COLLEGE MEDIA review

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This document compiles articles that were previously published online as stand-alone posts on the College Media Review website. During the original release period, content was not produced as bound issues; articles were uploaded individually as they were approved. For archival purposes, traditional volume and issue numbers have been replaced with a volume year, reflecting the publication cycle from July through June. CMR historically published a Research Annual each year. When publication frequency changed, some research articles were published online only. To avoid excluding any work, all online-published research articles are included.

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College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

New media law text encourages ‘thinking like a journalist.’

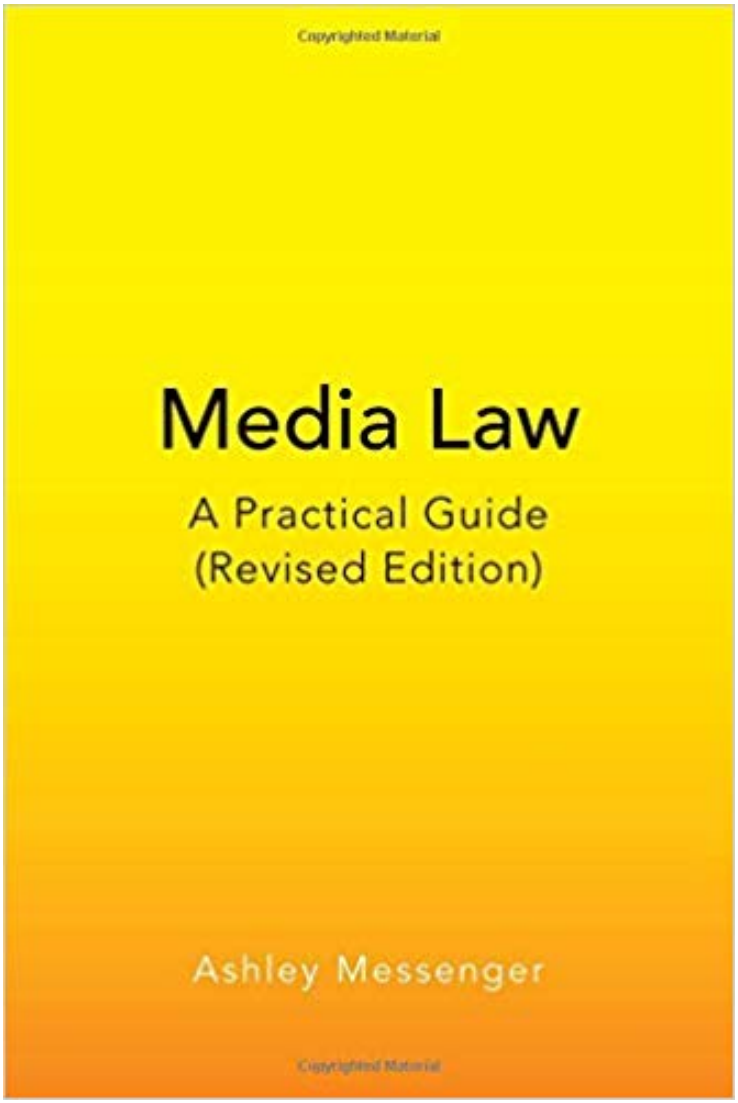
Review: ‘Media Law: A Practical Guide (Revised Edition),’ by Ashley Messenger

Reviewed by **Carolyn Schurr Levin**

Teaching media law to undergraduate journalism and communications students is challenging. The concepts are esoteric and complex, even for law students. For undergraduates, the laws often seem foreign and counterintuitive (tweets are copyrighted?!). Many of the media law textbooks and other resources are written by lawyers in language that seems directed to other lawyers or law students.

Luckily, in the mix of available course materials lies “Media Law: A Practical Guide (Revised Edition)”, by Ashley Messenger, who is NPR’s Associate General Counsel. This accessible and user-friendly book is an outlier. Although written by a lawyer, the language is direct and straightforward, exactly what you want for undergraduates, most of whom have never taken a law course before.

In the interest of full disclosure, I have been teaching media law in various iterations – with and without ethics, in person and online, to undergraduates and graduate students – for almost two decades. In my classes, I have used many of the available resources, including the first edition of Messenger's book, as well as other media law textbooks. Some of them have worked; others haven't. Messenger's book works.



"Media Law: A Practical Guide (Revised Edition)," by Ashley Messenger

The vast majority of media law textbooks are organized in similar ways. They begin with a broad introduction to the law, have a couple of chapters on The First Amendment, and then are sorted by legal topic – libel, privacy, telecommunications, advertising, etc. Interestingly, the topics are often introduced in the exact same order. Many of the books include excerpts from court decisions and case studies.

Although Messenger's book broadly follows this general format, it is decidedly different. It puts the legal concepts to practice, blending legal definitions with practical advice (hence the "Practical" in the title). The unique structure of the book focuses on "what you do as a reporter, instead of just legal theory," Messenger said. "Instead of 'thinking like a lawyer,' I think like a journalist," Messenger writes in the book's Preface. The major emphasis is on practical realities with less emphasis on caselaw and legal theories.

Undergraduate students "don't need a treatise," Messenger explained. "My goal is to sensitize students to the issues so that they know when they need to find a lawyer." The book's sections reflect that sensibility. "What Can You Be Sued for? (And Are There Related Criminal Charges?)," the Part II section heading queries. "How Does One Get Information to Publish?" the Part III section heading asks. The Copyright chapter is framed as: "Issues with Creating Content or Using Other People's Content." And, there are separate chapters on the use of photos and the use of music, issues that arise on a seemingly daily basis for communications students.

Messenger introduced the first edition of her book, "A Practical Guide to Media Law," published by Pearson Education, Inc., in 2014. She had been teaching media law to undergraduate students in the Journalism School at American University since 2002, and noticed consistent stumbling blocks for her students. There were certain concepts that the students just weren't grasping, Messenger said, including the difference between civil and criminal principles, the differing roles of government and private decision makers, and issue spotting. So, after a few semesters of teaching, she reorganized her course materials in a way to increase student understanding. Her class outlines became the first edition of her book.

The first edition, though, became "badly outdated" as important new Supreme Court decisions have been issued in the past few years. With a new publisher, Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., Messenger has updated and reorganized the first edition to include new cases and statutes, to incorporate suggestions that adopters have given her on the first edition, and to streamline sections. For instance, the copyright section deemphasizes information about copyright trolls such as Righthaven and includes new image tracking software. The trademark section has been rewritten to reflect the 2018 Supreme Court decision in Matal v. Tam about trademark disparagement. "I've modernized things to keep up with what's actually happening," she said.

What Messenger has not done is pad this book with unnecessary information. For example, she explained, the Supreme Court's recent Air Wisconsin v. Hoeper libel decision "doesn't add anything substantive to the day-to-day reality of what comes up for journalists," and so it did not make the cut for the book. She "really tried" to

keep the book from being "merely an academic exercise." And, with several hundred fewer pages than other media law textbooks, students will no doubt notice.

Fittingly, the book ends with "What Practical Issues Are Related to Media Law?" This last chapter includes non-legal consequences and considerations, assessing risk, media liability insurance, and journalism ethics – topics that are not regularly included in classic media law textbooks. They are a welcome and eminently useful addition. "The fact that the First Amendment may protect a speaker's right to say something doesn't mean that there won't be any consequences arising from such speech," Messenger writes. This may just be the most important lesson of this enlightening book, one that every single journalism and communications student should be reminded of – over and over again.

In our increasingly complex world, especially for mass communicators, a basic understanding of media law is arguably more critical than ever. "Media Law: A Practical Guide (Revised Edition)" will be released this July, with enough time to be adopted for fall 2019 classes. The paperback and e-book will be priced at $69.95.

Carolyn Schurr Levin is a media lawyer who has taught media law courses at Long Island University, Stony Brook University, Baruch College, and Pace University. Before teaching full time, she was the Vice President and General Counsel of Newsday and the Vice President and General Counsel of Ziff Davis Media.

Carolyn Levin

College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

Full Disclosure: Using FOIA requests in a college newsroom

McMichael's student, Hannah Daniel, recently received copies of her grandfather's World War II medals using the Freedom of Information Act.

How Georgia College students are breaking news using the state's open records law

By Pate McMichael, adviser, The Colonnade, and senior lecturer, Georgia College

The first story broke on a Monday morning in our group chat: "I just heard a GC bus hit a person."

Over the next five weeks, Georgia College, a public liberal arts university in Middle Georgia with 7,000 students, would experience the death of bicyclist, a devastating fraternity house fire, a norovirus outbreak that shut down the dining hall, an armed

robbery blocks from campus, and the shooting of a GC student who narrowly survived.

Our tiny young staff at *The Colonnade* had little experience fielding red-hot news, but that group message changed everything. For the two editors staffing the news desk, the grind of those five weeks taught them a valuable lesson: getting public records in a timely manner can make or break the big story.

Below are three examples — along with best practices — outlining how GC student journalists have used state open records requests to break news and hold those in power accountable for their actions.

Milledgeville Bicyclist Killed by GC Bus

That Monday morning text turned into the above headline. The 21-year-old bicyclist, Logan Jones, died on his way to the hospital. What exactly happened remained unclear, and *The Colonnade* had a 10 p.m. print deadline. Staff members wanted more specific information to distinguish their coverage from shabby online reports. Editors wanted to know whether the bicyclist or the driver was at fault.

The Colonnade's assistant news editor, Amy McDonald, filed an open records request at 2 p.m. for the official accident report. She also walked over to the scene and took photographs from a respectable distance (blood remained on the street) while confirming the accident location. University officials released a statement that afternoon providing few details.

The official accident report did not arrive for three days. However, in a stroke of luck, the Georgia State Patrol emailed some preliminary findings just hours before our deadline. *The Colonnade* only received those findings because McDonald had filed the open records request. It went online immediately, giving us the scoop:

> "According to the Georgia State Patrol report, Jones was riding his bike on the Hancock Street sidewalk toward downtown and continued onto the crosswalk

as a GC bus turned right onto Clarke Street. Jones struck the passenger side of the bus then fell from his bike and slid underneath the bus."

Jones was riding illegally on the sidewalk. The bus driver turned right on green and never saw Jones until he collided with the bus. McDonald was sick with norovirus when she received the final report confirming her reporting.

"Sitting on my couch reading about whose fault it was," she recalled, "that a student my age died in a tragic accident definitely jarred me a bit, thinking through the emotional ramifications the information would have on the victim's family and our tight-knit community."

McDonald will serve as our next editor. She plans to create a breaking news team for fall 2019. Her advice on getting public records in a timely manner is to submit them electronically. Outdated websites may say that people wanting information must submit their request by mail or by fax, she cautions, but the policy has probably changed. Call and ask.

"A polite demeanor can go a long way, whether it is through an email or over the phone," McDonald said.

GC Investigated 3 Hazing Allegations in Fall 2018

The Colonnade's hazing story ran in April 2019, but it actually began in October. That's when the national arm of Alpha Tau Omega suddenly dismissed one-third of GC's chapter. The hazing allegations concerned a pledge being asked to grow a mullet, which may have violated the state's anti-hazing law.

It seemed pretty minor, but the university stood by ATO's nationals. Soon after, university officials announced a mandatory anti-hazing seminar featuring the parents of Max Gruver, an LSU freshman from Atlanta who died in 2017 during a forced-drinking fraternity ritual. Something didn't add up because forced-drinking was not a factor in ATO's suspension.

GC's "overreaction" soon made more sense when rumors emerged that GC's Delta Zeta chapter faced forced-drinking allegations. That's when Lindsay Stevens, the news editor, filed an open records request with GC Student Affairs. She asked for investigative files and conclusions regarding any and all hazing allegations.

Stevens soon received a 17-page document from administrators in student affairs. The hazing records included the ATO and DZ investigations, but also a previously unknown allegation against Kappa Alpha. The records revealed that an anonymous source had warned university officials that "someone is going to get seriously injured or killed" because of what the source described as a laundry list of dangerous KA hazing allegations. The source, however, provided no evidence.

The records also explained the process by which our university administrators handle hazing allegations. It showed that GC public safety officers do not investigate unless officials in student affairs ask them to investigate. Instead, a GC student affairs employee conducts the investigation and recommends punishments. Generally, student affairs officials act on the evidence they receive. They do not have the power to gather evidence using warrants or subpoenas. When not in possession of evidence, student affairs officials call members from the chapter in, confront them with the allegations and make a determination based on the chapter's reaction.

The Colonnade's scoop revealed GC dismissed eight DZ members for attending an unofficial event that involved forced-drinking. The evidence included text messages that clearly documented what happened. Still, the sorority was not punished although its members were required to attend a mandatory training. Student affairs officials cleared KA because its members vigorously denied the allegations. ATO's punishment stood.

McMichael's student, Hannah Daniel, recently received copies of her grandfather's World War II medals using the Freedom of Information Act.

"Lesson I've learned are to be specific in your request but leave a little room to gather extra information," Stevens advises.

“In the fall I asked for hazing records rather than specifically ATO, and I got back an investigation I had no idea about.”

Now, Stephens is filing open records requests related to a 1970s serial killer. She also receives daily police reports and writes our weekly police blotter.

“My favorite part of getting records is reading them and learning about the legal process,” Stevens says. “The law is something I am very interested in and getting to see the police reports shows a me a little about the process.”

Unvaccinated Students on Campus

The Colonnade’s final spring issue contained a story on unvaccinated students. Senior writer Miya Banks broke the story just as the measles outbreak expanded to 22 states (Georgia included). Banks wanted to know how many unvaccinated students attend GC and whether the university has a plan for an outbreak. She wanted to know whether unvaccinated students had received a religious or medical waiver.

University officials do not have a master plan for an outbreak, Banks discovered, but an interview with the registrar explained one clear policy that Banks quoted directly:

“Should there be an outbreak on campus,” the registrar said, “anyone who does not have the vaccination will be asked to leave campus.”

The registrar initially refused to disclose the number of unvaccinated students.

“I asked for the records once in person,” Banks said, “then again with more careful phrasing through email because I was afraid, I had, perhaps, not stressed well enough that I wanted only numbers and not the names of students.”

After the email request, Banks received the 2015 numbers (71 students; four medical, 67 religious), but nothing current. She then decided to file an open records request

for 2016-2018. Almost immediately, she received a lump sum (not a year-by-year breakdown) for all three years (112 students; six medical, 106 religious).

"I thought I had worded my request plainly," Banks says, "but I think I may have failed to say, 'I want these numbers by individual years.'"

The tally, divided by three, predicts that less than 1 percent of the student body is unvaccinated. It also shows that 95 percent of exemptions were religious, not medical.

"It was the first time I had to press so hard to exercise my rights," Banks said, "and it paid off."

Best Practices and Pitfalls

Student journalists should learn the difference between a federal Freedom of Information Act request and a state open records law request. The average FOIA request can take years to bear fruit, but a narrowly tailored open records request should be disclosed within two weeks.

GC student journalists recommend asking to inspect, rather than duplicate, the records. In Georgia, if you ask for a single duplication, you must also pay a fee for the time it takes to prepare the records. Inspecting the records should not prevent you from self-duplicating them with a camera. Including what you're willing to pay for records that must be duplicated is also a good policy. GC students recommend agreeing to pay at least $5.

All student journalists attending state institutions can file open records requests for many different purposes, but they should be careful to avoid fishing expeditions. Open records requests are legal procedures, similar to lawsuits. Not every story merits such an aggressive approach. Often, departments and agencies will disclose records without a formal request. Take special care when seeking state employee's emails and texts, especially when absent a clear news premise.

Students should lastly recognize that open records laws only apply to the executive branch. Filing an open records request for judicial or legislative records shows ignorance and inexperience. Almost all court hearings and records, except grand jury and juvenile, are assumed open to the public. Legislative records and committee reports can be found online or requested in person at the state house.

Holding universities and students accountable requires student journalists to remain vigilant. Learning how to file a concise open records request on the basis of a clear news premise will improve coverage.

After all, First Amendment rights have no value if not exercised fearlessly. Our new editor didn't want to blame the victim for a tragic accident that cost a young man his life, but the records kept her honest.

"At the end of the day, I had to remind myself that publishing the information was important," McDonald said. "The community needed to know a final verdict."

Pate McMichael is the adviser of *The Colonnade*, Georgia College's independent student newspaper. He also teaches media law and investigative journalism as a senior lecturer in the Department of Communication. His first book, *Klandestine: How a Klan Lawyer and a Checkbook Journalist Helped James Earl Ray Cover Up His Crime*, was published in 2015. His most recent work, "The Last Casualty," will soon appear in *The Bitter Southerner Reader*, vol. 3. He holds an undergraduate degree in history from the University of Georgia and a master's from the Missouri School of Journalism, which featured his story "The Big Payback" in Words Matter, an anthology of narrative journalism.

College Media Review
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WordPress speaks my language

The CMS powerhouse dominates the content delivery business

By **Bradley Wilson**, *CMR Managing Editor*

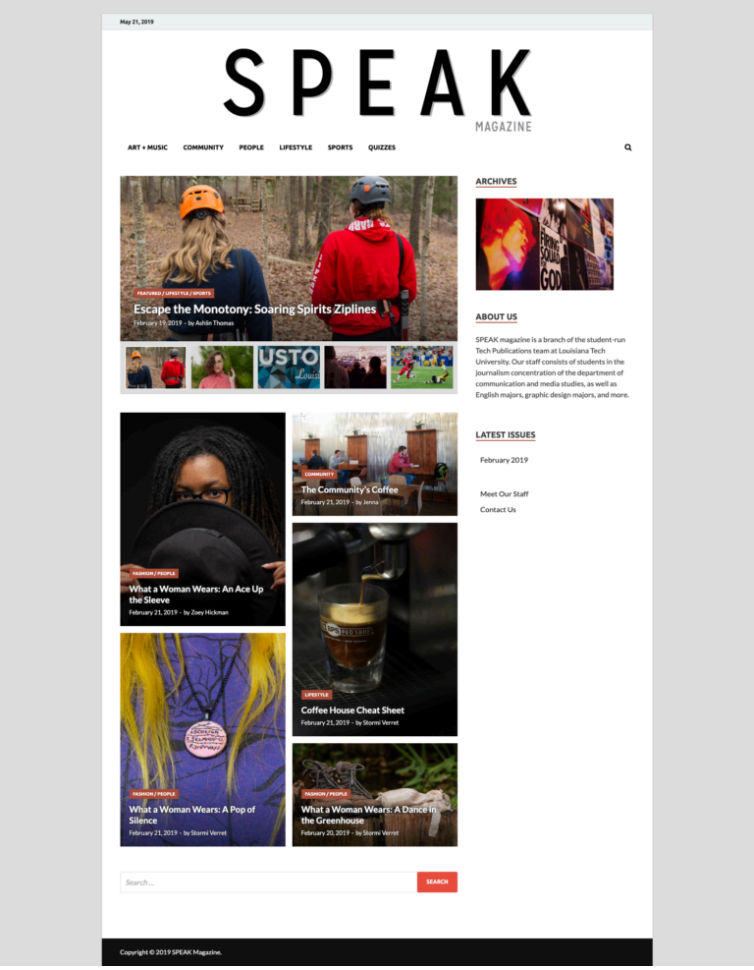
"WordPress is so amazing it doesn't even need an introduction," said Brad Parbs, a specialist in WordPress-focused Web development. However, for colleges and universities looking to update their website, knowing that WordPress is the most often-used content management system and that it is consistently ranked as the most user-friendly and easiest to use makes it easier to narrow down the choices.

Indeed, surveys rank it as having a market share greater than 60 percent, including sites for companies such as Forbes and Pepsi. Clearly, WordPress has become the content management system of choice for collegiate media. More than half (54%) of the school publications that received an Associated Collegiate Press Pacemaker or who where a finalist in 2018 used WordPress.

- "WordPress owns 66% of CMS market, powers 15% of websites"
- "Seven reasons why WordPress is the best website platform"

- “7 Reasons Why WordPress Is the Best Platform for SEO“

What follows is a discussion with **Jonathan Elmer**, former student publications manager at Louisiana Tech about his experience implementing WordPress and moving the student media online.



So, I get schools asking me all the time about starting up a website or revamping their old one. Is WordPress the way to go? Why/not?

I was hired as adviser for all student media here with the immediate mandate to take the publications online. My supervisor, Brenda Heiman, had championed this initiative and been tremendously supportive from the beginning. Since I was building everything from scratch – re-launching the student publications (newspaper, magazine and yearbook), writing job descriptions, interviewing and hiring staff, learning the procurement process with the State of Louisiana, purchasing equipment (new cameras, lenses and audio gear) – choosing WordPress to take our student newspaper and magazine online was just one of a myriad of decisions and tasks I completed this past year.

[perfectpullquote align=”right” bordertop=”false” cite=”” link=”” color=”” class=”” size=””]WordPress is known as an open-source CMS (Content Management System). Open source simply means that it’s free and supported by thousands of developers who continue to improve upon it.” BRIAN LUNDY[/perfectpullquote]

Initially, I found WP to be quite daunting when I tried to set it up. Heiman suggested I look for a consultant and I was lucky enough to hire Amber Narro from Southeast Louisiana University. Narro came to Tech for a day to train the student journalists and to get us started on WP. She gave the students and me the information to get started, and we were on our way to publishing online. As Narro described it to me recently, WP use is so widespread that wherever you are, the chances are very good there is someone close by who has experience with the Content Management System.

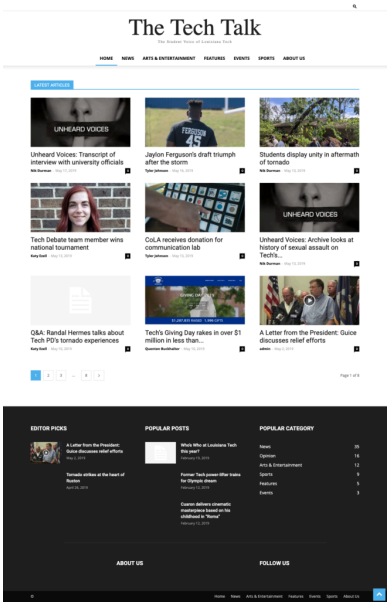
The decision to go with WordPress was straightforward. Most importantly, it would allow me to lead the students in concentrating on producing quality content and not worry about designing pages.

Plus, the WordPress universe is very robust. In my research, I even found a web site that will analyze the contents of any URL you plug into the search field and tell you what percentage of the site is produced with WordPress elements.

WordPress support was also crucial. WP is everywhere, is used by many people and at numerous publications. One result of this widespread use is that most of the challenges folks confront have been seen before and therefore are handily resolved.

I must stress the value of high quality content. Finding and telling stories that will be valued by our readers is my most important goal as a faculty adviser. From my viewpoint, the decisions involved in determining which of our available assets to deploy to tell those stories – writing, photographs, video, graphics and audio – also hold the most valuable lessons for the student journalists here at Tech. Another factor is that the student journalists here are limited by state laws concerning how many hours they are allowed to work weekly. In addition, several had other jobs to help pay for school. As a result, the time we had to produce content for our publications was a very dear resource.

One valuable result of all this work is that now there is a group of students here at Tech who can talk to prospective employers about their experiences helping to set up, launch and maintain a CMS.



As you were working with Louisiana Tech this year, what pros and cons did you find with WordPress?

WordPress is just one aspect of the many things I've learned during my first year as a student publication adviser.

In my experience, the biggest challenge was getting our CMS online. Once we accomplished that, the rest has been pretty straightforward. We've used video elements recently on our newspaper site, The Tech Talk (https://thetechtalk.org). It's been exciting to see the reactions of the student journalists and getting feedback from readers. That type of enthusiasm for what we've been able to do has been very rewarding for me as a former career journalist who's been fortunate enough to have a second career in academia.

Pros

- Widely used with a wealth of documentation online
- Open source
- Updates available frequently
- Tremendous range of choices in hosting and templates
- Quality is highly commendable
- Everything we learned, we shared with one another.

Cons

- You have to stay on top of the updates.
- Security.
- My advice to novice users would be twofold – "Don't get discouraged and don't get complacent."

Con that turns into a Pro

WP has a steep learning curve when, as I did initially, you go in cold. Once you get into the system, it's pretty easy to pick up. I think it's accurate to say new users will have some frustrations. This is the part where creative problem solving and hard work come into play.

Should I let WordPress host my site or find a third-party host?

We have third-party hosts. Most of the folks I spoke with during the process do the same. I'm fortunate to have the budget to operate in this manner.

If I go down this path, I have to find a host and have to register a domain name. There are a lot of details. How did you deal with all that?

There is no question that there are countless details to be dealt with in going online. I received some very valuable advice as a new photographer at the Associated Press in their Columbus, Ohio bureau – "Figure it out." As a photojournalist, I learned a valuable skillset that included decision making, self-reliance, an instinct to act immediately and make adjustments during the process. Key to this was the knowledge that mistakes are unavoidable. When those occur, you learn to correct them, own them, learn from them and move on. My opinion on working with WordPress is that if you wait for everything to be perfect before you launch, you'll never make it online. We've worked hard on creating interesting content on our sites for our readership. The layout and design is good, but I know it will be better the longer we work at it. From my perspective, it's a process. We've accomplished a tremendous amount this year, but we will do better in the future.

That has always been a source of motivation for me as a journalist and an educator. I create opportunities for myself to be learning continuously since I think that makes me a more effective mentor. That's one of the reasons I teach – I want to equip the students as effectively as possible so they'll succeed in the workplace.

You also have to find a WordPress theme. And that can be daunting. There are free ones. There are expensive ones. What advice would you offer for selecting a theme?

I have very strong opinions on this topic.

I was trained as a news photographer and worked as a photo editor in NYC at AP and Bloomberg News. I have studied design in a successful effort to supplement the compositional skills I developed as a visual journalist.

I'm always examining different sites in much the way I used to compare newspaper fronts at newsstands.

Asking questions constantly is a favorite strategy of mine. "Is it user friendly? Are layout and design logical? Does it make effective use of white space?"

We can agree most folks use their smartphones for everything now (at least it seems that way to me sometimes...). That leads to the inevitable question, "How will this look on a phone screen?"

Early research in this space taught me you have only a few seconds to capture a visitor to your site.

I looked at scores of templates, winnowed the candidates to five templates each for the student paper and quarterly magazine. Then I let the student editors pick them. My attitude with this approach is that it allows students to develop a sense of ownership and get practice making decisions. Part of that process is that they knew going in that they'd have to live with their decisions.

Choosing templates was an enjoyable process for me. I approached it just like photo editing. I scanned the thumbnails of the landing pages. I'd mark the ones I liked and compare them in full-screen mode. When I had a handful of finalists, then I would do serious research on those templates.

From my perspective, one of their strong points of the bounty of available templates is that if you aren't satisfied with you choice, you can go back and pick another one.

I avoided the free templates since the overall look was important me. However, as I've noted, I have the luxury of a budget for the templates we're using to showcase our work.

Design and first impressions are crucial from my perspective. There is a tremendous amount of competition online for readers' attention.

I gravitated to sites that allow you to effectively use all your elements – words, photos, video and audio. When you purchase a template, you also buy more options that lead to creative flexibility.

If I would offer advice to folks selecting a site, it would be don't let the process induce frustration or anxiety. Think about sites you visit frequently and ask yourself questions. "Why do I like this site? How do they use images? How do they package stories? What don't I like about the site and why? What aspects of this site stand out? Think about the use of color, too. For me, a lot of this process was instinctual.

I'd encourage people to ask questions such as, "Does this template offer me flexibility in the elements I use (or am considering using in the near future)?

Regarding free templates, I suppose a lot depends on what sort budget people have access to for templates. I consider myself fortunate since I had a budget this past school year and am allowed to pay student journalists an hourly wage.

Free templates have a restriction on the number of features and design limitations.

In today's society, security is also a concern. How did you deal with security issues including backups?

We have Secure Sockets Layer with our two sites.

Another key component of robust security is encouraging the student journalists to create strong passwords.

Finally, I think it's wise to stay on top of software updates.

Security was and is a major concern. Backups are vital (and one of the reasons I went with a third-party hosting plan). In addition, I have several friends and family

members who work in the Information Technology space so I enjoy a perspective on the topic that not everyone might share.

If you were giving someone one piece of advice about using WordPress, what would it be?

For anyone embracing CMS cold, I will say the following:

- Be patient
- Work hard
- Keep in mind that WP is very good at marketing. My experience (and others I have spoken with on the topic) is that it's not as easy as the marketing makes it seem.

Based on the anecdotes I have heard, the landscape is littered with a lot of sites whose creators started but just weren't able to finish. Probably the single most valuable lesson I have learned is that there are a lot of folks out there who are willing and able to help.

DEVELOPMENT OF WORDPRESS

WordPress started in 2003 with a single bit of code to enhance the typography of everyday writing and with fewer users than analysts could count on their toes and fingers. Since then it has grown to be the largest self-hosted blogging tool in the world, used on millions of sites and seen by millions of people every day.

Everything, from the documentation to the code itself, was created by and for the community. WordPress is an open source project, which means there are hundreds of people throughout the world working on it — more than most commercial platforms. It also means anyone is free to use it for anything from a cat's home page to a Fortune 500 website without paying anyone a license fee.

WHAT YOU CAN USE WORDPRESS FOR

WordPress started as simply a blogging system, but it has evolved to be used as a full content management system and so much more through the thousands of plug-ins, widgets and themes. WordPress is limited only by the user's imagination.

A LITTLE HISTORY

WordPress was born out of a desire for an elegant, well-architectured personal publishing system built on PHP scripting language and MySQL relational database management system and licensed under the GPLv2 (or later) open source license. It is the official successor of b2/cafelog. WordPress is fresh software, but its roots and development go back to 2001. It is a mature and stable product. By focusing on user experience and Web standards, the company hopes it can create a tool different from anything else out there.

SOURCE: Democratize Publishing: The freedom to build. The freedom to change. The freedom to share.

