

MEDIA ETHICS DIVISION

1999-2000 ANNUAL REPORT TO AEJMC

1. Officers

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Teaching chair

David Allen, Illinois State University

PR&R chair

Stephen Ward, University of British
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Graduate student liaison

Pat Kennedy, Syracuse University

Liaison to Commission on the Status of Women

Pat Dooley, Wichita State University

Liaison to Commission on the Status of

Minorities

Gracie Lawson-Border, Wayne State
University

Buddy Program Director

Louise Hermanson, University of South
Alabama
Lee Wilkins, University of Missouri

Liaisons to Professional Organizations

APPE: Deni Elliott, University of Montana
SPJ: Vicki Hesterman, Point Loma
Nazarene University
NCA and ICA: Cliff Christians, University
of Illinois

Southeast Colloquium Liaison & Past Chair

Michelle Johnson, Marist College

2. Demographics

[See Appendix A form for demographics]

Membership demographics

Members

April 1999	261
April 2000	287

Dues per member

Faculty	\$10
Students	\$5

Media Ethics Division funds

This year the Media Ethics Division raised its dues for faculty from \$5 to \$10 to pay for publication of its newsletter, which had been underwritten by the Silha Center at the University of Minnesota with the understanding that its funding would end when the interest group became a division. We anticipated some drop in membership. Instead were heartened to see both a boost in membership by nearly 10 percent and a healthy financial balance.

Balance as of 3/31/00 \$1,778.60

Research

3. Strengths and Weaknesses

This year, MED made a concerted effort to increase research activity. These measures are detailed below under numbers 4 and 5: faculty and student research activity. While we still need to do much better, we feel we heartened by our improving performance and encouraged that we are headed in the right direction.

Faculty research paper submissions increased from 9 to 11 and the acceptance rate dropped from 78% to 55%.

Judges: We increased our judges for the research paper competition from 13 to 36 this year.

Student research paper submissions jumped from 5 to 14, and the acceptance rate dropped from 60% to 43%. Incorporating the Carol Burnett award under MED helped to boost our graduate students participation.

Southeast Colloquium: Our participation in this mid-year event this year encouraged the submission of an additional 12 ethics research papers.

4. Faculty research

Faculty research paper submissions:	11
accepted	6
acceptance rate	55%

[Last year we had 9 faculty submissions / 7 acceptances = 78%]

Overall research activity:

The Media Ethics Division strives to bolster both the quality and the quantity of its research-related activities. It is our hope that the activities will result in an increased number of research paper submissions in forthcoming years. We are encouraged by the improvement this year, but we also recognize this as a weakness and seek to address it, in part, with the activities listed below.

Southeast Colloquium: MED participated in AEJMC's Southeast Regional Colloquium for the first time in March. We see this as an important opportunity for new professors and students to present and receive feedback on their work.

Papers submitted = 12
 accepted = 8
 acceptance rate = 67%

Faculty award: MED will give its first award for a faculty paper at the AEJMC convention this year. It will be awarded annually to the paper that offers the greatest practical contribution in ethics research for direct application to the journalism industry. We also hope this award will encourage tenure and promotion committees to look with favor upon such research in a candidate's portfolio.

Scholarly mentoring: At the 2000 AEJMC Convention (6 p.m. Wednesday, August 9), MED will offer a special one-on-one mentoring program for junior faculty and graduate students in lieu of a panel session. Senior scholars Jay Black, William A. Babcock, Clifford Christians, Robert Drechsel, Deni Elliott, Louis Hodges, Edmund Lambeth, Philip Meyer, Roy L. Moore, Maggie Patterson, and Lee Wilkins will meet with young scholars to advise them on the design of current and future media ethics research projects.

The scholars represent a range of interests and approaches from the social sciences and the humanities. We hope this opportunity communications that we encourage young scholars of all stripes with an interest in ethics to feel welcomed by MED and AEJMC.

Convention panels on Research:

[See Appendix B for details of Conference panels]

"Mass Media Research: (Limited) Effects on the Practice of Journalism," co-sponsored with Mass Communication and Society

"Senior Scholar Roundtable," co-sponsored with Community College Journalism Association, scholarly mentoring session in lieu of a panel.

