

H A R V A R D U N I V E R S I T Y

JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

JOAN SHORENSTEIN CENTER ON THE
PRESS, POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

THE GOLDSMITH AWARDS

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John F. Kennedy, Jr. Forum
Littauer Building
Kennedy School of Government
Cambridge, Massachusetts

BEFORE: ALEX JONES
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P R O C E E D I N G S

(6:15 p.m.)

MR. ELLWOOD: Good evening and welcome all of you here to the John F. Kennedy, Jr. Forum at the Kennedy School of Government. I am the Dean of the Kennedy School of Government and this is a wonderful night. And it will be an even more wonderful night if those of you who have cell phones put them to vibrate or turn them off, so as not to interrupt our speakers and so forth.

This is a wonderful night, in part because we're celebrating some important awards, and we are also joined by some very special guests. In the front row we have President Larry Summers, who is President of Harvard University.

(Applause)

MR. ELLWOOD: We also have Walter Shorenstein, whose generosity helped establish the Joan Shorenstein Center of Press, Politics and Public Policy.

(Applause)

MR. ELLWOOD: This is a remarkable man, who just celebrated his 90th birthday, and was an inspiration to us all. His contributions were so

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remarkable that the tributes took the entire evening, fortunately over dinner, in three segments. And what we saw was a man who has had enormous influence throughout, but we are especially grateful for his support and prodding here at the Kennedy School, he is truly a remarkable man.

We are also grateful to have Robert and Louise Greenfield here tonight. Bob Greenfield is the head of the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation that makes tonight's program possible. And by some strange coincidence, perhaps having to do with birth years, Bob Greenfield has also just celebrated his 90th birthday.
(Applause)

MR. ELLWOOD: The Shorenstein Center was established in 1986, Marvin Kalb, the Center's first director, is also with us tonight.

Marvin, where are you?

(Applause)

MR. ELLWOOD: Through its active program of teaching, research and public engagement, the Shorenstein Center has made a really powerful impression on those of us who think and care deeply about the future of journalism in a democratic society. Indeed, it seems that there has never been a more important time for journalism in democratic societies, and the openness and transparency they bring.

So tonight we have a chance to honor some of the country's finest reporters. I am going to now introduce Alex Jones, who is the Director of the Shorenstein Center and the Lombard Lecturer on Public Policy. He is a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who has been Director of the Joan Shorenstein Center since July, 2000. He is also the co-author, along with Susan Tift, of two books, *The Patriarch: The Rise and Fall of the Bingham Dynasty* and *The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind the New York Times*. Indeed, from 1983 to 1992 he covered the press for the *New York Times*. So we are very, very proud to have Alex here running the Shorenstein Center.

Alex?

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Thank you, David.

This is a very happy night for the Shorenstein Center, this year marks the 14th anniversary of the Goldsmith Awards program, and each year this night marks one of the high moments for the Shorenstein Center, and if I do say so immodestly, for American journalism. You heard David's brief account of how the award was created by Bob Greenfield, now let me tell you how things like this really happen.

Gary Orren, a friend of the Shorenstein Center and a professor here at the Kennedy School found

himself on a Florida beach, struck a conversation with the fellow next to him, who happened to be Bob Greenfield, a Philadelphia lawyer with a remarkable character. Bob had a client named Berda Marks Goldsmith, who had just died, and thought so much of Bob Greenfield that she had left him her entire estate, a significant estate, I might add. Bob declined to accept it, and was searching for a good way to use it for the purposes that Berda would have approved. She was passionately interested in government and followed the news ardently. She was particularly outraged at misconduct by people with a public responsibility.

When Gary Orren heard this, he said, do I have the right place for you, and made a beeline for Marvin Kalb, the Center's founding director, the man I was proud to succeed. Marvin and Bob Greenfield worked out the details and the result was the Goldsmith Awards in political journalism, which includes the investigative reporting prize, book prizes and the career award. This was all through the generosity of what became known as the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation, of which Bob is president.

The Greenfield family is most remarkable, and I'm very glad to say that some of them are here tonight, Bob's wife Louise, their son Bill and his wife Joan, their grandchildren Michael, Lauren and Jill.

Also with us is Deborah Jacobs, the Foundation's administrator and some members of the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation advisory board, Emily Clark, Claudia Cleary and William Epstein.

For many years Bob has been the family's representative on the Goldsmith Selection Committee, the committee that is the jury that picks the winners. But he has now passed that responsibility to his grandson Michael, who shows the same passion that his grandfather has. Without the Greenfield's continued support and good faith this night would not be possible, and I ask you to join me in saluting Bob Greenfield, the Greenfield Family, and the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: One of the pleasures of this night is to have the chance to publicly thank the man principally responsible for the existence of the Joan Shorenstein center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, Walter Shorenstein. As David said, Walter just turned 90, we are now thinking of holding his 100th birthday party either in the White House or on top of Mount Everest, with Walter anything is possible. With that indomitable drive that led him to start as a guy off the boat, just out of the Navy, with \$1,000 in his pocket after World War II, and build a fortune in real

estate. But it is his keen and passionate engagement with the world that led him to endow the Shorenstein Center as a memorial to his daughter Joan, a highly respected journalist at CBS, who died far too young, of breast cancer.

I ask that you join me with another round of applause for Walter.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: The first Goldsmith Awards are the book prizes, making these presentations will be my colleague Tom Patterson, the Bradley Professor of Government and the Press at the Kennedy School.

MR. PATTERSON: Thank you Alex.

Two Goldsmith Book Prizes are given each year, one for the best trade book in the area of press and politics and the other for the best academic book, as decided upon by a committee.

This year's trade book winner is Paul Starr's *The Creation of the Media*, which demonstrates that the American media system is as much a product of political choices as of technological change. Starr shows, for example, that politics drove policy makers early in the radio age, to favor commercial broadcasting as opposed to public broadcasting, and we live today with that decision. Public broadcasting remains an outlier in the United States, though not

elsewhere.

