

For the press, for the  
people, for your life.

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For the Press, For the People, For your Life. Embedded Journalism Issue Paper [pic] Written by: Sabrina Browne A New Target of War Introduction Section Have you ever wondered what it was like to be a news reporter? Not just any reporter, but a war correspondent? To be in the middle of a war, watching it with your very own eyes? It sounds exciting, riveting in fact. Picture yourself, standing there with microphone in your hand, while gun shots and grenades are going off. You tell the cameraman to keep rolling, because you don't want to miss a second of the action. Roughing it, living with soldiers, driving in tanks, etc. It all sounds straight out of movie, but for some people this is real life. Embedded journalists are news reporters who are attached with military units that are situated in conflict zones or war zones. These journalists put their lives at risk every day to provide news and keep the public informed on world issues. Such as the war in Iraq, the uprising in Libya and other countries throughout the world where conflict is brewing. Though these journals may focus on the world's issues, I am going to be focusing on their issues in my paper titled " For the Press, For the People, For your Life. " This paper focuses on the problems of embedded journalism that have been put aside, or that people feel journalists should expect while in these countries. Such as journalists being kidnapped during war, or killed in crossfire on the front line. The paper begins with current day issues that embedded journalists face such as a lack of security, transportation and proper training. I present facts from the International News Safety Institute and the Committee to Protect Journalism. I account, past journalists who risked their lives for the news, and the deaths that fell upon them. Then I conclude with what can be done, and move into the

history of embedded journalists, where we learn about the original embedded journalists from Vietnam to present day. In the history we learn how embedded journalism started with the military's "no censorship" and how quickly that changed. We then discuss multiple wars and the role embedded journalists played in them, leading up to the present day Iraq War. Lastly I conclude with what needs to be done for embedded journalists to provided better safety and for their news networks to dish out the expenses to ensure this safety. I then discuss the idea of wellness programs for journalists who come back from war, an idea that derives from a journalist in my contemporary section. I end the paper by discussing where to go next and what will happen if things in this industry don't change, if the cost of news continues to be the cost of a life. The "Real" Cost of News Contemporary Issue Section The embedding of journalists during wars or conflict zones is becoming increasingly dangerous as the media strives to fulfill the demand for news and overlooks the safety of those who provide the news. Even though journalists know the risks they are taking when they accept to cover a war story, the security provided to them needs to be tighter in these countries and conflict zones. When journalists do get attacked the media profits off of it, with an increase in ratings. The media produces multiple stories, newspapers and other sources of information covering the attack, while journalists are left to deal with the aftermath of being a war correspondent and its long term effects. The dangers of war correspondence have increased over the years with more journalists becoming casualties of war. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reports " Since 1992, 354 journalists have been killed in combat and

crossfire. " Some of these journalists were killed on the front, by suicide bombs, explosives or other means, but they live on as reminders of the risks of covering war. Such incidents prompted the development of organizations like the " International News Safety Institute (INSI). " Which is " website dedicated to the safety of journalists and media staff and committed to fighting the persecution of journalists everywhere" (INSI, About section). The International News Safety Institute also chronicles the casualties of journalists who have died or been injured while covering war stories. Starting from the Iraq War all the way to present day, these passages are written about journalists from all around the world and the stories that they risked their lives for. Such as Richard Kaplan, " an ABC reporter, covering the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict...who was shot by a sniper and the first American journalist to be killed by the conflict in 1992" (INSI, Casualties 1992). Another example would be the BBC journalist John Schofield. " Schofield was shot dead by a Croatian soldier... after being mistaken for someone in the Serb military" (INSI, Casualties 1995). Lastly, CNN translator and producer Duraid Isa Mohammed and driver Yasser Khatab. " The two were ambushed and died of multiple gunshot wounds as they were returning to Baghdad in a two-car convoy from an assignment in the southern city of Hillah" (INSI, Casualties 2008). The examples given above display different situations in which a journalist's life was taken. They also represent different perspectives on the matter of the way the life was taken. Some would say the way Mr. Kaplan died was a " risk he was aware of" while others, would say that it was cruel and that if he had more security around him, it could have been prevented. That same thought process applies to Mr. Mohammed

