNews to provide the most accurate picture possible of the pattern of reporting (and silence) in China’s media during the epidemic.

Analysis of this kind is no longer a purely academic pursuit. It can help provide essential context and background for coverage of all sorts, in China and



Is a mask, like those worn in Beijing in May 2003, effective against SARS? A ban on coverage of the epidemic made information scarce

beyond. After a massive mudslide in China's Gansu province in 2010, which claimed more than 1,400 lives, veteran investigative reporter Wang Keqin hurried to the scene for what would eventually be the most thorough report on the disaster and its underlying causes. At the University of Hong Kong, meanwhile, I was digging through my databases to provide background support. News reports and journal articles in the months and years leading up to the disaster offered a clear picture of the extreme damage caused to the area by careless development; a number of experts had even issued their own warnings.

Fished out of the shadows, old news coverage in China's media can provide clues to the family connections of government officials as reporters investigate their financial dealings. Even past propaganda can cast revealing light on breaking news stories. After a high-speed rail crash outside the city of Wenzhou in July 2011 claimed at least 40 lives, we uncovered and translated People's Daily coverage from the previous

December in which the paper valorized train conductors who were being forced to master technologically complex high-speed trains in just 10 days against the best judgment of their German trainer, who insisted they needed at least two months.

One method that can provide valuable insight, particularly given China's closed and secretive political culture, is the analysis of keyword frequencies over time. Since 2006, I have been applying keyword analysis to the issue of political reform as it has run hot and cold—or more accurately, cold and colder—in domestic Chinese media. Given the rarefied official vocabulary used by the Chinese Communist Party, this type of analysis can prove quite effective in spotting political trends.

The history of news coverage, and the lives of keywords, can reveal a great deal to journalists who take the time to master the art of online and database searches. In August 2013, for example, our research

Fished out of the shadows, old news coverage in China's media can provide clues to the family connections of government officials



COLOR CHINA PHOTO/ASSOCIATED PRESS

After a 2011 train crash outside Wenzhou, researchers uncovered a 2010 story that mentioned the skimpy training conductors received

center was the first to spot, and to plot, the appearance in official Party media of “public opinion struggle,” a term redolent of China’s Cultural Revolution era and pointing to a clear hardening of the Party’s stance toward domestic media and information control—and even, as the later standoff over visas for Bloomberg and New York Times journalists showed, toward international media doing tougher reporting in China.

Language has a life cycle. Changes to the language in which various issues are framed can enliven the reports we write

Language has a life cycle. Changes to the language in which various issues are framed can help us spot emerging trends, give essential context to on-the-ground reporting, and enliven the reports we eventually write.

The tools that help us make sense of the language all around us, to discover the truths within, are constantly changing. That, of course, presents new challenges to journalists and journalism educators. But we must recognize a fundamental change in what is required of our profession. Good journalists today must still be capable reporters and decent writers. But they must also be capable searchers, able to uncover the secrets hiding right under our noses.



Qian Gang, former deputy managing editor of *Southern Weekly*, is co-director of the China Media Project at the University of Hong Kong

Technology, Tra

How Weibo and WeChat are breaking the information monopoly

By Luo Changping

As the profitability of traditional Chinese media plummets, journalists are increasingly beginning to transform themselves, with the acceptance of bribes for writing positive stories becoming more and more common among news outlets. Social media have displaced print and broadcast to dominate the Chinese news industry. Weibo, China’s version of Twitter, and micromessaging service WeChat have brought a degree of freedom of speech and freedom of association, emphatically replacing the stringently regulated traditional media and becoming the main



Liu Tienan, a top government official, was denounced on Weibo for corruption

Transparency and Traditional Media

battleground of social discourse.

Sociologist Max Weber defined power as the ability to compel obedience, even against the wills of others. Some may suggest that power is the same as brute force, but this is incorrect; a ruler can achieve complete domination without violence, simply by controlling the flow of information. The Chinese government's monopoly on power can be represented by four objects: a gun, money, handcuffs and a pen. The gun and handcuffs show domination by force, while the pen and cash symbolize the rule of information. At times, all four elements may work in combination. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) may still be in firm possession of the gun, handcuffs and money, but the Chinese people themselves are increasingly wielding the pen.

Information about the murder of British businessman Neil Heywood—for which Gu Kailai, wife of former Politburo member Bo Xilai, was convicted, while Bo himself remains under investigation for corruption—emanated entirely from sources other than traditional

media. This was an important turning point. As the case of Bo Xilai shows, the gathering, dissemination, collation and analysis of news now takes place through processes completely different from those of traditional media, repeatedly breaching existing limitations on free speech in the process. In a desert of information, it is essential to gather information and professional knowledge through the Internet, piecing together a picture of each sensitive incident like a mosaic.

Thanks to this news mosaic, the CCP will find it impossible to proceed with its repressive reforms. Controlling information will not be easy either. Yet many officials simply have no understanding of what transparency entails and even less comprehension of how the times are changing. To prove this point, I used Weibo to denounce Liu Tienan, the deputy chairman of the



NG HAN GUAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

A journalist records a briefing last August about the trial of leader Bo Xilai. Nontraditional media covered the scandal as it first unfolded

National Development and Reform Commission and head of the energy board, for corruption, using concrete action to warn Party officials that a new era has arrived.

My hometown in the south of China is a mountain village so remote that the Japanese never reached it during World War II, and neither do Party newspapers and newsletters. But after I denounced Liu Tienan, more than 10 people in my village registered for Weibo and WeChat accounts. This is the might of technology.

Nonetheless, those in power have not given up their dreams of controlling information. Instead, they have initiated the work of “cleansing” the Internet, attacking influential Weibo personalities, and arresting journalists. While this does have the effect of restricting and punishing the distribution of false information, it replaces the regular channels of the rule of law with administrative supervision. In fact, Weibo and WeChat themselves possess the tools to police their own content. The CCP's reform plans both encourage innovation and restrict thought, thus creating a paradox. Lacking a free marketplace of ideas, China does not have the ability to renew itself or ensure long-term competitiveness. The prerequisite to creating such a marketplace is to smash the monopoly of information held by the state.



Luo Changping, a former deputy editor of *Caijing Magazine* in Beijing, won *Transparency International's Integrity Award* in 2013

Many Chinese officials simply don't understand how times are changing or what transparency entails



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Journalist Chen Yongzhou confessed to accepting bribes to fabricate stories about alleged corruption at a state-owned construction company

Under Pressure

China's market-oriented media face a precarious future

By Hu Yong

Two-thousand-and-three was a milestone year for investigative journalism in China. Some media organizations had been transformed from Communist Party propaganda tools into market-oriented news outlets. The Party line had weakened while market influences

strengthened, leaving many journalists with an expectation of a new wave of semi-independent journalism.

There had just been a change of leadership, with Hu Jintao taking over as president. In response to the SARS pandemic, the central government launched new laws and new accountability systems, igniting hopes for responsible and transparent governance. Market-oriented news outlets like the weekly magazine *Caijing* and the daily newspaper *Southern Metropolis News* expanded coverage.

In April of 2003, *Southern Metropolis News* published a story about Sun Zhigang, 27, a graphic designer who was picked up by police during a random identity check and died in custody, after

being attacked by staff and inmates. The story caused a national outcry, the first mass protest in China's budding online space. The detention and repatriation regulation, under which Sun had been held, was abolished, and a decade of rights advocacy began. The market-oriented media and new private online ventures opened up an alternative space where people could express their opinions outside official discourse.

Ten years later, with Xi Jinping now president, those advances are being reversed. In December, Chinese authorities charged free speech activists who protested outside the Southern Media Group's offices with public order offenses. The media group—which owns *Southern Weekly*, one of the most liberal newspapers in China—has been criticized for allegedly providing evidence to the police that the protests were interfering with their operations. The claim, which many believe is false, seems designed to tarnish the paper's moral image.

The press is under political as well as economic pressure. The experience of Chen Yongzhou is a case in point. A respected journalist working for Guangdong's *New Express*, Chen was arrested in October after he had reported alleged corruption at a state-owned construction equipment company. As the *New Express* and other media outlets were showing solidarity with Chen, he confessed on TV that he had been bribed to report false information. Though some feared Chen had been tortured into making a confession, he and the *New Express* went from being victims to being loathed across China.

For market-oriented media, cost cutting and declining advertising revenues have contributed to a lack of newsroom protection and a drop in professionalism and ethical standards. Economic interests are pushing aside the public interest. Now, just as a decade ago, market-oriented media face a turning point, this time for the worse. Communist Party outlets will continue to receive financial support from the Party itself.

Private online media are boldly exploring new applications, new platforms, and new services to meet the needs of a new generation of consumers. But the space market-oriented media have traditionally occupied is being squeezed by government censorship on the one hand and declining economic viability on the other. The golden age is over. The next decade, if there is one, will be precarious.



Hu Yong is an associate professor at Peking University's School of Journalism and Communication. He has worked for China Daily and China Central Television

New private online ventures opened up an alternative space where people could express their opinions

Follow the Money

**Investigative reporting principles
that apply in the U.S. apply in China, too**

By David Barboza

In the fall of 2011, while researching a story on China's business elites for *The New York Times*, I made a startling find: a set of corporate documents that linked the relatives of then Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao to more than \$2.7 billion in assets. The records, obtained during a government document search, showed that some of the prime minister's closest relatives, including his brother, son and daughter, had over the past decade acquired major stakes in scores of companies—diamond and telecom ventures, property and construction concerns,

Journalists working in China can now get detailed records on the finances of the country's biggest state-run entities and peer into one of the country's darkest secrets

and one of the country's biggest financial services companies, Ping An Insurance.

How, I asked myself, could such sensitive and potentially explosive information turn up in Chinese public records?

The answer, I have since concluded, was simple. China's rapid economic growth has given rise to a phenomenal shareholding boom and a public records system that is far more advanced and transparent than I had imagined. Journalists working in China can now get detailed records on the finances of the

country's biggest state-run entities and access to the names of investors in tens of thousands of public and private companies. They can peer into one of the country's darkest secrets: how the families of the nation's political elite accumulate wealth.

Publishing such information, of course, remains a challenge. The Chinese media are largely barred from reporting on the families of the Communist Party's top leaders. And in 2012, after Bloomberg News and *The New York Times* published a series of articles on the enormous wealth of China's ruling elite, the Chinese government blocked the websites of each news organization and tightened its surveillance of foreign journalists in China.

And yet, it's likely that in the next decade much more will be written about the hidden wealth of Chinese leaders. China is rapidly integrating into the global economy, with Western investors taking stakes in Chinese startups and Chinese companies acquiring assets overseas. As China becomes more international, it will be more difficult to

hide large stakes in public and private companies. In other words, there's no easy way to turn back the clock on investigative reporting involving Chinese businesses.

I have often been asked how I discovered the corporate records linking the family of the former prime minister to billions of dollars in assets. I often ask myself something else: What took me so long to do so?

I have two theories. First, many Western journalists, including me, were concerned about the risks involved in investigating China's top leaders. There was always the threat of losing one's journalism visa. Second, there were doubts about whether public records and shareholder lists even existed.

The records did prove complex. Although I began collecting records in late 2011, it took more than a year to make sense of much of what I discovered because the Wen family and their business partners had set up a network of shell companies and investment vehicles, many of which constantly changed their names and moved locations.

What I found, though, is that the same principles that apply to reporting in the U.S. also apply in China. Investigative reporting has always been about being patient and determined; knowing how to slowly put the pieces of a puzzle together, just like good detective work.