"Beyond the Burning Bed: Newsroom Decision-Making on the Status of Women," co-sponsored with the Commission on the Status of Women.

“Ignoring Institutional Review Boards: Have Journalism Researchers Ignored them for Too Long,” co-sponsored with Mass Communication and Society.

Newsletter articles:

[See Appendix C for copies of Ethical News, the MED newsletter]

“Finding new venues for ethics research,” by Paul Husselbee, Research Chair, Ethical News, Fall 1999.

“Upcoming paper calls and conventions,” a synopsis of other professional organizational meetings and paper calls, Ethical News, Fall 1999

The forthcoming issue of this year’s MED newsletter, Ethical News, will carry several articles on research topics and agendas.

5. Student research

Student research paper submissions:	14
accepted	6
acceptance rate	43%

[Last year, we had 5 student paper submissions/ 3 acceptances = 60%]

Research activity with students:

Graduate student award: MED is happy to announce that beginning this year, it will administer the University of Hawaii/ Carol Burnett/ AEJMC award for the top student paper on the subject of media ethics.

Scholarly mentoring: All graduate students who successfully submitted papers to MED this year received a personal letter inviting them to participate in the individual consultations on media ethics research that MED will offer at the AEJMC Convention in Phoenix. We hope that students will respond to the opportunity to seek advice and encouragement from senior scholars in the field.

Southeast Colloquium: Graduate students and new faculty members were the primary presenters at the Southeast Colloquium, which MED joined for the first time this year.

6. Overview of judging process

[See Appendix D for letter to judges and judging form.]

MED asked its top scholars from across the country to evaluate the papers submitted. Each judge read two papers. Papers were subject to a blind-refereed process of review. The MED Research Chair matched paper topics, based on titles and abstracts, to judges’ specific areas of expertise; then sent papers to the judge along with instructions and critique form. The judges returned the critique form to the Research Chair. The Research Chair tabulated the judges scores. The scores were standardized. Based on the scores and judges’ recommendations, papers were either accepted or rejected, and authors were notified in a timely fashion.

The Research Chair's instruction letter to judges encouraged them to include some constructive criticism. [Copy attached.] Most judges attached substantial commentary to the numerical form. We hope to hear from the successful paper presenters at the convention whether they found the reviewers' comments helpful.

7. Judges

36 judges from 30 institutions.
Each judge read two papers.
Each paper read by three judges

[Last year, we had just 13 judges.]

List of judges & schools:

1. David Allen, Illinois State
2. David Arant, Memphis
3. David J. Atkin, Cleveland State
4. Bill Babcock, Minnesota
5. Sherry Baker, Brigham Young
6. Ralph Barney, Brigham Young (retired)
7. Genelle Belmas, Indiana
8. Jay Black, South Florida
9. Fred Blevens, Southwest Texas State
10. David Boeyink, Indiana
11. Sandra Borden, Western Michigan
12. Kim Walsh-Childers, Florida
13. Tom Brislin, Hawaii
14. Cliff Christians, Illinois
15. Lucinda Davenport, Michigan State
16. Louis Day, Louisiana State
17. Deni Elliott, Montana
18. R. Ferrell Ervin, Southeast Missouri State
19. Thomas Eveslage, Temple
20. John P. Ferre, Louisville
21. George A. Gladney, Wyoming
22. Ted Glasser, Stanford
23. A. David Gordon, Wisconsin-Eau Claire
24. Beth Blanks Hindman, North Dakota State
25. Lou Hodges, Washington & Lee
26. Paul Husselbee, Lamar
27. Edmund Lambeth, Missouri
28. Patrick Parsons, Penn State
29. Maggie Patterson, Duquesne
30. Philip Patterson, Oklahoma Baptist
31. Michael Perkins, Brigham Young
32. Jane Singer, Iowa
33. Annette Taylor, Dayton
34. Paul S. Voakes, Indiana

35. Ginny Whitehouse, Whitworth

36. Lee Wilkins, Missouri

8. Awards

[Because these awards are all new this year, they are also listed above under the reports of overall research activity.]

