

**AEJMC Media Ethics Division
2004-2005 Annual Report**

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2. *On the demographic form (in a PDF only) (for both annual and mid-year meetings where appropriate) please report number and ethnicity of officers, panel presenters, moderators and discussants.*

- The demographic form is attached.

GENERAL INFORMATION

3. *Please provide an overall statement weighting the division or interest group's activities for this year in the Research, Teaching and PF&R areas.*

- **PF&R:** In last year's annual report, MED identified paying increased attention to PF&R issues as a key goal for this year. At the same time, MED also wanted to sustain its progress in research submissions. Therefore, we repeated last year's successful inception of a special topic paper call, but this year we selected a PF&R topic, rather than a teaching topic. The special paper call topic was "Ethics and Politics: Exploring Issues in Ads, Campaigns and Coverage." We repeated last year's successful back-to-back pairing of the special call research paper session and a panel discussion session on the same theme. That session is "At the Intersection of Ethics and Politics: Questions and Controversies Raised by Campaign Advertising, News Coverage and Spin Doctoring." The result will be a full afternoon of programming in San Antonio devoted to PF&R issues in media ethics. MED was also able to pay attention to both PF&R and research by continuing last year's new and more rigorous procedure for selecting a paper to win its award for research of professional relevance. PF&R issues also received sustained attention in the MED newsletter. The PF&R chair contributed a strong set of topical articles to the newsletter, and PF&R issues were raised by other newsletter writers as well. In fact, our newsletter continued to be a strong PF&R vehicle for the division.
- **Research:** In addition to the efforts above, which connected PF&R with research, MED emphasized research in media ethics by developing a strong slate of programs for its second mid-year meeting in conjunction with the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics and by supporting the 2005 colloquium on media ethics offered in conjunction with the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*. This year's program, held at the University of Oregon, was the sixth in the Colloquia 2000 Series aimed at stimulating collaborative scholarship on crucial issues in media ethics.
- **Teaching:** Because MED has focused on teaching activities in recent years, we didn't need to offer new initiatives in that area this year. Nevertheless, we sustained MED's strong tradition of attention to teaching issues. Our teaching standards chair contributed a series of teaching articles to the newsletter that provided practical but thoughtful media ethics teaching strategies. MED worked with the Council of Divisions to place our Media Ethics Teaching Workshop on Saturday afternoon for the second time, and we again hope it will attract new participants to this long-term program. We also offered a teaching-related panel at our mid-year meeting, and we are co-sponsoring two teaching panels on the San Antonio program.

4. *Please write a bullet-point statement (500 word maximum), to be co-authored by the outgoing and incoming Heads, addressing:*

What are your most important goals for the upcoming year?

- Sustain our efforts in research submission, including the call for research papers relating to a special topic, the selection and honoring of a paper related to professional relevance, and the University of Hawaii Carol Burnett Fund for Responsible Journalism student paper competition.
- Continue bringing new voices and topics into our programming, so that graduate students, junior faculty and scholars whose work focuses on media ethics issues in areas other than journalism feel welcomed by the division.
- Sustain our recently established relationships with the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics and the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*. Our relationship with APPE is an important way to provide interdisciplinary ethics programming and a mid-year meeting, while our relationship with JMME is a useful way to maintain our focus on scholarship in media ethics.

What goals did your group set this year that you were unable to reach? Why?

- None.

How may any or all of the Standing Committees help you to achieve your goals in the coming year?

- We have no specific concerns for the Standing Committees at this time.

RESEARCH

5. *Number of faculty research paper submissions:* 19
Number accepted: 8
Acceptance rate: 42 percent

6. *Number of student research paper submissions:* 15
Number accepted: 8
Acceptance rate: 53 percent

7. *Overview of judging process (form used is attached):*

- The Media Ethics Division received 34 paper submissions this year – 19 from faculty members and 15 from graduate students. Each paper was blind-reviewed by three reviewers, all of whom were full-time faculty with some expertise in the field of media ethics. Each reviewer completed an evaluation form for each of the five papers he or she was asked to review. Reviewers assessed each paper based on 13 criteria, using a 1-5 Likert-type scale. Those scores were added together, giving each paper a score between 13 and 65. Z-scores were then calculated for each judge's evaluation of each paper. Z-scores were calculated by taking the author's cumulative score for the 13 criteria, subtracting that judge's mean score for those criteria, and dividing by the standard deviation between that judge's scores for those criteria.