After my articles were published in 2012, conspiracy theories emerged in China, with some Hong Kong newspapers claiming that I had received a box of documents from the prime minister's enemies. It was much simpler than that. I requested documents and followed the money. In the end, I called some of the prime minister's relatives. And to my surprise, they didn't hang up.



David Barboza, Shanghai bureau chief for *The New York Times*, received the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting for his investigation into corruption in China



KIN CHEUNG/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, who left office in March 2013, was the focus of a 2012 *New York Times* story about corruption

Commerce & Corruption

**Notes toward an
independent, commercially
viable news organization**

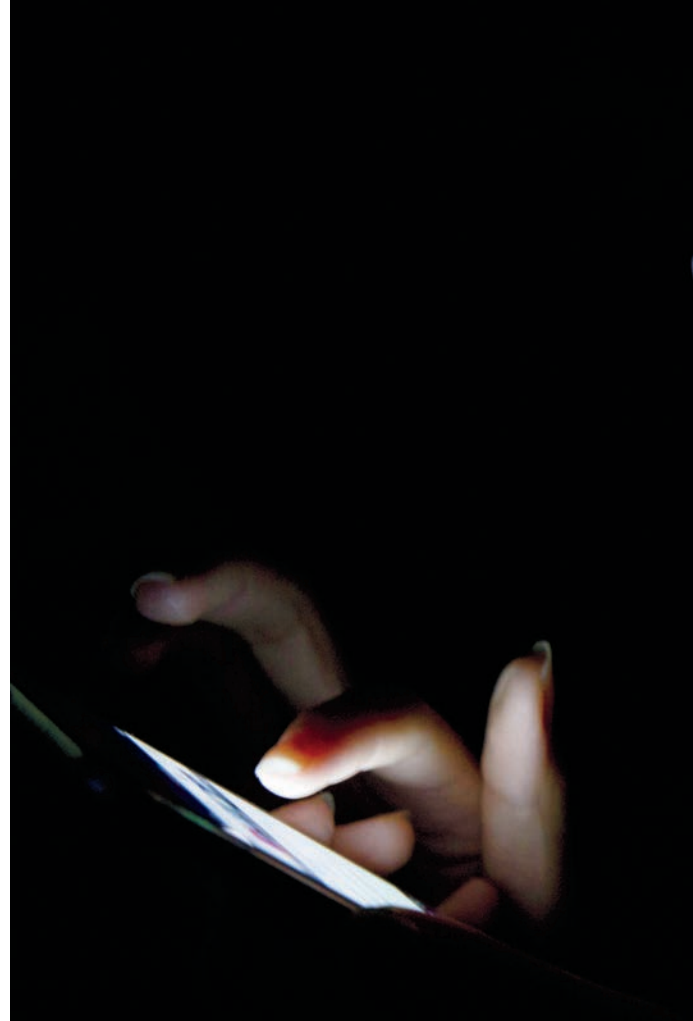
By Hu Shuli

Technology development has been reshaping the media industry worldwide. In developed countries like the United States, traditional media companies felt the shock brought on by new technology several years ago. The global financial crisis made their survival even more difficult, but it also forced traditional media in those countries to adapt to—even embrace—change.

The situation in China is different. A couple of years ago, while traditional media outlets in developed countries were suffering through their transitions, many in China's newspaper industry remained quite optimistic about the business outlook, believing that traditional media would remain dominant in the public sphere and continue to grow for at least the next five to six years.

However, changes have come much faster than expected. In the face of the rapid growth of Internet access, the market for traditional media has quickly eroded. Most of China's media outlets are now struggling both internally, from inefficient management, and externally, from regulatory controls. In recent years, commercial interests have also affected the industry tremendously; weak self-discipline has facilitated media corruption.

This corruption is seen in the unforgivable practice of “rent-seeking”—taking bribes to fabricate stories. The problem is, in China's peculiar political and media environment, where some media companies are government-linked, excessive interference and an absence of supervision coexist, making it easier for people to succumb to temptation, be it commercial or political.



Journalists in China, like this woman at a media event in Beijing in 2013, need better legal protection for the content they produce

Thus, some media firms smear companies that refuse to place ads with them, while others are happy to sell themselves as public relations tools. Such practices are no secret within the industry; some even brag about them.

China's media industry is not given adequate room for independent thinking, and there is no true competition to ensure that bad seeds are weeded out. To thrive, journalists need not only to exercise self-discipline; they need the rule of law and adequate protection. There is no freedom of speech without freedom of the press, and no social justice without the rule of law. Both play a key role in a society in transition.

Some of our peers are exploring paths for transition. It is too early to say which approach is best, but some principles should be shared by all media companies seeking new growth momentum.

A key criterion to measure the success of media in transition is whether it can sustain commercial growth while benefiting society. Compared to other enterprises, which make commercial interests the top consideration, media organizations should care more about their responsibility to social and public interests.

Traditional media should realize the challenges ahead. Companies should be prepared to face declining demand for print publications, sales and distribution, and adjust



NING HAN GUAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

government entities than corporations. Bureaucracy usually interferes with editorial decision-making. Therefore, establishing a modern business structure and enhancing corporate governance will be key issues for media leaders to tackle. They will also help determine the success of the media's transition. But it is not necessary for all media outlets to transform into corporations. Some still will be controlled by the Communist Party and the government to act as propaganda agencies. Those organizations have access to government subsidies and should explore operating as nonprofit organizations. But the rest of the industry needs to adapt to the changing environment to survive.

Like elsewhere, the media environment in China is rapidly changing. But Chinese journalists also have to deal with the pressure that comes from operating in a political environment where government oversight and censorship are strict. Perhaps because of this, it is doubly important that Chinese journalists try to improve and protect the credibility of the media, for public trust is its most valuable asset and best defense.

One factor hindering the growth of the country's media industry is the inadequate protection of intellectual property rights (IPR). There has long been a lack of IPR protection in China, which is rooted in lax law enforcement and lack of awareness from both industry participants and the public. The rapid growth of the Internet and online news portals has made IPR protection increasingly urgent. However, historical factors make the issue quite difficult to address. For instance, some media organizations have signed long-term contracts with news websites that allow the latter to use their content cheaply or even for free. Now, as competition intensifies, the failure to protect the right to original content has caused headaches for those media organizations.

Therefore, it is time for China's media to form a consensus to strengthen IPR protection. Meanwhile, the government should make efforts to provide effective legal protection for original news content.

Of course, in-depth analysis and feature stories will remain valuable. The capacity to provide such content will help media outlets win readers. But doing such stories is usually time-consuming and costly. This is another reason IPR protection is important.

Clearly, the demand for professional news reporting is still rising in China, and high-quality content will remain the core competitiveness of media organizations. Better company structures and digital know-how will be required to meet these challenges.

*To thrive,
journalists
need the
rule of law,
room for
independence,
and adequate
protection*

their personnel structure accordingly. The transition of mass media into the digital age will lead to significant changes in advertising. Ads in newspapers and magazines will see a dramatic decline, but at the same time the rise of Internet-based news portals will provide more diverse platforms and formats for advertising.

Like many of our peers, Caixin Media has been exploring the Internet arena. Over the past four years, we have seen our Internet business grow stronger and account for a larger portion of the company's total revenue. Although it is still smaller than that from Caixin's print publications, its growth rate has outperformed our traditional businesses. We are hoping to see Internet business become the major revenue source in the future. To achieve this goal, we must take innovative steps to develop new product formats to meet the needs of readers.

However, no matter how the media changes, professional journalism will always be the most important pursuit of reporters and editors. But systemic innovation in media companies will be needed to support development. In other words, media outlets should be run as modern companies.

China's traditional media companies are more like



Hu Shuli is editor in chief of Caixin Media Co. In 2007, she received the Louis M. Lyons Award for Conscience and Integrity in Journalism

Moral Hazard

{ Are the linguistic tricks Chinese journalists use to express their opinions just another form of self-censorship? }

By Yang Xiao



In China, May has 35 days. All mention of June 4th, the day in 1989 on which the Tiananmen Square massacre took place, is forbidden. So Chinese journalists and bloggers get around the ban online by talking about what happened on May 35th.

Twenty-five years after Tiananmen, the practice highlights two aspects of China's liberal media: the familiar story of oppression and the increasingly popular tactic of circumventing censorship through the venerable Chinese tradition of *chunqiu bifa*, expressing critical opinions in subtle linguistic ways. In early 2013, for example, when journalists at the liberal Southern Weekly went on strike to protest government censorship of their New Year's editorial, other publications supported them via *chunqiu bifa*. One story in the Beijing News lifestyle section extolled the author's love of "southern porridge." In Chinese, the word for "porridge" is *zhou*, a homophone of the first character in the "Weekend" part of Southern Weekend's name. Readers knew the author's fondness for southern porridge was really a fondness for the beleaguered newspaper.

When I worked at the state-run Xinhua News Agency from 2004 to 2008, I became fairly adept at *chunqiu bifa*. I used puns, metaphors and homophones—any kind of linguistic trick I could think of—to express my approval or disapproval. Later on, at Southern People Weekly, one of China's most influential national news-magazines (part of the Southern Media Group that also includes Southern Weekend and another liberal paper, Southern Metropolitan Daily), I wrote a lot of sensitive features that relied on my *chunqiu bifa* skills.

At first, I enjoyed the cat-and-mouse game with censors. I thought, "There will always be someone who can read between the lines." But now, I worry that this kind of expression will create in me a vicious circle of complacency, in which I know my efforts to speak freely will be fruitless but can console myself with at least

having tried. I fear that, in China's increasingly complicated and ambiguous media environment, *chunqiu bifa* may be changing from a means of dissent into a tool of inadvertent self-censorship that may ultimately deprive us of the ability to face the truth.

A decade ago, people believed freedom and democracy would grow gradually in China. Now, we're not so sure. Last July, Xu Zhiyong, one of the independent lawyers who won local elective office a decade ago, was arrested for being a leader of the "new citizens movement," which promotes transparency in government. Xu's detention is an example of how progress toward more freedom is being reversed.

That reversal began in 2008. Riots in Tibet and the protests that accompanied the Olympic torch's tour of the world created waves of nationalism in China. Then came the Sichuan earthquake, in which more than 80,000 people died. Chinese media exposed the corrupt local government officials responsible for the shoddy buildings. But they were quickly muted, and the most outspoken liberal newspapers were punished. At the Southern Media Group, propaganda officials moved into our offices to ensure "safety in production." The Beijing Olympics boosted patriotism, and the regime became less and less tolerant of dissent.

All this left little room for the Chinese liberal media, one prominent casualty of which has been investigative journalism. According to estimates by some of those working in the field, there are currently fewer than 80 investigative journalists in China. The emphasis is on lifestyle stories rather than hard news, gossip rather than muckraking, flattery rather than analysis—and of course, *chunqiu bifa*. The list of banned or sensitive words continues to grow, and now includes "universal values," "constitutional democracy," and "checks and balances." We console ourselves with dark humor about our revenge on the censors. Press restrictions may last forever, we joke, but newspapers will certainly die.

Even worse than the renewed restrictions is the change in the social and cultural environment, as evidenced by the rise of the 50-Cent Party, people hired by the government to post favorable comments on the Internet about the Communist Party and its policies. The 50-Cent Party existed before 2008, but it was only after



CHARLIE RIEDEL/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The government cracked down on dissent in the run-up to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing

2008 that it became an important factor in shaping public opinion.

