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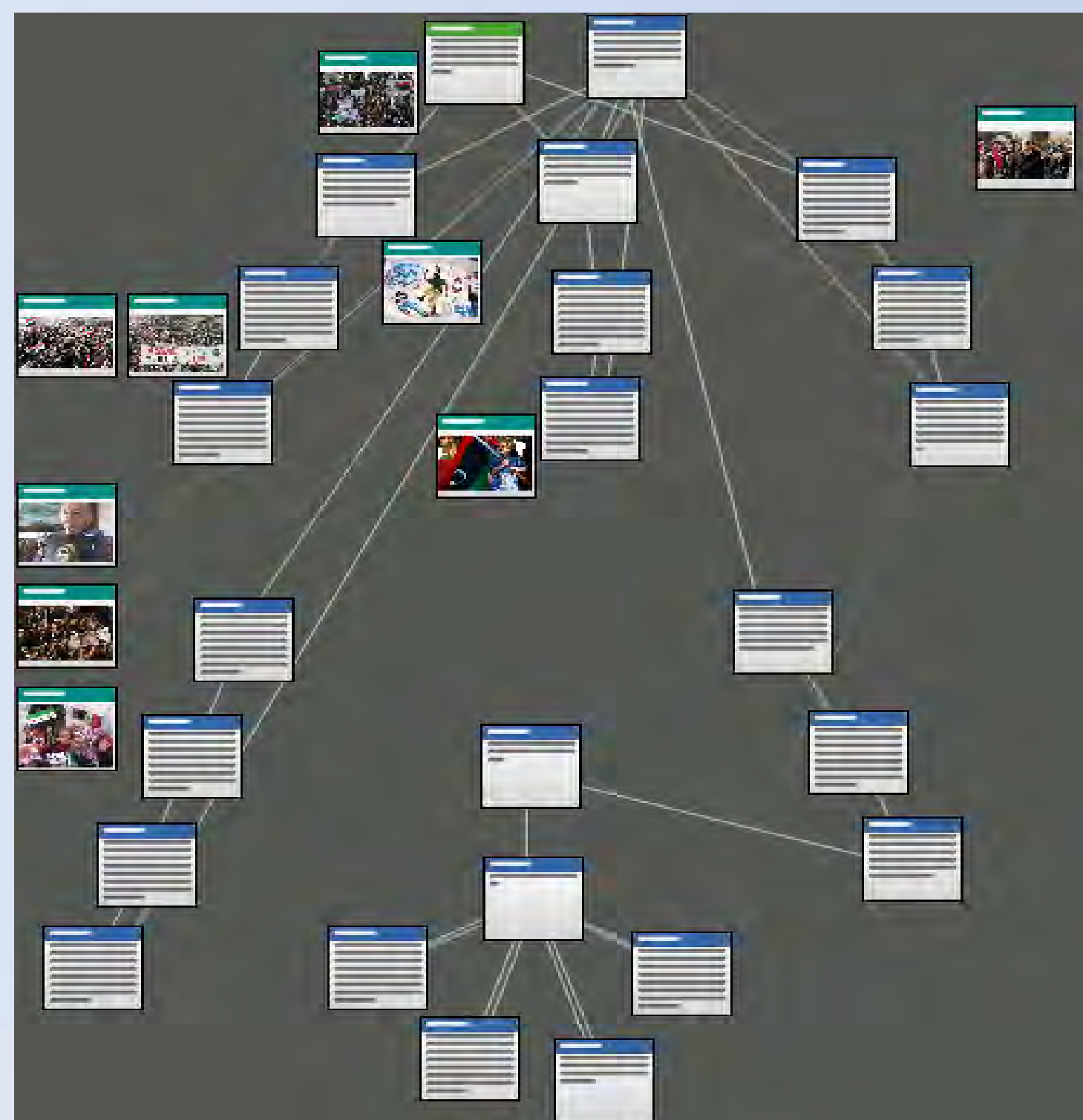
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Much Love, BJP: Examining Gender and War through Interactive Fiction

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Abstract

The intersection of gender and war is often examined under two different banners, that of the victim of war and that of the soldier. This project looks at an underrepresented third party: the war correspondent. Inspired by the life of Marie Colvin, an award-winning war correspondent killed in the siege of Homs, Syria in 2012, "Much Love" is an interactive story relating the life of fictional war correspondent Bany Polzin. Among the themes examined are motherhood, friendship, and rape as a war crime.



Marie Colvin, whose story inspired Polzin's, was a real war correspondent. Brave and funny and one-eyed (she lost the other to an RPG explosion in Sri Lanka, early 2001), she specialized in Middle Eastern conflicts. She was the first foreign correspondent to interview Libyan ruler Muammar Gaddafi after the United States completed Operation El Dorado Canyon, a retaliatory air strike following a 1986 bombing in Berlin.

Ms. Colvin's final reports came from Homs, Syria, where she was covering the government's 2012 siege. She described to Anderson Cooper the death of a baby boy, and stated that the Syrian government lied when it claimed to be shelling only terrorist gangs. Shortly thereafter, she and French photographer Remi Ochlik were killed by an IED as they fled from a building being shelled by the Syrian Army.

Later in 2012 Ms. Colvin was awarded the Anna Polikovskaya Award.

The final text adventure was made in Twine, a free program originally made by Chris Klimas and now maintained by an online community.



Sample

When Polzin and Van Meulin went overseas in November 2011, Polzin left behind a husband, Benjamin, a six-year-old daughter and a two-year-old son. Van Meulin left a dog, which went to live with Benjamin.

"I thought my husband would kill me when I said I was going back," Polzin laughed in an interview for local news station MIFOX29. "Of course it's terrifying to go into a country with so much conflict, but a lot of the fear is for the family you leave behind. We always seem to forget. Looking back to Daniel Pearl, Ochilk and Colvin all of those, we see a lot of brave journalists, not afraid to tell the truth when it would cost their lives. We forget about their families!"

(website printout. left-hand page, upper left corner)