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**From:** stevenspl@live.com on behalf of Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]  
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**To:** stevenspl@live.com  
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# Connecting

March 4, 2014



Colleagues,

Michael Meyer of Columbia Journalism Review wrote this story Monday on AP photographer **Khalid Mohammed** and how one photograph changed Americans' view of the Iraq War.

Here is his story:

Khalid Mohammed, a photographer for the Associated Press, took a picture 10 years ago of two charred American bodies hanging from a bridge and surrounded by a crowd of cheering Iraqis. His was far from the only photograph depicting the killing and mutilation of four civilian contractors on the streets of Fallujah on March 31, 2004, and the attack, while horrific, was far from the most militarily important event of the then one-year-old war. At this point, the number of Americans dead in Iraq was nearing 600, including five killed the same day as the contractors in a separate incident. But the power of Mohammed's image and others like it—each a presentation of a visual spectacle invented by a mob-drove coverage of the attack, making it one of the most significant events of the

war.

The photograph draws power from its contrast with the official narrative of the war at the time. When the image reached millions of viewers around the world, it had been almost a year since US troops seized Baghdad and helped Iraqi civilians tear down the statue of Saddam Hussein in Firdos Square. And it



was coming up on a year since President Bush was photographed on the aircraft carrier with the "Mission Accomplished" banner in the background. There was a growing wariness in the media and among the public that the war was turning into something more complicated than a limited engagement, but a new narrative, with attendant imagery, had yet to take hold. Press briefings maintained that Americans were being greeted as liberators by the Iraqi people, a view Mohammed's photograph challenged succinctly, albeit implicitly, and brashly, albeit silently.

Mohammed's photo told a different story, and did so in a single frame. It opened a new front in the war of public opinion for the Bush administration. For a time, it became the new face of the war and influenced not only the way the war was discussed but the way it was fought. Ten years later, it remains among a small number of images by which we'll remember the Iraq war. As Eddie Adams, who took the iconic photo of a South Vietnamese general executing a Vietcong prisoner on a street in Saigon, said to his colleague Nick Ut, who shot the famous Vietnam photo of the girl seared by napalm running toward the camera, "After the whole history of Vietnam is written, it'll just be our photos."

*Caption for photo: Iraqis chant anti-American slogans as charred bodies hang from a bridge over the Euphrates River in Fallujah, west of Baghdad, Wednesday, March 31, 2004. Enraged Iraqis in this hotbed of anti-Americanism killed four foreigners Wednesday, including at least one U.S. national, took the charred bodies from a burning SUV, dragged them through the streets, and hung them from the bridge. (AP Photo/Khalid Mohammed)*

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## Apologies to Mary

Apologies to **Mary Pennybacker** for my error in her first name in Monday's Connecting. With that, another kudo for the retired Washington administrative assistant:

**Walter Mears** - Enjoyed Mary Pennybacker's note - just as I enjoyed working with her all those years. She made things work and is a treasured personal friend. I am lucky to have been one of her COBs. She made us all better.

## AP in the news

AP board director Charles Pittman retiring from Schurz Communications

The Oscar for best selfie goes to ...

Anti-Gay Scouting Group Says It Was 'Horrified' The AP Published This Photo

## **1,717th column**

**Carl Leubsdorf** writes: With the attached column, I begin this week my 34th year as a columnist for The Dallas Morning News and, through its offices, for the McClatchy Tribune News Service. (Thanks to the editors of The News, I was able to continue the column after I retired as the paper's Washington bureau chief at the start of 2009.) That makes it my 1,717th column, not counting an extra when President Reagan died on a weekend, since I have not missed a week during the past 33 years. And to answer the obvious question, yes, I do take vacations, and I don't write while I'm away. I write something before I go away. The only time that was really risky was in 2001 when I underwent open heart surgery and wrote a column to appear afterwards, during Thanksgiving week, in which I gave thanks for having made it. I figured if I didn't, the column would not run. (Carl worked for the AP from 1960 to 1975, when he joined The Baltimore Sun, where he covered national politics and the White House for five years before being hired by ex-AP Managing Editor Burl Osborne, who had

become Executive Editor of The Dallas Morning News, as the paper's Washington Bureau chief. He held that job for 28 years and, when he retired, continued to write his weekly column.) [Here](#) is the link to his latest column.

### Ah, Rio...

As the wind howled outside my door with single-digit temperatures, AP's Brazil chief of bureau [Bradley Brooks](#) posted this photo on Facebook of him and his wife Fabiana, who are expecting their first child - to be named Jimmy, after his father - on April 24.

