



FREELANCERS

WITH BILL GENTILE

LOGLINE

They are a new breed of journalist. Daring, determined and tech-savvy, freelance foreign correspondents fill the void left by mainstream media retreating from international news coverage. With passion, creativity and the latest technology, they tell the human stories and report on the critical issues that demand our attention. And they do so without concessions or compromises.

Independent journalist Bill Gentile introduces us to these dedicated professionals searching for truth on the ground in some of the farthest corners of the earth.





THE SERIES

FREELANCERS with Bill Gentile

is a feature documentary series about the foreign correspondents who operate independently, without the institutional support and security of full-time staff.

In previous generations, freelancing was a step toward a staff job, but these men and women have chosen an alternative career path of meaning and purpose. Their goal is a life of independence, exploration and engagement with people and places whose stories are not being told.



Our series weaves together the stories and work of reporters, photographers and filmmakers. We see samples of their work as they practice their craft. We witness their struggles to sustain themselves in a rapidly changing and highly competitive profession. We learn about the countries where they work and we discover what sustains their precarious lives.



THE EPISODES

The background image is a cinematic scene. In the foreground, two people are seen from behind, standing in a grassy field. They are looking towards a large, dark, and heavily damaged structure that appears to be a collapsed building or a pile of debris. In the background, a white SUV is parked on a path, its headlights on. The scene is set during the 'golden hour' of sunset or sunrise, with a bright sun low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare and silhouetting the figures and trees. Bare trees are visible in the background, and the overall atmosphere is somber and investigative.

In each episode of **FREELANCERS**, viewers become engaged with these smart, passionate, creative journalists who have taken a stand on how to live their lives in pursuit of truth.

The series begins in Mexico where the so-called war on drugs has left at least 175,000 people dead in the past decade. At least 104 journalists have been murdered there since the year 2000.

We have mapped out future episodes in Turkey, Thailand, Kenya, Brazil and Lebanon.



CHARACTERS

The series is hosted and narrated by Executive Producer and Director Bill Gentile, who began his career as a freelance foreign correspondent in Mexico in 1977. His professional career as a reporter, photographer and videographer and his pioneering work as a backpack video journalist earn the trust of both his subjects and our audiences.

For a decade, he has taught the graduate Foreign Correspondence course at American University in Washington, DC, where he is a full-time faculty member in the School of Communication. **FREELANCERS** is supported, in part, by American University.



IOAN GRILLO has reported on Latin America since 2001 for international media including The New York Times, Time magazine, Reuters, CNN, the Associated Press (AP), PBS NewsHour, the Houston Chronicle, CBC, and the Sunday Telegraph. His first book, “El Narco: Inside Mexico’s Criminal Insurgency,” was translated into five languages and was a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize and the Orwell Prize. A native of Britain, Grillo lives in Mexico City.

JANET JARMAN is a photojournalist and filmmaker based in Mexico, where she documents issues such as immigration and public health, water resources, Mexico’s vibrant traditions and challenges to personal security. Her work has been published in The New York Times, GEO, Smithsonian Magazine, The Washington Post, Stern, Der Spiegel, 6Mois, The Wall Street Journal, and others. She recently received a grant from the MacArthur Foundation to produce a feature length documentary about midwives in Mexico. Janet began her career as a staff photographer at The Miami Herald.





GERARDO CARRILLO worked as a freelance television cameraman during the 1980s covering the conflicts raging across Central America. Carrillo went on to found the video unit of the Associated Press (AP) in Mexico, where he was born. Carrillo now is a staff videographer at AP, and a valuable contact and source for freelance journalists visiting Mexico and Central America.

MEGHAN DHALI WAL AND DOMINIC BRACCO II are freelance photographers. Both have worked with video, as well. Dominic is the author of a number of plays. They live together in their apartment in Mexico City, which they share with a dog and a rabbit. They spend much of their time researching and pitching grant proposals.





DAVID AGREN has covered Mexico since 2005 for publications including the Guardian, USA Today, The Washington Post and Maclean's magazine. His work focuses mostly on crime, corruption, politics, the Catholic Church and curious characters. He formerly worked as Mexico correspondent for the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

MILTON MARTINEZ ESTRADA is a quintessential journalism "fixer" based in the Mexican border city of Nogales. A correspondent for the Mexican magazine Proceso, he also provides logistical support, arranges interviews and advises visiting journalists on where they can safely work – and where they cannot. Milton's services can be crucial to any freelancer's successful journey to Nogales.





