

Extra! Extra! Read all about it!

Reporters Without Borders:

Defending press freedoms around the world



Reporters Without Borders (also known as *Reporters Sans Frontières*, or RSF) is a Paris-based international non-governmental organisation formed in 1985 to advocate freedom of the press. With offices across Europe and North America, and in Abidjan, Bangkok and Tokyo, RSF is internationally recognised for reporting on press freedoms in parts of the world where one's voice cannot always be heard.

Here in Montreal, Emily Jacquard, the secretary general of Reporters Without Borders Canada, was kind enough to offer AcademiX the opportunity to discuss her role at RSF and the "road to journalistic freedom."

Jacquard studied for her baccalaureate in France, but before enrolling in university she decided to take a year (or two!) off to brush up on her language skills by travelling through England and Germany, as she knew that she wanted to pursue a career in an international field. Upon her return to France she enrolled in a communications program at a university in Toulouse, in the south of France. She figured that with a degree in communications she would have more career options. As she eloquently puts it, "Everybody communicates – whether it be in political studies, journalism or international business." Jacquard opted for a two-year program so that she could get out into the workforce and start making a difference as quickly as possible.

While in Toulouse two things became abundantly clear. Firstly, an internship in a communications agency quickly showed Jacquard that the world of advertising and its persuasive communications techniques were not for her. Secondly, as an assignment for one of her courses she had to organise a mock media event for RSF promoting press freedoms. It was while working on this exercise that she first became aware of her dream to use communication skills in a more positive way.



Emily Jacquard, secretary general, Reporters Without Borders Canada

Jacquard then transferred to Concordia University, in Montreal, as part of an exchange program. It was during her initial studies in Canada that she decided to volunteer in the field of press freedoms. Jacquard explains, "I sent off my CV to *Médecins Sans Frontières*, Amnesty International, Doctors without Borders and Reporters Without Borders. At Concordia I had an amazing teacher – I think it was a revelation for me. The course she taught was Media in a Political Context, and it truly opened my eyes to the impact that media has on society – in all its forms, whether it be newspapers, radio, television or more recently the Internet and the role of journalism in democracy.



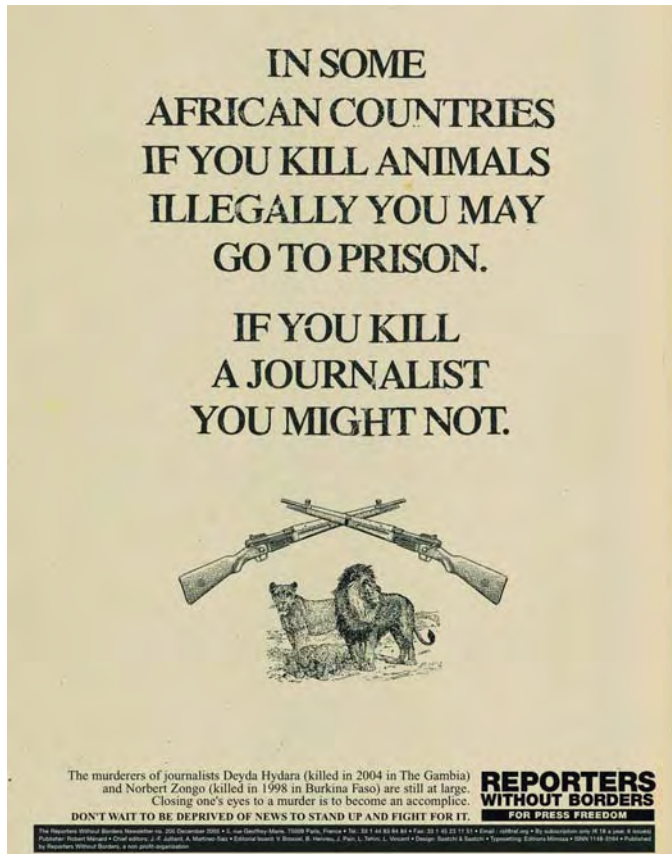
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FREEDOM
SHOULD NEVER BE
RESTRICTED**



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TO STAND UP AND FIGHT FOR IT**





Things that I had not really thought of before were suddenly clear in my head – the impact was tremendous and I knew that this was what I was meant to do.”

Jacquard says the realisation was a “light bulb moment.” She was “more than thrilled” when a response arrived from Reporters Without Borders.

She soon met with Francois Bugino, president and spokesperson for RSF Canada and himself a journalist from Rwanda, who was setting up an office in Montreal. Bugino had previously worked with RSF in Africa. At the interview she presented the RSF exercise that she had worked on in France. It so happened that Bugino wanted to hold a photojournalism exhibition in Montreal to raise awareness on the presence of RSF in Canada. He gave Jacquard the opportunity to turn her course exercise into reality.

