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imc_news@columbia.edu

PEOPLE

JAPAN'S MAVERICK JOURNALIST

[Continued from Page 7]

Securing a visa for travel in Myanmar is not easy, especially for journalists. The ease with which Doden landed one raised some eyebrows. "Some people say I got the visa because Japan is a major donor of aid to Myanmar. Others speculate (that) I got the visa because I am a woman," she said. "But for me the reason is not important. What matters is that I got access."

But whereas many journalists tend to focus on the purely political aspects of a story, Doden's journalistic style was clearly influenced by SIPA.

"Many of the stories I covered out of Bangkok were transnational in nature such as the trafficking of humans, H.I.V., and landmines," she said. "All of these issues are not confined to one single country but span the borders of many countries in this part of Southeast Asia."

Doden returned to Tokyo last fall, when her Bangkok assignment ended, along



One of Doden's journalistic coups was an interview with Burmese dissident Aung San Suu Kyi (above).

with its plum news breaks.

"Life is completely different now," she said. "Being a correspondent in the field meant that I had greater autonomy since I only had to liaise with the Bureau Chief. Now that I am back in the announcer division of NHK Headquarters, I need to coordinate with hundreds of people."

Not that it should matter. Doden's next interview, as she headed for the door, was yet another Nobel laureate, this time Japanese physicist Masatoshi Koshihira. Her assignment schedule, for now at least, is still a journalist's dream.

IMC news Spring 2003

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

RENDEZVOUS AT THE EDGE Two friends and IMC alumni speak of fear, war, and reporting the truth.

BY COLUM MURPHY

FOUR days after the first explosions signaled the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Kareem Fahim (IMC '01) was having a quick cocktail with friends to the soothing strains of piano chords in the lobby of his hotel in Amman, Jordan.

The serenity belied an uglier state of affairs outside in the streets of Amman, where Jordanian animosity towards the American invasion was running high. For Fahim, too, the sedate lounge masked the chaos of emotions he felt about the reason he was there - to report the war from Iraq for *The Village Voice*.

"I was ecstatic when the *Voice* gave me the job," he said, by telephone. "But now I am very apprehensive when faced with the reality of going to Baghdad. I take consolation when I hear some really seasoned journalists say that this war is more frightening than any other war they have ever covered."

Iraq would not be Fahim's first battle zone. He had reported from Palestine before. But there, he could at least see and anticipate the danger. This war would be laden with much more uncertainty - not least the risk of chemical and biological warfare, the unpredictable response of a dictator cornered and lethally armed.

But for the time being, snared in a visa trap, Fahim was forced to wait patiently for his papers in Amman.

But Fahim was putting his down-time to good use. The Hashemite kingdom was brimming with its own war-zone stories as a growing rift ruptured between the ostensibly neutral Jordanian government and its own people, most of whom vehemently oppose the war.

"The atmosphere here is extremely tense,"

said Fahim. "They have been showing terrible pictures of the destruction in Basra on Al-Jazeera and people are getting very angry. Some people have even downloaded some scenes and are using them as computer screensavers."

The *Voice* ran several of Fahim's pieces from Jordan including a story he wrote about the government crackdown in the notorious trouble spot of Ma'an in the south of the country, and another interview with Iraqis leaving Jordan to return to their homeland. "If you're going to die, you may as well die near your family," they tell him.

These haunting words echo, albeit more faintly, 580 miles north of Baghdad, where Fahim's friend and fellow IMC graduate, Raffi Khatchadourian (IMC '00) was in Georgia's capital of Tbilisi, where the mood was distinctly calmer.

Katchadourian was taking a breather here after a reporting expedition to the Pankisi Gorge - one of the most lawless regions of the world, a pocket of Georgia inhabited by Chechen rebels, suspected Al-Qaeda fugitives and criminal gangs.

For Khatchadourian, Pankisi is one of the last stops on a journey that began in southern Turkey from where he began reporting for a five-part *Voice* series entitled "Path of a Pipeline." The series traced the route of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline as it crosses mountains, deserts and earthquake zones, bringing oil from the depths of the Caspian Sea through Azerbaijan, Georgia and on to the Mediterranean sea in Turkey-stirring up ethnic and class strife along the way.

