

The Dominion

dominion, *n.* 1. Control or the exercise of control. 2. A territory or sphere of influence; a realm. 3. One of the self-governing nations within the British Commonwealth.

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Iranian Reformist MPs Resign *en Masse*

Nearly 120 members of the Iranian parliament have resigned in protest of the barring of reformist candidates from the national election, plunging the 25-year-old republic into political chaos. A statement read by the faction across national radio condemned the interference and accused hard-line politicians of seeking to impose a Taliban-style dictatorship in Iran, a particularly cutting remark given hard-line Shiite Iran's hate of the Sunni Afghan fundamentalist movement.

Pro-reform Majlis speaker Mehdi Karubi appealed to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to assist in resolving the three-week old crisis.

Ayatollah Khamenei has already intervened to order the Guardian Council to be less stringent in its vetting of candidates, bringing the number of disqualifications down from 3605 to 1160. Still, the Council has not reinstated some 80 sitting members nor any prominent supporters of reformist President Khatami.

The Guardian Council has denied the interior ministry's request to delay the election. Mohammad Reza Khatami, brother to the president and head of the reformist Islamic Iran Participation Front, warned "If the conservatives want to organize an election with the backing of the military, this would not be an election. It would be a coup d'état."



Reformist President Mohammed Reza Khatami at celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of the revolution that overthrew the Shah.

NATO Expansion Raises Fears

Russian defence minister Sergei Ivanov indicated that Russia and NATO plan this year to sign a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) that would allow the former Cold War rivals to deploy military forces in each other's territory. A NATO spokesman in Brussels confirmed that the alliance has SOFAs with many nations with which it participates in training exercises.

On April 2nd, NATO accepted seven former Warsaw Pact nations into the alliance, including Bulgaria, Lithuania and Romania. NATO has more than doubled the number of its full member nations, now totaling 26, since the fall of the Berlin wall and has begun to work closely with a further 20. Critics suggest that such a large membership defeats the original purpose of NATO as a quick-reaction defence force. They note that every country to join NATO in recent years has committed forces to the

"coalition of the willing" in Iraq, with the exception of Slovenia. This trend is raising fears that NATO, to whom membership is largely vetted by the US, UK and France, is seeking to move into roles traditionally occupied by the UN.

East Asia Drying Out

Klaus Toepfer, director of the UN environmental watchdog UNEP, warned the world's environment ministers that dust and sand storm activity in Northeast Asia has increased five-fold over the past 40 years. The Global Environmental Outlook (GEO) Yearbook for 2003, launched at UNEP's annual conference in Jaju, Korea, describes stronger and more frequent storms that are plaguing northern China and Mongolia and spreading sand as far as Korea and Japan.

Despite this, the GEO reports that satellite imagery indicates the world is experiencing an overall increase in the amount of plant coverage

due to rainfall and temperature changes. Advances in farming techniques are partly responsible, but decreased cloud cover in the Amazon and increased monsoon activity in southwest Asia have caused a flourishing of plant life in these areas. Warming northern latitudes were also implicated as contributing to the greening effect.

Algerian Election Declared Fair

Bruce George, designated monitor of the Algerian elections on behalf of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), has declared that the re-election of President Bouteflika by an 83% majority was a fair and legitimate expression of the electorate's wishes. Although Mr. Bouteflika's main rival, former Prime Minister Ali Benflis, has claimed "massive fraud" in the landslide win, Mr. George is calling the vote "one of the best conducted elections, not just in Algeria, but in Africa and much of the Arab world."

The Algerian elections were monitored by over 120 foreign observers, including members from the Arab League, the African Union, the EU, OSCE, and the UN. Europe was particularly interested in seeing an election win by Bouteflika, who's stabilizing reforms have reduced refugees to the continent and contented the large Algerian population in France, as well as aided conditions for Europe's continued economic expansion into north Africa.



A critical mass in Toronto. Last week, Montreal police forced the bicycle-based protest to disperse. *Ontario Indymedia*

Unions, Council Launch Legal Challenge to Uphold Compliance with Canada Health Act

Courts should be able to review the federal government's compliance with the Canada Health Act, say a coalition of "public health care supporters" including the Council of Canadians, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, and the Canadian Health Coalition. The federal government's position, according to court documents filed at the end of April, is that courts have no authority to review its compliance with the Canada Health Act.