One year later and still very much involved with RSF, Jacquard’s exchange program came to an end and she had to return to France, but not for long. She was desperate to continue the work she had done with RSF. As soon as she could get herself a work permit she returned to Montreal. Five years later, she is still working for RSF and is as passionate as ever about the importance of her work raising awareness on freedoms of the press – and violations thereof – the world over.

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There have been many high points for Jacquard over the past five years, including an event she organised in which the guest speaker was the daughter of Fidel Castro, who came to talk about press freedoms in Cuba. World-renowned Iranian cartoonist Nickhang Kowsar also made a lasting impression. Nickhang fled to Canada in exile in 2003, leaving behind his wife and daughter in Iran after he received death threats because of his scathing cartoons against the Islamic regime. If Kowsar had stopped drawing he would have been allowed to remain in Iran, but instead he chose to flee to Canada so that he could continue to express his opinions through a blog and his cartoons.

Last July Jacquard travelled to Afghanistan to help with the development of the country’s independent media. RSF was particularly interested in the state of press freedoms five years after the fall of the Taliban.

For 2007, Jacquard’s focus is on the impact of the Internet on journalism. In China, which is probably one of the worst places in

Freedom of the Press 2006: Draft Country Report

The following survey, first launched in 1980, assesses the degree of print, broadcast and Internet freedom in every country in the world. It assigns each country a numerical score from 0 to 100 that determines a category rating of Free, Partly Free or Not Free.

Country Ranking

N°	Country	Score
1	Finland	0.50
-	Iceland	0.50
-	Ireland	0.50
-	Netherlands	0.50
5	Czech Republic	0.75
6	Estonia	2.00
-	Norway	2.00
8	Slovakia	2.50
-	Switzerland	2.50
10	Hungary	3.00
-	Latvia	3.00
-	Portugal	3.00
-	Slovenia	3.00
14	Belgium	4.00
-	Sweden	4.00
16	Austria	4.50
-	Bolivia	4.50
-	Canada	4.50
19	Bosnia and Herzegovina	5.00
-	Denmark	5.00
-	New Zealand	5.00
-	Trinidad and Tobago	5.00
23	Benin	5.50
-	Germany	5.50
-	Jamaica	5.50
26	Namibia	6.00
27	Lithuania	6.50
-	United Kingdom	6.50
29	Costa Rica	6.67
30	Cyprus	7.50
31	South Korea	7.75
32	Greece	8.00
-	Mauritius	8.00
34	Ghana	8.50
35	Australia	9.00
-	Bulgaria	9.00
-	France	9.00
-	Mali	9.00
39	Panama	9.50
40	Italy	9.90
41	El Salvador	10.00
-	Spain	10.00

Country Ranking

N°	Country	Score
43	Taiwan	10.50
44	South Africa	11.25
45	Cape Verde	11.50
-	Macedonia	11.50
-	Mozambique	11.50
-	Serbia and Montenegro	11.50
49	Chile	11.63
50	Israel	12.00
51	Japan	12.50
52	Dominican Republic	12.75
53	Botswana	13.00
-	Croatia	13.00
-	Tonga	13.00
-	United States of America	13.00
57	Uruguay	13.75
58	Fiji	14.00
-	Hong-Kong	14.00
-	Poland	14.00
-	Romania	14.00
62	Central African Republic	14.50
-	Cyprus (North)	14.50
-	Guinea-Bissau	14.50
-	Honduras	14.50
66	Madagascar	15.00
-	Togo	15.00
68	Ecuador	15.25
69	Nicaragua	15.50
70	Burkina Faso	16.00
-	Kosovo	16.00
-	Lesotho	16.00
73	Congo	17.00
-	Kuwait	17.00
75	Brazil	17.17
76	Argentina	17.30
77	Mauritania	17.50
-	Senegal	17.50
-	United Arab Emirates	17.50
80	Albania	18.00
-	Qatar	18.00
82	Paraguay	18.25
83	Timor-Leste	18.50
84	Liberia	19.00

How the index was compiled

The index measures the state of press freedom in the world. It reflects the degree of freedom journalists and news organisations enjoy in each country and the efforts made by the state to respect and ensure respect for this freedom.

Each country has a ranking and a score which together sum up the state of press freedom there. A country can change rank from year to year even if its score stays the same, and vice-versa.

This year's report is based on events between September 1, 2005 and September 1, 2006. It does not consider human rights violations in general, but only press freedom violations.

Reporters Without Borders compiled a questionnaire with 50 criteria for assessing the state of press freedom in each country. It includes every kind of violation directly affecting journalists (such as murders, imprisonment, physical attacks and threats) and news media (censorship, confiscation of issues, searches and harassment).

