

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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 S. JONES  
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## PROCEEDINGS (6:10 p.m.)

MR. ELLWOOD: Good evening, everyone. My name is David Ellwood, I'm the Dean at the Harvard Kennedy School here and welcome to the John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum. This is a terrific day. Of course it's St. Patrick's Day, which is what makes it terrific. I am not wearing any green, however, which is really quite disappointing, except that the reason I'm not wearing green is I have a tie that says "We The People" and it is indeed an important part of the Constitution, and it does seem to me that that's even more important than a green tie on this occasion, since this is really one of the best and most significant evenings we have every year, that is the Goldsmith Awards.

Let me start by saying a couple of words about Walter Shorenstein, who with his wife Phyllis, has really made this program possible. As you know, some twenty years ago, the Shorensteins created this really remarkable place called the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, and it remains a premier place that promotes serious and probing analysis of the media and of public policy both in the United States and more globally. And indeed, there has never been a more important time to think of that as we watch newspapers collapse and we watch the nature of media changing rapidly.

Many of us are uncertain where that leads, I think many of us are quite concerned where that leads, but it is the generosity, the vision, the insight of a truly great American, Walter Shorenstein, that makes all of that possible. And so we hope to be joined by Walter

at some point tonight, but in any case, even in his absence, I would like us all to give Walter Shorenstein a very big hand.

(Applause)

Now, my only other task is to get off the stage quickly after introducing the director of the Shorenstein Center and the Lawrence M. Lombard Lecturer in the Press and Politics, Alex Jones. He covered the press for the *New York Times* from 1983 to '92, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1987. In 1991 he co-authored with his wonderful wife, Susan Tifft, *The Patriarch: The Rise and Fall of the Bingham Dynasty*. In 1992, he left the paper to work on *The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind the New York Times*, also co-authored with Susan Tifft, which was a finalist, by the way, for the National Book Circle Award.

He has been a Nieman Fellow at Harvard, a host on National Public Radio's "On the Media," executive editor of PBS's "Media Matters." He is on all kinds of commissions, but for us what really makes him special is the fact that he brings together this intense interest, but also objective look at the media and leads us as we think in a forward way about what we can do to make democracy work better through the media. So, to start the program off then, Alex Jones.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Thank you very much, David. We were told that Walter is going to be joining us, we hope he will be. So, if you see a man who walks in and he is 94 but sort of looking at the blondes, that's Walter.

(Laughter)

This is a very happy night for the Shorenstein Center, it always is, every year. This marks the 18th Anniversary of the Goldsmith Awards Program, and each year we look forward to this night as a high point of the Shorenstein Center and also, frankly, even modestly perhaps, for American journalism. I want to tell you a little about the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting because its story, the story of its creation, is worth retelling every year.

Bob Greenfield, then a lawyer, a Philadelphia lawyer, had a client named Berda Marks Goldsmith, who told him of her intent to leave him her entire estate. She did that. Bob declined to accept it and went searching for a good way to use the money for a purpose Berda would have approved. And she was very passionately interested in news and public affairs and good government, she followed the news ardently. She was particularly outraged at misconduct by people with public responsibilities.

Eventually, Bob connected with Marvin Kalb, the Shorenstein Center's founding director, and the result was the Goldsmith Awards in Political Journalism which include the investigative reporting prizes, the book prizes, the fellowships and the career awards. Thanks to the Greenfield Foundation, of which Bob is the chairman, and to the board members and to the family, I feel that it's very important to call your attention to them. The Greenfield family is most remarkable and I am very glad that many of them are here tonight, Mike Greenfield, who serves as a Goldsmith Prize judge, his wife Elaine, Jill

Feldman and Bill and Joni Greenfield. Also here are Barbara and Charles Kahn, who are foundation trustees. Without the Greenfield family's continued support and good faith, this night would not be possible. Could I ask all the members of the Greenfield family and those associated with the Greenfield Foundation to stand so that we can express our thanks.

(Applause)

As David said, one of the pleasures of this night is to have a chance to publicly thank the man principally responsible for the existence of the Shorenstein Center, Walter Shorenstein. Walter, as I said, turned 94 earlier this month, we are now starting to plan a truly huge hundredth birthday party. He celebrated his ninetieth at the Four Seasons in New York, that's the kind of guy he is. Walter made his fortune in real estate by harnessing this bottomless supply of drive and optimism that he had. Is Walter here? Well bring him in, so he can hear himself talked about.

(Applause)

Walter, welcome.

He made his fortune in real estate by harnessing this bottomless supply he has of drive and optimism and these same things, plus an enduring and passionate concern for his country, have marked his life. It is this public spirit of his that led him to endow the Shorenstein Center as a memorial to his daughter, Joan, who was a highly respected

journalist at CBS who died far too young of breast cancer. I ask, if you will, once again, to join me in wishing Walter happy birthday and welcome.

(Applause)

The first Goldsmith Awards are the book prizes and making those presentations will be my colleague and friend, Tom Patterson, the Bradlee Professor of Government and the Press at the Kennedy School.

MR. PATTERSON: Alex, thank you.

Two Goldsmith Book Prizes are awarded each year, one for the best book in the field of press, politics, that's a trade book, the second for the best academic book. The selections are made by a jury, this year it consisted of Alex Jones, Matt Baum, Marion Just and myself. I'm sure many of you read Mark Danner's unsettling piece in this Sunday's *New York Times*. Relying on Red Cross interviews with prisoners at Guantanamo, Danner described the once unthinkable torture chambers run by U.S. agents, acting on the authority of our highest officials.

The winner of this year's Goldsmith Book Prize in the trade category, *The Dark Side*, by Jane Mayer, tells the larger story of how the War on Terror turned into the war on America's ideals. Mayer details the scope of America's use of harsh interrogations, secret renditions, CIA prisons and warrantless wiretaps, while also relating the bitter in-fighting that went on within the White House between the Cheney hardliners and those who valiantly but unsuccessfully sought to preserve the rule of law.

*New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert said of *The Dark Side*, “It should be read by everyone who thinks they can stand the truth.”

We are honored this evening to recognize *The Dark Side*. Jane Mayer, please step up to receive the Goldsmith Book Award.

(Applause)

As I mentioned, there is also a Goldsmith Book Prize in the academic category. This year’s winner examines the public consequences of the changing shape of America’s new system. In its heyday, broadcast television news greatly expanded the audience for daily news. Americans were so addicted to television that they would watch most anything. At the dinner hour, that meant watching the evening news, the only programming available at that hour in most media markets.