KEITH DANNEMILLER is a freelance photographer living in Mexico City for over 30 years. During the 1980s, he covered the conflicts raging across Central America. Keith now focuses less on breaking news and devotes most of his time to documenting daily life in Mexico, conducting photo exhibitions and teaching the craft.

PATRICK TOMBOLA is an Italian/Australian photographer and filmmaker who concentrates on long-term documentary projects and editorial work throughout Latin America, the Middle East and Europe. His work has been published in The New York Times, Time Magazine, Sunday Times Magazine, Stern, Die Zeit, Vanity Fair and many others.





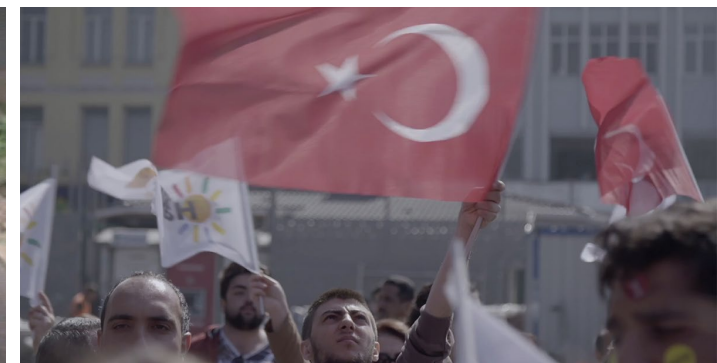
STYLE



Much the way Anthony Bourdain walks us through the world of food in CNN's "Parts Unknown," FREELANCERS walks us through the world of freelance foreign correspondence.

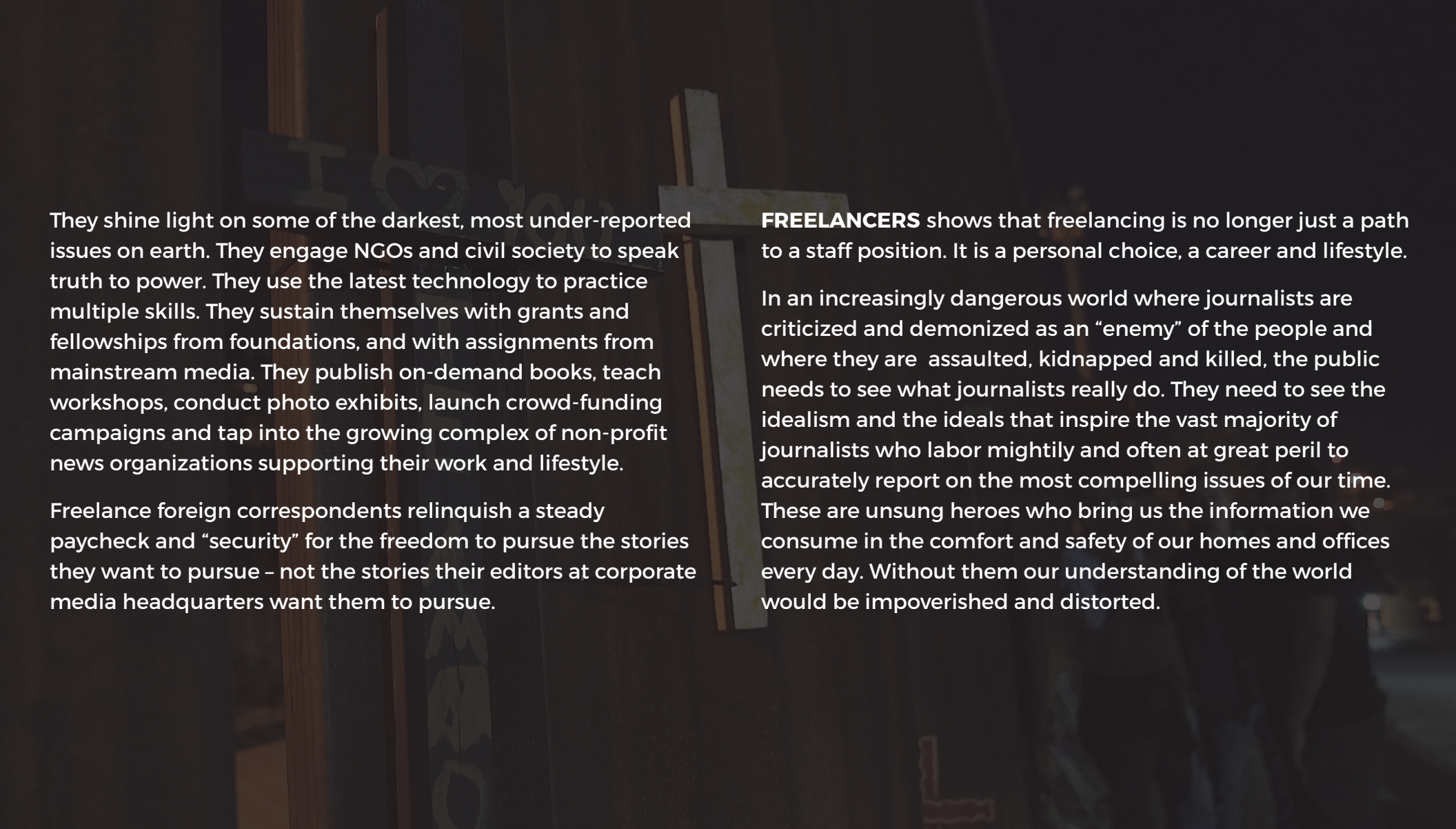
Bill Gentile, seasoned journalist and veteran of some of the most difficult stories of our time, is the thread running through the global series.