- Reviewers also were asked to give each paper an overall rating using a 1-5 scale (1 = poor, 2 = marginal, 3 = good, 4 = very good, 5 = excellent). Z-scores also were calculated for these criteria. The papers selected for presentation in San Antonio represent those with the highest cumulative z-scores – that is, the average of the two z-scores described above.
- Reviewers also were asked to provide an initial judgment about the papers’ relevance to working professionals. They were asked to give each paper a score of 1, 2 or 3, with 1 indicating the paper was “not relevant” for working professionals, 2 indicating it was “somewhat relevant” and 3 indicating it was “highly relevant.” The papers receiving the highest cumulative scores from all the judges were evaluated more comprehensively by a separate three-member committee.

8. *Total number of judges for general competition:* 23
Papers per judge: 5
Judges per paper: 3

9. *Did your group conduct any other type of refereed competition?*

- This year, we issued our second special topic call for papers. The focus was intersections between media ethics issues and electoral politics. This broad theme allowed a focus on PF&R issues, as well offered an opportunity for scholars in a wide array of specialties (news coverage of politics, public relations “spin” in campaigns, political advertising, etc.) to enter papers in the competition. Our goal was to make MED’s research paper competition welcoming to AEJMC members who do not consider MED their primary AEJMC affiliation. Authors were asked to designate on their title pages whether they wanted their papers considered for the special theme call. Those papers were rated by reviewers on an equal basis with all other papers submitted to MED. Eight papers were submitted for the special paper call, and four (or 50 percent) were accepted for the special themed research paper session.

Number of special-call submissions: 8
Number of special-call acceptances: 4

10. *Please list your in convention activities related to research.*

- In San Antonio, MED will present three referred paper sessions, including a special research paper session featuring the top submissions to MED’s special call for papers on the intersections of media ethics and electoral politics.
- In San Antonio, MED will offer four refereed papers in the Scholar-to-Scholar session.
- MED will organize one research panel session in San Antonio:
 - “Anonymous Voices in the Marketplace of Ideas,” with co-sponsorship of the Law Division.
- In addition, MED will co-sponsor a research panel session:

- “Requiring Student Participation in Research Pools,” organized by the Communication Theory & Methodology Division.
- Connected to its special research paper session, MED organized a PF&R mini-plenary panel session, “At the Intersection of Ethics and Politics: Questions and Controversies Raised by Campaign Advertising, News Coverage and Spin Doctoring,” co-sponsored by Advertising, Public Relations and Radio & Television Journalism divisions. MED also received AEJMC funding to invite Ronnie Crocker of the *Houston Chronicle* as a panelist.
- MED administers and awards the Carol Burnett University of Hawaii/AEJMC Prize for Excellence in Ethics Research by a graduate student. In San Antonio, the top two papers will be recognized and receive a cash award from the Carol Burnett Fund for Responsible Journalism. The Burnett award winner is Kris Boyle of Brigham Young for “Ideal Journalism: An Analysis of the *Idaho Falls Post Register’s* Ideologies in Covering the 2002 Gubernatorial Campaign,” and the runner-up is Andrew Morozov of Washington State for “Minding the Gap: An Ethical Perspective on the Use of Weblogs in Journalistic Practice.”
- MED awards a Professional Relevance Award for ethics research that is considered especially important for media professionals. In San Antonio, the award will be given to Martin Kuhn of North Carolina for “Interactivity & Prioritizing the Human: A Code of Blogging Ethics.”
- MED designates a Top Faculty paper award, as well as a second-place faculty paper. In San Antonio, the Top Faculty paper award goes to Romaine Smith Fullerton of Western Ontario and Maggie Jones Patterson of Duquesne for “Murder in Our Midst: Expanding Coverage to Include Care and Responsibility.” The second-place award goes to Susan Keith of Rutgers and Carol B. Schwalbe and B. William Silcock of Arizona State for “Blood on the Lens: ‘Private’ Moments, Public Platforms: Images and Ethics Codes Across Media in an Era of Violence and Tragedy.”

