



# Freedom Now

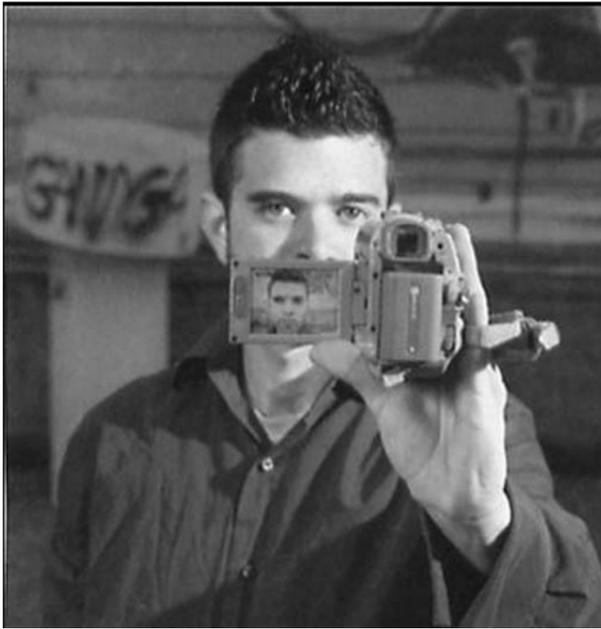


Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. —Thomas Jefferson

An irregular print publication of JoshWolf.net

January 12, 2007

## Journalist Josh Wolf Imprisoned for 144 Days



Barring judicial intervention, Josh Wolf, independent journalist and video blogger, will, in 44 days become the longest imprisoned journalist in US history, a dubious honor previously held by Vanessa Legget whose refusal to cooperate with a federal grand jury in 2001 resulted in her serving 168 days behind bars.

### Why is Josh in Jail?

Wolf is currently in “coercive custody” at the Federal Detention Facility in Dublin, California for civil contempt. Wolf was incarcerated earlier this year after resisting a subpoena to testify before a Federal Grand jury and for refusing to turn over his source material for video he shot of a San Francisco protest against the G8 Summit in 2005.

Wolf has covered San Francisco protests for several years and has gained privileged access to much of the Bay Area’s activist community, access denied to other journalists. He is concerned this case is an attempt to identify political dissidents, and his attorneys have argued that the grand jury investigation is a fishing expedition. Wolf has repeatedly stated under oath that his unpublished material does not contain footage of any of the alleged crimes under investigation. In a show of good faith, Wolf has offered to let the judge, William Alsop review his tape. Alsop refused.

Wolf, 24, is the recipient of the 2006 Society of Professional Journalists Freedom of Information Award as Journalist of the Year. Advocates from Reporters Without Borders, Committee to Protect Journalism, and numerous others have all spoken out in his defense.

### Notable Comments on this Case

“When journalists like Josh Wolf are put in jail, journalism and the public’s right to know suffer. An independent press needs a Federal shield law to protect journalists like Josh.” —Judith Miller, *Journalist*

“He [Wolf] may not have the clout or journalism credentials of some of the other government targets, but Josh Wolf is no less entitled to First Amendment protection. Each day he remains incarcerated represents another small dent in this nation’s basic freedoms.” —*San Francisco Chronicle Editorial 8/06*

“The Wolf case has absolutely no bearing on national security, the argument used in other tussles between federal courts and journalists who refused to name their

sources or surrender their files. Confirmed contempt of court orders against Wolf would mean that the independence of the press - which is based among other things on the right to professional secrecy - is more than ever in danger in the United States. Keeping Josh Wolf in jail would be tantamount to denying the role that the media is supposed to play in a democracy, one of questioning and criticizing. Congress must quickly debate and approve a federal shield law that would uphold the right of journalists to protect the confidentiality of their sources.” —*Reporters Without Borders*

“Jailing a journalist for his work is alarming, especially so when it is done by a democratic country.” —*Joel Simon, Executive Director, Committee to Protect Journalists*