Faculty award: For the paper that offers the greatest practical contribution in ethics research for direct application to the journalism industry. This year that award will be given to Charles N. Davis and Stephanie Craft of the University of Missouri for their paper: "Of Joint Ventures: Sock Puppets and New Media Synergy."

Southeast Colloquium: University of Miami professor Sigman Splichal and Bruce Garrison received the award for the best faculty paper for their study of newspaper editors' approach to reporting on the private lives of public officials. Susan Keith, of the University of North Carolina, received the award for top student paper for her study of ethics in editing textbooks. We see this as an important opportunity for new professors and students to present and receive feedback on their work.

Carol Burnett Award: The University of Hawaii/Carol Burnett/AEJMC award for the top student paper on the subject of media ethics will be presented to Erik Forde Ugland and Jack Breslin at the University of Minnesota for their paper: "The Moral Authority of the Minnesota News Council: Statements of Principle and Uses of Precedent." The judges also picked a runnerup: Patrick Lee Plaisance of Syracuse University for his paper: "The Concept of Media Accountability Reconsidered."

Teaching

The Pre-Conference Workshop on Teaching Ethics is MED's primary teaching activity. For a fuller report on this Workshop, see #19 Pre-Conference Activities below. See Appendix B for details on conference panels and Appendix C for copies of Ethical News, MED's newsletter.

9. Curriculum

"Teaching Ethics in Other Courses," convention panel co-sponsored with Law. (C)
"When should you talk about ethics? Weaving ethics across the curriculum," by Earnest L. Perry Jr., Ethical News, Spring 2000

10. Leadership

"Is there Truth in this Class? Teaching Post Modernism," a convention panel session co-sponsored with the Cultural and Critical Studies Division. (C)
"Blue Ribbon Panel on Diversity," sponsored by Minorities and Communication and Community College Journalism Association. MED suggested panelists. (C)
"Critical Thinking for the Professions: What is It? How do You Teach It?"

convention panel, sponsored by Critical and Cultural Studies. MED suggested panelists. (C)

11, Course Content and Teaching Methods

“Teaching Applied Media Ethics: The Minnesota News Council’s ‘Mock Hearing Handbook’” by Genelle Belmas, *Ethical News*, Spring 2000.

“Getting students to think about values,” by David S. Allen, Teaching Chair, *Ethical News*, Fall 1999.

12. Assessment

“Assessing media ethics,” by Margaret J. Haefner, Ethical News, Spring 2000.

PF&R

13. Free expression

“Places to go for information on Ethics of Internet Privacy,” Ethical News, Spring 2000.

“Public Records: Special Privilege for the Press or a Boon for the Public?” conference panel, co-sponsored with Law.

14. Ethics

“Speed Kills: Can ethics survive the rush to publish?” by Stephen Ward, PF&R chair, Ethical News, Winter 2000.

15. Media Criticism and Accountability

“Where to find ethics codes on-line,” Ethical News, Winter 2000.

“Selling (to) kids: Trends, Ethics, and Implications of Marketing that Targets Children and Adolescents,” conference panel, sponsored by Communication Theory and Methodology. MED suggested panelists.

“Critical Thinking for the Professions,” sponsored by Critical and Cultural Studies. MED suggested panelists.

16. Racial, Gender and Cultural Inclusiveness

“Blue-Ribbon Panel on Diversity,” sponsored by Minorities and Communication. MED suggested panelists.

“Beyond the Burning Bed: Newsroom Decision-Making on Coverage of Battering,” conference panel, co-sponsored with the Commission on the Status of Women.

17. Public Service

MED believes that its new faculty research award will promote public service by encouraging academics to engage in projects that have direct applications to the working press and which therefore benefit the public.

18. Number of non-member invited speakers .

Name	Affiliation
Jo Craven	Investigative Reporters and Editors
Ellie Dixon, Editor	Caledonian-Record (St. Johnsbury, VT)
Linda Valdez, Editorial writer	Arizona Republic
Stephanie Orr, Exec. director	Casa (Phoenix)

Four women, one Hispanic.