Last July, after a man detonated a homemade bomb he had strapped to himself at Beijing Airport, Southern Metropolitan Daily published an exclusive story about the bomber, who claimed he was left paralyzed by local law enforcement officers eight years ago and had been fighting unsuccessfully for compensation. Rumors quickly appeared on Weibo, alleging collusion between the bomber and Southern Metropolitan Daily to “pressure and embarrass the government.” The false claims were retweeted widely and, unfortunately, accepted as fact by many. The 50-Cent Party is no longer just a group manipulated by the regime, but one of the lenses through which many Chinese see and understand the world.

In “The Velvet Prison: Artists Under State Socialism,” Miklos Haraszti wrote of Hungary in the 1970s: “If I still speak of censorship, what I refer to is not merely certain bureaucratic procedures but the whole context of culture, not just state intervention but all the circumstances that conspire to destroy the basis of autonomous or authentic artistic activity ... not only

‘legal’ and ‘illegal’ restrictions but also the secret psychological sources that sustain the state’s reach even in the last cell of culture.” China’s liberal media are in the same bind.

As restrictions—and anxieties—grow, I have more doubts about the tactics I’ve used in the past to get my meaning across. Using *chunqiu bifa* now feels like scratching my itchy foot from outside my boot. Plus, as social media increasingly insulate people from information with which they disagree, journalists’ subtle linguistic tricks are too superficial for the well-informed and too sophisticated for those who just don’t care.

Next time, before using *chunqiu bifa*, maybe we should ask ourselves: Is this the best way to express myself? Am I doing enough? Am I pushing the line rather than just flirting with it? Speaking truth to power is the media’s reason for being, nowhere more so than in China.



Yang Xiao, a 2014 Nieman Fellow, is Beijing correspondent and a chief writer for Southern People Weekly. He previously worked for Xinhua News Agency

There are currently fewer than 80 investigative journalists in China, according to estimates by some of those working in the field

Up Close and Personal

{ **China as journalist's dream
and statistician's nightmare** }

By Evan Osnos

In 1948, the Harvard Sinologist John King Fairbank wrote, “China is a journalist’s dream and a statistician’s nightmare.” It was, he explained, a place “with more human drama and fewer verifiable facts per square mile than anywhere else in the world.” Sixty-five years

later, much of Fairbank’s description rings true, even as we find ourselves drawn even more urgently by the need to make sense of China’s metamorphosis, its contradictions, and the growing role that it plays in our lives around the world.

When I studied Mandarin, in Beijing, for the first time in 1996, the Chinese economy was smaller than that of Italy. The countryside felt near: Most nights, I ate in a Muslim neighborhood, where tin-roof restaurants kept jittery sheep tied out front. The animals vanished in the kitchens, one by one, at dinnertime.

By 2013, China had the world’s largest Internet population—a raucous, questioning, but still censored realm—the largest number of new billionaires and new skyscrapers, and an economy second only in scale to the United States. China’s rise has created vast wealth and power—but also corruption, a new awareness of inequality, and a growing demand in China and abroad for an understanding of who has profited and at what cost.

For journalists, China’s rise presents a set of puzzles that we cannot escape. The first is practical: As journalists in China, foreign or domestic, how do we navigate the obstructions erected by the Communist Party, and then limit the consequences to those who dare to speak? This is the most obvious challenge, but also, perhaps, the most familiar, and the tools we use are those which serve correspondents in any country: persistence and ingenuity, sure, but, more important,



China is the only country in the world with a Nobel Peace Prize winner in prison. Liu Xiaobo, pictured above, missed the 2010 ceremony in Oslo, Norway

the journalist’s version of the Hippocratic Oath—the determination to do no harm to sources in a nation that regards their voices as a threat.

The more novel problem is one of proportions: In a nation of such profound contrasts—between new freedoms and old forms of repression, between extraordinary fortunes and persistent poverty—how many words should we dedicate to the fact that China has never been more prosperous—and how many words should we spend on the fact that it is the only country in the world with a Nobel Peace Prize winner in prison? (That’s Liu Xiaobo.)

Lastly, and perhaps most difficult, the puzzle of cov-



TOBY MELVILLE/REUTERS

of forensic detail that we have rarely, if ever, seen in foreign correspondence. Reporters documented how the families of China's then-premier Wen Jiabao and its incoming president, Xi Jinping, had assembled enormous fortunes while their relatives were in office.

In retaliation, the government blocked the websites of The New York Times and Bloomberg News, which had led the new wave of investigations. Authorities also barred Chinese banks and other institutions from adding contracts for new Bloomberg terminals, and it blocked news organizations from adding new staff or replacing existing correspondents in China. The purpose was to pressure the business operations of news organizations that were already imperiled by the pressures of the Web. (That approach was also applied to The Washington Post and Reuters.)

Historically, journalists anticipated that they might be denied access to China if they covered hot button issues like human rights. (That rarely stopped them.) But, now, reporters and their employers are punished for exposing the private wealth of senior Party leaders. And that reflects a fundamental shift in the role that foreign correspondents play in China. We are no longer bringing home news to an American audience from a faraway land. China is a rising superpower, and an audience of readers. It is so present in our economic and political lives around the world that it has forced journalists to step up the quality of their work. Whether we like it or not, foreign correspondents are now active participants in the domestic conversation about the distribution of power and resources in the world's greatest economic boom. Even when a story in the Times is blocked by the censors, it finds its way to readers in China.

This is a new iteration of an old responsibility: As foreign correspondents, we have always faced the task of recording the memory that people in other countries are not permitted, by circumstance or by force, to record themselves. In the past, that has often meant documenting war and dissent. But in China today it also means documenting the world's most rapid accumulation of assets, and the sorting of winners and losers—a process that will have consequences for generations to come.

We are reporting on not only a country, but also a contest over the values that China will project as a new power in the world. It is an ongoing, unfinished debate about the definition of truth, accountability and power. It is a privilege and a responsibility to take the measure of this moment. Fairbank was right. It is a hell of a story.



Evan Osnos, a staff writer at The New Yorker, adapted this essay from his Joe Alex Morris Jr. Memorial Lecture delivered on Nov. 14, 2013 at the Nieman Foundation

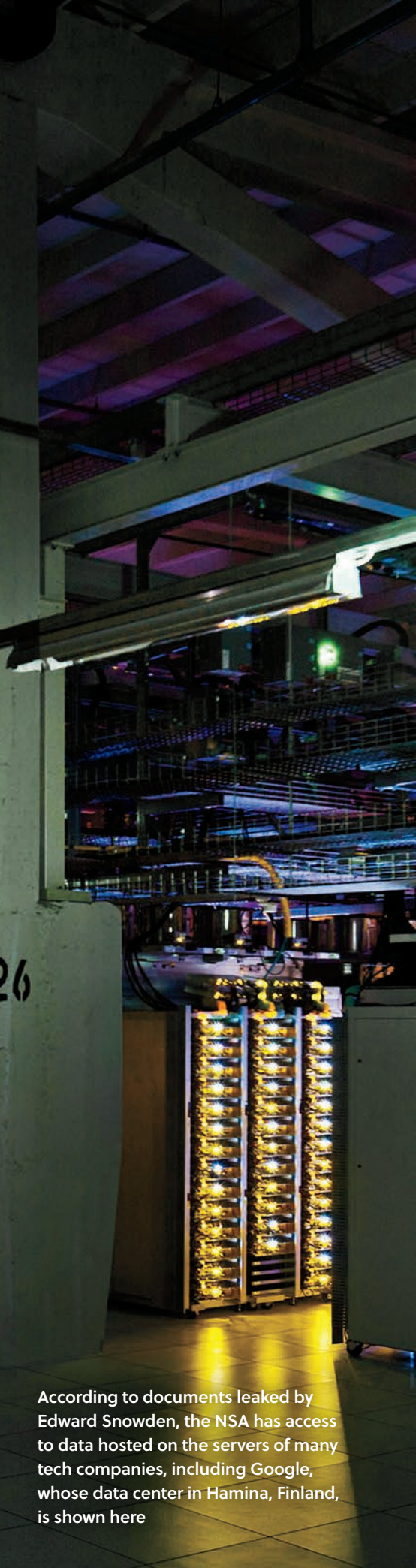
Whether we like it or not, foreign correspondents are now active participants in China's conversation about the distribution of power

ering China is one of access: What is a reporter and a news organization to do in a country that is increasingly denying access to journalists who publish work that the government finds threatening? Over the past two or three years, the Chinese government's view of the foreign press has changed in two important ways: In 2011, the Arab Spring unnerved the Chinese leadership more than any event in a generation with the demonstration of how information and organization could undermine authoritarian governments that appeared to be stable. At the time, Chinese authorities publicly criticized foreign correspondents, whom they blamed for covering Chinese activists who were inspired by events in the Middle East.

In 2012, with China's new wealth soaring, foreign news organizations ratcheted up their scrutiny of China's politicians—and their personal fortunes—to a level

Clear and Present Danger

The NSA, surveillance and
the threat to press freedom



According to documents leaked by Edward Snowden, the NSA has access to data hosted on the servers of many tech companies, including Google, whose data center in Hamina, Finland, is shown here

CONNIE ZHOU/COURTESY OF GOOGLE

By Geoffrey King

In the fall of 2013, the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) quietly began booting up its Utah Data Center, a sprawling 1.5 million-square-foot facility designed to store and analyze the vast amounts of electronic data the spy agency gathers from around the globe. Consisting of four low-slung data halls and a constellation of supporting structures, the facility includes at least 100,000 square feet of the most advanced data reservoirs in the world. The project represents a massive expansion of the NSA’s capabilities and a profound threat to press freedom worldwide.

The data center is but the most obvious example of a future in which governments may not only collect and parse enormous quantities of data, but also store it for increasingly longer periods of time. It could soon be possible to uncover sources with such ease as to render meaningless any promise of confidentiality a journalist may attempt to provide—and if an interaction escapes press scrutiny in the first instance, it could be reconstructed later. As long-term storage rapidly becomes less expensive, it will fall within the grasp of authoritarian regimes whose track records on press freedom afford little hope for restraint.

In addition to amplifying the harms caused by pervasive surveillance, the storage of data creates another, unique potential: it provides a deep breeding ground for artificial intelligence systems. As these capabilities evolve, governments will be able to spot patterns of terrorist activity, or journalistic activity, long before either becomes a challenge to their power. If left unchecked, surveillance systems may fail to draw such distinctions.

Given the NSA’s secretiveness, reporting on the agency often becomes an exercise in careful conjecture. Leaked documents from former NSA contractor Edward Snowden have shed some light on the agency’s activities. William Binney, considered one of the best mathematicians and code breakers at the NSA until his resignation in 2001 in protest of the mass privacy violations he alleges the agency committed after the 9/11 attacks, says journalists are “a much easier, smaller target set” to spy on than

the wider population. National security journalist James Bamford, whom *The New Yorker* dubbed “The NSA’s Chief Chronicler,” believes certain journalists get extra scrutiny. “If you’re writing about national security or the NSA itself,” he said, “they consider you—a journalist—a national security danger, and so they feel justified in doing whatever they’re doing.”