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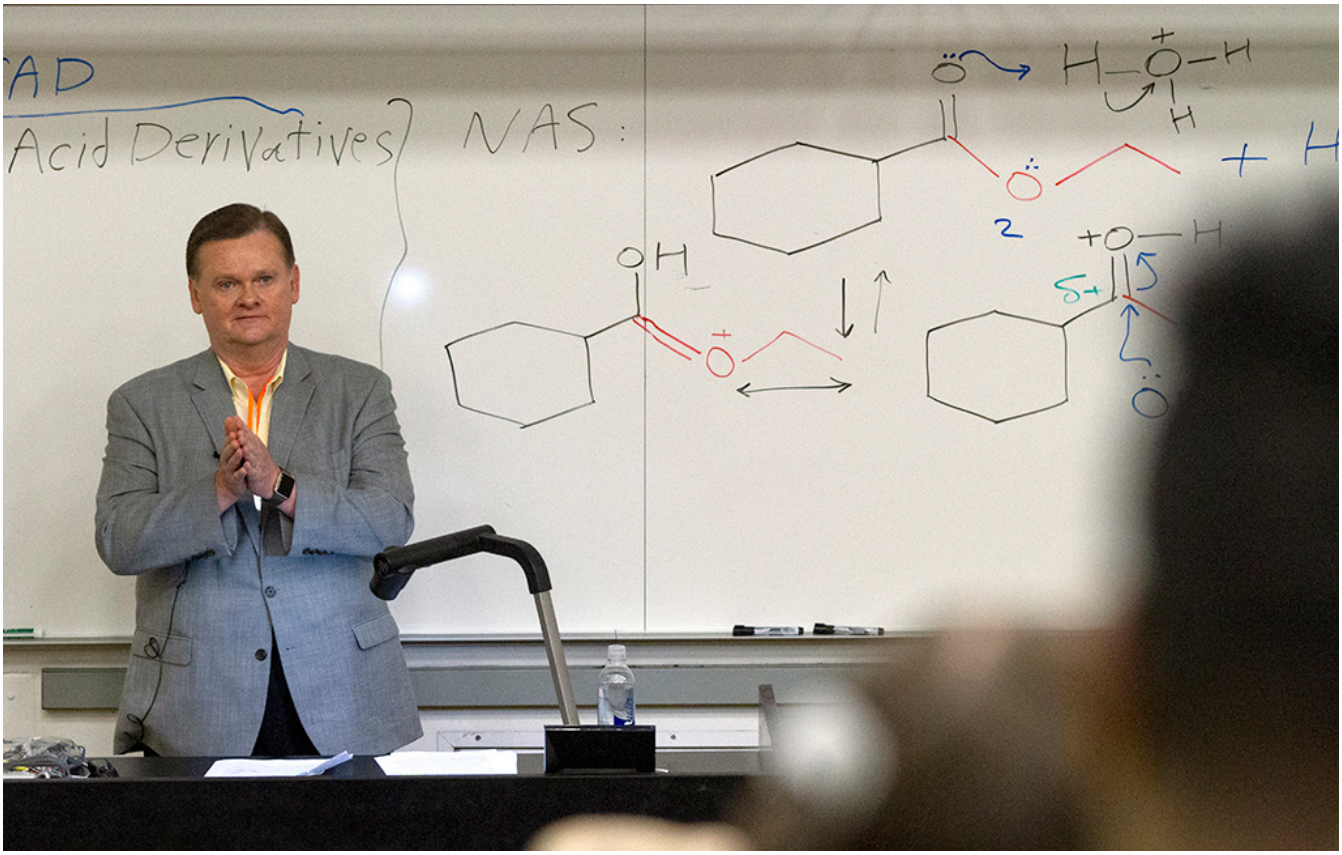
Hight reminds student journalists to take care of themselves



Sound advice from the Mega Workshop

By **Bradley Wilson**, *CMR Managing Editor*

When it came to the opening of the College Media Mega Workshop in Minneapolis, Joe Hight asked the 350 or so students what they all have in common.

Quickly, the students stated the obvious.

- We tell stories
- We all individually tell stories
- We have deadlines
- We're nosey. We're curious as well.
- We're skeptical.
- We follow a set of ethical standards
- We're passionate. When you lose that passion that's when u go into cynicism.
- We're here for the truth. People wonder what the truth is these days.
- We're tough. Only heard three or four of you say yeah.
- We ask the tough questions.

Then Hight turned the talk into what he really wanted students to start thinking about.

He asked, "I've always learned how journalists are resilient. Is that a myth?"

Hight was the editor of *The Gazette* in Colorado Springs when Dave Philipps and the news organization won the Pulitzer Prize in 2014 for its "Other Than Honorable" series about the plight of soldiers suffering from PTSD and traumatic brain injuries who were being kicked out of the Army without benefits.

And he led the team of reporters and editors who covered victims of the Oklahoma City bombing.

He talked about his coverage of the 1986 Edmond post office shooting and the 1999 tornado outbreak in which more than 50 died.

“Those stay with me,” Hight told the packed house. “But what else has stayed with me is those ones. The oilfield worker who was cut in half in a an oil rig in Oklahoma. The shooting victim in Lawton. The accident victim in his car. … The suicide. … The one I remember most was a fellow journalism student. He and two other of his coworkers were basically taken into an ice locker and executed.”

Hight said it was the Oklahoma City bombing, a truck bombing committed by a domestic terrorist in 1995, that forced him to think about the impact such coverage has on journalists.

“We didn’t understand what PTSD was, but the impact was there.”

He pointed to war correspondents such as Ernie Pyle who wrote in a 1944 column, “I do hate terribly to leave right now, but I have given out. I’ve been immersed in it too long. My spirit is wobbly and my mind is confused. The hurt has finally become too great.”

Or photojournalist Kevin Carter who won the Pulitzer Prize in April of 1994 and committed suicide on July 29. Carter left a suicide note that read: “I’m really, really sorry. The pain of life overrides the joy to the point that joy does not exist… depressed … without phone … money for rent … money for child support … money for debts … money! … I am haunted by the vivid memories of killings & corpses & anger & pain … of starving or wounded children, of trigger-happy madmen, often police, of killer executioners… .”

Then Hight made his point: “We have to think about how we cover victims. We have to think about the community we cover.”

It goes beyond covering the news and then forgetting about it.

“The problems can become overwhelming,” he said. “Seek help with your stress.”

First, he said, journalists need to understand how stress affects them. Then he said, journalists, just like first responders, need to spend a few minutes or hours away

from the job. Then, find someone who is a sensitive listener. He suggested that journalists attend a church, find an activity or play a sport.

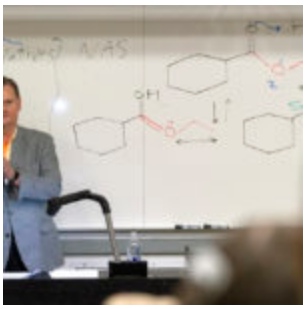
“It’s all about balance,” Hight said. “Find a way to laugh.”

Peach Norman Owen

Peach Norman Owen, a photographer with the Albion College student newspaper, The Pleiad, said there were several take-home lessons from what Hight said.

“You can’t hide behind the camera, you have to be willing to put yourself out there. There is trauma in journalism, and it’s not unusual to have PTSD as a journalist,” she said.

- Take care of yourself.
- Push yourself and put yourself out there but don’t let yourself take on too much.
- Be mindful of the people you’re working with. People you’re working with are people, not just sources.
- You’re allowed to let the things you cover, affect you.
- Set limits.
- It’s not if, it’s when.



Joe Hight spoke about journalists taking care of themselves at the College Media Megaworkshop at the University of Minnesota. Photo by Sam Oldenburg.

About 350 students listened to Joe Hight who spoke about journalists taking care of themselves at the College Media Megaworkshop at the University of Minnesota. Photo by Sam Oldenburg.

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College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

Study on integrated student media earns 2019 research award

CMA's Nordin Award recipients named

CMR Staff Reports

College Media Review has awarded Patrick Howe and Brady Teufel of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, the 2019 Ken Nordin Award, which recognizes the top college media research publication appearing in *College Media Review*.

The paper, "The Best Medium for the Story: A Case Study of Integrated Student Media" was published in volume 56 of the 2019 *College Media Review* Research Annual. The award was chosen based on a panel of CMR Associate Editor Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver, CMA Research Chair Elizabeth Smith and CMR Editor Lisa Lyon Payne.

In the annual, Kopenhaver included an editor's note that commends the authors for conceiving new models to ensure the best possible learning laboratory for achievement in student media. The 2019 CMR Research Annual, which compiles the

publications in a bound annual volume, is available for purchase through the CMR Bookstore.

An editor's note, describing the significance of the three published papers in this year's annual, appears below:

College student media operations have always provided opportunities for student journalists to learn the tools of the trade, looking forward to careers in the professional world. Having student media experience serves as a "gold star" on resumes when prospective employers seek to hire aspiring journalists. Those prospective employers know that applicants have had advisers who have trained them and encouraged their talents and creativity, providing them with the best possible environment in which to learn and practice the craft. Student media operations are also a crucible for new trends and experimentation to produce better campus media and better journalism.

Patrick Howe and Brady Teufel, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, in their article in this issue of College Media Review, "The Best Medium for the Story: A Case Study of Integrated Student Media," describe one of these new trends, a complete makeover of their student media operation to ensure the best possible laboratory for student achievement. Through a broad collaboration of students, staff and faculty, which, in their words, "aimed to overhaul traditional labels, duties and cultural distinctions, and combine all student media into one digitally oriented operation, while still retaining all the original outlets," the authors discuss their process through a case study and provide guidelines for others to consider as they evaluate their own media operations and think about new models for the newsroom.

Carol Terracina Hartman, Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania, and Robert G. Nulph, Missouri Western State University, selected the top 20 award-winning college and

university student media programs to analyze the "communication practices and messages of universities and academic departments that promote these top college media outlets using social media tools." Their goal is to provide a view of how these programs promote successes and honors of student media and use those factors to create visibility for the student media as part of their program and as a tool to recruit students. Their study examines the type of communication utilized, as well as what is communicated and when that communication occurs.

Journalistic accuracy and ethical reporting is always a top issue at student media operations as students learn the tenets of responsible newsgathering. In her article, "Plagiarism in College Media: Is plagiarism a problem? Is there a solution?," Carolyn Schurr Levin, Long Island University, has studied the issue at the top of every journalism teacher's list: plagiarism. She asserts, correctly so, that "one of the only points that college media advisers seem to agree upon is that plagiarism is rampant on campus." Her goal was to discover "how common plagiarism is at student newspapers and what those newspapers do to prevent it, including what plagiarism training is provided, if any."

College media operations seek to mirror the professional world as best they can. But students are learning and advisers are providing the best guidance possible to encourage them and hone their skills. The authors in this issue of College Media Review offer ideas for advisers to ponder as they commence a new academic year.

Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver, College Media Review Associate Editor

Lisa Lyon Payne / August 20, 2019 / College Media

College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

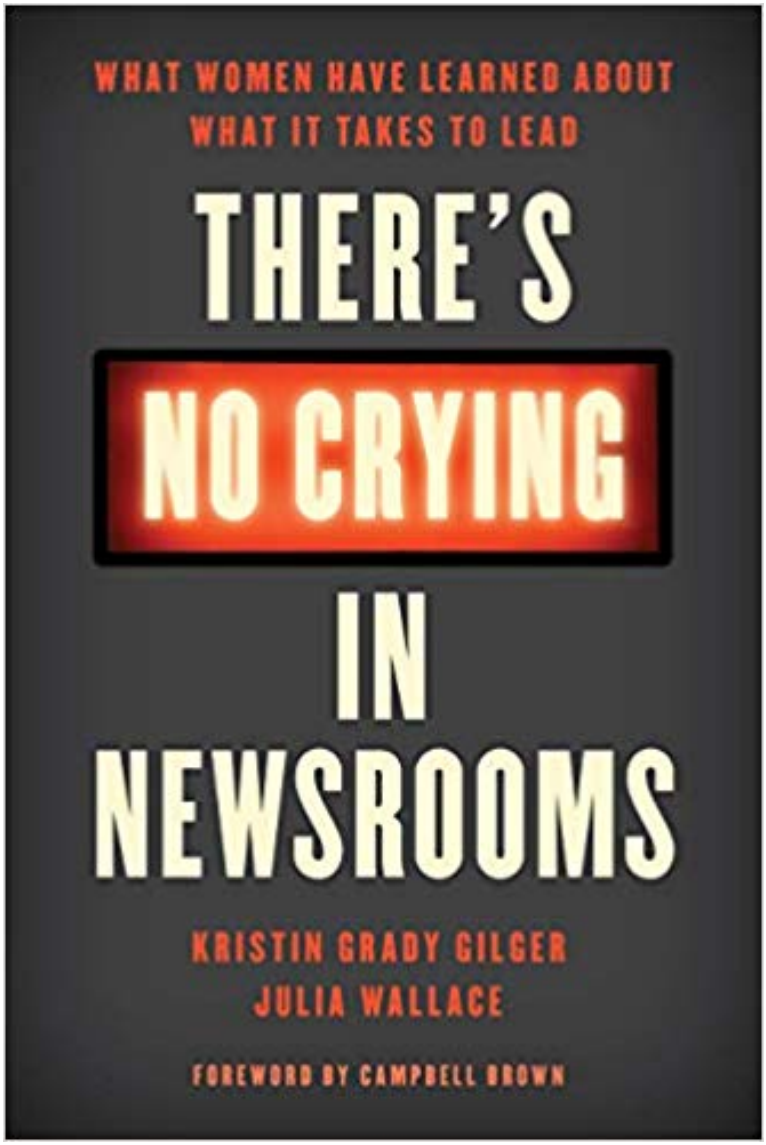
Book Review: ‘There’s No Crying in Newsrooms,’ by Kristin Grady Gilger and Julia Wallace

Book captures ‘what it takes for women to lead, not just in the news business but in any business’

Reviewed by **Carolyn Schurr Levin**

The co-editors-in-chief of the college newspaper that I advise are women. Last year’s editor-in-chief was a woman. In fact, in my nine years as the paper’s faculty adviser, the vast majority of the editors have been women. They have been talented and confident and unafraid to use the skills they are honing on campus at their summer internships or, after they graduate, in the workplace. Yet, are college newspapers, which, according to anecdotal evidence, are often largely staffed and led by female students, reflective of the workplace these students will enter upon graduation? What awaits these passionate young female journalists? Can they rise to the same level that they have achieved on campus, where running the student newspaper makes them campus leaders?

Kristin Gilger, Senior Associate Dean and Reynolds Professor in Business Journalism in the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University, and her colleague, Julia Wallace, Frank Russell Chair in the Business of Journalism at ASU, explore the answers to these questions in their new book, "There's No Crying in Newsrooms," published by Rowman & Littlefield in July 2019. Through the stories and experiences of female newsroom leaders, Gilger and Wallace examine "What Women Have Learned about What It Takes to Lead."



Campbell Brown, former NBC news correspondent and CNN prime-time host who is now the head of global news partnerships at Facebook, aptly summarizes the valuable lessons of this book in her Foreword. "Every woman I know in the news business has at least one story to tell about another woman who helped show her the way," Brown writes. "Over the past four decades, scores of women have walked into newsrooms only to find they were unwanted and unsupported and, still, they worked their way to the top," she continues. Gilger and Wallace's book "captures the voices of these funny, strong, and brash women who learned – often the hard way – exactly what it takes for women to lead, not just in the news business but in any business," Brown says.

"There's No Crying in Newsrooms" is different from other books that have examined women in the media. "Most of the other books about women in media either focus on one or several successful, well-known women and basically profile

them, or they are history books," Gilger said. "Ours tells the history of women in news over the past 40 or so years through strong narrative story-telling. We wanted to include lots of voices."

Gilger and Wallace culled the book's stories from interviews they conducted in 2017 and 2018 with more than 100 people, most of them women, including well-known journalists such as Christiane Amanpour, Gretchen Carlson, Jill Abramson, and Nina Totenberg, and many others who are not as well known, but all of whom changed American journalism over the past 40 years. Not only did "nearly every single one of the women leaders" contacted agree to speak, "but they couldn't wait to talk to us," the authors write. "And once they started talking, it was difficult to get them to stop."

Why this book and why now? First, the numbers for women in journalism appear to be slipping. At newspapers, the authors write, women seemed to hit a peak in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Women aren't doing much better in television and radio. According to a 2018 Radio Television Digital News Association Report, women made up just 22 percent of general managers at U.S. radio stations, 34 percent of TV news directors, and fewer than 20 percent of general managers. And, the #MeToo movement has "vividly illustrated" that women still contend with sexual harassment and sexual predators in the media workplace, which toppled Matt Lauer, Charlie Rose, Roger Ailes and too many others. Because Gilger and Wallace "love newsrooms" and "care about what happens to them," and because they teach journalism "in a school filled with smart, ambitious young women who inspire" them, they want to help their own students – and others – navigate today's news business.

The stories in "There's No Crying in Newsrooms" are personal and enlightening, offering insights into newsroom and digital media culture while detailing the challenges, day-to-day experiences and just plain hard work of women leaders. Although the obstacles these women faced, and continue to face, may not differ all that much from those faced by women in a myriad of other fields, the authors point out that the competitive, 24 hour a day nature of journalism "makes it an especially challenging profession for women who face almost daily choices between the personal and the professional."

What I found most helpful about the book was the professorial advice that Gilger and Wallace offer at the end of each chapter, culled from the wisdom of the women leaders they interviewed. "Embrace Your Scarlett and Your Melanie," they write, urging students that they "still have room to develop their own distinctive and effective styles. Other advice includes: "Confidence Counts." "Give Others Credit." "Watch and Learn." In a tip called "About the Crying," they acknowledge that they have both been known to warn young women not to cry in newsrooms, but that perhaps their advice needs to be tempered. "Too often, we tolerate screamers but not criers," they write, "and maybe it would be better if that ratio was flipped." Gilger suggested that the lessons from the narratives at the end of each chapter "will be useful for women, not just in news organizations but any field."

And lest you think that this is a book only for women, the authors indicated that "There's No Crying in Newsrooms" will have broad appeal. "We think the book will be of interest to any woman who aspires to leadership in any male-dominated company, but we expect it will especially resonate with women in media," Gilger said. "At journalism schools across the country, women make up two-thirds to three-quarters of enrollments, and we are especially hopeful that the book will be a useful guide for them." By capturing what women have learned about what it takes for a woman to lead, they hope to "pass that knowledge on to the next generation of women leaders" and at the same time "appeal to men, many of whom are interested and open to understanding the experiences of women, and who need to be part of this conversation."

When I finished reading "There's No Crying in Newsrooms," I had a long list of advice that I wanted to frame and hang in the student newspaper office on campus for my students. Although it is hard to pick just one piece of advice to sum up the impactful nature of this book for journalism and media students, NBC News senior vice president Rashida Jones' quote sticks with me: "Do the work; prove them wrong."

Carolyn Schurr Levin has been the faculty adviser for the student newspaper at Long Island University since 2010. She has taught at Long Island University, Stony Brook University, Baruch College, and Pace University. Before teaching full time, she was

the Vice President and General Counsel of Newsday and the Vice President and General Counsel of Ziff Davis Media.

Carolyn Levin

College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

Student media leaders forge relationships with new administrators

‘In with the new…’ Establishing productive work relationships that benefit student media

By *Debra Chandler Landis*

Ongoing communication between student reporters and the people and programs they cover is key to establishing mutual rapport, trust and respect.

So is communication between editors-in-chief and the top brass of their colleges and universities.

Student editors can help set the stage for ongoing productive working relationships in much the same way executive editors of professional news organizations do when they meet with community leaders, elected officials and others in high-level positions their reporters cover.

Editors also boost respect for student media and quality journalism when they think outside the box regarding news coverage and ask the president or chancellor to

support their paper or station's editorial independence.

Mills

Mills, a spring 2015 graduate of Virginia Wesleyan University, served as editor-in-chief of the student newspaper, The Marlin Chronicle.

"It is vital," says Thomas Mills of early and ongoing communication between the editor-in-chief and college officials.

In spring 2015, the paper received a press release announcing Scott D. Miller would be the new president of Virginia Wesleyan.

The Marlin Chronicle did not just re-write the press release. It published a news story in print and online, in addition to a later 30-minute audio podcast Mills and other editors did with the incoming president about his vision for Virginia Wesleyan, his background (which included work as a student and professional journalist), and leadership style, among other topics.

The podcast was posted on the paper's website, Facebook and Twitter channels.

"It was about two weeks later that we sat down with him and had our podcast interview. The podcast was really meant as an informal way for us, as students, to

meet the new president and ask questions," Mills said. "I also think it was a great way for Dr. Miller to introduce himself to the college. I think he respected what we were trying to do, and I think students did, too."

After Mills graduated, Kellie Adamson became The Marlin Chronicle's editor-in-chief in fall 2015.

Among Adamson's first actions: Ask Miller to publicly support the press freedom and editorial independence of The Marlin Chronicle, despite it receiving financial support from the university.

Adamson

Miller said he would.

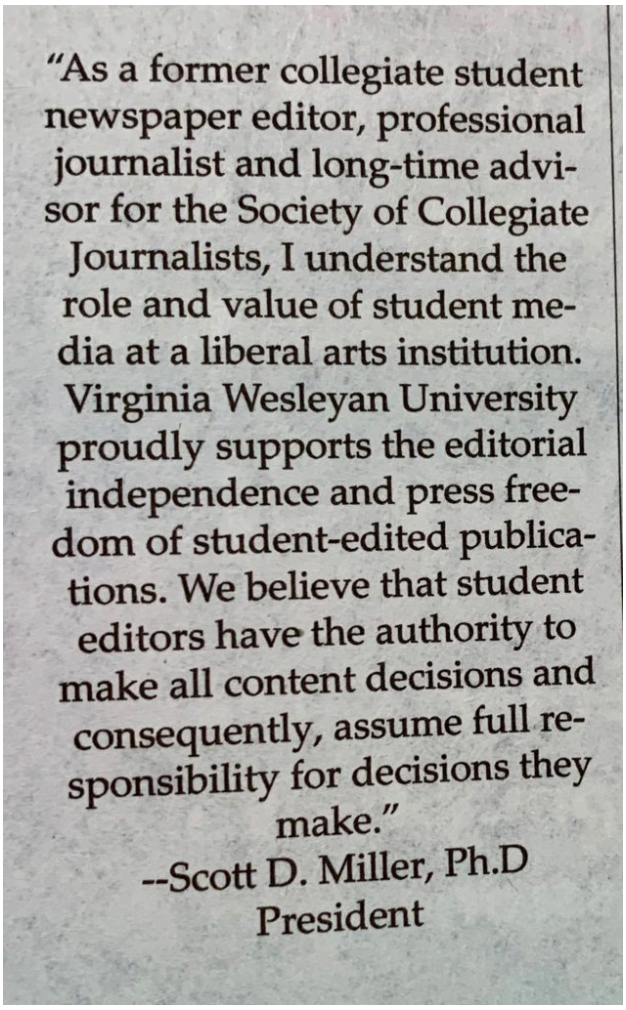
A written statement from Miller runs as part of The Marlin Chronicle's masthead on the paper's Community Section.

It reads: "As a former collegiate student newspaper editor, professional journalist and long-time advisor for the Society of Collegiate Journalists. I understand the role and value of student media at a liberal arts institution. Virginia Wesleyan University proudly supports the editorial independence and press freedom of student-edited publications. We believe that student editors have the authority to make all content decisions and consequently, assume full responsibility for decisions they make. – Scott D. Miller, Ph.D., President"

Looking back, Adamson said, "Having a new president for the school made our future unclear. We were unsure of what he would attempt to implement. I wanted to ensure that we could still do our jobs at the newspaper effectively and honestly without the fear of being shut down or censored. "

Miller's support and his journalistic background, Adamson noted, "helped the paper start off on the right foot" in a new semester with a new president.

“It allowed us to have an understanding that even if the news didn’t reflect well on the school, we were doing it for the greater good of our community, not out of malice. It also sent a sign to the rest of the school that Virginia Wesleyan’s administration was prepared to be open and honest,” she said.



More than 100 students from Northeastern Illinois University campus locations work each academic year with The Independent student newspaper, Seeds literary journal, Que Ondee Sola magazine, and WZRD radio station, according to the NEIU website. Each semester, student staffers meet the public and hear from media professionals during a “Meet the Media” event.

Support for an editorially independent student press is expressed on the Northeastern Illinois student media’s website: “The NEIU Student Media Board, which consists of student representatives from each media organization and their chosen faculty/staff advocates, supports a nurturing environment for University-supported, student-run media of both print and broadcast mediums and their online components and affirms the value of freedom of expression and diversity of opinion.

“The Student Media Board also facilitates working partnerships between the media organizations. As per the Illinois College Campus Press Act and the SGA Student Bill of Rights, the work produced by our student media organizations is free from censorship and is not subject to prior review by University officials.”

Dennis Sagel, coordinator of student media at NEIU, said ongoing efforts to keep communication lines open help those involved “understand where each other is

coming from and build mutual trust and respect."

There will always be stories by student and professional media that are unpopular with university presidents, Miller said. But Miller said he finds that by being accessible and providing information, a university can head off inaccurate stories before they're published.

Miller, for example, recalls a time a Marlin Chronicle reporter sought comment from him about the university supposedly eliminating the Marlin mascot. Students, the reporter told Miller, saw that a statue of the special fish had been moved and placed in a large trash barrel.

"I explained the statue was being power-washed and moved to the front of the campus where it would have greater visibility," Miller said.

There is no one sure-fire way for student journalists to establish the kind of productive working relationships with officials that will aid accuracy and robust, diverse news coverage.

But as former student journalists Mills and Adamson demonstrated, thinking outside the box regarding multi-media coverage, getting administrators on record with their support for an editorially independent student press, and continuing to talk with those administrators will help.

Among the more recent online resources on building trust and credibility, conducting news interviews, and producing podcasts:

- Building Trust With Sources | Bob Woodward Teaches ...
  *https://www.masterclass.com/classes/**bob-woodward**-teaches-investigative-journalism/chapters/building-trust-with-sources*

Learning how to build trust with **sources** is one of the most valuable lessons you can learn as a reporter. Here, **Bob** breaks down his approach.

- The Basics of Conducting Interviews for News Stories
  *https://www.thoughtco.com/conducting-**interviews**-for-news-stories-2073868*

Jun 27, 2019 · A look at the **basics** of conducting successful interviews for news stories. Includes information on note taking, recording, and transcribing. ... For instance, if you're **interviewing** the cardiologist and she mentions a new heart-health study that's coming out, ask about it. This may take your **interview** in an unexpected — but newsworthy ...

- Best Investigative Journalism Podcasts (2019) – Player FM
  *https://player.fm/**podcasts**/Investigative-**Journalism***

Investigative **Journalism Podcasts**. **Potcast Oregon** is a high-concept, professionally-produced Internet radio show that brings together cutting edge technology, investigative **journalism**, and engaging entertainment for a 30-minute variety show about the world of cannabis and beyond.

- Podcasting changes face of journalism and audio media
  *https://communicateinfluence.com/**podcast**ing-future-of-**journalism***

Podcasting changes face of **journalism** and audio media. With **podcasting**, **journalists** have an opportunity to tell a story via audio media and reach a new and growing world of listeners. with a program host.

Debra Chandler Landis retired in June 2017 from the University of Illinois Springfield, where she advised student publications for 23 years. She served as editor of College Media Review for four years. She is a freelance writer and lifetime member of the College Media Association.

College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

Legal analysis: Audible captions leads to copyright infringement suit

Where technology and copyright collide

By **Carolyn Schurr Levin**

There is nothing simple about copyright. The law is complex, with so many nuances. In this first CMR legal column, we analyze a pending copyright dispute involving newly developed technology in an effort to assist students and advisers as similar issues arise.

Audible, the Amazon.com audiobook company that bills itself as "the world's largest seller and producer of audiobooks and other spoken-word entertainment," introduced a new feature in July 2019 that displays the text of a book while it is read. The feature, called Audible Captions, allows listeners "to follow along with a few lines of machine-generated text as they listen to the audio performance," according to Audible's website. "We developed this technology," Audible's website states, "because we believe our culture, particularly in under-resourced environments, is at risk of losing a significant portion of the next generation of book readers. We have

heard from so many teachers and educators that they want to find new ways to improve literacy rates and inspire students to pick up a book and read."

LEGAL ANALYSIS:
In this new column, we will choose a recently filed lawsuit against the media and analyze the claims being made, the arguments against those claims, and the implications for college media organizations. –Editor"

Book publishing companies, however, were less than pleased with the announcement about the launch of Audible Captions. On August 23, 2019, seven publishers—Chronicle Books, Hachette Book Group, HarperCollins Publishers Macmillan Publishing Group, Penguin Random House, Scholastic, and Simon & Schuster—filed a federal copyright infringement lawsuit against Audible alleging that Audible Captions infringes the copyrights in their books. The publishers are seeking a court order to stop the launch of Audible Captions, as well as collecting an award of monetary damages for the alleged infringement

"Audible's actions—taking copyrighted works and repurposing them for its own benefit without permission—are the kind of quintessential infringement" that the federal copyright law prohibits, the publishers state in their lawsuit, which was filed in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Audible vigorously disputes the publishers' claims. "We disagree with the claims that [Audible Captions] violates any rights and look forward to working with publishers and members of the professional creative community to help them better understand the educational and accessibility benefits of this innovation," Audible states on its website.

In their lawsuit, the publishers argue that their books are available in many different formats. The publishing companies "invest substantial additional time, money, professional expertise and resources in creating high-quality eBooks and audiobooks to ensure that the reader and listener reads or hears the content of the work as intended," the lawsuit states. While Audible has obtained permission to distribute the publishers' audiobooks, Audible did not seek permission, nor does it plan to compensate the publishers or their authors for the new feature, Audible Captions, the publishers argue.

