While the physical and psychological welfare of all journalists is to some extent at risk, war/foreign correspondents face the most severe conditions and demands. The identification with their specific practice is therefore reinforced (66).

Jeremy Thompson (Sky News) “That in a way is the subtle transition into the 24-hour news channel world, where the emphasis is on the live reporter being somewhere, being at a scene and describing it. And pictures in a way are slightly secondary to that. Whereas, before it was the gathering of the pictures and the great package that you all aspired to…And now it’s getting there first and being on first” (66).

Journalists try to grab the attention and sentiments of their audiences in order to make them aware of conflicts around the world. This personal commitment is enhanced when journalists see themselves as ‘witnesses’ to atrocities and gross injustices (66).

The prioritisation of the moral and ethical duties of the journalist towards the public and the world in general is part of the professional values framework within which contemporary journalism operates (67).

Maggie O’Kane believes that, particularly in Bosnia, reporters had a role to contribute in ending the war and enforcing a halt to the fighting (67).

CHAPTER 6: ON ASSIGNMENT

Because of the lack of time for preparation, journalists working for large news organisations have an advantage in the resources available. They will generally have local contacts on the ground that are aware of the problems and capable of resolving many problems beforehand (77).

Dan Edge, a young freelancer with experience of Kashmir, Pakistan and Palestine, also acknowledged that the Internet ‘can be the most powerful tool’, especially in the ‘initial research phase’, added that ‘I can’t imagine how difficult it must have been to find out quality information quickly before the internet’ (78).

Edge adds a note of caution about over-reliance on the Internet, since ‘you’ll get a lot of crap’ from a Google search, before commending the use of ‘excellent libraries’ at work (78).

Meek also counsels about the importance of speaking various languages, not only when reporting, but also in the earlier preparation (79).

Other journalists (even though they may be competitors) are often a vital ingredient of handed down knowledge and reciprocal help, especially if it is a new assignment. Access to sources is paramount for all journalists (80).

James Meek: “In the first days of a conflict – in fact throughout – other journalists are always your best resource because you are each other’s eyes and ears. There is competition and you do sometimes not tell people things that would be useful to them, but more often than that, you’ll be chatting to each other because you know that you can help each other more than you can harm each other” (80).

Experienced frontline correspondents will develop a huge base of sources over the years and work hard at maintaining contacts despite difficulties (81).

The technologies have increasingly become more versatile, miniaturised and converged, so that recording and transmitting images and text is immeasurably easier and faster than in the days – scarcely a decade ago – when technologies were unreliable, heavyweight and cumbersome (82).

Correspondents now have greatly enhanced means of finding out about issues, communicating reports and – of less obvious benefit – of being called upon to service the unceasing demands.
of rolling news and of their reportage being readily available to those about whom they speak or write (82)

- (The Internet) is also a tool for checking the veracity of information received, even for providing additional news stories. It allows, for instance, ready access to other media, so correspondents in the field can find out what colleagues are reporting elsewhere…Furthermore, the Internet has meant that bloggers – sometimes located in places that the journalists themselves cannot reach – can become contributors to media accounts (83)
- Suzanne Goldenberg points out that the Internet ‘means that a reporter can be almost immediately accountable for what is published in the newspaper, no matter how far away she/he might be from the area of distribution’…‘The people one is writing about can often read what one is writing, which I suppose helps keep people honest – or intimidates them’ (83)
- More of a concern might be pressure and threats that come from groups who find out what has been reported about them to be disagreeable. Chris Ayres vividly recalls an attack on him…from a military officer who was ‘fizzing with barely controlled rage’ (Ayres 2005, p.279) having read Ayres’ reports that were published in The Times of London a few hours earlier (83)
- Ben Brown: “just one wrong bit of terminology and you can cause huge upset” (84)
- Whilst new technology has increased the speed of news production, the demand for instant news can inhibit more in-depth analysis. German television reporter, Uwe Kroeger of ZDF, outlines the disadvantages of speed and the advance of technology: “you depend on people to bring you video tapes and you just appear in front of a camera and tell the audience, “Ok, listen, this is happening here,” without having seen for yourself what is happening” (85)
- Contact is now virtually instantaneous with a loss of autonomy for the journalist. Kate Adie (2002)…observed that during the Balkan conflict in the 1990s, “if we (correspondents) stuck to reporting the facts – the scenes we’d witnessed, the incidents we had verified – we managed to convey a limited but accurate picture of what was going on” (86)
- Peter Sharp explains how he used to receive ‘feedback’ from the news desk and beat the opposition (86)
- New technology can make everything instant – ‘the globalisation of pictures’, as Chip Hires describes it (87)
- The role of technology is also seen, particularly by news organisations, as a growing problem in the coverage of conflict and war. BBC journalist Nik Gowing has been ubiquitous in his warnings to news organisations and governments about the new dangers: “Crimes that contravene human rights laws and military attacks can hardly be kept secret anymore and this puts governments and the armed forces under enormous pressure” (88)
- Decisions have to be made quickly. Television channels want to spread news as speedily as possible, but photographic and film material also has to be authenticated, as ‘one mistake can destroy your credibility’. Forgers and terrorist organisations have also been making use of modern techniques for a long time to further their interests (88)

