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## News

### Journalist promotes independent media

*Democracy Now* host Amy Goodman criticizes "corporate" media outlets

By Rachel Krueger, Daily Staff Reporter

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While covering a protest outside a cemetery in East Timor, journalist Amy Goodman almost ended up in a grave.

Denouncing the Indonesian occupation of East Timor, the protesters she was covering collided with the Indonesian army. The soldiers did not differentiate between the journalists and protesters at the rally, Goodman said, resulting in her being physically attacked as the troops beat and kicked her while she lay on the ground. Her colleague, Alan Nairn, jumped on top of Goodman to sustain her blows and in turn fractured his skull.

"You don't think in such an extreme situation, you just try to survive," Goodman said.

Goodman and her colleague were lucky — out of the approximately 1,000 protestors, 270 East Timorese were killed. She said this was not only one tragic incident in the history of genocide where the Indonesian army killed one third of East Timor's population. But it was also a tragedy for journalism.

"The genocide almost got no coverage, and when it did it showed very little in the United States's role in providing the weapons to the Indonesian army. And this went on for almost of quarter of century," she said.

In a speech titled "Independent Media in a Time of War and Elections," Goodman spoke at the University today on the deterioration of America's journalistic standards and the need for the media to maintain its integrity.

Amy Goodman, who is host of Democracy Now!, an independent, national radio and TV program that is broadcast to over 300 stations, will also reflect Goodman's book "The Exception to the Rulers: Exposing Oily Politicians."

The book was co-authored by her brother David Goodman, who also delivered a speech yesterday to a packed Hutchins Hall.

Both speakers addressed the power of the independent media — any media source not sponsored by corporate underwriting — and how it offers an alternative for those distrustful of larger media avenues.

"Journalism has been very misused and abused. We need to make our own media because it has been taken over by large corporations," she said

Goodman said that the current hunger for independent media is being reflected because two to three news stations a week are picking up her independent news show, Democracy Now!.

Communications Prof. Susan Douglas, who helped coordinate the event, said that the independent media has an important role in a wartime society.

"Because they are not funded by corporations or the government, they can maintain a greater independence," said Douglas.

Douglas said Democracy Now! was a great example of a truly independent media source because it receives its funding from its listeners.

David Goodman said the media fueled the buildup to the war by not investigating

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landlords' conduct

further into issues such as the claims that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction.

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"(The media are) merely acting as a megaphone for the politicians. What is passing for journalism is really just (public relations.)," David Goodman said.

Mayoral candidate proposes paid tuition for Detroit grads

"The results of this uncritical style of reporting is that we have a government that thinks nothing of lying to the people, and the media that think nothing of acting as a conveyor belt to a war where one of the main justifications were false," he said.

New 'Soundfall' and microcinema proposed for Cool Cities grant

But College Republicans member and LSA junior Jeston La Croix said he believes America entered the war for justified reasons, besides the weapons of mass destruction.

Cardinals gather for conclave

"I think that one of the most important reasons we entered the war did not involve whether Saddam had the weapons or not. He disliked the U.S. and did not want to let inspectors in. That complicated the issue of weapons of mass destruction because he kept inspectors out and therefore we could not know for so long. The powers he showed to his own people and violation of human rights also played a role in why we went to war," La Croix said.

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"To this day, Bush is being bashed that they have not found weapons or what they consider weapons of mass destruction. However, the arsenal they found ... is sufficient evidence that there were, are, or could have been weapons of that nature," La Croix added.

Women lobby for over-the-counter Plan B

Amy Goodman said a study by Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting, a media watch organization that criticizes biased reporting and censorship, found that during the week former Secretary of State Colin Powell gave his speech to the United Nations, only three of the 393 interviews broadcasted by four major networks covering the war — ABC, CBS, NBC and PBS — featured anti-war representatives.

On campus

"This was at a time when most people were for diplomacy, yet instead the media was beating the drums for war," she said.



La Croix did not share the speakers' perception that the media at time was pushing for war.

"The media was not helping stir the cause for the war. I think the media seems more anti-war than anything. I think that the perceptions due to the terrorist attacks may have strengthened the cause, but I don't think the media exaggerated anything. If anything, I think they fought against entering the war," La Croix said.

Amy Goodman added that corporatization of the media makes it difficult for many different voices to be heard.

"We are not talking about fringe minority or even a silent majority, but a silenced majority silenced by the corporate media," she said.

After her closing speech, Amy Goodman received a standing ovation.

RC Junior Tara Smith said this gesture was merited because the event exposed deeply entrenched media biases.

"She was enthralling. Her message was simple — we need to bring reality into perspective. Things that seem radical in the media are really not as extreme as they seem.

Music sophomore Adam White said he felt compelled to action after listening to both speakers' experiences.

"Personally, I feel we have to promote independent media. Money makes the mass media far too biased," he said.

Journalist promotes independent media

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