"Audible did not seek a license for the creation and provision of the transcriptions provided to consumers [and] does not plan to compensate Publishers or their authors for this feature, nor will it allow them to decide what titles will be made available," the lawsuit alleges.

Audible counters that its intended goal for Audible Captions are laudable and that there is no infringement. "This feature would allow . . .listeners to follow along with a few lines of machine-generated text as they listen to the audio performance. It is not and was never intended to be a book."

Until the issues are decided by the court, Audible Captions will not be available. The parties agreed on August 28 that Audible will not enable its Captions feature for the publishers' books until the court rules on the publishers' August 23 motion for an injunction (a court order to stop Audible Captions). So, for the time being, Audible Captions will not be available – at least for the books owned by the publishing companies involved in this lawsuit.

In the most recent court papers filed on September 12, Audible has asked for a dismissal of the case in its entirety, arguing that the service does not exceed the scope of the license that Audible has from the publishers to create the audiobooks, and that even if it does, "Audible Captions is a quintessential fair use" with important public benefits. The publishers' reply is due on September 20, and a hearing in the case is scheduled for September 25 before United States District Court Judge Valerie Caproni.

The widely divergent positions of the publishing companies and Audible will ultimately be decided by a federal court. So, where does this leave those of us who create our own content and also use others' content every day, sometimes in technologically new ways? What lesson does this case have for us?

First, technology changes rapidly.

First, technology changes rapidly. In the Audible case, as reliance on written words disappears, audio innovations progress. Whether or not that will ultimately be held to constitute infringement or fair use, it is extremely important to think through the potential copyright issues posed by technological advances, and to apply copyright basics, rights and defenses to your analysis. Copyright training and education for student journalists is critical. Students must understand and be aware of the importance of respecting copyrights.

Whether or not that will ultimately be held to constitute infringement or fair use, it is extremely important to think through the potential copyright issues posed by technological advances, and to apply copyright basics, rights and defenses to your analysis. Copyright training and education for student journalists is critical. Students must understand and be aware of the importance of respecting copyrights.

Second, be cautious when using work created by someone else. If you are not sure whether your use of others' copyrighted materials will fall within the scope of a permission, whether it will exceed that permission, or whether it may constitute fair use, speak with editors and advisers. When in doubt, seek permission.

Third, seek legal guidance, either through the Student Press Law Center, your local press association, or other available legal resources. Check out the Student Press Law Center's Student Guide to Copyright Law. Innovations in technology raise novel copyright questions. New cases are constantly being filed and decided. Staying aware of the changes will protect you, your student media organization and your content.

Carolyn Schurr Levin, a media and First Amendment attorney, is Of Counsel at the media law firm of Miller Korzenik Sommers Rayman LLP. She was the Vice President

and General Counsel of Newsday, Vice President and General Counsel of Ziff Davis Media, and Media Law Adviser for the School of Journalism at Stony Brook University. She has taught media law at Baruch College, Stony Brook University, Long Island University, and Pace University. From 2010-2019, she was the faculty adviser for the Pioneer, the student newspaper at Long Island University, during which time the Pioneer won 28 awards.

Carolyn Levin

College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

Graphic approach for introducing journalism to students not farfetched at all

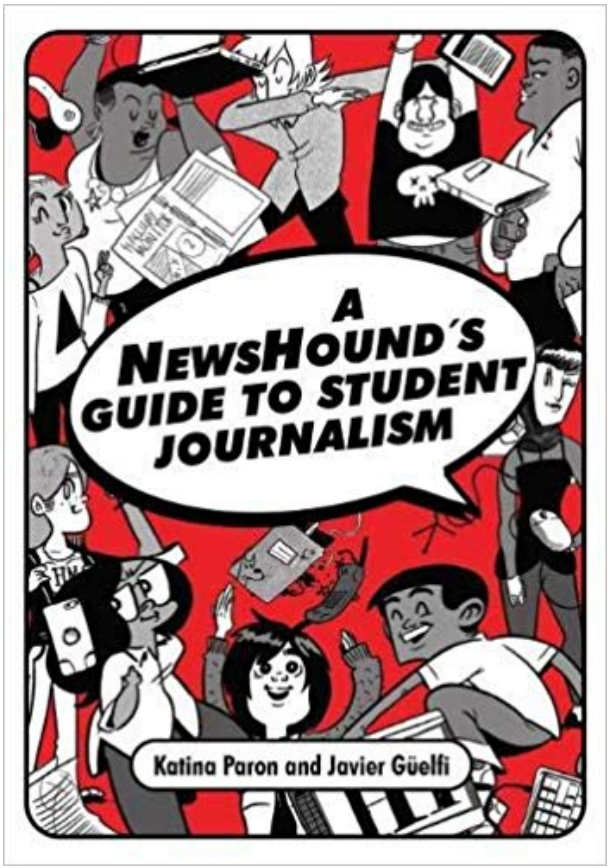
Book Review: A NewsHound's Guide To Student Journalism, by Katina Paron and Javier Guelfi

Reviewed by **Carolyn Schurr Levin**

Using a comic book to teach basic journalism principles may initially seem like an unusual, albeit original, idea, but, after reading "A NewsHound's Guide To Student Journalism," the idea does not seem farfetched at all. In fact, you won't be able to put it down. And, while enjoying the comics, perhaps even without knowing it, you will simultaneously be learning so many important journalism concepts and principles.

Written by Katina Paron, who has worked in different capacities as a student journalism educator, and illustrated by Javier Guelfi, a cartoonist, illustrator and graphic designer, the book is clever and engaging. Although the book is not brand

new – it was released in October 2018 – it is worth taking a look at, if you haven't already done so.



The book includes content routinely included in other basic reporting books, such as interviewing tips, understanding and avoiding conflicts of interest, and using data in news stories. What makes it unique, though, are the comic strip vignettes that introduce each chapter and topic. To begin the chapter on "Deep Throat: Digging into Investigative Journalism," readers meet Joe Kubble, a high school freshman who "was born to be a reporter." In each subsequent chapter's comic, Kubble navigates the perils and pitfalls of journalism, from the importance of verification to crowdsourcing through social media. In doing so, he learns, and teaches us, basic lessons in how to write a lead, how to localize news, and how to stay out of trouble.

In Chapter 6, readers also meet Blair Jayson, a new transfer student who comes "highly recommended" to the student newspaper staff. Blair Jayson, the high school comic version of *New York Times* plagiarist Jayson Blair, proceeds, in the comic strip, to engage in strikingly similar unethical behavior. As anyone who has attempted to teach students about plagiarism knows, just saying "plagiarism is a serious academic offense" is often not enough. Seeing the disbelief and anger that comic strip Blair Jayson causes in her fellow student editors vividly brings to life the human reaction to the ethical betrayal. This is a highly effective way of teaching by showing.

"A lot of students I've worked with over the years had never seen a journalist in action," Paron said in explaining the reason she decided to use the graphic format for her book. "You can teach them 'how' to do it but they'll feel like an imposter until they have something to compare it to. Showing beginning reporters what

journalism looks like with students who look like them was a big drive behind using the comic format." She chose to work with Guelfi as the illustrator because she liked how his characters "come to life."

Each chapter of "A NewsHound's Guide" includes a compelling comic, interspersed with that chapter's lesson. Each chapter ends with The Journalistic Takeaway, important bullet point lessons to remember, and useful classroom activities. "The instructional pages serve as learning guides and reference pages that student journalists can refer to," Paron said. In the chapter on "Making a Difference and Making a Change," a comic focuses on french fries vs. broccoli, leading to a creative story about improving lunches in the school cafeteria. The Journalistic Takeaway is to "Be Helpful Instead of Critical." Instead of focusing on uneaten lunches, the chapter shows students how to "bypass the negativity and solve the issue with creativity and audience involvement."

Although the comic strips center around students at a high school student newspaper, the lessons are readily applicable to college journalists, who will also find the anecdotes accessible and interesting. Despite the high school setting for the comics, "they aren't dealing with little kid problems," Paron said about the broader appeal of her book to student journalists at all levels. "Crowd sourcing, anonymous sources, verifying information, falsifying quotes – these are journalistic issues that all newsrooms face no matter the age."

Paron believes that "A NewsHound's Guide" is useful for student media outlets to have on hand for new staff members who may join the college newspaper with limited journalism experience. It is also a helpful tool for introductory journalism courses. In my past basic reporting classes, I struggled to find a journalism education textbook that the students would actually purchase, actually read and hopefully learn from. "A NewsHound's Guide" is just such a book.

Carolyn Schurr Levin, a media and First Amendment attorney, is Of Counsel at the media law firm of Miller Korzenik Sommers Rayman LLP. She was the Vice President and General Counsel of Newsday, Vice President and General Counsel of Ziff Davis Media, and Media Law Adviser for the School of Journalism at Stony Brook University. She has taught

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Journal of the College Media Association

Preview: ACP and CMA annual Fall National College Media Convention

Come to DC: It's More than the First Amendment

OCT. 31-NOV. 3, 2019 • GRAND HYATT • WASHINGTON, D.C. • #COLLEGEMEDIA19

By **Carol Terracina Hartman**

In partnership with Associated Collegiate Press, College Media Association returns to Washington, D.C. for its annual fall convention this year. Speaker highlights include a slate of keynote speakers: Capital Gazette Editor Rick Hutzell, accompanied by Gazette reporters Danielle Ohl and Alex Mann.

Attendees also will welcome Washington Post executive editor Marty Baron of "Spotlight" Fame, NPR's Nina Totenberg, and CNN's Abby Phillip.

Convention offerings this year – 275 of them! – include career workshops, tech tips, media management and skills-oriented sessions such as photojournalism and

design. Whether digging into data is your gig or jazzing up entertainment reviews is your goal, find it in the conference schedule.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE CONVENTION INFO

Topping the program for advisers is the annual peer-reviewed research papers presentation. Reserve time on your calendar for this session using the conference app on Saturday, Nov. 2 at 1:30 p.m. CMA Research Chair Dr. Elizabeth Smith of Pepperdine University will moderate presentations of the top research papers on various college media issues. Content may include trends among college media outlets and present an in-depth look at results, pointing out how advisers also can develop similar research projects.

Looking for work? Grab notebooks and business cards and head to a Saturday session "Landing a Media Job Today" at 12:30. The session will focus on career advice and job hunting tips with recruiters and editors from POLITICO, The New York Times, The Washington Examiner, The Chronicle of Higher Ed, and others. Immediately following is a Career Expo in which attendees can meet reps in person.

Other helpful conference sessions include: Making the Most of Your First Journalism Job; Breaking into Broadcast News; How to Land an Internship – and Turn It Into a Job, and more.

Don't forget to take advantage of the on-site critiques, the Photo Shoot-Out, and Register for the ACP's Best of Show contest and CMA's Film and Audio Festival. Arriving early? Check out the pre-conference schedule of workshops; pre-registration is required, so sign up soon!

Downloading the conference app guarantees access to current session details should they change from the printed conference program. Organizers will send notifications throughout the day, so check frequently.

Be sure to keep in touch in the run up to the conference and while attending #collegemedia19. Let us hear from you!

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Same ol' problems with student's video?

Student and freelance photographers taking close-ups of the bands at Picnic in the Park in Oslo, Norway.

Learning the craft, speaking the language of video production

By **Paul Glover**
Henderson State University

- "Did you use a tripod?"
- "Did you use a microphone?"
- "What format is the video in?"

Do these questions sound familiar?

One older definition of *convergence* refers to a "combination of technologies, products, staffs and geography among the previously distinct provinces of print, television and online media" (Singer, 2004). The idea of newsroom convergence forces many university programs to combine resources in order to develop student reporters into *backpack journalists*, *Multimedia-Skilled Journalists* (MSJ) or simply *Multimedia Journalists* (MMJ).

Whether print or broadcast, students and recent graduates entering their college internship or first real-world job are very often assigned the task of writer, videographer, audio engineer and video editor. Competency in all these skills is required and expected. This article will focus on essential skills for student journalists who are asked to produce videos for television, websites and social media and how students can best develop these skills.

Production

For news production and delivery, the boundaries between home, office, classroom, lab, plane, train and automobile have disappeared. The need for consistent, quality video and audio is always present. "It varies with each company and job listing," says Lisa Lubin, Emmy-award winning TV producer, video consultant and published travel writer. "But most MSJs today have to know how to shoot, edit, write, do some on-camera work/reporting, producing, and now, social media," says Lubin. "A lot of technical skills get left behind... no matter what the goals are or if the aspiring journalist just wants to be on-camera, they need to know how to shoot and edit. This includes how to get a good interview shot, how to get solid b-roll, how to shoot in sequences to result in a dynamic edit, and of course to not forget that without quality audio, there is no story."

Alex Durham, Henderson State University graduate and current reporter for WLKY News in Louisville, Kentucky, agrees. "Yes, an MMJ flies solo," she says. "We hunt our stories down, we shoot the b-roll and the interviews ourselves. We then write the story, track our voice, and edit the entire package." Durham also notes the need for creativity and audio expertise in gathering natural (NAT) sound. She carries a lavaliere and a stick microphone in her gear bag. To create a better package about a segment on corn, she came up with an idea on the spot. "You can hear sounds of the corn kernels falling and then the corn stalks blowing in the wind. I literally held my lavaliere microphone up to the stalks of corn, pressed record on the camera, and moved the corn stalks with my other hand to get that sound."

Another HSU mass media graduate, Sarah Williams, got her first reporting job in Denison, Texas, at NBC affiliate station KTEN, where the situation was the same. She defines working as a Multimedia Journalist as "hard a** work and doing everything by yourself. LOL, kidding, but not really. Well-rounded is the best way to describe it. You have to develop a knack for shooting, asking the right questions that will get people to say what you're looking for, and always show and tell."

Learning the Craft(s)

What is the best way to teach production skills? There may not be a better teacher than experience, no matter where you are located. On a recent trip to Hannover,

Germany I wanted to see if teaching media production posed some of the same challenges to instructors there. I interviewed Jorg Dill, who has a Master's degree in Communication and has worked in sports broadcasting, including interning at the World Cup. He says training students to multitask, especially in media production, would "require a lot of time because teaching at our school, you have students of a lot of different backgrounds so it's very diverse…you would have to teach a lot of different skills." He also says, "… We start teaching them the basics of computer knowledge. That is one aspect that's very important…as the years progress they acquire additional skills so they learn how to research for information." Dill also adds that a successful student has to bring three things to the table: "motivation, a certain amount of talent, and has to put in the workload."

Larger programs with more faculty, more classes and more resources than smaller programs don't face the same problems. They have enough resources to help students achieve a level of technological efficiency. Faculty must also continue to learn new skills and their schools must purchase new equipment to keep up with the always changing landscape of media production. As Dill puts it, "in Germany there is a saying that jurors from yesterday in buildings of ages ago are trying to teach the kids of today to prepare them for tomorrow," he adds, which is basically impossible.

Taking a page from a colleague and fellow CMA adviser, Michael Ray Taylor, I relived my journalist days and hit the streets in full reporter mode when I visited Oslo, Norway to photograph a music festival. Cold calling on a local digital storytelling production company, XVision, I met Adrian Skar, lead XR developer. From a software point of view, he agreed that students should learn as many programs as they can while still in school. "Any Adobe software, Photoshop… Premiere…After Effects…at least learn what the studios and industry are doing," says Skar. As far as production overall, Skar agrees that you should finish one project while starting another one. "Get students in the mindset [of working on] one project and another and another one… in the industry the turnaround is so quick." It can be very helpful to students when faculty and universities support this idea with equipment, facilities and networking opportunities. As I immersed myself in the photographer's circle at the Picnic in the Park (PiP) music festival held in June at Sofienbergparken in Oslo, I had a chance to ask several (much younger) photographers how they learned the skills they applied in their daily work. Festival photographer and freelancer, Lisa Wiik,

mentions that she learned the foundations of production work in film school. “Then I started work in the industry and… you kind of learn by doing that.”

Speak the Language

It is absolutely possible to shoot good video, collect good audio, tell a good story with writing and editing and transcode the file into a variety of formats in a rushed environment. It happens every day. Many colleges with media programs have traditional and online media outlets. No one wants “shaky” video or poor audio or files that won’t play to be the first thing that viewers notice. Graduates need the ability to speak the language of pre-production, production and postproduction. It is discouraging for a producer or editor to receive video for the newscast and wonder why they couldn’t just use a tripod or better audio equipment; not many can tolerate shakiness or be patient enough to discern coherency from a bad recording. Learning on the job is ok in college (sometimes) but it is not something employers find appealing.

Student journalists that can perform all these technological tasks adequately as incoming freshmen can be rare. Most students must be taught over time. How quickly a student learns production skills varies from individual to individual. What they gain from lectures is beneficial but more importantly they need hands-on experience. It may be shortsighted to think a generation of digital natives who grew up with technology automatically understands how to use it efficiently in a media production environment.

Four Tips

Is it the responsibility of journalism and broadcast professors to teach everyone how to shoot and edit? Yes. It’s easy, right? Just filter everyone through the same class and “BAM!” it’s done. Not really. Cars, clocks, and even phonographs come with instruction manuals. In the classroom the teacher has to mediate this manual. Some students get video production technology instantly and some let it sink in through

experience. Even though there are many details involved, below are four important areas to checklist as a starting point for any potential MSJ.

1. **White Balance Your Camera** – The correct white balance will accurately represent your environment. When your white balance is off, the hue of every other color is off. First, choose your lighting environment whether natural or artificial before setting the white balance of your camera. If you are a novice, try automatic settings on the camera until you are familiar with the different looks with each setting and its numeric representation based on Kelvin (K). "Indoor" and "Outdoor" settings will vary in "cool" to "warm" colors respectively while "Tungsten" may appear blue. If subjects appear natural and you're satisfied, go ahead and shoot. If you prefer manual settings, gather a white card (white poster board will do) and place it under the lighting conditions, preferably close to the subject's face or emphasis point. Zoom in until the card fills the screen, focus, and press the white balance button until the camera sets itself. As fast-moving journalists, you may not have time, but try and white balance every time your lighting environment changes, especially under cloudy skies and moving between outdoor and indoor lighting.
2. Tripods – The "shaky" action camera techniques used in the opening battle scene in "Saving Private Ryan" are amazing. They may not work so well for b-roll of the new Starbucks opening on your campus. You don't need an expensive tripod to get a tripod look, but if you do have one, always use it and encourage students to do the same. Teach students how to use different types if possible. Some companies make mini-tripods or stabilization devices for shooting with phones or other alternative recording devices. If no tripod is available, make sure they can DIY by using a desk, a chair, a shelf, basically anything that can provide stabilization and give you a good composition. It is possible to go shoulder-cam or hand-held but make sure the camera is held near the center of body, not the head, for better balance.
3. **Get the Mic** – Most camcorders or DSLRs have an on-board microphone that is incapable of reproducing a wide range of frequencies, rendering it fairly useless for interviews and ambience. It is simple to get a good, even cheap, microphone for your camera or phone. XLR (External Line Return) connections tend to perform better than the 3.5 mm connections, not to mention some video cameras come with both inputs. An XLR connection is more reliable for hand-held or

wireless microphones and produces cleaner audio quality. Students must also take note whether or not the microphone requires phantom power. Many cameras supply this to the microphone but it needs to be assigned. Using batteries in conjunction with phantom power can produce audio that is "in the red" which is unusable and may even damage the electronics. If the camera or phone only has a 3.5-millimeter input, a shotgun, hand-held or wireless microphone can be purchased for that connection. Wireless lavalieres and hand-held microphones are best for a direct signal from a person talking while shotgun microphones have a larger pickup pattern. Whatever the options and price range are, any external connection is better than on-board microphones, though it is a good idea to check the owner's manual for specifications. Capturing good audio will prevent headaches in the editing room.

4. **Codecs** – CODEC is an acronym for compressor/decompressor that students need to be familiar with. It is necessary for files to be encoded (packaged) by one computer application and decoded (unpackaged) by another. Students need to know what codec the camera or smartphone uses to encode files as well as the files that the video editing software can read and un-package. The camera manual will always have information about the specific codec used for encoding video. Students need to be able to transcode file formats between hardware and software so that the workflow is not interrupted and videos arrive ready to play across different mediums.

Students must learn to converge with new technologies, different mediums and each other. Paying attention to these four steps of video production is merely a start in training media students to be more viable as "backpack" journalists and media producers. Point, shoot and upload sounds easy, and it can become routine but only through experience. Media teachers should foster the connection, the networking and the tools but it is also up to the student to get their hands dirty.

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- Author Bio

Paul Glover is a Professor of Communication at Henderson State University where he advises Henderson Television (HTV) and KSWH-LP 102.5 FM The Pulse. At the University of Alabama, he worked for the NPR affiliate, WUAL-FM. In 2004, he earned an M.A. in Communication Systems Management while managing the Radio/TV stations at Angelo State University. He earned an M.F.A. in Digital Filmmaking at the University of Central Arkansas in 2011.

Author Paul Glover prepares for an all-day music festival shoot at Picnic in the Park in Oslo, Norway.

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Washington Post editor: Press exists to hold government accountable

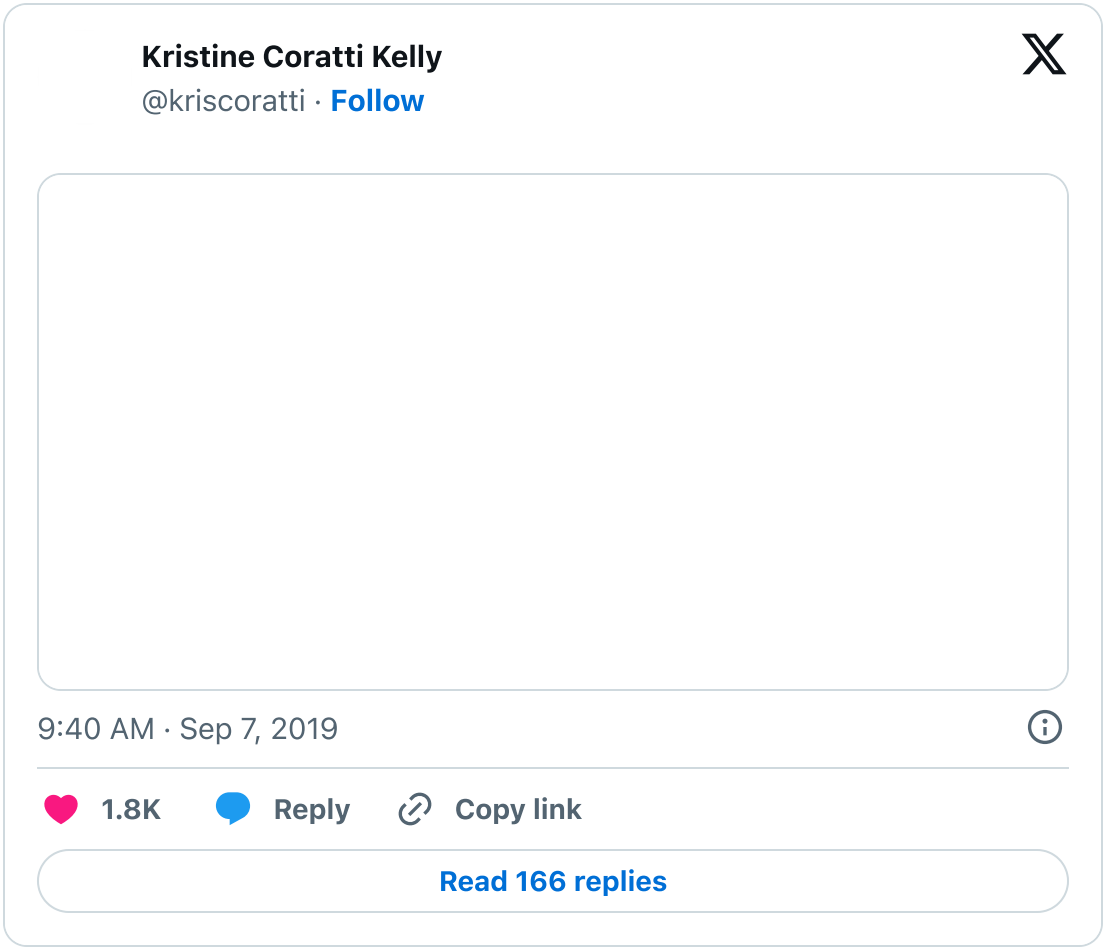
‘Important time for journalism in this country’

By **Bradley Wilson**
CMR Managing Editor

When *Washington Post* Executive Editor Marty Baron spoke to a crowd of hundreds of college journalists at the National College Media Convention, sponsored by the College Media Association and Associated Collegiate Press, he was rather unassuming. For a man who has worked for the *Miami Herald*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times* and who has been portrayed in the movie Spotlight for leadership at the *Boston Globe* and coverage of the Boston Catholic sexual abuse scandal that earned the Globe a Pulitzer Prize in 2003, he seemed rather quiet.

But that’s just on the surface.

When it comes to standing up to the president of the United States or for the First Amendment, Baron is far from unassuming.



Baron acknowledged from the outset to a crowd of hundreds of college journalists, "This is a really important time for journalism in this country. Obviously our profession has come under assault primarily from this White House down the road, and so we have to be thinking a lot about what our profession is all about and what our role is in a democracy. We find ourselves having to defend ourselves in a way that we haven't had to do in quite some time."

Still, he saved his punchline for the end — truth and facts do not depend on someone's opinion, who holds the most power or what's the most popular.

He said the press has an important role to tell the truth as nearly as it may be ascertained.

"Getting at the truth is difficult," he said. "It's really hard. It's difficult."

The discussed that journalism has not always had an easy time in this country noting that the first newspaper in this country was shut down immediately and early administrations helped shut down newspapers and jail editors.

“We’ve come through those really difficult periods,” he told the crowd.

Then he launched into a bit of a history lesson, referring to the creation of the First Amendment and the founding of our government.

“We have a democracy. There are institutions in this democracy that are critical to its proper function. That includes the executive branch, the presidency. It includes Congress. And it includes the courts. And it also includes the press.”

But he also referenced historical times including the passage of the Sedition Act and the Espionage Act and a second Sedition Act. “There were extreme measures taken against those who dared to criticize government.”

But Baron acknowledge that “The reason that the press exists is to hold the government accountable. Over time, it’s become recognized that our job is to not only hold those in government … accountable but hold all powerful individuals accountable and all powerful individuals accountable.”

“We have a lot of important work to do.”

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Photographers challenge themselves during DC Shoot-out

CLASS FAVORITE Mari Woodmansee, California State University Bakersfield (Jennifer Burger), mwoodmansee25@gmail.com. Activist Phillipos Melaku-Bello pretends to be an angry protester hitting

someone with his sign. He said, "Activist can be passionate this is a good picture to have."

College Media Convention showcases student photojournalists

By **Bradley Wilson**, CMR Managing Editor

I made it. With one minute to spare. I was supposed to be at the opening session for the Photo Shoot-out three hours early. American Airlines had other plans. However, thanks to people like Meredith Taylor, CMA's executive director, Kevin Kleine of Berry College and Sam Oldenburg of Western Kentucky University, I really didn't need to be there. It was in good hands.

It's always fun meeting with the photographers, discussing the assignment and possible interpretations of it and the challenges they'll face in the next couple days. The reasons for NOT putting metadata in each image they want to submit have gotten down right clever. But, yes, they have to find a way to put the metadata with any image they submit.

So, we showed some past entries when the hotel's technology cooperated and we sent the ban of some 50 college photojournalists on their merry way.

THE ASSIGNMENT: You need to find a person who lives or works in Washington, D.C. or the area — not a tourist. Tell that person's story. Have some fun along the way and be prepared to explain what you were thinking at the critique. In the metadata File Info, include the following information in the following format. full name, school (adviser's name); your e-mail address; caption that includes the names of all identifiable people in the image.

ON-SITE CRITIQUERS: Bradley Wilson, Kevin Kleine, Robert Muilenburg, Sam Oldenburg

"I enjoyed participating in a critique outside of my normal environment," Andrea Clunie said. "While I did suspect much of what was said, it's helpful to hear criticism

and (suggestions for) improvements from industry professionals. I find great joy in being given feedback for growth."

THE RESULTS: When we meet for the group critique, the last thing we do is go through a series of multiple eliminations finding coming upon a class favorite.

- *FIRST: Mari Woodmansee, California State University Bakersfield (Jennifer Burger, adviser).*
- SECOND: *Jack Rodgers, University of Minnesota (Charlie Weaver*, adviser)

SECOND CLASS FAVORITE Jack Rodgers, University of Minnesota (Charlie Weaver); Korean War Veteran Mack Pitts surveys the entrance to the World War II Memorial in downtown Washington D.C. on Saturday, Nov. 2. Dozens of World War II, Korea and Vietnam veterans traveled from Texas to be honored by active duty service members during a brief ceremony just after sunrise.

"For the second picture laid down on the ground to get a different outlook," said Woodmansee. "We were trying to get different shots and angles. Just his expression in the photo made me choose this one. I took a lot of photos that day and this one just spoke to me and stood out"

Jack Rodgers said, "My favorite part of the shootout was definitely just getting out and exploring D.C. While I knew I wanted to take a fair amount of photos over the course of the conference, I also made sure as much as I had my camera out, I also just kept it in my bag. This lead to exploring for the sake of exploring, seeing new things, talking to people and overall learning what the city was like. All skills that are crucial to being able to make good pictures when you do have a camera in hand."

Zahn Schultz agreed that getting to view the city in a new way was exhilarating.

"What I like about the shoot out is it is the most interactive of all the sessions at the conference," Schultz said. "Getting to go out and shoot a new city is the ultimate adventure. It's challenging and pushes you outside your comfort zone. It's like a treasure hunt to find the story and capture it as you run around a new city for the first time."

Logan Bilk also agreed with Rodgers.

“The Photo Shoot-out was a fun way to get to know the city of Washington, D.C.,” Bilk said. “Given that it was my first time visiting the nation’s capital, I was a bit hesitant about where to start looking for a portrait. However, the Shoot-out made me get out of my comfort zone and find out what makes the city unique.”