According to legal counsel Stephen Shrybman, the enforcement mechanisms of the CHA have never been used. Health Minister Pierre Pettigrew has claimed that it is complying with the Canada Health Act, but Shrybman says the federal government fails to collect the information that would allow it to determine if provinces are complying with the principles of the Act.

Passed unanimously in 1984, the Canada Health Act requires that health care in Canada be publicly adminis-

tered on a non-profit basis, comprehensive in coverage, universally available, accessible, and portable (meaning available to people who travel or move within Canada or outside the country).

"For years now the auditor general has criticized the federal government for its shoddy reporting on health care. We can't hold them to account to protect publicly funded, publicly delivered health care in Canada," said Linda Silas, President of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions.

"We suggest that behind this stonewalling is a political agenda—to tacitly encourage the provinces to allow further private, for-profit involvement in all aspects of health care," said Silas.

Liberals Get Set to Hype "Transformative Change"

"I look around the room here today and feel a renewed sense of energy... because we are entering what I believe will be a period of critically important transformative change." This is among the stock phrases Liberal campaigners are being encouraged to use in the coming election campaign.

Other phrases emphasize Paul Martin's leadership. "Our

prime minister, Paul Martin, is doing a tremendous job as the standard-bearer for change." "In only a few short months (Martin) has been able to set the stage to improve, through policies and initiatives, the lives of all Canadians in the coming decade."

Many observers are not impressed. Rabble.ca columnist Scott Piatkowski writes, "the period since the Martin takeover in December has been remarkably devoid of any new initiatives (as distinct from new speeches suggesting that new initiatives may soon occur, if only we wait for the next speech)." Maclean's columnist Paul Wells described Martin's health care initiatives thus: "he will solve health care, where all before him failed, by showing up." A recent analysis by Dennis Bueckert of Canadian Press found Conservative and Liberal rhetoric on health care to be deeply similar: "both sides spout similar platitudes, but offer few specifics".

Montreal Police Shut Down Critical Mass

Police dispersed a monthly bicycle protest in Montreal last week, arresting at least one person and handing out \$500 in fines. The "critical mass"

consisted of approximately 50 cyclists taking up one lane of a street in Montreal. Using the slogan "we're not blocking traffic, we are traffic", critical masses are a form of grassroots protest that aims to direct critical attention at unsustainable forms of transportation, particularly cars.

According to eyewitnesses, police forced several cyclists from their bicycles, issued fines, and threatened other cyclists with fines if they did not disperse. According to cyclists, this was the first time that Montreal police had forced a critical mass to disperse.

Critical masses occur on the last Friday of every month in at least 17 Canadian cities, in seven provinces (a list is available at www.criticalmassrides.info).

Among Canadian cities, Montreal is known for its relative support of sustainable transportation. Last September, Montreal was the only Canadian city to turn a significant part of its downtown core into a pedestrian street for several hours for Car-Free Day celebrations. Ste-Catherine, along with several other downtown streets, was transformed into an outdoor festival, with throngs of pedestrians filling space normally occupied by notoriously aggressive Montreal drivers.

Independent Journalism Under Occupation

by Dahr Jamail

Today in Iraq, like in the U.S., there is a horrendous disparity between what is really occurring on the ground and what the Western corporate media chooses to report.

I recently spent nine weeks in Iraq working as a freelance independent journalist. On a daily basis, I witnessed firsthand the corporate media either mis-reporting or not reporting stories as they arose.

The signs were glaring—from the parking lot full of parked white SUV's in the middle of the day supposedly used by the CNN and Fox news crews, to the absence of ABC, NBC, or CBS media crews at any of the sites of the news stories I was covering. Even stories that were on the front pages state-side are regularly being covered from the press room and not the field.

It's no wonder the corporate media rarely reports on the torturing of many of the over 10,000 detained Iraqis by the US military, the constant home raids, or the infrastructure in nearly complete disrepair as we begin the second year of the occupation. For most of the corporate media tend to stick closer to their hotels, rather than where the stories are occurring and being lived every day—out amongst the Iraqi people.

The majority of the corporate media tend to simply go where the U.S. military tells them it is safe to go, while donning their flack jackets, helmets, and the preferred 'we vs. they' mentality with Iraqis. Once they arrive at the scene of, say, a sealed off section of Baghdad where yet another Improvised Explosive Device has detonated near a passing patrol, they are herded to the one section the military allows to be photographed - so at best they might



An ambulance destroyed by US forces during the "siege of Fallujah". Jamail argues that corporate news outlets are willfully oblivious to war crimes and atrocities committed by occupying forces.