Paul Starr, a one time Pulitzer Prize winner, is unable to be with us this evening because of a family medical situation, but we are delighted to be able to honor his work with the Goldsmith Book Prize in the Trade Book category.

Now, in the academic category this year's winner is *Comparing Media Systems*, co-authored by Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini. This book is the first fresh look in about a half century at how western democratic systems emerge and change in their news systems. Hallin and Mancini identified three different models, each defined by a different form of journalism, with consequences for how politics is conducted and how public opinion is formed.

One is the liberal model, typified by the United States, which is based on the large notion of press freedom. The second is the democratic corporatist model, of which Germany is an example, and which is characterized by a close connection between media organizations and social groupings. And the third is the polarized pluralist model, which allows a strong role for the state, Italy exemplifies this model.

Comparing Media Systems is one of the most important political communications books in years and

we are honored to be able to award it the Goldsmith Book Prize in the Academic Category, and the authors are here with us.

Dan Hallin is Professor of Communication at the University of California, San Diego. Paolo Mancini, a former Shorenstein Center Fellow is on the faculty of the University of Perugia in Umbria, Italy.

Dan and Paolo, it's a great book, please come up for your award.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Thank you, Tom.

Each year a panel of jurors examines scores of entries for the Goldsmith Prize in Investigative Reporting, to narrow the field to six finalists, which are immediately announced. The jury also selects the winner, of course, but that choice is not announced until tonight. We do it this way for a reason, the concept of the Goldsmith Prize is to encourage a certain kind of investigative reporting, in the belief that it is especially important.

Investigative reporting is the most difficult, the most time consuming, and the most expensive kind of reporting there is. In this time of cutting costs and dumbing down, investigative reporting has been especially hard hit. So it always encouraging each year, when we are sent example after example of

prime investigative journalism focused on topics that are of crucial importance to the larger common good.

Our charter calls for an award that recognizes work that improves the quality and integrity of government and politics in the United States, and promotes more effective and ethical conduct in government, the making of public policy or the practice of politics. As Bob Greenfield constantly reminds us, impact or prospective impact is an essential to awarding the prize.

Our finalists this year are outstanding examples of the kind of journalism the Goldsmith Prize seeks to honor. We announced the finalists early because we want each of the news organizations involved to get a chance to brag a little.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: Our hope is that being a Goldsmith finalist will be inspiring to others. Certainly we in the media need that inspiration.

Our jurors this year, whose names are in your program, are a distinguished group of print and broadcast journalists and non journalists. I am not a juror and I do not vote, but I am present at the deliberations and I can tell you that the selection process is rigorous, arduous and I'm often told, very rewarding. Certainly it is a lot of work and we are

very grateful.

Before I recognize each of the Goldsmith finalists I want to present a special award, however, the jury has the discretion to recognize an entry that is judged not to fit directly into the criteria for the Goldsmith Award but is of such great merit that the jury wishes to single it out. This year the jury elected to award a special citation to "Frontline" and the BBC for their remarkable joint effort in creating the stunning documentary "Ghosts of Rwanda".

The horror of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 is one of the harrowing nightmares of our time. The worst of it was that the United States and most of the international community largely stood by and did little or nothing while 800,000 Rwandans were methodically hunted down and murdered by Hutu extremists.

The evil of the systematic murder was palpable and clear, but the evil of turning away was far less clear. And the reasons for what happened, even ten years later, were still murky, especially for an audience that takes its information mostly from television screens. It really deals with key government officials, diplomats, soldiers and survivors, Frontline and the BBC put together a painful and riveting firsthand account of the people who lived

it, who were on the scene, and frequently were thwarted in their efforts to do something.

The message of "Ghosts of Rwanda" was clear, that it must not happen again. Without question, this film is one of the principle tools that will be used by those who seek in the face of future genocides, to break that silence. One needs only to watch this documentary to know what must be done.

It is my pleasure to award a special citation to Frontline and the BBC for "Ghosts of Rwanda", on behalf of the Shorenstein Center and the Goldsmith Prize Jury.

Would you come forward?

(Applause)

MR. JONES: It is now my honor to present the 2005 Goldsmith Prize finalist, in alphabetical order by news organization.

Our first finalist is "Wired for Waste", by Paul Donsky and Ken Foskett of the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. In 1998 Atlanta, like many other American cities was made the beneficiary of a program that I for one did not even know existed. It seems those little charges at the end of our phone bills are in part to fund a federal program to provide poor children with access to the internet.

In the six years since the program was

begun almost \$13 billion has been gathered for this purpose, and Atlanta took its share of the money and ran with it, literally. Ran in the sense that according to reporting by Donsky and Foskett the money ran through a host of fingers like water through a sieve. They turned what happened in Atlanta, a \$73 million spending spree, vendors billed Atlanta for equipment and services never provided, and charges were calculated without bids. The usual discounts offered to educational institutions were ignored, the vendors got top price. Officials applied for and received millions for schools they knew they were going to close. As a result, millions of dollars of computer equipment remained unused, much still in the original packing cartons.

There was \$5 million in outright fraud, cell phones, plasma TVs, wiring of football stadiums. In one district a vendor offered a nice slice of the pie to a consultant who was advising on who should get the contract; not surprisingly the contract was duly awarded. Shocking? Perhaps not, we're jaded now and almost expect to hear such stories.

But this one took a lot of work, a lot of digging, and it mattered, and then it was a case of gross abuse of the power of government, the kind of malfeasance that makes those of us who believe in

government cringe. It was first rate investigative journalism right on our target.

And I would ask that you join me in saluting Paul Donsky and Ken Foskett of the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, for "Wired for Waste".

Would you please stand?

