

# **RISK@DSJ**

**RISK REPORTING COURSE**

**DANISH SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM**

**ARHUS, SPRING 2007**

**WORKSHOPS / SEMINARS / LECTURES  
SCREENINGS / GUESTS**

**DEVELOPED & PRESENTED**

**by**

**TONY MANIATY  
Master of Arts (Media)**

## RISK@DSJ

What follows is the outline of the three-week Risk Reporting Course which I ran at the Danish School of Journalism in Aarhus from 27 February to 16 March 2007. The course - a series of workshops, seminars, lectures and screenings - has been running in differing forms every semester for the past two years.

In September 2005 I delivered a paper to a global conference - *September 11 and Beyond: A Challenge to Journalism Research* - at the DSJ, while completing my research Masters Degree at Sydney's Macquarie University on the subject of television coverage of war from Vietnam to Iraq. In 2006 I embarked on writing a mainstream account, *The Savage Eye: Television at War*, and was approached by the DSJ to run the Risk Reporting course in the Spring 2007 semester.

Given my background and expertise in television news and current affairs, I angled the course mainly around broadcast reporting, with screenings of news reports and documentaries, and introduced live telephone input (using Skype and mobile phone links) from correspondents, producers and news managers in Baghdad, New York, Sydney, Brussels, Jakarta, Toronto and London. These calls, broadcast into the class, consisted of a 30-minute dialogue with the talent, followed by a 20-30 minute question-and-answer session involving students. This innovation proved very successful and rated highly in student evaluations.

Nineteen undergraduate students attended the course - seven from Denmark and the remainder from a range of countries: the United States, Canada, Hong Kong, Belgium, Sweden, Estonia and Slovakia. Attendances were exceptionally strong and, despite cultural differences, students embraced the group activity enthusiastically. All aspects of the course were conducted in English.

The course feedback was very encouraging.

## **MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY**

### SESSION ONE/TWO: SEMINAR

**WELCOME TO THE RISK REPORTING WORLD:** The class and Tony get to know each other's life stories and Tony presents an overview of the program. We break the class into four groups: 4-5 people students per group. Students discuss their aspirations in journalism, what they know already of risk reporting, and their attitudes to covering war, urban conflict and natural disasters. We discuss the 'rules of engagement' - how groups and individuals can extract the maximum benefit from the course. Emphasis on team work, flexibility, adaptability.

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: EXERCISE

**EXERCISE ONE: CRASH COURSE IN CONFLICT REPORTING:** It's 1968, the Tet Offensive is underway in Saigon; reports are coming in of widespread attacks across the country, and of the unthinkable - a Viet Cong suicide bomber assault on the United States embassy. At 1400 Arhus time we cross to New York for a live phoner with RON STEINMAN, the NBC Bureau Chief in Saigon, 1968. Ron will update us on events at the embassy, and students will take notes. To a one-hour deadline, students will write a 600 word breaking hard-news story based on video footage, original eyewitness accounts, Steinman's phoner, maps of the embassy and surrounds, and news agency updates.

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION FOUR: SEMINAR / SCREENING

**EXERCISE ONE: CRASH COURSE IN CONFLICT REPORTING:** Exercise continues... Then we look at **HOW THE PROFESSIONALS DID IT:** Powerpoint presentation of some outstanding reporting of the 1968 Tet offensive - from the agencies, newspapers and TV reports. Discussion on differing styles of risk reporting.

## **TUESDAY 27 FEBRUARY**

### SESSION ONE: SCREENING/LECTURE

**THIS JUST IN:** Powerpoint visual journey through the last 200 years of conflict reporting, from Crimea to Iraq. Tony offers accompanying commentary, shaping the risk reporting landscape and its broad historical context. What is conflict and why do/should we cover it? Grand ideals versus harsh realities, in the endless quest for truth, power, technological supremacy - and audiences.

