**Why Is Michael Gordon Still Employed by the New York Times?**

Why oh why can't we have a better press corps? Yet another New York Times edition. Judy
giving some guest lectures for Marcia Parker's "Trade and California".

Let's do 2-4 on Wednesdays for office hours. Drop in (I should be in 601 or 611 Evans) or call 510 643 4027 or email delong@econ.berkeley.edu for an appointment.

SHRILBBLO
Matthew Yglesias is shrill; Matthew Yglesias / pr...
Andrew Sullivan is shrill! The Daily Dish: In...
Why oh why can't we have a better press corps? Ove...
Dan Froomkin Meets the Journamalists: And in spite...
Arthur Silber is shrill; Once Upon a Time...: Thi...
More journamalism! Irony is dead! Duncan Black

Miller doesn't work at the New York Times any more. Why does Michael Gordon?


Some media critics immediately compared the New York Times piece to its articles on Saddam Hussein's alleged weapons program that were used by the Bush administration to make the case for invading Iraq.

These critics have pointed out two similar features between

A Note on Comment Policy:
Trolling comments get deleted, usually. Other comments by trolls often get deleted too. I don't have time to moderate this properly, but I'm trying to keep it a discussion rather than a foodfight. Comments on the comment policy are welcome at:
http://delong.typepad.com/sdj/2005/03/dealing_with_tr.html}

Capacity Utilization since 1995:

There are three things around here that you may not know about--unless, that is, you have sharp eyes:

1. My rotisserie-league political
Stuart Taylor drives Chris Hayes and Prometheus 6...

Each day that the Washington Post publishes Anne A...

Oliver Willis is shrill: David Broder Libels D...

Ex Majority Leader Dick Armey is shrill: Armey r...

sat... Saturday's article and those before the war:

near complete reliance on unnamed
government sources
and the byline of New York Times reporter
Michael R. Gordon.

Gordon and former New York Times
reporter Judith Miller
coa... infamous September 8,
2002 piece, alleging
Iraq attempted to
purchase aluminum
tubes towards
developing nuclear
weapons. The New
York Times later
singled out the article
as part of its editor's
note apologizing for its
inaccurate coverage of
Iraq and WMDs. Well,
Michael Gordon
appeared on
Democracy Now! last
March. During our
interview, I asked him
about his reporting in
magazine: Egregious Moderation.
2. My feed and webpage of
economics-only material.
3. My Main Home Page, which will always have my Berkeley schedule
in the left column.

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EGREGIOUS MODERATION

Dan Froomkin: A Shaky Briefing on Iran?
Ezra Klein: Anti-Anti-Anti-Anti-Anti-Semites
Greg Sargent: David Brooks And The Doctrine Of Pundit Infallibility
Digby: Polarizer In Chief
Matthew Yglesias: "I See No Loyalty Here, Sir"
Unqualified Offerings: Glenn Reynolds Says: "Assassinations R US"
Wonkette: Army Brass Beg 24: "Stop Torturing Everybody"
Majikthese: Froomkin Nails Iran Briefing Story
Matthew Yglesias: Mike Gerson and Condi Rice: Worst Speechwriters Ever
War and Peace: Doug Feith: Lyingest Man Alive

MICHAEL GORDON:
There was no agency in the American government that said Saddam was not involved in WMD. You know, the State Department, although it's turned out to be correct, certainly on the nuclear issue, did not turn out to be -- you know, didn't challenge the biological case, the chemical case, and I'm going to offer you this last thought, and...
Press Corps?

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Bookmarked at Del.icio.us on 2007-02-18

Note to Self: Justice McReynolds...

CATEGORIES


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thought, and I'm happy to respond to any questions you have, but you know, there are a number of complicated WMD issues --

AMY GOODMAN:
Let me just ask something on that. Are you sorry you did the piece?

MICHAEL GORDON:
No, I'm not. I mean, what - - I don't know if you understand...