Alex Abdo, an American Civil Liberties Union attorney, is part of a team of lawyers who have litigated against the NSA for violating the privacy and free speech rights enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. He believes that “all reporters should be worried,” though perhaps for different reasons. “Reporters who work for the largest media organizations should be worried probably primarily because their sources will dry up as those sources recognize that there is no way to cover their trail” when they talk to journalists at *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, or *The Wall Street Journal*. For independent journalists, by contrast, the primary concern is that “they themselves will be swept up in the course of their reporting, because they don’t enjoy some of the institutional protections that journalists get when they work at the bigger organizations.”

Asked about surveillance of journalists, the NSA asserted that the primary function of its data collection is to protect the U.S. from foreign threats. Spokeswoman Vane’ Vines, herself a former investigative journalist, says, “NSA is focused on discovering and developing intelligence about valid foreign intelligence targets in

order to protect the nation and its interests from threats such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.” (Intelligence officials have in the past misled the public about the NSA’s activities. At a March 2013 Senate Intelligence Committee hearing, Senator Ron Wyden asked Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, “Does the NSA collect any type of data at all on millions or hundreds of millions of Americans?” Clapper said, “No sir ... not wittingly.” After Snowden’s revelations about the mass collection of Americans’ phone call records, and facing accusations of perjury from members of Congress, Clapper sent

Former NSA staffer Binney says the NSA is mapping individuals’ lives, particularly their social and business connections, via the trail of digital “metadata” attendant with day-to-day existence. Though generally considered to exclude the contents of communications, and often transactional or descriptive in nature, metadata can be exquisitely detailed, as illustrated by a top secret order from the secretive U.S. Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (known as the FISA court) leaked to The Guardian by Snowden. According to the order, the NSA collects the numbers, location data, unique identifying information, and the time and

sources. NSA chronicler Bamford says this has a “very serious effect” on investigative journalism. “If they’re able to see all the numbers you’re calling, they’re able to tell pretty much what kind of story you’re working on, even without getting the content of it. They’re able to tell what the nature of the story is, who the sources are you’re dealing with.”

The NSA, Binney says, is “building more and more storage because they’re collecting more and more data. The NSA will “take everything” off communication lines “and store it” for perhaps half a million to a million targeted individuals. According to Binney, the content information will then be indexed to the graph of lives and social networks. The agency can then query a timeline of an individual’s relationships over a period of time and “go straight into the content” indexed to each event. Binney’s estimate is that the NSA has both content and metadata going back a dozen years, and that this will only grow over time.

The extent to which the NSA may lawfully gather, store, and disseminate the contents of communications about U.S. persons is more closely constrained by the Fourth Amendment, as well as by statutes such as the 2008 FISA Amendments Act and other regulations, than is metadata. Nonetheless, there are numerous ways for the NSA to harvest the contents of communications of American journalists. The New York Times reported in August 2013 that the NSA is copying and searching the contents of large amounts of Americans’ cross-border communications, for the purpose of uncovering even mentions of small details—an email address, for example, or a nickname—about a foreigner under surveillance. Additionally, under current regulations, incidentally-acquired communications of Americans can be retained for up to six years to analyze whether they contain foreign intelligence information and/or evidence of a crime, according to recently declassified documents and reporting by The Washington Post and The Guardian. (Encrypted communications may be kept indefinitely, documents leaked to The Guardian reveal.)

As the government stores more and more data, it will become next to impossible for journalists to keep sources confidential.

As the government stores more and more data, it will become next to impossible to keep sources confidential. The dangers are further compounded for non-U.S. journalists

a letter to the committee chairwoman, Senator Diane Feinstein, apologizing for his “clearly erroneous” remarks under oath.)

In August 2013 the German magazine Der Spiegel reported that it had reviewed NSA documents, provided by Snowden, showing that the agency hacked into a “specially protected” internal communication system at the Qatar-based broadcaster Al Jazeera. According to Der Spiegel, the NSA documents listed the operation as “a notable success.” The NSA has not publicly commented on the report.

One journalist for whom surveillance apparently has had direct and recent consequences is the award-winning documentary filmmaker Laura Poitras, whose films showcase American policy in the post-9/11 era and who, with Glenn Greenwald, documented Snowden’s revelations about the NSA in The Guardian. Poitras says she was detained for questioning at U.S. border crossings more than 40 times between 2006 and 2012.

Most journalists will probably not end up in the NSA’s crosshairs. But all journalists need to recognize that the agency is collecting immense amounts of information, that it will continue to develop this capacity, and that once collected, this information can be retained and put to broad use.

duration of phone calls, for all parties. As reported by The New York Times, the FISA court has also authorized and re-authorized the collection and analysis of all Americans’ call records, regardless of any connection to a foreign agent.

Though judicial attitudes toward the privacy implications of metadata surveillance may slowly be shifting, as judges have begun to recognize its power to open up the lives of individuals to scrutiny, at present such data remains largely unprotected by the U.S. Fourth Amendment—meaning that even American journalists lack a so-called “reasonable expectation of privacy” for large amounts of their information.

The information gleaned from the aggregation of metadata records can build a remarkably intimate picture of one’s life. As computer security expert Bruce Schneier wrote on his blog in September 2013, metadata analysis is the equivalent of hiring a private detective to keep tabs on a person’s activities and associations. “The result would be details of what he did: where he went, who he talked to, what he looked at, what he purchased—how he spent his day,” Schneier wrote. “That’s all metadata.”

Metadata surveillance is particularly dangerous to journalists because it means the government can quickly pinpoint their



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/ ASSOCIATED PRESS

Demonstrators in Washington, D.C. last October protest the NSA's spying on Americans, as revealed in documents leaked by Edward Snowden. National security expert James Bamford believes journalists get extra NSA scrutiny

The dangers are further compounded for non-U.S. journalists. If a British, French, or German journalist were to undertake “an investigative story on something involving the U.S., some war crime committed by somebody in the U.S.,” the NSA, Bamford says, “can do whatever they want in terms of finding out who their sources are.”

Veteran reporter Peter Maass recognizes that just as the U.S. takes the gloves off when dealing with foreign journalists, other actors are likely to handle Americans the same way. “The NSA and the U.S. government are not the only threat” to the work of American journalists, he notes. “The Russian government is interested in it, and the British government is interested in it, private interests are interested in it,” he says.

While the experts debate the fine points, working journalists are forced to examine their own practices. Ali Winston, an award-winning freelance investigative reporter based in the San Francisco Bay area, says he has tried to mitigate the exploitation of his electronic communications for years, including by

using the anonymizing software Tor, and has taken new security steps given recent revelations about surveillance.

As dangerous as the NSA's expanding storage capabilities are to journalism, the trend carries an even darker prospect. The growth of data collection and storage provides a training ground for artificial intelligence systems designed to fish information efficiently from a vast sea of data. According to Binney, the ultimate goal is to be predictive. If the NSA manages to develop a system that could automatically assign a threat index to members of the public, the agency would almost certainly use it to give journalists extra attention. As Cynthia Wong of Human Rights Watch noted in an analysis posted on the organization's website in August 2013, reporters are among the relatively few regular users of privacy-enhancing technologies. This alone, Bamford notes, is enough for the government to target reporters. “I don't use encryption,” he says. “No. 1, it flags you, and No. 2, it gives [the NSA] more of an incentive to try and break it.” (At least one expert disagrees: Snowden told *The New York Times Magazine* that “unencrypted journalist-source communi-

cation is unforgivably reckless.”)

The revelations about surveillance have changed the way journalists must think about the security of their work product, their sources, and themselves. Prudent journalists wishing to avoid scrutiny for themselves or their sources will have to adapt their behavior, whether by avoiding contact with sources or ceasing to use privacy-protective technologies such as encryption. Such changes impair journalists' ability to freely gather and disseminate information.

Regardless of whether the NSA's programs are as carefully targeted as it claims, the agency's infamous secrecy and expansive capabilities have cast a deep shadow on press freedom worldwide. The only true recourse is to force transparency through ever more incisive reporting, for as Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis wrote 100 years ago, “Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants.”



This is an edited excerpt from Geoffrey King's "Attacks on the Press," published by the Committee to Protect Journalists

Nimble with Numbers

How the nonprofit Chicago Reporter is using data and digital journalism to cover race and poverty

By Susan Smith Richardson

John A. McDermott founded The Chicago Reporter in 1972. Despite his best intentions, the Reporter is still around today. A civil rights activist who stood with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. during his 1966 fair housing campaign in Chicago, McDermott believed that the city needed a publication that would measure its progress toward achieving racial and economic justice by the numbers. Many years and more than 100 awards later, the Reporter’s mission remains the same: investigating race and poverty. That would vex McDermott, who hoped racial equality would prevail and put his magazine out of business.

“Follow the money” is a staple of watchdog journalism. The Chicago Reporter plans to spend more time “investigating up,” placing the focus on those who gain from and game the system

The Chicago Reporter is a rarity as an investigative nonprofit news organization that focuses on race and poverty. It’s older than the Center for Public Integrity and many other venerable national nonprofit news outlets. The Reporter is under the umbrella of a faith-based nonprofit, the Community Renewal Society, and supported by grants and contributions from individuals.

However, as it enters its 40s, the Reporter is navigating a culture change. The mission hasn’t changed, but how we cover race and poverty has—partly because of digital journalism and partly because of growing income inequality and the complex racial dynamics of having a black commander in chief. Americans have and have not overcome, making this one of the most fascinating times to cover race.

For much of the Reporter’s existence, the staff has produced long, data-driven investigations about structural racism, which have stirred policymakers and opinion leaders to action. In 2007, our most high-profile investigation prompted the state attorney

general to sue Countrywide Financial Corporation and its subsidiaries for pushing subprime mortgages on creditworthy Latinos and African-Americans.

But until recently, the website was largely an afterthought. As the new editor and publisher of the Reporter, I’m working with a staff of two reporters, two photojournalism fellows, two editors, and contract bloggers to transform an influential publication into an influential daily website. Since I accepted this job, I’ve been asked the same question: “How are you going to do that with such a small staff?”

Because data has been the Reporter’s calling card for years, we started there, reimagining how to use numbers online in a timely, creative and compelling way. ProPublica’s Tools & Data page provided ideas.

The site’s graphics and interactive databases are powerful explanatory journalism on their own. Recently, the investigative news organization published a series on the landmark 1968 Fair Housing Act that featured an interactive map that showed the relationship between the Great Migration and housing segregation in Chicago and





M. SPENCER GREEN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Chicago Reporter covers crime, including allegations of police misconduct under Jon Burge's command, the focus of a 2006 protest

other Midwestern cities. The concentration of African-Americans in these cities following the journey north mirrors residential segregation patterns today. ProPublica's map was a history lesson in structural racism.

The award-winning investigative outfit isn't the only organization we've looked to for ideas. While ProPublica's work highlights the analytical power of data, Homicide Watch D.C. shows its emotional potential. The website corrals data to put a human face on the district's murders, combining

maps, police and court records, photos of the victims and reminiscences from family and friends. Personal stories are intermingled with demographics about the victims and their alleged killers, capturing in one place who is dying and who is doing the killing. In D.C., as in Chicago, violence is concentrated in poor and black communities. (The Chicago Sun-Times now publishes a Homicide Watch Chicago.)

As the Reporter considers what interactive databases it wants to create, we can learn

from both Homicide Watch and ProPublica's approach. But with any database, the most important considerations are whether it serves the public interest and provides critical information. And having the right database is one way to become a destination site. In Chicago, plenty of news and information sites have zeroed in on the city's homicide rate, creating databases that are grim go-to destinations for the latest deaths. Though it has fallen this year, the death toll is concentrated in some of

the city's poorest neighborhoods and disproportionately claims African-American youth. When it comes to crime, race and poverty are intertwined.