### MORNING BREAK

### SESSION THREE: SEMINAR

**THIS JUST IN:** Seminar continues...

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: DISCUSSION

**ASSESSING THE TET OFFENSIVE:** Tony gives feedback on students' 600-word reports on the Tet Offensive attack on the US Embassy in Saigon. Group discussion on what worked and what didn't...

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION FOUR: SCREENING

**WAR PHOTOGRAPHER** (2001), Oscar-nominated documentary by Swiss filmmaker Christian Frei about the life and work of American photojournalist James Natchwey. "I have been a witness," says Natchwey, "and these pictures are my testimony. The events I have recorded should not be forgotten and must not be repeated." Harrowing and inspiring, Frei's documentary shows us a man of enormous compassion who nevertheless seems untouchable, remote, less than human himself. The enigma of the man who saw too much...

## WEDNESDAY 28 FEBRUARY

### SESSION ONE: LECTURE & POWERPOINT [SOMALIA]

**SCOPE ENOUGH & CONFLICT INTERVIEWING:** Getting the story and information 'on the ground'. You're flying into Mogadishu. Getting to grips with the value and the limits of frontline reporting. How wide or narrow should our coverage be? Is intense focus the enemy of context? Does the metaphor story or image serve or distort the Big Picture of conflict? Reliable and unreliable sources: can you spot the difference? Dealing with tyrants: the benefits and dangers of the formal interview. Privacy, trust and other ethical issues. Framing the questions, curbing your prejudices and knowing how far to go - and when to stop.

### MORNING BREAK

### SESSION TWO: LECTURE & POWERPOINT [SOMALIA]

**SCOPE ENOUGH & CONFLICT INTERVIEWING:** Session continues...

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: EXERCISE

**EXERCISE TWO: REPORTING AFGHANISTAN: THE RETURN OF THE TALIBAN.** A two-day exercise starting with a Powerpoint illustrated survey by Tony of the current situation. Groups will use this plus other available sources to write and illustrate articles on developments since 2001, with particular emphasis on the re-growth of Taliban activity outside Kabul and its impact on civilians. Live phoner to Baghdad with TIM LAMBON, ITN Deputy Foreign Editor, who began reporting Afghanistan in the 1980s and has returned many times. Articles must be fully designed pages with substantial text, illustrations, fact boxes etc. Deadline 1400 tomorrow, Thursday.

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION FOUR:

**EXERCISE TWO: REPORTING AFGHANISTAN: THE RETURN OF THE TALIBAN** continues...

**THURSDAY 1 MARCH**

SESSION ONE: EXERCISE

**EXERCISE TWO: REPORTING AFGHANISTAN: THE RETURN OF THE TALIBAN** continues... Deadline is 1400 today.

MORNING BREAK

SESSION TWO: EXERCISE

**EXERCISE TWO: REPORTING AFGHANISTAN: THE RETURN OF THE TALIBAN** continues...

LUNCH BREAK

SESSION THREE: SEMINAR

**EXERCISE TWO: REPORTING AFGHANISTAN: THE RETURN OF THE TALIBAN** continues. Assignment to be handed in by 1400.

AFTERNOON BREAK

SESSION FOUR: SEMINAR

**EXERCISE:** Search and review a range of relevant 'risk reporting' websites for inclusion as links on RISK@DSJ website. (200 words per site.)

\* \* \* \*

**DSJ OPEN DAY LECTURE (with POWERPOINT):** Auditorium, 6pm.

**'SPIN CYCLE: 24/7 MEDIA, GOVERNMENT POLICY AND MILITARY TACTICS.'** Tony Maniaty explores the impact of 'as live' globalized media on government and military decision making in recent conflicts - and on how this vexed relationship influences the conduct of war and peace operations.