19. Pre-Conference Activities

Pre-Conference Workshop: "Teaching Ethics in Journalism"

Students:

Women = 10

Men = 5

One Asian. Race of others is unknown.

Names and affiliations:

Don Hyun Byun, Chonnam National University, South Korea

Thomas J. Emmerson, Iowa State University

Norma Green, Columbia Collge

Martha Vines Henderson, Northwestern State Univrsity of Natichitoches

Susan Keith, Freedom Forum Follow, U. of North Carolina

Mary Cronin Lamonica, Stonehill College

Jimmy McCollum, Lipscomb College

Lee Anne Peck, Ohio University

Mavis Richardson, University of Minnesota

Geanne Rosenberg, Baruch College, CUNY

Loret Gnivecki Steinberg, Rochester Institute of Techology

Douglas J. Swanson, University of Wiscnsin-LaCrosse

Sheila L. Tefft, Emory Univeristy

John Clifton Watson, American University

Susan Wiley, Florida Atlantic University

Instructors:

David Allen, Illinois State

Cliff Christians, Illinois

Louis Hodges, Washington and Lee

Edmund Lambeth, Missouri

Margaret Patterson, Duquesne University

Lee Wilkins, Missouri

20. Out-of-Conference Activities

MED made a special effort this year to play a scholarly and collegial role in related organizations at their national conferences. We appointed special liaisons to these conferences, and they have filed the following reports:

APPE. The Ninth Annual Meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, held late February outside of Washington, D.C., attracted media ethics scholars, media ethics literature, and papers relevant to the field. Publishers displayed media ethics titles in the exhibition room and students and scholars with interest in media ethics issues were well represented among the 360 participants.

One session was devoted specifically to journalism ethics and included the following papers: "Creating a Valid and Effective Newspaper Ombudsman Position," by Christopher Meyers; "Reframing the Media Audience as an Ethical Entity," by Kristie Bunton; "The Changing Space Between Private and Public: Using Photographs and Dialogue to Teach Sensitivity to Mass Media Privacy Issues," by Paul Lester and Deni Elliott. Sandra Borden chaired that session.

In addition, the following papers were presented within other sessions: "Moving Journalism from Objectivity to Activism," by Sherrie Wilson with Marilyn Dyrud chair; and "Ethics in the Capstone Course: A Model for Senior Seminars," by Jeff Stein. Tom Brislin, Tom Cooper and Ed Spence brought a media ethics perspective to their contributions on a panel, "Honoring Indigenous Rights," chaired by Deni Elliott

Other with interest in communication or media ethics at the conference included Bill Babcock, Sherry Baker, Wendy Barger, Lou Hodges, Ed Lambeth, Judy Lichtenberg, Parvin Parvaran, James Warren, and Sherrie Wilson.

NCA. Civic journalism and the ethical use of public relations were among the topics discussed by MED members who presented at the Sixth National Communication Ethics Conference in May.

MED member Clifford G. Christians of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign used civic journalism as an example of the interpersonal foundation of civic obligation in his presentation "Promises versus contracts," part of a session Sandra Borden moderated that was titled "Norms of Democracy and Communication: A Critical and Speculative Discussion." Citing a recent newspaper example, Christopher J. Schroll of Wayne State University also referred to civic journalism, suggesting it illustrates how citizens can go beyond merely enduring each other when striving for tolerance. His presentation, part of the same session, was called, "Is this the best we can do? A critique of democratic intolerance."

MED member Deni Elliott of the University of Montana spoke about changes she has observed in the teaching of mass communication ethics during an interactive "Roundtable on Integrating Ethics Across the Communication Studies Curriculum."