Dahr Jamail

get shots of an already cleaned up scene. The U.S. military in Iraq has a strong tendency to hide its own destroyed hardware to sanitize a scene, and the corporate media does a good job of making sure they don't run photographs of this, nor any wounded or dead U.S. soldiers.

Then there is, of course, the editorial selection factor. In mid-December I broke a story of U.S. military personnel detaining sixteen 14-17 year-old school boys at a secondary school in Al-Amiriya, Baghdad for holding a non-violent pro-Saddam Hussein demonstration after the dictator was captured.

When a friend who writes for the AP assisted in filing the story of armed soldiers pulling children from their classrooms to over 100 major newspapers throughout the U.S., only one editor responded. The reply? "This is not news."

Other stories I covered that were never run by corporate media outlets included a massacre near Ramadi where the military executed three men from a family, the gross mis-reporting of the military of their 'killing' 54 Fedayin fighters in Samarra during the end of November (really there were

two fighters and eight civilians killed), or the fact that most of the people in southern Iraq are suffering from water borne diseases due to the fact that Bechtel is not fulfilling their contractual obligations and rebuilding the water infrastructure there.

Instead, the US public is fed bogus polls telling them half of Iraqis feel they are better off now with a year of occupation under their belts. That is an amazing figure, since nearly every one of the hundreds of Iraqis I interviewed throughout Iraq was understandably enraged at the 70% unemployment, less than 8 hours of electricity per day in Baghdad, water so terrible there are cholera outbreaks in southern Iraq, and a security situation that spirals further out of control on a daily basis.

About the only time it's easy to find Iraqis who are pro-occupation is if you let the CPA show them to you, thus it's the journalists with the least initiative that find the rarest selections of public opinion by speaking to those pushing brooms or sitting at a desk at CPA HQ.

Every independent journalist I spoke with in Iraq reported the same thing: the majority of Iraqis, already incensed at the

Americans' failure to rebuild, and coping with the aforementioned abuses and hardships, have run out of patience with the occupying forces.

In fact, the conduct of the corporate media in Iraq is making the climate more dangerous for journalists. I have arrived at the scene of an attack on the U.S. military to report their heavy-handed reactions of shooting several Iraqi civilians, only to be threatened and yelled at by angry Iraqis. Why? Because they had become frustrated with telling their stories to corporate journalists, only to

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The Dominion is a not for profit free newspaper covering topics of interest to Canadians. We aim to provide a counterpoint to the mainstream papers, direct attention to independent journalism, and establish a venue where alternative forms of journalism can be practiced.

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Accounts highlights the work of independent journalists from around the world.

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Accounts Unsettled

Independent reporting from Iraq

The past two weeks have seen a remarkable effort on the part of the US government and numerous media outlets to directly contradict reality. The single most remarkable instance of the contradiction came from US military spokesman Mark Kimmitt, who said that "the stations that are showing Americans intentionally killing women and children are not legitimate news sources. That is propaganda, and that is lies."

The astoundingly frank exhortation to shun plainly evident reality in favour of official spin came amid US claims that 95% of the 600 killed and thousands wounded during the military siege of Fallujah were "fighters". An estimated 60,000 people were displaced. Thanks to independent reporting and other direct accounts, we know these assertions to be blatantly misleading.

If disinformation can be so effective in one instance, it should sharpen our sensibilities in a general way as well. The following excerpted reports from soldiers, activists and independent reporters in Iraq represent a series of hints at the reality that is missing from corporate media coverage of Iraq.

—Dru Oja Jay

From an interview with Lance Corporal Mike Hoffman of the US Marine Corps. Hoffman participated in the initial invasion of Iraq, and is now a member of Philadelphia Veterans for Peace. The interview appeared in Traveling Soldier magazine (<traveling-soldier.org>).

B: Now, I know from what you've said in the past that even before you went you had some



Residents of Fallujah transport a woman shot by a US sniper. Dahr Jamail/New Standard News

questions about the war. What I'm wondering is this: how the actual experience of being there influenced your opinion.

H: It really added a great deal of resolution to my ideas, because after being there I saw what it really meant. I saw the destroyed villages, I saw guys there with lives taken on both sides and lives destroyed by what happened there and by what people did over there.

B: The media have reported that since the 3rd Infantry Division really raised hell about not going home, there's been a clamp down that soldiers are not free to express opinions against the war. Does this apply to Marines also?