Cable came along and offered people more choices and then the Internet further broadened the selections. Today, if you want news, there is more of it out there than ever before. On the other hand, if you don’t want news, well there’s lots of other choices as well. It’s that change from a low-choice news environment to a high-choice one that Markus Prior examined in his book *Post-Broadcast Democracy*. Relying on audience and public opinion data, Prior shows that however much we might worry about the digital divide where access to information depends on our ability to pay for it, we ought to be even more worried about the choice divide where access to news depends on whether we think it’s worth our time.



Many citizens today are unequal by their choice, they pay almost no attention to news and consequently know almost nothing about current affairs. And because they know less, they also care less about public life and participate less in it. Markus Prior, please come forward to accept the Goldsmith Book Prize for your remarkable book *Post-Broadcast Democracy*.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Before I tell you about the six finalists for the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting, I would like to thank the judges, Mary Margaret Graham, Mike Greenfield, who you met a moment ago, Bill Ketter, Bill Purcell, Guy Raz and Janet Wu. I am the person who sort of runs the judging process but I am not a judge myself, so I can tell you that the judges this year, as every year, had an enormous number of superb entries.

Narrowing the field to six was very difficult, narrowing the winners to one was even more difficult. I think that all of them, as you will hear, deserve your respect and certainly they are an indication once again of the importance of investigative journalism in a society like ours. I will talk about them in alphabetical order according to the news organization represented.

When we place an order for Chicken McNuggets at McDonald's, there is a good chance the chicken was processed at one of the many plants run under the corporate ownership of House of Raeford Farms. House of Raeford has plants scattered throughout the Carolinas and its work force is heavily Latino immigrants who need jobs and have little

recourse to the kinds of protections that less vulnerable workers would likely demand.

They depend for their safety on OSHA which, in the past administration, seemed all but to drop scrutiny of poultry in the poultry industry. For instance, OSHA regulators rarely check whether employers are reporting honestly about safety conditions, and even more important, actual on the job injuries, and when problems are found, the companies are rarely penalized.

It was left to the *Charlotte Observer* to try to find out what was actually happening at the House of Raeford Farm's sprawling operation, and what did the team of reporters find? An 800-worker plant in West Columbia, South Carolina, reported no musculoskeletal disorders for four years. Now, those injuries are the most common found in an industrial work place, it's a big name for a lot of injuries that involve simply getting yourself hurt on the job, and experts told the *Observer* that it was inconceivable that four years would pass without a single one.

Similarly, at a Greenville, South Carolina plant it was boasted that they had a five-year safety streak with no lost-time accidents. What the *Observer* then found was that the company was under reporting, misreporting, hiding, brushing aside scores of injuries in an effort to keep the Chicken McNuggets coming. In the case of the Greenville plant, injured employees had no lost time because they would be brought back to the factory hours after surgery in some cases.

At four of the company's largest plants, the first-aid attendants and supervisors refused worker requests to see doctors, even in the face of debilitating pain. Hiding and ignoring injuries lowers costs for medical care and eliminates compensation for lost wages. Also, the government rewards companies that report low injury rates by inspecting them less often, and regulators rarely check whether companies are reporting accurately.

To find out what was really happening, the *Observer* team had to turn over a lot of rocks. They viewed thousands of documents and conducted hundreds of interviews. The result was a six part series that showed that officials in the poultry industry had ignored or threatened injured workers, as they created an illusion of safety, a practice that boosted profits at the cost of jeopardizing the health of thousands of poultry workers, and they showed that government policymakers had allowed it all to happen.

One of the aspects of judging the Goldsmith Prize is a measurement of the investigation's impact. Within less than a week of publication, federal lawmakers called for hearings to address the issues, the GAO had begun studying whether regulators are doing enough to crack down on companies hiding workplace injuries and key lawmakers are now pushing for stronger investigations and stricter punishments. One top manager at a company was indicted for instructing staffers to use bogus employment documents to hire illegal immigrants and about a dozen supervisors have been arrested on immigration violations.

In North Carolina, lawmakers have beefed up staffing at the state labor department and both state and federal legislators have promised to strengthen the government's power to punish employers who violate child labor laws, which is also going on. The series told how the company blocked injured workers from seeing doctors while hauling others with broken bones or severed fingers back to work hours after surgery. It exposed how underage workers were routinely hired to perform hazardous jobs and it told how the company took advantage of the fear of their workers, many undocumented, that they would be fired or deported if they protested. As one reader wrote to the *Observer*, "Upton Sinclair, Ida Tarbell and Lincoln Steffins would be proud."

Please join me in saluting Ames Alexander, Kerry Hall, Franco Ordonez, Ted Mellnik and Peter St. Onge for their series "The Cruellest Cuts: The Human Cost of Bringing Poultry to your Table." Would you all please stand?

(Applause)

In January of 2008, Detroit was rocked by a headline in the *Detroit Free Press*, "Mayor Lied Under Oath, Text Messages Show." This headline was the result of a painstaking and probably unprecedented weeks-long review and authentication not of documents, but of 14,000 text messages sent to and from the pager belonging to the mayor's chief of staff. She was, it turned out, also his longtime lover, something both had denied under oath but which was only too clear on the text messages which were both explicit and obvious.

But this was only the beginning for the mayor, his chief of staff and the *Free Press*. Before he finally acknowledged his guilt ten months later, Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and his supporters denounced the *Free Press* for reporting that represented a “lynch mob mentality.” He fought the paper and tried to bully them, he claimed the paper had broken the law in obtaining the text messages. He claimed the messages had been manipulated.

The reporters were told that they were in danger, and a city council member warned the *Free Press*'s publisher to watch his back. The story had actually begun years ago with the illicit sexual relationship between the mayor and his chief of staff, which they were determined to keep secret. When an internal affairs investigation in the police department threatened to expose them, they arranged for Deputy Police Chief Gary Brown, who was leading the investigation, to be fired. When he filed suit for wrongful firing, they both lied under oath about firing him and about their relationship.

It was these lies that the *Free Press* uncovered in their text message search. What they also came to learn was that the mayor engineered settling the wrongful suit for nearly \$9 million, again to cover up the affair, and the *Free Press* discovered more and more, as they went along, a pattern of cronyism, special treatment and wholesale abuse of power. That all came vividly to life in the pages of the *Free Press*.

Ultimately, the chief of staff pleaded guilty to two felonies and was sentenced to a jail term. On October 28, the former mayor, who had been forced to resign, went to jail to

start a 120-day sentence. He had pleaded guilty to two felonies, surrendered his law license and agreed to pay a million dollars in restitution to city taxpayers.

Since that January day, the *Detroit Free Press* had published more than 500 stories, more than 60 editorials. They had published more than 300 readers letters and more than 100,000 online comments, one of them from a reader who said he had lost faith in the media but that the *Free Press* had restored his belief in journalism. Many said that only a newspaper could have uncovered such a story and then stayed with it, and it had reminded them of the critical role newspapers play in our democracy. Their words to God's ear.