After I get home and can get things organized, I send out the link to the Flickr gallery to a bunch of photojournalism friends. Everyone is busy, so all they have to do is give me their top three. Then I work to figure out the top placing images.

- **FIRST AND BEST OF SHOW**: Mari Woodmansee, California State University Bakersfield (Jennifer Burger, adviser).
- **SECOND**: Yuki Smith, Montgomery College (Steve Thurston, adviser)
- **THIRD**: Zahn Schultz, Central Washington University (Jennifer Green, adviser)
- **HONORABLE MENTION**: Andrea Clunie, Milwaukee Area Technical College (O. Ricardo Pimentel, adviser)
- **HONORABLE MENTION**: Logan Bik, California State University Northridge

Rodgers said that the Shoot-out also reinforced that you don’t have to be doing something wildly interesting or be in the perfect light to make good photos.

“My favorite interaction of the weekend came from a subject who I talked to for a good while at a coffee shop,” Rodgers said. “Before I even took a photo, we just talked about life for a good 45 minutes. This part of the process is quickly becoming my favorite aspect of photojournalism.”

JUDGES: Alison Strelitz, Bernadette Cranmer, Eric Thomas, Gary Lundgren, Gina Claus, Jason Weingart, Jed Palmer, Jennifer Green, Jessica Kemnitz, Jim McNay, John Beale, Judy Babb, Kelly Furnas, Laura Widmer, Laurie Hansen, Leah Waters, Leslie Shipp, Margaret Sorrows, Matt Stamey, Michael Reeves, Michael Simons, Mindy Wiedebusch, Mitchell Franz, Nicole Gravlin, Sam Oldenburg, Steven Dearinger, Tim Morley and Tom Winski.

DC Portrait 19

Shoot-out images

Due to lack of planning on behalf of the Washington Nationals, the parade celebrating their World Series championship was scheduled at the same time as the critique for the Shoot-out. (Notice that I used passive voice. If I knew who scheduled the parade, I'd give them a piece of my mind.)

Realizing that many photographers were going to want to shoot images of this parade that would be making international news only a few blocks from the hotel, we made the critique option — if they also submitted pictures of the parade.

READ Logan Bik's story about the parade.


Washington Nationals Parade

Nationals

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NPR's Totenberg: 'I wanted to be a witness to history'

Meeting the person ‘behind the voice’

Anytime a radio personality gets on the air, listeners develop a mental picture of the person behind the voice.

Frequent National Public Radio listeners are no different. Ira Glass, Sylvia Poggioli, Steve Inskeep and Juan Williams appear on the radio so often anyone who has heard them has developed a mental image of what they look like even without scouring NPR’s site for a portrait.

Nina Totenberg, who, for the record is all of 5-foot, 4 ½-inches and looks like everyone’s favorite aunt, is no different.

Totenberg has been on NPR almost since it first went on the air in 1970 and she loves to talk about what it was like “back then.”

“I’m so old that there were no women reporters when I was young,” she told a crowd of college journalists in Washington, D.C. “I wanted to be Nancy Drew. I figured as I got older I realized I couldn’t be Nancy Drew because, first of all, I’d have to kill my mother. Nancy Drew had her widowed father and her boyfriend Ned and her red roadster. And none of those things were going to happen to me and I really loved my mother.”

She enjoys a good laugh.

So, she wasn’t going to be Nancy Drew. And she wasn’t going to be a police detective.

“That was out of the question too because there weren’t any women of them.”

But she was interested in public life and politics but didn’t want to be a part of, as she said, “the cause.”

“I wanted to be a witness to history,” she said. “They say journalism is the first draft of history. Well, I wanted to write the first draft.”

And the rest is, well, history.

Since 1975, Totenberg has covered the courts for NPR where she joined women like Linda Wertheimer, Susan Stamberg and, eventually, Cokie Roberts in a female-dominated newsroom — because NPR paid so little. But early on, she said, "It was lonely."

"We sat in one little area, we sat together," she recalled. "The guys there thought we didn't know but they referred to it as the fallopian jungle. We thought it was funny. Today it would probably be grounds for hanging. We didn't think it was terribly respectful but we did think it was funny."

She prides herself on being able to take complex issues before the U.S. Supreme Court and other legal issues and distilling them so that listeners even without any legal background can understand.

"I have an instinct for understanding these concepts," she said, concepts related to everything from abortion to DACA to religion to guns. "Once I get it through my thick head, it's easier to distill it for an audience."

But she said it's also important not only to understand the issues but to know and to understand the people involved. She attributed part of her success in covering the Supreme Court to the personal and professional relationships she's built up with the justices over the years.

"It helps to have known people," she said. "It helps if you know them even a little bit."

She also likes to discuss where the court is now and where it's going.

For example, she discussed how it's only in the last couple of decades that justices have given interviews.

"When I first started they simply didn't give interviews. And they didn't write books either. That's really why justices give interviews they're promoting their books.

Justice Ginsburg gives interviews because she is a rockstar. She says it sort of gets her going in the morning to give public appearances."

However, she doesn't think the court will go so far as to allow cameras in the court, at least not in her lifetime.

"As a broadcaster I certainly would like to have day audio of the arguments and even more than that I would like same day audio of the opinions. But to have cameras in the Supreme Court, inevitably it would turn into infotainment," she said. "It would be chopped up and used in, if not deceptive ways, certainly in ways the justices would not like and in ways I would think are not true to the argument."

While the court may not allow cameras, the recent changes in personnel — particularly the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh — cannot be underestimated.

"I don't think you can overestimate how big of a shift this will represent. It's equal to the shift when justice Alito replaced justice O'Connor. There will be nobody who is the sort of centrist right person on the court anymore. You're going to see a profound in the law over the next few years."

Indeed, she said, she has little doubt this court will overturn one of the most significant court cases in American history — *Roe vs. Wade*, the case that effectively made abortion legal.

"It's not going to survive this court," she said.

More immediately, however, the impeachment trial inevitably brings more stories her way particularly since, if makes it to the Senate, Supreme Court Justice John Roberts will preside over the trial.

"I'm not sure he really is not looking forward to that," she said.

But she offered advice for students covering impeachment such as Anna Muckenfuss from *The Appalachian* in Boone, North Carolina.

"I'm not sure you should," Totenberg said. "Anybody who is interested in impeachment has a lot of access to many news outlets and people who are experienced and who will know more than you do. If you're going to cover impeachment, you should find a way to cover it from the student perspective."

Perhaps that advice shouldn't have been all that much of a surprise. After all, that's been the way she's covered all of the hundreds of stories she's reported on over the last 40-some years, from her own, unique perspective.

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From the Student Press Law Center:
Nina Totenberg talks with SPLC about her career, reporting advice for crowd of student journalists

December 3, 2019 / Feature / anita hill, nina totenberg, npr, radio, supreme court

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Legal analysis: Sarah Palin v. The New York Times Company

A compelling lesson in libel law

By **Carolyn Schurr Levin**

Sarah Palin's libel lawsuit against The New York Times is not a new case. It was initially filed on June 26, 2017. But, as the case continues to wind its way through the courts, it offers a compelling lesson in libel law.

Here's what it's all about: In 2010, former Alaska Governor and Vice-Presidential candidate Sarah Palin's political action committee, SarahPAC, published an online map with crosshairs over congressional districts of some Democrats, including U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords. In January 2011, a gunman opened fire at a political

event in Tucson, Arizona, killing six and wounding 13, including Giffords. The gunman who shot Giffords pled guilty; there was no evidence that he had seen the SarahPAC map. Several years later, another U.S. Representative was injured when a gunman fired at a congressional baseball practice in Virginia. The night of that attack, which injured U.S. Representative Steve Scalise, the New York Times published an editorial on its website titled "America's Lethal Politics," tying the two shootings to the SarahPAC map. The June 14, 2017 New York Times editorial asked:

"Was this attack evidence of how vicious American politics has become? Probably. In 2011, when Jared Lee Loughner opened fire in a supermarket parking lot, grievously wounding Representative Gabby Giffords and killing six people, including a 9-year-old girl, the link to political incitement was clear. Before the shooting, Sarah

Palin's political action committee circulated a map of targeted electoral districts that put Ms. Giffords and 19 other Democrats under stylized cross hairs.

Some New York Times readers challenged the editorial's assertion that the map constituted "political incitement" and that there was a link between the map and the Giffords shooting. The New York Times promptly removed those references from the online editorial, and issued corrections and an apology, saying there was no link between political rhetoric and the shooting. The New York Times Opinion Twitter account, @nytopinion, also sent out the correction the next day, on June 15, 2017: "We're sorry about this and we appreciate that our readers called us on the mistake. We've corrected the editorial."

Palin did not contact the New York Times to complain about the editorial. Instead, 12 days after the editorial was published, she filed a defamation lawsuit against the New York Times in federal court, claiming that the editorial had wrongfully linked her to the 2011 mass shooting, and that the New York Times had connected her map to the shooting despite knowing that it was false. She wrote in her court filing that when the New York Times published the editorial, "it knew that there was no link or connection. . .between Mrs. Palin's political activities and Loughner's 2011 shooting." By doing so, she wrote, the New York Times "implicitly attacked the conservative policies Mrs. Palin promotes and drove its digital advertising revenues at Mrs. Palin's expense."

Defamation is an area of law that allows an individual whose reputation is harmed by false statements of fact to seek a remedy against the offending parties in a civil lawsuit. "The hallmark of a defamation claim is reputational harm." (Freedom Forum Institute)

It is difficult for a public figure or a public official (which it seems clear Palin is) to win a libel lawsuit in the U.S. She must prove that the publisher made the statements with actual malice – either knowing the statements were false or with reckless disregard for whether they were true or false, the longstanding standard established by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1964 in the case of New York Times v. Sullivan.

Libel suits can and often do drag on for years, costing both time and money to defend. Palin v. New York Times is a prime example. The progress of this case is quite complicated. The New York Times made a motion to dismiss the lawsuit in July 2017, shortly after Palin filed it. The New York Times argued that there was no actual malice and also that the editorial in question was opinion not fact (only a statement of fact can be the basis for a libel claim). The federal district court judge held an unusual evidentiary hearing to decide that motion, and the author of the editorial in question was called to testify. James Bennet, the New York Times editorial page editor at the Times and the author of the editorial, testified that his reference to Palin in the editorial was intended to make a rhetorical point about the present atmosphere of political anger.

In August 2017, the federal district judge agreed with the New York Times that there was no actual malice, and dismissed Palin's case. U.S. District Court Judge Jed Rakoff began his decision by saying, "Nowhere is political journalism so free, so robust, or perhaps so rowdy as in the United States. In the exercise of that freedom, mistakes will be made, some of which will be hurtful to others. . .But if political journalism is to achieve its constitutionally endorsed role of challenging the powerful, legal redress by a public figure must be limited to those cases where the public figure has a plausible factual basis for complaining that the mistake was made maliciously." Judge Rakoff found that Palin did not have such a basis.

Palin asked Judge Rakoff to reconsider his decision, but he declined to do so, so Palin appealed Judge Rakoff's dismissal of her libel case. Two years after the case was

dismissed, on August 6, 2019, a three-judge panel of the federal appeals court reversed the dismissal on procedural grounds and reinstated the lawsuit. The appeals court held that Judge Rakoff had dismissed the case too quickly, that the hearing at which Bennet testified was not the proper procedure for a motion to dismiss, and that Palin had plausibly stated a claim for defamation and so is entitled to proceed with her case.

The appeals court thus sent the case back to the lower court to proceed to the discovery phase of the lawsuit and the taking of evidence between the parties. The appeals court declined to issue a decision on the ultimate libel question until all of the evidence has been considered.

But before that discovery process even began, on August 20, 2019, the New York Times filed a petition to the appellate court for a rehearing, arguing that the appellate decision reinstating the case "inevitably will inhibit the type of core political speech that invariably follows mass shootings."

Although parties file petitions for rehearing in many cases, few are granted. To grant this type of petition, the federal appeals court would have had to find that it misapprehended the actual malice standard in libel cases, as the New York Times argued, or that its August 2019 decision did not follow settled law about opinion in libel cases. On November 7, 2019, the appeals court denied the petition for rehearing, without further explanation.

Several media outlets and organizations, including the Associated Press, Dow Jones, Bloomberg, HBO, BuzzFeed, Gannett, CNN, Hearst, the Washington Post, and Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, had filed a "friend of court" brief in support of the New York Times' request for a rehearing by the appeals court. Those "friends," who described themselves in their court papers as "dedicated to and dependent upon the First Amendment," argued that the appellate court decision in the Palin case was inconsistent with the standards established by the U.S. Supreme Court in the NY Times v. Sullivan case. At this time, since the rehearing was just denied, it is unclear whether the New York Times will try to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, or whether the case will go back to the district court for discovery, and ultimately a trial.

Where does this more than two year back and forth, with the dismissal and then the reversal of the dismissal of the Palin libel case, leave us? The case offers many takeaways for student journalists learning best practices in minimizing libel risks and avoiding libel lawsuits.

The first takeaway is that it is not only investigative news stories that can lead to lawsuits. Editorials (such as in Palin v. New York Times), opinion columns, tweets – virtually any communication – can be the basis of a libel case.

The second takeaway is that, despite the well-established, and very difficult to prove, legal actual malice standard, public officials – and celebrities and other public figures – do sue for libel.

The third takeaway is that student journalists should be trained in the basics of libel law so that practices can be implemented and efforts can be taken to minimize legal risks. Of course, there is no guarantee against being sued, but thorough and careful reporting and skeptical editing can minimize those risks.

The fourth takeaway is that all content should be thoroughly reviewed – by copyeditors, section editors, editors-in-chief – before posting or publishing. Don't allow the desire to post online quickly hamper the meticulous review of content.

The fifth takeaway is that mistakes should be promptly corrected. A correction is not a panacea against a lawsuit (Palin sued the New York Times despite its prompt correction), but it is nevertheless extremely important and can be seen as mitigating evidence in court. If you get it wrong, admit the error and apologize.

And, if in doubt, seek legal guidance, either through the Student Press Law Center, your local press association, or other available legal resources. Libel is complex and dense. The Palin v. New York Times lawsuit is far from over, two years later.

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Carolyn Levin

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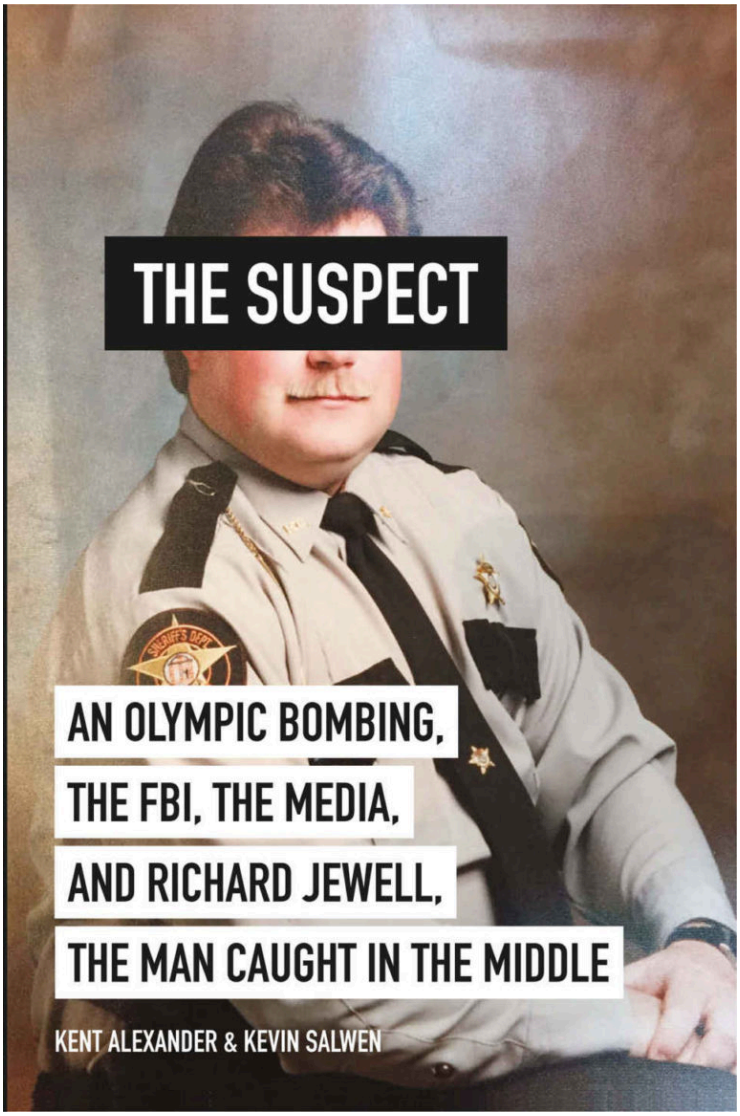
College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

Book Review: 'The Suspect: An Olympic Bombing, The FBI, The Media, And Richard Jewell,' by Kent Alexander and Kevin Salwen

Jewell 'Caught In The Middle'

Reviewed by **Carolyn Schurr Levin**

Journalists sometimes get it wrong. When they do, there are clarifications and corrections, new or revised newsroom policies, and a lot of hand wringing. There may also be lawsuits. That was the case when the Atlanta Journal-Constitution (AJC) named security guard Richard Jewell as the suspect who placed the bomb in Centennial Park in Atlanta during the 1996 Summer Olympics. Many other news outlets followed the AJC in naming Jewell as "the suspect." Jewell was not, in fact, the perpetrator of the crime. But the FBI had identified him as a suspect, and the media willingly and enthusiastically picked up on the storyline. After being cleared of any wrongdoing, Jewell sued the media outlets, settling with some (NBC paid $595,000, CNN paid $350,000) and engaging in protracted litigation with others, including a 15-year court battle with the AJC.



For many years, I have used Richard Jewell's prodigious litigation to teach about republication liability in libel cases (one who repeats a defamatory falsehood can be held liable to the same extent as the original speaker). In doing so, though, I did not address, or in fact think much about, the human impact of the error – on the wrongfully named individual, on the journalists, or on the source. In "The Suspect: An Olympic Bombing, the FBI, the Media, and Richard Jewell, the Man Caught in the Middle," authors Kent Alexander and Kevin Salwen provide a powerful, in-depth and highly personal account of what happens to a human being when the FBI and subsequently the news media erroneously name him as a suspect in a high profile crime. As Salwen said during a recent phone interview, "whether you are in the FBI, or the media, or the news consuming public," this book reminds you that "there is a human being on the other side."

The authors are intimately familiar with the crime, the search for a suspect, and the subsequent sequence of events. Alexander was the federal prosecutor who worked with the FBI to find the Olympic bomber and later wrote the letter clearing Jewell. Salwen was a Wall Street Journal reporter and editor who ran the paper's southeastern section during the 1996 Olympic Games. Together Alexander and Salwen have crafted a narrative not only about Jewell's life before and after the crime, but also about the FBI agent who made the case against Jewell and the AJC reporter who publicly named him as the prime suspect, both erroneously.

Why are Alexander and Salwen telling Jewell's story now, nearly 25 years after the Olympic bombing? "Perhaps revisiting the tale of Richard Jewell will encourage the current media to pause longer and presume innocence before rushing to suggest guilt," they write. "Perhaps law enforcement will use the Jewell case as a rallying cry to treat leaks of individuals' names as criminal acts, not just inevitabilities. And perhaps all of us in the news-consuming public will reconsider our expectation of immediacy and ponder the benefits of returning to an era when accuracy was prized over speed." After reading "The Suspect," I couldn't agree more with the authors about this book's relevance, even so many years after the crime. In fact, I came away with the strong feeling that every journalism student should be required to read this book, if for no other reason than to make them fully aware of the wide ranging and potentially devastating impact of the stories that they tell, and to cause them to pause, double check and triple check those stories.

The 1996 Olympic Games brought 197 nations, two million visitors and 15,000 journalists to Atlanta. It was a big story for all of those journalists, but especially for the AJC, which put a massive team in place, seeking to be "the go-to media outlet for Atlanta-area readers and, in turn, visitors from around the world in 1996." The reporter at the center of the Jewell story, Kathy Scruggs, who dreamed of "becoming a star police reporter," worked hard and spent years cultivating law enforcement sources, but was also a divisive force in the newsroom. She is emblematic of police reporters in so many newsrooms, Salwen said.

On July 26, Jewell, who was working as a security guard at the Olympics, spotted an olive-green knapsack in Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park, containing the largest bomb of its kind in FBI history. The bomb detonated minutes later, killing two people and wounding 111 others. Jewell became a hero for saving many other lives. Touted as a hero, he readily agreed to interviews, even drawing an extensive map of the explosion scene. Media outlets went into overdrive, with CNN.com, MSNBC.com and USAToday.com updating their websites within an hour of the bombing, the authors write. For the AJC, "[t]he pressure of having 15,000 journalists in the AJC's backyard weighed like the moisture in Atlanta's summer air."

The FBI also went into overdrive in an effort to locate the perpetrator of the crime. Soon after the crime, the FBI targeted Jewell, who "fit the profile of the lone bomber,

the hero bomber." Before AJC's Scruggs named Jewell in print, she did try to confirm the information she had received from her FBI source. Although she was able to confirm Jewell's name with another source at the Atlanta Police Department, and, as Salwen put it, "there was no doubt that Richard Jewell was the lead suspect," the FBI hadn't said anything publicly about Jewell and there had been no charges or arrests. Knowing "the public insisted on speed," the AJC decided to run the story anyway (this was, as Salwen puts it, "a social media story set in a pre-social media era"). The AJC headline read: "FBI Suspects 'Hero' Guard May Have Planted Bomb." CNN followed with "The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, in a special edition, today identified a security guard named Richard Jewell as the prime suspect in the Atlanta bombing." With that, Jewell's life changed forever.

Media outlets all over the country reiterated the "news" that Jewell was "the suspect." Many of those outlets were "relentless," according to the authors. The New York Post headline asked if he was "Saint or Savage?" Despite the thousands of journalists in Atlanta for the Olympics, "few did much original reporting," the authors state. The Olympic games continued, but Jewell "had to close himself off at home," surveilled by the FBI and hounded by the media. The three broadcast networks and CNN had even pooled resources to rent an apartment in the complex next to Jewell's for $1,000 a day, the authors write.

Most disturbingly, only "a few publications, including the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, remained cautious, carefully stepping around any presumption of guilt." The Arizona Republic "editorialized on the media's behavior," writing that "Jewell is the latest victim of media competition running wild in the age of instant information. . . Would it be too much to wait for the results of the investigation?"

As we now know, the results of that investigation found that there was no connection between Jewell and the bomb. Jewell was never arrested, was never charged with a crime, and was in fact innocent. The actual perpetrator of the crime, Eric Rudolph, was found in 2003 and confessed.

On Saturday, October 26, 1996, three months after the AJC named Jewell as "the suspect," the FBI delivered to Jewell a "clearance letter," stating that he was "not considered a target of the federal criminal investigation into the bombing on July 27,

1996." The lawsuits soon began. Jewell filed suits against CNN, NBC, the New York Post, Time magazine, AJC and others.

Can months of inaccurate coverage ever be undone? Jewell attempted to rebuild his life. He got a new job as a police officer in Luthersville, Georgia, got married, bought a farm in middle Georgia, and was named by People magazine as one of "The 25 Most Intriguing People of the Year." Oprah Winfrey told Jewell, "we owe you a big apology for making the judgement in our minds before we heard the facts."

But, Jewell had serious health problems, exacerbated by stress, and died of a heart attack at the age of 44. Scruggs, the AJC reporter, spent years "trying to handle the pressure" of defending her work during depositions in the lawsuit that Jewell brought. She died at the age of 42 in 2001. Her source, whose FBI career "had dissolved in a muddle of internal investigations," died at the age of 57 in 2003. It was not only Jewell's life that had been seriously impacted by the false charges, but also the lives of the journalist and the FBI agent.

Clint Eastwood's new film, "Richard Jewell," which opened on Dec. 13, is based on "The Suspect." Authors Alexander and Salwen had roles as consultants to the producing team. The film, seemingly like everything else related to the 1996 Olympic bombing, has drawn its own controversies. Some commentators tried to portray it as, what the New York Times termed, "a veiled pro-Trump polemic" which goes after Trump foes, the FBI and the press. The AJC threatened legal action against Warner Bros. for the way its journalists, particularly Scruggs, are portrayed in the film.

Irrespective of the latest controversy, with the movie and with Alexander and Salwen's new book, both released in late 2019, and a series planned for Spectrum TV, it is clear that the events of July 26, 1996 continue to intrigue us. Although Jewell, the journalist and the FBI agent are no longer alive, "The Suspect" is nonetheless an important story about the personal consequences of "getting it wrong." This book will enlighten student journalists about the importance of pausing, digging deeper, and using their best efforts to "get it right." Or, as Salwen put it, "remembering there is a human being on the other side of the story." Perhaps, the authors hope, it will lead us back to a place where accuracy is just as valued as immediacy.

Carolyn Schurr Levin, a media and First Amendment attorney, is Of Counsel at the media law firm of Miller Korzenik Sommers Rayman LLP. She was the Vice President and General Counsel of Newsday, Vice President and General Counsel of Ziff Davis Media, and Media Law Adviser for the School of Journalism at Stony Brook University. She has taught media law at Baruch College, Stony Brook University, Long Island University, and Pace University. From 2010-2019, she was the faculty adviser for the Pioneer, the student newspaper at Long Island University, during which time the Pioneer won 28 awards.

Carolyn Levin

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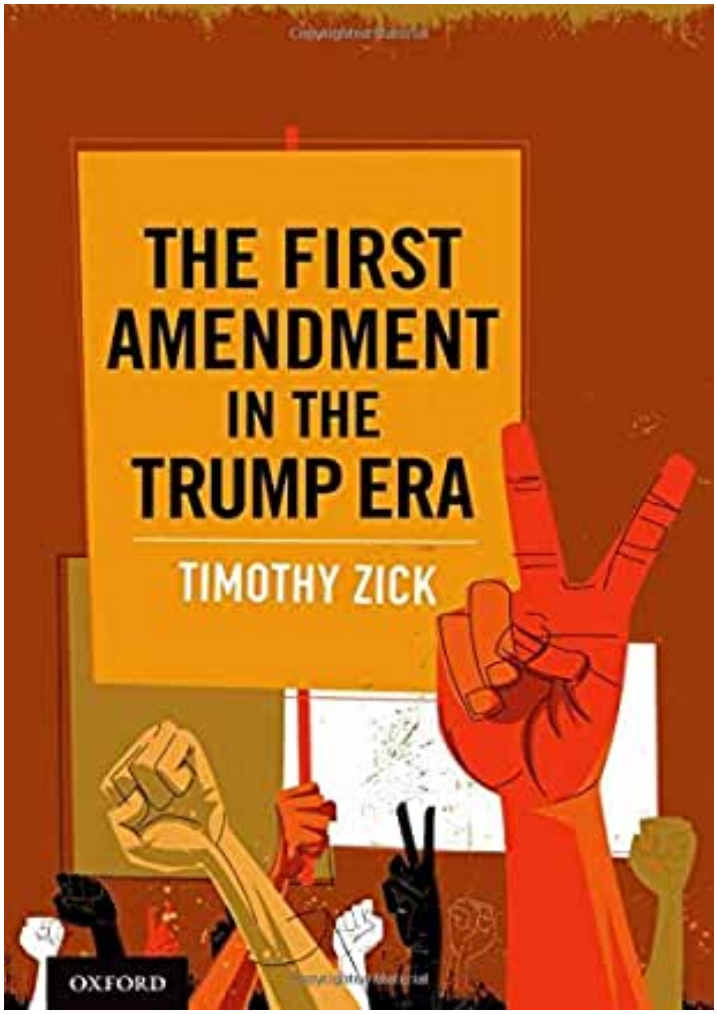
Book Review: ‘The First Amendment in the Trump Era,’ by Timothy Zick

Unique time in First Amendment orthodoxy

Reviewed by **Carolyn Schurr Levin**

Watching and listening to Donald Trump both at his rallies during the 2016 presidential campaign and then after he became President, Timothy Zick, the John Marshall Professor of Government and Citizenship at William & Mary School of Law, felt that he wanted to chronicle the onslaught of attacks on the First Amendment that he was hearing. Although previous presidents had certainly had terrible relationships with the press, the assaults on journalists as “enemies of the people,” denying reporters access to press briefings because of negative coverage, blocking critics on Twitter, vowing to “take a look at the libel laws,” suggesting that flag burners be jailed, the war on truth, and so much more, felt decidedly different to Zick. He was observing systematic efforts “to undermine the press’ credibility and to turn the public against the media.” And, so Professor Zick set out to chronicle those First Amendment assaults. The result is his recently published, comprehensive and highly readable new book, “The First Amendment in the Trump Era.”

Lest you have tuned out the noise, the book is highly critical of the Trump administration's approach to the First Amendment. No matter what side of the political spectrum on which you fall, though, this book can truly educate you about this unique time in First Amendment orthodoxy.



Unlike Professor Zick's three previous books, which primarily targeted an academic audience, this book is pitched to "a wider audience and a broader discourse" about its subject matter. Not only is it intended for those interested in the attacks on freedom of the press in the last several years, but also for those who want to learn more about the history and social benefits of dissent in the United States. Indeed, I found the chapter dedicated to dissent to be the most enlightening. There are "many serious challenges to protecting dissent and maintaining a culture of dissent" now, Professor Zick writes, and "we need to have a plan of attack to deal with [President Trump's] anti-dissent agenda and to preserve a culture of dissent moving forward." Democracy thrives "when there is noise and disagreement, not conformity and consensus," Zick says, arguing for the "active facilitation and encouragement" of the tolerance for dissent. Rather than feeling compelled to "choose sides," people "must feel free to speak out" without being labeled "disloyal enemies."