and Mr. Katab, but what about Mr. Schofield? John Schofield was shot after being "mistaken for someone in the Serb military." Should Mr. Schofield have been prepared to be mistaken for someone else? Of course not, but if the security provided to him was tighter, there's a high possibility he would be alive today. On the other hand, some journalist's embrace the dangers that come with war corresponding, some might even say it's addicting. In the article "I'm Addicted to War" the author Maria Trombly talks about the positives and negatives of being a war correspondent and the side effects it had on her life when she stopped covering wars. Trombly begins the article by saying "I had my first taste of combat shortly after I turned 23, in the former Soviet republic of Georgia. From then on, war was my constant companion, friend and spiritual adviser" (Trombly.) She then goes on to discuss war reporting with passion and infatuation as she saw her children's high school graduations as the "light at the end of the tunnel" that would allow her to get back to reporting. As the article continues she says "I love my children, but my family was a prison that kept me from doing the work I was meant to do." Trombly had become so obsessed with war reporting, nothing else could suffice. Nothing could fulfill her hunger, like the nourishment she received on the front line. She was too addicted to the adrenaline rush that came with war reporting. Even after her fiancé was beaten and she was taken as prisoner, Trombly couldn't kick her addiction to war reporting. Trombly had become "seduced by war" and reached out for help. After receiving the help she needed, she realized that her prior addiction to war was a serious problem that could have permanently damaged her relationships, her marriage and her overall mental state of

mind. She apologized to her loved ones and learned to enjoy her work in its next phase, after war reporting. But she still says " I don't trust myself to stay away from the front if I was anywhere near a conflict zone. " In this case, an embedded journalist had become so fixated on war reporting, nothing else seemed to matter. The dangers and risks that came with war reporting, were small factors compared to getting the story out to the press. " I felt that I was doing the most important work in the world...I was doing what I was put on Earth to do" (Trombly). Trombly's main focus was the press and gathering information for the press. Even if it meant she would lose relationships with her love ones and jeopardize her own well-being, she was seduced by war. War seduction is one of the aftermaths that come with war reporting, but it's not something that is dealt with by everyone. This effect is felt only by the journalist who did the reporting, not by the media that received the news. The media continues to release news on the stories obtained from wars, as their journalists lives begin to spiral out of control, as we saw with Trombly, who cared more about getting the story then her own life In short, embedded journalism has been around for quite some time now, but the risks are starting to outweigh the rewards. As I stated earlier, 341 journalists have been killed since 1992, meaning that over the past 19 years, 17 journalists were killed every year while covering wars. That's almost two journalists every month out of the year. CPJ research demonstrates that the vast majority of journalists killed since 1995 were murdered rather than killed in crossfire. In fact, according to CPJ statistics 26 journalists (8 percent) died in accidents or suicide bombings, 68 journalists (20 percent) died in cross-fire and 247 (72 percent) were murdered. The CPJ report also shows a

steady increase of 12 journalists being killed in 1999, to a whopping 20 journalists being killed in 2004 and only eight journalists being killed in 2011. Though there was a decrease in the number of journalists who were killed this year, that doesn't mean the danger of embedded journalism as has decreased. The dangers of embedded journalism are still present and should not be overlooked. Though journalists may be prepared and aware of some of the risks that await them before war, nothing compares to actually being in the war. In fact, many journalists quoted in "Journalists Under Fire" by Howard Tumber and Frank Webster, say "I think the best training is just in-the-field experience" (Thompson, pg. 133). Which is something most journalists don't get until they're actually out on the frontlines of the war. Many of the journalists who have lost their lives to war reporting would still be alive today if they had better security in their surroundings. Vaughan Smith, a freelance cameraman interviewed in "Journalists Under Fire" said "There's no way a journalist can compare to a soldier for training in a battlefield...It's a real problem...The understanding of safety is appallingly poor...When it comes to actual practical improvement of safety, broadcasters are afraid of the cost" (Smith, pg. 134). It's up to networks to take action and provide their journalists with more security in these conflict zones. It is up to them to draw the line between the importance of news and saving money, and providing adequate safety and protecting someone's life, but until then embedded journalists will remain at risk. From Vietnam to Present Day