“At a time when journalists are under increasing pressure to comply with government subpoenas- and in the absence of a federal shield law - these three have chosen to risk jail rather than reveal confidential sources or turn over to government unpublished portions of their work. The Chronicle reporters have refused to name the source of the grand jury testimony that informed their articles on steroid use among athletes. Wolf, who already has spent time in jail, has refused to turn over unpublished footage of an anarchist demonstration in San Francisco. While their case are dissimilar, the underlying principles are not.” —*Society for Professional Journalists*

“The weak connection made by the Federal government to conjure up jurisdiction in this matter should strongly suggest that Mr. Finigan and this grand jury are not concerned with legitimate law enforcement and are more likely interested in attacking freedom of the press and activists. If the allegations that someone tried to set a San Francisco police vehicle on fire had any merit, there would be a local investigation into the matter.” —*Carlos Villarreal, Executive Director, National Lawyers Guild San Francisco Bay Area*

“[Wolf’s imprisonment] is a direct assault on the integrity of our free press by an overly aggressive administration, and I am deeply concerned that these actions could have a dramatic and chilling effect on our country’s journalistic integrity. We must stand against the circumvention of our constitutional rights, and support those brave individuals who defend our right to a press that is free from government obstruction.” —*Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco)*

## Free the Media Democratizing the Exchange of Information

**Free the Media** is a Web 2.0 experiment designed by Josh Wolf and developed by Len Harrison to create an environment that promotes and sustains journalist activism and builds communities around common causes, now online at [mediafreedom.net](http://mediafreedom.net). According to its designer and developer, it represents a next step in grass roots organization and a shift from broadcasting information to its free exchange.

Wolf, currently in federal custody for refusing to cooperate with a grand jury’s investigation of his journalistic sources, was unavailable for comment at press time. However Harrison spoke at length about the project. “Drupal, our base platform, calls itself ‘Community Plumbing’. It enables individuals and groups anywhere in the world to produce, discuss, and share information, ideas, and actions. We’re adapting it for political grassroots, independent media, and hopefully a bit more.”

Harrison’s “a bit more” involves public conversations and whatever else they become among well-known people and with the site’s public. “We live in this odd world where people become famous for something and then move on to become influences in spheres totally outside the source of their fame. Celebrity creates credibility,” says Harrison. “At the same time, we have this false intimacy in which people feel they know these people they’ve never met, like Oprah, say. It’s a kind of broadcast culture in which participation is simply passivity. You watch, you agree or maybe not, but it doesn’t matter. The important thing is the watching...”

“What we want to do here is change that dynamic. We want to create a space in which people who would traditionally be broadcasting ideas, information, opinions, art, or whatever become participants in an exchange that involves everyone. The result is a genuine intimacy, a democratization of the processes which shape our cultural identity, and the birth of a real community.”

When asked if this meant Free the Media would be cultivating celebrities or was intended as some sort of fan site, Harrison responded “It’s more nearly the opposite. For one thing, if we’re on target with this, it’s we who will be cultivated, not the other way around. It’s also a sort of ‘anti-fan’ concept in that we want to build a space in which everyone is a contributor, everyone a participant; yet one which respects people for what they say and do.” (See Free the Media page 3)

## Sarah Olson & Dahr Jamail

### Two More Journalist under Fire

Sarah Olson, a freelance journalist from Oakland, California has been subpoenaed to testify for the prosecution in the US Army court-martial of 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Ehren Watada, the first commissioned officer to publicly refuse deployment to Iraq. Dahr Jamail an independent noted for his coverage of Iraq and the Middle East, is also on the Army’s witness list but has not at this time been subpoenaed. Neither of them feel this is an appropriate action by the government. as Sarah puts it, “I think it’s my job as a journalist to report the news. It’s not my job to participate... in the military or government prosecution of political speech.”