**FRIDAY 2 MARCH**

SESSION ONE: SEMINAR/SCREENING

**EXERCISE TWO: REPORTING AFGHANISTAN: THE RETURN OF THE TALIBAN.** Tony offers feedback on students' assignments.

MORNING BREAK

SESSION TWO: SCREENING

**WELCOME TO SARAJEVO** (1997), UK feature film directed by Michael Winterbottom. A group of television journalists covering the Bosnia conflict in 1992 discover an orphanage in Sarajevo close to the frontline. Reporter Michael Henderson gets so emotionally involved that he launches a campaign to save the children, and - with the help of an American aid worker - decides to illegally take one girl back to England. Based on the true story of a British ITN journalist.

LUNCH BREAK

SESSION THREE: SEMINAR

**IT'S JUST MY JOB EIGHT DAYS A WEEK:** Getting your mind into a sensible state for risk reporting: are you mentally equipped for a range of human horrors? Relations with family and colleagues. Calculating risk, contemplating death and seeking distraction - emergency sex, drugs and other crisis options. PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder – and the work of groups assisting journalists suffering trauma from their risk reporting. Live phoner with DR ANTHONY FEINSTEIN in Toronto, world's leading expert on PTSD in conflict reporting; psychiatrist and consultant to CNN and other news organizations; author of the newly-released *Journalists Under Fire: The Psychological Hazards Of Covering War*.

AFTERNOON BREAK

SESSION FOUR: SEMINAR

**IT'S JUST MY JOB EIGHT DAYS A WEEK:** Seminar continues at the bar...

## **MONDAY 5 MARCH**

### SESSION ONE: LECTURE

**ALL ALONE OR TOGETHER NOW?:** Tony discusses the pros and cons of being a freelancer vs. employee of a media organization; of being 'embedded' with military forces vs. going 'unilateral' with all the risks that implies. A survey of choices and benefits, both from the journalists' and audience's point-of-view.

### SESSION TWO: SCREENING

**MO & ME** (2006), documentary by Salim Amin, son of the legendary conflict cameraman Mohammed 'Mo' Amin, about the frequently absent, globe-trotting father he loved, revered and feared. Mo Amin's thirst for breaking news and his relentless ambition put him in harm's way - enduring torture, automatic arms fire, explosives and, ultimately, the amputation of his left arm - until his death in a plane crash in Africa. A sympathetic but not uncritical look at a driven soul.

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: EXERCISE

**EXERCISE FOUR: *DILEMMAS IN CONFLICT REPORTING*.** In a 1500 word essay, students will discuss the ethical dilemmas raised in "*Mo and Me*", "*War Photographer*", and "*Welcome to Sarajevo*" - and explore their own feelings about what it might be like to cover warfare, refugees and other high-risk situations. Deadline 1015 tomorrow, Tuesday.

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION FOUR: EXERCISE

**EXERCISE FOUR: *DILEMMAS IN CONFLICT REPORTING*.** Continues...

## **TUESDAY 6 MARCH**

### SESSION ONE: SEMINAR

**EXERCISE FOUR: *DILEMMAS IN CONFLICT REPORTING*.** Continues... To be delivered to Tony by morning break today (1015) for later assessment.

### MORNING BREAK

### SESSION TWO: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**BUILDING A NEWS SITE:** With Chester Folming, from DSJ IT Department. As part of the development of our RISK@DSJ in-house website, Chester will guide students through the technical side of web journalism.

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: SEMINAR / SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**WEBSITE FEVER:** Groups will discuss the nature of good media websites, analyze world-class examples, and work on the RISK@DSJ website, reshaping, polishing and editing material produced so far in the course and inserting it into the site. Focus here on innovative concepts for bringing risk reporting issues to the attention of media industry practitioners and to general audiences.

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION FOUR: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**RISK@DSJ WEBSITE WORK:** Continuation of developing and inserting course-produced material into the site.

## WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH

### SESSION ONE: SEMINAR/SCREENING

**BUT IS IT ENGLISH?:** Non-Western perspectives on risk reporting. Should we play the 'our side' versus 'their side' game, or remain culturally neutral? What happens when we report what our audiences don't want to hear? What happens when war reporters from Christian, Muslim or Jewish backgrounds approach the same story? When reporting slides into propaganda? SCREENING: **CONTROL ROOM** (2000), a documentary by Arab-American filmmaker Jehane Noujaim about the Qatar-based Al-Jazeera, the Arab's world's most watched TV network. An 'equal opportunity offender', Al-Jazeera has been attacked not only by the Bush administration but also by every major Arab government.