Please join me in recognizing the superb journalism of Jim Schaefer, M.L. Elrick and the *Detroit Free Press* staff for "A Mayor in Crisis."

(Applause)

In the wake of 9/11, and especially after the invasion in Iraq, Americans who were worried about the wisdom of the administration's strategy and the conduct of the war looked to the experts for insight. And on television those experts, for the most part, were retired generals, a whole cadre of them who served the cable and broadcast networks as professional arbiters of what was working and what was not. They assessed the Pentagon's performance, they gave views as to the war's objectives and execution, and for the most part, they told the American public that the Bush Administration deserved high marks.

What Americans didn't know until after an exhaustive investigation by David Barstow of the *New York Times* was that these generals were pitch men in the sense that

they had been recruited by the Pentagon. What they also didn't know is that, in many cases, these same retired generals had a financial interest in maintaining support for the war because of their relationships with the fed's contractors. It was shocking and disheartened in that these senior officers were respected and honorable men, that they had proven to be able to be coopted, if not corrupted. They were part of a nationwide information campaign orchestrated by the Pentagon. They made the administration's case for war and a long occupation after having been given talking points in high-level Pentagon briefings. Barstow revealed that sometimes these talking points were repeated word for word on TV, and he showed the lucrative financial interest many of the generals had which benefitted from the very policies they were asked to assess. Of course these conflicts of interest were not disclosed to the public by the generals or the television networks, to their shared shame.

When Barstow's first article was published last April, the reaction was immediate. The Pentagon announced that it was suspending this program of trips and briefings for favored analysts, various government agencies announced investigations and several presidential candidates condemned the program. The article was instantly linked by hundreds of websites and stayed on the *Times*' most-blogged list for a month.

But from one quarter there was silence: the TV networks. That wasn't terribly surprising, several had refused to talk to Barstow, and those that did had mostly shown that they either weren't aware or terribly concerned about the conflicts of interest between the

analysts' role on television and their stake in military contracting, nor did they seem terribly bothered that viewers were led to believe that they were getting not propaganda but unvarnished, expert judgement from esteemed war heroes.

This piece of investigative reporting was particularly difficult and shows the importance of time to report and legal power that is an accepted cost of business at the old-school media like the *Times*. Ironically, while bloggers denounced the revelations as showing the corruption of mainstream media, they also had to rather sheepishly acknowledge that the information had come through a two-year, shoe-leather investigation by that most mainstream of the mainstream media, the *New York Times*.

It wasn't easy for Barstow. The Pentagon and the networks fought him every inch of the way for access to internal e-mails and transcripts and other documents. When he saw that material, he understood why. In one case, after a group of retired generals had publicly lambasted the defense secretary's war time performance, the Pentagon mounted an immediate counteroffensive, summoning some of its favorite generals to write op-eds of support. A general who was a Fox analyst was preparing an opinion article for the *Wall Street Journal* and Barstow, in his reporting, was able to quote verbatim the general's message to the Pentagon, "starting to write it now, any input for the article will be much appreciated." The Pentagon quickly forwarded talking points and statistics.

In his second article, Barstow focused on General Barry R. McCaffrey, the Gulf War hero and Clinton drug czar, who had been the preeminent master in the interplay of



Beltway clout, media celebrity and military contracting. General McCaffrey was NBC's leading military analyst, but he also ran his own consulting company for military-related businesses and worked for one of the largest contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“On the air,” Barstow wrote, “he had consistently advocated wartime policies and spending priorities that are in line with his corporate interests, and yet, for instance, when he promotes on TV and to Congress, and his former senior military comrades, his company's plan to sell 5,000 rehabbed armored vehicles to Iraq, he does not also say that he is being paid to do so.” Barstow pointed out that this does not prove the general skewed his commentary; what it does show is that leaving out his self-interest tainted his views, and for this NBC must also be held accountable. The network's response was again silence. But the last time General McCaffrey was on NBC, which was not long ago, he was identified as having a stake in military contracting business.

For his work to expose a practice that was both a corruption of government and of journalistic practice, please recognize David Barstow of the *New York Times* for “Message Machine.”

(Applause)

In the Autumn of 2007, a *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reporter was doing a profile of a newly promoted corporate executive when she decided to do something simple and obvious but too often skipped: she checked. She placed a call to the University of West Virginia to confirm that Heather Bresch, the daughter of the Governor of West Virginia, in

fact had a Masters of Business Administration degree from the university, as Mrs. Bresch had claimed. The answer was that she did not.

Then days later came a call with the opposite information: Ms. Bresch did have an MBA. The fact that her father, the governor, was a childhood friend of the university's president and that she herself was the second-highest ranking executive at a company that was the biggest donor to the university, was not lost on the reporter. At that point, the *Post-Gazette* began a difficult and sensitive investigation of just what the hell was going on here.

There began a lot of dogged research of university archives and meticulous examination of records, countless interviews and agonizingly slow source development. But in time, the two reporters on the story pieced together a tale of how a well-connected woman was awarded a degree she didn't earn. This was in the face of stubborn resistance from the university, the company and Ms. Bresch herself that she had earned a degree a decade earlier.

When the *Post-Gazette* published its findings in December of 2007 detailing phantom grades for phantom courses and courses not taken, the university, the corporation and Mrs. Bresch responded with angry denial. West Virginia powers, including the state's leading newspaper, charged the out-of-state *Post-Gazette* with shoddy reporting and suggested that the paper was just a tool of the governor's enemies and had done a terrible injustice to Ms. Bresch.

The *Post-Gazette* responded with more digging, more reporting, Freedom of Information Act requests, telephone and e-mail records and found there was clear evidence that the university had failed to comply with the law and failed to produce all of the relevant documents as required, so the newspaper sued the university. When the university put together a panel to examine the questions raised in the newspaper's investigation, the *Post-Gazette* exposed the numerous conflicts of interest among panel members, forcing the university to reconstitute its panel with members from outside the state and outside the orbit of the governor and the university's president.

Months later, this independent panel affirmed in every respect and in every detail what the *Post-Gazette* had reported. It said that the university had made a seriously flawed decision in making up grades for Ms. Bresch out of thin air. Within days, the provost resigned, a day later the dean of the business school resigned, and shortly thereafter, after the full faculty had demanded it, the president resigned as well.

Please join me in recognizing the journalistic work of Patricia Sabatini and Len Boselovic for "MBA Mystery in Morgantown."

(Applause)

As some of you know, investigative reporting is expensive and, in these economic times, many news organizations have cut their budgets by reducing investigative reporting. This prompted the creation of *ProPublica*, a not-for-profit news organization focused on investigative reporting and funded by the Sandler Foundation and other benefactors that

has made it possible to hire some of the nation's best investigative talent, much of it either unemployed or fearful of being unemployed. This is the first year of *ProPublica*'s life and I am glad to say that they have hit the ground running.