At the heart of its case against Watada, the Army wishes to press multiple counts of “Conduct Unbecoming

an Officer and a Gentleman” for public statements made by Watada against the Iraq War. Olson’s interview with Watada and a public speech he made, which was reported by Jamail, represent the government’s ground for calling the journalists’ as witnesses, although any material testimony they might possibly furnish is already in the public record.

Dahr feels that “the situation it puts us in as journalists, ...should be a wake-up call, a shot over the bow for journalists all across the country.” Both see this a direct attack on the press, an attack with striking similarities to Josh Wolf’s case. Olson’s analysis, “Why I Object to Testifying Against Lt. Watada” is reprinted on Page 2.

## A Shield Law for All

by Josh Wolf

In the October issue of *Digital Journalism*, the editor stated only professional journalists should be protected by a shield law, arguing that reporter's privilege "must be vary narrowly applied or the justice system would collapse." I feel this perspective is inherently flawed and its application would be dysfunctional.

At best, narrowly defining who qualifies as a protected journalist will result in an elite class of mainstream media professionals, while reporters for the alternative press would be given no choice but to practice their craft without a net. More likely, I anticipate this approach would establish a state-sanctioned journalist license, and anyone would be subject to having her license revoked should she stray from the party line. At worst, independent voices could be subject to prosecution for practicing journalism without a license.

The First Amendment was not written to protect the Hearst Corporation and its thousands of employees, although it certainly should. When the founding fathers set out to guarantee a free press they really did seek to protect independent journalists and pamphleteers, such as Thomas Paine and his "Common Sense".

The problem with limiting protection to "professionals", is two-fold. If journalism students are not protected, they will be denied the opportunity to engage in serious news gathering and thus be unprepared to enter their field. If independents have no protection, who will report on mainstream journalistic abuse?

What about the stories that are ignored or neglected by the mainstream media? Are those issues really not worthy of coverage simply because the established media has deemed them unfit for airtime? If it is important that these stories are covered, then isn't it also important that journalists investigating these stories be protected?

Who should be protected? As Jeff Jarvis mused previously, "Tony Soprano shouldn't be able to insulate himself by simply creating a blog", but I do feel that the mommy-blogger who breaks a story about a dishonest baby-food company should not be forced to out her sources. In my opinion, anyone's journalist activities should be protected whether or not he is paid for his work. A journalist is a public servant. If he or she is working from conscience and without financial compensation, how can this possibly invalidate him or her as a public servant?

Would such broad shield law cause the justice system to collapse? I doubt it, but there is a more sensible approach to limiting protections without establishing an exclusive class of protected journalists. By applying a balancing test between the need for law enforcement to obtain this information against the damage that would be inflicted to the rights of a free press, many of these cases can be resolved without the establishment of a state-sanctioned press.

For example, in my case the federal government asserts a protester threw a firework in the vicinity of a police car four days after the Fourth of July. The US Attorney argues this was an attempt to burn the police vehicle and therefore merits a federal investigation; but according to the police report, the car did not burn. Despite my statement that I neither filmed nor witnessed the alleged incident and despite my offer to screen the complete footage for the judge, I am currently sitting in a federal prison cell for protecting my sources and unpublished material.

If I were to submit to the government demands, then it would no longer be possible for sources to trust me with privileged information. I would be denied the unfettered access I've been granted through establishing a trusted relationship with Bay Area activists, and I would thus be unable to fully report on civil dissent in the San Francisco region. Forcing me to comply with this subpoena would and has created a chilling effect, which should be balanced against the federal government's need to investigate the alleged crime which resulted in no significant damage to the police vehicle.

## Why I Object to Testifying Against Lt. Watada

by Sarah Olson

(Reprinted from *Editor & Publisher*, December 30, 2006)

OAKLAND (Commentary) In May of this year, I conducted an interview with Ehren Watada while working as a freelance journalist. Watada is a 1st Lieutenant in the U.S. Army and is the first commissioned officer to publicly refuse orders to deploy to Iraq.