H: It applies to everyone. There was a clamp down before that happened. They told us what we could and couldn't say to the media and the media was told what they could and couldn't report. And on top of that there was an unspoken pressure on everyone not to say the wrong thing. We all knew what the wrong thing was—anything critical of war or about

what we thought was happening over there. Even though I'm out of the military, when I came back to Fayetteville last night—even though I wasn't stationed here—there's another military town literally less than half an hour from where I was stationed, which is almost the exact same place. Even though I know I'm not in the military and I'm not part of it anymore, I still felt that pressure again just being here. Especially when it's so fresh—it's really something hard to fight against.

B: Would you say from your own experience, and others you've talked to, that feelings among the rank-and-file of the armed forces are more or less or about the same in their criticism of the war. Is it increasing or decreasing?

H: It's definitely increasing as the length of the occupation goes on, because they don't see themselves getting anywhere. They're doing things almost like something they heard about in Vietnam, where in Vietnam guys would go on patrol and they'd sit outside of the base and they'd make false radio reports.

Instead, you've got guys who are sent on patrol and instead of a real patrol they jump in a humvee and drive through town as fast as possible to avoid any kind of confrontation. And that's not the point of a patrol. On a patrol you're trying to find intelligence, you're trying to make some difference there. These guys are just trying to get through without getting killed.

Jo Wilding is an English activist currently working on humanitarian projects in Iraq. The following is excerpted from her online diary, which can be found at <wildfirejo.blogspot.com>.

Azzam is driving, Ahmed in the middle directing him, and me by the window, the visible foreigner, the passport. Something scatters across my hand, simultaneous with the crashing of a bullet through the ambulance, some plastic part dislodged, flying through the window.

We stop, turn off the siren, keep the blue light flashing, wait, eyes on the silhouettes

of men in US Marine uniforms on the corners of the buildings. Several shots come. We duck, get as low as possible and I can see tiny red lights whipping past the window, past my head. Some, it's hard to tell, are hitting the ambulance. I start singing. What else do you do when someone's shooting at you? A tire bursts with an enormous noise and a jerk of the vehicle.

I'm outraged. We're trying to get to a woman who's giving birth without any medical attention, without electricity, in a city under siege, in a clearly marked ambulance, and you're shooting at us. How dare you?

*

Saad has had four contracts from the Dutch military for school rehabilitation. He doesn't have much time for the likes of Bechtel who take contracts at inflated prices and just siphon off the money and don't do the work properly, but he's more irritated still with the translators working for the Dutch army, who are diverting the contracts to their own relatives and friends, he said.

Yesterday a contract worth \$91,000 was given to the brother of the translator, a 19-year old with no experience as a building contractor or engineer. The money is good on these contracts and the translators know they can get away with securing them for their own families, even when they're not professionals. As a civil engineer with twenty years of experience, Saad felt aggrieved and decided to go and challenge the decision in court.

I was dubious that there were any processes through which he could challenge it, any system of judicial review for procedural impropriety, any appeals process. Sure enough, when I saw him later, he said nothing happened in court because the translator was a friend of the Dutch military.

But Saad says that everything is better now Saddam is gone. He doesn't care how long foreign troops stay or

what they take, he says, as long as the Baathists are gone. It doesn't matter to him who runs the country so long as it's not the Baathists. He spent four months in the jail in the security police headquarters in 1994, showed us the scar on his ankle where a cigarette was put out. He pointed out the jail where he was held. "I burnt it with my own hands," he said, miming striking a match. Bush, he said, is a gentleman.

The men and women in jail now—without charge, trial, lawyers, without their families knowing where they are—are all from Fallujah, Ramadi or Tikrit, he insists. Nothing will convince him that there are detainees from anywhere else in Iraq, nor that merely to be from those places is not a valid reason for internment. Everyone from the three towns was directly oppressing the people of the south, he says, every one, including the children.

Sometimes reconciliation seems a long way off.

From "Baghdad Burning", the online commentary of an anonymous Iraqi programmer who is known as Riverbend: <riverbendblog.blogspot.com>.