11. Please list your out-of-convention activities related to research.

- MED held its second mid-year meeting in conjunction with the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics annual conference. We met Feb. 24 to 27, 2005, in San Antonio and were pleased to significantly increase MED’s presence on the APPE slate. MED held an informal members’ meeting and programmed four panel sessions, as well as four research paper sessions. This increased programming provided an important venue for media ethics scholarship and included:
 - Paper session: “The Religiosity of American Journalists,” Edmund B. Lambeth, University of Missouri.
 - Paper session: “Ethics and Editorial Responsibilities: The Case of Tule Lake,” Marilyn A. Dyrud, Oregon Institute of Technology.
 - Panel session: “What Does Corporate Media Consolidation Portend for American Democracy?” Elliot D. Cohen, Indian River Community College, Arthur M. Levine,

California State University-Long Beach, Edward Wasserman, Washington & Lee University.

- Panel session: “Teaching Values and Moral Development to Media Ethics Students,” Jay Black, University of South Florida, Edward Spence, Charles Sturt University, Lee C. Wilkins, University of Missouri, Lee Anne Peck, University of Northern Colorado, and Patrick Lee Plaisance, Colorado State University.
 - Paper session: “Critical Conversations: A New System for Press Accountability, Wendy Wyatt Barger, University of St. Thomas, and “Making Credibility Appeals Credible: Avoiding Popularity Contests,” Stephanie Craft, University of Missouri, and Christopher Meyers, California State University-Bakersfield.
 - Panel session: “Constitutionally Protecting Profit: the First Amendment and the Business of Journalism,” Hazel Dicken-Garcia, University of Minnesota, David T. Ozar, Loyola University Chicago, Lee C. Willkins, University of Missouri, and Jennifer Henderson, Trinity University.
 - Panel session: “The Role of Emotion in the News Professions and Professional Ethics,” Peggy J. Bowers, Clemson University, Thomas H. Bivins, University of Oregon, and Wendy Wyatt Barger, University of St. Thomas.
 - Paper session: “Young Scholars in Journalism,” Kris Boyle, Brigham Young University, Karen Steen, University of South Florida, and Jeff Neely, University of South Florida.
- MED again supported the annual colloquium on media ethics offered in conjunction with the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*. The sixth in the Colloquia 2000 Series aimed at stimulating collaborative scholarship on crucial issues in media ethics, this year’s program was held May 9 through 12, at the University of Oregon. Its focus was “Caring and the Media.” Participants focused on the application of ethical theories addressing care and compassion to media practices. The resulting papers will be published in JMME in 2006.

12. Please describe briefly the research goals and activities of your division.

- Goal: We hope to continue increasing the quality and quantity of research submissions to both the AEJMC convention and the mid-year meeting with APPE.
- Activities: We have described them in 5 through 11 above.

TEACHING

13. Please list your in-convention activities related to teaching.

- In San Antonio, MED will co-sponsor two teaching panels:
 - “Ethics, Legal Issues, Expectations and Internship Management” organized by the Public Relations Division.

- “Voice to the Voiceless: GLBT and Disability Issues in News Coverage and Classrooms” organized by the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Interest Group.
- For the second year, we will offer the Media Ethics Teaching Workshop on Saturday afternoon of the convention. We believe the move from pre-convention programming to in-convention programming makes the workshop appealing to participants who have to stay at the convention because of Saturday night airfare restrictions. We also believe it lets us provide important programming for AEJMC members on Saturday afternoon, when a number of other divisions’ programming slates are winding down. Again this year, the workshop will contain content related to an overall theme (this year it’s visual ethics) that will be attractive to veteran teachers of media ethics, as well as a “boot camp” session that will appeal to novices. The “boot camp” portion of the workshop discusses how to develop a syllabus and coursework in media ethics, how to evaluate ethics assignments without devolving into subjectivity, and how to incorporate moral theory and case studies. The thematic portion of the workshop addresses how a topic – visual ethics – of increasing ethical importance may be treated in the classroom. Both of these workshop emphases clearly stress the Teaching Standards Committee’s focuses on curricular development, assessment and teaching methods.

14. Please list your out-of-convention activities related to teaching.

- MED’s Teaching Standards Chair contributed a series of articles to the division’s newsletter. The articles shared effective and innovative teaching ideas with division members. These were most often concrete activities that could be done in one class period or unit, which MED members could easily integrate into their own courses. The articles focused on such topics as a strategy for teaching visual ethics, an examination of core values in public relations ethics, and ways to help students learn moral theory. All of the articles described a division member who was willing to share activities that work well in his or her own classes. These articles clearly fit the Teaching Standards Committee’s focuses on curriculum, course content and teaching methods.
- At MED’s mid-year meeting with APPE, one panel session focused on issues in teaching moral theory. It was “Teaching Values and Moral Development to Media Ethics Students,” with Jay Black, University of South Florida, Edward Spence, Charles Sturt University, Lee C. Wilkins, University of Missouri, Lee Anne Peck, University of Northern Colorado, and Patrick Lee Plaisance, Colorado State University. For members who couldn’t attend the mid-year meeting, we published highlights of the panelists’ ideas in the next MED newsletter.