Historical Context Section Embedded journalism has been around for several decades, progressing as each decade goes by, allowing for a significant change from its origins during the Vietnam War. The Vietnam War was the "

first and last uncensored war" (Class notes). It was a rare exception in the history of combat coverage displayed by the American media. For the first time, viewers were actually seeing the gruesome, raw and uncut footage of what was happening in the war. This was a pinnacle of freedom for the American media, but the risk of obtaining news was high. Four journalists were killed when their helicopter went down in Laos during the Vietnam War on Feb. 10, 1971. The journalists were Henri Huet of the Associated Press, Larry Burrows of Life magazine, Kent Potter of United Press International and Keisabura Simamoto of Newsweek. " They were killed in their South Vietnamese helicopter that lost its way over the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. The helicopter was shot down by a North Vietnamese soldier" (pg. 113, Simpson). These four journalists died an unpredictably and untimely death, unlike the next journalists who was kidnapped and killed during the Vietnam War. Dana Stone, " was a photo-journalist who worked for ABC...Stone and his colleague Sean Flynn were kidnapped by the Viet Cong on April 6, 1970.... they had been handed over to the Khmer Rouge...both died violently" (Simpson, 217). After the Vietnam War, the number of journalists being killed or kidnapped on the frontlines began to increase. Moving past the Bay of Pigs Invasion and the U. S.'s intervention at Grenada, we stop at the Persian Gulf War, where A TIME magazine photo-journalist, named Christopher Morris was held hostage by Iraqi troops (INSI, 1990). After that the U. S. found itself involved in the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict. Though the U. S. was only involved in the conflict for four years, many journalists were killed and kidnapped. Such as the journalist I mentioned earlier in the contemporary section, who was shot after being mistaken for a Serbian



military soldier. Another example would be Carol Byrne who was abducted along with freelance photographer Duane Hall, journalist Rita Reed and Croatian radio reporter Boris Glozinic. " The journalists were approached by a roadblock manned by Serbian soldiers...They cocked their guns and pointed them at us...We were terrified we would be killed" (Seib, 124). As journalists continued to be kidnapped and killed, technology began to advance. With the 90's coming to an end, a new war was upon us and would lead to the highest number of journalist being killed to date. The Invasion of Afghanistan precluded what is now the Invasion of Iraq. The Iraq War has the highest number of casualties, then any other war to date. At the beginning of the war, technology had advanced and new weapons had proved greater risk to the military as well as the journalists covering the war. " The technology takes journalists to the action and therefore raises the level of danger. There are many more media out there. There's much greater pressure to deliver" (Thompson, 119). This pressure that journalists felt deliver mounted from the high for news during this time period. The Iraq War started in 2003, only two years after 9/11 when the American public witnessed two airplanes crashing into the Twin Towers, forever changing our country as whole. The American people were angry, vengeful and wanted to see the Iraqi's paying for the American lives that were lost. Who was going to bring it to them? Journalists. At what cost? Their lives. Many journalists died throughout the Iraqi War, as the casualty toll according to the CPJ is 140 journalists killed by crossfire, suicide bombings or murder. Crossfire deaths are somewhat common, while suicide bombings tend to be unpredictable, but murder? Since when is murder common or predictable? It isn't. You can't train a journalist for