WORTH READING/WORTH SURFING

» Nathan Newman: Amnesia on the Death of Reconstruction
» WHEELING STEEL CORP. V. GLANDER, 337 U.S. 562 (1949). Dissent by Douglas and Black
» Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad, 118 U.S. 394 (1886)
» Peter Bergen: "Paul Cruickshank of NYU's Center on Law and Security and I coauthored this attached study which we believe is the first attempt to measure the effect of the Iraq war on jihadist terrorism. The headline-- a sevenfold increase in jihadist ter
» Residents cry fowl, bring in hired gun
» James Hamilton: Saudi oil production cuts: "But, if you'll indulge me in a bit of cloak-and-daggerism, there are others who must know. This data cannot be something that would be that difficult for American or Russian intelligence operatives to collect. S
» Israelis Are Gone, but Gaza Rebuilding Is Slow
» The Federalist #78: Hamilton: The Judiciary Department
» Kevin Drum: "SCAIFE REPENTS....Bill Clinton's #1 attack dog during the 1990s was reclusive wingnut zillionaire Richard Mellon Scaife. But according to one of his close associates, he's had a change of heart..."
now journalism works, but the way journalism works is you write what you know, and what you know at the time you try to convey as best you can, but then you don't stop reporting.

AMY GOODMAN:
Well, let me, let me --

MICHAEL GORDON:
Can I answer your question, since you asked me a question?

AMY GOODMAN:
» Louis Uchitelle: Nafta Should Have Stopped Illegal Immigration, Right?
» Gavin Kennedy: Adam Smith's Lost Legacy: Smith Did Not Have a Labour Theory of Value for Commercial Society
» John McMillan: Reinventing the Bazaar: A Natural History of Markets
» Fred Rodell: Rodell Revisited: Selected Writings of Fred Rodell
» Time Magazine: Dec. 04, 1939: Justice McReynolds
» Sean Masaki Flynn: Economics For Dummies
» Lisa Margonelli: Oil on the Brain: Adventures from the Pump to the Pipeline
» Seth Waxman: The Physics of Persuasion: Arguing the New Deal
» Economagic
» Bandwagon is a mind numbingly simple online iTunes backup (for Mac users)
» Dean Baker: Bad Housing Data...
» Fred Rodell: Nine Men: A Political History of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1790 to 1955
» Robert T. Swaine (1946), The Cravath Firm and Its Predecessors
» Frederick H. Wood (1925): The Small Investor and Railroad Ownership and

MICHAEL GORDON:

No, wait a second, if you ask me a question -- I'm happy to answer all your questions, but what I'm trying to explain to you is one thing. That was what I knew at the time. It's true that it was the key judgment. It's the same information they presented to Colin Powell, by the way, and it's what...
Tit-for-Tat and Other Strategic
persuaded
him to go to
the United
Nations and
make the
case on the
nuclear
tubes. I wrote
the contrary
case, giving
the IAEA
equal time.
They
disputed it. I
don't have a
dog in this
fight. I didn't
know what
was the
ultimate truth.
When the
IAEA came
out in
January and
disputed it, I
reported it.

AMY
GOODMAN:
Michael
Gordon, let
me just

» Making Light: Matthew 6: "Vanderslice's
unselfconscious remark, meant for her
own brand of religious insider, reeks of the
same kind of spiritual vanity we've seen all
too often from the self-anointed "religious
left." "The religious community c

» Martin Wolf: Why America will need
some elements of a welfare state

» Johnson, Smeeding, and Boyle Torrey:
Inequality through the prisms of income
and consumption

» TOP SECRET POLO STEP: Iraq War
Plan Assumed Only 5,000 U.S. Troops
Still There by December 2006

» The TPM DOCUMENT COLLECTION:
Baghdad Briefing on Iranian Weapons in
Iraq

» Econ 211: Economic History Seminar:
Spring 2007 Schedule

» Econ 237: Macroeconomics Seminar:
Spring 2007 Seminar Schedule

» Brad Setser: It will be difficult to
rebalance the global economy if Chinese
exports keep growing at 30% ...

» Cechetti, Lam, and Mark: Asset Pricing
with Distorted Beliefs

» Ken Pollack: "I wish I could tell you that
it is impossible, but I don't think it is. I think
a war with Iran would be very messy and
would cost us a lot more than we would
gain. While many members of the
Administration agree with that, others do
not, a

» Rand Beers: "There is widespread
agreement that although some within the
administration may be pushing for war, a
strike on Iran would run significantly
counter to U.S. interests in the current
environment. Military action would spark
even greater anti-US
respond. We don't -- we have limited time in the program, but I just --

MICHAEL GORDON:
Well, then you should let me answer your questions.

AMY GOODMAN:
I did.

MICHAEL GORDON:
No, you haven't let me answer your question.