In our search for a database that would serve the public interest and capture an ongoing racial injustice, we settled on police misconduct cases. If Chicago is known for its homicides, it's also known for the torture of crime suspects from the 1970s to 1990s under the orders of a now notorious police commander, Jon Burge. The practice caught the attention of former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan when local groups raised it as a human rights issue. A steady stream of victims have been released from prison and settled financially with the city. It is no surprise that the victims are predominantly African-American.

Databases matter; so does being nimble with numbers. We break news with our investigations, yet, if we're not part of the daily conversation, we appear irrelevant to readers—and the donors who keep us going.

The daily news site Colorlines masterfully taps the Zeitgeist around race, with its mix of investigations, viral videos, blogs and graphics. For Thanksgiving, Colorlines

When it comes to covering poverty and race, investigative reporters often ignore the policies that enable the powerful and privileged to thrive

created an infographic examining the impact of "Black Thursday" on retail workers. The graphic simply yet effectively put into context what the dash to boost sales meant to some of the nation's lowest-paid workers, many of whom are single mothers.

Learning from Colorlines, we're using numbers to add context to daily news stories. Recently, we dusted off numbers from a previous investigation to contextualize a story about an African-American man who was awarded \$1 million in a police misconduct case. Our research showed that the officer named in the lawsuit had been listed in several similar lawsuits, yet he remained on the Chicago police force.

Digital journalism alone isn't changing how the Reporter covers race and poverty. The issue of income inequality has received a push from President Obama, former U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert Re-

ich, and Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz. This attention has caused us at the Reporter to rethink our starting point for covering these issues. While the Reporter remains true to coverage of the least in Chicago, income inequality is broadening the conversation about poverty into a discussion about opportunity, and who does and doesn't have it.

The adage "Follow the money" is a staple of investigative and watchdog journalism. Yet when it comes to covering poverty and race, investigative reporters often ignore the policies that enable the powerful and privileged to thrive. There are the stories about the Wall Street wolves that prey on investors and markets; the CEOs who bank millions of dollars while their lowest-paid workers can't qualify for food stamps. But on a daily basis, journalists don't cover, whether it is the city budget or whose car

Cold, Hard Facts to Cold, Hard Cash

By Lorie Hearn

In newsource grew out of the desperation that was sweeping newsrooms across the country in 2009. I was a senior editor for metro and investigations at The San Diego Union-Tribune, and I'd spent way too much time discussing potential layoffs. When I looked one way, there was a sprawl of deck chairs on what could be the Titanic. The other way? The deep black sea.

I jumped. The journey's been exhausting and exhilarating and completely unexpected.

inewsource, on the campus of San Diego State University, is one of more than 100 nonprofit journalism centers across the U.S. Most of us have sprung up in the last five years. inewsource has three full-time reporters, who spend all of their time in the very tough world of investigative, accountability reporting.

But if you think being an investigative reporter is hard work, try finding the business model to support it. We journalists think we're above talking about money, let alone asking for it. We're too self-righteous for that. At least, I thought I was. Well, the cold hard facts about the future of accountability journalism lie in cold hard cash.

The biggest mistake I made in founding a journalism nonprofit was thinking that good work will automatically attract funding.

The more dubious news is that no one has figured out how to keep it going. A few, like ProPublica, were "born on third base," as Chuck Lewis, my friend, inewsource board member, and founder of the Center for Public Integrity, said. They had a big benefactor.

Most of us, however, are funded by foundations and philanthropists, who are proud of our mission but not wild about being a long-term crutch. We're launching membership campaigns and trying to get traditional media to pay for content and finding other services to charge for. (The New England Center for Investigative Reporting, for example, does very well with training and high school summer camps in investigative journalism.) The message we're all hearing: You've got to diversify revenue. You never know when someone will kick out one leg of your three-legged stool.

I was a reporter, editor and manager before I leapt into the depths. But that didn't prepare me to run a business. Four years into it—with some courses at USC and an executive program at Stanford behind me—I'm more comfortable asking for money. Today, inewsource has a solid plan. It's not perfect. It's not for-sure. But so far, so good.



C-CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Chicago Reporter adds context from its archives to ongoing coverage of violence

gets towed, how the most privileged in our communities benefit from government policies, tax codes, access, and exclusive networks. We plan to spend more time “investigating up,” placing the focus on

those who gain from and game the system.

While we’ve conducted a variety of investigations over the years, the Reporter has often focused on the city’s poorest residents, those once trapped in its looming

public housing developments. These are the forgotten voices. But stories at the intersection of race and poverty aren’t the only race stories to be told. Like the majority of their fellow Americans, working and middle class people of color realize the gap between the ideal of opportunity for all and the reality of declining economic mobility. The steady erosion of the black middle class in the recent economic crisis is a little-told story. But it too is as much a snapshot of structural racism as incarceration figures for black men.

In the end, it takes an audience to survive. How we tell the story matters, and data matters. But ultimately it’s the quality and breadth of our stories on which we stake our survival. The thoroughness and timeliness of our coverage about race and poverty will determine whether the Reporter will be around another 40 years—or at least until we complete the mission John A. McDermott set out for us.



Susan Smith Richardson, a 2003 Nieman Fellow, is editor and publisher of The Chicago Reporter

If you think investigative reporting is hard, try finding the business model to support it

Our key to sustainability (that’s profitability in the for-profit world) is a unique partnership we’ve forged with a public broadcaster in San Diego. It took time and trust to nurture the relationship, but together we are making a big impact while ensuring the financial viability of investigative work. Other nonprofits are partnering with public media as well, with varying success. Some have fee-for-content contracts. inewsource has gone further.

The inewsource team—two reporters, a data specialist, and me—is “embedded” in the KPBS newsroom, a two-year-old, concrete and glass space with all the newest technology. KPBS is the NPR and PBS affiliate in San Diego, with 11 reporters and a stable of original local news programming, including radio features on “Morning Edition,” a talk show at noon, and a half-hour nightly television news show. In exchange, we give KPBS our content, which ranges from Web posts and radio spots to interactive, searchable data and fully produced television and radio packages. Together, inewsource and KPBS reach an estimated 1.4 million people a week through public radio and television, the Web, and social media.

We each respect the other’s distinct mission. KPBS has mighty goals to serve its audience with all kinds of news and programming. inewsource has a single-minded goal: investigative reporting.

It’s around investigative reporting that we’ve found common ground for fundraising. That’s right, we actually approach funders, raise money together. And we’ve secured multi-year commitments. The quality of the journalism and the distribution network make a powerful argument for philanthropic support. There are many people out there who have capacity to give who care about the role of in-depth, accountability journalism in a democracy. It’s more important than ever that we talk to them about how their financial investment in us is an important way for them to show they care.

Nobody has found the magic answer to sustaining investigative journalism. Sheer force of will can’t do it. But passion can keep you going. It can be contagious. Believe me. The first time someone hears you speak and comes up afterwards to hand you a check, it will restore your faith and come a little closer to convincing you that there is no shame in asking for money to support one of the most important missions on the planet.



Lorie Hearn, a 1995 Nieman Fellow, is the executive director and editor of inewsource, a nonprofit she founded in 2009. She formerly was an editor and reporter at The San Diego Union-Tribune

4 Headlines that Will Restore Your Flagging Faith in Journalism

Or at least explain what Upworthy means for the future of online content

By Joshua Benton

A Kid Came Up To Her In The Hall And Told Her She Saved His Life. He Wasn't The Only One In Tears.

Having A Bad Day? Here Are 46 Powerful Things You Should Really Hear.

A Firefighter Went To Put Out A Fire, But He Had No Idea He Would Be A Hero Of A Different Kind.

Clear Your Next 10 Minutes Because This Video Could Change How Happy You Are With Your Entire Week.

Those are all recent headlines on Upworthy, a website that launched in 2012 and, in less than two years, was generating 88 million unique visitors a month. (NYTimes.com gets about 30 million.) If you spend any time on Facebook, it's likely you've come across some Upworthy stories, shared by friends who found them inspiring, infuriating or otherwise irresistible. Put 10 of them in a row and chances are you'll find it hard to click just one.

For those of us who've written a lot of headlines, Upworthy's stand out for a number of reasons, but chief among them is their comfort with emotion. These headlines aren't afraid to tell you how you're going to feel about clicking them.

It's not that journalism pre-Internet was unfamiliar with the power of emotion to reach audiences—or unafraid to use it. Tabloids were and remain the print exemplar here, with their lurid tales, clear good guys and bad guys, and damsels in distress. Television news has long known the value of a rescued dog story. And even the stodgiest of broadsheets trafficked in feel-good features and anger-driving columns.

But Upworthy and BuzzFeed, Quartz, NowThis News, and other Web-native outlets that one could (loosely) lump together as



BISWARANJAN ROUIT/ASSOCIATED PRESS

This villager in India keeping kittens safe from flood waters in 2011 was featured in BuzzFeed's "21 Pictures that Will Restore Your Faith in Humanity"

viral media are different. And the prime driver of that difference is a major shift in how readers find content online.

Search fell in importance as a traffic driver and social media took its place. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other networks are built around person-to-person sharing—of what you had for breakfast this morning, yes, but also of news and other content.

That new environment is the main reason headlines have become so much more emotional and evocative. Online, headlines often pop up alone and have a bigger job to do.

This shift is, on net, a good thing. Yet it encourages changes that some traditionalists might find disorienting. At Quartz, The Atlantic's business news site, it leads to a near-deconstruction of the traditional news story into its constituent parts — inverted pyramids traded for standalone charts, data nuggets, and other highly sharable chunks of information. At the ever-growing BuzzFeed, it leads to stories in listicle form, animated GIFs where text used to

be, and headlines optimized for clicking. At NowThis News, a social video startup, it means news updates as short as six seconds.

This too is healthy. The newspaper article, the television package—these are forms tied to their medium. In 2013, we saw old formats inch closer to feeling indigenous to the Web; witness the transformation of longform pieces into multimedia experiences.