Abrahm Lustgarten came to *ProPublica* from *Fortune* magazine where he focused on the confluence of business and the environment. That background has served him and *ProPublica* well. Until *ProPublica* began covering the story, companies drilling for natural gas in the United States enjoyed almost complete freedom from public scrutiny. They were also granted highly unusual exemptions from federal environmental regulations, the better to speed natural gas to the market.

What Lustgarten discovered was that this combination of regulatory fast tracking and out-of-sight, out-of-mind scrutiny posed a real threat to the safety of the nation's water supplies. In partnership with a range of print and broadcast news organizations, *ProPublica* has managed to put the brakes on some of the riskier drilling plans, aroused to action the state of New York and state authorities around the country, and raised the prospect of federal legislation that would redress the imbalance between energy and environmental priorities, both of them laudable but only in the proper balance.

The issues roots go back to 2005 when Congress exempted companies' deep-drilling activities from federal law that protects the nation's drinking water and from monitoring by the Environmental Protection Agency. This was at the behest of the Bush Administration and Vice President Cheney's Energy Task Force. State regulators also

tended to tread lightly, lulled by an EPA report that the drilling process was safe, a report *ProPublica's* reporting thoroughly discredited.

In July, *ProPublica* broke a story in the *Albany Times Union* and on WNYC, New York City's public radio station, that Governor David Paterson was preparing to allow extensive drilling for natural gas on millions of acres of land surrounding New York City's reservoirs. State officials assured legislators that there had never been one instance of drinking water contamination from the kind of drilling that was planned, in which a mixture of sand, water and chemicals are forced into rock that contains bubbles of natural gas.

In fact, *ProPublica* reported, New Mexico and Colorado officials had already identified more than a thousand incidents in which toxic chemicals from waste pits near wells had apparently leached into groundwater. New York officials had no plan for how to handle the millions of gallons of hazardous fluid that would be produced by the drilling. In fact, it was only after *ProPublica's* report that officials even asked the drilling companies what chemicals they planned to use.

Governor Patterson announced that drilling would not go forward until there was every assurance that it was safe. He ordered hearings to be held across the state to reexamine the sixteen-year-old environmental impact statement. In November, *ProPublica* had a lengthy article detailing contamination cases across seven states. They showed that cancer-causing substances had started to appear in drinking water wells. People were

getting sick near drilling sites and the gas companies were settling with them for millions of dollars. This was out West.

Then, in December, *ProPublica* teamed with the *San Diego Union Tribune* to take a close look at the Colorado River which serves as a source of water for Los Angeles and San Diego. Drilling near the river was planned. Again *ProPublica* pointed out the dangers, and reaction was swift. Members of Congress from Colorado and New York jointly proposed legislation that would end the exemption from the Safe Drinking Water Act. Editorials began appearing demanding disclosure of what went into the drilling chemicals, which drilling companies considered a trade secret.

The impact is still unfolding, but in only a few months Abrahm Lustgarten's reporting prompted an extraordinary reassessment of an industry that had been scarcely covered.

Please join me in saluting Abrahm Lustgarten and welcoming *ProPublica* to the first rank of investigative journalism.

(Applause)

One of the people who appeared in the seven-part *Washington Post* series by Debbie Cenziper and Sarah Cohen was an eleven-year-old boy named Trenton Robinson, he was huddled under a heap of blankets when they found him on a dingy corner of southeast Washington, the poorest part of Washington. The rent-controlled apartment

complex where he lived had no heat or hot water, so his father had kept the oven on all night, and it had been that way for four years.

“They say we could die in this house,” he said, so cold that his breath could be seen. The *Post* series addressed a scandalous, inhumane and illegal but widely ignored practice by some of the district’s most prominent developers and landlords. It was actually rather simple: if you cut off water, heat, electricity, air conditioning and the like, people would eventually become so uncomfortable and discouraged that they would move out and their apartments could be converted into condominiums and then sold for huge profits.

Nearly three decades ago, D.C. leaders had tried to protect the interests of rent-controlled renters by giving them the right to vote on whether their apartment complex could be converted into condominiums. It was a strong law but the *Post* series showed how dozens of landlords had thwarted it by driving tenants, so they left voluntarily, and they accomplished this by refusing to do repairs or refusing to provide heat, hot water or electricity.

When the now empty buildings were converted to condos, the landlords quickly racked up more than \$300 million in sales that they tracked. The people forced out were poor and generally had no one to help them. The *Post* investigation found that the buildings had racked up 3,000 housing code violations, including leaks, broken stoves and toilets, splintered floors and cracked walls. In nearly forty cases, buildings had no heat,

electricity, hot water or air conditioning. In three cases, tenants literally had no place to bathe.

At Trenton's building, raw sewage, teeming with maggots, covered the basement floor. The owner told the *Post*, "I want it vacant. if I didn't have tenants, then I could sell it." Despite thousands of complaints, the city delayed building inspections and failed to collect fines against negligent landlords, including several with prominent ties in the region. One was a member of a local banking family, two were in business with a high-ranking member of the Clinton Administration.

To report the stories, Cenziper and Cohen analyzed 128,000 housing code violation reports, a thousand court cases and hundreds of government records obtained through more than Freedom of Information Act requests. They obtained confidential e-mails and corporate operating statements, they tracked down the owners of troubled properties, many of whom had shrouded their identities behind a web of limited liability companies. The work was complicated by conflicting and haphazard city records, forcing the reporters to sift through thousands of original documents dating back a decade to provide the first detailed accounting of the city's failure to track down negligent landlords.

And Cenziper and Cohen spent months canvassing dark, dirty buildings talking to tenants. It included a mother forced to pour paint thinner around her daughter's bed to keep the bugs away and a father who could no longer use his kitchen because it reeked of rat urine.



The impact of the series? Two weeks after the first stories were published, the city council repealed the loophole in the law that the landlords had exploited. The D.C. Attorney General sued landlords at 23 of the most neglected buildings, forcing the correction of more than a thousand housing code violations.

The mayor fired sixteen housing inspectors, half the city's inspection force, and created new policies to conduct quicker investigations of unsafe buildings. In December, eight members of the city council introduced a new Tenant Protection Act which would force the city to use its repair fund for neglected buildings instead of, as had been the practice, using the funds to rehab privately-owned single-family homes, some valued at a half-million dollars, another revelation by Cenziper and Cohen.

The new Tenant Protection Act would also make it easier for tenants to sue landlords for code violations. The people helped by this intense, expensive investigative effort were among the city's most powerless, which is something I think that is very important to bear in mind.

Please join me in recognizing the work on the behalf of Debbie Cenziper, Sarah Cohen and the *Washington Post*.