AMY GOODMAN:
Are you sorry then, that the New York Times was sorry that this

» Lawrence Wright: "Iraq brought [Al Qaeda] back to life.... The jihadis who went to Iraq will begin to return to their own countries, empowering the local cells, which have been proliferating in the Arab world and the west and which have only lacked a degr

» Mark Thoma: Economist's View: Optimal Provocation: "Iran should provoke the U.S. right up to the point where the marginal benefit from an additional unit of provocation - higher oil revenues from a rising risk premium - just equals the marginal cost"

» Felix Salmon: Do hedge funds generate alpha? Yes: Rene Stultz: “The academic bottom line on hedge fund performance is captured well by these studies. If one picks randomly a hedge fund, one should have a positive insignificant alpha after fees."

» Fritz Stern: Five Germanys I Have Known

» Ogged: "Linkrot is perhaps the single most important issue facing humankind today. I was looking for something in the archives, and noticed that link after link is dead. For a while, I was caching the pages I linked to (as here, where the cached pages are

» Matthew Yglesias: "To me, the striking thing is how infrequent it is to actually see non-critics of America's Israel policy make the argument that current policy serves the vital interests of the United States (TNR's editorial line, for example, from whic

» Scott Rosenberg: Dreaming in Code: Two Dozen Programmers, Three Years, 4,732 Bugs, and One Quest for Transcendent Software
sorry that this piece appeared as it did on the front page of the New York Times.

MICHAEL GORDON: I don't think "sorry" is the word the New York Times used.

AMY GOODMAN: That was the New York Times reporter Michael Gordon speaking on Democracy Now! last March. I'm joined in studio now by Rick MacArthur, publisher of Harper's....

RICK MACARTHUR: ...[W]hat's interesting about Michael Gordon is that when he did the reporting on the phony aluminum tube story with Judith Miller four years ago, he

» Wonkette: Army Brass Beg 24: 'Stop Torturing Everybody': "U.S. Army Brigadier General Patrick Finnegan has pleaded with the producers of a popular teevee show about torturing Arabs to please stop torturing everybody. With the military now forced to accep

» Nouriel Roubini: "It now looks like the alleged growth rebound in Q4, from the 2.0% of Q3 to the 3.5% of Q4 was an illusion based on incomplete data. Based on recent data on inventories for December (much lower than initially predicted by BEA) and todayâ

» Unqualified Offerings: "Yesterday, the popular Republican blog Red State advocated war with Iran and embraced having it spread throughout the Middle East. Now, the respected (look, he is, whether readers here like it or not) law professor Glenn Reynolds i

» Dana Milbank - Star Character Witnesses at Libby Trial - "Libby must believe himself to be in desperate legal straits to have six journalists serve as his character witnesses. And, indeed, the reporters' testimony appeared to do little to dent the prosecu

» Buce quotes John Adams: "Have I not been employed in mischief all my days? Did not the American Revolution produce the French Revolution? And did not the French Revolution produce all the calamaities and desolations to the human race and the whole globe e

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somehow escaped
unharmed and is now
thriving.... [H]e's going
around acting like he's
an expert on Iraq,
when, in fact, he's still
playing the role of
conduit for the official
line, the Army line or
the government line,
depending on who he's
talking to on what
day....

[W]hat's interesting is
the play that they gave
his story on Saturday....
They put it on the top of
the front page... the
lead story.... [N]ot far
down in the... Monday
story -- you find a
paragraph where they
say -- and this is very
interesting -- that they
don't have any real
evidence, any direct
evidence, that any of
this is true.... Newsday,
a perfectly respectable
newspaper, puts "US:
Iran is Arming Shia" on
They report what the military officials [in Washington] are claiming, but in the second paragraph, they say the military command in Baghdad denied, however, that any newly smuggled Iranian weapons were behind the five crashes of US military helicopters... shot down by insurgent gunfire....

That is what journalism is, contrary to what Michael Gordon says. It's putting the story in perspective, pointing out that the... [insurgency is] dominated by Sunni, not by Shia.... [T]he most damning omission... is complete lack of perspective on who's fighting whom, who's shooting at whom in Iraq. Does the Iranian government...
really have an interest
in destabilizing what's
now a Shiite-dominated
government? Doesn't
make any sense....
[T]here's no logic to it...
just this massive
omission...