In the interview, Lieutenant Watada asserted that he had a duty as an officer to evaluate the legality of his orders and conduct himself accordingly. He said that he could not participate in the Iraq War because it was "manifestly illegal" and that his participation would make him a party to war crimes.

In June, Lieutenant Watada made national headlines when he refused to deploy to Iraq.

Lieutenant Watada continues to report for duty at Fort Lewis in the state of Washington while awaiting a February 2007 court-martial on one charge of "missing movement" and four charges of "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman." Each of the latter four charges is based entirely on political speech. If convicted on all charges, Lieutenant Watada could spend up to six years in prison.

The U.S. Army has cobbled together portions of my interview with Lieutenant Watada and these statements comprise the foundation of one charge of conduct unbecoming an officer. To substantiate this alleged crime, the Army has subpoenaed me to testify on behalf of their prosecution.

The dynamics of the situation are clear. When the military chooses to prosecute a soldier for expressing dissenting political positions to a member of the press, that journalist is unwittingly and inevitably forced into the middle of the conflict.

Among multiple issues this raises, it begs one central question: Doesn't it fly in the face of the First Amendment to compel a journalist to participate in a government prosecution against a source, particularly in matters related to personal political speech?

It is my job as a professional journalist to report the news, not to act as the eyes and ears of the government. I am repelled by this approach that jeopardizes my credibility and seeks to compel my participation in muting public speech and dissenting personal opinion.

Further, it is stunningly ironic that the Army seeks my testimony – the testimony of a journalist – in a case against free speech itself. What could be more hostile to the idea of a free press than a journalist participating in the suppression of newsworthy speech?

When journalists are subpoenaed to confirm the veracity of their reporting, they typically agree to this limited request. What makes this case different is that the thing in question is the political nature of Lieutenant Watada's speech. Participating in the U.S. Army's court-martial forces me to build the case against my source and contribute to an act of suppression against the media's ability to report the news.

As a journalist, I cannot support or criticize the thoughts of an interview subject. My job is to record those thoughts accurately and provide a public forum for



debate. If the Army succeeds in turning me into an arm of their investigation, it will chill not only press freedom but also free speech. This is a slippery slope that bears watching and requires vigilance.

It seems clear that the U.S. Army is attempting to redefine the parameters of acceptable speech and to classify dissent as a punishable offense. Subpoenaing journalists in this case unequivocally sends the message that dissent is neither tolerated nor permitted. Utilize your constitutionally guaranteed speech rights and go to prison. What rational soldier would agree to speak with me or any other member of the media if jail was a likely result?

When the press cannot or does not reflect the vibrant and varied perspectives within our society, it is reduced to a simple transcriber of government press releases. The record of existing dissent is erased, and a dumbed-down, homogenized version of "The American Experience" is all that's left in its place.

I stand firmly by a conviction I share with many: a member of the press should never be placed in the position of aiding a government prosecution of political speech. This goes against the grain of even the most basic understanding of the First Amendment's free press guarantees and the expectation of a democracy that relies on a free flow of information and perspectives without fear of censor or retribution.

You may ask: Do I want to be sent to prison by the U.S. Army for not cooperating with their prosecution of Lieutenant Watada? My answer: Absolutely not. You may also ask: Would I rather contribute to the prosecution of a news source for sharing newsworthy perspectives on an affair of national concern? That is the question I wholly object to having before me in the first place.

**Ed. Note (from *Editor & Publisher*):** According to press reports, the trial of Lt. Watada is expected to begin in February. Some accounts suggest that the charges filed against him mark the first time since the Vietnam war and the case of Lt. Henry Howe that the military has made the charge of "conduct unbecoming an officer" to prosecute an officer's public statements. One site that has written about Olson, truthout.org, has declared that this is the first time the Army has sought testimony of a professional journalist to prove one of its own officers violated military law by publicly questioning the rationale for war.