CHAPTER 9: DANGER AND SAFETY

- According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), during the decade 1995-2004, 341 journalists were killed while carrying out their work (117)
- CPJ research demonstrates that the vast majority of journalists killed since 1995 were murdered rather than killed in cross-fire…only 68 journalists (20%) died in cross-fire, while 247 (72%) were murdered, often in reprisal for their reporting (117)
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- CPJ research demonstrates that the vast majority of journalists killed since 1995 were murdered rather than killed in cross-fire…only 68 journalists (20%) died in cross-fire, while 247 (72%) were murdered, often in reprisal for their reporting (117)
- Photographing and recording combat are among the most dangerous assignments and during this period 62 cameramen, photographer and soundmen were killed (117)
- CPJ: “Covering combat is risky, but a much greater threat than a stray bullet are the murderers who kill journalists deliberately, using the generalised violence associated with war to cover their tracks” (117)
- Jon Swain: “not sure it’s more dangerous than it was in Vietnam or the Second World War”…“we’re much more conscious now of danger” (117)
- Barbara Jones: journalists “don’t have the right to be frightened when you’ve got 23 million people who are literally being targeted (in Iraq)” (117)
- Cameras also mean that unacceptable behaviour is identifiable – a feature that means that photographers and cameramen are vulnerable to attack from those who have reason not to have their pictures taken (119)
- Jeremy Thompson (Sky News): “There’s much greater pressure to deliver. The technology takes you close to the action and therefore raises the level of danger” (119)
- More dangers for women – Jane Kokanwho worked in Somalia, was arrested at the airport: “A couple of guys threatened to rape me” (122)
- John Irvine (ITN): “nobody can make the decision better than the person who’s experience what’s going on, on the ground” (122)
- Frontline correspondents inevitably encounter risks in their work. How they respond to these depends on personality, training and experience. But it is evident that on occasions – as in Iraq since the 2003 invasion – dangers are acutely high. Sometimes, too, their luck runs out (129)

FEINSTEIN DANGEROUS LIVES CHAPTER 1

- One moment she was fine, calm and intelligible, the next, agitated, tremulous and incoherent (2)
- These patients are said, in psychiatric parlance, to have a conversion disorder. This is in effect a rerouting of emotional distress into physical symptoms, an unconscious process that changes, or converts, emotional dysfunction into neurological abnormalities (3)
- In the past these patients were given a diagnosis of hysteria (3)
- A decade of cumulative stress, which had included a number of near-fatalities, reached an apogee when, in the span of a few days, her cameraman was killed while on assignment with her and, in a separate incident, a close colleague was badly wounded in an assassination attempt (4)
- Deeply shaken by these experiences, she had taken to medicating herself with tranquilizers and alcohol, two drugs that were readily available on the black market in war zones (4)
- It soon became clear I our conversations that while she loved her work as a war journalist, she found the job stressful and at times terrifying (4)
I was surprised when she told me that psychiatric help, even if the form of some basic counseling, was not readily available to her. Although she was employed by one of the world’s major news organizations, she had no access to this type of assistance (5).

“Sure, we all know that we drink too much and at times our emotions are all screwed up, but that comes with the turf, and if you find that hard to deal with, then there is always the royal family to follow or a Wimbledon to report on, heaven forbid.” She shuddered (5).

The more I listened, the more I came to realize that her profession, for all its allure and excitement, was practiced at a cost to both emotional equilibrium and physical health (5).

Not only had most of the news organizations neglected to provide for the psychological welfare of their war reporters, but trauma researchers had ignored them too (6).

Somehow (war journalists) appear untouched by the death and destruction that surrounds them and forms the heart of their métier (7).

Soldiers may bleed and die, but journalists emerge unscathed (8).

Entrenched within the persona of the war journalist is an element of self-deception – the idea that he or she is someone who can confront war with impunity (8).

The news bosses are not immune to this way of thinking either, for it affords them a degree of comfort when dispatching journalists to wherever the latest conflagration erupts. So effective has the profession been in fortifying these constructs and perpetuating a very public myth of unassailability that researchers in the field of psychological stress have, to date, passed them by (8).

The deaths in Sierra Leone of two celebrated and very experienced journalists, Kurt Schork of Reuters and Miguel Gil Moreno of Associated Press Television News, have helped challenge the notion of invulnerability that has so tightly enveloped the profession (9).

CHRIS CRAMER (Iranian embassy in London siege) (9).

“Wasn’t the done thing, but I think if I knew then what I know now, I would have taken myself off to a shrink” (9).

“It fundamentally changed my ability to do my job” he recalled. “In other words, I lost my bottle. I did not want to be knowingly anywhere that was unsafe – at one point, that could even be a restaurant or the underground. I didn’t want to be anywhere that put things outside my control.” (9).

The BBC established a policy of offering counseling to employees back in the 1990s, and other news organizations are starting to follow suit (10).

Anthony Loyd Chechnya (12-13) – “It’s like looking at a light bulb and then looking at the afterimage. Days later, I could still see that woman. Literally for several days after it, there was this serum of an imprint. I still think of the image very often. I certainly have not forgotten it.” (13).

When news organizations sanitize the content of news, pandering to their viewers’ sensitivities, they also inadvertently influence the public’s perception of just how dangerous war journalism is (14).

However, maintaining a balance between factual description on the one hand and sensationalism on the other demands vigilance. Fascination with what the war journalist endures in war zones can very easily slip into voyeurism. This does the profession and any study of it a disservice. Conversely, to back off from describing the full magnitude and breadth