Both were voices for people often overlooked by a mainstream media all too willing to stereotype.

Khatchadourian dismissed immediately any suggestion that he was reporting from a war zone. "There is a big difference between writing from near a war and writing from a war," he said, by telephone. "And the dividing line is significant - it is the nature of the moment where your life is at risk."

It is true that Katchadourian did not have to contemplate bombs and explosions. The region was teetering in peace, but conflict stalked the

villagers in the dilapidated Turkish port of Ceyhan, and the landless peasants in Georgia. Khatchadourian's job was to tell the stories of the poor, displaced and cheated, who were battling the powerful pipeline builders.

It is the storytelling that binds Fahim and Khatchadourian.



On the fringes of war, carrying voices from the frontlines.

The conflicts they covered were intrinsically different - Fahim reporting from the edge of "shock and awe" warfare; Khatchadourian from a trail of economic and ethnic conflict - but both were voices for people often overlooked by a mainstream media all too willing to brush-stroke entire countries and cultures in the tawdry colors of stereotype. "I found it frustrating that in the U.S. media, there is a tendency to make sweeping generalizations about Arab culture," said Fahim.

While the *Voice* afforded them reporting luxuries in time, space, and a sophisticated readership, the respect they showed their subjects gave them an incomparable edge. Neither can change American media coverage overnight, but each story is one step closer, bringing home truer portraits of life and war in faraway lands. ~

MORE INSIDE:

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE on changes afoot in IMC

CLARA PEREZ on the joys and perils of stringing

LADANE NASSERI on SIPA's Shanghai connection

JUDY LAM on the resurgence of Web journalism



The Newsletter of the International Media and Communications Concentration School of International and Public Affairs Columbia University
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SPOTLIGHT: IMC CHANGES

FROM THE DIRECTOR The Inside Track

BY DONALD H. JOHNSTON



A DECADE has passed since the IMC curriculum was put in place.

Since then, times have changed with the world, with student needs and with our resources. So we're beginning a

review to see if curricular adjustments are needed or desired.

Although new courses have been added over the years and options for the requirements have been expanded, the impetus for the review is two-fold: First, the lack of access to many of the Journalism School courses because perennially there are no openings in them; and second, a tightening of the budget throughout SIPA that currently is limiting the options of the concentrations and institutes.

One immediate change is the addition of Anya Schiffirin to the IMC staff as co-director, which allows me to spend more time on special school projects. She also will teach the course "Topics in International Business and Economic Reporting." The course was a one-credit mini this spring term, but will become a full three-

credit course next fall.

Schiffirin, a former Knight-Bagehot Fellow at the J-School, has had 10 years experience as a business journalist in Istanbul, Barcelona, Amsterdam, Hanoi and New York. Currently she is the director of journalism training programs at the Initiative for Policy Dialogue, an international network of economists based at Columbia.

The first project initiated by Schiffirin is a series of mini-courses, to be shared and funded jointly by SIPA and the Journalism School, starting next year. As planned, there will be two in the fall and two in the spring, running consecutively. At least two likely will be business-oriented. Others under consideration are "Covering Wars," proposed by Adjunct Professor Tom

Times have changed with the world, so we're beginning a review to see if curricular adjustments are needed or desired.

Lansner, and one dealing with commercial and NGO public relations, designed primarily for students in the IMC communications track.

One expected major loss from the IMC program, after a dozen years, is *Slant* magazine. As decided by Dean Lisa Anderson, *Slant* will be absorbed into *SIPA News*, the school's PR/alumni publication. The intended result will be on a model of a consumer magazine, mixing a variety of articles with school-related information -- similar to the magazine distributed by the London School of Economics.

Students will be encouraged to propose and write articles, as well as the school items, although they no longer will form an indepen-

dent, self-governing staff, as has been the practice since the launching of *Slant*. Four years ago, the magazine was raised to a professional level, but it continued to have two strikes against it: its circulation was limited pretty much to the university community, and lacking adequate advertising, it was a perennial money loser. *SIPA News* has a distribution of 11,000 copies, mainly to alumni.