Gentile engages the characters in our series and draws out their stories of life on the edge of the first draft of history. Each episode takes inspiration from the highly acclaimed and award-winning documentaries about journalists in Central America, "The World Is Watching," and "The World Stopped Watching" -- both of which feature Bill Gentile as a leading character. We also draw from the HBO series, VICE.



A photograph showing a man in a blue t-shirt from behind, standing next to a woman who is partially visible through a metal fence. The man has a tattoo on his left arm and is looking towards the woman. The woman is looking back at him with a concerned expression. The fence is made of vertical metal bars. The background shows a dry, hilly landscape with some greenery and a concrete wall.

IMPACT



They shine light on some of the darkest, most under-reported issues on earth. They engage NGOs and civil society to speak truth to power. They use the latest technology to practice multiple skills. They sustain themselves with grants and fellowships from foundations, and with assignments from mainstream media. They publish on-demand books, teach workshops, conduct photo exhibits, launch crowd-funding campaigns and tap into the growing complex of non-profit news organizations supporting their work and lifestyle.

Freelance foreign correspondents relinquish a steady paycheck and “security” for the freedom to pursue the stories they want to pursue – not the stories their editors at corporate media headquarters want them to pursue.

FREELANCERS shows that freelancing is no longer just a path to a staff position. It is a personal choice, a career and lifestyle.

In an increasingly dangerous world where journalists are criticized and demonized as an “enemy” of the people and where they are assaulted, kidnapped and killed, the public needs to see what journalists really do. They need to see the idealism and the ideals that inspire the vast majority of journalists who labor mightily and often at great peril to accurately report on the most compelling issues of our time. These are unsung heroes who bring us the information we consume in the comfort and safety of our homes and offices every day. Without them our understanding of the world would be impoverished and distorted.

AUDIENCE & DISTRIBUTION



AUDIENCE



TARGET AUDIENCE:

PEOPLE WHO WATCH TELEVISION NEWS,
INCLUDING THE VICE SERIES ON HBO,
DOCUMENTARIES ON NETFLIX OR PBS
AND LATE-NIGHT POLITICAL COMEDY



SECONDARY AUDIENCES:

PEOPLE WORKING IN
COMMUNICATION & MEDIA
AND IN POLITICS

Professional journalists in the
United States: **90,000**

JOURNALISM AND PUBLIC
AFFAIRS STUDENTS

Schools in U.S. with journalism
programs: **400+**

ORGANIZATIONS AND SOCIAL
NETWORKS FOCUSED ON THE
FOLLOWING ISSUES:

News and information
Domestic U.S. policy
U.S. foreign policy
Human rights
1st Amendment

FILM RELEASE & DISTRIBUTION

WORLD PREMIERE

TOP TIER FILM FESTIVAL - EARLY 2018

GENERATE MEDIA BUZZ

| SALES/DISTRIBUTION INTEREST

| BUILD AUDIENCE

TARGETS FOR DISTRIBUTION INCLUDE:

HBO

|

NETFLIX

|

UNIVISION/FUSION

|

CNN

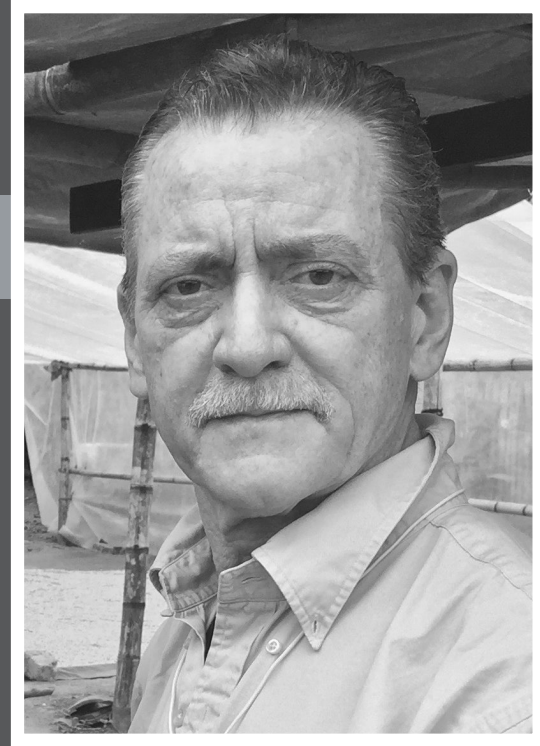
FILMMAKERS

BILL GENTILE

Executive Producer/Director

Bill is an independent journalist and documentary filmmaker teaching at American University in Washington, DC. He is the founder and director of American University's Backpack Journalism Project. He is a pioneer of "backpack video journalism" and one of the craft's most noted practitioners. He is the author of the highly acclaimed "Essential Video Journalism Field Manual."

Gentile's recent work includes "When the Forest Weeps," a short film that examines how Ecuador's Kichwa Indians struggle as their deep spiritual relationship with the Amazonian rain forest diminishes in a clash with the forces of so-called modernity. He began in 1977 as reporter for the Mexico City News and correspondent for United Press International (UPI) based in Mexico City. He spent two years as editor on UPI's Foreign Desk in New York, then moved to Nicaragua and became Newsweek Magazine's Contract Photographer for Latin America and the Caribbean.



His book of photographs, "Nicaragua," won the Overseas Press Club Award for Excellence. He covered the 1979 Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua; the U.S.-backed Contra War and the Salvadoran Civil War in the 1980s; the U.S. invasion of Panama; the 1994 invasion of Haiti, the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War and the subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He won two national Emmy Awards and was nominated for two others.

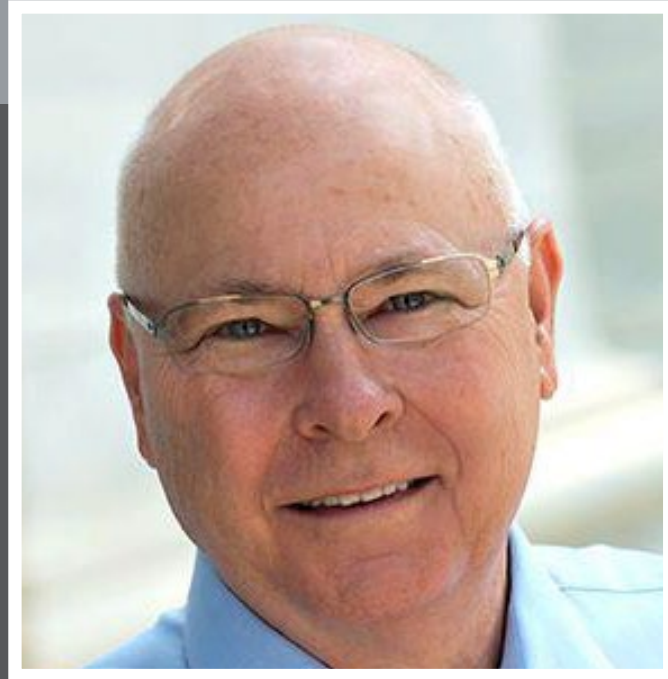
LARRY KIRKMAN

Executive Producer

Larry Kirkman has produced and executive produced public television documentaries funded by PBS, CPB and NEA, including the series America Works. He is a filmmaker-in-residence in the Investigative Reporting Workshop and Film and Media Arts professor at American University, where he was dean of the School of Communication for 11 years.

