

FERGUSON: Reporter shares experience from field

Continued from Page 1A

For example, “wealthier people, mainly white, left for the suburbs, choking off the city in the middle. The city stayed mostly black,” he explained. “The surrounding counties needed revenue. So they found their revenue by charging, with tons of violations, the people in that small, poor area. (City residents) started to accumulate fines. The fines led them into debtors jail.”

These and other tensions escalated for years, Duara said. And when Michael Brown was shot, they exploded.

The Ferguson story lent itself not just to copious coverage but numerous news angles — the race angle, the class angle, the civil rights angle, the civil liberties angle, the police-vs.-protesters angle.

“CNN, FOX and Infowars are all going to grab a different piece of that,” Duara said.

And, as in the ancient Indian story of blind men touching a part of an elephant — in which one man believes the animal’s tail is a rope, another believes its side is a rock, a third believes a leg is a tree trunk, etc. — none of the media outlets saw the big picture.

“Nobody sees the elephant, and that includes us in print media,” he said.

Event coverage

Stories like Ferguson — full of opportunities for powerful footage and iconic photographs



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Audience members watch footage of the Ferguson, Missouri, demonstrations during the Columbia Forum presentation by Nigel Duara.

— put print journalists at a disadvantage compared to, say, broadcast journalists and photo-journalists, according to Duara, now a reporter at the Los Angeles Times.

In print media, reporters can convey background and explain abstract, esoteric ideas, “which is not a luxury that broadcasters have.” But Ferguson-type events tend to be so visually compelling that images often tell the story far better than prose can tell it, he said.

In generations past, news centered more on institutional coverage of city council meetings, legislative sessions and police departments. Reporters tracked their beats and obtained copies of bills, meeting minutes

and police reports.

But increasingly, “we’ve moved away from reporting on institutions and moved toward reporting on events,” he said, “and there are consequences to that decision.”

For instance, it means that news coverage is influenced less by institutions and — especially if the institution is a business or a nonprofit — public relations departments. Institutions “need to make good news about themselves. Otherwise, it’s all going to be bad,” he said.

It also means, of course, that coverage depends on events taking place. Without a public-relations specialist helping set the tone and shape the story, reporters have to do it themselves, like

they did in Ferguson. And each journalist will only be able to capture a fragment of a larger story.

Though many viewers watching coverage on TV and the Internet often saw lines of protesters facing lines of police, “as with every situation, it wasn’t homogeneous,” he said.

“There were protesters that had been drinking all day; they were ready to fight. There were protesters who had been reading about civil rights, really, all day — seriously, blogging about civil rights all day — and came out to actually protest,” he said.

“There were police officers who came out to break somebody’s head open, and there were police officers who came out there

to preserve order.”

A key to understanding Ferguson is to know there were “countervailing forces of pretty equal determination,” Duara said. “Protesters wanted attention (paid) to a story that they felt needed to be told, at any cost, to themselves, the police or the city,” he said. “And the police had a standing order to maintain order at any cost.”

Conflict reporting

Ferguson was event coverage, but it was also institutional coverage, Duara said. It required “the kind of beat work, the emotional distance, to cover the ideas, while simultaneously covering the events.”

In battle or conflict, journalists of some kind have long played a role.

When the Greek historian and philosopher Thucydides — whom Duara called the first war correspondent — “covered” the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta in the Fifth Century B.C., he, like the reporters who covered Ferguson, tried to create a narrative that attempted to “make sense of chaos and death.”

Duara illustrated the difference between event coverage and institutional coverage by pointing to the differences between journalism during the Vietnam War and during the Iraq War.

“The military originally thought it was a good idea to send reporters with soldiers into Vietnam,” he said. “And the ef-

fect of that was that dead American soldiers were appearing on the nightly news. Coffins with flags on them were appearing on the nightly news. That did not go well.”

The military learned its lesson, and, with the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, journalists were embedded with the military, restricted from allowing dead soldiers and flag-draped coffins on TV.

“In Vietnam, it was event reporting,” he said. But during the Iraq War, “the coverage was not so much about an event. It was about an institution.”

“The institution was called the ‘coalition government,’ and it was doing its mightiest, as PR people, to shape the perception of itself,” he said, adding that “that’s the future of conflict reporting: We’re going to be further controlled. We’re going to have more people telling us more things and what to do. It’ll never be Vietnam again.”

But the Internet, smartphones and social media, like Facebook and Twitter, have all changed how news got reported, distributed and consumed.

“Now events are not just visual. They are also tactile. They are also participatory. You can hold them in your hands. You can interact with them,” he said.

When conflicts like Ferguson flare up, people can get involved in them from afar, he said. “And then we can shame the people who make bad jokes about it on Twitter, which has become a national pastime.”

MEDICARE: Seniors will have to make new choice for plan

Continued from Page 1A

individual and group commercial coverage, in Clatsop County.