### THE JOSH WOLF COALITION

#### ::: PBS FRONTLINE HOUSE PARTIES :::

We will be organizing house parties in the Bay Area and around the country to coincide with the February 20th airing of a PBS Frontline News War series, which includes an interview with Josh by Lowell Bergman and details about his case. We will also screen Kevin Epps' piece and will have preview copies of the DVD. If you are interested in attending or hosting a party please contact [andy.blue@yahoo.com](mailto:andy.blue@yahoo.com).

#### ::: JOIN THE FREE JOSH WOLF COALITION :::

You or your can read and sign the coalition statement at [JoshWolf.Net/Coalition](http://JoshWolf.Net/Coalition). For more info write [andy.blue@yahoo.com](mailto:andy.blue@yahoo.com).

#### ::: NEW YORK CITY EVENT :::

We would like to organize an event in NYC in late January or early February. If you are in NYC and interested please contact [andy.blue@yahoo.com](mailto:andy.blue@yahoo.com)

## Protect the Fourth Estate: Why We Need a Robust Federal Shield Law

“Burke said there were Three Estates in Parliament; but, in the Reporters’ Gallery yonder, there sat a Fourth Estate more important than they all...Printing, which comes necessarily out of Writing, I say often, is equivalent to Democracy: invent Writing, Democracy is inevitable... Whoever can speak, speaking now to the whole nation, becomes a power, a branch of government, with inalienable weight in law-making, in all acts of authority.” *On Heroes and Hero Worship*—Thomas Carlyle

The influence of the mass media today is beyond anything Carlyle could have imagined in 1841. Carlyle’s printing press has become a ubiquitous, immersive stream of words, sounds, and images that mold our common reality, shape our culture, and not only persuade our opinions but even define the processes of thought by which we arrive at them. We also know now that Carlyle’s optimistic equate of Writing to Democracy is not so simple. Democracy does depend on an informed and educated citizenry, and it does emerge spontaneously from information and education, which Carlyle realized.

But to the degree that any government or any locus of wealth and power can control the media, it can disinform and miseducate as well. Recent history is full of such examples. The twin arts of propaganda and advertising purpose nothing else but to create emotional allegiances that influence the actions of entire populations through selective information and education. This is a literal disempowerment of people, just as genuine democracy is the empowerment of all. The pen like the sword, is a double-edged tool.

Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* rationalized and inspired the American Revolution. Thomas Jefferson spoke repeatedly of the primacy of the press and the necessity for an informed citizenry. All populist movements depend on creating a public voice and the history of social reform is the history of such voices, from the muckrakers, through “Deep Throat,” to today’s whistleblowers and bloggers. A free society depends upon a free press. The function of journalism within society is

equivalent to the function of a doctor or a priest for an individual. Journalists thus deserve the same protection afforded doctors and the clergy. We need a Federal Shield Law based upon these other privileged relationships under the law. Nothing less will suffice.

We live in a time when media is not only ubiquitous and arguably more powerful than the three branches of government, but also in a time in which media consolidation and indirect control threatens the freedom of the press, which is the lifeblood of democracy. Historically, when people find their views are not represented by an “official” press, whether it be state-controlled or corporate media, citizen voices arise. In the USSR it was *samizdat*. Today it is blogs and internet journalism. Such citizen journalists are not less than their “official” counterparts. They are frequently reporting what is being ignored and should be known by all. In these cases, it is they, and not the “professionals” who are the *real* journalists. Thus, any Federal Shield Law must protect everyone who reports news, not a journalistic elite.

Right now there is some movement in Congress toward a Federal Shield Law. One Congressional Aide spoke of the need to include bloggers and other wholly independent reporters. This is certainly necessary. This same person, however, suggested that the bill in draft or under consideration by his Congress person, included a broad exemption for “national security”. Such an clause is potentially of great concern unless the burden of proof for a national security exemption falls upon the government when it seeks to break the protection of the law. The natural and pernicious tendency to abuse “national security” to conceal partisan agendas is an historic fact. It would vitiate any protection afforded journalists upon an Executive whim.

