



[The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) (USA): 14 July 2000

MEDIA: NEWS OF FIJI, BY WAY OF FLINT

How an American professor in graphics design helped Wansolwara newspaper beat an attempted gag to prevent its special edition of the Fiji crisis reaching the Pacific university community and general public.

By **BARBARA J. KIVIAT**

[Link to The Chronicle article](#)

MARA J. FULMER didn't help Fijians get on the World Wide Web so that the island nation could advertise its white-sand beaches and Pacific sunsets. Her motivation was nothing less noble than preserving freedom of the press.

In late May, because of continuing civil strife, the University of the South Pacific shut down its journalism program's Web site, including the online version of Wansolwara, the quarterly student newspaper.

A rebel attack on a local television station had prompted the Fijian university to suspend publication of the paper, which had just sent to the printer the June edition, reporting on how an indigenous-Fijian group was holding government officials hostage.

As the days passed, news-media groups, journalism schools, and professors around the world decried what they viewed as an unwarranted clampdown on free speech. But in the end, it was Ms Fulmer, a professor of graphic design at Charles S. Mott Community College, in Flint, Mich., who got the paper back up and running - at least online.

Ms Fulmer, who was an instructor with the Pacific university's journalism program three years ago, contacted professors there and agreed to receive e-mail attachments of stories and set up the June edition on her own [Looking Glass Design](#) site until the university allowed the paper to go back online a month later.

She is modest about her role, calling it "mostly providing moral support."

David Robie, a senior lecturer and coordinator of the Pacific university's journalism program, calls the arrangement "an excellent case study of how international cooperation can beat Internet gags."

Copyright © 2000 by The Chronicle of Higher Education

Copyright © 2000 [Barbara J. Kiviat](#) and [Asia-Pacific Network](#). This document is for educational and research use. Please seek permission for publication.
<http://www.asiapac.org.fj/cafepacific/resources/aspac/fiji17.html>

 [Return to Asia-Pacific Network index](#)