His work in social advertising campaigns includes Connect for Kids, which received more than \$300 million in donated media and was a pioneer in digital strategies. As the American Film Institute's first director for video and television, he produced the National Video Festival at the Kennedy Center.

He edited Strategic Communications for Nonprofits, a series of media guides and served as chair of Oneworld.org, an international online news service and innovator in public service communications.



MATT CIPOLLONE

Associate Producer/Director of Photography/Editor/Sound

Matt Cipollone is a documentary film cinematographer, editor and producer. In addition to collaborating on numerous independent documentary features, Matt specializes in helping socially-minded foundations and organizations tell their stories and showcase their important work through documentary film and media. His film work has taken him throughout the US and abroad.

Matt's films include "Dear Baltimore" (2016), about a highly successful youth program in Maryland helping student athletes from some of the country's most problematic neighborhoods to excel. The film is woven together by a letter written to the city of Baltimore by student John Chalmers, as he reflects on the city that raised him and the program that has helped steer him and his friends toward a bright future. "Dear Baltimore" was an official selection of the 2017 DC Shorts Film Festival, the largest short film festival on the East Coast.



LAMA AL-ARIAN

Associate Producer/Middle East

Lama Al-Arian is an Arab American journalist based in the Middle East. She's currently working with National Public Radio (NPR) in Beirut, Lebanon, and has been covering conflict zones around the region for years.

Lama has worked on a variety of stories including the aftermath of the Arab Spring, Turkey's failed military coup, the war in Syria, ISIS in Iraq and Libya, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) crisis in the summer of 2017. She's covered the refugee crisis around the region extensively, documenting accounts of people escaping war and poverty for a series called, "Humans of War."

She is a graduate of American University in Washington, DC.



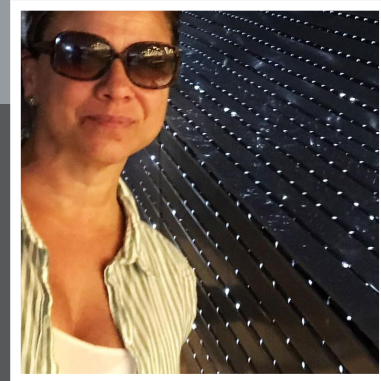
ESTHER GENTILE

Associate Producer/Planning and Logistics

A freelance videographer and editor, Esther Gentile has worked on documentary projects from Greece to Guatemala, from Ecuador to Afghanistan. Born in Havana, Cuba, she was awarded a Master's Degree in Latin American Studies at American University in Washington, DC.

Her organizational skills, extensive travel experience and study, plus expertise in the technology of communication, lend themselves well to the FREELANCERS project.

Esther provided crucial leadership in the crowdfunding campaign that helped pave the way for successful financing of production and post-production of the FREELANCERS pilot in Mexico.



ADVISORS

HANNAH ALLAM is an American journalist and reporter for BuzzFeed News. Based in Washington, DC, she covers Muslim life in the United States. Ms. Allam was the Baghdad bureau chief for McClatchy Newspapers during the Iraq War and later Middle East bureau chief based in Cairo, Egypt, during the Arab Spring uprisings. She later covered foreign affairs and the State Department from Washington, DC.



SAM MEDDIS is a founding member of usatoday.com and USA TODAY the newspaper. After the paper's founding in 1982, he served as lead reporter covering the U.S. Justice Department, FBI and CIA, and later as a deputy managing editor and video team lead. In 1995, he became founding technology editor for usatoday.com. His reporting has won numerous awards. He now is adjunct professor at George Mason University, where he teaches history of world cinema in the College of Visual and Performing Arts.



FRANK SMYTH is founder and executive director of Global Journalist Security. He is also Senior Advisor for Journalist Security at the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, where he blogs on journalist security. Frank has been awarded for both his investigative journalism and his service to the journalism community. He has covered armed conflicts, organized crime and human rights abuses in El Salvador, Guatemala, Cuba, Colombia, Rwanda, Uganda, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Jordan and Iraq.



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