Options

Advantage plans are offered by private companies that contract with Medicare to provide the same items but not necessarily at the same rates. The plans — which bundle Medicare parts A, B and D, and can

offer additional items — essentially replace Medicare for seniors enrolled in them.

Paulette McCoy, public affairs manager at Providence Seaside Hospital, said that Regence’s decision to pull the Advantage plan from the county will impact hundreds of Providence patients. “BlueCross was our most popular (insurance provider),” she said.

Columbia Memorial Hospital’s administration could not

be reached to provide patient figures.

Three health insurance companies in Clatsop County offer Advantage plans that can replace Regence: CareOregon and FamilyCare Health Plans, which contract with Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria, and Moda Health, which contracts with Providence Seaside.

Columbia Memorial will take payment from Moda Health, but payment amounts

will be larger because the hospital is out of the company’s network. Providence contracts with CareOregon but only for special-needs plans; enrollees must qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid, the federal health insurance program for the poor.

Shop carefully

Nearly one-third of Medicare beneficiaries could face record increases of roughly

50 percent in their Medicare premiums next year, while not receiving a cost-of-living increase in Social Security benefits, as reported this week in the New York Times.

Unless Congress intervenes, a quirk in federal law that protects about 70 percent of Medicare beneficiaries from premium hikes could expose the remaining 30 percent to “major price shocks” from the rising costs of prescription drugs,

Medicare Part B and new medical technology.

Michelle Lewis, community programs supervisor at Northwest Senior and Disability Services, advises soon-to-be-former beneficiaries of Regence’s Advantage Plan to shop carefully and to read thoroughly the replacement plans that interest them.

LUM'S
AUTO CENTER

46TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!

Thank you friends for 46 wonderful years!
Please join us for a fun celebration all weekend long!

SPECIALS ALL DAY!

BBQ LUNCH & CAKE!

OCTOBER 16TH FRIDAY 17TH SATURDAY & 18TH SUNDAY

HUGE SAVINGS on new & preowned vehicles

*Financing as low as 0% | *Manufacturers' Rebates | Service specials and much more

<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>NEW 2015 DODGE DART</p> <p>SE, 6-speed auto</p> <p>MSRP \$38,280 - Lum's Disc. \$783</p> <p>Final price \$17,582*</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Stock #395010</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>NEW 2014 DODGE CHARGER</p> <p>RT, AWD, V8 Hemi</p> <p>MSRP \$38,280 - Lum's Disc. \$4,282</p> <p>Final price \$33,998*</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Stock #394095</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>NEW 2015 DODGE CHALLENGER</p> <p>SXT or R/T, V8 Hemi</p> <p>MSRP \$36,375 - Lum's Disc. \$2,464</p> <p>Final price \$33,911*</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Stock #395039</p> </div>
<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>NEW 2015 JEEP CHEROKEE</p> <p>Latitude, 4x4, AWD, 9-speed auto</p> <p>MSRP \$38,280 - Lum's Disc. \$1,657</p> <p>Final price \$24,723*</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Stock #385006</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>NEW 2015 JEEP CHEROKEE</p> <p>Latitude, 4x4</p> <p>MSRP \$30,125 - Manuf. Rebate \$3,250 - Lum's Disc. \$1,717</p> <p>Final price \$25,158*</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Stock #385017</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>NEW 2015 JEEP PATRIOT</p> <p>Sport, 4x4</p> <p>MSRP \$25,825 - Manuf. Rebate \$2,500 - Lum's Disc. \$1,397</p> <p>Final price \$21,928*</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Stock #385019</p> </div>
<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>NEW 2015 GRAND CARAVAN</p> <p>6-speed automatic</p> <p>MSRP \$28,430 - Manuf. Rebate \$3,000 - Lum's Disc. \$1,678</p> <p>Final price \$22,752*</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Stock #395062</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>NEW 2014 TOYOTA SEQUOIA</p> <p>SR5, 4x4, sport package</p> <p>MSRP \$49,311 - Lum's Disc. \$5,313</p> <p>Final price \$43,998*</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Stock #924421</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 5px;"> <p>NEW 2014 TOYOTA SIENNA</p> <p>LE, 3.5L, FWD</p> <p>MSRP \$31,890 - Lum's Disc. \$3,892</p> <p>Final price \$27,998*</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Stock #924542</p> </div>

Voted BEST CAR DEALERSHIP EVERY YEAR

Readers' Choice Awards

LUM'S
AUTO CENTER

www.lumsautocenter.com 888-488-4260

1605 SE Ensign Ln • Warrenton

*Special APR financing is not available on all models — ask dealer if your model qualifies. Consumer cash rebates do not apply when 0.0% financing is chosen. Bonus Cash rebates do not apply when 0.0% APR financing for 60 or 72 months is selected. O.A.C. through Chrysler Capital or Toyota Financial Services. Special price does not include \$75 doc. title, registration and tax, if applicable. Lum's discounts and manufacturers' incentives may vary by model. See Lum's Auto Center for complete details. Subject to prior sale. Offers end 10/31/15.