(Applause)

Before I announce the winner of the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting, I would like to call your attention to a change made possible by the Goldsmith Fund of the Greenfield Foundation which supports these prizes. As you may know, the winner gets a

prize of \$25,000. It's a big prize, but each year, without exception, all of the finalists are superb and deserve not only to be recognized but to be rewarded. So, beginning this year, and in the face of the economic downturn, the Trustees of the Greenfield Foundation granted our request that the award for finalists will be \$10,000. That's not shabby these days.

(Applause)

And now, before I announce the winner, I would like to ask all the finalists to stand once again and I ask you to join me in showing our appreciation and our admiration.

(Applause)

The winner of the Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting for 2009 is "Forced Out," the seven-part series in the *Washington Post* by Debbie Cenziper and Sarah Cohen.

(Applause)

Ten years ago, Gwen Ifill became the moderator of "Washington Week," the signature PBS weekend program in which a gathering of Washington journalists surround a table and talk about what's been happening in the nation's capitol. It is the longest-running prime-time news and public affairs show on television and its most long-lived host, so far that is, was Paul Duke who was moderator for twenty years. Do any of you remember that "Washington Week," as it was called the "Washington Week in Review"? I hate to say it but it was a group of old newspaper guys who altogether suggested one word to me, gray.

(Laughter)

And I say that now knowing that that's not an insult. And that was the message: Washington coverage is done by old white guys and they are the only ones who really know what's going on. In the decade that Gwen Ifill has been moderator and then Managing Editor of "Washington Week," a revolution has taken place that has occurred quietly but powerfully. It may be one of the most genuinely important things that has happened in television news.

Now, week after week, if you tune in to "Washington Week," you may see some old white guys, they are there, but you may well see, for instance, a show that is all African-Americans or all women or all young people, or usually a mixture of all of the above. Gwen Ifill has done something that many would have said was as unlikely as an African-American being elected president: she has made diversity, genuine diversity, normal, not something to point to or make a big deal about — she has made it normal for all kinds of people who are smart and speak with authority to appear on the longest-running prime-time news and public affairs program on television.

That is a remarkable achievement, and it has been done with an engaging smile, low-key good humor and while creating the genuine impression that she is enjoying herself, but there is steel there, too. Gwen Ifill's extraordinary classiness came home to me most powerfully when I saw her on "Meet the Press" with Tim Russert, calmly and without

raising her voice, devastatingly call him out, call out David Brooks who was also at the table and call out the many other A-list journalists who routinely went on Don Imus' show.

This was in the immediate wake of the notorious episode in 2007 in which Don Imus finally went so far that he couldn't get back. You may recall that he referred to the Rutgers University girls' basketball team, whose members were African-American, and the night before had lost in the NCAA women's basketball final, he called them what everyone agreed was an outrageous racial insult. Gwen Ifill had dispassionately written that this casual smearing comment was tossed out in a volley of male camaraderie by a group of amused, middle-aged white men.

What she might also have written was that the middle-aged white men who regularly appeared on the Imus show included long-time friends and colleagues, such as Tim Russert and David Brooks who was a fixture at "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" where Ifill is Senior Correspondent. Years ago, when Ifill was covering the White House at NBC News, Imus had tossed a casual insult in her direction, but Gwen Ifill, sitting next to Tim Russert that Sunday two years ago, was not clamoring for vengeance. She was, with enormous dignity and poise, calling on these men she knew and presumably liked and respected for doing something she could not understand and thought impossible to justify.

Why would they go on a program where things like that happen? No African-American journalist would do so, so why would they? And why, and this is before the momentum against Imus grew overwhelming and it looked like it might pass, why were

white men at the table, the ones there now, not speaking out? There has been radio silence, she said. Russert and Brooks looked like 15 year olds who had been caught smoking, blowing the smoke out the window, by their teacher. It was devastating and very, very classy.

Perhaps Gwen Ifill's moral authority came from watching her father, an African Methodist Episcopal minister of Panamanian descent by way of Barbados, who lived in many places in the East because of his ministry. As a result, Gwen was born in New York City but lived in church parsonages and other places all over the Northeast. She graduated with a BA in communications from Simmons College in Boston and was headed toward a career in newspapers, her first love.

She interned at the *Boston Herald American* where she then got a job. From there, she went to the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, then was a local and national political reporter for the *Washington Post*, a White House correspondent for the *New York Times* and a chief congressional and political correspondent for NBC News, steadily making a name for herself as poised, accomplished and wicked smart. In October 1999, she became moderator and later Managing Editor of "Washington Week" and also became Senior Correspondent for "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" where she specialized in issues ranging from foreign affairs to politics.

We consider her one of our own, as she is on the Advisory Board of the Institute of Politics and has brought her "Washington Week" program to the Kennedy School and a

host of other places to try to break the inside the Beltway insularity of Washington reporting, and trooped through a ten-city tour with the program before live audiences during the 2008 campaign season. This campaign season, she was also poised to bring out a book, *The Breakthrough: Politics and Race in the Age of Obama*, which was not what we journalists called a sloppy wet kiss for Obama but an examination of four groundbreaking African-American political figures, including Obama. I mean can you imagine writing a book about African-American political breakthroughs without including Obama? Her timing prompted some darts from Matt Drudge and the like, but she has, per usual, sailed serenely on, to the bestseller list I might add.

Gwen has been awarded more than a dozen honorary degrees and been honored by many organizations for her journalism and is in fact a breakthrough in her own life, as a woman, as an African-American and most of all as a respected professional journalist whose sense of fairness and objectivity has made her the choice to moderate two vice presidential debates. She changed what was normal in Washington journalism. I am proud to introduce the winner of this year's Goldsmith Career Achievement Award to the very classy Gwen Ifill.

(Applause)

MS. IFILL: Thank you. I am uncharacteristically moved by that, thank you.

(Laughter)

That was very sweet. I am incredibly honored to be here tonight and woo-hoo, Debbie and Sarah, congratulations. Being girls at the *Washington Post*, I remember what that was like, so congratulations.

I'm really honored to receive this award because it means that all those late nighters I pulled at the *Baltimore Evening Sun* and all the coast-to-coast flights that I spent covering losing candidates mostly, and candidates debates where the candidates didn't answer the questions, it turns out that they were not for naught.

I'm also loving this because, like all things we appreciate, it fits with how we view ourselves. I always wanted to be a journalist, I always wanted to write. I, however, could never finish anything, so I needed a deadline, so journalism seemed like the reasonable thing. I like the idea of sitting on the front row, I like the idea of forcing questions to be answered. It took me decades to realize that people didn't always have to answer them the first time.

And when I finally reached the pinnacle of my craft, after all these years of working all these places you heard about, it turns out that instead of becoming Mary McRorey, I had become Queen Latifah.