Other aspects of the program proposed for review are:

- The requirement for a **media project**. The demise of *Slant* as a student-run publication eliminates a major option for the project; but also the option of an independent research project needs looking at.

- Our arrangements with the **Journalism School** to see if we can acquire more access.

- The **communications track**. There are more students in the track than when the curriculum was devised, and their career goals are more diverse.

- Should there be a **core course** required for all IMC students? For example, on critical issues in international media and communications?

- Do we have the most appropriate **writing courses** from the perspective of our students' career goals?

- Should we have **joint projects**, involving reporting and writing, with other concentrations such as Human Rights, Economic and Political Development, Environmental Studies, and Conflict Resolution?

There's much to think about. Let me hear your thoughts. ~

E-mail feedback to Professor Johnston at dhj3@columbia.edu

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Washington Square, New York City



BY JONATHAN ADAMS

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PEOPLE

BLAZING A WRITING TRAIL Michele Wucker Tackles Hispaniola

BY ALEXANDRA HARLAND

MICHELE Wucker is not one to steer away from a challenge. At *The Milwaukee Sentinel*, her tenacious reporting helped to break a story that led police to identify one of Jeffrey Dahmer's victims. At SIPA, while other students spent spring break lounging on sunny beaches, Wucker was in Haiti covering the coup of 1991. That experience paved the way for her acclaimed book *Why the Cocks Fight: Dominicans, Haitians and the Struggle for Hispaniola* (1999). The book, which has received widespread praise, is "a socio-political history of the Dominican Republic's turbulent relationship with Haiti and the United States."

Wucker's interest in policy issues can be traced to her childhood. As a young teenager growing up in Waco, Texas, Wucker remembers following the news on the Latin American debt

crisis in the mid-1980's. Though at the time she could not quite grasp the intricacies of international finance, she was fascinated by the workings of what would become a lifelong passion. "Basically, the more complex an issue, the happier I am," Wucker explained.

It is this love of all things complex that drove Wucker to research and write the book. In writing *Why the Cocks Fight*, Wucker sought to use a vivid and evocative style that would humanize policy issues and thus appeal to a wider audience.



Wucker explores turbulence in Hispaniola in her book, *Why The Cocks Fight*.

them."

As a student at Rice University in Houston, Texas, Wucker received a grant to study the politics of language in the Dominican Republic. At SIPA, where Wucker concentrated in International Political Economy (what is now International Economic Policy), *Why the Cocks*

Fight started out as a certificate project in the form of a book proposal. She credits SIPA with giving her access to great courses in finance, journalism and anthropology which ultimately contributed towards the research of her book.

Following graduation from SIPA, Wucker worked on Wall Street with Dow Jones Emerging Markets and *International Financing Review*. Though she claims to be passionately interested in financial issues, she also concedes that financial journalism "helps to subsidize the less lucrative stuff." Currently, Wucker is a Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute in New York City where she specializes in immigration, the politics of culture, Latin America and the Caribbean, and international finance and debt crisis. As part of her activities with the Haitian and Dominican communities in New York, Wucker started an online chat group of about 300 scholars, activists, journalists and government officials to discuss Haitian-Dominican relations.

Wucker is currently working on a new book on immigrant assimilation and citizenship. Despite her interest in weighty issues, however, Wucker does manage to inject some fantasy and whimsy into her busy schedule. In addition to her non-fiction book, she is working on the fourth draft of a novel. All she'll say about the story is that it is about bad pop love songs set in Texas in 1985. Barely 16 when she started college, Wucker feels entitled to a little fun at this stage of her life. "I'm definitely making up for lost time!" ~

PEOPLE

JAPAN'S MAVERICK JOURNALIST Aiko Doden Takes The Path Less Traveled

BY COLUM MURPHY

HER face is beamed into millions of Japanese television viewers' homes every day, but Aiko Doden is far more than just another famous face. The SIPA graduate enjoys a reputation as a standard-setting broadcast journalist in the otherwise dry world of Japanese media, thanks to in-depth and courageous reporting.