### MORNING BREAK

### SESSION TWO: SEMINAR

**DECISIONS FROM NEAR AND FAR:** Command and control issues as they currently influence coverage in the hottest risk zone in the world, the Middle East. Who decides the news agenda in conflict zones and how should it be controlled? Live phoner to London with BBC producer STUART HUGHES, who has worked extensively in the Mid-East - and who lost a leg in 2003 in a landmine explosion which killed his cameraman. In Vietnam, journalists shaped their own coverage for months on end; in Iraq, homogenized coverage was remote-controlled from New York and London by the minute. Can reporters still use their own intuition and operate with enough editorial independence to create unique stories?

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: SEMINAR/SCREENING

**EVERYWOMAN AND HER HANDYCAM:** Tony explores the rise of the VJ (video journalist) through the rapid development and availability of inexpensive video cameras. SCREENING: **SEEING IS BELIEVING - HANDYCAMS, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE NEWS** (2000), a Canadian documentary by Katerina Cizek and Peter Wintonick that explores how entry-level digital cameras are reshaping the reporting landscape, whether in the hands of the professional freelancer, the wannabe journalist or the politically-motivated community action group. The film focuses on Filipino video activist Joey Lozano, who works with dispossessed villagers trying to reclaim land from the cronies of former President Marcos.

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION FOUR:

**EXERCISE FOUR: DILEMMAS IN CONFLICT REPORTING.** Students receive feedback on their essays.

## **THURSDAY 8 MARCH**

### SESSION ONE: SEMINAR

**THE RISE OF THE URBAN WAR CORRESPONDENT:** We explore the phenomenon of 'everyday' reporters thrown into conflict reporting in their own cities, particularly in regard to terrorist attacks - a phenomenon that will increase for sure. DSJ students who 'covered' last weekend's riots in Copenhagen (Aaron and Kristina) will tell us what happened when Danish police raided their hostel looking for video - and will show us their riot images. Manhattan and 9/11, the London Tube, Madrid - what challenges does this new phenomenon pose for reporters and news organizations, and how should they be met?

### MORNING BREAK

### SESSION TWO: SEMINAR

**THE TROUBLE WITH TERRORISTS:** A live phoner with a journalist with a unique entrée into the world of international terrorism, and the role of the media in reporting it - and, arguably, in promoting it. From 2003-2006, MICHAEL ROSE was Head of Communications with Interpol in Lyon, and before that, a Reuters Chief Editor and global correspondent who worked from Nigeria to East Timor. Michael offers valuable professional insights into an increasingly complex and dangerous reporting scenario, and on working with police and other civilian authorities in crisis zones.

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**RISK@DSJ WEBSITE WORK:** Continuation of developing and inserting course-produced material into the site.

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION FOUR: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**RISK@DSJ WEBSITE WORK:** Continuation of developing and inserting course-produced material into the site.

## **FRIDAY 9 MARCH**

### SESSION ONE: SEMINAR

**DON'T JUST STAND THERE:** In the world of risk reporting, one issue stands out: involvement versus detachment. Should reporters get personally involved in efforts to help, or retain their status as 'non-involved' observers? What sort of relations should journalists in crisis zones have with NGOs and aid workers? Is it wise to get emotionally involved? A 'hypothetical' debate with Danish School of Journalism special guest JETTE ISAKSEN, a Danish aid worker with extensive experience in Africa and Afghanistan, and most recently in Darfur.