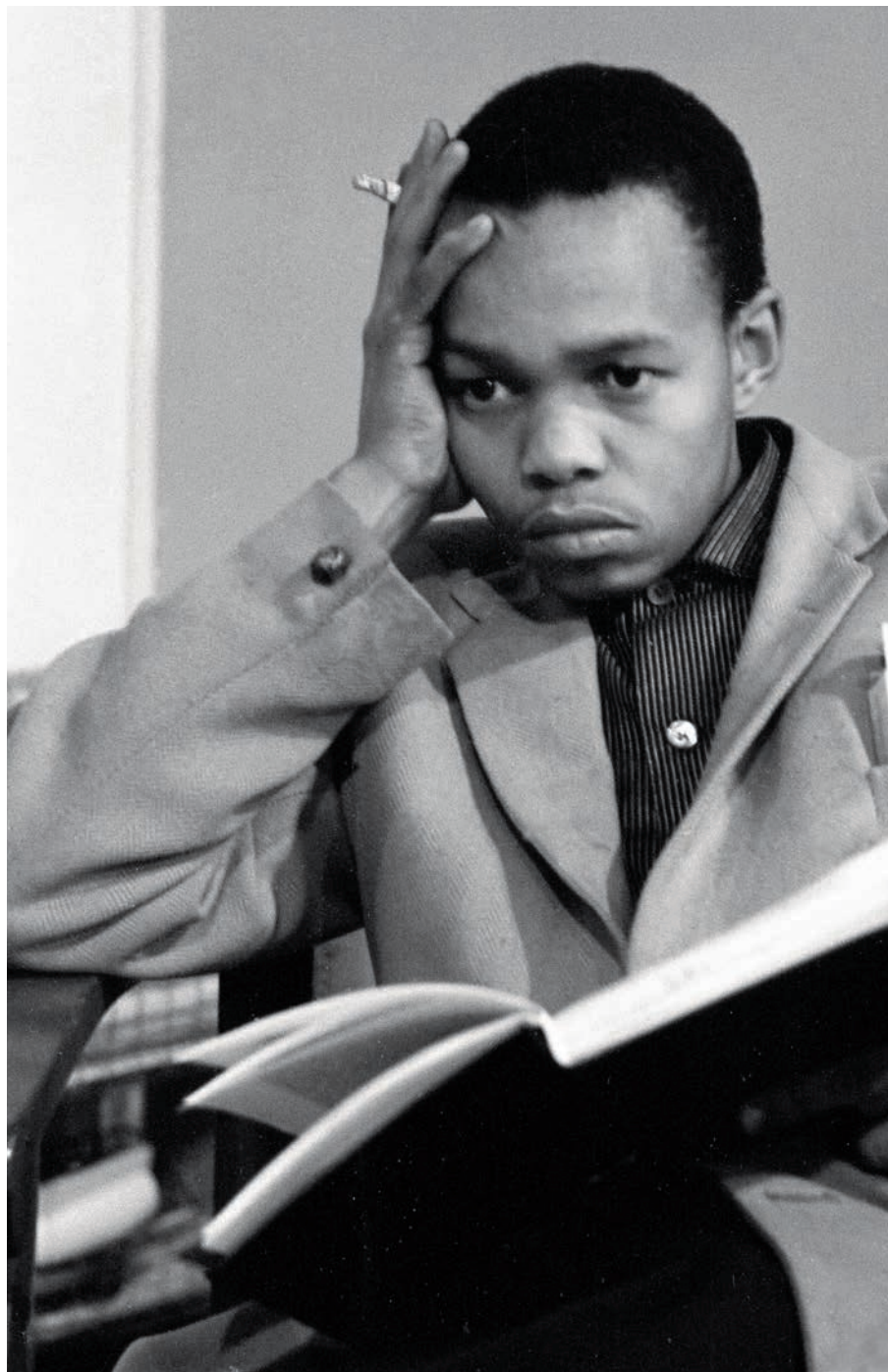
As has been the case at every step of the digital news transition, there will be awkwardness and missteps along the way. Those emotional Upworthy headlines rub a lot of people the wrong way—even in the moment they click on them. But take them as signs that online content is evolving in new ways, ways that traditional outlets will be able to learn from and that will lead to a healthier future for journalism.



Joshua Benton, a 2008 Nieman Fellow, is the founding director of the Nieman Journalism Lab

A Native of Nowhere

Ryan Brown explores the career and troubled life of South African journalist Nathaniel Nakasa, NF '65



Nat Nakasa was 20 when he moved to Johannesburg to join the staff of Drum magazine

Nathaniel Nakasa left Harvard in the spring of 1965 ambivalent about his experience as a Nieman Fellow. According to his biographer Ryan Brown, he found studying race as an academic subject immensely frustrating.

Nakasa came to Harvard as one of South Africa's most celebrated journalists and the first black columnist for the Rand Daily Mail. In the late 1950s and '60s, he reported on the injustices of apartheid for Drum, the top black newsmagazine.

When Nakasa was offered a Nieman Fellowship, the South African government denied him permission to leave the country unless he gave up his right to ever return. At Harvard, Nakasa never warmed to most of his fellow Niemanians or to life in America. After the fellowship, he moved to New York but he had no job and the depression that had settled on him after arriving in the U.S. didn't lift. He wrote that he was a "native of nowhere ... a stateless man." That July, at the age of 28, he died after a fall from a seven-story window, a likely suicide.

In this excerpt from Brown's "A Native of Nowhere: The Life of Nat Nakasa," she focuses on the controversy Nakasa's brand of journalism caused in South Africa.

Do Blacks Hate Whites?" blared the headline of Drum's cover story in November 1958. The story was an "investigation into the most difficult, most critical issue in our country, in our time," its opening lines announced. In fact, the question had seemed to hover over much of the magazine's content that year, from stories of the African independence movements sweeping the continent to profiles of rioting factory workers and spot news pieces on protests against forced removals—all of them haunted by the question of apartheid and the chasms it was opening in South African society.

JURGEN SCHADBERG

For his piece, Nat had collected the testimonies of a wide spectrum of black South Africans—a singer, a priest, a herdsman, a doctor, an activist—concluding that what the majority felt was “not hate then—quite. Suspicion. Distrust. Resentment. And guilt.” Along with a piece the following month casting the opposite question—“Do Whites Hate Blacks?”—the richly reported article was by far Nat’s most significant piece from his first year of reporting at Drum—and his most personal. “It is the correct, the accepted thing on the White side to show a cold hostility, if nothing worse, towards the black,” the 21-year-old wrote. “This harsh voice is now producing a black echo. The black man who still maintains social or friendly contacts with whites is being thought of as a ‘sell out!’”

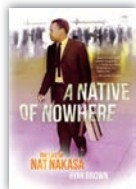
The charge of selling out to the white establishment was one that had stalked Nat from the moment he started working at

The charge of selling out to the white establishment was one that had stalked Nat from the moment he started working at the Drum

Drum. “People felt like he saw a lot of things through white eyes,” David Hazelhurst, a Drum editor, said. “To an extent,” said the white journalist Allister Sparks [NF ’63], “I think he simply felt closer to young white folk.” Putting it most pointedly, [veteran journalist] Leslie Sehume said Nat was “what we blacks would call a coconut”—that is to say, black on the outside, white on the inside.

Too often, they complained, he seemed cozy with the middle-class white reformers whose approach to racial equality they found maddeningly slow and condescending. “You can imagine, it was a very anti-white world we lived in,” said Joe Thloloe [NF ’89], “and when we left the shebeens in town and went home to Soweto, there he was walking off to the [white] northern suburbs to spend time with Nadine Gordimer and her friends.”

As Nat wrote years later, he had never



“A Native of Nowhere: The Life of Nat Nakasa”

BY RYAN BROWN

Jacana Media, 2013

been able to convince himself that the white left was the true political enemy in South Africa. Even young Afrikaners earned his sympathy for being brainwashed into tacit acceptance of apartheid. “In my view, my Afrikaner contemporaries are getting a raw deal,” he wrote. “The grip of authority on the minds of black youth is not as tight as it is on theirs.”

This kind of rhetoric earned Nat a special distinction among some black friends and colleagues. “Nat tommed [behaved in a servile way],” said his colleague Wally Serote. “He tommed while we were rat-racing for survival.” To Serote and the others, Nat had refused to throw the force of his identity behind his blackness, and they couldn’t understand why.

For many of Nat’s friends and colleagues, the question was simple: how could any white person, no matter how sympathetic, begin to understand what life looked like on their side of the colour bar? Sure, white liberals sneaked into the townships to drink illegal liquor and listen to jazz music, to feel the energy and chaos that vibrated through that world and to see how the other 80 per cent lived. But at the end of the evening, they got into their cars and drove back into a different South Africa, one where the majority of children attended school, people held jobs that paid a living wage, and the sight of a policeman calmed the nerves rather than sent them racing. ...

Urban black intellectual life dazzled many of these left-leaning young whites because of the startling immediacy of its concerns and the rawness of its anger, qualities that felt distant, even among liberals, in the white world. But for black intellectuals themselves, the crucial distinction remained. However much a white South African bristled at apartheid’s laws, however many nights she spent with her African boyfriend, she always woke up the next morning still white. The black urban world she experienced in snapshots made up the entirety of life for men like Nat.



Trucks carrying coffins roll by mourners at a mass funeral in 1960 following the Sharpeville massacre

The same immediacy and rawness that thrilled his white friends held him in a chokehold. His circle drank voraciously, loved aggressively and balanced on the edge of the law not only because it was exciting, but because those in their social and racial position had no more stable path they could find their way onto—in short, no escape from their escapist life. How then, they wondered, could they stand shoulder to shoulder with whites politically? Even if they had the same goals, by the nature of the apartheid beast, blacks had to be scrappier, more radical and less compromising in the way they approached the issues.

But Nat never seemed to absorb that way of thinking completely. He’d grown up in a mixed township with a father committed to a multiracial strain of liberalism. His



For Nat, the early 1960s were marked by tremendous uncertainty and a momentous rise in his own career

tending it did not exist. This chokehold around the country's news intensified a problem already building in the Drum offices—retaining writers in a country that refused to let them write.

Over the previous three years, the sardonic former Drum editor Sylvester Stein, who helped Nat get his first pass in Johannesburg, as well as writers and friends Todd Matshikiza, Arthur Maimane and Bloke Modisane, slipped into exile in Europe, unwilling to continue living subversively in the country of their birth. With the government and police hovering low over the activities of dissidents, the antics of fringe country began to feel for many as if they simply were not worth the tremendous danger they posed ...

Amidst all of the tremendous uncertainty Nat faced in the early 1960s, however, the period was also marked by a momentous rise in his own career. With the size of South Africa's black intellectual community shrinking, the young writer skyrocketed through its ranks. In a three-year span between 1961 and 1964, he not only founded a literary magazine and continued to write for Drum, but also became the first black columnist for the leading liberal white newspaper, the Rand Daily Mail. By the time he was 26 years old, he had been invited to follow Lewis Nkosi [NF '61] to the United States on a prestigious journalism fellowship at Harvard University.

But if the South African government appeared determined to purge itself of dissident intellectual activity, it also sought to contain those same intellectuals within its own borders. So as Nat turned his sights to the United States, he came up against a government intent on keeping him firmly rooted in the country of his birth ...

The moment Nat boarded his flight [to the U.S.] that day in 1964, he entered a dark rift. By law, he was no longer a South African, but by blood and personal history he was rooted only there.

childhood was built on the idea that if you worked hard enough, behaved respectably enough and spoke sharply enough, the world would rise to meet your expectations—colour and class be damned. And even as he plunged into the Drum social world, he carried that sense of optimism with him. In that sense he was not so much a coconut as a chameleon—sometimes blending seamlessly with his scenery, but at other times vividly and suddenly out of place ...

When Nat wrote of Africans' escalating fear and sense of powerlessness, his general language veiled just how close to home the issue had become for him as a writer. Already fearful of a government crackdown, in the State of Emergency after Sharpeville [a 1960 massacre of black protesters by South African police] Drum faced two stark options: either to severely limit its political content or be banned completely

by the government. The state's emergency regulations blocked the magazine's staff from publishing their account of the shooting for more than six months.

The May 1960 issue of Drum—the first to go to press after the tragedy—featured only a photographic spread of the funerals held for victims, headlined by a stark image of a long line of coffins and mourners, both of them trailing out to the edge of the frame. And in the July issue, Nat reported on a cadre of ANC [African National Congress] activists involved with the anti-pass campaigns who had gone into exile in Basutoland (now Lesotho). In the 1,500 words of the piece, he never mentioned the word “Sharpeville.”