Posted by Brad DeLong on
February 14, 2007 at 12:48 PM in
Better Press Corps/Journamalism, Bushisms, Iraq, Middle East,
Pieces of the Occasion | Permalink

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Listed below are links to
weblogs that reference Why Is Michael Gordon Still Employed by the New York Times?:

Comments
Why Michael Gordon? A question I have asked for several years, and I dearly love the New York Times. Just understand there are certain reporters who are always suspect, as my mother told me long ago about Judith Miller before I
understood that Miller was simply incapable of proper reporting.

**Posted by: anne | February 14, 2007 at 01:09 PM**

What I need on Iraq has long come mainly from the astonishing Juan Cole.

**Posted by: anne | February 14, 2007 at 01:21 PM**


February 15, 2007

A Prewar Slide Show Cast Iraq in Rosy Hues

By MICHAEL R. GORDON

WASHINGTON — When Gen. Tommy R. Franks and his top officers gathered in August 2002 to review an invasion plan for Iraq, it reflected a decidedly upbeat vision of what the country would look like four years after Saddam Hussein was ousted from power.

A broadly representative Iraqi government would be in place. The Iraqi Army would be working to keep the peace. And the United States would have as few as 5,000 troops in the
country.

Military slides obtained by the National Security Archive under the Freedom of Information Act outline the command's PowerPoint projection of the stable, pro-American and democratic Iraq that was to be.

The general optimism and some details of General Franks's planning session have been disclosed in the copious postwar literature. But the slides from the once classified briefing provide a firsthand look at how far the violent reality of Iraq today has deviated from assumptions that once laid the basis for an exercise in pre-emptive war.

The archive, an independent research institute at George Washington University, has posted the slides on its Web site, www.nsarchive.org.

August 2002 was an important time for developing the strategy. President Bush had yet to go to the United Nations to declare Saddam Hussein's supposed
weapons programs a menace to international security, but the
war planning was well under way. The tumultuous upheaval
that would follow the toppling of the Hussein government was
known antiseptically in planning sessions as "Phase IV." As is
clear from the slides, it was the least defined part of the strategy.

General Franks had told his officers that it was his
supposition that the State Department would have the
primary responsibility for rebuilding Iraq's political
institutions.

"D.O.S. will promote creation of a broad-based, credible
provisional government — prior to D-Day," noted a slide on "key
planning assumptions." That was military jargon for the notion
that the Department of State would assemble a viable Iraqi
governing coalition before the invasion even began....

**Posted by:** anne | February 15,
2007 at 02:13 AM

http://www.washingtonpost.com/
February 11, 2007

Victory Is Not an Option: The Mission Can't Be Accomplished -- It's Time for a New Strategy
By William E. Odom - Washington Post

The new National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq starkly delineates the gulf that separates President Bush's illusions from the realities of the war. Victory, as the president sees it, requires a stable liberal democracy in Iraq that is pro-American. The NIE describes a war that has no chance of producing that result. In this critical respect, the NIE, the consensus judgment of all the U.S. intelligence agencies, is a declaration of defeat.

Its gloomy implications -- hedged, as intelligence agencies prefer, in rubbery language that cannot soften its impact -- put the intelligence community and the American public on the same page. The public awakened to the reality of failure in Iraq last year and turned the Republicans
out of control of Congress to
wake it up. But a majority of its
members are still asleep, or only
half-awake to their new writ to
end the war soon.

Perhaps this is not surprising.
Americans do not warm to
defeat or failure, and our
politicians are famously
reluctant to admit their own
responsibility for anything
resembling those un-American
outcomes. So they beat around
the bush, wringing hands and
debating "nonbinding
resolutions" that oppose the
president's plan to increase the
number of U.S. troops in Iraq.

For the moment, the collision of
the public's clarity of mind, the
president's relentless pursuit of
defeat and Congress's anxiety
has paralyzed us. We may be
doomed to two more years of
chasing the mirage of
democracy in Iraq and possibly
widening the war to Iran. But
this is not inevitable. A
Congress, or a president,
prepared to quit the game of
"who gets the blame" could
begin to alter American strategy in ways that will vastly improve the prospects of a more stable Middle East.

No task is more important to the well-being of the United States. We face great peril in that troubled region, and improving our prospects will be difficult. First of all, it will require, from Congress at least, public acknowledgment that the president's policy is based on illusions, not realities. There never has been any right way to invade and transform Iraq. Most Americans need no further convincing....

**Posted by: anne | February 15, 2007 at 02:23 AM**

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