Freedom Now urges you to speak up for a Robust Federal Shield Law that protects everyone practicing journalism and contains no hidden loopholes that make its protections fragile. The Fourth Estate is the voice of society and needs full protection.

### Congressional and Senate Contacts for a Federal Shield Law (as well as your own Representative and Senators)

#### Nancy Pelosi

Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
235 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-0508  
Phone: 202-225-4965  
Fax: 202-225-8259  
Email: sf.nancy@mail.house.gov

**Patrick Leahy**  
Chairmen of the Senate Judiciary  
Committee  
433 Russell Senate Office Bldg  
(at Constitution and Delaware)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
(202) 224-4242

**John Conyers**  
House Judiciary Committee  
2426 Rayburn Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (202) 225-5126  
Fax: (202) 225-0072  
John.Conyers@mail.house.gov



#### DVD

**Running Time:** 2 hours

**Cost:** \$10 suggested donation

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#### Featuring work from filmmakers:

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(the tape that started it all)

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P.O. Box 2235

Wrightwood, CA 92397

Or go to [www.JoshWolf.net](http://www.JoshWolf.net) and click "T-Shirts".

## Free the Media

(from Page 1)

You can’t flatten humanity into some sort of bland equality that disregards intelligence, wisdom, and insight, yet it is equally silly to put people on pedestals as authorities because they won some reality show or vote someone into office based on their performance as a dramatic actor.”

According to Harrison, Free the Media integrates current and planned modules which support information exchange, public discussion, and allow users to create, build, and maintain interest or advocacy groups.

“Users define their own areas of interest and align with others however they like,” Harrison states. “The news you see on the site is personalize to your areas of interest, although a lot of those features are still under development. There’s a mechanism by which you can respond to anything you read with your own opinion, just like you see on many news sites these days, but we’re taking that one step further, so that at minimum your comments are automatically forwarded to the author of a piece and at best, he or she actively becomes involved in discussion on the topic. Although everyone has their own viewpoint, including us, we’re not trying to make this something that’s politically correct according to Josh and Len or anyone else. We’re looking for a diversity of opinions and advocacy: left, right, or whatever. Lots of voices and views and a rich set of tools that support discussion and organization for action available to all, including calendars, mailing lists, IM, etc..”

Although cautioning that the site is still “somewhere between a prototype and a beta” and “lacks the graphics niceties” he envisions for the future, Harrison encourages interested people, especially “those with something to say or a cause that’s important to them,” to visit Free the Media at [www.mediafreedom.net](http://www.mediafreedom.net), to get “a view of what’s coming,” and to contribute relevant work in any medium.

## Support Josh Wolf

#### DONATE

Send checks to:

Liz Wolf-Spada  
P.O. Box 2235  
Wrightwood, CA 92397  
or donate through Paypal  
([www.JoshWolf.net](http://www.JoshWolf.net))

#### WRITE

Correspond with Josh. Let him know we are thinking of him and supporting his courageous and important stand.

Joshua Wolf #98005-111  
Federal Detention Center, Unit J2  
5675 8th Street  
Dublin CA 94568

#### DISCUSS

You can join his email list by sending a blank email to: [Supportjoshwolf-subscribe@lists.riseup.net](mailto:Supportjoshwolf-subscribe@lists.riseup.net)

#### READ

Josh’s blog, The Revolution Will Be Televised, is being regularly updated from prison. Check it out at [www.JoshWolf.net/blog](http://www.JoshWolf.net/blog)

#### DISTRIBUTE

Glossy Flyers can be obtained by e-mailing [freejosh@joshwolf.net](mailto:freejosh@joshwolf.net). DIY flyers and Web banners can be found at <http://freejosh.pbwiki.com/Flyers> and Graphics/

#### FUNDRAISE

If you are interested in hosting a concert or other type of fundraiser please contact Josh’s support team at: [freejosh@JoshWolf.net](mailto:freejosh@JoshWolf.net) so we can assist.

