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978-1-107-10830-1 - AP Foreign Correspondents in Action: World War II to the Present

Giovanna Dell'Orto

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AP Foreign Correspondents in Action

World War II to the Present

Based on extended interviews conducted from the Pakistani countryside to Washington, *AP Foreign Correspondents in Action: World War II to the Present* reveals for the first time what it takes to get the stories that bring the world home to America. It gives new frontline insights into major events from the Japanese surrender in 1945 to the 2010s Syrian civil war, and it helps understand the impact of news on international affairs by revealing foundational journalistic practices.

Both successes and failures through eight decades of foreign correspondence from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe show that public discourse has been best served by correspondents who, at great risk, challenged accepted narratives, exposed omnipresent lies, gave a voice to the voiceless, and stymied the frequently violent efforts of those who feared truth-telling eyewitnesses.

Giovanna Dell'Orto is an associate professor at the University of Minnesota's School of Journalism and Mass Communication. She teaches and researches the interplay between news, journalistic practices, and international affairs – topics she has lectured about to academic and professional audiences from China to Chile. A former newswoman with The Associated Press and fluent in four languages, she is the author of *American Journalism and International Relations*, also from Cambridge University Press, which analyzes the impact of foreign correspondence on American foreign policy from 1848 to 2008. She is also the author or editor of three other books on journalism and foreign affairs. She holds a PhD in Mass Communication from the University of Minnesota.

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*To the memory of Anja,
and to Kathy, Terry, and all foreign correspondents
who give so much to tell the stories*

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Acknowledgments

While I was researching wire copy for my *American Journalism and International Relations* book at AP's Corporate Archives in New York, their invaluable director, Valerie Komor, suggested that, given my interest in foreign correspondence, I should give a call to George Bria, a "former correspondent." I did, asking for a meeting the next morning before my flight home. George said he would be delighted, but could we make it before his doubles tennis match since, having just turned 95, he might be a bit tired afterward? I knew I had a story. After interviewing George, whose career in foreign news began with covering the end of World War II, and 60 other AP foreign correspondents, I have this book – and thousands of pages of notes, historical photos, plus warm memories of my own – so my biggest, profoundest debt of gratitude goes to all of them, for their time, candor, insights, and unfailing, exceptional graciousness.

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Nor would it have maintained altitude without the University of Minnesota, its College of Liberal Arts, then led by Dr. Bud Duvall, and its School of Journalism and Mass Communication, with its stellar staff, and led by Director Dr. Albert Tims, which provided grants and research leaves that made it possible for me to travel to conduct the interviews as well as to hire two fabulous research assistants, Stephen Bennett and Rodrigo Zamith, who helped prepare for them and then transcribed dozens of hours of recordings (for the latter, thank you also to Alyssa Anderson, Marcheta Fornoff, and Devan Grimsrud). The SJMC's IT and digital media team, Scott Dierks and Wally Swanson, offered their limitless expertise with tireless kindness at every stage. I have greatly benefited from the suggestions by Donald Ritchie, Historian of the United States Senate; Professors Hazel Dicken-Garcia and Mitchell Stephens; and colleagues at the meetings of the American Journalism Historians Association, International Communication Association, International Studies Association, and Joint Journalism and Communication History (AJHA/AEJMC). The anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press provided crucial encouragement and advice. Cambridge senior commissioning editor Robert Dreesen has supported and sustained this book from the initial idea – it is our second book, a partnership I tremendously treasure.

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Their emails contained only a link: <http://www.ap.org/Content/AP-In-The-News/2014/AP-photographer-killed-reporter-wounded>.

Anja Niedringhaus had been murdered and Kathy Gannon horribly wounded by a policeman who fired his automatic weapon at them as they sat in their car in Afghanistan, on assignment to cover the country's pivotal elections. Anja and Kathy – I could see them, less than a year earlier, peering through the crowds at Benazir Bhutto International Airport arrival hall, and then smiling, laughing, discoursing in every now infinitely precious moment of the weekend they welcomed me to Pakistan, taking time for interviews even as they were getting ready for another Afghanistan assignment. As I was writing

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this book, another AP foreign correspondent, video journalist Simone Camilli, was killed (together with an AP translator) covering war in the Gaza Strip – and I hate keeping this count, fully aware of how many more are in harm's way as I type this.

Telling stories to better understand others – it is what AP foreign correspondents put their lives on the line to do and, in my small, privileged way, it is what this book is intended to do. Humbly and gratefully, I dedicate it to them.