Media and Democracy: from Afghanistan to the Arab Spring

Wednesday 1 June, 12.30-1.30pm
ALL WELCOME!
Faculty of Creative Arts, 25-128, University of Wollongong

From the 'Facebook revolution' in Egypt to the slow development of public radio in Afghanistan, both social media and conventional news have played a significant part in recent uprisings and reconstruction processes. How are new media contributing to struggles for democracy from Afghanistan to the Arab world? And what are the challenges for democratising media in the context of war and revolution? In this seminar experienced journalists and media watchers share insights on possibilities and challenges for media and democracy in the context of dictatorships and international conflict.

SPEAKERS: ALI MOHAMMAD HESAMFAR, 29, from Shiraz, Iran, is a morning announcer on Iranian state radio, IRIB. He is an acclaimed actor, playwright and producer of radio drama and documentary in Iran. Ali is a Visiting Fellow at University of Wollongong under an Australian government Endeavour Executive Award.

ZAINAB ABDUL-NABI, 27, worked as a television and newspaper journalist in her native Bahrain, but was blacklisted after reporting on human rights issues. She is an intern at Dateline, SBS Television, as part of her Master of Journalism at the University of Wollongong, and was interning at SBS Radio News as the ‘Arab Spring’ unfolded.

STEVE AHERN, OAM, is an international broadcast training consultant, broadcaster, author and media commentator. A former director of radio at the Australian Film and Radio Training School and former manager of ABC metropolitan radio, Steve trains emerging broadcasters from Asia to Africa, specialising in radio formats, digital media and multi-platform broadcasting. He has recently returned from Afghanistan, a nation where only 30% are literate and most communication is via mobile phone technology.
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