(Laughter)

Well, as these things go, considering the other option was to be portrayed by a man in drag, I thought that was a good thing.

(Laughter)

So I have no complaints, especially now when it seems that every day I experience a flash of worry for a friend or a colleague who is living in fear that his or her life and career is about to be threatened by yet another job disappearing, by yet another newspaper closing, by yet another broadcast outlet shrinking. Magazines, radio, television, newspapers, it doesn't matter, commercial or public, it doesn't matter, we are remaking ourselves and we have little choice.

But even with the stresses that our industry is undergoing right now, we, those of us who are lucky enough still to be in it, still have among the best gigs going. I think back in my career where I learned how to get the answers on subjects I knew nothing about, my first job at the *Boston Herald American* writing was actually covering food. I didn't know how to cook, but it was a writing job and I figured I could learn how to cook, which I did, well.

But it's also where I discovered that important stories could be covered in creative ways, whether it was covering riots by telephone. When I first started at the *Herald American*, we were in the middle of the bussing crisis here in Boston and I wasn't being paid near enough to go into Southie to try to figure out how many chairs had been broken that day. So I would cover it by telephone, called the headmaster, asked what had happened, and then we would send a white colleague in to find out and fill in the details and we would share a byline.



I also learned how to cover things in creative ways by working for an afternoon paper where you worked later at night, overnight, hoping to make sure that you weren't scooped in the morning by the competition or at least the scoop wouldn't last too long. And it also taught me how to write fast and how to write stories from phone booths, when phone booths still existed. I also learned how to treat race as an advantage, instead of as a burden. It meant I saw things other reporters didn't see, talked to people other reporters wouldn't talk to and told the stories that others could not.

It turned out that being underestimated had its up sides. My high school guidance counselor, for instance, advised me not to even expect to be accepted at a college like Simmons, across the river, where I will deliver the commencement address this year.

(Applause)

For some reason he never even brought up Harvard.

(Laughter)

But ignoring him and ignoring a lifetime full of people like him, my brother calls them the Mr. McDuffys after our fine guidance counselor, ignoring the Mr. McDuffys of the world allowed me to push ahead even when there was no one who expected all that much of me. My brother ignored Mr. McDuffy too, by the way, and he has degrees from Dartmouth and Yale now. Little did I know that Mr. McDuffy was doing me a favor, he was teaching me how much extra credit you can get for exceeding expectations, especially if the expectations are low and you know it.

As a journalist, I suppose I became drawn to stories about people who beat expectations. Bill Clinton, who was an obscure southern governor from a small state when I began covering his presidential campaign in 1991, most people did not, won't say so now, they won't admit it, but he wasn't supposed to win, the expectations for him were very low. Jesse Jackson was a Martin Luther King acolyte, largely dismissed as a civil rights loudmouth and opportunist the first time he ran for president in 1984. He did not win then, or in 1988 when I covered him, but I think an argument can be made that he laid the groundwork for what Barack Obama accomplished twenty years later. Jesse Jackson won thirteen contests that year, 1988, and he opened people's eyes to the possibility that someone who did not look like, as Barack Obama put it, the faces on the dollar bills, so that sort of person could benefit and could create a multiracial coalition.

My favorite politicians all along have been the underdogs, whether they were on county councils or in Congress. They were always being underestimated or even mis-underestimated, to recoin a phrase.

(Laughter)

It can be a powerful tool. I'm convinced that this penchant for the underdog is what led me to my book, *The Breakthrough*. If the candidates I profile in the book have anything in common it's that people told them no, people told them to wait their turn, people told them to step aside for just a while, to wait. They took advantage of the fact that few people expected anything of them. Now, this is not to say that everyone underestimated them or

me, surely. I would not be standing here tonight if Sarah-Anne Shaw, who then worked for WBZ here in Boston, had not helped me get my first college internship, or Anne Devery of the *Washington Post* had not recruited me to the national political staff in 1987 or if my friend Tim Russert had not dared me to leave print for television to come to work at NBC News. Someone has to see the possibilities in you and then the beauty of our craft, when it works right, is that our careers can become a form of continuing education.

Along the way, if you are smart and aware of your limitations, you learn from your mistakes and your miscalculations. This is why I am not a pundit. If I made predictions two years ago, I would have told you maybe three things for sure. I would have told you John McCain was toast, which he was, and then he wasn't, and then he was again.

(Laughter)

I would have told you that Hillary Clinton was most certainly the democratic nominee and I would have told you that Barack Obama was an intriguing but doomed upstart. I would have told you America wasn't ready for a black president, so this tells you how much I know.

(Laughter)

So, instead of predicting, I'll tell you a couple of things I have learned and then I'll let Alex take over the questioning because I am looking forward to that part of the evening. This last election demanded more translation than most, and this presidency may as well. Every phrase is a code, every policy comes with a caveat. In this last election, if one

candidate told you one thing or told you that the other one would raise your taxes, they were both probably right. Like the meaning of “is,” it depends on the meaning of “you,” everybody’s taxes are going to go up. Are you in the top two percent of earners? Do you depend on Pell Grants to afford your college education? Is your tax money going to bail out greedy bankers? Then your tax bill is going to be affected.

Here is another thing, anyone who tells you that someone else is playing the race or gender card probably is playing it themselves. This does not mean they are incorrect and it does not mean the card is a dirty one. Perhaps it is now possible to talk about the politics of difference without having a venal purpose. Perhaps not, but I get the feeling we are going to see fairly soon.

And perhaps it’s also the time for folks who swore that young people weren’t going to vote last year will admit that they were wrong, because the most important breakthrough last year, I think, was generational, not racial. And the optimism that comes with youth may be what saves this presidency and this nation from being dragged into what increasingly looks like an abyss.

The economy, the health care crisis, the jobs crisis, the credit crunch, two wars, all together it could be enough to sink us all, but being a journalist has taught me the difference between skepticism and cynicism and how to recognize when it is a virtue to have a little of both. I am skeptical about almost everything, I am cynical about almost

nothing. Being skeptical means you always have questions, which is what journalists have to have. It means that there is always a possibility of a different answer.

Being cynical means you decided it's over, the questions have been answered and you have no more. That's not what journalists do. Being skeptical and being a journalist has taught me that the best lessons are not necessarily learned from the people with the most power or the loftiest titles but sometimes just by keeping your ears, your eyes open, maybe reading 158,000 documents and then writing it all down, talking to people who are not the usual suspects.

On Inauguration Day, I got the chance to remember why I work for public broadcasting. I went down on the Mall and my job was to do a story for that night's news hour about what people were saying. So I went down there, not up in the little skybox somewhere watching the parade but down with the people, the freezing cold people, and I went around with my microphone and my cameraman asking that most prescient and penetrating of journalistic questions, "So how do you feel?"