Forced into a kind of journalistic amnesia, Nat and Drum struggled to convey the magnitude of apartheid resistance in a country whose rulers were intent on pre-

ASSOCIATED PRESS



Celebrating 75 years


More than 400 Nieman Fellows and affiliates gathered in Cambridge



PHOTOS BY LISA ABITBOL

Nieman Foundation curator Ann Marie Lipinski welcomes attendees to the 75th anniversary dinner at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts

Soundings got started in the mid-'70s as a forum for Fellows to talk about the personal and professional influences on their journalism. To kick off the anniversary weekend, six Fellows—**Ameto Akpe**, NF '14; **Brett Anderson**, NF '13; **Robert Blau**, NF '97; **Alfredo Corchado**, NF '09; **I. Roberto Eisenmann, Jr.**, NF '86; and **Gwen Thompkins**, NF '11—took to Harvard's John Knowles Paine Concert Hall stage to tell intimate Sounding-like stories about their lives and their work, under the moderation of **Geneva Overholser**, NF '86. (Corchado writes about

 Videos and more photos from the 75th anniversary celebration are online at nieman.harvard.edu/75

live storytelling on page 15.)

On Saturday, New Yorker executive editor **Dorothy Wickenden**, NF '89, moderated a panel discussion about the future of storytelling. Kara Oehler, editor in chief of Zeega, talked about using archival video and audio interviews to produce interactive stories. Joe Sexton, a driving force

behind the multimedia project "Snow Fall" on The New York Times website, urged journalists to just "say yes" to newsroom innovation. Elise Hu said she and her colleagues at NPR try to make their programs laboratories for new ways of telling stories. Douglas McGray, editor in chief of Pop-Up Magazine, talked about live performance as a vital and commercially viable way to "publish" journalism.

The weekend ended with a gala dinner at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and a farewell brunch at Lippmann House the next day.

90-MINUTE NIEMANS

The focus broadened on day two when Nieman Foundation curator **Ann Marie Lipinski**, NF '90, introduced the "90-Minute Nieman" session, saying, "If we as Nieman Fellows are privileged, and we are, it is due in no small part to the riches on this campus." Seven big thinkers from Harvard and MIT put those riches on display with succinct talks:

Jill Lepore, David Woods Kemper '41 Professor of American History at Harvard and staff writer for *The New Yorker*, on "The Public Eye: Privacy in the Age of Publicity"

William Julius Wilson, Lewis P. and Linda L. Geysler University Professor at Harvard University, on "When Work Disappears: The Impact of Joblessness on Inner Cities"

Katie Hinde, assistant professor of human evolutionary biology at Harvard, on "Why Mammals Suck"

Ethan Zuckerman, director of Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for Civic Media, on "Saving the News with Advocacy Journalism"

Sheila Jasanoff, Pforzheimer Professor of Science and Technology Studies, Harvard Kennedy School, on "Innovation: The Untold Stories"

Nicco Mele, adjunct lecturer in public policy at Harvard Kennedy School, on "The End of Big: Why the Future of News Is Small"

Nancy F. Koehn, historian and James E. Robison Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School, on "Rachel Carson: One Person Strong Enough"



Lester Sloan, NF '76



Former Nieman curator Bob Giles, NF '66, and Amy Ellis Nutt, NF '05



William Marimow, NF '83



Harvard professor Sheila Jasanoff

The Washington Post's **Anne Hull**, NF '95, interviewed biographer **Robert A. Caro**, NF '66, about how he won the trust of sources and discovered the truth about the enormous power Lyndon Johnson wielded in the Senate. (See page 8.)



Former Nieman curator Bill Kovach, NF '89, and Yang Xiao, NF '14, chat under the gaze of the new portrait of Agnes Nieman



Beena Sarwar, NF '06

Former Nieman Foundation curator **Bill Kovach**, NF '89, presented **Jane Mayer**, reporter for *The New Yorker*, with the I.F. Stone Medal for Journalistic Independence. Mayer gave a talk about the challenges of reporting in an age of surveillance. (See page 4.)

1974

Nicholas Daniloff received the 2013 New England News-paper & Press Association Journalism Educator of the Year Award during the association's annual conference in October. He has taught at the Northeastern University School of Journalism in Boston since 1989 and plans to retire at the end of the current academic year. He is known for engaging his students through role-playing exercises, taking on the part of an administration spokesman holding a press conference on Iran or donning a black robe and curly wig to portray philosopher Immanuel Kant. Daniloff previously served as a correspondent in London, Paris, Moscow and Washington for United Press International and U.S. News & World Report, and has written three books.

1975

Thomas J. Dolan, a longtime investigative reporter at The Buffalo (N.Y.) News, died of Parkinson's disease at a retirement community in Getzville, New York, on August 23, 2013. He was 70. After starting his journalism career at the South Bend (Ind.) Tribune, Dolan arrived at The Buffalo Evening News in the 1960s. A native of Illinois, he left Buffalo after a few years to become an investigative reporter at the Chicago Sun-Times and, later, a producer at WBBM-TV. He returned to the News in 1982 and spent the next 26 years as a financial, city and suburban reporter. He retired in 2008. His second wife, Marion G. Dolan, died in 2011. He is sur-

vived by a son and daughter from his first marriage and two stepsons.

1986

Micha Bar-Am's photojournalism is distilled in "Insight: Micha Bar-Am's Israel," published in September 2011 by Koenig Books to coincide with a traveling exhibition of the same name. Exhibit curator Alexandra Nocke edited the book. For almost 60 years Bar-Am followed the history of Israel with his camera. He covered ordinary moments in the lives of Israeli citizens and the numerous wars across the Middle East. Images from the book were exhibited at the Willy-Brandt-Haus in Berlin and at the Open Museum of Photography in Israel.

1988

Emily O'Reilly became the European Ombudsman in October, following her election by the European Parliament in July. From her office in Strasbourg, France, O'Reilly fields complaints from the 28 member states of the European Union (EU) about EU institutions. The European Ombudsman typically receives about 2,500 complaints a year from citizens, businesses, and other entities. Many of them are about a lack of transparency, including access to documents. For the previous 10 years O'Reilly had served as the National Ombudsman of Ireland. Prior to that she was a longtime political reporter for The Sunday Tribune, The Sunday Business Post, The Irish Press, and The Sunday Times.

"Seven Days" That Shook Canada

Tom Regan, NF '92, reflects on the legacy of fellow Canadian Douglas Leiterman, NF '54, who helped develop "60 Minutes"

Douglas Leiterman, NF '54, an acclaimed journalist in Canada, died on December 13, 2012 at his winter home in Vero Beach, Florida. He was 85. After his Nieman year, he covered politics for Southam News Services in Ottawa. During regular appearances on television, he developed a reputation as a tough interviewer who called out politicians about their facts. He is best known for his role in creating the television show "This Hour Has Seven Days" for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

When I was a kid growing up in Ottawa, Canada in the mid-1960s, my dad worked for then Canadian Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson. I overheard a fair amount of political talk, but I mostly ignored it as I was more interested in hockey. But one thing I do remember was my dad frequently talking about this show called "This Hour Has Seven Days." It was a big deal.

The show, launched in 1964 and cancelled after 50 episodes, was the brainchild of two men: one was a "soft-spoken dynamo" named Douglas Leiterman, NF '54.

It's hard to overstate the importance of "This Hour Has Seven Days." Some TV historians say the show changed journalism in Canada, in the same way that a few years later coverage of the Watergate scandal effected changes in the U.S.

Writing in The New York Times, Martin Knelman offered a thumbnail sketch of the show: "Broadcast live from a Toronto studio on Sunday nights, the show was a combination of skits, music, documentary segments and news flashes delivered with

1989

Peter Richmond's book "Phil Jackson: The Lord of the Rings" was published in December by Blue Rider Press. Jackson is a retired National Basketball Association player and coach who won 11 championships—six with Michael Jordan's Chicago Bulls and five with Kobe Bryant's Los Angeles Lakers.

Jackson, the son of Pentecostal ministers who became the most successful coach in the history of professional sports, declined to be interviewed for the book so Richmond interviewed everyone he could find who knew him.

1996

Ying Chan received the 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Asian American Jour-



CBC STILL PHOTO COLLECTION/HENRY FOX

Douglas Leisterman's show changed journalism in Canada

attitude. Many people loved it, many people hated it, and at its peak, three million Canadians—one out of every three English-speaking adults at the time—watched it. And on Monday morning, the whole country would be talking about it.”

After the show—which the CBC management called “dangerous”—was cancelled, the uproar from the Canadian viewing public was so great, it actually became a subject of a parliamentary inquiry. Within a year, the head of the CBC was gone as a result.

One last note: Leisterman's passionate journalism intrigued people at the U.S. network CBS. They hired him to help them develop a public affairs news show. Perhaps you've heard of it... “60 Minutes.”

nalists Association in August. Chan, a former reporter for New York's Daily News, is currently a professor of journalism at the University of Hong Kong and founding director of the school's Journalism and Media Studies Centre. She was also the founding dean of Shantou University's School of Journalism and Communication. “She's helping to train, inspire and motivate an entirely new

generation of curious young journalists,” award judge Josh Awtry wrote of Chan. “I can think of no better time and place for leadership in the principles of a free press. As issues of social inequality and free speech come to the fore, it's a comfort to know that journalists like Ying Chan are assisting in engagement and education outreach efforts.”

Mary Schmich has collected more than 150 of her Chicago Tribune columns from the past 20 years in the new collection “Even the Terrible Things Seem Beautiful to Me Now,” published in August by Agate Midway. The book includes the 10 pieces for which she was awarded the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Commentary, as well as her series on the demolition of an infamous housing project, a 12-part series about a district judge whose mother and husband were murdered, and “Wear Sunscreen,” her widely quoted graduation column from 1997.

1998

Christine Chinlund received the Yankee Quill Award from the New England Newspaper & Press Association in October. The award honors the lifetime achievements of journalists in New England who “have had a broad influence for good, both inside and outside the newsroom,” according to the association's website. Chinlund started her journalism career as a volunteer with VISTA (Volunteer in Service to America) in Vermont, producing and delivering a monthly newspaper for low-income residents. She worked at several newspapers in Vermont before joining the Globe's bureau in Concord, New Hampshire. She has been with the Globe for 30 years, serving as political and investigative reporter, editor of the national and foreign desks, and ombudsman. She is currently the managing editor for news. The nomination submitted by Globe reporter Emily Sweeney, president of

the New England chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, praised Chinlund's leadership and experience: “She's one of the sages of the newsroom, and highly regarded by her peers. She's the one reporters and editors turn to when they need advice on a story. They respect her, and trust her judgment.”

2001

Mark Pothier was promoted to business editor at The Boston Globe in August after three years as deputy business editor. Pothier joined the Globe after his Nieman Fellowship, becoming the first editor of Globe South, one of the newspaper's zoned sections.

Peter Turnley published a new book of photographs documenting his nearly 40 years living in Paris. “French Kiss: A Love Letter to Paris,” which he self-published in November, features moments of everyday life in Turnley's adopted hometown—a stark contrast from the photographs of war, famine and disaster around the world for which he is best known. Turnley was a contract photographer for Newsweek from 1986 to 2001, and his work has also been featured in Harper's, National Geographic, and other magazines.

2002

Jeffrey Fleishman is now a senior reporter for the Los Angeles Times's arts and entertainment team after spending the past 11 years as a foreign correspondent for the paper.