#### PROMOTE

Write letters and articles of support for Josh to your local media. Blog about his case. Link to his blog ([JoshWolf.net/blog](http://JoshWolf.net/blog)) and wiki ([freejosh.pbwiki.com](http://freejosh.pbwiki.com)).

#### PARTICIPATE

Your talents and ideas are valuable and appreciated. If you would like to help in any other way, please contact [freejosh@JoshWolf.net](mailto:freejosh@JoshWolf.net).

## A Day in the Life of Inmate # 98005-111 AKA Josh Wolf by Josh Wolf

At 5:30 AM each morning, I awake to the sound of the morning guard walking down the corridor and unlocking each cell. Breakfast is available for the next few minutes, if one can get up and out to the dayroom. More often than not, I elect to stay in bed—I'm eating too much in here anyhow, and lunch is usually served before noon.

On the days I do get up in time, we are usually served what amounts to a deluxe continental breakfast featuring some combination of the following: cold cereal, some sort of cake, hard boiled eggs, yogurt and a piece of fruit.

By 6 AM, I am almost fully awake and listening to Democracy Now! on KPFA. At 6:30 AM, the guard once again locks down our cell while the orderlies clean the unit; these prisoners mop the floors, wash the windows and clean the showers five days a week. After Democracy Now! , I usually listen to KPFA Morning Show and it is these two programs which allow me to stay current with the news. I do have a subscription to the Chronicle, but by the time the paper arrives it borders on being a historic document.

Sometime between 8 and 9 AM, the guard unlocks the door to our cell again and the counselor performs his inspection to make sure that all our personal property is stowed away in our footlockers and our beds are made. If our room fails to pass the inspection, then we are liable to remain locked in our rooms until lunch.

On weekdays, we are usually taken out for Rec at some point in the morning. The Rec yard is a small slag of concrete with a basketball court and a pull-up bar; there is also a volleyball net. Only half the unit is taken out each day and we alternate between playing basketball and volleyball. Some of the guys work out and others walk or jog around the yard. Rec lasts for one hour and is our only real opportunity to breathe fresh air.

We are usually served lunch sometime shortly after Rec. Lunch consists of a green salad, the occasional potato salad, some sort of hot sandwich on most days, and cookies are frequently part of the meal as well.

After lunch, we are permitted to hang out in the day room or our cells until 2:45 PM, when we are locked down for count. During this time, I usually find myself conversing with friends or watching television. Sometimes we get a game of Scrabble going and at other times I choose to spend most of my time sitting on my bed reading.

The count is usually cleared shortly after 3 PM at which time we are released from our cells and mail is delivered. I spend some time musing over my mail and by 4 O'clock we are frequently being served dinner.

At 5 PM, I meet up with my work out crew and we generally exercise for about 45 minutes to an hour. Although there are no weights available in the detention center, we are able to exercise most of the major muscle groups through a combination of improvisation and the use of our own body weight.

After working out, I generally prepare some sort of high-protein snack and shower. Although I occasionally watch a bit of television during the evening, I try to devote the last hour or two before lockdown to responding to the correspondence I have received.

Just before 8:45 PM, I go into the guard's office and deliver whatever letters I have finished writing, and then fill up my mug with water from the drinking fountain. By that time, the guard has usually announced lockdown and we all scamper back to our cells where we wait out the rest of the night.

After being locked down at 8:45 PM, I usually talk to my cellie for a bit, get ready for bed and often time s respond to another letter or two. It is during this time that I usually write my daily entry in my journal,

At 10 PM, the station I listen to while I write switched to a talk-format and I usually start reading one of my books. The library in the detention center is pretty abysmal: three book carts stuffed with the stale paper-

backs-but fortunately I've had a plethora of books sent in to me from dozens of supporters. The entire time I've been here, I've always had an enticing book to dive into and the opportunity to loan out books to many of my fellow prisoners.

After reading for a couple of hours, I find myself falling asleep sometime around midnight. A few hours alter, I find myself awake and living out the same story again and again.