(Laughter)

This was one of those days where you actually got good answers to that question, however, and I, along the way, encountered a woman from Oklahoma named Eugenia Peet. Eugenia Peet was standing a few feet from me during the Oath of Office and she was wearing kind of a leopard-print hat and gloves and looking warm and at one point, I looked over to her during the oath and she fell to her knees and began sobbing. My

cameraman and I looked at each other. So I went over to her, tapped her on the shoulder and asked her the fabulous question, “How do you feel?” And she smiled and she said, “Well, I’ve been crying all day.” And I said, “Well, you are still crying,” and she said, “Yes, I am. First I started crying because I was cold...”

(Laughter)

“...and then I began to cry,” and she stopped and she put her hand on her chest and she said, “I began to cry because I have a little son and my little son no longer has to be just a rapper or an athlete, he can be all these things, the ceiling is off, the sky is the limit.” By the time she was done speaking, and we put that on the air that night, it ran for 55 seconds. If I had been working for NBC News, that would have run for maybe eight seconds, tops. This woman’s voice wouldn’t have been heard, someone we would have never heard from. No one ever knocks on her door, no one ever asks her how she feels, yet she managed to capture the words and the feeling of a million people on the Mall that day and I had a chance to have her tell her entire story, which is why I work for public broadcasting, I got to tell the whole story.

But in the end, the essence of the reporter’s craft is to learn all you can about something honestly you never previously cared about, and then to find a way to make it accessible to everyone who bothers to read you or listen to you. That’s what I get to do every night on “The NewsHour” and every Friday on “Washington Week.”

I do love public broadcasting, but I am not on a high horse about it. I am not one of those who believes that television journalism is necessarily going to hell in a handbasket because Jon Stewart gets to ask the questions, and he gets to answer them too, it seems.

(Laughter)

It's important to remember the difference between what he does and what we do. But as long as people are asking questions, journalism will still be vital. As long as press freedom in China and Zimbabwe and Columbia remains under attack, journalism will still be vital. And as long as elections stay as crazy as this one just passed and the ramifications become so consequential, we, some of us, most of us I hope, will always be fully gainfully and essentially employed.

Thank you for this honor. I look forward to your questions.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: We are going to have some questions. If you would, please make sure you ask a question and don't make a speech and we will then proceed at pace. Yes, sir?

FROM THE FLOOR: For Gwen Ifill. In your career, you have received at least two First Amendment awards that I'm aware of, can you tell me what it is that you've done to justify receiving First Amendment awards? That to me suggests something heroic, you put your life on the line, you do something extraordinary. You have many peers which to me seem to have done much the same that you have done and not gotten these such rewards, awards. So tell us what you've done that would qualify? And along with that, since you are

associated with the First Amendment, are you absolutely opposed to the Democrats and liberals, and others, to impose this ridiculous so-called fairness doctrine on right-wing talk radio?

MR. JONES: Okay, we've got you.

MS. IFILL: We are old friends, he and I, he comes and visits me whenever I'm in Boston. It's good to see you again.

(Laughter)

I'll give you the same answer I gave you last time, I don't know, I don't have an answer. I would rather get to another question.

MR. COHEN: My name is Ari Cohen, I'm an alum of the Kennedy School from the class of 2008. I would like to say, Gwen, I have watched you for many, many years on television, you are such a pleasure, you have such a personality, God bless you.

MS. IFILL: A different kind of stalker, huh?

(Laughter)

MR. COHEN: Thank you for your beautiful voice on television, it's great. My question has to do with public service. What type of leaders do you interview that really seem to come from the heart space? Where do they come from? What's their strength, versus the ones that aren't making it?

MS. IFILL: You know I have to say I'm an odd one, I like politicians, I do. The vast majority of the elected officials I have interviewed in my career have been people who got



into it because they wanted to serve the public, because they want to represent their community, because they want to make things better. And every now and then there are just enough rogues to get arrested and keep us all interested, but most of them, the vast majority of them, are people who are engaged.

The best part about this book for me was that I got to meet all kinds of people I've never heard of before. Someone would tell me about somebody else and that person would tell me about somebody else, and they had so much more in common than they had that was different. But the one thing they had in common was they didn't want to seek public office just for the power of it, they wanted to seek it because they thought there was another way that they could do what their parents had done in a different time. And I find that constantly and always very enlightening and helpful, and I hate it when people break the bond of trust and then we take them down, but the ones who don't, we are very happy and we believe they are they are the majority, at least I do.

MR. SINGH: Hi. My name is Turin Singh, I'm a junior at the college. First of all, I would like to say thank you and congratulations on your award.

MS. IFILL: Thank you.

MR. SINGH: Seeing the reporters here today, it's really encouraging to see that investigative journalism still exists, but then the question still remains, and you brought this up towards the end of your speech, why does it take someone, like a comedian, like Jon Stewart, to seriously probe at some of these networks and seriously probe at CNN and

CNBC and get them to ask the tough questions which a lot of the reporters in this room have done? Why isn't that more commonplace in the cable news networks?

MS. IFILL: Well, there are so many things I could say that could get me in trouble, let me back up.

(Laughter)

As I was watching Alex read the descriptions of the work that was done here tonight, that was nominated tonight, I thought to myself someone should send Jon Stewart this list of work. When I say that the bulk of the politicians are the ones doing the good, hard work, that's also saying that the bulk of journalists. It's really a lot easier to sit on television and yell at someone for having not done it than it is to understand what it takes to spend years reading through documents, cultivating sources, peeling back onions, not accepting "Oh, that's not true" for an answer, like the folks at the *Detroit Free Press* did.

There is a lot more of that kind of work being done, I know because I read it and I know because I judge contests like this. And it's a lot more spectacular and a lot more entertaining to have a comedian interrogate someone about a failing which is a clear failing, but I don't think it represents, by and large, the bulk of the really hard work that's being done when there are no television cameras on, when the lights aren't rolling. My fear is that people will so much buy into the notion that no good work is being done that we'll forget about all the good work that is being done, which is why awards like this are important.

(Applause)

MS. SHEFFIELD: My name is Carrie Sheffield, I am a MPP student here at the Kennedy School. You mentioned in your address that you appreciate working for public television because it allows you to interview people in depth and cover stories that aren't covered necessarily on the mainstream commercial networks. My question is regarding newspapers. There has been some talk about government, a "bailout" or government personal ownership of newspapers. Do you see that as a trend that will be coming down the pipe, and do you think that that will be good for society and good for journalism?