She has interviewed some of the most powerful newsmakers on the planet, among them Nelson Mandela and Kofi Annan. As an investigative reporter she has tackled complex cross-border issues such as the spread of H.I.V. in Southeast Asia. Doden has come a long way since 1988, when she joined the conservative, government-owned Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) fresh out of college.

Doden got the coveted anchor position early in NHK, and quickly found it wanting. "In Japan, being an anchor is considered the ultimate glamorous position for many," she explained. But she wanted to be more than just glamorous. Doden had designs on becoming a leading broadcast journalist, and a stint at SIPA was part of this plan.

Though never officially an IMC concentrator, Doden did maintain close contact with the IMC faculty, and in particular, Professor Donald Johnston, who advised her on how best to draw on SIPA's resources.

"Studying at SIPA gave me the analytical framework for understanding what is happening in the world," she said. "After SIPA, I was well armed for my career in journalism." After graduation, she returned to Tokyo where she continued as an anchor for popular television news programs like "Ohayo Nippon!" ("Good Morning Japan!"). But before long, she found her way out of the studio, and into the field, as a reporter in the channel's Bangkok bureau. Some of her colleagues were perplexed at her decision to take up a position in Southeast Asia, regarded by many as a far shabbier posting.

"People used to ask me: 'What did you do wrong?'" she explained. "But I was so excited to be on location where the action is - nothing happens in the studio."

She certainly found action at the Bangkok Bureau. From that vantage point, she covered not only Thailand, but also the surrounding countries of Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. As much as half her time was spent away from her Bangkok base.



Doden, now among Japan's top journalists, kept in close contact with IMC Director Professor Donald Johnston in SIPA.

It was in Myanmar that she got her most rewarding reporting experiences, snaring interviews with no less than Nobel laureate and notable dissident Aung San Suu Kyi, the public face of Myanmar's stalwart opposition to its repressive military regime. In the course of nearly 40 trips she made to Myanmar during her two-year Southeast Asian stint, Doden covered the Myanmar leader's house arrest and subsequent release, even securing an inside track with the key opposition National League for Democracy.

"Traveling frequently to Myanmar allowed me to witness the process of democratization in that country - no matter how slow it was," she explained.

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INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

COVERING THE WORLD ON A STRING Or, How To Be A Successful Stringer

BY CLARA PEREZ

WHEN Richard Chateauvert, a Canadian who has been a stringer in New York for six years, was asked what was the difference between a stringer and a freelancer, he answered: "What is the difference, exactly?"

The lines differentiating the two labels can be murky. Tom Kent, deputy managing editor of the Associated Press and SIPA professor, said the terms are used differently by different news organizations. In general, the main difference is that while a freelancer is usually a free agent who approaches a variety of media and magazines to

pitch stories, a stringer may be loyal to one or more organizations. (Though there are "superstringers" who spend as much as 90 percent of their time working for one organization.)

These relationships make for potential conflicts of interest. A stringer, for example, should not be working for direct competitors. But it would be feasible to string for newspapers

in different parts of the country, a monthly magazine, and a broadcast radio station.

"You have to understand who gets you first if something really important happens. You have to have your order of battle established," said Kent.

One of the functions of a stringer, he added, is to look for stories in their area. The stringer will pitch the story, set up the interview and take care of the logistics so that the news organization's correspondent can do the story quickly. A stringer may write, though often without a byline.

"Stringers are also divided into two groups: insiders and outsiders," adds Kent. Insiders are citizens of the country they cover, stringing for a foreign organization. "Then there are some who go off to make their fortune somewhere like Kabul - those are the outsiders," says Kent. "They go and set themselves up working for a variety of different media, and hope that one of them develops really strongly and becomes their main strength."

So how does an aspiring stringer wedge his or her foot in the door? The answer depends largely on location, timing and contacts. In terms of location and timing, Kent suggested that a stringer should move in when a story is dying down and the news agencies can't afford to keep as many correspondents there, like Kabul, rather than when a story is just gaining momentum.