murder, no matter how many scenarios or days of training they go through. Instead of networks, spending the tiny amount of funds they do on training, they need to learn to spend sufficient funds on training and security for their journalists. One would think, after all this time has passed since the casualties of the Vietnam War, networks would be more cautious and secure when it comes to embedded journalism. That doesn't seem to be the case. The point of history is to learn from one's mistakes, not repeat them. Since the Vietnam War, the media seems to have improved itself with new technologies, services and online subscriptions, while their embedded journalists are being trained by ex-soldiers and treated like ex-soldiers. " Ex-soldiers don't often know about journalism and journalists are normally suspicious of soldiers...If the companies don't provide some sort of training, they might get sued, so they are worried about that" (Smith, pg. 134). Money seems to be the one component that has remained important throughout the history of embedded journalism. It plays a key factor in many of the ordeals these journalists face while out on the front. Like the quote above, the training is provided, so networks don't have to worry about getting sued. So one might say, networks provide inadequate training to their journalists, just to save their own asses. While another might say, networks provide adequate training to their journalists, and it is up to the journalists to apply what they learned in training to their actual experience out on the frontlines. But no matter how much training you receive, it will never come close to the real life experience of being out on the frontline, nor does it mean you're better off than a journalist who hasn't received any training at all because the Iraq War is far too dangerous. This is very dangerous time for embedded

journalists because for the first time, journalists are being targeted. "...Now were in situations where journalists sometimes are the targets. There are people out there trying to kidnap or actually kill us...if you've got Special forces people with you, it may not make a great deal of difference" (Paul, 111). Overall, the present era of embedded journalism is the most dangerous by far. War no longer consists of the opposing nations being the target, but journalists as well. Attacks have advanced from journalists being gunned down and assassinated, but have turned into murders, suicide bombs, chemical attacks, rape and sexual assault. The dangers are higher than ever now, as these journalists go out on the frontlines and get the news. It has become a life or death situation for some, while others credit their experience for getting them by. Journalists are putting their own safety second, to fulfill the demand of the news. " We're already going too far down the road of safety. The big danger now of journalism is not that it should be made safer, but perhaps become safe" (Paul, 132). Lessons for a Better Tomorrow Conclusion Embedded journalism will always be a controversial topic, as the events that occur during war are sometimes unpredictable, but that doesn't mean changes cannot be made. If networks took the time to provide their journalists with proper training and security, a lot of journalists would still be here today. Instead of cutting corners and hiring ex-soldiers to train the journalists, why won't the networks hire retired journalists? Men and women who have been out on the frontlines and can share their experiences. The training of a soldier and that of a journalists are like oil and water, they do not mix. Though they may be around each other for long periods of time, the two fluids will never become one. A journalist is not a

soldier and a soldier is not a journalist. Journalists are not skilled in the same areas of a soldier and thus think differently; news outlets should acknowledge this and re-develop their training programs because clearly they haven't been working for the past few decades. Yes they have changed over time, with actual training courses being held over a day to a week depending on who you work for, but at the same time these training courses are still subpar. Just like journalists bring their best work to the table, news outlets need to start doing the same. They wouldn't expect a journalist to report a story half assed, so why are they providing programs that are half assed? The solution here is for embedded journalists to sit down with their networks and discuss a new initiative. One where the news is not just the number one concern, but the journalist safety as well. This initiative would include better training programs, adequate security, manuals, and a wellness program for journalists coming home from the frontline. We saw what happened to Trombly, she was seduced war, and she is not alone. There are other journalists out there going through her situation, who may not have reached out for help like she did. A wellness program for former frontline journalists could really make a difference, but we have to implement change first. People have to start taking small steps and take action if they every truly want to see a change within embedded journalism, if not journalists will continue to pay for news with their lives. Sabrina Browne Professor Heim American Journalism Dec. 12, 2011 Issue Paper — Bibliography Paul, Christopher, and James J. Kim. Reporters on the Battlefield, The Embedded Press System in Historical Context. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004. Print. Pinder, Rodney, and Sarah de Jong. International News Safety

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