

Media Ethics Division

Annual Report 2001-2002

1. Current officers:

Chair:	Virginia Whitehouse, Whitworth College
Vice chair/program head:	David S. Allen, University of Wisconsin
Secretary/newsletter editor:	Sandra Borden, Western Michigan University
Research chair:	Stephanie Craft, University of Missouri
PF&R chair:	Deni Elliott, University of Montana
Teaching chair:	Kris Bunton, St. Thomas University
Web/listserv chair:	Tom Bivins, University of Oregon
Graduate student liaisons:	Michelle Stack, University of Toronto
Liaison to Commission on Status of Women:	
	Lee Wilkins, University of Missouri
SPJ liaison:	Elizabeth K. Hansen, Eastern Kentucky University
NCA and ICA liaison:	Cliff Christians, University of Illinois
Liaison to Committee of Concerned Journalists:	
	Stephen Ward, University of British Columbia
Liaison to Asian-American Journalists:	
	Tom Brislin, University of Hawaii

Research

3. Briefly analyze the strengths and weaknesses of our research activities this year

Strengths:

- During our third year as a division and our fifth year as a group, we are continuing to grow in number and participation. We are most proud that the number of research submissions reached an all-time high, and the number of faculty submissions was double the previous year. The quality of research chosen for conference presentation was exceptionally high.
- We are seeing an increase in papers that attempt to frame a new agenda for research, including the ethics of the coverage of international conflict.
- We are developing ethical research standards appropriate for our division that potentially could be adopted convention-wide.
- We have reached an agreement to forge closer ties with the editors and leaders of the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*.
- We continue our cooperation with the annual Colloquia 2000 Series. The Colloquia is a decade-long project designed to “promote civil dialogue of mass media ethics, develop scholars and improve the quality and quantity of scholarship in the field, enhance the body of knowledge, and inform curriculum and practice. This year’s Colloquia was held at Washington & Lee University with the theme “Global Media: The Quest for Universal Standards.”
- We are participating in preliminary discussions with the Law Division in creating a Northwest Colloquium to serve as a research forum for senior scholars in our related disciplines.

Weaknesses:

- We had expected to see more research concerning media ethics surrounding the tragedies on Sept. 11 but saw no studies in that arena in this round of conference papers. We did however see research on the coverage of violence in other parts of the world and violence in the media itself.
- We need to continue to encourage strong research from both faculty and graduate students to increase the number of high-quality submissions.

<u>4. Number of faculty research paper submissions:</u>	18
Number of acceptances:	9
Acceptance rate:	50 %

<u>5. Number of student research paper submissions:</u>	12
Number of acceptances:	4
Acceptance rate:	30 %
Total submissions:	30
Total number of acceptances	13
Total acceptance rate:	43 %

6. Judging form: see attachment

7. Judges

Total number of judges: 18
Number of papers/judge: 5

List of judges/affiliations:

1. William A. Babcock, California State University, Long Beach
2. Jay Black, University of South Florida
3. Sandra Borden, Western Michigan University
4. Kristie Bunton, University of St. Thomas
5. Mike McDevitt, University of Colorado
6. Maggie Patterson, Duquesne University
7. Ginny Whitehouse, Whitworth College
8. Bonnie Brennen, University of Missouri
9. Charles Davis, University of Missouri
10. Deni Elliott, University of Montana
11. John P. Ferré, University of Louisville
12. David Boeyink, Indiana University
13. Dong-Hyun Byun, Chonnam National University
14. Linda Steiner, Rutgers University
15. Kathy Fitzpatrick, University of Florida
16. Samuel P. Winch, Penn State Harrisburg
17. Lee Wilkins, University of Missouri
18. Fran Collins, Kent State University

8. Research awards:

- The divisions offers a faculty research award for the paper representing the most useful contribution of information or includes findings that can be applied by working professionals.
 - This year's winner was David Craig, University of Oklahoma, for his paper "The Promise and Peril of Anecdotes in News Coverage: An Ethical Analysis."
- The division administers and awards the Carol Burnett/University of Hawaii/AEJMC Prize for excellence in ethics research by a graduate student. The top student paper and runner-up are recognized and receive cash awards from the Carol Burnett Fund for Responsible Journalism.
 - This year's winner is Wendy Barger, University of Oregon, for her paper "Moral Language in Newspaper Commentary: A Kohlbergian Analysis."
 - The runner-up is Thomas W. Hickey, University of South Florida, for his paper titled "A Masochist's Teapot: Where to Put the Handle in Media Ethics."