Despite what may feel like an incessant ongoing public conversation about the First Amendment, Professor Zick believes that "a lot of people just don't know anything" about it. This book aims to solve that problem. It is a detailed and well-sourced chronicle of the First Amendment conflicts that have occurred so far during the Trump presidency, putting them in both historical and social context.

College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

Research (Vol. 57): Social Media Use and Yearbooks

How award winners deploy social media

By **Robert Bergland**

Northwest Missouri State University

Abstract: The Internet and social media have transformed all college media outlets, and the yearbook is no exception. But, while there have been some studies on the impact of these technologies on commercial and college newspapers, yearbooks have not received such scrutiny. This study of award-winning yearbooks attempts to shed light on how yearbooks are using social media to promote their events, their staffs and their content. Using the 22 yearbooks that have been named a finalist in the major competitions in the last three years, this paper examines the number of followers, the number of posts, the content of these posts and the follower response to those posts during the fall 2018 semester.

Introduction: College yearbooks are in a time of transition. On one hand, in an age of the internet and social media, the print-centric traditional yearbook is in danger of

becoming a relic of the past. The cost of producing the yearbook, the ability to provide its content digitally and the digital-native demographic of most of the yearbooks' authors and readers has threatened the very existence of the print college yearbook. Not surprisingly, many colleges have chosen to move to an electronic-only version of a yearbook, to change the format to a magazine produced more often or to eliminate the yearbook altogether. On the other hand, the ephemeral nature of digital-only outlets on the Web (Myspace, anyone?) and the obsolescence of various "hard" electronic distribution methods (CDs, once touted as a replacement or supplement for yearbooks, are no longer able to be read on most computers today) make the permanence of the print yearbook attractive. Given that yearbooks are meant to be mementos, physical keepsakes and historical records that many graduates keep their entire lives, there is a strong argument for maintaining the yearbook in print, in a form that will be guaranteed to be easily accessible and readable in 10, 50 or 100 years.

Regardless of whether the college yearbook is in print or digital form, one thing is clear: college yearbook staffs should be using digital technologies—and especially social media—for the benefit of current readers, future readers and themselves. From a promotional standpoint, not utilizing the available technologies to encourage book sales (for those yearbooks who sell the book) and pickup (for those yearbooks who rely on student fees to produce the book for all students) translates into fewer people reading the book. An indifferent or Luddite approach to the new platforms diminishes the hard work of the staff by limiting the number of people who end up with the book in their hands. Not promoting portrait or organization photos likewise decreases the amount of student participation in the book's content,

detracting from the comprehensiveness of the book and the likelihood of students purchasing/picking up the book.

Yearbooks can also use social media as a means for connecting not only with current potential readers, but also with past readers. Through updates about campus events, links to new or past stories or the sharing of current or past spreads or covers, yearbook staffs can provide information to alumni and other non-student university stakeholders. Indeed, while yearbook content is often less timely and more feature-oriented than campus newspaper content, in many ways the technologies have blurred the lines between newspapers and yearbooks. While yearbooks might not use their webpages as much as newspapers for distributing news, they can use social media to provide information and content to current students, past students and the campus and surrounding communities.

From an educational perspective, perhaps the most important benefit of yearbooks' use of social media is preparing the staff for careers in journalistic and related fields. For better or worse, social media and the Web are integral parts of the publishing world. Whether the students go on to careers in journalism, public relations, book publishing, photography, graphic design or business/technical writing, their experience with those technologies is critical in preparing them for jobs in those areas. Just as their experience with writing, editing and design is important in their educational development, so too should they be using and gaining experience in social media to help them learn about the field.

The question, of course, is how college newspaper staffs can and should be using social media. One answer to that question begins with looking at the best ways that some college yearbooks are already using the technologies. To that end, our goal was to study some of the best yearbooks and to analyze their social media activity. What platforms are they using the most? How often are they posting? What things are they posting about? How much and in what ways are readers interacting with the yearbooks on social media?

In trying to answer those questions, we chose the best print yearbooks in the country, the ones who had been named a finalist in the past three years in the general excellence category in a major national competition (There are no award

categories for yearbook-only websites or social media presence, so we were left to look at the best yearbooks overall. As with college newspapers, an outstanding print version sometimes—but definitely not always—transfers over into a quality digital product). In the end, we examined 22 yearbooks, studying their use of Facebook and Twitter (the most commonly used social media platforms) over the course of a full semester, fall 2018.

A Shortage of College Newspaper and Yearbook Research on Social Media

Literature Review: Let's begin by being blunt: there is a dearth of scholarship on college yearbooks. To the best of our knowledge, no one has published a yearbook-only research article in a scholarly journal. An examination of the indices of numerous journals that have included studies on college newspapers comes up empty for college yearbooks. A Google Scholar search of college yearbooks yields psychological studies about smiling and appearance in yearbook portrait photos, but no empirical research about the yearbooks themselves.

Even *College Media Review*, the most friendly home for any such research, has been largely devoid of any articles devoted to yearbooks, let alone scholarly investigations of them. There have been no studies in any of the CMR Research Annuals, and a search using the term "yearbook" on the CMR website for the last decade brings up only two yearbook-only articles, both published by Susan Smith in 2013. The first, "The Future of the Venerable Yearbook," is a well-done, thorough journalistic article (not a quantitative or qualitative study) with interviews of yearbook advisers and people in the industry, while an accompanying piece in the same issue, "South Dakota State University Students Resurrect Yearbook" is a narrative of her school's decision to bring back its annual. Other research and non-research articles bring up yearbooks only tangentially, as a small part of a look at entire media program offerings. We hope this article begins a new research emphasis on college yearbooks.

There have been a few studies that have looked at college newspapers and how they have used the web and social media. Brockman, Bergland & Hon (2011) examined online Pacemaker winner websites, focusing on multimedia, interactive and distribution features used by those top publications. A 2013 AEJMC paper, "Content

Management Systems, Distribution and Social Media on College Newspaper Websites" was more recent and exhaustive, examining 392 college newspapers, one-fourth of the nearly 1,600 college newspapers in the Editor and Publisher directory. Amazingly, over a third (36%) of those publications didn't even have a website, almost the exact same percentage as a 2008 study. Of those that did have a website, 31% had a Twitter badge/link on their website, with 18% including their Twitter feed on their website. About the same amount had a Facebook badge/link (35% of those with a website, 21% of all the publications, including those without a website), while 9% of those college newspapers had their Facebook feed on their website.

Commercial Newspaper Use of Social Media

While there has been no study of how exactly college newspapers are using social media—we intend to follow up this study with a related one on college newspapers in the next year—there has been ample research about how commercial newspapers in the United States and around the world are using social media. Facebook studies have included pieces such as Welbers and Obgenhaffen (2019), which found that newspaper Facebook posts in Dutch and Flemish newspapers were often more personal and subjective than the headlines and leads of stories in the newspaper. Genc (2019) analyzed how Turkish journalists are using Facebook and Twitter to distribute the news. In a country where 900 newspapers have closed in the last five years and only 1,000 still exist, readers are turning to social media first for their news, and journalists are accommodating that preference. Other articles focus on how newspapers use social media to cover special events, such as earthquakes (Volterrania, Iezzia & Cecchere 2018) and elections (Skogerbo & Krumsvik 2015).

Another area of social media research is how journalists use social media for sources. Paulussen & Harder (2014) examined Flemish newspapers to find the many instances of when Twitter, Facebook or YouTube were cited as a source by journalists. Broersma & Graham (2013) did a similar study of Dutch and British papers, looking for citations using Twitter, as did Moon and Hadley (2014) in their study. Nordheim, Bozcek & Koppers (2018) did one of the most comprehensive studies of social media use as a source, looking at the *New York Times'* social media sources over a 10-year period.

Some of the more valuable studies, as they relate to this research, are the ones which analyze how the newspapers and journalists are taking advantage of the capabilities and potential of Facebook, Twitter or both. In a relatively early study, Armstrong and Gao (2010) looked at news organizations' use of Twitter, finding that they most often tweeted about crime and public affairs issues. Ju, Jeong & Chyi (2014), in their seminal study, "Will Social Media Save Newspapers?" also study Twitter and Facebook from an organizational perspective. Their 2012 examination of 66 U.S. newspapers answered the question in the title with a "no," that while social media drove more traffic to the newspapers' websites, the gain in revenue was "underwhelming." For their newspapers studied in 2012, Twitter reached a bigger audience than Facebook for distributing news content.

Other studies have focused not on the journalistic organizations, but on how journalists themselves are using social media. Lasorsa, Lewis & Holton (2012) note in their analysis of 22,000 Tweets by journalists that many journalists shed some of their objectivity in their tweets, including more opinion, more of their personal lives and more transparency about the newsgathering process. Parmlee (2013) looked at political journalists in the 2012 election, finding that Twitter especially, more so than Facebook, has changed how political journalists operate—and not necessarily always in a good way, as the pressure to tweet sometimes affects the actual writing of news stories. Engesser & Humprecht (2015) took a broader approach, looking not only at journalists across fields, but across continents, examining 39 social media accounts of journalists in five Western countries. Again, Twitter reigned supreme, but most of the users were not taking full advantage of the capabilities of Twitter or its ability to connect with readers.

Still other studies have looked at social media and newspapers from the perspective of the user. Larssen (2018) studied the readers of Norwegian newspapers, looking at the levels of interaction with Facebook and Instagram. Another study involving Larsson and co-author Kalsnes (2018) focuses on sharing on Facebook, concluding that users most often share content that is celebrity-focused, sensational or other soft news.

Research Questions: Based on our examination of the literature and a sample examination of numerous yearbook social media feeds, we came up with several research questions.

RQ1 What percent of the yearbooks are active on Twitter and Facebook?

RQ2: What are the most common subjects of social media posts?

1. Is there a difference between what they post on the different social media platforms (ex: do they post differently on Twitter vs what they post on Facebook?)

RQ3: How often do yearbooks post to social media?

1. How much difference is there in their number of FB v Twitter posts?
2. Is there a correlation between the enrollment and number of followers and how often they post?
3. Is there a correlation between how decorated the yearbook is and how often they post (do multiple-award winning books post more often?)

RQ4: How many followers does each yearbook have on each platform?

1. Is there a correlation between the number of followers and the enrollment?
2. Is there a significant difference between the number of followers on each platform?

Methodology

Subject selection: One of the problems in doing a study of college yearbooks (and perhaps one reason why there is a lack of scholarship on college yearbooks) is there is no reliable, current and exhaustive directory of college yearbooks. While there are a few college newspaper directories—most notably, the *Editor and Publisher* compilation of approximately 1,600 college newspapers—there is no directory for yearbooks, making any full-blown study of all college yearbooks difficult at best. So, one of the key questions for our study was how to settle on a list of yearbooks to

study. It was important to not have a haphazard collection, but one that was selected in a logical manner, hopefully using a process employed in previous studies. In addition, the goal in selecting the books to study was not to create an overview of what *all* yearbooks were doing, but an example of what the best yearbooks were doing to provide a model for what yearbooks could and should be taking advantage of in social media outlets.

To that end, we chose to use a methodology employed in previous newspaper studies published in *College Media Review*. In a 2011 study of college newspapers, Brockman, Bergland and Hon were also looking to use the best newspapers as an example of what interactive, multimedia and distribution features should be included on campus newspaper websites. In doing so, they chose to pick the winners of three years' worth of Associated Collegiate Press Pacemaker competitions. More recently, Terracina-Hartman and Nulph (2016) used a similar technique when examining how colleges were promoting the success of their newspapers. They used a more robust method, not only using Pacemakers, but also the Columbia Scholastic Press Association Gold Crown winners and the College Media Association Pinnacle winners. Using a weighted system giving points for the various award levels (first/second/third/honorable mention), they took the top 35 newspapers to work with.

This study likewise used a list of the finalists and award winners for the ACP Pacemakers, the CSPA Gold Crown Awards and the CMA Pinnacles for a period of three years: 2016, 2017 and 2018. All yearbooks that earned at least one general excellence recognition (finalist or award winner) in the last three years were included in the study. Twenty-three yearbooks met that standard. One yearbook, the Western Kentucky *Talisman*, had converted to a magazine recently and was eliminated from the study, because of its new focus and because its frequency and content of posts were remarkably different than the other yearbooks (Its conversion and use of social media is worthy of a completely separate qualitative study).

Social media outlets: In our initial examination of several of the award-winning yearbooks, we noticed that they were predominately using Twitter or Facebook, or in some cases, both. As far as the other main social media outlets, only a few were using Instagram, and for the most part, their Instagram posts mirrored their

Facebook posts (not surprising, since Facebook owns Instagram and has built-in capability to cross-post). Pinterest, while a seemingly conducive platform for yearbooks, was not really used at all, most likely because the college demographic by and large does not use Pinterest nearly as much as their parents (or grandparents, for that matter). As a result, we chose to focus our data collection on Facebook and Twitter.

Collection period: The original plan was to collect data on Facebook and Twitter posts for a month. However, an initial pilot study of some yearbooks' social media postings revealed that many of the staff members weren't posting much and that a full semester would be necessary to have adequate data to work with. In addition, there was the concern that using only a month of posts might skew the data, as the post content was very much tied to the time in the yearbooks' season. For example, the month of September for many books is a time of yearbook presales or pickup, while October is a time of pushing portraits. So, we decided to use a full semester, choosing the most recent full semester, fall 2018. We defined that period as Aug. 15 to Dec. 31 to encompass the full traditional semester.

Taxonomy/Data Coding: A key focus of the study was to find out what yearbooks were posting about. Was it focused on yearbook content being produced? The organization/staff? Promoting the book or encouraging people to get their portraits taken? To get answers to those questions, a taxonomy was created after reviewing the feeds of several yearbooks. After an initial pilot study of a yearbook (not on the list of award winners) that posted frequently the taxonomy was revised, collapsing a few categories and adding others.

Followers/Posts: In addition to coding the Tweets and Facebook posts, other information was also collected:

- total number of posts
- number of followers
- number of reactions to posts (splitting them up into likes and comments)
- number of posts that were text only, had graphics/photos or had video

Results

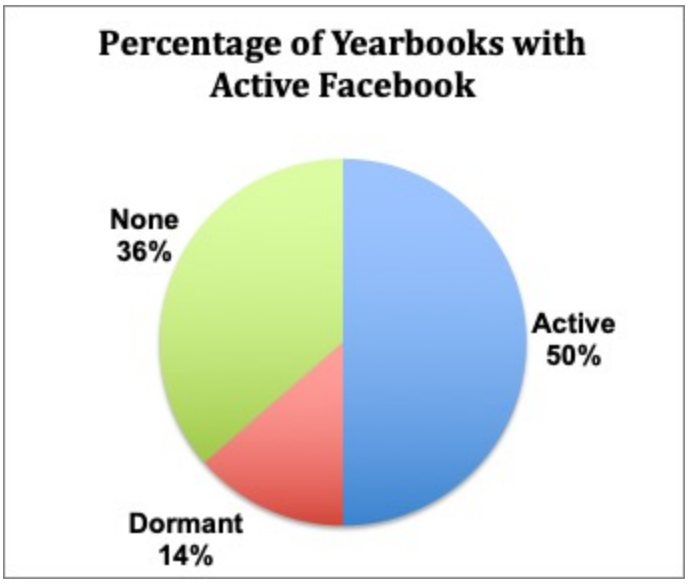


Chart 1

Social Media Presence: The first research question addressed whether the yearbooks were even using Facebook and Twitter. Surprisingly, only half of the yearbooks were using Facebook actively in the fall of 2018 (Chart 1). Eleven were using Facebook, three had dormant accounts and eight had no Facebook page whatsoever.

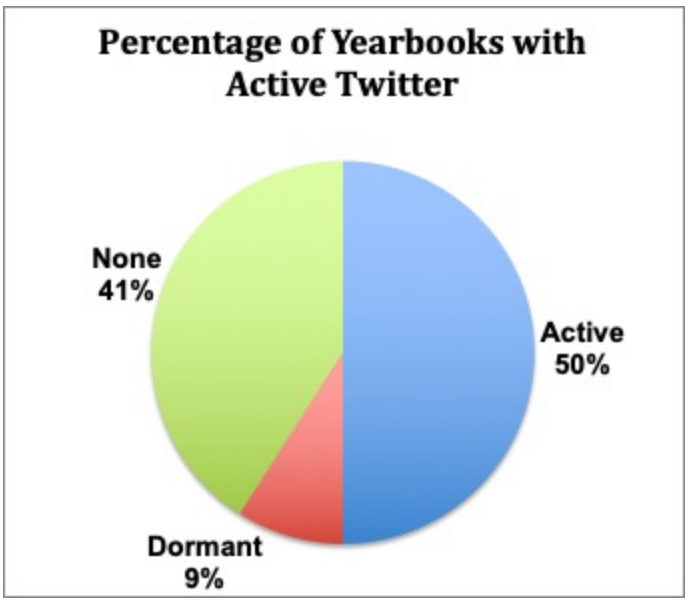


Chart 2

The same was true of Facebook. Half the yearbooks did not have a Twitter account (Chart 2). Interestingly, though, some of the yearbooks that did not have a Facebook page did have a Twitter account. Neither the Indiana *Arbutus* and the Troy *Palladium* had a Facebook page, but they both had a Twitter page, and two of the most active Twitter pages at that. One yearbook, the Harding *Petit Jean* did not have its own

Twitter page, so is counted as not having a separate yearbook Twitter account, but it did combine with other student media for a Harding Pubs account. However, virtually all of the posts that semester were generated by the newspaper.

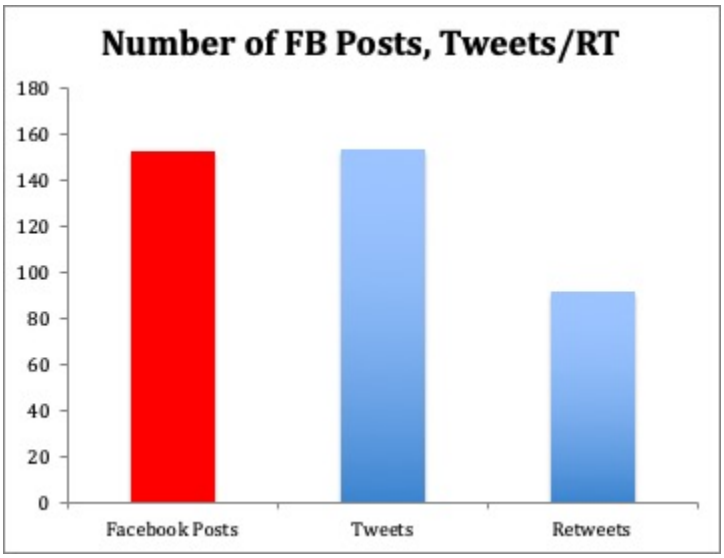


Chart 3

Activity: One of the other key questions was how often the yearbooks were posting (Chart 3). Amazingly, the number of Facebook posts (152) was almost identical to the amount of original tweets (153).

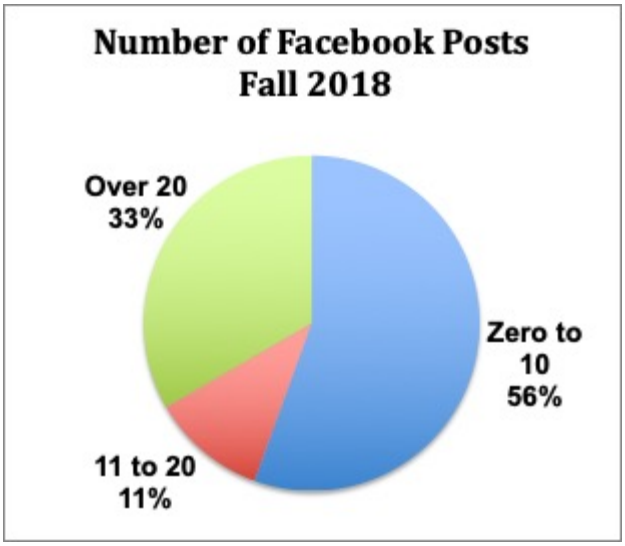


Chart 4

Within that number, though, there was a significant difference in the amount of posting (Chart 4). Nearly half of the yearbooks (5 of the 11) posted six or fewer times to Facebook over the course of the semester, or about one or two times a month. On

the high end of the spectrum, Virginia Tech, which has no Twitter page, posted 33 times, or seven to eight times a month on average. It should be noted, however, that the posting frequency did not fit into a neat "average." Getting into the weeds of the data, one can find a common, unsurprising occurrence: a staff may start the semester posting like gangbusters, and come the end of October, post little or nothing the rest of the semester.

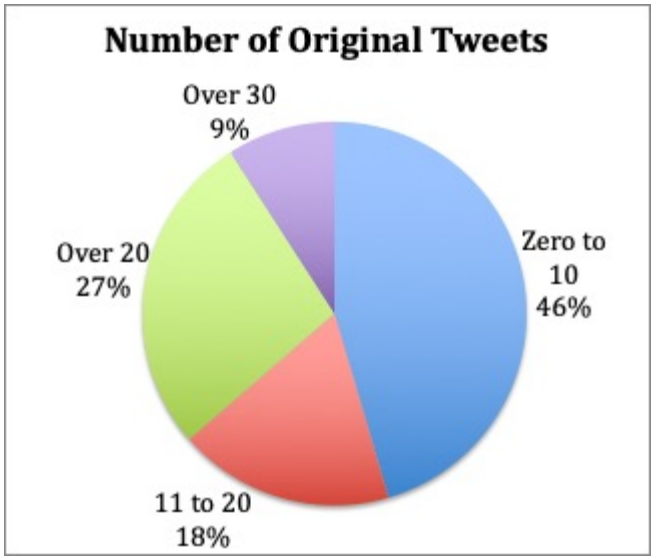
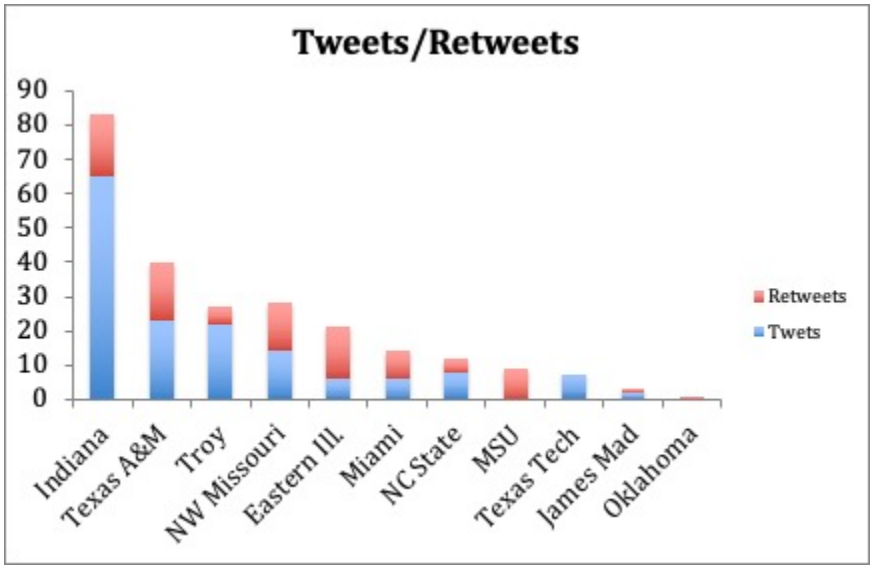


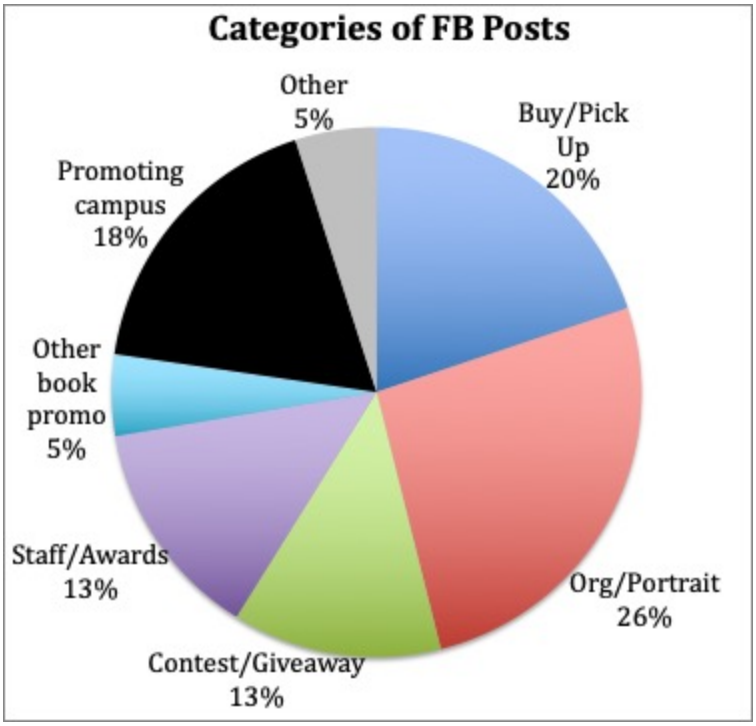
Chart 5

The number of Tweets was likewise very disparate (Chart 5). On one end of the spectrum, the Indiana Arbutus—which had no Facebook page—tweeted 65 times, while again, nearly half of the schools with a Twitter presence tweeted fewer than 10 times over the course of the fall 2018 semester.



The following graph (Chart 6) better shows the discrepancy between schools and also adds in the number and percent of retweets. As can be seen in the graph, some schools don't retweet at all or very little, while other schools only retweet or retweet more than they tweet.

As shown above, Indiana's tweeting far outpaced that of the other schools, comprising 42% of the total number of tweets by the award-winning books.



Types of social media posts: One of the most important questions for the study addressed the actual content of the posts. The hypothesis, based on the literature review and personal experience with newspaper use of social media, was that the majority of the posts would be promoting content, with links to stories. With these yearbooks, however, that was far from the case. Instead, almost half of the Facebook posts were either promoting the buying or picking up of the yearbook or encouraging people to have their portraits or their organizational photos taken/submitted. (Chart 7).

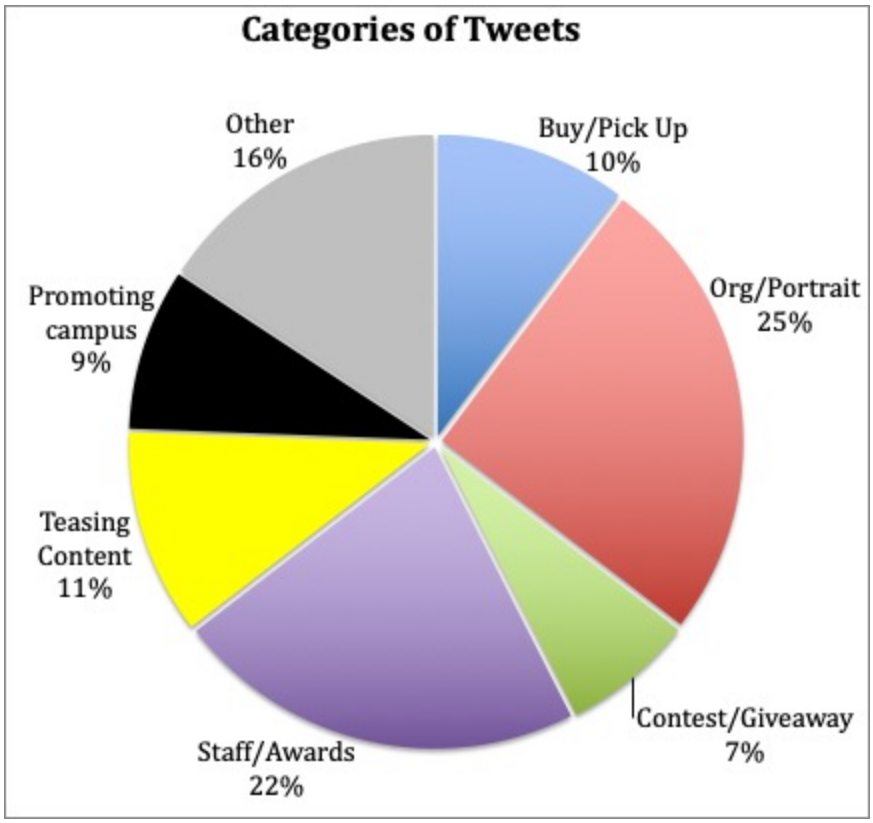


Chart 8

The tweets were remarkably similar: the vast majority promote the book or the staff in some way, with about half of those again coming in the sales/pickup of the book or the push to have individual or organizational photos taken. Interestingly, though, while only a couple Facebook posts teased content the staffers were working on, 14 tweets (almost 10%) teased content, with a few tweets that provided web links to stories. (Chart 8).

