

Civic J to be featured at conference

By Mike McDevitt
University of Colorado
CJIG research chair

Four papers related to civic journalism topics have been accepted for presentation at the AEJMC Midwinter Conference to be held at the University of Georgia Feb. 8-10.

The civic journalism-related papers are the following:

“Television news sources: Does civic journalism lead to better television sourcing?” David D. Kurpius, assistant professor, Louisiana State University.

“Branding best practices: Examining the costs and benefits of co-branding in Best Practices 2000: A collaborative civic journalism project.” Danielle Sarver, doctoral student, Louisiana State University.



“Tale of two cities: Connections between community, corporate culture and civic journalism.” David O. Loomis, Park Fellow, Ph.D. program, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“Unearthing the theoretical roots of civic journalism.” William I. Sutley, assistant professor, Auburn University.

The conference will open Friday evening with a reception from 6:30-8

p.m. Saturday’s schedule includes research sessions in the morning and afternoon as well as a panel presentation, Technology and the Journalism Curriculum: Does Industry Convergence Require Changes in How We Teach?

The program concludes Sunday morning with a “breakfast with senior scholars” from 8-9:30 a.m.

The conference is co-sponsored by the Civic Journalism Interest Group and the Communication Technology and Policy, Media Management and Economics, Visual Communication, Radio and Television Journalism divisions of AEJMC. It is hosted by the Henry W. Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia, Athens.

Goal-setting under way; feedback sought

By Tanni Haas
CUNY Brooklyn

The last issue of this newsletter included a call for members to help outline the future goals of the interest group.

The following is a complete list of responses received, in order of those most often mentioned. Please rank-order the items in terms of importance and mail your responses to Tanni Haas, 134 Second Place, 4th Floor, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11231 or e-mail me at thaas@brooklyn.cuny.edu. I will write a brief summary to appear in the next issue of CJIG News.

Ten responses were received regarding the first question — What do you think should be the goal(s) of the interest group?

Bring together academics, practitioners and students for discussion of civic journalism theory, research and practice.

Help academics learn about current civic journalism practices to provide training for the next generation of prac-

tioners, including development of curriculum and pedagogy for undergraduate and graduate study in civic journalism.

Showcase the last academic thinking on civic journalism to inspire practitioners and ensure that practitioners are involved in the interest group’s events and deliberations.
• Create connections within AEJMC between civic journalism and related areas of scholarly inquiry.

Engage academics in fields related to civic journalism (political science, sociology, history) and practitioners in all areas of mass communication in dialogue to strengthen civic engagement in democratic institutions.

Promote the values of civic journalism by sending letters-to-the-editor to newspapers who either approve or disapprove of civic journalism.

Study and advance excellence in news writing through audience analysis, including feedback from and interaction

Civic journalism alive and well

Nation after Sept. 11 needs the kind of journalism CJ offers

By Sharon Hartin Iorio
Wichita State University
CJIG president

As we enter the new year, the events of Sept. 11, 2001, continue to have a powerful impact on our lives as citizens, academicians and civic journalists. That day altered irrevocably the routines of our nation and its college campuses.

Post Sept. 11, our mandate, as journalists and teachers, to promote sound coverage of community issues and in-depth reports of citizens' concerns remains unchanged.

The difference is that today, addressing citizens' concerns means monitoring the world. Reporting a community's voice means writing about the needs of individuals and ways people are coping in this new cultural and economic environment.

What seems to trouble many of us is the uncertainty of it all. What changes in news coverage are taking place? What is the future of civic journalism?

Coping and news coverage

Recent coverage, in general, has urged Americans to just get back to "normal" routines. We've been told to shop, travel, consume as only we know how and, should depression linger, seek professional counseling.

While some of this advice may be worthwhile, coping as isolated individuals simply cannot be the wholesale reaction of Americans to the aftermath of Sept. 11, economic downturn and global terrorism.

To many observers, America is

undergoing a major social conversion. We've seen respect for public servants — police and firefighters — rise dramatically. Displaying the flag is popular.

The public's conception of patriotism, the status of religion in public life and the meaning of diversity — racial, cultural, ethnic — is heightened.

At the same time, voices of alarm express concern over protecting civil liberties, and little attention is being given to government- or self-censorship of major media.

A CJ response

What's needed is an academic and journalistic response, a civic journalism, that will hold a mirror to life in America today.

This civic journalism is not so much town hall meetings where broadcasters and print journalists are called to task over recent political coverage or lack thereof (although that could well be one aspect).

Instead, this civic journalism would identify and then report to citizens' concerns. For example, people may be interested in knowing how public security, public health and energy policy are being formed now and how that may impact individuals and families.