I've been reading articles about Chalabi being (very hopefully) on his way out. I can't believe it took this long for Washington to come to the conclusion that he is completely useless. Did anyone there actually believe he was going to be greeted as the leader of a new era? We were watching him carefully during the last few weeks, trying to see what he would do or say during the attacks on Fallujah and all the fighting in the south. That was a crucial time: we were waiting for some reaction from the Puppets—any reaction. Some condemning words; some solidarity with the Iraqis being killed and left homeless—and there was a strange sort of silence. One of them threatened to step down, but that was only

after outraged Iraqis showed an inclination to eat them alive if something wasn't done about the situation.

Chalabi has only lately ventured out from under his rock (in the usual flashy tie) to cry out that Lakhdhari al-Braheimi, the special UN representative sent by Kofi to check out the possibility of elections, is completely and totally biased against Shi'a. So now Chalabi seems to consider himself a champion of Shi'a everywhere in Iraq. The amusing thing about this is the fact that, apparently, no one has told Chalabi that he has become the joke of the Shi'a community. We (Sunnis and Shi'a) tease each other with things like, "So, the Shi'a man of the moment is Chalabi, ah?!" and the phrase is usually received with an indignant outcry and a comparison of the man of the moment to Britney Spears, for example.

I stare at him when he gives his speeches on television and cringe with the thought that someone out there could actually have thought he was representative of any faction of Iraqi society. I can hardly believe that he was supposed to be the one to target the Iraqi intellectuals and secularists. He's the tasteless joke Bush and Co., sent along with the soldiers and tanks to promote democracy—rather like one of those plastic blowup dolls teenage boys practice dancing with before the prom.

I also heard today that the Puppets are changing the flag. It looks nothing like the old one and at first I was angry and upset, but then I realized that it wouldn't make a difference. The Puppets are illegitimate, hence their constitution is null and void and their flag is theirs alone. It is as representative of Iraq as they are—it might as well have "Made in America" stitched along the inside seam. It can be their flag and every time we see it, we'll see Chalabi et al. against its pale white background.

From "Report from Fallujah—Destroying a Town in Order to Save it", by Rahul Mahajan. It was originally posted to Mahajan's web site, Empire Notes (<empirenotes.org>).

Rana al-Aioubi, one of our translators, told me, "These are simple people." Without wanting to go along with the patronizing air of the remark, there is a strong element of truth to it. These are agricultural tribesmen with very strong religious beliefs. They are insular and don't easily trust strangers. We were safe because of the friends we had with us and because we came to help them. They are not so far different from the Pashtun of Afghanistan—good friends and terrible enemies.

The muj are of the people in the same way that the stone-throwing shabab in the first Palestinian intifada were—and the term, which means "youth," is used for them as well. I spoke to a young man, Ali, who was among the wounded we transported to Baghdad. He said he was not a muj but, when asked his opinion of them, he smiled and stuck his thumb up. Any young man who is not one of the muj today may the next day wind his aqal around his face and pick up a Kalashnikov. After this, many will.

Al-Nazzal told me that the people of Fallujah refused to resist the Americans just because Saddam told them to; indeed, the fighting for Fallujah last year was not particularly fierce. He said, "If Saddam said work, we would want to take off three days. But the Americans had to cast us as Saddam supporters. When he was captured, they said the resistance would die down, but even as it has increased, they still call us that."

Nothing could have been easier than gaining the goodwill of the people of Fallujah had the Americans not been so brutal in their dealings. Tribal peoples like these have been the most easily duped by imperial-

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Like Water for Profit

An interview with Rudolph Amenga-Etego

by Hillary Lindsay

On April 19th, Rudolph Amenga-Etego was awarded the Goldman Prize, often thought of as the "Nobel Prize for the Environment," for his struggle to secure safe and affordable drinking water for the people of Ghana. It is not the word water that repeats itself most often in conversation with Amenga-Etego, however, but the word community.

According to Amenga-Etego, the World Bank has left this critical component out of its plan for water delivery in Ghana. "Their formula does not include communities. Basically, they promote a development that transfers money from banks to governments to multinational corporations. The multinational corporations then deliver the resources to the people who have no say."

Amenga-Etego is determined that the people of Ghana will have a say in the battle over the control of their country's water.

In 2001 the Ghanaian government, which owes significant debt to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), raised water rates by 95 percent in order to help pay off its debt. Many Ghanaians can no longer afford the cost of clean drinking water, and according to the country's Ministry of Health 70% of all disease in the country is water related.

The World Bank and IMF have now offered to loan Ghana even more money in order to rebuild its publicly owned and controlled water system. But the 400 million dollar loan comes with a catch: The Ghanaian government must abandon its practice of subsidising the cost of water for poor communities, and the water must be sold at full market rates.



