



The Military and the Press: An Uneasy Truce (Medill Visions Of The American Press)

Michael S. Sweeney

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Because news is a weapon of war--affecting public opinion, troop morale, even strategy--for more than a century America's wartime officials have sought to control or influence the press, most recently by "embedding" reporters within military units in Iraq. This second front, where press freedom and military imperatives often do battle, is the territory explored in *The Military and the Press*, a history of how press-military relations have evolved during the twentieth and twenty-first century in response to the demands of politics, economics, technology, and legal and social forces.

Author Michael S. Sweeney takes a chronological approach, considering freedoms and restraints such as the First Amendment, court decisions, and government and military directives that have affected the press during World Wars I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the more recent conflicts. He explores the ongoing themes of wartime censorship and propaganda, as well as operational security in the battle zone. In chapters addressing the recent shift in military strategy in dealing with the press, Sweeney discusses new forms of control--from embedding journalists and discouraging unaccredited "unilaterals" to developing the news agenda through a barrage of briefings, sound bites, and visuals and appeals to patriotism that border on domestic propaganda. With profiles of a few specific journalists--from Richard Harding Davis covering the Spanish-American War to Christiane Amanpour reporting from the conflicts in Bosnia and Iraq--this deft blend of journalistic history and analysis should serve as a call-to-arms to a public not always well served by a military-press standoff.



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