More than that, it was a healthy dose of initiative and perseverance that helped Sudarsan Raghavan start his career as a stringer. Raghavan (IMC '94) is now based in Nairobi as the Africa bureau chief for Knight Ridder. Raghavan began

Rather than go in when a story is gaining momentum, a stringer should move in when a story is dying down, "as a mushroom after the spring rain."

stringing after his first year at SIPA, when he faxed *The San Francisco Chronicle* a pitch on Afghan orphans while working in an NGO in Pakistan.

When Raghavan returned to New York, he interned with and strung for *Newsweek*, and freelanced for *Newsday*. After working for *Newsweek* for a year, he was "itching to go overseas." Upon hearing that *Newsweek's* Johannesburg editor needed a stringer, Raghavan called the editor to

say he was coming to Johannesburg.

"I hightailed it down there," he said. Once in South Africa, Raghavan started stringing for about 10 other publications. The timing was helpful, as Raghavan was in South Africa shortly

Working for DaimlerChrysler Motors Company, he's been promoted twice in three years and now is Senior Manager, Communications & PR, for Chrysler International. As such, he's responsible overall for coordinating the company's PR operations in all countries outside of North America. "I do a lot of traveling," says Gavilan, who's from Argentina.

ANA CUTTER (IMC '98) left the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs in New York, and is consulting at the United Nations on security and peace issues.



The life of a stringer is plagued by unreliable pay checks and no benefits, but IMC-alumni stringers say the freedom and fulfillment are well worth the downside.

after the country's first post-apartheid elections, when many correspondents were leaving, and stringing opportunities abounded.

Contacts, as usual, made the difference. "Being a stringer is all about relationships," says Raghavan.

Apart from its flexibility, Chateauvert said that stringing worked well for journalists in highly specialized fields, such as science, where it is difficult to get regular work. But news organizations can be notoriously unreliable at paying for a stringer. "It helps to be independently wealthy," said Kent.

"Go where rent will be cheap and the dollar will be strong," said Raghavan. Living in South Africa and other countries where the dollar was strong, he was able to keep expenses low.

But another downside is that stringers do not get the benefits, such as health insurance, of regular media organization staff members. These benefits can be important when covering dangerous parts of the world, as Raghavan has.

But even so, for those looking for freedom and flexibility, stringing is a great way to get in the game. "I never intended to be a stringer all my life," says Raghavan. "But the advantage is that you have so much freedom."

"You can write, and if you're competent, you can make a living out of it." ~

For the last two years she also has been an adjunct instructor in SIPA's Conflict Resolution Program. Now married, she is expecting her first child in July.

AS a television producer for Fox News in New York, PETER MARCHESE (IMC '99) normally spends his day developing the "big story of the day" to send out to the network's affiliates.

But during the Iraq war, he was constantly busy with other things as well. "As you know," he says. "The news never stops, particularly with a war." ~

COMMENT: WAR COVERAGE

EMBEDDING CHANGES Journalism Gets An Unprecedented Close-Up On The Iraq War

BY DONALD H. JOHNSTON

THE unprecedented and overwhelming nature and scope of the news coverage of the Iraq war underscore the growing role of the media in world affairs and the need for proper training of correspondents. In a very real sense, it buttresses the relevance of programs like IMC.

Never before have so many media people - about 5,000 of them - been permitted so close to the action; and never before have they, by print and electronic means, so extensively brought the fighting into the living rooms of the public everywhere. "The Press Goes to War" is how the *World Press Review* magazine recognized the phenomenon on its May cover.

Many publications, including *The New York Times*, have included media performance as part of their coverage. This led Floyd Abrams, a widely respected First Amendment lawyer and student of world affairs, to say while moderating a panel discussion of the war, "The media coverage is part of the war itself." He observed that the press' wide access to American troops and the

fighting - called embedding - and the new communications technology are "potentially transformative. War will never be the same."

The centrality of the media's role in the war suggests that they, including the Internet, will be an increasingly large force in global affairs in the future. And the future inevitably will bring international relations that are complex, with the postwar problems in the Middle East and regional and ethnic conflicts elsewhere. The United States, as the superpower, is bound to be involved everywhere.