(Applause)

MR. JONES: In American journalism there are a few, very few, brand names, people whose byline commands that you read and whose work is the gold standard. In my opinion James Fallows is one of those. The elegance of the Fallows method, if you can call it that, is deceptively simple. It seems to look at something and then ask, why did that happen? Simple. Well especially if the kind of question you're asking is, as he put it, why did we go to Baghdad blind? Why were we so unprepared to be an occupying force? His answer is a superbly researched account in *The Atlantic Monthly* magazine, and I quote: "The U.S. occupation of Iraq is a debacle, not because the government did no planning but because a vast amount of expert planning was willfully ignored by the people in charge."

The story is the chronicle of what he terms a historic failure. The breadth and depth of his work took him through the labyrinth of the Washington establishment, where he found both human and

documentary evidence that he assembled into a portrait of hubris and what seems almost willful self-destructiveness. As Jim Fallows said in his piece, no one contends that Donald Rumsfeld or Paul Wolfowitz or the administration as a whole is dumb, the planning for the military victory was exemplary.

So what happened? Jim Fallows answered that question with a wonderfully plainspoken commonsensical tour de force of research and writing. The story he tells makes you shake your head in dismay at human folly, but it is essential that it be told.

Please join me in honoring James Fallows as a Goldsmith finalist for "Blind into Baghdad".

(Applause)

MR. JONES: The best kind of investigative reporting almost always prompts a feeling of outrage at some injustice. There is also sometimes a powerful poignancy and empathy for the individuals who have been the victims of the malfeasance. Diana Henriques, of *The New York Times* prompted both fury and a kind of pained sadness in her article "Captive Clientele". It was a story that no one knew existed, no one really would have imagined, or maybe they would.

Diana told the story of people like Troy Jenkins, a 25 year old army sergeant from Kentucky, who threw himself on a cluster bomb in Iraq to save his

buddies. Before he shipped out Sgt. Jenkins had been sold a life insurance policy for about \$100 a month. For that \$100 a month if something happened to him and he didn't come back, his loved ones would be paid \$27,500. But for \$100 a month you can buy life insurance that would pay one a half million dollars. Indeed, Uncle Sam would have sold him directly \$27,500 of life insurance for \$1.79 a month.

Scandal number one was that naive soldiers were getting hoodwinked, but the real outrage came from Diana's revelation of why people like Sgt. Jenkins were taken in. It turns out that the people selling these policies were former military officers who were operating with the knowledge, if not the approval, of the Pentagon. She told how former military officers were allowed by base commanders to make formal, official looking presentations to financially inexperienced soldiers headed off to war.

And they sold these soldiers, who had been carefully trained to trust and obey, insurance policies at ten, twenty, even fifty times more than the insurance provided by the government. As she explored her subject she found complicity from the top for all kinds of chicanery, all designed to trade on the presumption of the soldiers that they would not be cheated by their own, that their fellow soldiers, their

officers would not exploit and use them just to make a buck.

She showed too, how in the face of pressure from big financial interests, the military brass would cave, in one case abandoning the investigation of a big financial company whose products and sales practices were suspect. In this case the impact was fast and powerful, new laws, refunds and the like. The jury found something deeply moving about young, inexperienced, trusting soldiers headed into harms way, and trying to do the right thing by their families, and played for suckers by the very people they trusted the most, and had the most reason to trust. It was in fact Diana Henriques who was working on their behalf.

Please join me in recognizing Diana Henriques as a Goldsmith finalist for "Captive Clientele".

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Methamphetamine is a potent, cheap drug that has become the drug of choice in much of the country. There is a meth epidemic that is raging not just in the nation's cities but through rural communities, where stories about uncovering homemade meth labs are now about as common as they were in my time of discovering marijuana patches, and in my

father's time in Tennessee of moonshine stills.

Meth is much worse than marijuana and moonshine were though. Mention of meth addiction is now commonplace in accounts of violently broken families of crimes from breaking and entering to murder. Steve Sue and Erin Hoover Barnett of *The Oregonian*, in Portland, Oregon, knew there was a meth problem in Oregon, but no one had ever looked into it carefully. What they found was there was a huge problem, no state treats more addicts per capita than Oregon. Nearly every case of a parent losing rights to raise a child involved meth abuse.

But the most shocking discovery they made however, was that the meth epidemic was unnecessary, they found that the key ingredient in making meth is something called pseudoephedrine, which is used legitimately in cold medicine and manufactured in a handful of factories in India, Europe and China. They found that efforts to restrict the flow of meth chemicals paid huge benefits in reducing the potency, and hence the damage, of the illegal meth.

But Congress and the pharmaceutical company lobbyists have thwarted those efforts to control it. They found that Pfizer had developed but never brought to market a form of pseudoephedrine that works in cold medicine but does not work for making the

illegal form of methamphetamine. Why? There was no good answer.

The groundbreaking work of Steve Suo and Erin Barnett promises to be a powerful factor in forcing the government and the pharmaceutical industry to act.

Please join me in saluting Steve Suo and Erin Hoover Barnett for "Unnecessary Epidemic".

(Applause)

MR. JONES: One of the crucial roles of the kind of investigative reporting we seek to honor tonight is its capacity for championing those otherwise would go unchampioned. There are few groups less likely to be championed than those who find themselves charged with crimes and are so poor that they can't afford to hire a lawyer. They are the refuse of American society, and probably to some are not entitled to a top notch legal representation at taxpayer expense. But while they may not have the lawyers of a Martha Stewart, they are also not entitled to be represented by a system that is slovenly, under-funded, incompetent and corrupt.

Ken Armstrong, Florangela Davila and Justin Mayo of *The Seattle Times*, lent their investigative skills to examining the very broken public defender system in Washington State. What they

found was a system in which indigent defendants are ignored and often defended by people who are paid a fixed fee by the case, no matter how many cases they take on or how much lawyerly work is involved. They found crushing workloads, shoddy representations, skewed financial incentives, and as you would imagine, very often no justice.