9. Primary research-related accomplishment

- Significantly increasing the total number of paper submissions and doubling the number of faculty submissions was a major accomplishment. We are pleased with the strides made toward improving the quality and quantity of research in media ethics.

Teaching

10. Curriculum

- In-convention activities: None this year
- Out-of-convention activities:
 - MED will offer the annual pre-conference Media Ethics Teaching workshop, focusing this year on “Media Ethics in a Global Society.” Speakers will consider curricular aspects of diversity, coverage of terrorism, and introducing public relations and advertising modules in media ethics courses.
 - Romaine Smith Fullerton’s fall newsletter article provided an overview of the 2001 teaching ethics workshop and how she planned to incorporate that material in her own curriculum.

11. Leadership

- In-convention activities: None this year
- Out-of-convention activities: None this year

12. Course content and teaching methods

- In-convention activities:
 - Primary-sponsored convention panel “Beyond Codes & Cases: Teaching Public Relations Ethics” led by Peggy Bowers and co-sponsored by the Public Relations Division.
- Out-of-convention activities:
 - Chair Ginny Whitehouse’s spring newsletter article “A cross-cultural approach to teaching ethics” encourages the introduction of intercultural communication theory as a means to consider the ethics of diversity.

13. Assessment

- In-convention activities:
 - Primary sponsored convention panel “Teaching Ethics, or Teaching About Ethics? Assessing the Impact of Ethics Courses on Students,” led by Teaching Chair Kristie Bunton. This panel will include pairs of faculty with their students discussing the impact of ethics courses.
 - Primary sponsored convention panel “Do Methods Matter in Studying Ethics?” led by Peggy Bowers.
- Out-of-convention activities:
 - Teaching Chair Kristie Bunton’s fall newsletter article “Questions from Sabbatical Land” suggests using sabbaticals to reassess teaching methodology, case studies, and the use of technology.
 - Vice Chair David Allen’s winter newsletter article “Assessing ethics, and the ethics of assessment” considers the development of teaching assessment models used in faculty evaluation.
 - Stephen Ward’s spring newsletter article “Make assessment part of student learning” suggests methods of clearly linking course objectives to student learning.
 - PF&R Chair Deni Elliott’s spring newsletter article “A focus on outcomes enhances student learning” encourages faculty and students to articulate why

ethics courses are imperative.

14. Other

- Use of newsletter relative to teaching
 - Teaching assessment was a priority in this year's newsletter. MED members were asked to assess their own teacher evaluation tools and pedagogical methodology. In addition to the articles described earlier, an overview was provided in the spring newsletter of online syllabi for media ethics courses.
- Activities this year compared to previous years in area of teaching
 - MED was criticized last year for limited in-convention, primary sponsored programming in teaching. This year's convention program responds to that criticism and reflects the division's decision to make the area of teaching assessment a priority. In addition to the three teaching panels, MED presents a daylong program devoted to teaching its pre-convention workshop, which each year draws participants from around the world.
- Most significant achievement related to teaching
 - The Media Ethics Division chose to focus this year on the assessment of teaching. This priority was reflected in newsletter articles and convention programs. Kristi Bunton's convention panel will bring faculty and their former students together to consider how to better make connections between the classroom experience and the professional world. MED also is proud to continue to offer the annual Media Ethics Teaching Workshop.