Columbia's President Lee C. Bollinger says the 21st Century will be the "century of the journalists," and journalists thus must be prepared to not only report the complex news, but also to put it into proper context and perspective. It is for this reason that he believes journalists should study fields such as international affairs, political science and economics as well as reporting, writing and editing - as is offered in the IMC curriculum.

There is no doubt that the Iraq coverage has had unusual scope and nature. The Bush Administration permitted the mass of journalists into the war zone apparently to cater to public opinion. There had been criticism of the limited access journalists had been given in the Gulf and Afghanistan wars. In Iraq the journalists have included not only mainstream reporters, but those from such outlets as MTV and *People* and *Rolling Stone* magazines.

As a result, the TV screens have been flooded with graphic scenes of bombing and ground fighting, some shot from so close that viewers seem to be on-site 6,000 miles away. In between shots, talking heads have interpreted the actions and military decisions endlessly. When the war began to last longer than anticipated, and nega-

tive reports crept into the coverage, the Bush Administration complained about the press' performance, contending that the coverage gave the public inaccurate impressions.

One day, when U.S. advances were slower than expected, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said, "We have seen mood swings in the media from highs to lows to highs and back again in a single 24-hour period."



Paving the way for "the century of the journalists."

Some critics say there are drawbacks to embedding of journalists with troops, aside from the obvious physical risk for the reporters and other media personnel. One is that reporters could become so close to the units they're attached to - and protected by - that their coverage might become distorted or biased. Another is the risk, given the competitive nature of the news business, of press reports violating military security.

Certainly, covering a war is not easy, especially for reporters new to it in unfamiliar territory and cultures. Covering the rebuilding of civic societies after the fighting stops is equally difficult, though in a different way. But there's bound to be more of each in the future. So it's critical that students aspiring to roles in international affairs - in the media or otherwise - are ready for the new kinds of challenges ahead. ~

dle managers from SMG, China's second largest media group, were sent over to benefit, as part of the Picker Center's executive program, from SIPA's expertise in the areas of international affairs and policy making.

Designed as a full-time training over the months of April and May, this program is a carefully balanced mix of academic and professional work. It enables the visiting executives to attend various classes with faculty members, polish their knowledge of the English language, and meet successful New York City professionals in their area of interest.

"Some days the sessions are held on campus by professors and some days outside of the University, where they get a chance to meet high officials of companies such as *The New York Times* and ABC," explained Donald Johnston, director of SIPA's IMC program. "In the afternoon they attend language classes."

Financially supported by SMG, this program was born out of the CEO's desire to provide each year a substantial training to upcoming young executives in various companies of the conglomerate. According to Dean Robin Lewis, "Chinese media traditionally did not have inter-

national scope. But SMG is today in the process of becoming a successful international conglomerate. And of course it is interesting for SIPA to share our expertise with such an organization."

SMG is a multimedia conglomerate of radio, television, newspaper, magazines, movies, videos, and websites with a total assets of 10.7 billion yuan and comprised of 5,200 employees. It includes 10 nationally renowned media organizations, nine art troupes and six sports clubs.

On April 10, SMG announced a strategic tie-up with the U.S. financial news network CNBC, turning the Chinese conglomerate into a cross-border media giant.

According to Dean Lewis, this newborn partnership will increase SIPA's visibility in the Chinese media and considerably benefits students in search of media-related jobs in China. "The conglomerate's name will trickle down into China's different media organizations. In the future when a Chinese employer sees SIPA's name on a student's resume, he will recognize it as the school which trains China's renowned media organization's executives." ~

PEOPLE

ALUMNI NOTES Who, What, Where

BY IMC NEWS

ARIEL GAVILAN (IMC '98) was in New York on business in April, and with a little time before his flight home to Detroit, visited SIPA and reported that he's "doing great."