They found in some counties that lawyers for indigent clients are paid \$20 per case, period, no matter the time required for an adequate defense. They found indifference to pleas for more money by lawyers trying to do a good job, and a general contempt for a group of defendants that were viewed as undesirable. Remarkably, for a place with a reputation for humane living and forward thinking enjoyed by Washington, they found that their state ranked dead last in the support it gives for public defense. The work was based on shoe leather reporting and sophisticated database analysis.

In their reporting they uncovered anomalies such as the public defender from one of the state's poorest counties, who managed to earn \$250,000 a year while shortchanging his clients. The state bar took notice and took action, and there are signs that Washington State, after many years of neglect, is doing something about it.

Please recognize Ken Armstrong, Florangela Davila and Justin Mayo as Goldsmith finalists for "The Empty Promise of an Equal Defense".

(Applause)

MR. JONES: WFAA is a Dallas television station that may be the best local station in the country when it comes to investigative reporting. The station was a Goldsmith finalist last year and now they're back, with a series of investigative broadcasts that once again irritated and embarrassed and pushed and prodded the State of Texas into changing something. Brett Shipp and Mark Smith of WFAA targeted the Texas workers compensation system, which is the vast body that oversees workers compensation claims.

You might be thinking they were looking for examples where fakes and swindlers were making phony worker compensation claims and taking advantage of the system. Not this time. This time the system was systematically denying benefits and medical care to thousands of injured workers in an apparent effort to keep down costs.

Shipp and Smith found that a small number of carefully selected doctors would reject claims on behalf of insurance companies, apparently no matter what the record showed. And if doctors sought more information, documentation, or approved too many

claims, they were not rehired. They found regulators ignoring fraud and questionable practices, such as a \$2.2 million grant from one of the state's largest workers comp insurance carriers to a group of regulators.

There were twenty separate broadcasts in the series, and the impact was quickly apparent. The chairman of the workers comp commission resigned, the executive director retired. A state panel has recommended that the commission be abolished. It was a piece of top notch investigative reporting that got results.

Please join me in recognizing Brett Shipp and Mark Smith for "State of Denial".

(Applause)

MR. JONES: May I ask you one more time to join me in a round of applause for all six Goldsmith Award finalists and for this year's special citation winner.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: This year, after long deliberation, the Goldsmith jury awarded the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting to Diana Henriques of *The New York Times*, for "Captive Clientele".

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Early last month there was

what I consider to be a vintage Andrea Mitchell moment. She was interviewing Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, it was one of those Andrea Mitchell specials, an exclusive interview with a very important person in the world of politics and international affairs. Andrea Mitchell has had many, many of those. She may well have interviewed Fidel Castro more often, over the years, than any other American reporter, and used her special access to craft an hour long documentary on Fidel in 2003, another very rare commodity.

So last month she is in Rome with the new secretary of state, who was making her first visit to world leaders in her new position. Andrea Mitchell has been the chief foreign affairs correspondent for NBC News for over a decade, and it is safe to say there is no more respected American broadcast journalist covering the shifting sands of foreign affairs. In that interview it is possible to see why that is so.

After throwing a few easy questions at the secretary of state, on topics such as whether Israel should release more political prisoners as part of the peace initiative, and what exactly did she want from European leaders, Andrea got down to business. She asked the secretary of state whether by promoting regime change in Iran America was telling Iranians that they should rise up against their government?

Secretary Rice responded with what can only be called State Department double talk, along the lines that we did not want the Iranian people to feel that they had been forgotten and there was cause for concern about the Iranian regime. At which point Andrea interrupted and said, you called them loathsome.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: Which prompted Secretary Rice to observe that such things as the summary execution of young women was indeed loathsome, which prompted Andrea to say, some of our allies, Egypt, Saudi Arabia do the same thing without that kind of harsh criticism from you and the president. She then asked Secretary Rice how she felt about having herself described in a headline as being coquettish--

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: --with Chancellor Schroeder, and having an Iranian leader dismiss her as being a bit emotional. Secretary Rice said she didn't think much about such things, which I'm sure is absolutely true, and I'm sure Andrea believes that too.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: It is that kind of interviewing and reporting that has given Andrea Mitchell her reputation and why she is being honored here tonight. She is for one thing, an insider's

insider. I understand that she is married to someone who is sort of famous who as a Washington figure but I can't think of who he is. However, that is not what I mean by insider's insider.

She came to Washington to join NBC in 1978, after learning the ropes as a radio and television reporter in Philadelphia. Within a year she found herself covering Three Mile Island and as the network's energy correspondent. A few years later she was working as a White House correspondent for NBC where she stayed throughout the Reagan Presidency, covering summits and arms control, among other stories. In 1988 it was Andrea Mitchell who broke the story that George Bush had chosen Dan Quayle to be his running mate, scooping George Bush, I might add, which is the quintessential insider's insider exclusive.

During the Bush years she worked as chief congressional correspondent, where she covered the Clarence Thomas hearings, the savings and loan bail out and other major stories. After covering Bill Clinton during the 1992 campaign, she has covered every presidential election since 1972 by the way, she moved into the White House again, this time as chief White House correspondent.

Then in 1994 she moved to chief foreign affairs correspondent, traveling the world, but based

in Washington, and offering not only reporting but analysis, traveling to Kosovo, North Korea, Afghanistan, and every other explosive spot on the globe, with occasional side trips like covering Hillary Clinton's campaign for the Senate.

She has also been one of the voices decrying the decline in the major networks' commitment to international journalism, which has been slowly strangled as bureaus have been closed and experienced, highly trained reporters, the more junior versions of Andrea Mitchell, have been told that they cost too much, and besides, Americans don't care about foreign news.

In making Andrea Mitchell our Career Award winner for 2005, we not only salute her for her talent and energy and drive, we also salute her for what she stands for. Professional broadcast journalists, many of them women, who are outstanding, and who don't get to do as much work as they should. We in this country need a lot more Andrea Mitchells, tonight we honor the one we have. It is my great honor and pleasure to present the 2005 Goldsmith Career Award for Excellence in Journalism to NBC News' Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent Andrea Mitchell.

