



## Featured Views

 Printer Friendly Version  E-Mail This Article

*Published on Wednesday, November 9, 2005 by CommonDreams.org*

# Ode To Amy Goodman

by **Joyce Marcel**

O Amy Goodman, how do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

First, you are the anti-Judith Miller, the discredited New York Times reporter who beat the drums for Bush and Cheney's illegal war, who embedded her journalistic integrity for a chance to play with the big boys. Were they really that big, Judy? Really?

You, Amy Goodman, sneer at the very word "embedded." You treasure journalistic independence. For twenty years, first as news director of WBAI in New York, one of Pacifica Radio's flagship stations, and since 1994 the lovely and formidable one-non-blonde eye at the center of the growing whirlwind of horrible truths that is "Democracy Now!," you have reported news free of corporate underwriting.

"The media should be like a huge kitchen table that stretches across this country, where we discuss life and death, war and peace - and anything less is a disservice to this country," you said at Keene (N.H.) State College this past weekend, to an enthusiastic crowd of over 600 people. "My mission is to make dissent commonplace in this country."

Day after day, "Democracy Now!" reports the news to a growing audience on some 400 non-commercial radio stations, public access stations, on the Dish satellite network and DirecTV (on Link). The show also podcasts on the Web (democracynow.org) so "people around the world can have access to the news from the grassroots level."

You are often branded as "far left," but it's hard to know exactly what that means. You are for freedom and democracy, and isn't that exactly what our adrift president, George W. Bush, is trying to spread across the world?

You have proved your bravery as a reporter in the field. In East Timor you had guns pointed at your head and watched innocent people slaughtered. Your friend's skull was shattered as the Indonesians made a last-ditch grasp to keep their power. You barely escaped with your life. You were rewarded with a trip back to see the Timorese, having paid such a high price for freedom, celebrate its return.

And now your dark and deadpan eyes are focused with the strength of lasers on the lies and corruption of the Bush administration. You are on the side of the angels, standing shoulder to shoulder with Cindy Sheehan and the other mothers who have lost their sons and daughters to this despicable war.

"These young people who died would have been our future leaders," you said. "Who will our leaders be now?" And your answer? "The mothers!"

The run-up on television to the Iraq war, as you pointed out, was "a video war game" full of dramatic images of battleships, barricades, missiles pointing at the sky, planes zooming through the air at the speed of sound, fireworks in the night, soldiers dramatically backlit by the setting orange sun.

"If we had a state-run media, how would it be any different?," you said. "I am accused of advocacy journalism. If that is true, then the mainstream media is my model."

Every night you show us the real pictures of war - children burned, women with their arms and legs blown off, houses destroyed, American soldiers maimed for life.

"I really do think that if for one week in the United States we saw the true face of war, we saw people's limbs sheared off, we saw kids blown apart, for one week, war would be eradicated," you said. What is your goal? Nothing less, it seems, than a movement , like the one inspired by one of your heroes, Rosa Parks.

"She is always portrayed has a tired seamstress who just wanted to sit down," you said. "But she was a troublemaker. She had been an activist for years. She was very brave. She had committed her life to opposing segregation. Rosa Parks said she was part of a movement. And to understand movements is to understand how history is made."

The news you report every night is brutal. Torture camps, Abu Ghraib, our use of chemical weapons - napalm-like substances and white phosphorus that burns bodies to the bone, the massacre at Fallujah, Bush saying in Panama "We do not torture" while Cheney openly searches for ways to exempt the CIA from anti-torturing legislation. My only question is how you keep from slitting your wrists in despair.

"I'm inspired by the people I cover, the people I work with," you said when I called you to ask. "People in the most difficult circumstances. In East Timor, in the middle of the slaughter, they always had hope, had the belief that things can be better. In the US in the middle of these difficult times, people continue to organize. Think of Rosa Parks and what she faced and what African-Americans have faced for centuries. She made the right move by not moving. At a moment, something like that can launch a movement. What's the alternative? To give up hope is like breathing, You really have no choice."

*Joyce Marcel is a free-lance journalist who lives in Vermont and writes about culture, politics, economics and travel. Reach her at [joycemarcel@yahoo.com](mailto:joycemarcel@yahoo.com).*

###

 Printer Friendly Version  E-Mail This Article

#### FAIR USE NOTICE

This site contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in our efforts to advance understanding of environmental, political, human rights, economic, democracy, scientific, and social justice issues, etc. We believe this constitutes a 'fair use' of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes. For more information go to: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml>. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

### Common Dreams [NewsCenter](#)

A non-profit news service providing breaking news & views for the progressive community.

[Home](#) | [NewsWire](#) | [Contacting Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Donate](#) | [Sign-Up](#) | [Archives](#)

© Copyrighted 1997-2005  
[www.commondreams.org](http://www.commondreams.org)