

# Former CNN journalist explores her love of danger

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Siobhan Darrow was looking for love in all the wrong places: civil war in Chechnya, violence in Northern Ireland and even a purported fling with her boss, Ted Turner.

As foreign correspondent for CNN, she had enough experiences to fill a book. She retired from journalism and wrote "Flirting with Danger," published by Anchor Books.

But what she really wanted was a lasting relationship and happiness, so "instead of interviewing newsmakers, I started interviewing potential husbands."

*'I decided I was going to have to leave journalism if I wanted any kind of life.'*

**Siobhan Darrow,**

former CNN foreign correspondent

"I decided I was going to have to leave journalism if I wanted any kind of life," she said, explaining that she settled in Southern California in part because of the weather. "I went on a lot of wacky L.A. blind dates."

During a talk at UCSB on Monday, Ms. Darrow read from her book, answered questions about war reporting, and offered her views on journalism. She criticized television reporting on Afghanistan as one-sided.

"The war in Afghanistan is so neatly packaged, you don't seem to hear about civilian casualties," she said.

"I know how hard it is to find food, stay warm and stay safe, let alone find news to tell. We live like animals, the way most people live in wars."

Ms. Darrow also talked about the danger inherent in her assignments as a war correspondent.

Once, CNN received false reports of her death.

Company officials tried repeatedly to call her mother to give her the bad news, but luckily, she didn't return home until after it was determined that it was another female reporter in the area who had been killed.

Ms. Darrow's brushes with death and experiences as a reporter made the kidnapping of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl more immediate. The Pakistani group claiming to have seized him said Mr. Pearl was being held in "inhuman conditions" similar to those of suspected terrorists held at Guantanamo Bay.

"I was very upset when I saw that. When we're out there, we're really, really vulnerable. Journalists are being used more and more," she said during an interview while she was signing her book. "I hope he comes home safely."

For Ms. Darrow, leaving journalism to get away from wars and write her book was also an exercise in

self-discovery. She had to find out what attracted her to cover the scenes of violence, almost like an alcoholic is drawn to booze, she said.

Her book begins with anecdotes about her parents' strained and violent marriage before her father died when she was in high school.

Ms. Darrow studied Russian history and culture in college and was assigned to cover the area for CNN after starting with the company in a position logging videotapes at night.

She also dated Ted Turner while he was "between wives," she said.

Her talk inspired USCB freshman Jacqueline Esparza.

"You don't even think how simple your life is until you hear about other people's," she said.

Though Ms. Darrow's book is about a journalist chasing soldiers, she devotes time to her clumsy romances, prompting one Scottish book reviewer to compare her to Bridget Jones of the book and movie "Bridget Jones's Diary."

Like that heroine, Ms. Darrow said her tale also has a happy ending.

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