"'*There's No Crying in Journalism*:' Checking in on the Mental Health of Journalists in the Age of 'Reporting Live From…'"

All journalists know that having "thick skin" is a prerequisite to survival in this business as scathing criticism of the ways we do our job is often keen and swift. Expectation of blistering barbs from editors/producers and peers as well as downright condemnation from readers and viewers is just par for the course in the life of a journalist. Tom Hanks' character – Jimmy Dugan, from the 1992 movie *A League of Their Own* certainly would understand…just as there is "No Crying in Baseball," also, there is "No Crying in Journalism."

Anyone of my former students would be quick to recount how many times, I've told them to "suck it up and keep going – because there is 'no crying in journalism'." Interestingly, as I think back on it, I've been especially hard on my female students, because I want them to be tough as nails and as competitive as any man in the business – Jimmy Dugan would be proud. Crying or whining that the equipment is too heavy" or that "the way you criticized my work hurt my feeling" definitely is not the route to get there. We are trained to "shake off" harsh criticism and press forward with our mission to seek and reveal the truth.

But, what about the emotional toll of "seeing and living" these truths day in and day out? What becomes the fallout from a lifetime of "up-close-and-person" exposure to the realities of the world? With the power of collective assembly that social media has brought into our lives and a ravenous appetite for instantaneous coverage of breaking and live news reporting, journalists get a front-row seat to the worst of our world on a regular basis.

A recent article in *Journalist's Resource* from the Harvard Kennedy School's Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy summarizes the findings of six research projects focused on the practice of journalism and mental health.

This research-in-progress examines the mental health of journalists in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The country is a uniquely positioned locale to practice "hard news" - - in that it is part of the Middle East/Gulf Coast Country Council and heavily influenced by western journalism; yet, it does not have high rates of public crimes, observable poverty, natural disasters, or homeland conflict/war that would warrant the levels of anxiety and depression as seen with the journalists of the Harvard studies. While the population of journalists in the UAE are made up of both Emirates and Ex-patriots (some who originally hale from countries cited in the Harvard research roundup), this research seeks to find whether their reporting experiences produce similar indicators of mental health fatigue as those in the original studies.

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