It registers the degree of impunity enjoyed by those responsible for such violations. It also takes account of the legal situation affecting the news media (such as penalties for press offences, the existence of a state monopoly in certain areas and the existence of a regulatory body) and the behaviour of the authorities towards the state-owned news media and the foreign press. It also takes account of the main obstacles to the free flow of information on the Internet.

RSF has taken account not only of abuses attributable to the state, but also those by armed militias, clandestine organisations or pressure groups that can pose a real threat to press freedom.

The questionnaire was sent to partner organisations of Reporters Without Borders (14 freedom of expression groups in five continents) and its 130 correspondents around the world, as well as to journalists, researchers, jurists and human rights activists. A scale devised by the organisation was then used to give a country-score to each questionnaire. The Statistics Institute of the University of Paris provided assistance and advice in processing the data reliably and thoroughly.

The 168 countries ranked are those for which completed questionnaires were submitted from a number of independent sources. Others were not included because of a lack of credible data. Where countries tied, they are listed in alphabetical order. The index should in no way be taken as an indication of the quality of the press in the countries concerned.

For further information please visit: www.rsf.org

Freedom of the Press 2006: Draft Country Report (cont.)

Country Ranking

N°	Country	Score
85	Moldova	19.17
86	Mongolia	19.25
87	Haiti	19.50
88	Tanzania	19.82
89	Georgia	21.00
90	Guatemala	21.25
91	Angola	21.50
92	Malaysia	22.25
93	Comoros	22.50
-	Zambia	22.50
95	Niger	24.50
-	Seychelles	24.50
97	Morocco	24.83
98	Bhutan	25.00
-	Côte d'Ivoire	25.00
-	Turkey	25.00
101	Armenia	25.50
-	Malawi	25.50
103	Indonesia	26.00
-	Sierra Leone	26.00
105	India	26.50
-	Ukraine	26.50
107	Lebanon	27.00
108	Cambodia	27.25
109	Guinea	27.50
-	Jordan	27.50
111	Bahrain	28.00
112	Cameroon	28.25
-	Peru	28.25
114	Gabon	28.50
115	Venezuela	29.00
116	Uganda	29.83
117	Tajikistan	30.00
118	Kenya	30.25
119	USA (extra-territorial)	31.50
120	Nigeria	32.23
121	Djibouti	33.00
122	Thailand	33.50
123	Kyrgyzstan	34.00
124	Chad	35.50
125	Burundi	39.83
126	Algeria	40.00

Country Ranking

N°	Country	Score
127	Swaziland	40.50
128	Kazakhstan	41.00
-	Rwanda	41.00
130	Afghanistan	44.25
131	Colombia	44.75
132	Mexico	45.83
133	Egypt	46.25
134	Palestinian Authority	46.75
135	Azerbaijan	47.00
-	Israel (extra-territorial)	47.00
137	Bangladesh	48.00
-	Equatorial Guinea	48.00
139	Sudan	48.13
140	Zimbabwe	50.00
141	Sri Lanka	50.75
142	Democratic Republic of Congo	51.00
-	Philippines	51.00
144	Maldives	51.25
-	Somalia	51.25
146	Singapore	51.50
147	Russia	52.50
148	Tunisia	53.75
149	Gambia	54.00
-	Yemen	54.00
151	Belarus	57.00
152	Libya	62.50
153	Syria	63.00
154	Iraq	66.83
155	Vietnam	67.25
156	Laos	67.50
157	Pakistan	70.33
158	Uzbekistan	71.00
159	Nepal	73.50
160	Ethiopia	75.00
161	Saudi Arabia	76.00
162	Iran	90.88
163	China	94.00
164	Burma	94.75
165	Cuba	95.00
166	Eritrea	97.50
167	Turkmenistan	98.50
168	North Korea	109.00



the world for press freedoms, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to present points of view deemed undesirable by the state.

The Internet is developing at break-neck speed in China but without any letup in censorship. Both in Beijing and in the outer provinces the authorities continue to crack down on those who discuss sensitive political issues online.

On a final note, here's something for all of our readers to think about:

More than a third of the world's people live in countries with little or no press freedoms. RSF works tirelessly to protect the peoples' right to unfiltered information. Forty-two journalists lost their lives in 2003 for doing what they were paid to do – keep us informed. Today, more than 130 journalists around the world are in prison for their reports. RSF supports journalists and media professionals who have been imprisoned or persecuted for their work and provides financial and other support to their families. It also speaks out against abuses, censorship and laws that limit freedom of the press.

For more info on RSF check out their website at www.rsf.org.