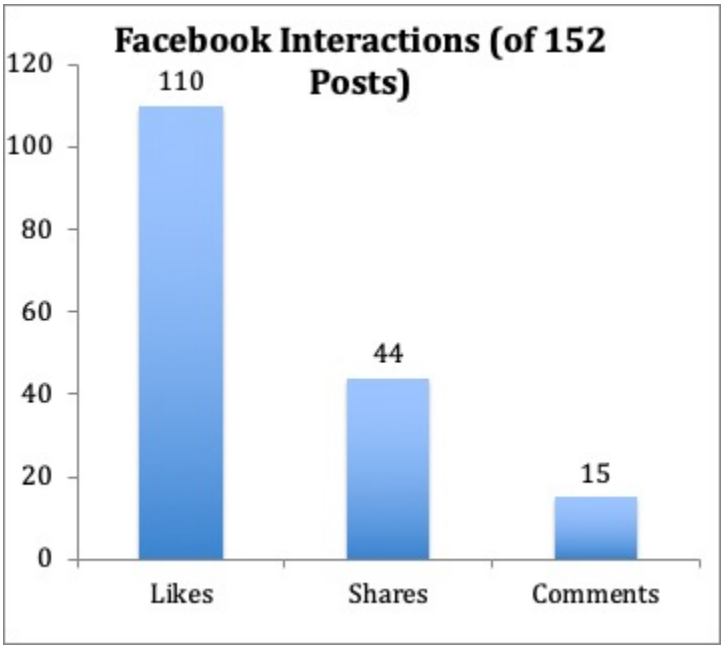


Chart 9

Follower Response: Lacking the access for detailed analytics for each of the yearbooks' Facebook and Twitter pages, we were left with the more rudimentary Like and Share/Retweet metrics for judging the response of the readers. For Facebook, that amounted to 110 of the 152 posts being liked (72%), although it should be noted that 89 of those posts had five or fewer Likes. Less than a third of the posts were shared, and only 10% generated any comments. (Chart 9)

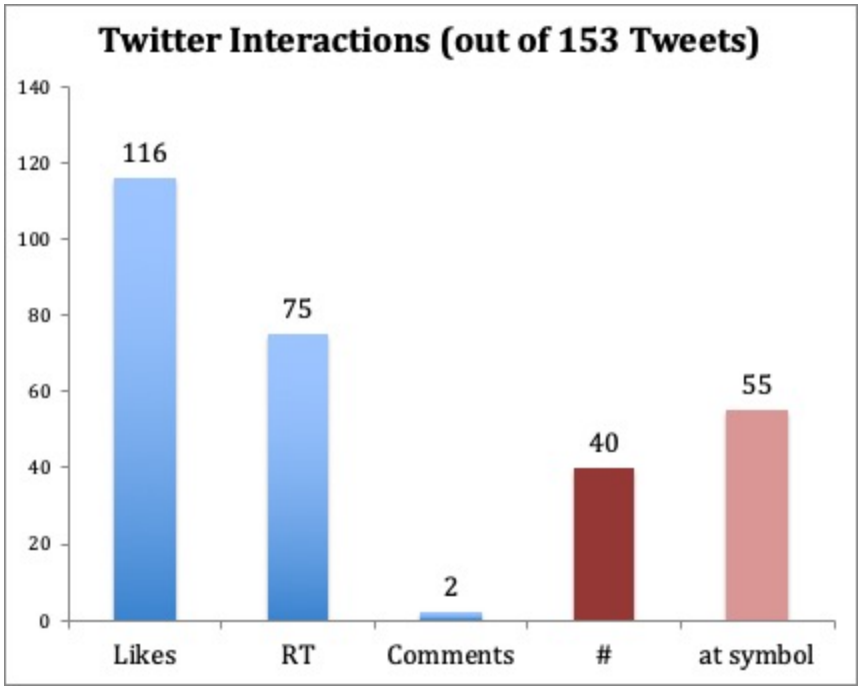


Chart 10

The Twitter likes again were remarkably similar, with about 75% of the tweets getting liked (again, most of them just getting a few likes), although a greater percentage were retweeted. There were only two comments on all of the tweets. (Chart 10).

The reach and response rate can also be affected by an effective use of the hashtag and @ in tweets. Many schools never used either in their tweets; the bulk of the ones used were from just a couple of the yearbooks.

School	Book	FB Post	Followers	Tweets	Followers	RT	Award Rank
NC State	Agromeck	23	853	8	697	4	2
University of Miami	Ibis	29	1024	6	708	8	1
Loyola Marymount	The Tower	1	412		184		7
Baylor	Roundup		322		181		3
Univ. of Oklahoma	Sooner		1129		894	1	7
Southern Methodist	Rotunda		9				7
Harding*	Petit Jean						7
NW Missouri State	Tower	15	794	14	676	14	12
Kansas State	Royal Purple	16	1021				6
Virginia Tech	Bugle	33	363				12
Eastern Illinois	Warbler	2	720	6	335	15	16
Texas A&M	Aggieland	20	447	23	200	17	16
Texas Tech	La Ventana	7	86	7	112		3
James Madison	Bluestone			2	489	1	7
Michigan State	RC Log	2	1177		304	9	12
Indiana U	Arbutus		374	65	321	18	12
Washington & Lee	Calyx						16
Troy	Palladium			22	316	5	16
Rice	Capanille	6	1616				5
Central Arkansas	Scroll						16
California Baptist	Angelos						16
North Alabama	Diorama						16

Correlation between enrollment and number of awards and social media presence: The simple hypothesis for the impact of enrollment was this: The bigger the school, the bigger the book, budget and staff will likely be, and thus the greater likelihood that there may be a staff member dedicated to social media and a bigger audience to serve. To a large part, that was true. The schools without any social media presence (Washington & Lee, Harding, Central Arkansas, North Alabama and California Baptist), are all among the smallest universities on the list. The latter three universities also have another thing in common—they received only one finalist award over the past three years. On the other end of the spectrum, the most-awarded yearbooks were among the most active on social media. The University of Miami *Ibis* and North Carolina State *Argomeck*, the two books winning the most general excellence awards the last three years in CSPA/CMA/ACP competitions, were also two of the most active on social media. It should be noted, though, that there were definitely exceptions to the correlation between the size of the school and number of awards won and the amount of social media presence. For example, Baylor, one of the biggest and most decorated schools, had no social media presence. Northwest Missouri State, with fewer awards and an enrollment under 10,000, was among the more active on both Facebook and Twitter. (Chart 11).

Instagram: The use of Instagram, arguably the best social media platform for the visually centric yearbook, largely paralleled the other social media use of yearbooks. Similar to Facebook and Twitter, roughly half (12) had active, dedicated Instagram accounts. When accounting for the two schools that had combined student media accounts (the yearbook sharing an account with the newspaper and other media)

and one school with a dormant account, 15 of the 22 books had some sort of Instagram presence. For the 12 active dedicated accounts, they had an average of 545 followers, with a high of 885 (Troy) and a low of 248 (Texas Tech). The average number of posts for the fall semester was 16, with a high of 32 posts (Virginia Tech) and a low of 2 (Miami). In short, the number of posts on Instagram was roughly similar to the number of Facebook and Instagram posts, although the number of followers was generally smaller on Instagram. However, it is interesting to note that the yearbooks' use of Instagram was not necessarily consistent with their usage of Facebook and Twitter. For example, some of the schools that were active on both Facebook and Twitter had no Instagram presence whatsoever (Eastern Illinois and Northwest). Conversely, other schools that didn't post at all during fall 2018 on Facebook and Twitter did have an active Instagram account (Baylor, Central Arkansas). In all, out of the 22 top yearbooks in the country, only four had active, dedicated accounts on the three main social media platforms of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: Texas Tech, Texas A&M, Miami and North Carolina State.

Conclusions: One of the most surprising findings from the study was sheer lack of social media engagement on the two major platforms. To be frank, it was disheartening to see only half of the yearbooks make even a solitary post on Facebook. Likewise, only half tweeted, and several of those schools who did tweet only tweeted a couple times or largely just retweeted from university or other sources. It's especially important to remember: *these are the very best books in the country*. True, there is not necessarily a direct, causal link between what these publications are doing in print vs what they are doing online, just as the best print newspapers may not be the best newspapers online. Still, if half of the biggest, best and quite likely the best-funded yearbooks are not using Facebook or Twitter, one has to wonder what that percent is at all of the smaller schools with smaller books, smaller staffs, smaller budgets and lower quality. It's logical to assume that an even higher percentage are not taking advantage of the technology to help recruit staff and promote the book.

The other less surprising finding was how little social media was used to actually promote the content of the book. For many staffs, about the only types of post were (multiple) reminders to the campus community about book sales/pickup or portraits/organizational photos. While those are surely the most important things to

yearbooks and their bottom lines, the actual content of the book could have also been used help drive interest in the book. There were only a handful of examples of posts with spreads, stories and covers to help people appreciate the quality of the books (for that matter, there were surprisingly few social media posts about the awards that these books won).

The number of followers vs the size of the school and social media activity as seen in the chart above has some huge discrepancies. The Texas Tech yearbook, for example, has only 86 Facebook followers, about a tenth of the number of a Northwest Missouri State—all the more remarkable considering Texas Tech has about five times the enrollment. Clearly, a staff in that position needs to work on increasing that number of followers to make its posts more effective. By the same token, some schools with a great number of followers are squandering their opportunity by not taking advantage of that following. The Sooner, with 1,129 Facebook followers, didn't post at all in the fall of 2018. Rice, topping the list with 1,616 followers, only posted six times.

Based on the findings in this study, there are several things the student media field might wish to consider:

- More sessions at state and national conferences dedicated to yearbook use of social media, outlining ways to more effectively take advantage of the main platforms.
- More training materials—perhaps in the form of resources available on the CMA website—such as tips for increasing the number of followers, job descriptions for social media editors and strategies for promoting the book and content on social media.
- More research studies and practical articles on social media in *College Media Review*, *College Media Matters* and other outlets.
- Perhaps a new contest category for semester- or year-long social media campaigns for yearbooks.

Limitations and Future Studies: The biggest limitation of this study is, of course, the small number of books examined. While the goal of the study was to provide an example, a model of what the best print books are doing, the selection method and

small number of books examined mean that the results here cannot be generalized to the yearbook population in general. With a more expansive list—perhaps using the CMA directory, singling out yearbook advisers—a fuller snapshot of what more books are doing would be possible. Another limitation is the restriction to just Facebook and Twitter. A future study could also examine Instagram in greater detail, as there were a few yearbooks that were using that platform extensively and effectively.

Finally, this study only looks at the external, final product of the social media posts. Ideally, a follow-up study would use other research methods to triangulate the data. A survey of these (and other) yearbooks about their social media plans and setup (for example, which staffers/editors are posting? How many different people are posting? Do they have any training or guidelines for what they post?) would add different insights. In addition, interviews with advisers and EICs would yield perhaps the most useful data about what has been done in the past, why they post the way they do, whether they have a dedicated social media editor and what their plans are in the future.

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College Media Review / February 25, 2020 / College Media / award winner, college media, crown, pacemaker, yearbook

In addition to a broad survey of the president's relationship with the press, Professor Zick writes eloquently about the President's "often contemptuous" relationship with individual dissenters. "President Trump has used social media to threaten, troll, and retaliate against reporters, media entities, and dissenters," he writes. "We ought to heed carefully the First Amendment lessons of this era – both to assess any damage done to our free press and speech institutions and traditions, and perhaps as importantly to reacquaint ourselves with the foundations upon which those things rest."

Many college media advisers have reported recent and troubling First Amendment assaults on their own campuses, perhaps a trickle-down effect from the wider national landscape. The CMR listserv has, just in the past few months, been filled with anecdotes about newspapers suspiciously missing from newsracks, administrators expressing displeasure about accurate and properly reported stories, and journalism students caving to peer and other pressure in their legitimate newsgathering efforts. Advisers experiencing these or similar issues on their campuses may very well agree with Professor Zick that the press is in trouble.

And yet there is also a lot to be hopeful about. This fall, 297 media advisers and 1322 students attended the CMA convention in Washington, D.C., the highest number since 2015. Previously declining enrollments in journalism programs seem to have experienced a "Trump bump." According to MarketWatch, applications have jumped at journalism schools across the country, including a 10 percent increase for the 2017-2018 school year at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, 24 percent more journalism applicants at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism for the 2018-2019 school year, and the highest ever number of first year applicants at the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California. These numbers, reflecting engaged and empowered student journalists, are surely also a part of the legacy of President Donald Trump's impact on the First Amendment.

Professor Zick is not pessimistic. "I dedicated the book to dissenters for a reason," he said in a recent phone interview. He believes that "the American people will continue to engage in acts of dissent and play their part in terms of checking authoritarian impulses. We have reached "a critical moment in our nation's

history," he says, a time when he urges consideration of "how we can best defend and preserve our First Amendment." He sagely reminds us, "the First Amendment challenges we face as a nation are broader and deeper than any single government official," just as the challenges college media advisers and students face on campus are larger than any one college administrator.

With the proliferation of fake news, hate speech and a post-truth culture, there is certainly a temptation to throw up our hands in exhaustion. But, there is also ample reason for us to educate ourselves about the First Amendment's freedom of press and freedom of speech clauses, and the current challenges being posed, if only to sufficiently arm ourselves against them. Professor Zick's book is a worthwhile and important guide in that endeavor.

Carolyn Schurr Levin is a media and First Amendment attorney affiliated with the New York City Law firm of Miller Korzenik Sommers Rayman LLP. She was the Vice President and General Counsel of Newsday, Vice President and General Counsel of Ziff Davis Media, and Media Law Adviser for the School of Journalism at Stony Brook University. She has taught media law at Baruch College, Stony Brook University, Long Island University, and Pace University. From 2010-2019, she was the faculty adviser for the Pioneer, the student newspaper at Long Island University, during which time the Pioneer won 28 awards.

Carolyn Levin

January 21, 2020 / College Media Review

College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

The Big Story: Uncharted territory

Students at the March 12 impromptu banquet, one-day after university officials announced they were moving to remote classes for the remainder of the semester.

College newsrooms shift focus amid coronavirus pandemic concerns

By **Elizabeth Smith** and **Courtenay Stallings**
Pepperdine University

“This is big.” That was the reaction of Graphic News Editor James Moore when Pepperdine University announced seven weeks ago the suspension of its international program in Shanghai, China, as COVID-19 spread across Asia. Over the next six weeks, as the virus spread across the world, the university eventually suspended all seven of its international programs and closed the Malibu campus, moving to all-remote instruction. James was right— it was big.

Over the past few weeks, university presidents have announced campus closures in rapid succession. While these closures pose unprecedented challenges for classrooms and campuses, they are uncharted territory for student newsrooms, too.

While professional newsrooms have shifted to reporters and editors working remotely, college newsrooms have the added disadvantage of having staff members relocating across the globe. For staff members of the Graphic, the focus continues to be on delivering in-depth, urgent news content. To meet the goals, the staff is relying on a broad newsroom contingency plan that focuses on methods of delivery, a sharper focus on multimedia content and rethinking the use of technological tools.

Contingency Plans

Pepperdine Graphic Media is the student newsroom at Pepperdine University that closely covers the campus community through the Graphic newspaper (print and digital), social media, special editions, podcasts and a features magazine. As Pepperdine students returned from spring break Sunday, March 8, advisers sent the following contingency plan to the entire staff. At the time that advisers distributed the contingency plan, campus closure seemed possible but not probable. Three days later, university administrators announced the campus closure.

The following is PGM’s contingency plan:

1. **Reporting and editing:** Most of our work can be done remotely. Reporting and editing shouldn’t experience much of a disruption from a possible outbreak. Please plan to continue reporting and editing, although stay in close and regular contact with your section editors as story assignments could change quickly.

2. **Photos:** We will need to rely on file photos or courtesy photos for much of our coverage. Since Elizabeth Smith is on campus, she will act as a point-person for retrieving photos from the server. She will put out daily calls for images that are needed.
3. **Digital-first:** Getting stories online in an extremely timely manner is always our goal. This will continue to be a top priority.
4. **Social:** In the event of an outbreak (or disruption to classes being held on campus), social media will continue to be of paramount importance to distributing content. Section editors will appoint one staff member to assist with all social media postings.
5. **Design:** In the event of a disruption, we plan to still produce a print product, although we would significantly reduce the number of papers printed. I am working to secure Adobe access to each section editor, so that pages can still be produced. I will update sections on this matter in the budget meeting.
6. **Art:** Art can be completed remotely and shouldn't experience much of a disruption from a possible outbreak. Artists should plan to stay in regular contact with their section editors.
7. **Advertising:** We will continue to solicit print and digital ads.
8. **Meetings:** We would continue any regularly scheduled meetings via Zoom. Zoom links will be distributed via email and Crew.

This contingency plan is based on past experience. In a Letter from the Editors, Executive Editor Channa Steinmetz and Managing Editor Madeleine Carr wrote, "This isn't the first time PGM has had to do this — in November 2018, our staff reported remotely following the Borderline Shooting and Woolsey Fire and was able to produce digital content, alongside the physical special edition that hit stands when students returned to campus. This is to say, we feel we are adequately prepared to cover any news that unfolds, whether from off-campus apartments or hometown desks."

A massive wildfire that burned campus and a mass shooting that took the life of a Pepperdine student made for an excruciating time for the Pepperdine community as they experienced these back-to-back tragedies. However, the lessons from that two-week closure informed the contingency plan for the COVID-19 closure and newsroom shift to remote work. Additionally, a clear articulation of expectations of multimedia coverage and use of technology is intended to support the contingency plan.

Multimedia coverage

Although the Graphic intends to still print small batches of its weekly editions for the next four weeks, most community members will rely largely on social media and digital content to keep up with campus news. To meet this need, the Graphic intends to shift to the following:

- Daily episodes of the Graph, the news podcast
- Daily editions of the Pixel, the email newsletter
- More frequent social media updates (PGM regularly posts on social media platforms daily)

Technology and Communication

It is unclear what these remote student newsrooms will evolve into, exactly. Technology will shape how the staff communicates with each other and with its audience. The following tools will take on new importance:

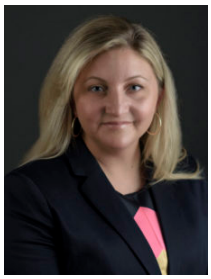
- **Slack/Crew**: PGM senior leaders discussed keeping the conversation on this app (in this case, Crew) focused only on the news at hand; this is to keep the conversation focused and not to lose the attention of staff members of notifications.
- **Zoom**: PGM will conduct online meetings via Zoom, a remote conferencing service acquired by the University and utilized for remote learning and meetings.
- **Adobe Creative Suite**: PGM uses the Adobe Creative Suite widely. Adobe announced free 90-day licenses for students to help manage campus closures and

limited access to technology. This means everyone in the newsroom can help with design and editing remotely.

- **Camayak**: PGM uses this cloud-based workflow system for all content. This makes writing and editing remotely seamless and without any changes from more typical newsroom editing.
- **Chartbeat**: PGM uses this (in partnership with Camayak) to monitor real-time analytics.
- **Mailchimp**: PGM uses this for distribution of the email newsletter

PGM's contingency plan was shared on the College Media Association email distribution list Monday, March 9. Advisers intended to share this as a resource as other newsrooms developed their own plans. The response has been tremendous. Dozens of schools have since shared their contingency plans for remote coverage. Each plan, while unique to their newsroom, articulates the importance of communication via technology tools with a focus on hyper-local coverage. Despite the specifics, advisers and editors should craft plans that consider the needs of student journalists in a time of major fluctuation, accommodates logistical shifts and (most importantly) serves the community. This is an important opportunity—student journalists are being given the chance not only to write the rules, but to write the whole playbook, from the inside out.

Elizabeth Smith, director of Pepperdine Graphic Media



Courtenay Stallings, assistant director of Pepperdine Graphic Media

March 17, 2020 / College Media / college media, covid-19, newroom, Pepperdine, university shutdown

College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

Knight First Amendment Institute v. Donald J. Trump: Reimagining the Town Square

Public officials cannot block naysayers from social media

By **Carolyn Schurr Levin**

The campus quad is a place where students, professors, administrators, staff, and visitors talk, walk, congregate, share ideas, play catch, hawk college newspapers, and so much more. It is a space that has traditionally been open and accessible, with few limitations, not only at public universities, but also at private colleges. In many respects, it is similar to a traditional town square, the open space in the heart of a town where people gather, share thoughts and are entertained.

Because they are open to all, town squares are, by law, considered to be traditional public forums which are given the highest level of First Amendment protection. They are public places that have by long tradition been devoted to speech and assembly. The government has a difficult time limiting speech in such spaces.

A public forum has traditionally been a physical place. But, in the 21st century, we interact in new digital types of public squares. On Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms, we meet virtually, instead of in person, to share and debate ideas. Although we don't throw a Frisbee disc as we do on the campus quad, we toss out our opinions to our virtual communities. What happens then, if public officials try to limit us from access to that online space because they don't like our opinions? Can they do that? Or is that similar to telling a student that he can't express his ideas to his friends while traversing the campus quad?

A recent case is winding its way through the federal courts on this very issue. When U.S. President Donald Trump blocked users who had criticized him on his @realDonaldTrump Twitter account, the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University joined with several blocked individuals in filing a federal lawsuit, claiming that Trump's Twitter page is a digital town square where individuals cannot constitutionally be denied access. "The @realDonaldTrump account is accessible to the public at large without regard to political affiliation or any other limiting criteria," the 2017 lawsuit stated, arguing that the blocking of users violated the First Amendment.

Rebecca Buckwalter-Poza, a writer, had replied to one of the president's tweets in 2017, "To be fair you didn't win the WH: Russia won it for you," she tweeted. Soon thereafter, she discovered she had been blocked from the @realDonaldTrump account.

Philip Cohen, a sociology professor at the University of Maryland, had replied to one of the President's tweets with a tweet showing a photograph of the President with these words superimposed on the photograph: "Corrupt Incompetent Authoritarian. And then there are the policies. Resist." About 15 minutes later, he discovered that he too had been blocked from the @realDonaldTrump account. Buckwalter-Poza, Cohen and several other Twitter users joined with the Knight

Institute in arguing that by blocking them from his Twitter account, the president has engaged in viewpoint-based discrimination that violates their First Amendment rights.

A federal district court judge agreed with them. On May 23, 2018, U.S. District Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald decided that Twitter's interactive space is a designated public forum and the viewpoint-based exclusion of individuals violates their First Amendment rights.

The case didn't end there, though.

The president appealed that decision on June 4, 2018. In a 3-0 decision about a year later, on July 9, 2019, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit affirmed the district court's holding that Trump's practice of blocking critics from his Twitter account violates the First Amendment.

"The First Amendment does not permit a public official who utilizes a social media account for all manner of official purposes to exclude persons from an otherwise-open online dialogue because they expressed views with which the official disagrees," the appellate court held.

The appeals court decision did not end the case though. On Aug. 23, 2019, the president filed for a "rehearing *en banc*," asking the full Second Circuit Court of Appeals to decide that the three-judge appeals court panel got it wrong. That petition for a rehearing is still pending, six months after it was filed.

Lest you think that the issue of blocking critics online is a partisan one, on the same day that the appeals court decided the *Knight Institute v. Trump* case in favor of the blocked Twitter users, two different Twitter users sued U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez for blocking them from her @AOC Twitter page because of their opposing political views. Dov Hikind, a former Democratic state assemblyman

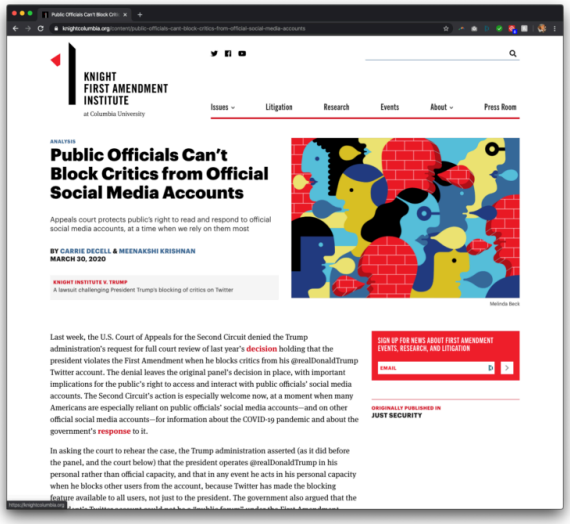
from Brooklyn, New York, frequently criticized Ocasio-Cortez on her Twitter page. "If the courts ruled POTUS can't block people on Twitter, why would @AOC think she can get away with silencing her critics?" he asked on Twitter. The second plaintiff, Joseph Saladino, a YouTube personality known as "Joey Salads," who was also blocked by Ocasio-Cortez, said his separate lawsuit was a test of whether there is a double standard in the courts for liberals and conservatives.

Shortly after the two federal lawsuits against Representative Ocasio-Cortez were filed, she apologized, settling at least one of the cases. "In retrospect, it was wrong and improper and does not reflect the values I cherish," she said in a statement about her settlement with Hikind. "I sincerely apologize for blocking Mr. Hikind."

Turning back to campus, then, we already know that students cannot be stopped from speaking on the quad or from posting club notices on campus bulletin boards that are open to all. So, can a university president or other college administrator remove comments or block users on his or her social media site because those users criticized university policies or decisions? The *Knight Institute v. Trump* case seems to indicate that, at least for an administrator at a public university, the answer to that question is a resounding no.

Carolyn Schurr Levin is a media and First Amendment attorney affiliated with the New York City Law firm of Miller Korzenik Sommers Rayman LLP. She was the vice president and general counsel of Newsday, vice president and general counsel of Ziff Davis Media, and media law adviser for the School of Journalism at Stony Brook University. She has taught media law at Baruch College, Stony Brook University, Long Island University, and Pace University. From 2010-2019, she was the faculty adviser for the *Pioneer*, the student newspaper at Long Island University, during which time the *Pioneer* won 28 awards.

Carolyn Levin



RELATED STORY:

"Public Officials Can't Block Critics from Official Social Media Accounts"

March 30, 2020 / College Media / First Amendment, public forum, town square, trump, Twitter, twitter blocked

College Media Review
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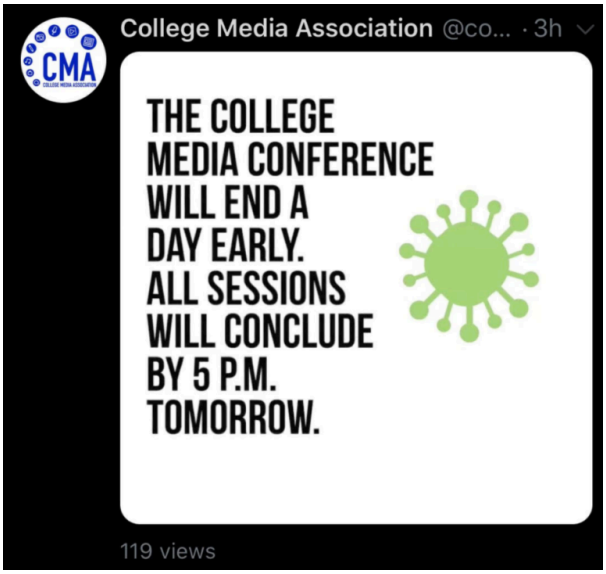
Shoot-out participants continue despite COVID-19

11 photojournalists document city in crisis

Everything was pretty much ready to go for this spring's Shoot-out in New York City. Then, as with so many other things, along came COVID-19 and Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York issued a ban on meetings of more than 500 people.

"The spread of this coronavirus is not going to stop on its own, and we know that mass gatherings have been hotspots for the virus to infect large numbers of people quickly," Cuomo said.

Under the guidance announced by Cuomo, most gatherings of more than 500 people were banned, including the College Media Association conference.



"Mr. Cuomo's decision to limit gatherings of more than 500 people was an especially heavy blow to the theater industry, a crown jewel of New York City's tourist trade. Last season, the industry drew 14.8 million patrons and grossed $1.8 billion," according to an article in *The New York Times* March 12.

Quickly, the conference evolved and Saturday sessions, including the critique of the Photo Shoot-out led by Jack Zibluck, were moved to Friday. Otherwise, it continued as normal with 11 participants.

"In retrospect, the CMA convention was a crucible and an example of our new, changing, and unstable reality," said Zibluck. "Our students adjusted. Our Shoot-out project, which morphed from 'Postcards from NYC' to 'the only story that mattered' went well. We had 14 participants [in the closing critique], double the participation of most other sessions, and we had the usual divisions between artistic expression and journalistic work. We had a really good discussion. The winners caught the sense of isolation. The subjects were masked. And alone. In the most populous city in the country.
Sometimes a visual expression says more than anything I can describe verbally.

SECOND PLACE by Saugat K. Shrestha, University of Louisiana Monroe (Christopher Mapp, adviser) shrestsk@warhawks.ulm.edu;
Subways are getting emptier. A man sits inside an almost empty train on Thursday at noon. The virus has a significant effect upon Newyork city traffic. "People are avoiding trains and subways, and they are taking other alternatives to go their work," said the passenger on a Subway to Brooklyn.

Alicia Otto, a photographer from Missouri Western University said, at first, "It was quite an experience, one that I was looking forward to very much."

However, clearly it was not the ideal time to be photographing on the streets of New York.

"... I sought out people who appeared as if they would welcome my contact," Otto, who goes to school with about 5,000 other students, said. "I will add here that I had an adverse experience with a local New Yorker on their way to work that week. I was verbally 'dressed-down' for not walking quickly enough on the sidewalk because it was commuting time! Also, the last time I was in New York and taking photos, I was yelled at by a homeless person whose picture I wasn't even taking. That being said, I was a little hesitant to seek out locals that didn't look like they really wanted me to approach them."

Ah, New York.

"So, despite it all, the students really did the job," Zibluck said.

THIRD PLACE by Prajal Prasai of the University of Louisiana (Monroe) (Christopher Mapp, adviser) Unafraid: Tyler is an Uptown New York resident who works for Comedy Club. Despite the dwindling number of tourists, he says," The business is good for us as the Broadway is closed. Tyler feels prepared in case there is a city-wide lockdown. He has savings and has grocery stocked to last him for a few months. As a result, he does not feel scared during this COVID-19 pandemic.

FIRST PLACE and CLASS FAVORITE TIE: Katherine Hui of Rice University (Kelley Callaway, adviser)

SECOND PLACE: Saugat K. Shrestha, University of Louisiana Monroe (Christopher Mapp, adviser)

THIRD PLACE: Prajal Prasai of the University of Louisiana (Monroe) (Christopher Mapp, adviser)

CLASS FAVORITE TIE: Michael Pieper, Delta College (Crystal McMorris, adviser)

CLASS FAVORITE TIE
Michael Pieper, Delta College (Crystal McMorris)
MichaelPieper@Delta.edu
“New York City workers stay cautious as America slowly shuts down around them”.
Armed with masks, workers around The Big Apple brave the public while the threat of COVID-19 remains imminent on March 12th, 2020. More than 46 states have reported cases of the widespread of virus known as COVID-19 or “Coronavirus”, making it one of the biggest concerns in America this spring. Michael Pieper, March 12th, 2020.