MS. IFILL: I'm waiting to hear the public outcry that supports that notion that extends beyond newsrooms, or even within newsrooms. I have heard it floated around but I haven't heard anyone very seriously take it on as a way that newspapers will survive. It's also just a real problematical idea that we can continue to grill and write and cover the people who then we owe our livelihoods to, I think that would be—

MS. SHEFFIELD: —with PBS or with NPR—

MS. IFILL: No because, frankly, the truth of the matter is I think two percent of our fund raising comes from government sources and the rest of it comes from people like you.

(Laughter)

MS. RUSSELL: Hi, Gwen. Chris Russell. Could you expand on your comment about the real breakthrough being generational, not racial, in regards to the election? And then if you could also go back to the news media and talk a little bit about the generational shift in

the news media, since so much of the awards tonight have focused on what we are trying to preserve, so if you could also talk about the generational change in media?

MS. IFILL: Well, all real change, in the end, is generational change. When John Lewis stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington, next to Martin Luther King, he was 23 years old, that was a generational shift. He was then stepping up and taking power from older people who then had to step aside. In that case, it was more racial because in fact black people hadn't had a whole lot of elected office in power, prior to that.

What's happened now, both in politics and probably much more broadly, is that because there was already a generation of African-Americans in office, in power, a lot of them weren't handing over the baton very easily. They were kind of saying, "Well I'm kind of comfortable here and in order for them to go —." There is a guy who is the new head of the NAACP who is 35 years old, his name is Benjamin Jealous. He did not get that office easily, by the way, he had to struggle to get it.

He told me a story of going to the 1993 anniversary of the March on Washington, which was called the March on Washington for Jobs, Justice and Peace, and how there were two stages. On one stage there was the Civil Rights Alliance who were holding forth on the iconic Lincoln Memorial stage. On the other stage, which was the Washington Monument stage, he called it the kiddie stage because that's where all the younger people were relegated, and they were a little annoyed about it.

And he remembers asking Julian Bond why was this and Julian Bond looked him in the eye and said, if I have power that you perceive that you want, then it is your job to snatch it from me, and so that snatching is what's happening. It's happening generationally as much as racially. It's not a first that these black folks are in office. It is, however, a first that younger people of all kinds of races are not only getting involved and getting elected but also getting people elected.

You know, I was struck looking at the people who were nominated for these awards tonight. I don't know whether it's an energy thing or not, but we had a lot of young faces of people doing the best work in journalism, that's also our future. What is also our future is that we can no longer do it the way that we've always done it. I would love to go back to the way I imagined the romance in newspapers in 1977. Of course by working for the *Herald American*, it was like working in 1952—

(Laughter)

—because we still had our typewriters and things. But I know that we are not going back there and the survival for my industry and the survival for anybody who really wants to do this kind of work is to find multi-platform ways of doing it. And so everybody is figuring that out but, in the end, that's our salvation, I think.

MR. SANDERS: I'm Sam Sanders, a second year student at the Kennedy School. And your book profiles all male politicians, and I wanted to get your thoughts on what you think the future of black politics is, seeing this preponderance of male faces.

MS. IFILL: Yeah, that's a good question, huh?

(Laughter)

I realized this, that my four major profiles were going to be about men, and so I went on a hunt. I decided, I'm a woman, I'm going to find me some women, so I went out looking and I found the mayor of Atlanta, Shirley Franklin, and I found a woman who is a district attorney in San Francisco whose name is Kamala Harris. She is now running for attorney general of the state of California. Speaker pro temp of the Louisiana House, Karen Carter Peterson, who was here at the Kennedy School for a while.

I found a lot of women, but I found it interesting the mayor of Baltimore, I found a lot of interest, Dianne Wilkerson, who unfortunately between the time I wrote the book and the time it came out, things happened but—

(Laughter)

Hey, indictments happen, these are politicians. But I discovered that there were a lot fewer women at that same level of breakthrough as the men and I set out to find out. I called these women whose job was to recruit women candidates and asked them why, and I stumbled upon part of the answer in talking to these women, I mean when you go back and read what Shirley Chisholm said when she ran for president, she said that she felt that gender was the greater drawback for her than race.

When I went back and talked to Shirley Franklin, the mayor of Atlanta, she didn't become mayor, even though she had been the right-hand person for two previous mayors,

she didn't become a mayor until she got over sixty years old, and when I asked her why, she said, "Well I didn't think I could do it." Women were not stepping out there and taking it and snatching it. Women are more likely also to be raising their families and making those choices. Nancy Pelosi didn't become Speaker of the House until she was a grandmother, so we are not quite there yet. I am pretty convinced that there is another generational breakthrough coming along that will have more female faces, but we have to deal with some more fundamental societal issues before that becomes widespread.

MR. ZUCKER: Howard Zucker, one of the IOP Fellows for this year.

Congratulations on your award.

MS. IFILL: Thank you.

MR. ZUCKER: My question is if you were to sit down with a foreign dignitary or a foreign leader in a country where there isn't freedom of the press, what argument would you make, specifically what example would you use to show them that freedom of the press would be in the best interest of their country?

MS. IFILL: It's an argument we try to make. I'm on the board of the Committee to Protect Journalists and that's actually an argument we make probably on a monthly basis with leaders from countries all around the world who don't mind imprisoning people. They don't much listen as carefully as we would like to think, to our arguments, especially certain countries, like Zimbabwe, and even in China which has the highest rate for imprisoning journalists around the world.

But it's the same argument that you make here, it's no different. The problem is when you are making it to someone who doesn't believe in democracy, there is less of an argument, it's less convincing to tell someone that being challenged is a healthy thing. It's less convincing to tell them that shutting down printing presses is not the solution for criticism, but it doesn't mean that you don't stop and that you don't push and that you don't advocate.

And in the case of CBJ, embarrass and expose and shine a light on mistakes that are made and the choices that are made and the limitations that are imposed. A lot of this can only survive in darkness when no one is paying attention, so we root around, we find and shed as much light on it as we can. And it's not so much convincing the tyrants to let a free press bloom and blossom, it's a way of making them feel the pressure from around the world that they are out of step, and sometimes it even works.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Gwen, we thank you, that was terrific. We have of course a plaque for you but we also have something else for you that was a tradition instigated by Marvin Kalb and that is that we give you a Harvard chair.

(Applause)

The good thing is that this particular Harvard chair does not require the approval of the faculty or the president of the university.

(Laughter)



Tomorrow we will be convening a seminar on the state of investigative reporting with all of our finalists and also with Jane Mayer who is one of the preeminent investigative reporters in the United States, without question. We hope that many of you will come. We will be on the fifth floor of the Taubman Building, breakfast at 8:30, and we will begin at 9:00.

Again, let me congratulate all the finalists, the winners, Gwen. Thank you all for being with us, thank you for being here on this particularly happy night. See you then.

(Applause)

(Whereupon, at 7:35 p.m., the session was adjourned.)