Ghanaians gather water from a well in Sukuru. So far, citizens have successfully prevented large-scale water privatization. Will Parrinello

Amenga-Etego has no illusions about the intentions of the World Bank or the multinational corporations lining up to supply Ghana's water needs. "The World Bank policy is aimed at creating markets for multinational corporations dealing water, and those corporations are not charities, they are in it for the profit."

In response to the threat of privatisation, Amenga-Etego founded the National Coalition Against the Privatisation of Water, made up of health workers, farmers, academics, environmental groups, trade unions, students and religious leaders.

"For the past three years there's been a groundswell in resistance to privatisation, and you will see that when you go into the communities and encounter what we call the local action committees."

Communities have been at the heart of resistance in Ghana,

and according to Amenga-Etego they are also at the heart of the solution. "Water is meant for human consumption, it's for communities, so if those who benefit are involved then you ensure ownership. You also ensure the issues of governance are addressed because you bring management and accountability to the doorsteps of the people."

The small Ghanaian town of Savelugu provides a working example of the kind of community-based water management model that Amenga-Etego is promoting. A public water company supplies bulk water to the community and the town handles the distribution, rate collection, basic repairs and maintenance of the pipes. "It helps promote grassroots democracy. What is more democratic than involving people in managing their own lives?"

Amenga-Etego insists that Savelugu's community-based

system, which is now being used as a model for small towns throughout Ghana, is not only more democratic, but also more efficient. Burst pipes are quickly fixed, collection rates have increased, people who cannot afford to pay for water are known in the community and exempt from any cost and most importantly, people in Savelugu have easy access to clean, affordable drinking water.

Community mobilisation and organising paid off in 2003 when the Ghanaian government bowed to pressure and suspended the water privatisation project. But the battle continues: the government is currently working to secure parliamentary approval of a new water privatisation plan and the World Bank has hired a public relations firm to lead a media campaign to promote the plan.

"Communities have to get their acts together" throughout Ghana and around the world, says Amenga-Etego. "We must establish networks of communities in defence of the right to water. These networks must share information about these companies, because they are the same companies."

Amenga-Etego believes that multinational corporations, such as U.S.-based Bechtel Corporation, Vivendi, Saur, Suez Lyonnaise of France and the U.K.'s Biwater, "have realized that the gold of today is water, and because the availability of fresh water is reducing due to climate change and other environmental problems, the value of water is increasing. Whoever controls the water in the future will control the wealth. Whoever controls the world's water is controlling the world's life. If people are serious about stopping this trend they need to stop the corporations"

Plunderphonics

by Jane Henderson

Mix the Beatles' *The White Album* with rapper Jay-Z's *Black Album* and what do you get? DJ Danger Mouse's experimental CD, *The Grey Album*. You also get a cease-and-desist order from EMI Music. Tracks from the 3000 now-illegal copies of this CD have spawned countless downloads and are just one of hundreds of examples in the current debate over what is art and what is piracy.

Canadian artist John Oswald has made a career out of walking that line. He's been plundering sound archives since the early 1970s, when he began with the recorded works (and sanction) of William S. Burroughs. But Oswald specifies that it must be "blatant ... There's a lot of samplepocketing, parroting, plagiarism and tune thievery going on these days which is not what we're doing." Instead, Oswald plays with "transformed but still recognizable" audio quotations, delighting in their interaction.

Consider the same situation in print. If I wanted to write a book out of a thousand or so fused quotations, as Oswald's *Plexure* album is made with audioclips, I would put in a big fat bibliography or more footnotes than T.S. Eliot. Readable? Not so much; but legal? Certainly. In sound art, however, Oswald points out that creating

such a "scholarly version" of *Plexure* would require negotiating "over a thousand clearances, and any one that is not obtainable would compromise the project." Is there no other way to create an audio footnote or sidestep sonic quotation marks?

Copyright showed up in the original American constitution, derived from England's 1709 Statute of Anne: for the encouragement of learning. The American exhibit *Illegal Art* points out the irony that copyright was "originally intended to facilitate the exchange of ideas, but is now being used to stifle it." Indeed, "if the current copyright laws had been in effect back in the day, whole genres such as collage, hip-hop, and Pop Art might have never have existed." Canonical greats like Bach or Shakespeare would also have some answering to do.