ON-SITE COORDINATOR: Jack Zibulck, University of Tennessee (Chattanooga)

JUDGES: Abigail Gibbs, Danielle Veenstra, Deanne Brown, Don Green, Eric Thomas, Ethan Hyman, Gina Claus, Greg Cooper, Griff Singer, Jane Blystone, Jeff Grimm, Jessica Christian, JG Domke, Jill Chittum, Jim McNay, John Beale, Judy Babb, Kaelin Mendez, Kelly Glasscock, Kim McCarthy, Larry Steinmetz, Laura Ivie, Laurie Hansen, Makena Busch, Margaret Sorrows, Matt Stamey, Mitch Ziegler, Nicole Gravlin, Pat Gathright, Pooja Pasupula, Randy Stano, Richard Schultz, Ryan Welch, Sam Oldenburg, Sergio Luis Yanes, Sharin Chymley, Steven Dearinger, Tom Winski

ALL THE IMAGES:

CMA NYC 2020

April 4, 2020 / College Media / college media, college news, coronovirus, covid-19, news, pandemic, photography, photojournalism

College Media Review
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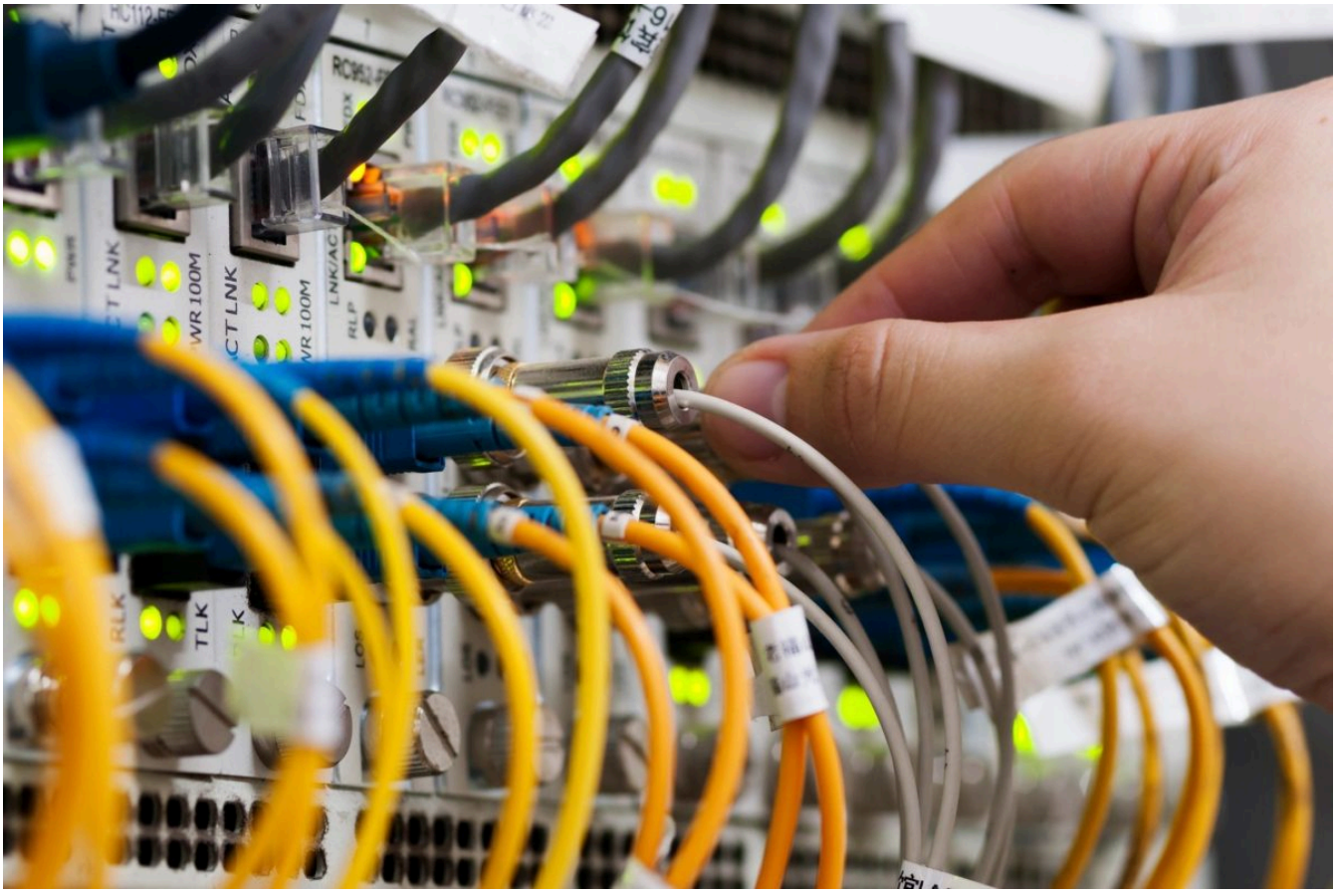
College media adapt to online only formats



Adjustments from COVID-19 may mark permanent changes for student newspapers

By Angel Trinh

While universities across the country have suspended in-person classes to limit the spread of COVID-19, the future for student newspapers remains unknown because being online-only until physical classes resume could create long-term changes.

More than 600 universities responded to a survey conducted by the American Association for Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers to gauge the changes institutions are making or considering in response to COVID-19. According to the press release published April 2, 81% of institutions have moved completely online for the rest of the spring term. Of the universities that have moved online, 23% have decided to keep classes online for the summer and 38% are considering doing so.

Student publications have had to quickly adapt to producing web-only content, and some may not return to printing once classes begin again.

College Media Association Treasurer Steven Chappell said the number of student newspapers that decide to move online-only increases each fall, and he thinks he'll see a larger number make that decision this year than any previous.

"There are some publications that have been looking at this for a long time," Chappell said. "This will probably be the exacerbating event that pushes them over the line and forces them to take the plunge into an online-only universe."

Funding concerns

Without print newspapers for the rest of the semester, publications may be losing crucial advertising revenue. Others may lose advertisers permanently.

Jim Rodenbush, adviser for Indiana Daily Student at Indiana University, said IDS has lost money from advertisements but hopes that the relationships with the advertisers are strong enough to continue once printing resumes.

“The biggest concern, I suppose, is what is this going to look like when we’re on the so-called other side of it?” Rodenbush said. “A lot of the Bloomington community and advertisers that we have relationships with are restaurants and small businesses, and there is no guarantee for a complete recovery for some of these places.”

Student newspapers that are more reliant on print revenue are more likely to stop printing, Chappell said. Student newspapers are either part of an academic program or part of student affairs, often funded by student fees. The newspapers on the academic side tend to have better support and are more stable than the latter because they are partly funded by tuition money.

Chappell is the adviser of the Northwest Missourian at Northwest Missouri State University. Most of its advertisers have agreed to move their ads online or reserve printing in the fall. Chappell said that means losing revenue in the future, but he doesn’t know to what extent that may be.

“The businesses that tend to advertise with the Missourian heavily are those kinds of business that may not survive this if it lasts a long time,” Chappell said. “If the economy tanks, state tax revenues are going to go down, and the first thing the state of Missouri cuts every time their tax revenues go down is education. … That could definitely impact us as well, so we could see lost funding on two fronts.”

What does this mean for printing in the future?

Tammy Merrett, adviser for *The Alestle* at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, said she is 99% certain the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs will force her to publish the newspaper completely online, because he’s been trying to do it for years.

In the past, Merrett has been able to justify printing because it generates the most revenue. Not printing would eliminate more revenue than it would save in print costs. However, she doesn’t know if printing will still be the main revenue generator once classes resume.

“The only way we would know is trying to go back to print and seeing what happens with revenue,” Merrett said. “But that’s kind of what’s hard to pin down, so, after this, we may get to a point where print does not generate as much revenue as or more revenue than what we’re paying out of printing costs, and if it’s at that point, then I would have no choice as the fiscal officer but to say, ‘you know, it’s not cost effective anymore to print.’”

Merrett said she hopes this doesn’t happen, but she tends to prepare for the worst case scenario so she can be pleasantly surprised. However, seeing what’s going on in the professional world keeps her expectations low.

Many professional papers, such as *The Des Moines Register*, are laying off reporters. Some, such as *The Tampa Tribune*, have stopped printing entirely until the pandemic ends. Others, such as two newspapers in South Dakota, have shut down completely.

Chappell said he doesn’t know if student newspapers will follow the professional trend.

“Historically , college newspapers mirror what happens to professional newspapers,” Chappell said. “We’re just a few years behind because it takes forever to make change at the academic level.”

Developing a Digital-First Mindset

In some ways, the COVID-19 pandemic has strengthened students’ ability to produce content for their newspapers. Many have had to write stories remotely while adjusting to online classes for the first time. Although there have been challenges in getting interviews and staying motivated, many advisers are proud of how their students have handled it.

The Torch at Valparaiso University has been working on converging the newspaper with its TV and radio stations since January in an effort to give students experience with a bit of everything and make them more mobile. Publishing online-only has helped them make this change, adviser Paul Oren said.

“It’s kind of force-feeding it,” Oren said.

Oren wanted to focus on their online content because his students often didn’t like to produce content that wasn’t going to be printed in the weekly newspaper. He said they would treat it like a punishment. Now that they can only publish content online, he hopes they are learning how valuable the website is.

Oren also wants his students to promote their stories more on social media. He said it takes time to get used to because now they are competing with everything online for page views, whereas *The Torch* was the only newspaper on and around campus.

“Our students are learning how to be their own self-promoters on social media, and that’s a great skill to have,” Oren said.

Students on the *University Times* staff at California State University, Los Angeles also prioritized the print newspaper over updating online content. When Julie Patel Liss became the faculty adviser two semesters ago, she had the goal to have her students develop a digital-first mindset.

Patel Liss said being forced to go online-only has helped the students make that shift because they no longer have to worry about the print edition. Her students cover breaking news well, and she hopes they’ll retain those skills.

“The fact that they’ve been able to consistently get stuff up within hours, or in most cases within minutes, I think at that point kind of shows them that they can definitely do it,” Patel Liss said. “What I’m hoping that comes of this is that … when it comes time for print, they already have a whole base of stories. So then they don’t need to worry so much about print because the content will be there.”

Final Thoughts

Student newspapers are adapting to unprecedented circumstances. They are strengthening their communication skills and learning from this experience.

“There’s no blueprint for this,” Oren said.

Merrett said she hopes her students can use this situation to further build a positive perception of *The Alestle* because SIUE hasn't provided clear communication in its updates. She told her students to take the opportunity to be a central resource of information for the community.

"I think a lot of student publications are doing just that," Merrett said. "They're doing lots of good work, and they are stepping into that void where universities are not communicating well. ... No matter how many awards are won by the student publications, there's still a perception that they're students 'playing journalism.' It's a serious endeavor, and people need to be more aware of that. University administrations also need to be more aware of that and hopefully will take positive steps to encourage that rather than be threatened by that."

Angel Trinh is a Multimedia Journalism Major and a Writing Minor at Northwest Missouri State University.

April 14, 2020 / College Media Review /

Angel Trinh

College Media Review
Journal of the College Media Association

Top tips for launching a college media research project

Balancing Act: Launching a research program requires give-and-take

By **Carol Terracina Hartman**

The description in the NYC09 program for a faculty adviser session appeared pretty straightforward: "Academic Research: Launching a Program." It drew a packed room.

Research Director Vince Filak, UW-Oshkosh Professor and then-adviser of *The Advance-Titan*, led the session, and he opened by suggesting looking at one's own campus media newsroom to start.

The choice begins with deciding whether to pursue inductive vs. deductive research:

Start with a problem in the newsroom and translate to a trend and find appropriate theory, such as social learning theory. Or, start with a theory, such as framing, and develop a measure, "How do we cover X?" with women in sports, climate change, crime, mental health, or other news topics as possible substitutes for 'X.'

"Pick your passion," he said, suggesting future researchers track ideas on a daily basis. "Look for low-hanging fruit!"

The Nordin Paper Award competition deadline approached – July 1 – with top papers selected for presentation at AEJMC's Council of Advocates session, the fall national CMA conference, and submitted for publication in *College Media Review*.

The reaction was unexpected, to say the least.

The room divided nearly into two, much like Moses' parting of the Red Sea: those who were interested in research and those who found it impossible.

“How can I do research when I have to teach, grade, advise the paper and then take a fellowship or internship during the summer to keep my skills up?” one adviser said. “When exactly am I supposed to do all this?”

Another adviser agreed, offering a different reason.

“What good does this do my students? I have to freelance all summer to keep contacts and make sure I know what’s happening in newsrooms?” she said.

Others said launching a research program would require a give-and-take.

“To even start research, you have to do research – a proposal, lit review, IRB. And then it might not be approved. You might not get release [time] or funding,” he said. “And then there’s no credit for that on your vitae.”

To respond to these and a variety of other concerns, the following tips might prove useful for launching a program of research on campus media:

- Look for that fruit! What do you see: any trends in coverage or usage? Are events being covered similarly in your region or are you finding coverage quite divergent, making you question how audience demographics could be so different? Is your program convergent but others in your system or state more so or less so? Be observant and question everything.
- Research before you go. Conduct a literature review to see who has done what and when; this step helps refine the topic and choose definitions. Google Scholar can help refine key words and search terms, likely authors who might come before you, and possible incidents driving research; then head to EBSCO Host to search documents. If your institution doesn’t have the subscriptions needed, then searching by author on ResearchGate or Academia.edu might help.
- While reviewing the literature, assess these prior works for their methods. Do you have a case study? Is qualitative the best option? Or do you want to count occurrences through a quantitative analysis of frequency.
- Do not reinvent tools: check scales or measures you might be able to adapt – whether an interview protocol, a content analysis protocol, a survey instrument, or more.

- Find a partner. View it as strengths of weak ties: Your strengths should shore up each other's weaknesses.
- Collect lots of data. Ideally, a dataset should yield several papers.
- Target conferences and journals, such as CMA's Council of Advocates session at AEJMC in August or AEJMC's Journalism and Mass Communication Educator; check submission deadlines and set group deadlines. Read prior conference proceedings and publications. Ask an editor if s/he would preview an abstract.
- Read good writers. Reading CMA's peer-reviewed journal, *College Media Review*, is a solid strategy to reviewing style and topics of recent campus media research.
- Keep the pipeline flowing: while one partner is designing, one should write literature review; one collects data, another prepares data analysis; one is revising, one is sending abstracts.
- Hit your deadline! Submit, revise, and celebrate. Set a new plan.

Maintaining a profile on clearinghouses such as ResearchGate and Academia.edu and setting alerts on keywords also helps you stay current on your research topics and current on who is doing what and publishing where. Announcements for special collections or sections also would appear in these alerts.

For specific information on opportunities to submit research within CMA, attend the Research Sessions at CMA's regional and national conferences or contact CMA Research Director Elizabeth Smith, Pepperdine University.

April 28, 2020 / College Media Review /

College Media Review
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Research (Vol. 57): Errors, Requests, Apologies...

A case study of 50 years of corrections in a college newspaper

By **Alyssa Appelman,** *Northern Kentucky University*
and **Kirstie Hettinga,** *California Lutheran University*

Abstract: Corrections increase transparency and credibility, but college newspapers rarely publish them. This study explores trends in college newspaper corrections. In particular, it analyzes 50 years of corrections at a sample college newspaper and its website. Through thematic analysis (*N* = 95 corrections), it discusses changes in correction style and content over time. It explores the struggles of college newspapers, as well as the influence of professional news outlets. In particular, the authors identified a shift from early "requests for corrections" to more "modern" corrections that included labels and apologies. It also finds a strong influence of the student editor, who occasionally published specific calls for transparency and accuracy. As student newspapers have significant staff turnover, this study recommends that messages about corrections and accuracy be shared by student media's consistent forces: relevant classes, publication handbooks, and—perhaps most importantly—faculty advisers.

Keywords: Corrections, Accuracy, Transparency, Classes, Handbooks, Advisers

Method: Thematic Analysis

Corrections are a critical mechanism for news organizations to build transparency. When journalists make mistakes, the argument goes, then they should publish a correction, clarification or retraction—some indication that a mistake was made while providing the accurate information for the readers. Media researchers (e.g., Nemeth and Sanders 2009) and practitioners (e.g., McBride 2019) have noted that corrections foster higher perceptions of credibility.

Despite the valuable role of corrections, their history is a little spotty. They have not always been seen as a positive thing; for example, they were not truly standardized

by *The New York Times* until the early 1970s (Silverman 2007). Corrections are arguably necessary for news media to be truly ethical, but, as noted by LaRocque (2005), it is not something many news organizations are fond of doing. This seems to be particularly true with student journalists.

Corrections are rare in college student newspapers (e.g., Hettinga, Clark, and Appelman 2016). Of course, lack of corrections does not mean lack of errors. Mistakes often go uncorrected, particularly online (Maier 2007). Despite the likelihood of errors, student media corrections—and related research—are relatively limited.

This study seeks to fill that gap by examining college media corrections. In particular, it analyzes 50 years of corrections at a sample college newspaper and its website. Through thematic analysis, it discusses shifts in correction style and content over time. It explores the struggles of college newspapers, as well as the influence of professional news outlets. In doing so, it suggests ways for college newspapers to enhance accuracy and credibility.

Literature Review

History and Role of College Student Newspapers: Various student newspapers claim to be the oldest in America, with varying levels of credence to their claims (College Media Matters 2013). The oldest to claim the designation hails from Dartmouth in 1799, whereas other contenders include *The Cornell Daily Sun*, *The Harvard Crimson*, and *The Miami*. The "youngest" newspaper with the "oldest" claim of publishing was founded in 1878, indicating a nearly 90-year span of contention. Regardless of age, student newspapers have long served as an educational opportunity for students to hone their journalistic craft. According to Carlson (2014), a 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index survey of 30,000 Americans found a relationship between this type of work ("where students were able to apply their classroom knowledge") and later career and job engagement.

The student newsroom is one such activity in which students can apply their classroom learning to a more "real-life" situation; however, they range in their

degree of similarity to professional publications. Some college publications produce content daily online and multiple days each week in print, whereas others print only weekly or monthly. Some are fully converged newsrooms—in which traditionally siloed platforms of broadcast, print, and online come together—whereas others are producing these types of content separately. Kopenhaver (2014) noted that nearly 20 college newspapers in the United States have annual budgets as big as $750,000 to more than $1 million, while other student publications operate on shoestrings. Some rely on student fees (Grasgreen 2013) or curricular funding, and others are completely financially independent. Others rely on curricular, or lab, models in which the publications are classroom work products. Despite such differences, student publications have much in common, as well, particularly in terms of their overall purpose. Kopenhaver (2014) wrote:

Student media throughout history have challenged authority, reported the truth about their campus communities, ensured an accurate portrayal of facts, and sought to provide the public with information they need. And—importantly—they have served as the foundation for the journalists of the future to train, practice and perfect their craft.

Kopenhaver (2014) noted that since the beginning "college student media have attempted to mirror their professional counterparts" (para. 1). One way in which college media outlets mirror professional ones is in this quest for the "accurate portrayal of facts." That means that media outlets need to address inaccuracies when they inevitably occur.

Corrections and Accuracy

College student journalists, like professional journalists, make mistakes, and this could occur for any number of reasons. It could be that, as argued by Gilmore (2013), the inexperience of student journalists contributes to error. It also could be that the nature of their employment—often voluntary—makes them less attentive to details. It could be that their transitory nature on campus makes them unaware of the history of the community, or it could be that, as the saying goes, to "err is human."

In any case, journalists have an existing remedy to these inevitable situations: corrections. Corrections are a small way for newspapers to demonstrate their commitment to accuracy to their readers. Kelly McBride, senior vice president of Poynter and Craig Newmark Journalism Ethics Chair, recently wrote, "In my experience there's a direct correlation between journalistic quality and the amount of time and energy a news organization spends on corrections" (2019, para. 15).

Corrections are notes written by editors to amend the record when a mistake is made. Despite journalistic dedication to accuracy, mistakes in a high-speed news environment do happen. In a study of news accuracy, nearly two-thirds of news and feature articles had errors according to sources (Meyer 2004 and Maier 2005), sources reported errors in 61% of local news and feature stories. LaRocque (2005), however, noted that many news organizations are not fond of running corrections, often because of unintended consequences: "One of the unhappy truths of running corrections, though, is that the correction can sometimes attract more attention than the original error" (31).

Craig Silverman wrote the book on corrections, "Regret the Error," and noted the practice's history. He attributed the "first formal corrections policy" to *Publick Occurences* in 1690 and noted that modern corrections policies emerged in the 1970s, including the convention of correction "anchoring," where corrections are run in the same place in each issue. Since then, additional changes in professional newsroom structures led to changes and concerns regarding corrections. Researchers have been concerned with the possibility of increased errors in the absence of copy desks (Russial 1998) and with more consolidated copy desk structures (Martin and Martins 2018), though the actual impact of such digital changes are mixed. Additionally, Maier (2007) found that online mistakes are often not explicitly corrected, but rather just changed. This unacknowledged changing—or "scrubbing"—has been called out as a problematic, unethical practice (e.g., Cornish 2010; Silverman 2007).

Changes in policies have been shown to be effective. Nemeth and Sanders (2009), for example, found that a decision to revamp the corrections process at *The New York Times* led to *The Times* publishing more corrections, which "may have improved that newspaper's reputation for fairness and accountability" (100) and that the increase

in corrections may enhance reader relations. In essence, running corrections when necessary is considered a marker of credibility. Despite their connection to credibility, corrections are relatively rare in college newspapers. In one of the few related studies, college newspaper websites were found to be similar to professional publications in terms of their impact, objectivity, and type (Hettinga, Clark, and Appelman 2016). Corrections were only found in a bit more than 50% of the college newspapers examined; however, they were more likely to be found at ones that were more professional in terms of their publication frequency and financial independence. Some research suggests that college newspapers print corrections only in severe situations. Johnson (2013), for example, reported that "viral" stories and the potential speed of misinformation demands swift corrections, citing a college newspaper that incorrectly reported the number of people killed by a tornado. Why does this happen? This study explores one possible explanation for the lack of corrections in college newspapers—the problem of turnover.

The Problem of Turnover

High turnover at college newspapers is the norm; a student might work on a college newspaper for a few years, or even just for a semester or two. In a long-form investigation of corruption, a faculty mentor noted, "With student journalists, the turnover is unbelievable," (Koros 2015, para. 7). Ascarelli, Huckins, and Collopy (2013) described this as one of the unique struggles of college newspapers. This can have multiple implications, including constant hiring and training. This project argues that turnover also specifically affects corrections, or the lack thereof. Colleges have several elements in place that can help maintain consistency despite turnover, all of which could potentially help when teaching accuracy and corrections. However, as seen below, it remains unclear how effective they are in achieving this goal.

Program Coursework. One thread of consistency over time could be classes, which could teach students about accuracy and corrections. In practice, however, these issues and practices are not often taught in meaningful ways. Copy editing classes, which would, ostensibly, be the core place to discuss this practice, are already being asked to teach multiple skills and theories; the switch from print to digital has

already increased the number of topics instructors are expected to cover. Hettinga (2016a) looked at 10 popular journalism textbooks and found that the majority dedicated little space to defining and discussing accuracy. Additionally, not all students who work on college newspapers are journalism majors, so teaching this in classes, though useful, might not solve the problem.

Publication Handbooks. Another area for stability might be found in student newspaper handbooks or policy manuals. Kanigel (2011) described the student newsroom manual as a critical tool for assimilating student journalists into the newsroom: "A good staff manual can: Give the paper a foundation and sense of continuity, even in the face of high turnover" (16). In "The Student Newspaper Survival Guide" a former student media adviser echoed that sentiment, saying that "A handbook serves as a point of reference for continual newsroom policies" (16).

This is also in line with the practices of professional organizations, which commonly have established norms and standards that are codified in published style guides, handbooks, and codes of ethics. However, student newspaper policy manuals and handbooks often lack specifics regarding corrections; in other words, "corrections policies were common, but ranged in their effectiveness" (Hettinga 2016b, 9). That study—titled "Student newspaper manuals need clarification on correction practices"—found that student newspaper handbooks noted the need for corrections, but often lacked guidance, as "there is no information about what actually warrants a correction, or how to format the correction" (15). Additionally, as in professional newsrooms, it's unclear whether students follow the handbooks, so, even if these guides are updated, they might not have the desired effect.

Faculty Advisers. The faculty adviser can also be a thread of consistency for student publications. Advisers tend to stay with college papers for many years. In a survey of college media advisers (N = 379), Kopenhaver (2015) found that while the norm used to be three or more years as adviser, that's no longer the case. She found that more than 40% reported working as an adviser for more than 15 years; one-third had been working with their current publication for 5-9 years, almost 25% for 15 or more years, and 14% for 20 or more years (Kopenhaver 2015). In other words, "Advising has become a career path, one in which longevity is a hallmark." Thus, the adviser can be seen as a source of consistency for an inconsistent staff. As discussed by

Hettinga (2018), advisers do teach accuracy in college newsrooms, though this is often at a more practical, rather than theoretical level.

With the somewhat limited body of research on corrections in college newspapers, the purpose of this study is to explore corrections in one student newspaper over time. Does it publish corrections? Was that always the case? And, if changes have occurred, are they related to one of the safeguards against the problem of turnover? This leads to the study's core question: How did the style and content of corrections change in a college newspaper over its 50-year history?

Method

Data Collection: This study analyzed a weekly student newspaper at small, private, liberal arts university as a case study.[1] This newspaper was chosen because of its accessibility and because of its history; it includes corrections before and after the 1970s, which, as noted by Silverman (2007) marked the professional shift in correction style.

The print edition's digital archives were available for issues between 1961 and 2010, and the publication's website has searchable archives beginning in 2013; there was a gap in accessible archives during this online transition. Additionally, there were a few missing issues, including all volumes from 1976 to 1983. To find corrections in the sample—through the digital archives before 2010 and the website after 2013—the researchers conducted keyword searches for "correction," "correct," "error," and "editor's note." In the data collection process, they observed that the newspaper sometimes used related terms to address such issues, so they searched the archives again to include the terms "for the record" and "mistake."

Though the archives were available from 1961, no search results appeared using the keywords until 1968. Upon closer examination, the researchers saw that the search results revealed a few items that were announcements, more than corrections (e.g., a text box labeled "For the record" in 1993: "Security listings were not available from the Student Affairs office this week"), so those were removed from analysis. Additionally, the results revealed three specific calls for accuracy, which were not

corrections per se, but were letters from editors and staff discussing the newspaper's correction policies and goals.

In all, the researchers identified and analyzed corrections (N = 95) and calls for accuracy (N = 3) in 50 years of the sample newspaper (from 1968 to 2019). Of the corrections, 77 were from the print edition's digital archives, and 18 were on the newspaper's website. These include corrections of objective errors in fact (e.g., from 1991: "Last week's baseball statistics were for the top eight in batting average and not a list of the starting players"), as well as notes about missing information (e.g., from 1987: "Inadvertantly [sic], last week's poll did not include the statement that 1 is strongly agree, 3 is no opinion, and 5 is strongly disagree."). They include minor issues (e.g., from 2005: "Article in Nov. 8 issue stated waterpolo is in its 2nd season. It is in its 3rd."), as well as larger problems (e.g., from 2018: "The article 'CLU's new 2018-2019 Senate director elected' was removed from the website because of falsified information."). Generally speaking, the majority of infractions could be classified as minor—name errors, title errors, failure to include bylines, etc. The corrections appeared in various pages and sections of the newspaper and, later, its website.

Case Study and Thematic Analysis

The researchers conducted a thematic analysis of these corrections to explore the evolution of corrections practices. As this research is limited to the archive of one student newspaper, it can best be described as a case study. In his defense of the method, Flyvbjerg (2006) noted the importance of case studies as context-dependent sources of knowledge (221) and ends with a call for more case studies in the social sciences (242).

After collecting the data through the archives, the researchers conducted multiple close readings (Braun and Clarke 2013) of the corrections. They noted commonalities and patterns, in terms of the type and style of corrections. They also noted historical trends, including, for example, shifts in titles (from "Correction" to "For the Record") and tone (from matter-of-fact to apologetic), which were then compared and analyzed.

Findings

Thematic analysis revealed significant shifts in correction style and content over time. The researchers saw the emergence of themes that mostly reflected the history of corrections, professionally, as well as the specific efforts of the publication's editors.

Early "Requests for Corrections"

The earliest identified correction would not resonate with the modern reader as a correction. As noted, the first correction found through the archive was published in 1968. It was not labeled as a correction and specifically pointed out an error in a new campus publication, not the paper itself. The next correction, published in 1969, might be more identifiable by today's standards; it was labeled as a correction and addressed a factual, byline error. However, following that correction, the authors identified an era of "requests for corrections." These were not modern corrections, but instead signed letters to the publication that identify a mistake and request a correction; sort of like letters to the editor, but without any responses. No correction or editor responses were attached to these requests. One such example from 1969 reads:

REQUEST FOR CORRECTION: Typographical (?) error, page 3 of the January 17 ECHO. Article entitled "A Welcome Change" "It seems that the only practical solution lies in properly controlled use of new scientific knowledge—preferably apolitical control." (Not—"preferably a political control") This error completely changes the viewpoint of the article, which is my reason for requesting a correction. Thank you, Gerald S. Rea.

Such requests culminated in 1985 with a lengthy letter labeled "Angry request for precise information." This signed request seeking transparency or clarification is shown in Figure 1.

Angry request for precise information

Dear Editor,

I am writing to you in reply to your article on page 1 of your October 30th issue.