Giannina Segnini was recognized for journalistic excellence with a Gabriel García Márquez Prize for Journalism in November. Segnini founded the investigative unit at La Nación newspaper in Costa Rica, where she has been a pioneer in computer-assisted reporting and data mining to uncover corruption. Most famously, the newspaper's reporting about two former presidents accepting bribes led to both being sent to prison. In announcing Segnini's selection, the advisory board for the award, which includes **Rosental Alves**, NF '88, wrote that what "the investigative team at La Nación has done under Segnini's leadership has permitted the discovery of deliberately hidden relationships between facts and persons, and abuses of power."

2004

Masha Gessen is the author of "Words Will Break Cement: The Passion of Pussy Riot," published by Riverhead in January. In February 2012, the five women known as Pussy Riot performed a "punk prayer" in a Moscow church to rid the nation of Vladimir Putin. Security forces shut them down. A video of the performance went viral.

Kirsty Milne, a journalist who later turned to academia, died of cancer in July. She was 49. Milne was raised in a media family—her father, Alasdair Milne, was director-general of the BBC and her brother Seumas is a journalist with The Guardian—and followed that path out of college as a trainee at the BBC. She soon

turned to print journalism, writing for the New Society and New Statesman magazines in London. She moved to Scotland, where she had spent part of her childhood, to cover the newly established Scottish Parliament for the Sunday Herald and The Scotsman in 1999 until she left for her Nieman Fellowship in 2003. The year at Harvard was followed by a career change. She completed a master's degree in intellectual and cultural history at Queen Mary University of London and a doctorate in English language and literature at Magdalen College in Oxford—the latter after being diagnosed with lung cancer. Her doctoral thesis, "Vanity Fair From Bunyan to Thackeray: Transformations of a Trope," is scheduled to be published as a book next year. She is survived by her husband, Hugh Shaw Stewart.

2007

Alagi Yorro Jallow self-published the book "Delayed Democracy: How Press Freedom Collapsed in The Gambia" in October. After its independence from the United Kingdom in 1965, Gambia was one of the few successful multiparty democracies in Africa, Jallow writes, with a press that was free to criticize its leaders. But after current President Yahya Jammeh seized power in a 1994 coup, the government cracked down on dissent in the media. The newspaper that Jallow founded and edited, The Independent, was one of the casualties of that repression; staff members were harassed, threatened



A Matter of Conviction

Lyons award winner Pamela Colloff's investigations into murder cases have led to overturned convictions

Pamela Colloff, *who has exposed deep flaws in the Texas criminal justice system through her investigations into wrongful convictions, is this year's recipient of the Louis M. Lyons Award for Conscience and Integrity in Journalism.*

An executive editor at Texas Monthly, Colloff was selected by the 2014 Class of Nieman Fellows. The Lyons award was established by the Nieman class of 1964 in honor of longtime Nieman Foundation curator Louis Lyons, who retired that year. In their announcement, the 2014 Nieman Fellows wrote, "When many of her colleagues have moved on from the sensational murder trials, often content that justice has been served, Colloff treads a lonely road, digging through boxes of court documents, re-interviewing witnesses and questioning the motives of prosecutors and the competence of defense attorneys ... The power and humanity of her stories has helped force reexaminations into several cases and given them an impact far beyond the borders of Texas."

In 2011, one month after the publication of an exposé by Colloff, the district attorney's office dropped all charges against death row inmate Anthony Graves and freed him from prison after 18 years. In 2013, Colloff examined the case against a mother convicted of

and arrested, and its presses were destroyed. In addition to recounting this grim history, Jallow also offers some hope. Several former journalists from The Independent have created online outlets in exile.

Andrea McCarren won five Emmy awards from the National Capital Chesapeake Bay chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences in June. McCarren, a reporter and part-time anchor for WUSA in Washington, D.C., has now won 15 Emmy awards in her career. Her reporting from the past year that was honored includes a series on underage drinking and "Six Terrible Seconds,"

about a woman who survived an accident that killed two of her friends, one of whom was driving drunk. That report also won a regional 2013 Edward R. Murrow Award for hard news reporting. Her series "Wasted: Young and Using" received awards for outstanding news series and best investigative reporting from the Chesapeake Associated Press Broadcasters Association and the Washington Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, respectively.

2008

Janifer McKim became the assistant managing editor and senior investigative reporter



JEFF WILSON

Pamela Colloff is an executive editor at Texas Monthly

killing her adopted son with salt. Six weeks after publication of Colloff's story, the state's highest court granted the woman a new hearing. In an interview last year with Nieman Storyboard, Colloff said, "Sadly, I don't believe that the rate of wrongful convictions is necessarily much higher in Texas than it is anywhere else. This is a national problem."

at the New England Center for Investigative Reporting in August. The nonprofit center, based at Boston University's College of Communication, partners with local news media to conduct in-depth investigative reporting with the assistance of student researchers. McKim spent the past six years as a reporter at The Boston Globe, where she covered business and social issues and won the 2011 Casey Medal for Meritorious Journalism for a series on child sex trafficking. She was previously on the investigative team at the Orange County Register.

Dan Vergano joined National Geographic.com as a senior

writer and editor in September. He covers daily news for the site, with a focus on the science angle. During the government shutdown in October, for example, Vergano wrote about how a plan to move a Tyrannosaurus Rex skeleton from Montana to Washington, D.C. was put on hold. Vergano previously covered science, technology and energy for USA Today, where he had worked for the past 14 years.

2010

Alissa Quart profiles fringe groups that are changing mainstream culture in "Republic of Outsiders: The

Power of Amateurs, Dreamers and Rebels," published by The New Press in August. Her subjects range from "mad priders" who choose to treat mental illnesses with peer counseling instead of drugs to retired Wall Street bankers forming an Occupy Bank Working Group to create new financial networks.

2011

Rob Rose's new book "The Grand Scam: How Barry Tannenbaum Conned South Africa's Business Elite," was published in November by Zebra Press. Rose broke the story of Tannenbaum's scheme while working as an investigative reporter for The Financial Mail magazine in 2009. He currently covers business and corruption for South Africa's Sunday Times.

Pablo Corral Vega self-published a photo book "My Garden in the Wild" in December. In early 2013, Vega began taking photographs of the natural "gardens" of Ecuador as a tribute to his girlfriend, Carolina Hidalgo, who was killed in a car accident in January 2013. He raised money with a Kickstarter campaign, which raised nearly three times its goal.

2012

David Skok, formerly director of Globalnews.ca, the online portal for one of Canada's largest broadcast news companies, has joined The Boston Globe as digital adviser to the editor. In a memo to staff, Globe editor Brian McGrory said, "David will play a key role in our upcoming

push to further define our two brands—bg.com as a broader, more ambitious site that better reflects the creative journalism of the Globe, and a redesigned boston.com as a sharper, edgier site with a strong news spine."

2013

Ludovic Blecher was named director of the Digital Innovation Press Fund when it launched in September. A joint effort of Google and a French publishing trade group, the Association of Political and General Information, the fund will disburse 60 million euro (approximately \$80 million) over the next three years to French media organizations with ideas for innovation in digital media. Blecher previously was in charge of digital strategy for French newspaper Libération.

Alexandra Garcia joined The New York Times as a senior video journalist in October. For her first piece posted to the newspaper's website, Garcia traveled to Conyers, Georgia, to report on "The Great Bull Run," an Americanized version of Pamplona's famous running of the bulls. She formerly worked at The Washington Post.

Beauregard Tromp, who was a visiting assistant professor and Knight Chair at the University of Miami School of Communication during the fall 2013 semester, helped to produce "20 Years On," a student reporting project documenting life in South African townships 20 years after apartheid ended.

Stories To Live By

Giving voice to people who've never spoken up

Soon after starting high school in Tg. Mures, the small city in Romania's Transylvania region where I grew up, I began skipping classes.

I left the house every morning, hid around my apartment building until my parents, both doctors, went to work, then returned home to read. Sometimes it was sci-fi by Asimov or Herbert; other times it was conspiracy thrillers or my mother's Sandra Brown books. My parents learned of my exploits from the school nurse, who was worried about the many diseases listed on the (faked) medical absence notes I brought in. Nobody in the high school's history had skipped as many classes as I had. My parents didn't appreciate this record; in fact, I'd never seen either of them so disappointed. Born into working class families during communism, they were first-generation physicians who worked long hours to create a better life for my brother and me. They dreamed we would follow them into medicine, maybe even create a family dynasty. Even if we didn't do that, they didn't want us to fail.

I failed, and I tried to explain why. Something happened when I started ninth grade; all the new students and teachers terrified me. Sometimes I stuttered my way through a sentence, but shame at doing so overwhelmed me and I shut up again.

I felt alone. So I skipped class after class.

Now that my parents knew, I didn't want to let them down, so I returned to school. When ninth grade ended, I attended the school summer camp, where my journalistic adventure began. A friend and I published a daily bulletin of news and gossip.

The kids loved it. When we returned to school, we started a weekly paper, called The Voice. By the time we stopped, 60 issues later, we were up to 32 pages, we had been summoned to the principal's office many times, and we had a few hundred loyal readers.

I had found a voice and maybe even a profession.

In 1999 I started journalism school in Bucharest, finding refuge from the unwelcoming city in a web site I started with a university colleague. Under pseudonyms we sounded off on everything from alternative rock to books to the broken politics of pre-European Union Romania.

In my junior year I took part in a program taught by American journalists. They did something our



CRISTIAN LUPSA

What we want is to give voice to stories nobody has heard, to people who've never spoken up, because the stories we tell about our world and our lives are what bind us

Romanian teachers hadn't—they made us go out into the street and report. This showed me a side of journalism I knew little about. Journalism done not through raising your own voice, but through letting the voices of others come through.

I wanted to learn how to do it better, and that's what brought me to the Missouri School of Journalism, where I got my M.A., and then on to jobs in Washington, D.C., and Boston. I learned how to make journalism that was both relevant and interesting, and found guidelines to live by—most listed in my personal Bible, "The Elements of Journalism," co-authored by former Nieman curator Bill Kovach.

I also found the journalism that best fit me—narrative nonfiction, deeply reported and carefully written stories of people that reflect our common humanity, our joys and struggles. I later discovered a quote by Joan Didion that remains my guiding principle: "We tell ourselves stories in order to live." We tell stories to connect, to understand, to compare, to plan, to escape, to change, to heal.

I decided that doing deeply reported journalism about the way we live was even more necessary in Romania, a former Communist country where trust is in short supply and where telling intimate stories is seen as irrelevant.

I have been doing that for almost seven years, as a writer, an editor, a teacher, and entrepreneur. In 2009, together with other journalists, I started Decât o Revista, an independent magazine that tells the stories of modern day Romania, stories about prisoner re-integration, Paralympic sports, human rights education, Roma activism. We continue to struggle and have by no means figured out a business model. In April, just as I learned I got the Nieman, our bank account had dropped to \$100.

We might make it another year; we might not. But surviving was never the goal. What we want is to give voice to stories nobody has heard, to people who've never spoken up, because the stories we tell about our world and our lives are what bind us. They bring hope where before there was fear, joy where before there was pain. I have felt this in my own life, and I have seen it in the lives of others.

Cristian Lupsa, a 2014 Nieman Fellow, is editor of Decât o Revista

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Journalism in China, 25 Years after Tiananmen

Paul Mooney, China correspondent from 1994 to 2012

Hu Shuli, editor in chief of Caixin Media Co.

Qian Gang, co-director of the China Media Project

Evan Osnos, staff writer at The New Yorker

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