Importantly, copyright is a commodity. Its tradability means that it is always the copyright holders, who may or may not be the artists, whose rights are protected. Financial and creative protection for artists become just financial interest protection for copyright purchasers.

What is most valued here? The right to make money off your own work? The right to determine who else is making money off your work? The right to have maximum influence over interpretation of your work, or to stave off its subversion?

There are two debates. One is the question of what requires protection, creative production or the

money it can generate? The second is between different conceptions of art. As Martin Cloonan, chair of the anti-censorship group Free-muse and Head of the University of Glasgow's Department of Adult and Continuing Education recently wrote: "One

[conception] sees creativity as essentially social in nature and thus asserts that the rights of the public (or collective) are paramount...[T]he public's right to knowledge, to access the thoughts and deeds of others, is highly prized."

That's the belief of media project the DBI, propagators of the No Copyright Seal. Arguing that intellectual property concepts can only restrict the flow of info and ideas, the Department of Behavioural Investigation offers the seal to ensure that what it stamps can't be copyrighted by anyone, ever.

On the other hand, you could see "creation as an individualistic act where the rights of the artist (as vested in the copyright holder) are paramount. Here the right of the original artist is held to be paramount."

Between those polarized versions of art are the vast grey areas in which we find Oswald or DJ Danger Mouse, mucking around in other people's art to create artifacts anew.

So say the plunderers. Could we get a comment from the plundered?

William S. Burroughs, Elektra and The Grateful Dead, for example, have respected or requested that Oswald use their work. For his 1999 "sonic archeology" project *Disembodied Voice*, rights were not just given but the plundering project was actually commissioned. In this



case, Oswald used pianist Glenn Gould's acclaimed recordings of *The Goldberg Variations*. What he used though, was not the sound of the piano, but of Gould himself, inadvertently humming along. Oswald isolated, enhanced, and in some parts replicated Gould's unconscious vocals and *The National Ballet of Canada* then danced to the virtuoso's haunting hum instead of his familiar piano performance.

At the other extreme, though, is Oswald's 1990 album *Plunderphonics*, which the recording industry demanded be destroyed. Because most looted work is represented by record labels, it is difficult to find artist to artist dialogue on the subject, but it is clear in this case that the industry was acting on the request of plundered artist Michael Jackson. No doubt the album's cover, which morphed an image of Jackson's body with that of a naked white woman, caused some of the offence.

Artistic integrity is certainly up for debate, but it is unfortunate that it takes place mostly in the courts and through sharply worded letters of warning to sound artists. The grey areas of intellectual property law leave room for experimentation and redefinition but the atmosphere is discouraging and it takes a certain amount of audacity to break through.



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ists for centuries now. But now a tipping point has been reached. To Americans, “Fallujah” may still mean four mercenaries killed, with their corpses then mutilated and abused; to Iraqis, “Fallujah” means the savage collective punishment for that attack, in which over 600 Iraqis have been killed, with an estimated 200 women and over 100 children (women do not fight among the muj, so all of these are noncombatants, as are many of the men killed).

A Special Forces colonel in the Vietnam War said of the town, Ben Tre, “We had to destroy the town in order to save it, encapsulating the entire war in a single statement. The same is true in Iraq today—Fallujah cannot be “saved” from its mujahedeen unless it is destroyed.

From an April 12 report by Dahr Jamail, entitled “Americans Slaughtering Civilians in Falluja”. It was originally published by the New Standard (NewStandardNews.net).

B Once we turned off the highway, which the US was perilously holding onto, there was no U.S. military presence visible at all as we were in mujahedeen-controlled territory. Our bus wound its way through farm roads and each time we passed someone they would yell, “God bless you for going to Fallujah!” Everyone we passed was flashing us the victory sign, waving, and giving the thumbs-up.