NEWS

CHINESE EXECS GET SIPA MEDIA TRAINING IMC-Linked Program for Shanghai Group

BY LADANE NASSERI

APRIL 7 was for many SIPA students like every other busy Monday, more so with approaching deadlines on research papers and the prospect of the final exams. However, for 14 media executives from Shanghai Media Group (SMG) as well as for SIPA, this morning was the first in the establishment of a promising and long awaited partnership.

In its inaugural year, a group of bright mid-

ANNUAL ALUMNI MIXER SIPA's Office Of Career Services Organizes IMC Networking Event

BY NORI AKASHI



Talya Tibbon (left) and Claudine Bogage (both IMC '99 and CNN producers) introduce themselves at the mixer.



Students make a beeline for Institutional Investor's Jenny Anderson (right, now with The New York Post as a business reporter), after she announced at the mixer that the financial magazine was in hiring mode.



Beaming for the cameras, IMC second-years Christine Ostrowski and Apostolos Mangiriadis decide that the mixer is a roaring success.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

WEB JOURNALISM STAGES A QUIET RETURN Once Shunted To The Wings, Online Media Make Slow Comeback

BY JUDY LAM

BARELY a peep is heard about the most vaunted revolution of the late 20th century these days. In the 1990's, the Internet Revolution had seemed

all-encompassing. Hands were wrung over the ballyhooed obsolescence of the print media. Subscription rates to newspapers have not fallen to media channeled over computer screens.

Yet as the world googles its way into the 21st century, the new media's fall from grace appears to have been exaggerated just as much as the juggernaut it was once promised to be.

"Just as reports during the dot-com boom of the death of print were wrong," said Sreenath Sreenivasan, a Columbia journalism professor who specializes in new media and the Internet. "The reports now of the death of the web are wrong, too."

Recent developments have triggered interesting new reminders of the effectiveness and immediacy of interactive news delivery.

The war in Iraq, for example, has boosted the use of the Internet. According to *The New York Times*, high-speed, broadband Internet is

coming of age now, just as CNN as an all-news all-hours television channel did during the first Gulf War. With the availability of sophisticated technologies that transmit video images directly from Baghdad, many office workers are able to follow the war within the confines of their cubicles. Having said that, the medium is more popular in the office than at home because offices are

less likely to be equipped with televisions, and because individual home users are less likely to pay for broadband connections.

Statistics published by *The New York Times* show that over 20 million people worldwide visited news websites such as cnn.com and msnbc.com on

March 19 - the day that war broke out - a 70 percent increase from the prewar level.

Web journalism, Sreenivasan argues, is more important than ever before, and traffic to the news sites is at record levels. The public typically turns to the web to find alternate views and a broader perspective. [See Page 5]

The Internet may have fallen short of expectations, but its growth is far from over.

COMMUNICATIONS

MEDIA'S OTHER SIDE Jobs In Public Relations

BY ELIZABETH ASHFORD



THE obvious career options for IMC graduates are straightforward enough, so long as they want to become a foreign correspondent. But, though little noticed, opportunities do exist under IMC's broad "communications" umbrella - which includes press, public, corporate and organizational relations - and they have wooed many an IMC high-flyer into this line of work.

The breadth of professional options available in communications is almost dizzying, in an age when a marketing mindset permeates both the public and private sectors. Skills in professional communications are sought after whether an IMC'er wants to work for the United Nations, a local politician, a small NGO or a major corporation.

Although the political press officer who delivers spin for consumers outside his organization - most notably White House spokesman Ari Fleischer - has been a longstanding professional fixture, external media communications are no longer enough. Organizations now recognize the

benefits of positioning themselves not just with the general public but also with their own employees. The work is thus as varied as its subjects; depending on the specific position, work can range from website development to courting press coverage to speechwriting.

Many IMCers land in communications after transitioning from a career track in journalism. Cecilia de la Macorra (MIA '02), who works as the press attaché for Mexico's UN delegation, was interning at CNN and wanted to become a reporter before securing her current position. David Fondiller (MIA '92) wrote for UPI,

Opportunities do exist under IMC's broad "communications" umbrella, which includes press, public, corporate and organizational relations

Foreign Affairs and Forbes before becoming communications director at Marakon Associates, a New York-based corporate strategy firm. Anna Grossman (MIA '99), currently the communications associate for Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), previously worked as a freelance researcher for *Newsweek*.