Professional Freedom and Responsibility

15. Conference programming on free expression

- Co-sponsored panel with the International Division “Inflaming Anger, Ignoring Context in the News”
- Co-sponsored mini-plenary “Terrorism’s Attack on Freedom”

16. Conference programming in ethics

- Primary sponsored convention panel “Global Ethics for the World Press” led by Lou Hodges and co-sponsored by the International Division

17. Conference programming in media criticism and accountability

- Co-sponsored convention panel with Visual Communication “Supermarket Tabloids: The Real Story”

18. Conference programming in racial, gender and cultural inclusiveness

- Primary-sponsored convention mini-plenary “Ethics is the Reason: Newsroom Diversity Attempts Fail Because of a Failure to Recognize Cultural Differences in Ethics” organized by Chair Ginny Whitehouse and co-sponsored by Community College Journalism and Minorities and Communication.

19. Conference programming in public service

None this year

20. Number of non-member invited convention speakers (only for panels for which Media Ethics is the primary sponsor or MED-supplied panelists)

Ray Marcano, Dayton Daily News
Elizabeth Vernon, Skagit Valley Herald

21. Pre-convention activities, with description of activity and division’s role

- MED’s annual pre-conference Media Ethics Teaching workshop will focus this year on “Media Ethics in a Global Society.” Speakers will consider a range of PF&R issues including diversity, moral development and ethical theory in the new global society.

22. Out-of-conference activities, with description of activity and division’s role

- MED continued its support of the Colloquia 2000 through its members leadership at this year’s meeting at Washington & Lee University, under the theme “Global Media: The Quest for Universal Standards.” Scheduled in October just after the attacks in New York and Washington, DC, the conference had to be restructured to focus on newly emerging global concerns. Brian Richardson reported on conference in the winter newsletter. PF&R Chair Deni Elliott’s winter newsletter article “Global Journalism and the Myth of the Nation-State” is an excerpt of her presentation there.
- PF&R Chair Deni Elliott and other MED members are participating in Ethics Updates’ online forum “Philosophers Speak Out...” in its inaugural discussion on “War, Terrorism, and Peace.”

- MED continued its support for the World Press Institute, which this spring introduced an online forum “Global Journalism Ethics.” The inaugural forum asked WPI’s global network of journalists to consider the absence of clear global definition of who a journalist is, particularly in regions where journalists also serve as state spies. Former PF&R Chair Stephen Ward heads the WPI and is actively recruiting MED members for participation in the forum.

23. Primary accomplishment in area of PF & R

The Media Ethics Division has contributed to the dialog on global ethics following the Sept. 11 tragedies through its convention and pre-convention programming and its participation in international forums. This is particularly significant considering that new paradigms in global ethics are forming as cultural, religious, and political tensions continue to escalate.

24. Newsletters.

Please see three newsletters included in this packet (the fourth issue was not available at the time the Annual Report was due) Also, please note that MED opted to go to an online version of its newsletter this year.

25. Final statement

- ⊙ MED accomplished all of its 2001-2002 goals. The division significantly increased the number of research submissions, doubling the number of faculty papers. The division focused newsletter articles and convention programming on improving the assessment of teaching. Lastly, the division will offer a cash award to the top faculty paper to encourage research application to the professions.
- ⊙ In addition to our stated goals:
 - Webmaster Tom Bivins created our MED web site, located at http://jcomm.uoregon.edu/%7Etibivins/aejmc_ethics/home.html.
 - Newsletter Editor Sandra Borden facilitated the move from a paper to an online newsletter.
 - *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* Editor Jay Black negotiated an agreement with publisher Lawrence Erlbaum to offer MED members the journal subscription at a reduced rate.
- ⊙ Our goals for upcoming (2002-2003) year are:
 - to maintain and increase the number and quality of research submissions
 - to adopt ethical standards for research as a division and to encourage the convention consider more explicit ethical guidelines for research
 - to focus next year’s newsletter on the assessment of research, as this year’s focus was on the assessment of teaching
- ⊙ How might the Standing Committees help us in our goals for this year?
 - We would welcome suggestions from the Research Committee on addressing the newsletter focus and assistance in creating more explicit ethical guidelines for research across the convention.
 - We would welcome suggestions from the Teaching Standards committee on

coordinating ethics teaching panels with other divisions.

- We would welcome suggestions from the PF&R Committee on additional ways to address the development of global ethics.