(Applause)

MS. MITCHELL: Thank you for such an

overly generous citation, especially in light of the extraordinary investigative work and the wonderful books you've celebrated here tonight. I want to thank you, Alex, thank the judges, and of course particularly the Goldsmith-Greenfield Foundation, and Louise and Bob Greenfield here tonight and their families, for the vision and the generosity that have made these prizes such a coveted honor.

I am indeed humbled to be joining the distinguished list of recipients, most recently Linda Greenhouse last year and Sy Hersh before that, and of course tonight's winners, who have done much harder work than I in investigative journalism.

And I want to thank and of course salute Walter Shorenstein. I knew Joan and admired Joan and she represented the absolute best standards in our profession and was an early role model for me.

This is indeed a critical time for our profession and in fact sadly, for our nation, because the trend against covering foreign reporting and foreign affairs has actually been reversed largely because of 9/11. So for all of the terrible reasons of suffering in our country we are doing more foreign reporting and ramping up. But as journalists and people who care deeply about the rights and privileges that we enjoy under the First Amendment, and the

responsibilities we bear for providing honest information to the public, I think we are really at a crossroads on both fronts.

As most of you know, the Federal Appeals Court in Washington has now held that two of my fellow journalists, Mathew Cooper of *Time*, and Judith Miller of the *New York Times*, must disclose their sources or risk being jailed for contempt of court. In Judy Miller's case the issue involves conversations she had with sources in contemplation of an article that she was thinking about writing and never did. If there were ever a case that involves Alice in Wonderland, this is it.

And in Matt Cooper's case, he wrote an article for *Time* magazine's website questioning the administration's motives for leaking the identity of the wife of Joseph Wilson, a critic of the Iraq war, to columnist Robert Novack. Interestingly, the federal prosecutor has either left Mr. Novack alone or there is some other reason for his not having been swept up in this encroachment of press freedom, at least to our knowledge.

Not far from here tonight in Providence, Rhode Island, one of my colleagues, television newsman Jim Taricani is under house arrest. Jim's crime was for broadcasting legally a videotape of a city official

accepting a bribe, an official who was later tried and convicted of the crime. Jim was found guilty of criminal contempt and is only free of jail because of a chronic heart condition. When NBC News President Neil Shapiro asked Jim, shortly before his sentencing, whether he was scared, Jim replied, this is what reporters do.

Senators Lugar and Dodd, among others, have now introduced legislation that would protect journalists at the federal level with the same kind of shield that are already in force in many states. But of course we journalists are not terribly popular and I wouldn't bet too much on that legislation passing. And this is all occurring at a time when our profession is indeed trying to heal itself from a succession of very damaging scandals that have fed the public's hostility towards the news media.

A recent Knight Foundation survey found that only 51 percent of more than 100,000 students surveyed believe newspapers should be able to publish without the government first approving their stories. And more than a third said the First Amendment went too far in guaranteeing rights to journalists.

Complicating all of this are technological and cultural changes that challenge our very concept of how we define journalism. During the court hearing on

the Miller and Cooper case, the judges debated whether legal protections for reporters are even feasible in this day of unconventional forms of journalism.

Judge David Sentelle wrote, does the privilege also protect the proprietor of a web log, the stereotypical BLOGer, sitting in his pajamas at his personal computer posting on the worldwide web his best product to inform whoever happens to browse his way.

As if they were not enough for us to ponder, what are we now to make of fake reporters in the White House press room? And fake news releases from our government. Is Jeff Gannon or James Guckert, or whatever his real name is, any different from the assorted oddball characters who have passed through the White House press room for generations? Ronald Reagan's advisors used to seat them strategically at formal press conferences in the East Room and tell the president that if he got into trouble he should call upon one of them, not because they would go easy on the president but because they might be so confrontational in their demeanor that it would create sympathy for the president with the television audience.

Perhaps my very favorite person in that category was Naomi Nover. Now Naomi was usually a sweet white haired lady, sometimes she could be a little difficult but she was actually a very sweet

lady. She had inherited her press pass from her late husband who had run a news service. I never knew of a story that Naomi filed in all those years covering Ronald Reagan but she did travel with us whenever we went overseas to summits. She seemed to view the assorted summit trips as wonderful sightseeing and shopping opportunities.

Now on one such trip we were in China, and a Chinese guard tried to stop Naomi from taking a snapshot of the terra cotta warriors. So one of the other reporters, Gary Schuster of the *Detroit News*, had to intervene to protect Naomi. So he had a stroke of genius, he pulled a dollar bill out of his wallet and he showed the picture of the dollar bill with George Washington to the Chinese soldier, pointed back to Naomi with her white hair. She in fact did resemble our first president.

(Laughter)

MS. MITCHELL: The soldier quickly decided that anyone important enough to have her picture on the American currency deserved access to the terra cotta figures.

(Laughter)

MS. MITCHELL: So is there a difference between James Gannon and press room habitués like Naomi Nover or the Reverend Consalving, or for that

matter the indomitable Sarah McClendon, well of course there is. Everyone knew what Reagan and his successors were doing and why when they called on these people, and none of these other reporters or reporter wannabes tried to disguise their identity or their agendas, at least most of them didn't. None of them certainly were bound to the white House press secretary in any secret compact to polish the image of the administration. And none of them demeaned and distorted the appropriately adversarial relationship between journalist and government official.

How does this affect any of the rest of us? Well any time any of us participate in a White House briefing with fake reporters asking staged questions, and unknowingly relay that information to the public through live broadcast of the briefing or through the information that is distilled from that briefing we are cheating our readers and our viewers and our listeners.

Similarly, we are all at risk when local news organizations or their cable news syndication providers that feed out actualities every afternoon for their newly expanded local broadcasts, cover government video news releases without proper identification or verification. As the *New York Times* reported recently, the Bush Administration has taken a practice that did

in fact begin under Bill Clinton and expanded it so broadly that agencies from the State Department to HHS are now distributing video public relations releases to local stations throughout the country.