MED member Michael Dillon of Duquesne University made a presentation called "Gatekeeper or Maitre d'? Journalists and the responsible use of public relations" during a panel called "Ethical Issues in Building Community and Defining Public Interest in Public Relations." The other presenters and the titles of their presentations were: Calvin L. Troup, Duquesne University, "Pursuing civic public relations through a dialogic advocacy model"; Debra A. Worley, Indiana State University, "Expanding the role of public interest: Utilizing models of ethical decision-making for critical analysis"; Virginia T. Rodino, Syracuse University, "A transformational look at the role of public relations in developing a collectivist ethic of corporate social responsibility"; and Richard M. Dubiel, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, "Public Relations, Ethics, and the Demise of Journalism."

MED members were involved in the conference in other ways besides making formal presentations. Division Chair Maggie Patterson of Duquesne University was

a member of the committee that selected the recipients of the inaugural Duquesne University Graduate Student Fellowships in Communication Ethics. The fellowships were awarded to the authors of the top four student papers.

MED member Sandy Borden was a co-director of the conference, which is hosted every other year by Western Michigan University.

The conference will be held again in 2002. It is sponsored by: the Communication Ethics Commission of the National Communication Association; the Center for the Study of Ethics in Society, the Department of Communication, and the College of Arts and Sciences at Western Michigan University; and the Department of Communication at Duquesne University.

SPJ Liaison Vicki Hesterman reports on the following activities of interest to MED members. The national SPJ convention will be held Oct. 26-29 in Columbus, Ohio. President-elect Ray Marcano reports Miramax Films announced it will screen a major new movie for convention-goers, followed by a program on media criticism and its effects on the movie business. Also scheduled to speak: Erin Moriarty of CBS-TV's 48 Hours; Alex Chadwick of National Public Radio; Gary Webb, formerly of the San Jose Mercury News; and a possible appearance by singer MC Hammer, who will talk about the effects of media coverage on celebrities. Convention planners have arranged for writing coaches to be available on two days and they're working with Ohio State officials to bring presidential candidates George W. Bush and Al Gore to the SPJ convention.

21. Primary accomplishment in the area of teaching

- An increased number of thoughtful and practical articles on teaching in Ethical News
- The continued ability of the Pre-Convention Teaching Workshop to draw students and faculty. We see this workshop and its week-long predecessors at the Universities of Missouri and Kentucky as one of the primary reasons Media Ethics grew so fast as a new interest group and division.

23. Newsletters

[See appendix C.]

23. Primary accomplishment in the area of PF&R

Faculty award: The new faculty research award for the ethical research that has the most promising practical application to the field is our primary accomplishment in PF&R.

"Inclusivity" activities This year we have co-sponsored panels with Minorities and Communication ("Blue Ribbon Panel on Diversity") and with the Commission on the Status of Women ("The Burning Bed"). We believe both of these will be big draws at the convention. Because we have not had great success in drawing minority and women panelists in our short history as an Interest Group, we see these cooperative efforts as a means to make contacts and begin to address diversity issues more fruitfully within MED.

24. Goals

(1) Goals set last year that we were unable to meet?

- We have not increased our research paper submissions as much as we would like to, although we have made reasonably good progress
- We set out a number of PF&R goals last year based on the recommendations of the Committee to Establish Professional Ties. They were not all to be accomplished in one year, so we have more work to do.
- We hoped to attract more participation by minorities on our panels and other events.

(2) Why?

- Progress on the research papers is slow. I think we are making the right moves to encourage more submissions.
- We set complicated and industrious goals in PF&R. We need to patiently seek the volunteers who will help us to implement them.
- Co-sponsoring events with MAC and the Commission on the Status of Women has helped our quest for diversity this year, but we do not have any magic formula to improve our performance here.

(3) What are our three most important goals for the upcoming year?

- Encourage more ethics research and more research paper submissions to MED.
- Continue implementation of our PF&R goals to Establish Professional Ties.
- Improve our ability to attract minorities to participate on MED panels.

(4) How might any or all of the Standing Committees help us to achieve these goals?

- If the Standing Committee on Research has advice about what further measures we might take to encourage research paper submissions, we would like to hear those.
- We could use help from the Commission on the Status of Minorities in identifying minority AEJMC members who work in ethics and would like to serve in leadership positions.