## The PrisonBlogs Project

While Josh is certainly not doing hard time at FDC Dublin, for which he and his family are grateful, all experiences of incarceration share certain universals. The rules governing daily life, which are arbitrary, ubiquitous and change often, provide the most pervasive reminder of one's loss of freedom. The ill-fitting uniforms, restrictions on communications and visits, and the replacement of ones name with a number all contribute to an experience of disempowerment and the loss of individuality and basic human dignity.

PrisonBlogs.Net is a project to provide prisoners with a voice, a public, and the sense of empowerment and restored dignity this brings by publishing prisoner's writing and art. Its sister site, PrisonBlogs.Org, will become a mutual aid based community for prisoners and their families, an advocate for a Prisoners Bill of Rights, act to publicize cases of abuse, and, as resources become available provide advocacy for individual cases of injustice within the prison system.

The project begins by linking sponsors with prisoners who want to publish their work through personal blogs. Because few inmates in US correctional facilities have internet access, each prisoner will need a sponsor who can receive the inmate's blog entries and post them. An individual can sponsor as many prisoner's as she or he wants and can comfortably handle. The sponsor may also choose to print responses to posts for the prisoner. If desired, sponsors may remain anonymous; prisonblogs will handle the actual mail traffic if requested.

We are soliciting sponsors for prisoners and prisoners who would like to blog. There is no charge to sponsor or to blog other than postage, and PrisonBlogs will cover that if participants cannot. For more information and to sign up, see [PrisonBlogs.Net](http://PrisonBlogs.Net) or [PrisonBlogs.Org](http://PrisonBlogs.Org)

## JoshWolf.Net

**Updates on Josh Wolf,  
Sarah Olson Dahr Jamail  
The Media Wars  
Non-Corporate News and Media  
The Revolution Will Be Televised  
(Josh's Blog)  
Free the Media  
(MediaFreedoms.Net)  
PrisonBlogs  
(PrisonBlogs.Net)**

**JoshWolf.net**

## Transcribed Speech for NewCollege on Media Activism By Josh Wolf

I've been asked to weigh in on media activism, but before that, I think it's important to reflect on the current state of the media. The media is precariously perched on a precipice, and it is still anybody's guess where it is heading. Media consolidation has run rampant for some time, and there is no indication that the trend will slow down any time soon. Many media conglomerates own companies across numerous industries, and there is every reason to believe these news outlets would have grave reservations about airing any reports that could potentially hurt their profits. The mass media often acts as stenographers for the establishment, and like Fox News, they are anything but "Fair and Balanced".

But there is hope; independent media is more alive now than it has been since the American Revolution. For the first time almost anyone can distribute his or her story. If you can access the internet, the power of the press is in your hands.

The mainstream media has certainly noticed. Time recently named the collective "you" as Person of the Year. Commercial outlets across the country have set out to capitalize on the economic and influential power of this growing movement that has been coined: "citizen's media". It is their desperate wish that the people jump into the company car, but the reality is we don't need them. We don't - they know it - and that's why they are scared.

While some media companies may make a good faith effort to develop sustainable partnerships with the growing community of independent media workers, most companies are seeking to exploit and co-opt this blossoming movement. Oftentimes, these outlets feel the pride of having your work on display should be payment enough. Others offer a small financial sum but demand the creator turn over all rights in perpetuity. These lopsided contracts should not be subscribed to blindly.

So what is my vision for media activism? I envision a sort of ad-hoc union of full and part-time, independent media makers fashioned loosely after the IWW. By joining together, we can create our own sustainable media network. We can also work in concert to apply pressure on commercial ventures seeking to exploit the labor of independent "citizen journalists", and, by boldly telling the truth and describing the world as we see it, we can become a viable alternative to the corporate media's lies. We can change the world.

It's common sense. It's the "Rise Up Network". And it's my vision for media activism. I hope you share it with me. Good-night.