Now there are occasionally good reasons for using government handout video, I can think of a missile test or some other such highly technical reason, perhaps, if it is properly labeled and adequately explained. But some local stations are not only airing the pictures from the government, they are also broadcasting the narration that they government provides, particularly from the Agriculture Department. And this is narration that the government's own PR company are so hopefully providing to accompany the pictures.

Perhaps even more insidious, some stations are erasing the government's voice track and having their own reporters or anchors rerecord it to make these stories sound more authentically local. How did local news organizations reach the point where they think it is appropriate to fill their ever expanding broadcasts with fake news scripted by the United States Government.

The Bush Administration is now spending a quarter of a billion dollars on public relations companies that produce these handouts. As a result, we

now have available on the web to television stations across the country upbeat reports on Iraq, featuring positive interviews, on issues from Medicare to farm prices. Hundreds of local stations are running stories extolling Bush Administration policies, reaching tens of millions of people every day. But all these reports were written and distributed by the administration itself and its public relations firms, not by journalists.

Last month the Government Accountability Office warned that prepackaging news "for purposes of publicity or propaganda" has been banned since 1951, unless the reports are clearly labeled and factually accurate. But the Justice Department ruled the next week that video news releases are in fact legal, and at his news conference last week the president said it has been a long standing practice of the federal government to use these types of videos. He added that it would be helpful if the local stations would make it clear to their viewers that portions of their newscasts were provided by the government. But said Mr. Bush, "evidently in some cases that is not the case."

When we as journalists can of course, and should and will disclose what the government is doing, the *New York Times* did a fine job of that. But fundamentally we cannot change government behavior

except every four years, except by exposing it to public censure and ridicule. However, upholding standards in our own profession is our responsibility and no one else's.

The bottom line here is no matter who produces these videos, broadcasting them is simply not ethical. In my own company, I'm glad to say NBC News has an official policy guideline for all its employees discouraging the use of any video provided by non news organizations. If used under limited circumstances, it must be approved by an executive producer and disclosed to viewers. Still, for millions of viewers the government has indeed found that the best way to spin the news is to produce it itself.

All of these trends diminish our credibility at a time when good tough journalism is needed more than ever. Sadly, I fear we are not doing enough to develop talented young people to join the ranks of the investigative reporters and the authors you have honored tonight. I know how much I still rely every day on the solid training I received as a novice in newsrooms in Philadelphia and Washington.

If reporters are no longer being expected to follow the ethical constructs that define our profession television news organizations will not long be able to disguise the hollowness at the core of their

newscasts. Viewers will quickly figure out that skill at reading a teleprompter is no substitute for real reporting. If the audience is tuning out perhaps there is a good reason.

I became a reporter because I am a story teller. I love unraveling mysteries and holding people in authority accountable for their actions. And fortunately I started out in a city which had so much local government corruption it was just a great training ground. As a child I had very few female role models, other than fictional characters like Nancy Drew and cartoon figures like Brenda Starr.

The post 9/11 world we now inhabit is infinitely more complex and challenging than the world in which I was raised. We are now living through a period which has severely tested our abilities to fulfill our basic mission as reporters. How good a job did we do before the war and since, as Jim Fallows has so expertly analyzed. Even as we now challenge those who made false or misleading claims wittingly or unwittingly, about weapons of mass destruction, those of us who covered these issues have to look inward and answer for our own fallibilities. Admittedly, without being on the ground inside Saddam Hussein's Iraq most of us lacked independent means to verify intelligence claims. But did we consult enough outside sources and

adequately condition our reports to convey the proper amount of distance from the government's certitude?

What about our political coverage in this last campaign? Our critics may rightly ask have we implicitly created a different standard for reports on the nightly news than for cable talk shows or even BLOGs? As new technologies and new media proliferate and information is transmitted instantaneously on the internet, I'm not sure I have any better answer than anyone else about how to preserve standards of accuracy. But I know we have to find a way to avoid sacrificing both accuracy and also sacrificing accuracy for speed, if we are serious about living up to our obligations.

Last summer we had a lesson, a good lesson in how to respond, and I think in this particular case we did well, we were responding to intense pressure to be the first to report who John Kerry was going to choose as a running mate. And I confess I was eager to be the one to break the story, having done the Quayle story, which by the way, no one would believe at the time, but fortunately I had an anchorman and I called Tom Brokaw in the control room and I said it's Quayle, Quayle. And he said, well, are you sure? And knowing how unlikely this choice was to most people it seemed I actually confided to Tom and to Tom alone who my

sources were, because I felt he deserved that protection from his reporter.

Well again, we were going through this, it was July 4th weekend, we knew that John Kerry was going to announce his choice on Tuesday morning. And I was filling in for Tim Russert on "Meet The Press" that weekend so there was a lot of other pressure. And we basically worked around the clock, with everybody pitching in, and we had conference calls, and finally on Monday, John Kerry was going to make the announcement on Tuesday morning, I got the word from a really authoritative source. And I called everyone and we had a conference with all of the top executives, with Brian Williams, to share our information. And at the time Brian had discovered that Secret Service, I was telling him that it was Edwards, and he had discovered that the Secret Service had mobilized in North Carolina with a team.

And we were trying to decide whether we could go with it, and we all agreed we couldn't. Because I had one source, Brian's information did not mean that they had not mobilized a Secret Service team around Gephardt, Bob Graham and all the others in anticipation of who the choice would be. Kerry had deliberately not notified the so-called losers because he did not want this to leak, he wanted to announce it

on the web.

So we just decided that the only thing we could do was just stay there all night, Monday night, and try to break the story, keep calling more people and wait until we had a second source, which we finally did get in the early hours of the morning, so we were able to break it on "The Today Show". But in this day of instantaneous news and of incredibly inaccurate information being perpetuated so quickly on the web, it really makes me wonder about generations of reporters who are coming up through the ranks who don't have the guidance that I have always had, and who don't have the training that many of my colleagues have.