15. Please describe briefly the Teaching goals and activities of your division.

- Goal: We will continue MED’s long-term emphasis on offering reliable pedagogical guidance for teaching media ethics by devoting space to practical teaching topics in the newsletter and offering the Media Ethics Teaching Workshop at the convention.
- Activities: We have described them in 13 and 14 above.

PROFESSIONAL FREEDOM & RESPONSIBILITY

16. Please list your in-convention activities related to PF&R.

- In San Antonio, MED will organize three PF&R panel sessions:
 - “At the Intersection of Ethics and Politics: Questions and Controversies Raised by Campaign Advertising, News Coverage and Spin Doctoring,” organized by MED with co-sponsorship of the Advertising, Public Relations, and Radio/TV Journalism divisions.
 - “What Is Responsible Advocacy? Perspectives on Ethics in Public Relations,” organized by MED with co-sponsorship of the Public Relations Division.
 - “Your 15 Minutes of Fame: The Academic’s Role as a Public Scholar,” organized by MED with co-sponsorship of the Communication Theory & Methodology Division.
- In addition, MED will co-sponsor a PF&R panel session:
 - “Strange Bedfellows: The Role of Advertising and PR in the War on Terrorism” organized by the Advertising Division.
- Non-member invited convention speakers:
 - Ronnie Crocker, *Houston Chronicle*

17. Please list your out-of-convention activities related to PF&R.

- The PF&R chair wrote a series of articles for the division’s newsletter. They addressed such PF&R-related topics as whether readbacks of stories to news sources should become part of journalists’ “standard of care,” ways that journalists can educate the public about journalism’s best practices, the Terri Schiavo case as an opportunity to consider how journalists can foster public understanding of ethical issues, and an ethical critique of the use of the term “nuclear option” in coverage of the debate over U.S. Senate rules on filibustering judicial nominees as a case study on the value of thinking about journalistic word choice in ethical terms. These contributions clearly fit with three PF&R Committee focuses: First, on ethics by discussing issues in terms of ethical theory and professional ethics; second, on media criticism and accountability by critically evaluating journalistic practices and suggesting specific ways to improve practices; and third, on public service by discussing how to educate the public about journalistic practices and foster public understanding of ethics.
- At MED’s mid-year meeting with APPE, three of our sessions especially focused on PF&R issues. They were:
 - Panel session: “What Does Corporate Media Consolidation Portend for American Democracy?” Elliot D. Cohen, Indian River Community College, Arthur M. Levine, California State University-Long Beach, Edward Wasserman, Washington & Lee University.

- Paper session: “Critical Conversations: A New System for Press Accountability, Wendy Wyatt Barger, University of St. Thomas, and “Making Credibility Appeals Credible: Avoiding Popularity Contests,” Stephanie Craft, University of Missouri, and Christopher Meyers, California State University-Bakersfield.
- Panel session: “Constitutionally Protecting Profit: the First Amendment and the Business of Journalism,” Hazel Dicken-Garcia, University of Minnesota, David T. Ozar, Loyola University Chicago, Lee C. Wilkins, University of Missouri, and Jennifer Henderson, Trinity University.
- The MED webmaster maintains a media ethics expert link on the division’s website. It lists MED members who are willing to comment about media performance in interviews, workshops and talks. This is an important public service provided by professors whose training makes them articulate observers of media practice.

18. Please describe briefly PFC&R goals and activities of your division.

- Goal: Through our mid-year meeting with APPE, MED will continue making connections with scholars in other areas of professional ethics. Also through its website experts link and its award for professional relevant research, MED will continue encouraging members to serve the public and the media professions.
- Activities: We have described them in 16 and 17 above.

General Information

19. Please attach copies of the newsletters sent by your group this year, and any other material you wish us to note.

- Four issues of “Ethical News,” MED’s newsletter: Summer 2004, which was published after last year’s annual report was submitted, Fall 2004, Winter 2005 and Spring 2005. The newsletter is published online and available at:
http://jcomm.uoregon.edu/%7Etbivins/aejmc_ethics/LINKS/newsletter.html
- MED’s special topic paper call.
- MED’s paper judging form.