What prompts journalists to flip to the other side of the communications coin? Greater job stability and less day-to-day stress are frequently cited reasons. "I didn't like the intensity of *Newsweek's* weekly deadlines, and I find it's exciting to really have an impact on an issue," says Grossman, whose work for WEDO includes crafting the organization's messages into mediaspeak and lobbying strategies. Plus, the pay is higher than that for reporters, even on the entry

level; a master's degree and some background in communications can expect to reap upwards of \$60,000.

IMCers do face a dearth in speechwriting and media relations courses, especially for development and diplomacy work, and no reciprocal relationship exists as yet between the IMC concentration and the Business School's media management program. However, the skills necessary for a communications career - strong writing, editing and media literacy - can be assembled and finessed via subject-specific courses at SIPA.

IMC alumni who handle communications for policy organizations say that a strong background in international affairs played a critical role in their work. "Courses in international affairs, and specifically those linked to the UN, have helped me with my job," said Omar Gharzeddine (MIA '95), a press officer for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Grossman agreed: "Get a broad educational base in international affairs - that's the most important thing."

Savvy internship choices are important. "Find the meatiest internship you can, at the type of organization where you want to work after graduation," said Marakon's David Fondiller. An internship with a private sector communications firm may be a lucrative summer proposition, but it may not translate into a post-graduate career with the Red Cross public affairs office.

OCS Director Meg Heenehan said that about 15 students approach her annually about careers in communications. The small number belies its diversity and sense of reward. "You feel you're working for a cause you relate to, that has meaning for you - maybe more so than marketing a certain brand of soap," said Gharzeddine. At the end of the day, what more could an IMC graduate ask for? ~

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

RETURN OF THE WEB

[Continued from Page 4]

"More than two million Americans go online for the first time each month," said Sreenivasan. "Not to mention the millions of others around the world."

Yet it is a feature of the media that is unsung and under-appreciated.

Ford Fessenden, the database editor at *The New York Times*, spent over six months after September 11 trying to pinpoint the exact physical location of all victims inside the Twin Towers at the time of the attack.

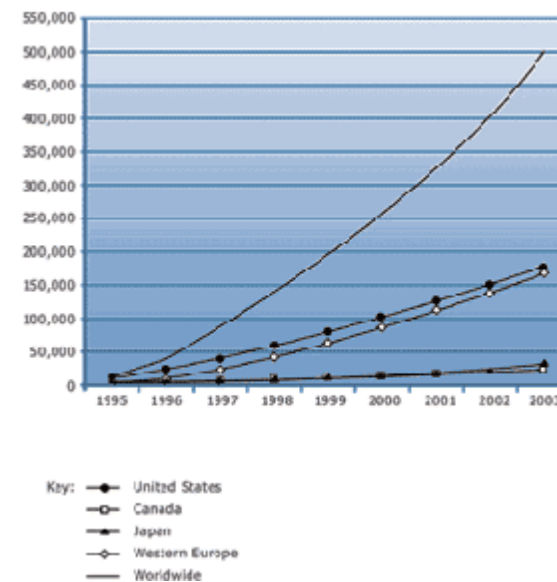
He telephoned each victim's family to find

out this information based on the last phone calls they had received from their loved ones. *The Times* used his data in a feature story, with a human angle, but left out the technical explanation of how he gathered the information.

"I thought it was important for people to know how the information was obtained in order to give it credibility," said Fessenden. "In the end, people want to read about people, so I lost." Fessenden posted it on the *Times'* website so that people could learn about his data collection method if they so desired.

The role of the Internet may have fallen short of the exaggerated expectations of the 1990's, but its growth and proliferation are far from over. As broadband connection costs go down, more people subscribe to it, and the wider world population previously unequipped with the technology catches up, the buzz may be up and at them again.

The juggernaut might come back. ~



Internet usage worldwide has been on the upswing in recent years. (Source: Net Services PLC)