What we reporters do every day is explore the intellectual and geographic landscape of the world as surrogates for the public. And like every reporter I know, I sometimes find it amazing that people pay us to do this, because it is so much fun. Since I was a teenager I've wanted to be a journalist because I love the sheer joy of spinning a narrative, it's like reading a good novel or watching a movie, you know, how will the story end, how will the Senate vote turn out? And separately of course we have the extraordinary excitement of being eyewitnesses to history.

As journalists we can go where other people can't. Once there, of course, it's our mission

to relay the facts and more, to give context and background and the larger meaning of events. For those of us in television there is the additional challenge of providing the right words to give focus to the lasting images that once stitched together create our visual history.

To this day the moment that crystallizes for me the beginning of the end of the Cold War was Ronald Reagan on a June day in 1987 in Berlin, demanding that Mikhail Gorbachev tear down that wall, just as the flickering hope for Middle East peace will always recall for me the September morning in 1993 when Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat finally shook hands on the South Lawn of the White House.

But if we journalists are going to continue enjoying our front row seats we really have to do a better job of justifying our privileged access, it has never been more important.

So again, I want to thank you for honoring me tonight, and my congratulations to all the outstanding winners of the Goldsmith Prizes. My thanks to my colleagues in particular at NBC News who have given me so many opportunities over the years to earn and grow as a journalist. It is with them that I share this prize, and I accept it with gratitude to all of you for singling me out for this honor. Thank you so

very much.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: It is the Kennedy School tradition that our speakers answer a few questions, and we will do that tonight. There are microphones here and here and also up here on the balcony. If you would, when you ask a question, identify yourself and please ask a question, we're not looking for manifestos but questions.

While some of you are coming to the microphones, let me, if I may, Andrea, present you with a second piece of your prize. One of the things that we have as a tradition is to make you feel that you are indeed seated in the heart of culture, knowledge and wisdom. And when you sit in this chair we hope that you will feel this way, this is a chair that is part of the career award and it has actually got your name on the back of it.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: And we'll even ship it to you.

MS. MITCHELL: Thank you very much.

MR. JONES: Yes, sir?

MR. STRAIGHT: Good evening Ms. Mitchell, it's an honor to even talk to you, I watch you all the time and I love you, you're great.

MS. MITCHELL: We need every viewer

believe me.

(Laughter)

MR. STRAIGHT: Brian Straight.

My question for you is how does, especially in television and broadcast journalism, how can it stay substantive when you have people like Leslie Moon saying we want to make the news younger and fresher and hipper, how can you preserve that substance?

MS. MITCHELL: Well there is nothing wrong with being young and fresh and hip, I wish I were.

(Laughter)

MS. MITCHELL: But I think there has to be a good intelligent mix, and that is why we rely on our anchors, who are managing editors, and on executive producers and on the leadership of the networks at least, to make intelligent decisions. Now I am very encouraged that my long time friend and colleague Bob Schieffer is now the anchor of "CBS Evening News" because when they were making the decision as to who was to succeed to that chair I think at least, while it's only on a temporary basis as Bob would be the first to say, he represents the finest tradition of CBS News.

So I'm not so sure that the direction is all going to be in a less substantive trend. I think

that in fact there is an appetite for serious news and we are seeing it on all three networks. We are seeing a lot more foreign coverage, there was obviously a period, an unfortunate period, leading up to 9/11, when instead of covering some of the stories that we ought to have been covering we were focused on a missing intern and a congressman, and looking for connections between the two that did or did not exist.

So there was a lot of really bad, I'd say bad judgements that went on in the past. And I think we've gotten past that. I think we all realize we're living in serious times and I would suspect that CBS will make a good decision when they eventually have to decide what their next phase is going to be. Because the public simply will not tolerate anything less.

MR. STRAIGHT: Thank you. It should be you though.

(Laughter)

MR. JONES: Let me ask a question if I may. One of the things that has clearly been happening is that news is being supplanted, by that I mean the news of verification, news that involves reporting and traveling and interviewing and questioning, is being supplanted by what would be called the news of assertion, the conversational environment in which cable news seems to spend most of its time and energy.

When you look at the future of television news, do you see, realistically, a future for the expensive kind of news that NBC has done during your career, the kind of news you do? And when you look at Fox News and CNN and MSNBC and such, and you see the direction they are moving, where is that going to leave the networks' news operations?

MS. MITCHELL: Well, I would like to think that there is room for all of this, my concern is that the public begins to get more and more confused about what is news and what is conversation. And we have Jim Lehrer and the "News Hour" doing such a fine job every night, we have the three networks doing serious newscasts. On any one given night or another one might be marginally better than the other but they are still three very serious newscasts.

And I would like to think that there will always be a place for that, yes, it is expensive and we don't in fact perhaps every night do as much as we could in any one particular area because the audience is very fractioned and people do have very short attention spans.

What I think is the real loss is the loss of serious documentaries, that it's extraordinary what WFAA does in Dallas, and they're to be congratulated for more than twenty segments on this report. But on

the local level and also at the national level we don't have enough documentary production, that is very expensive and it's not well supported.

But I am not as despairing, I think the cable talk shows, primarily in prime time, have their place, and in fact during the election campaign there was a lot of good work that went on in between a lot of shouting. What does disturb me is that people are confusing journalism for talk, for attitude, and of course the most provocative sound bite is the one that gets repeated and people are invited back if they make outrageous assertions.

And what is truly upsetting is when reporters now don't check information, just because it has been printed by one news organization does not mean that it is accurate, and in fact there is legal liability if it is not checked. But particularly in the case of people who are public personalities, the assumption seems to be if anyone prints it, it is fair game.

I was raised in the day when we would go on the air at 6:30 and if CBS broke a story I would have to get it confirmed before we could match it, or else I would have to go on the air and say CBS News reported tonight that so and so was just named to the cabinet. But the only way to do that was to get it

matched. And now it seems to be that in this cable universe, and with the internet, people think that if anything is asserted it is fact, and that is perhaps the most damaging trend that we now face.