Most of the article was good and informative but one part made me angry. Not because of what was stated, but because of what wasn't stated. In one paragraph it reads "39 out of 40 black students enrolld receive financial aid." First of all, where did you get your statistics from? 39 out of 40?! If this is so then why is it that I found more than one black person not on any kind of financial aid. Was it 40 black students that applied for financial aid and 39 received it? Or was it out of the 40 black students attending CLC/U 39 are receiving financial aid? Another question is, why did you not say out of how many Asian students? You just put 18 receive some form of financial aid, 18 out of how many? What about the Latin-Americans, or any other minorities that go here? Why are Blacks the only thoroughly discussed minorities? I and many other students found this article demeaning, inconsistent, and just plain untrue! There were a lot of upset people over this article. Here are just a few of the comments I heard:

"Why was it even put in the article?"

"What was the purpose of this stating these figures in the newspaper?"

"Are they implying that you're all poor?"

In conclusion I would like to say how disappointed I am with your article. I would like a correction made and more information given.

Actually, I don't see where how much financial aid people get is the publics' business. I and the others would like to see some proof though, of your information.

I suppose I should address this to the author of the article instead of the Editor.

Your reply is eagerly anticipated.

Sincerely,
Tina Lawrence
November 1, 1985

Thank you

Dear Editor,

I'd like to take this time to thank seniors for their participation in Senior Portraits last week.

Also, thank you for your patience and understanding during the many delays. The workers also need to be thanked for their time: Cindy Lincoln, Teresa Burgoyne, Cath Stringer, Jennifer Ramsdell, Kelly McGuire and Leonora Perri. Thanks again to all involved.

Sincerely,
Evelyn Rudek
Student Publications Commissioner

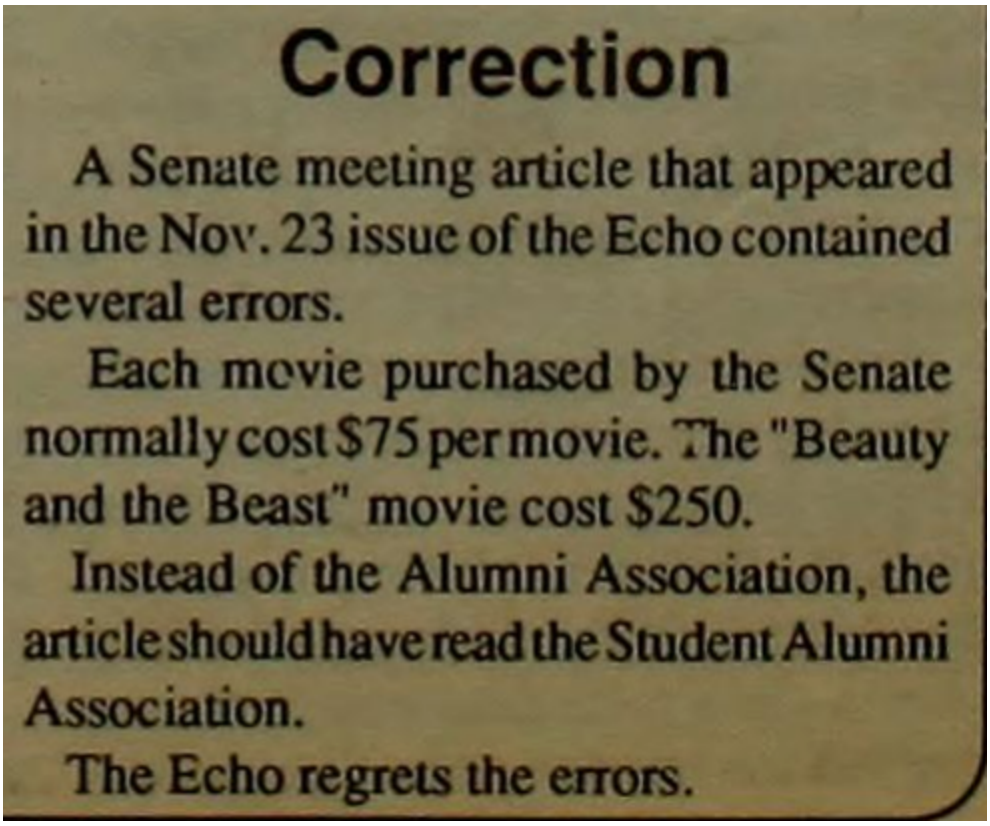
Figure 1: A 1985 "request for correction."

"Modern" Corrections: Labels and Apologies

Two other requests for corrections—noted in 1969 and 1972—looked slightly more like modern-day newspaper corrections. The requests in 1969 and 1972 address a math problem and a name error, respectively. Notably, these more modern

corrections appear around 1970, which is right around the time professional publications began standardizing their corrections practices (Silverman 2007). A more modern style of correction does not reappear again until 1986. Here, the authors began to see more labeling of corrections—either as "Correction" or "For the Record"—but it is often unclear in which article the original error actually appeared.

Though corrections continue to appear after 1987, they vary in style and take their most significant jump in 1991. At this point, more modern conventions such as labeling and identifying the article in which the error appeared emerged. The first "apology" appeared in 1992, and the corrections started regularly including dates and headlines for the initial error in 1993. Figure 2 shows a "modern" correction from this era.



Correction

A Senate meeting article that appeared in the Nov. 23 issue of the Echo contained several errors.

Each movie purchased by the Senate normally cost $75 per movie. The "Beauty and the Beast" movie cost $250.

Instead of the Alumni Association, the article should have read the Student Alumni Association.

The Echo regrets the errors.

Figure 2: A 1992 "modern" correction.

This style remained relatively consistent until the newspaper began publishing online in 2011, when the placement began to differ. As with professional publications, the online corrections were appended to articles, rather than in a

separate "Corrections" box. An anchored online page was introduced in 2018, but corrections were still attached to the articles, as well.

The Editors' Influence

In addition to this general trend of increasing consistency, the researchers observed the potential influence of individual editors. As noted, three specific calls for accuracy were found, in 1997, 2005, and 2018. Student newspapers, as discussed, are marked by constant turnover, so these were written by three different editors, representing three completely different staffs.

The note from 1997 ran in every available issue that fall semester. It tells readers the publication's policy of correcting mistakes and provides contact information for readers to report "errors that significantly affect a story." The first issue of that spring semester also included an editorial asking for student, faculty, and administration support, which began with a note about accuracy: "Complaints, direct and by word-of-mouth (but never for publication as a correction or Letter to the Editor), have arisen regarding the quality of [publication]." Four corrections ran during that school year, all anchored in "For the Record" boxes on page 3 of the News section.

The 2005 and 2018 notes were more specific letters from the editors in chief to readers. The 2005 letter included the following:

We are changing some internal things to work on our credibility, but the one that most affects the [publication's] readers is that we are printing corrections. Now that we are doing this, though, we hope that our readers will take advantage of this improvement and let us know when we make mistakes. We want to know if somebody is misquoted, if a name is misspelled and of any other information that was printed incorrectly. So instead of just complaining about [the publication], tell us about it so we can fix it.

Similarly, the 2018 letter included the following:

> Student reporters are in an interesting time to be studying journalism. But the discussion of fake news, pressure to get stories online quickly while remaining accurate and other calls to media only drive us to be more attentive to our work. Journalist Carl Bernstein popularly described reporting as working toward "the best attainable version of the truth." That is what we are doing here at [publication] – the paper is not going to be perfect. You'll likely find grammar errors or other problems, maybe even in this letter. The point is to continue seeking the truth and dispersing it.

Eight corrections ran during the 2005-2006 school year, all anchored in "Corrections" boxes in the Opinion section. Nine corrections ran during the 2018-2019 school year (not all were published before the current research was conducted and thus were not included in the analysis), and those corrections are all dated, anchored on a "Corrections" page, and appended to the articles.

Discussion

Corrections increase transparency and credibility (e.g., Nemeth and Sanders 2009; McBride 2019), but college newspapers rarely publish them (Hettinga, Clark, and Appelman 2016). To address this concern, this study explored trends in college newspaper corrections. In particular, it analyzed 50 years of corrections at a sample college newspaper and its website. Through thematic analysis, it found a strong influence of professional news outlets, as well as of the publication's editors.

First, the study found a strong influence of correction style at professional news outlets. The standardization of corrections seemed to run alongside that of professional counterparts. The student newspaper's era of unstandardized "requests for corrections" became more modern in the 1970s, which is around the time professional publications began standardizing their corrections practices as well (Silverman 2007). The student newspaper saw more labeling, identifying, and apologizing in the early 1990s. Their online correction practices were similar, as well; as with professional publications, the students' corrections were appended to the online articles, rather than in a more anchored spot. This confirms Kopenhaver's (2014) suggestion that "college student media have attempted to mirror their professional counterparts" (para. 1).

Second, researchers found that individual editors may influence the number of corrections published. Three specific calls for accuracy were found, and corrections that followed tended to be fairly standardized in terms of location and style. For this publication during this time frame, editors who made explicit commitments to corrections seemed to be more likely to print corrections during their tenure as editor. The number of corrections from year to year cannot be used as an explicit measure of transparency and accountability, because, as mentioned earlier, the number of corrections is not the same as number of errors. Years with fewer corrections could, indeed, mean years with more unreported errors, but they could also just mean years with fewer errors. It's also difficult to say that the publication sometimes published "a lot" of corrections or sometimes just "a few" because it's unclear what constitutes a "normal" number of corrections.

Additionally, it's unclear from where the push was coming. Editors might have written these letters on their own, but they also might have been encouraged by others. Student newspapers have a turnover problem (Ascarelli, Huckins, and Collopy 2013), as discussed, and there are several elements in place to help maintain consistency, including: program coursework, publication handbooks, and faculty advisers. It could be that such letters committing to accuracy and the publication of corrections were written because teachers, handbooks, or advisers encouraged them to do so. In other words, the push for accuracy could be coming from the editors, but it also could be coming from these other factors.

It does seem, though, that for student news organizations seeking more credibility through a dedication to accuracy and transparency, this is likely a top-down directive. Because of the short tenure and constant turnover, there is the potential for greater inconsistency. Therefore, it may be that faculty advisers need to take a more proactive role in establishing the need for corrections, standardizing policy, and helping students adhere to these professional norms.

Limitations and Future Research

This research looked at only one student publication with a relatively short history, which could be seen as a limitation. However, the sample publication's history is actually well-suited for this analysis; it includes corrections before and after the

1970s, which marked the professional shift in corrections. Also, as noted, case studies do serve a useful purpose for researchers in terms of obtaining context-dependent sources of knowledge (Flyvbjerg 2006, 22). That said, it could be helpful to conduct a future analysis with a different type of student newspaper. College newspapers differ in meaningful ways (e.g., budget, level of independence), so it could be that different models of oversight lead to different correction practices.

In reviewing the findings of the current research, editor notes supporting correction practices seemed to be correlated with the increased frequency of correction publication; however, a case study cannot support causation, nor can it shed light on the motivation behind changes in practice. A future study could explore student journalists' motivations for running corrections, as well as whether the scope of the error affects that motivation.

Despite using multiple search terms, it is possible that not all published corrections were identified and gathered. Further, several years of the publication were missing from the archive, and some issues were lost in the online transition. There were, however, still trends found, even if the sample was incomplete. Additionally, many publications struggled with the online transition, so it would be difficult to find a publication without a similar gap. A future study could use different archival databases to find a more complete sample, which could further develop the trends and themes seen here.

Conclusion

In all, this research suggests that is possible for student newspapers to use corrections in a manner similar to professional publications; it seems to be contingent on the student staff. Through thematic analysis, it finds a shift from early "requests for corrections" to more "modern" corrections that included labels and apologies. It also found a strong influence of student editors, who occasionally published specific calls for transparency and accuracy. As student newspapers have significant turnover, this study recommends that messages about corrections and accuracy be shared by student media's consistent forces: relevant classes, publication handbooks, and—perhaps most importantly—faculty advisers.

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[1] The name of the school and publication were removed for blind review.

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Fighting the Coronavirus “funk”

It’s OK to quit your funk.

By **Carol Terracina Hartman**
Managing Editor for News

As we conduct all the end-of-semester rituals – filing grades, archiving editions, announcing a new slate of editors, hosting our awards banquets, and eventually, clearing off at least one corner of a desk, it’s time to close the chapter on Spring Semester 2020.

Now summer break prep begins: pull out that list of goals from last August and see what was accomplished, what was diverted, what needs reviewing, and what can be tackled over the summer break – research, training, intern development, conference attendance or presentation, tech purchases, check check check.

But wait! That scenario sounds like a past life: Isn’t this what we do when not sheltering at home, teaching remotely, donning masks to go to the market or laundromat, learning how to produce and deliver news in all digital to a terrified readership.

Life is just too uncertain; why pretend everything we knew about life hasn't changed? Isn't it best to just wait and see than try to plan and prepare?

Maybe, just maybe, it's OK to quit your funk.

Nothing about the spring semester wasn't traumatic; even clicking the final 'submit' on sending grades for the last class failed to generate joy for many faculty; instead, it generated uncertainty and trauma: "Did I do enough for them? are they OK? How will they do in the course sequence? I coulda have done more, shoulda tried harder, shoulda developed more resources!"

That right there is reason enough to quit your funk.

Use that leftover trauma coloring the summer session and fall semester with uncertainty to build a contingency plan: stare it in the face. Every geographic region has its Achilles weather heel – hurricane, wildfire, bomb cycle, Polar vortex – and every fall conference, we hear from student staffs how they weathered their particular storm and kept reporting. Some of those extreme weather events have seasons; operations manuals have plans for those seasons.

But whose operations manual includes a shutdown, a pandemic, a contagion? [please, pat yourself on the back if yours does and present at CMA!] Many student media outlets wrestled with administrations, fighting to keep publishing as both academic and student affairs struggled with a clear path forward. Not being together, distractions and obstacles at 'home,' and access all offered additional challenges. Clearly, policy and procedures, with feedback from an advisory board, would help.

So here's a Top Tips List to Quit Your Funk by facing it, acknowledging not only the need for a little debriefing but also acknowledging the possibility of No End in Sight

(at presstime).

- Update the Ops Manual: State policy for operating during a pandemic shutdown. If the manual already addresses emergency conditions, such as extreme weather, differentiate between orders from various entities, such as national, state, local and campus-imposed restrictions.
- Review technology portability: If a staff chooses to go remote, realistically, how possible is it? Develop a survey to review staff needs in terms of bandwidth, devices, and other equipment. Review software compatibility between home systems. If possible, research options for checking out laptops and iPads and detail those procedures.
- Chart the production flow: from start to finish, begin with specific check-in times – not only for progress, but device maintenance check-ins and 'soul' check-ins. Taking time to make sure people are coping and they are not struggling with their is never a bad decision. Develop one for on-campus and for remote production.
- Post a graphic with the production flow on your chosen platform, whether it be Slack or Discord. Make sure everyone knows their role, their time and who to contact with questions. Agree on best contact method [text, Messenger, etc.]
- Prepare for Election 2020 coverage. This election season presents lots of opportunities for in-depth reporting, from new voting machines, mail-in legislation and absentee requests, format of nominating party conventions, candidate debates as well as the issues pertinent to college-age audience (student loans, ACT / SAT requirements, paid athletes, changes to Title IX reporting, and more).
- Update the press kit. If student media isn't convergent, doing so through advertising during a presidential campaign is a smooth way to launch. A campaign contacts an ad rep at the newspaper and, by arrangement, the rep can say, "for 10 % more, we can air your ad on 91.7 WCUP FM."
- Build that Creative Services Agency! While ad clients may request graphic services during a special campaign, such as Homecoming or Graduation, actively seeking graphics clients for every edition can drive revenue. Consider hiring a graphic designer alongside the graphics editor and develop a business plan that first focuses on campaign services. Local candidates often walk in with a business card, planning to order a 2×2 ad. That's the ideal candidate for Creative Services.

Facing the source of “the funk” that might hang around after surviving an unusual and downright nerve-wracking semester might be the perfect balance between taking advantage of some unscheduled time during the summer break and acknowledging the uncertainty of not knowing what teaching or advising is going to look like.

A good first step is registering for the CMA Zoom Happy Hour on May 28, 5 p.m. CST. See you there!

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Journal of the College Media Association

Losing grip: Drafts, Self-Editing and Story Pitching as Exercises in Narrative Humility

Writer-coaching is not a new concept

By **Michael A. Longinow**
Biola University

Admit it. You wish the writing was better in your student-run newspaper or magazine. The problem is bigger than you might think. But the good news is it's not all on you as adviser. It's the students' thing — it has to be. And your students are probably more willing to make their writing better than you expect.

That might be surprising. We think of students of the generation sitting in our undergrad classrooms as post-literate: stuck on their phones, never touching books, baffled by people who turn wood pulp newspaper pages or read slick magazines. A 2019 study based on U.S. Education statistics suggests more than 30 million adults in the U.S. cannot read, let alone write. The National Bureau of Economic Research, in 2008, said children whose parents have low literacy are more likely to have low literacy themselves — and to struggle in school, perhaps dropping out. So what's the answer? Not just us. It's our students. When students help each other figure out how to learn, how to figure out a task like writing, more than just better articles results. Better students, better learners come of it.

Be warned, though: it's complicated. To learn journalistic writing is an exercise in courage. It's confrontation — not merely of the blank screen, or the labyrinth that is English grammar, or the nuances of quoting, paraphrasing and attributing fact or opinion. The real face-off is with self. A writer who wants to get published must give up control of their baby, their creation. They must admit that what they have written, how they connected ideas using words, could be better. It might need to be thrown out entirely in favor of a different direction, a different approach.

That notion isn't just an echo in your classroom or campus newsroom. It's the industry. No writer's work (unless it's their blog or social media posting) ever goes untouched. The best writing, the memorable kind, comes from re-writing. Students get tired of your telling them that, but when the student sitting next to them says it, they listen.

Your task, then, is to get students talking to each other about their writing. In the newsroom, that's known as writer-coaching — not a new concept. But it rose to prominence in the 1990s among journalism educators and professionals when Roy Peter Clark and Donald Fry published "Coaching Writers: Editors and Reporters Working Together." (A second edition came out in 2003). It was common sense: English teachers had been using their methods for decades, calling it peer editing. Truth be told, Clark isn't just the world-famous writer coach at the Poynter Institute. He's a recovering grammar geek with a Ph.D. in medieval literature from Stony Brook. But he has a knack for getting even the most cranky journalists to think about their writing as building blocks: Legos stuck together that can be rearranged.

Clark's coaching ideas grew out of the thinking of Donald Murray, a famous writer coach at the Boston Globe whose "Write to Learn" (eight editions of it) has been part of writing instruction for decades. Clark invokes Murray but also the Jesuit scholar Walter Ong, another literature prof, who made the argument that orality — our tendency to process ideas by means of the spoken word — cannot be separated from literacy. Before we write, we must think.

So Clark tells editors to sit with a writer and zip the lip. Let the writer summarize the story in a sentence or two. If they can't, send them back to do more reporting, to find out what they meant to say in the piece. Clark's argument: when a writer does this (not wasting time on a draft that just wanders around with no point), the end result is better. Murray calls this thinking time "pre-writing," and says it can be done anywhere: in your car, in the bathroom, alone, in a group. It can be done in a campus newsroom.

My adaptation of Clark's suggestions is called "pitching and coaching" — and has nothing to do with baseball. I build a partnership between my writing classes and our university's student newspaper — a daily that relies on freelancers. I require all my article assignments to be pitched to an editor. (They have to show me a PDF of the email.) The pitch has to give a 1-2 sentence summary, it must tell how the piece meets the "so what" test, and who they've already contacted, or will contact for authoritative support on the article's claims.

It got brutal.

“When I would pitch to the editors, I would often get disappointed because most of the time, the editors didn’t see the story the way that I did,” wrote one student in a reflection paper. “I was doing it completely wrong.” Or she’d been beat by the competition. “What I should have done was to check to make sure the story hadn’t been done before I pitched it,” she said. And she learned that if she had a question about the safety of women students at night around campus, she should ask (the chief of campus safety, not a roommate) — flat out, not by hinting at the problem. Nothing she pitched got published; yet she was glad for having learned in the coaching experience.

Another student recalled that when her piece was edited (in real-time on a Google doc), “the story no longer felt mine as they highlighted things for me to take out and wrote down suggestions for what could be done differently.” Her first impulse was to walk away. “I wanted to flat-out reply, ‘No, I will not be taking this out,’” she wrote. But what got her though was changing her thinking. “I got myself into the mentality that editing is a normal part of the process.” She now welcomes edits and suggestions for improving her writing.

And this was all student-to-student. I, as the writing prof and media adviser had no direct role in the writer-coach process. Sure, students got graded on articles in my classes; if they read my comments, some improved. Many ignored my comments. When we as writing faculty or advisers talk about problems in a piece, it’s expected (with a yawn). But when a student editor puts hands on the baby, something else is going on — something better, something lasting. Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, in “Campus Life: Undergraduate Cultures from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present” relies on historical records to show that for generations, life-to-life learning outside the classroom has had a longer staying power in lifelong development than any textbook or class lecture. John Dewey would agree.

Part of my pitching and coaching regimen extends to editing students. I had a class this semester in editing; in it I required each student to take on a freshman writer as their “coachee.” These older students said it opened their eyes — even the working newspaper editors, because they had to think about what their edits were doing, how it felt to the writer. And many, who had never been an editor on a campus publication, said they were unaware how much power there was in the editor-writer

relationship. Just a chat, or an email exchange, could re-craft a piece of writing, making it clearer, smoother, more logical. If done in a way that encouraged the writer, the exchange left both with a sense of having done something profound. They were learning about themselves, not just about words or articles on deadline. And that's ultimately what we're all about.

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COVID19: Telling ‘The story of why’


Gallery View
Bradley Wilson
Ed Trayes
Nicole Bronzan
Linda Shockley
Beth Butler
Recording...
Nicole Bronzan
Mute
Stop Video
Participants
Chat
Share Screen
Polling
Pause/Stop Recording
Q&A
More
End

Using a health equity lens to cover COVID-19 in minority communities

By Lyndsey Brennan
Kent State University

For the media to cover the effect of the coronavirus on minority communities in a way that is just, journalists must frame stories using a health equity lens, said Nicole Bronzan, senior communications officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Bronzan addressed about 60 Dow Jones News Fund interns and their supervisors in a May 27 webinar.

Bronzan, who worked as an editor at *The New York Times* before directing communications for nonprofit organizations, said reporters should apply two major principles when covering these communities:

First, journalists should focus on the reasons situations aren't equitable. "You have to start [the story] with the problem because people don't always know about it," Bronzan said. "But don't stay there. Don't let that be all the story is about."

If journalists are reporting a statistic that says black people are three times more likely to die from COVID-19 than white people, they should dig into the underlying causes—such as access to affordable and stable housing and good jobs with fair pay—that led to that disparity in health.

Bronzan also encouraged journalists to research the history of the communities they're writing about for context. Journalists should consider what systemic injustices impacted that community (for instance, housing discrimination and redlining) and how the effects of those injustices linger today.

"It's not just a story [of how] one community ranked higher than another community. It's the story of why," Bronzan said.

Second, journalists should shift the conversation from problems to solutions. "We need to move away from 'if it bleeds, it leads,'" she said, "and talk about the work being done and the progress being made."

Bronzan said journalists covering the coronavirus pandemic may be tempted to emphasize the problems it has created, but they shouldn't dwell there. "People want to feel like there's hope," she said, and reading about people who are addressing problems and bringing out the best in their communities can generate that hope.

Bronzan recommended a ProPublica article — "Two Coasts. One Virus. How New York Suffered Nearly 10 Times the Number of Deaths as California" — as an example of excellent writing using a health equity lens. It answers the questions 1) Who is

most affected and why? 2) Are their voices being heard? and 3) How can we highlight not just problems but solutions?

Christine Bartruff, a junior in journalism at the University of South Carolina who attended the seminar, said Bronzan helped her understand how factors that seem unrelated to health can have a huge impact on life expectancy.

“It’s so important as journalists to be able to connect those dots,” Bartruff said. “There is a context you can add to any story if you just look hard enough.”

Bronzan encouraged those in editing positions to speak up if a story could be reframed in a more equitable way. She suggested approaching a writer with the attitude that everyone is on the same team. Saying “this is how it came across to me, and I think there’s a better way” will get better results than acting indignant, she said.

“There is a way to say anything you need to say in a civil and also a kind way.”

WATCH the webinar.

Lyndsey Brennan

Lyndsey Brennan is a student in the master's of journalism program at Kent State University in Ohio. Before returning to school, she worked eight years in public and school libraries in the U.S. and Honduras. This summer, she is working as a copy desk intern with the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* by way of the Dow Jones News Fund.

Bradley Wilson / June 16, 2020 / Feature / bronzan, covid-19, health equity, robert wood johnson foundation
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Local media leaders encourage prospective journalists

Community journalism 'never more important' than now

By Megan Wehring
Texas State University

The Pew Research Center continues to report on declining newspaper circulation ("its lowest level since 1940"), revenue ("declined dramatically between 2008 and 2018") and employment ("dropped by nearly half between 2008 and 2018").

But Frank Blethen, in a *Washington Post* column, says, "Local journalism has never been more important or sought after."

And longtime journalist Joyce Dehli calls local journalism "an essential force in our democracy."

Emphasizing the continuing role of local media in American society, a panel of local journalists visited with college students as part of Dow Jones News Fund and Texas Press Association intern training May 27.

Panelists discussed how local journalists need to earn and maintain the public's trust. They must tell all the stories of the community.

Cyndy Slovak Barton

"You also have to show up at events. As people get to see you more and they begin to realize 'Oh, you're just a normal person. You're not this I'm-going-to-get-you kind of journalist,'" Cyndy Slovak-Barton, publisher at Barton Publications, told the group of 10 interns during a virtual training. Barton Publications produces a number of publications in Hays County, Texas, including the *Hays Free Press*.

"We bring them the news from their own backyards, which also promotes a feeling of connectedness and community for local residents," Kara McIntyre, a 2018 graduate of Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas, and now editor of the Alpharetta/Milton edition of Community Impact Newspaper, Community Impact's first market in Georgia, said. "It's hard to care about a community if you have no idea what's happening in it."

Mike Hodges

To provide resources for nearly 500 newspapers, the Texas Press Association, founded in 1880, values giving the public information while maintaining high standards of journalism, said Executive Director Mike Hodges, adding that TPA's main mission is to promote and preserve the future of newspapers in Texas.

The panel also promoted community newspapers as a place for young journalists to start their careers.

Small newspapers allow reporters and interns to gain more hands-on experience because there's a limited staff. Ken Cooke, publisher at the *Fredericksburg Standard-*

Ken Esten Cooke

Radio Post, said journalists have more opportunities at small publications.

"One thing that I like about community papers versus working at a large metro is you get to do a little bit of everything," Cooke said. "You're going to be taking photos, helping with an email newsletter —these days you'll be shooting video and then writing also."

Cooke also said small newspapers cover a wide range of topics for the community.

"We cover a lot of high school sports," Cooke said. "We don't have university sports here so the high school is the big deal. Everybody has a story to tell, and our reporters do a good job of other features whether they are lifestyle or overcoming an obstacle."

Slovak-Barton said almost every person a reporter meets has a story that needs to be shared.

"My father-in-law would flip open a phone book [back in the day they were available] and say, 'Call that person and find what their life story is,'" Slovak-Barton said. "There is an interesting story on almost any person. You can find a story on anything."

Sam Sutton, a reporter at the *Standard-Radio Post* in Fredericksburg, Texas, said local journalism is still the best way to find the most accurate and up-to-date information, especially in towns such as Fredericksburg, a town of about 11,500 north of San Antonio.

"We want to give our readers the most relevant and accurate information, while also telling the stories of every part of our community," Sutton said, "whether it's a local business, a local hero, or, and this is the hardest to tell, but a sad story."

McIntyre agreed with Sutton.

“We are literally documenting history, and, while national outlets are doing the same, they can’t possibly cover each community the way a local journalist can,” she said. “We can take something as broad as these topics, focus it down and tell our readers why it matters and how it’s going to affect them. National outlets can’t do that the way we can, simply because they aren’t here every day.”

Some local newspapers had to adjust their content after losing advertising revenue due to the COVID-19 virus. Slovak-Barton’s staff at the *Hays Free Press* notified subscribers that, for a period of time, they would receive a virtual copy that looked like the print edition.

While the coronavirus is at the forefront of headlines, local journalism has started to keep up with statistics in the community. Slovak-Barton said the *Hays Free Press* moved to online daily updates for their readers.

“We actually have a daily count on our website,” she said. “It’s a daily chart that goes out, listing how many are hospitalized, how many new ones are testing positive.”

“All we want to do is keep people informed,” Sutton said, “even if it’s news some people may not want to read.”

As the TPA panel, coordinated and moderated by Griff Singer, a retired senior lecturer from the University of Texas at Austin, wrapped up, the speakers gave some lasting advice for the young journalists. Cooke reminded the interns that they won’t know everything on their first day.

“Don’t be afraid to ask,” Cooke said. “Don’t be afraid to run somebody’s quote by them and say, ‘Hey I just wanted to make sure this was correct.’ You’re not going to automatically understand everything.”

Sutton also had some advice for young journalists.

“Your work is important,” he said. “Use that as motivation.”

WATCH the entire panel discussion.

MORE INFORMATION

- "Want to reduce political polarization? Save your local newspaper" by Joshua P. Darr, Johanna Dunaway and Matthew P. Hitt, Feb. 11, 2019, NiemanLab
- "In this moment of multiple crises, we need strong local journalism" by Frank Blethen, May 18, 2020, *Washington Post*
- "Rebuilding local journalism as an essential democratic force" by Joyce Dehli, Nov. 15, 2016, Nieman
- "Local journalism is in crisis. That's a big problem for education" by Evie Blad, Jan. 7, 2020, *Education Week*

Megan Wehring recently graduated from Texas State University with a bachelor of science degree in journalism. She is interning at the Hays Free Press in Kyle, Texas, where she is covering town meetings and feature stories. When she's not writing, Wehring enjoys mini-photography sessions and exploring coffee shops.

Megan Wehring

 Bradley Wilson / June 30, 2020 / Feature / breaking news, daily newspaper, local media, magazine, media ethics, media law, news, newspaper

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