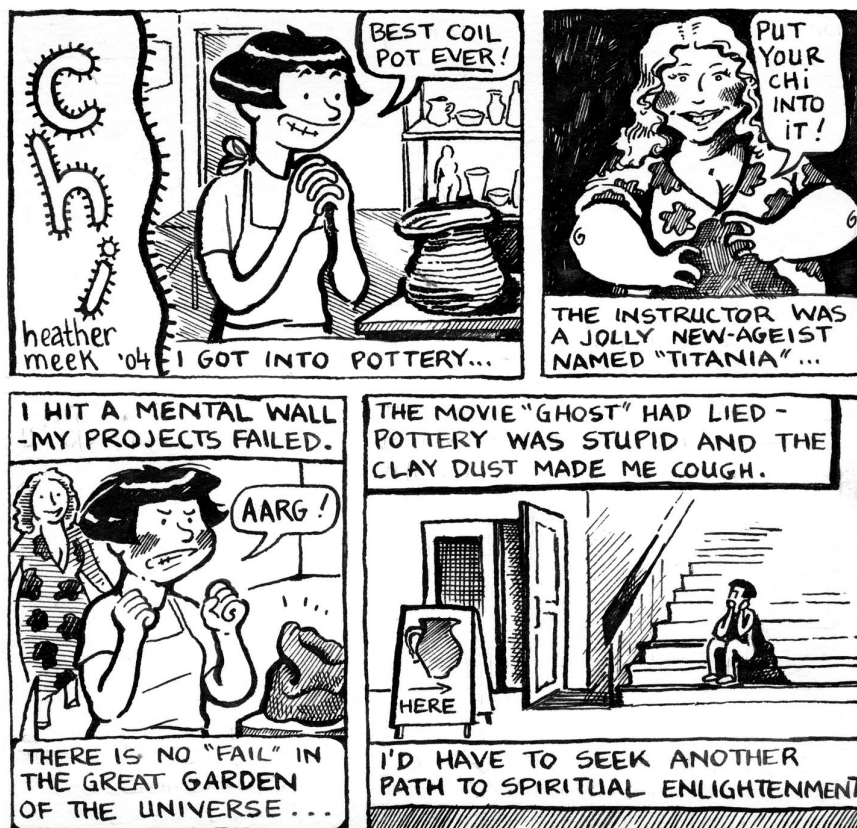
As we neared Fallujah, there were groups of children on the sides of the road handing out water and bread to people coming into the city.

They began literally throwing stacks of flat bread into the bus. The fellowship and community spirit was unbelievable. Everyone was yelling for us, cheering us on, groups speckled along the road.

As we neared Fallujah a huge mushroom caused by a large US bomb rose from the city. So much for the ceasefire.

The closer we got to the city, the more mujahedeen checkpoints we passed—at one, men with kefir around their faces holding Kalashnikovs began shooting their guns in the air, showing their eagerness to fight.

The city itself was virtually empty, aside from groups of mujahedeen standing on every other street corner. It was a city at war. We rolled towards the one small clinic where we were to deliver our medical supplies from INTERSOS, an Italian NGO. The small clinic is managed by Mr. Maki Al-Nazzal, who was hired just 4 days ago. He is not a doctor. ...



Iraqis in the nearby Ramadi hospital and an Iraqi Policeman, reported seeing far more body bags than the three reported by CENTCOM.

Meanwhile, Dr. Rayid Al-Ani, the Assistant Director of the Ramadi Hospital reported three dead Iraqis having been brought to his hospital from the scene of the attack, and said three of the wounded brought to him with terminal injuries died shortly thereafter. Did the military revise their story? Of course not. Did any of the corporate media outlets hold them accountable for this? Of course not. Did they even bother driving out to Khaldiya to check the military's claims?

“Independent Journalism”,
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have these journalists return to Baghdad and parrot the military press release.

The most common example of the lack of investigative journalism by the corporate media in Iraq is that most of the journalists simply parrot what General Kimmitt and Dan Senor (Mr. Bremer's spokesman) feed them at the Coalition Provisional Authority press conferences. During these surreal “press conferences”, if the general or Mr. Senor are asked a tough question, the journalists microphone is sometimes cut, or the question is simply avoided altogether.

This was clearly illustrated when a US patrol was hit by an Improvised Explosive Device on January 27 in Khaldiya, an area between Ramadi and Baghdad.

The U.S. military reported three American soldiers and one Iraqi civilian killed in the attack. Every witness I interviewed at the scene, as well as wounded

in Iraq is not rocket science. I am simply doing my job as a journalist to report the Iraqi side of the story, along with the Coalition Press Information Center side. An informed citizenry forms the basis of a democracy. Not only are U.S. citizens being deprived of access to information about the true nature of the critical situation in Iraq, they are being outright lied to by most of the corporate media outlets.

Should the corporate media not be held accountable for blocking the democratic process? How can U.S. foreign policy be shifted when the media is simply not reporting the facts?

There may never have been a time such as this where the need for investigative independent journalism has been so great. In Iraq, citizens and soldiers both will continue to die on a daily basis while the corporate media continues to report on bogus polls.

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