Yes?

MS. ADAMS: My name is Jaima Adams, I'm a student here at the Kennedy School.

I was wondering, for all of us here in the audience tonight, if you could talk about what you see as the most important issue in the world of foreign affairs, if you would, but just talk to us about what you see as the most pressing issue of the day.

MS. MITCHELL: Well, I think there are a number of pressing issues, but I think the most pressing, the most challenging for those of us American reporters is how to evaluate government assertions about intelligence. Because we don't have the tools, we are not on the ground in many of these places, we're not in North Korea, we can't go underground. We have to trust either the International Atomic Energy Agency or our own government agencies.

And the politicization of intelligence is perhaps the most alarming trend in recent years, as well as the reality that the agencies themselves were not always intentionally misleading the public and misleading the government. I think there is a

combination of incompetence, bad information being analyzed inexpertly and therefore, sort of a transmittal of bad information to our policy makers.

And we are now going to experiment with a new structure with the National Intelligence Directorate, which has just been given \$181 million to spend, but they don't know how to hire or where to build. And I'm not sure that any of these new structures are really going to improve on the truly flawed system we now have. So it has been decades in the making but we now have a foreign policy establishment and a political establishment that is relying on flawed or inaccurate information. And we have to rely on our government or test our government, but we don't know whether the decisions we are making about North Korea, Iran and other proliferating societies is based on real solid information.

So I think that is one of the biggest challenges for our government and also for us as journalists.

MS. WHELAN: Hi, I'm Maura Whelan, with the Belfer Center here at the Kennedy School.

I had a question for you about secrecy. We hear consistently that this administration has a stricter secrecy policy, is able to hold in the leaks more so than past administrations. And given your

experience and how many administrations you've dealt with, is that necessarily the case, and are the penalties higher, and what would they be on the people who were formerly your sources?

MS. MITCHELL: Yes, it is the case. And my favorite administration, Jim Fallows may recall certain events during the Carter years, but my very favorite, from the standpoint of leaks, was the Reagan Administration, because you had three different branches of the West Wing, you had the Jim Baker, the Mike Dever and the Ed Meese branch, we called it the troika. And so you had three centers of power, each of which wanted to be as self-important as possible and so all of their aides had a vested interest in cultivating journalists and making their bosses look better, or their bosses had a vested interest in making themselves look better. It was wonderful.

Of course as good as that was, we didn't know about Iran Contra until Ed Meese walked into the briefing room that November day and told us. So we were not very good at digging out the secrets of an entirely illegal cover operation that was going on. So we did manage to dig a lot but not as much as we should have.

This administration is very different because you have a center of power, George W. Bush, a

White House that was populated with his loyalists, it's very hierarchical, they truly are loyal. They are not political figures who came up working for other people and they all came together around his candidacy, they all came up working for him. And now he has taken these White House staff people and made them cabinet secretaries.

So now you no longer have even the vestiges of independence in some of these departments, or it's gradually moving in that direction. I think it's very helpful to the president in trying to, he takes great pleasure in this and in fact he has accomplished it, there have been very few leaks of appointments, it's just not the kind of thing that we get. Now it's not a terribly important story, I would rather have a leak about something a lot more important than an appointment, but I'll take what I can get.

They are very loyal to him, and where the loyalty becomes a problem, I think from a public policy context is when we are talking about big issues, whether it's Social Security or Iran, Iraq, the post war occupation in particular. The fact that the State Department's voluminous work on that subject was so rejected and career ambassadors were blacklisted in favor of the Pentagon for the post war occupation led to so many bad decisions that we are, the ultimate

price has been paid by more than 1,500 men and women in the armed services and their families. And this country has paid indeed a very heavy price for some of those bad decisions.

MR. GUTIERREZ: Hi, my name is Adassi Gutierrez, I'm a student at the Kennedy School.

I have heard and read some perceptions of the White House press corps as being somewhat cowed by the Bush Administration not being able to hold it accountable. I guess for disclosure, I was part of the Clinton Administration and I do kind of feel that the White House press corps was a little bit harder on them, of course, a biased point of view. I'm just wondering what the White House press corps could do to be, to hold the Bush Administration more accountable? I wonder if you would address that?

MS. MITCHELL: Well it's a good question, because I think over the years, the hardest place to cover the administration is from inside the White House press corps, and it does become kind of a very difficult, constraining place because you're on the road, you're on a bus, you're on a plane, it's very difficult to develop outside sources. But it is something that you need to do.

When I was there, I kind of worked the Hill and other sources and found ways to work back

inward. But as I say, we still didn't break some of the biggest stories of our time. I think that the press corps has been constrained by the real discipline of the Bush team and how difficult it is to find sources, they are extraordinarily loyal. And I think they are the kind of aides that if you gave them truth serum they would still give you their name, rank and serial number. So the White House may not be the best place from which to cover some of these policies. It might be necessary to take a step backward.

And I think you're correct that there has been sort of less push-pull in recent years, certainly less than during the early Clinton years when it just seemed like there was stuff happening all the time. And they would tell you themselves, as some of them have in their books, that in those first hundred days there were just so many decisions that were made that led to controversy. But I think they did face a lot more scrutiny than the current folks in the White House.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Again, I congratulate all the finalists and the citation winners, and of course Andrea Mitchell.

Tomorrow at 8:30 on the top of the Taubman Building we will have a continental breakfast and then

at 9:00, a panel in which all the finalists and award winners will be taking part, talking about the state of investigative journalism. You are all invited, and I hope many of you will be able to come. I think that does it. I want to thank you all for being with us tonight, it's been a very happy night. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

(Whereupon, at 7:28 p.m., the session was concluded.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

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is an accurate record based on the recordings of
the proceedings taken:

Before: ALEX JONES, Moderator

In the Matter of:

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