### MORNING BREAK

### SESSION TWO: SEMINAR

**WAR OR PEACE?:** Is the primary job of journalists simply to cover conflict, or can the media also mediate for peace? What role should reporters play in trying to stop conflicts? What is the appropriate balance between reporting military conflict (cause) and the subsequent civilian suffering (effect)? A continuation of Session One's 'hypothetical' debate with Tony and Jette Isaksen joined on a live phoner from Brussels by ANDREW STROEHLEIN, Media Director of ICG, the International Crisis Group. ICG is an independent, non-profit organization with 120 staff on five continents working to halt and resolve deadly conflict. Andrew is an experienced journalist and a member of the Advisory Panel of MediaBridge, a Reuters project dedicated to improving crisis coverage around the world.

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: SEMINAR

**THE DELICATE LINE:** How to handle censorship and media manipulation in faraway places, including government and military pressure, threats and outright lies; organizational censorship, when your stories are 'modified' at home base; and peer pressure and self-censorship, when you stop yourself writing the things that matter. Operating in hostile environments poses complex challenges to those seeking to 'tell it like it is' - while desperately trying to stay alive.

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION THREE: LECTURE / SEMINAR

**THE DELICATE LINE:** Discussion continues at bar...

## **MONDAY 12 MARCH**

### SESSION ONE: LECTURE

**TRAVELLING LIGHT:** What to take: clothes, protective gear, documents, technology, first aid kits, survival equipment. Interesting 'kit' lists compiled by war correspondents since 19<sup>th</sup> century. Transport options and latest gear including electronics, satellite phone systems, laptop editing etc. Live phoner to Sydney with TONY HILL, Head of International, Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Tony has decades of global experience and will survey the latest field gear, including medical and emergency supplies.

### MORNING BREAK

### SESSION TWO: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**RISK@DSJ WEBSITE WORK:** Continuation of developing and inserting course-produced material into the site.

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: SEMINAR 1330-1530

**KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN:** Special guest visit - ANDREW KAIN, head of the UK-based AKE. Security in conflict zones. Basic rules for survival. Along with its competitors such as Centurion, AKE is a leading security trainer for journalists, NGOs and corporate travelers in risk environments, and its courses are regularly taken by correspondents from leading news organizations including CNN and major newspapers. Andrew is a former British SAS officer who formed AKE in 1990. The company has an office in central Baghdad, is up to date on the latest risks in war zones including Iraq and Afghanistan. Andrew will discuss the needs of correspondents in conflict situations, how to avoid being injured, killed or kidnapped, and what to do in emergency and life-threatening situations.

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION FOUR: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**RISK@DSJ WEBSITE WORK:** Continuation of developing and inserting course-produced material into the site.

## **TUESDAY 13 MARCH**

### SESSION ONE/TWO: SCREENING/SEMINAR

**ENEMY IMAGE** (2005), documentary by French filmmaker Mark Daniels. A critical look at how television has covered warfare, starting with Vietnam in the 1960s, and measures taken by the military to ensure the American public never again sees the close-up horrors of battle in their living rooms. The 2003 invasion of Iraq lasted only 800 hours, observes Daniels, but it produced 20,000 hours of video, most of which was tightly controlled to create a sanitized view of combat. Features extensive interviews with correspondents and news anchors.

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSION THREE: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**MANIPULATION IN A DIGITAL AGE:** Tony discusses journalistic ethics, digitization and manipulation in risk reporting. The temptation to exaggerate material to create greater impact is high in conflict reporting - the Middle East has recently provided well-publicized examples of photo-manipulation, but most goes undiscovered - not only stills manipulation, but also video and sound. What are the ethical boundaries here? What can be done to expose the cheats? An accompanying Powerpoint presentation of Photoshop-style 'alterations'.

### AFTERNOON BREAK

### SESSION FOUR: LECTURE

**GUNNER PALACE** (2004), a documentary by US filmmaker Michael Tucker. American soldiers of the 2/3 Field Artillery, known as the 'Gunners', relate their experiences in Baghdad during the Iraq War. Living in a bombed out palace built by Saddam Hussein, they face hostility many months after President George W. Bush declared the end of major combat operations in the country. A non-media view of life in a war zone, seen 'in the raw' from the soldiers' perspective.

**WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH**

## SESSION ONE: LECTURE / SEMINAR

**TROUBLES IN PARADISE:** Tony on the South Pacific's 'arc of instability', with recent and ongoing outbreaks of violence in East Timor, Papua/New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Tonga - and now a military coup in Fiji. Live phoner with SEAN DORNEY, thirty-year veteran of reporting the Pacific trouble zones for Australian Television network and ABC Radio. As the tourists depart, the journalists fly in. A survey of the pressures of living and working under tropical coup conditions.

## MORNING BREAK

## SESSION TWO: EXERCISE

**EXERCISE FIVE: TROUBLES IN PARADISE TOUR:** Groups prepare an itinerary for a trip to a current crisis or conflict area - complete with list of stories, travel plans, logistics etc. Each group must prepare outlines and research for two television news stories (2-3 minutes each) and two television news features (7-10 minutes each). Budget of \$US18,000 for a reporter and camera person, including airfares from Europe. Groups will pitch their proposals to Tony and the rest of the class. Locations: East Timor, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Fiji.

## LUNCH BREAK

## SESSION THREE: EXERCISE

**EXERCISE FIVE: TROUBLES IN PARADISE TOUR:** continues...

## AFTERNOON BREAK

## SESSION FOUR: EXERCISE

**EXERCISE FIVE: TROUBLES IN PARADISE TOUR:** continues...

**THURSDAY 15 MARCH**

SESSION ONE:

**EXERCISE FIVE: *TROUBLES IN PARADISE TOUR*:** continues...

MORNING BREAK

SESSION TWO:

**EXERCISE FIVE: *TROUBLES IN PARADISE TOUR*:** continues...

LUNCH BREAK

SESSION THREE: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**EXERCISE FIVE: *TROUBLES IN PARADISE TOUR*:** Presentation by groups of their planned South Pacific stories and itineraries.

AFTERNOON BREAK

SESSION FOUR: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**RISK@DSJ WEBSITE WORK:** Completion of developing and inserting course-produced material into the site, and final touches - including group photo!

## **FRIDAY 16 MARCH**

### SESSION ONE: SEMINAR

**THE MEDIA-MILITARY COMPLEX:** How the media and the military are becoming more entwined as each year passes, and the implications for risk reporting - and for our understanding of war and other conflicts. Live phoner to Jakarta with GEOFF THOMPSON, Jakarta-based ABC Television journalist just back from an earthquake and plane crash in Indonesia, and formerly embedded with US Marines in Iraq. How does Geoff handle the pressures of working with the military? What can journalists do to ensure that this trend does not overtake the fundamental values and independence of the media? Can risk reporters still use their intuition and operate with sufficient editorial independence to create unique visions? Should risk reporters owe allegiance to their nation, their country's forces, their employer organization, to their profession, or to themselves? Choosing what sort of risk reporter you want to be...

### MORNING BREAK

### SESSION TWO: SCREENING / SEMINAR

**THEN AND NOW:** Screening of Academy Award-winning newsreel **KOKODA FRONTLINE** (1944), shot by Australian cameraman Damien Parer who worked for Paramount and was killed in the Pacific in 1945; followed by TV news reports filed by ABC's Geoff Thompson as an 'embed' in Iraq in 2003, including the on-camera shooting of three civilians in a car behind US troops in Baghdad. The changing visual styles and journalistic values in war reporting.

### LUNCH BREAK

### SESSIONS THREE: LECTURE

**FROM DENMARK TO DARFUR or THE ROAD TO BAGHDAD:** Do you really want to become a risk reporter? Think about it. Wouldn't you rather be at home with your cup of hot chocolate, in front of a warm fire - rather than being *under* fire and eating very suspect dog stew? If you're convinced that frontline crisis reporting is your future, some practical tips from Tony on how to proceed.

### SESSION FOUR: SEMINAR

**FINAL WORDS**, farewells all round, exchange addresses at the bar...

[COURSE ENDS]