

Title: Carroll Bogert talk  
Byline: Tebben Lopez

Take the path less traveled.

A one-way ticket from the U.S.A. to Beijing, China might not have been what Robert Frost had in mind when he wrote his famous poem, but journalist and human rights activist Carroll Bogert's life has been a road not taken.

Fresh out of college, all Bogert knew was that she wanted to be a foreign correspondent. She had no experience, no portfolio and no time to work through the ranks of different news organizations – the more traveled path by journalists.

Instead, she went to Beijing. She figured that rather than planning to become a foreign correspondent, she would just be one. And for her, it worked.

"The best way to become a journalist is to become a journalist," she told students at a talk Tuesday Monday? night, at Fairfield University.

Over the years, Bogert has habitually been untraditional. She still is, now as, don't capitalize titles after names -1 eputy Executive Director for External Relations for the Human Rights Watch.

Prior to her visit to the university, Bogert conducted an inventory of the number of foreign correspondents in the news today. What she found were dwindling bureaus abroad, if the news organizations still had any.

"The internet has wrecked international journalism because no one knows how to fund them them is unclear," said Bogert. What she calls smart newspapers are trying to repurpose themselves in the new technological era and stay alive.

But while the Internet creates problems for big corporations, it enables small independent organizations like the Human Rights Watch. "The web gives us tools to make things ourselves," said Bogert.

She sees a hole that is forming in the mainstream media. Because of their dwindling resources and consequent lack of foreign correspondents a gap in coverage is appearing. Bogert believes that the Human Rights Watch can fill it.

This is no easy task, as Bogert explains. They are still figuring out how to use the new tools available to them. Each piece of information must be translated on several different levels of communication simultaneously. This multiplicity becomes very complex.

And there is no example to reference. Bogert doesn't know of many other independent organizations like hers that are doing the same thing.

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A particular point of debate, within and outside of the organization, is the multimedia aspect of the Human Rights Watch communication.

“We don’t know how much we should mimic the broadcast news,” said Bogert. But if they want to define and create a new visual style, they risk losing viewers.

The Human Rights Watch multimedia spots serve as what Bogert calls “D.I.P.s: digestible information products.” In contrast, their regular reports are geared towards experts. “We have a duty to communicate with people who aren’t specialists,” said Bogert.

In a recent investigation in Papua New Guinea, the Human Rights Watch came back with a report of gang rapes of women in the gold mining areas of the country. The reaction from the mining company was prompt and responsible.

But the multimedia spot fell under criticism because it broke the mold. Instead of a television story, the cinema photography felt more like a documentary. To critics, the art seemed inappropriate for such a gritty topic.

Bogert disagrees. She feels that the Human Rights Watch research is “top of its class” and the visuals should also be the best. “The better we look, the more people will want to look at us,” she said. [Even if it is a journalistic path less traveled](#)

For over a decade, Bogert has taken a journalistic path less traveled, and it seems to have made all the difference. [you give yr opinion here’ my add is an alternative](#)  
Deadline 2

Carroll Bogert

Self Reflection

My goal for this piece was to emphasize Bogert’s tendency to nuance and how it’s being reflected in her work and how it relates to the current situation in news. I readers to see how you can benefit from deviating from convention.

This is the first version so it hasn’t changed at all yet. [No rewrite? Hmm](#)

Everything leading up to this has been constructive. In particular, the focus and selectivity were strong in my mind when I was writing. Unfortunately, unlike the last

story like this, I only had a vague idea of what I wanted to write on, so I had a lot of unnecessary notes.

I'm not sure how this compares to the other stories. I struggled a bit with sorting through all the different information that I had. This turned out to be more of a **feature** **piece** might be yr strength as I think this is yr best work I think that the other pieces that I've done.

I think I stayed on point. Tell yr classmates to do so... I had a lot of interesting facts that I wanted to get in that I thought were relevant to the overall focus. I also tried to keep in mind the small paragraphs that I tend to struggle with.

I need to sharpen my story formulation process. I really can't leave it until after the event has happened. i'll avoid saying: told ya so I think I get really interested and stop thinking journalistically about the event. Besides that, I think I still need to work on my focus and discrimination with details, and then everything else to a lesser extent. But practice makes perfect, right?

I look forward to your comments so I can make this better.

There is a lot to like here. You have a personal style of writing that comes out in this softer kind of feature approach. You want to be versatile and write a variety of things, but this works to your strength.

Well done

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