They posed for this shot in far different weather than I am experiencing, so I am sharing it with others on Connecting in colder climes, just to rub it in. Brad notes that with this year's new family addition in April, Brazil hosting the World Cup in June-July, a complicated office move in Rio (the western hemisphere's hottest real estate market at present) involving the creation of a GMS studio and shared space with BBC and their new Rio studio, not to mention the 2016 Olympics, "the headline here is I'm going growing grayer by the minute!"



**Welcome to Connecting**

## **Dudley welcomes these new members of Connecting**

**Terry Anderson** - After two years at the University of Kentucky and a year at Syracuse University, I've been in Ft. Lauderdale for two years doing a consulting job for an international business startup. I'll be retiring at the end of the month, but not completely, perish the thought. I'm going to be teaching at the University of Florida in Gainesville this fall. I'm rather surprised to be enjoying Florida (always thought I was a New York person, but I'm glad to be missing those winters). Incidentally, my daughter Sulome is very much a New York person - a freelancer doing a lot of stories in the Middle East, including (no surprise) Beirut - she's half-Lebanese. And who'd a thought, she's very good. (Editor's Note: On March 16, 1985, while serving as AP's chief Mideast correspondent in Beirut, Terry was abducted and held captive for the next six years and nine months. His captors were a group of radical Shiite Muslims called Hezbollah, who were supported by Iran. He was the longest-held of the American hostages captured in an effort to drive U.S. military forces from Lebanon during the Lebanese Civil War. Terry was released on December 4, 1991.)

**Ken Fields** - AP technology manager, Seattle, responsible for technical issues in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington State. Previous assignments ere Chicago chief of communications, Chicago Laserphoto operations manager, St. Louis technician and Indianapolis technician. Started with AP in St. Louis in 1978.

**Joe McKnight** - Hi Paul -- I was born Aug. 25, 1925 in my grandpappy's farm house, Perry County, Ala. Grew up at Selma, Ala., served 35 months in U. S. Army Air Corps 1943-46, including seven months on Luzon, Philippine Islands; graduated in 1950 at former Howard College, now

Samford University, Birmingham, Ala. I joined AP in Atlanta March 26, 1951. In Spring of 1959 I transferred to Birmingham bureau. In- April, 1963, I was appointed correspondent at Wichita, KS. I transferred to Columbus bureau in October, 1967 as Assistant Chief of Bureau. I was named enterprise editor for Ohio and remained in that job until I retired Dec. 31, 1991. First thing after retiring was to take a month to ski in Utah. When I returned I had a message that corporate communications was looking for an editor for the then retiree newsletter, Cleartime. I jumped at the chance and found it a great way to keep in touch with all the great people I was privileged to work with for so many years. With help from corp. com. I edited Cleartme for over 12 years until it was given a few pages in AP World. In June 1950 I married Peggy Frances Thompson at Birmingham. We have three sons, four grandsons. In early 1970s we took up snow skiing as a family interest with our three sons and a year or so later added water skiing -- Many happy outings on ski slopes from Vermont to Utah and on waters from Lake Erie to Norris Lake, TN. In retirement Peggy and I enjoy traveling -- we've driven in 49 of the 50 states (no bridge to Hawaii yet), Canada, Mexico, Costa Rica and a half-dozen European countries. We gave up skiing after I had a knee replaced in 2007 but I still enjoy tennis three or four days a week. And that's probably more than you wanted to know. CHEERS!

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## **Items of interest**

**Warren Buffett on newspapers: " \_\_\_\_\_ "**

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**Russia Wages Media War Alongside Crimea Invasion**

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**CNN's Ukraine dilemma**

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**Photojournalist Confronts Ethical Dilemma** (Bob Daugherty)

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**A CNN journalist and a giant in his humanity: He brought the funny**

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**What Marc Andreessen got right and got wrong in his future of news manifesto**

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**Last stop for One Stop: The digital revolution claims the corner newsstand**

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**A Freelancer's Dilemma: Solving the Identity Crisis**

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**The Washington Post's Native Ads Get Editorial Treatment**

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**Tiny digital publisher to put Newsweek back into print** (Mark Mittelstadt)

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**Heavyweight debate over the future of non-profit journalism**

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**At least one thing a web site can't do...**

When Wichita State won its conference and improved its record to 31-0, the only undefeated Division I men's basketball team and ranked second in the nation by AP, The Wichita Eagle was quick to distribute commemorative front pages brandished by players as their coach is interviewed on ESPN. (Shared by Eagle editor Sherry Chisenhall)



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