Or, worried workers and job seekers might be interested in coverage that would show not only NASDAQ and New York Stock Exchange activity but how that activity could shape their futures.

Finding what concerns citizens and reporting that within the larger context of global events and government strategy is the real purpose and real value of civic journalism.

What our country needs is reporting that identifies what changes actually

are taking place in our society and shows how they are being played out in cities and towns across our country.

It seems to me that those who pronounced the death of civic journalism in recent months spoke way too soon. We need civic journalism to tell us about our community life now more than ever.



CJIG activities

Look in this issue for a listing of CJIG panels for the August 2002 AEJMC annual meeting. Co-vice chair David Loomis and I took several outstanding panel proposals to the AEJMC Midwinter meeting in Dallas Dec. 1.

We found partners for six invited panel presentations in Miami. Thanks to all who contributed panel suggestions and thanks to Kathy Campbell for setting the strategy and making the pre-Dallas contacts.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, Tanni Haas gives us an update on the ongoing dialogue to establish the goals of CJIG and decide how to use our funds. There's news on the CJIG co-sponsored AEJMC Mid-winter Conference and more.

Interested in contributing news or opinion regarding activities on your campus or in your community that explore the aftermath of Sept. 11 and the changing media environment? Please contact newsletter editor, Charlyne Berens at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, cberens1@unl.edu.

Civic journalism to be well-represented at AEJMC

Afficionados and novices alike will have an opportunity to learn more about civic journalism at AEJMC's August convention in Miami.

Wednesday, Aug. 7, 10 to 11:45 a.m. Teaching Panel

Cosponsor: Mass Communication and Society Division

Title: Civic Journalism—10 years of work

What have we learned from more than 640 newspaper and 100 TV projects that have appeared over the past 10 years? What direction will civic journalism move toward in the coming decade? What is the future of journalism curriculum development?

Wednesday, Aug. 7, 3:15 to 4:45 p.m.

Teaching Mini-Plenary

Cosponsors: Public relations, visual communications, internships and careers interest group

Title: Dealing with Violence and Trauma: What we forgot to tell our students

Panelists will discuss the impact on media professionals of covering and responding to traumatic events.

Wednesday, Aug. 7, 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Research Panel

Cosponsor: Minorities and Communication

Title: Delving into Diversity — Race Reporting in U. S. Newsrooms

The "browning" of America is a demographic phenomenon that challenges journalists and academics and students to push out of their comfort zones to produce more meaningful coverage of national issues and their communities.

Thursday, Aug. 8, 3:15 to 4:45 p.m. Teaching Panel

Cosponsor: Visual Communication

Title: Building Zones of Connectivity with Readers and Viewers

Nine out of 10 newspaper editors said in a recent survey that the future of journalism depends on a lot more interactivity with readers. Finding ways for ordinary people to connect with developing news stories and public issues is the topic of this panel.

Thursday, Aug. 8, 8:30 to 9:45 p.m.

Civic Journalism Business Meeting

Friday, Aug. 9, 7 a.m.

CJ Executive Meeting

Friday, Aug. 9, 3:15 to 4:45 p.m.

CJ Refereed Research Panel

Friday, Aug. 9, 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Teaching Panel

Cosponsor: Council of Affiliates

Title: What happens when the students get it but the profession doesn't?

Are student journalists being given the tools to reconcile principles taught in the classroom with the realities of the marketplace?

Saturday, August 10, 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Professional Freedom and Responsibility Panel

Cosponsor: Radio and TV Journalism

Title: Caution: Slow-moving Broadcasters. What does it take to move broadcasters to civic journalism?

Newspapers across the country have adopted civic journalism principles and practices into their coverage far faster than broadcasters. This panel will address reasons why the phenomenon exists and explore issues limiting the engagement and expansion of broadcasters into the realm of public issues and community coverage.

Goal-setting

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with audiences.

Promote research into journalism's connection to civic life and the development, uses and effects of civic journalism.

Expand civic journalism initiatives by networking with interested individuals, including diverse groups and youth at the community, state, national and international levels.

- ü Conduct an annual survey of public perceptions of the news media and how the news media can reconnect with the public at grassroots levels. Sponsor meetings with newspaper editors and interested citizens to discuss survey results.

In response to the second question — What ideas do you have for the approximately \$7,000 in funds the interest group has accumulated? — the following seven responses were received:

Pay for a luncheon with a keynote speaker

Invite and pay editors to participate in panels organized by the interest group.

Pay someone (or a team) to create a comprehensive, online civic journalism bibliography that covers the first 10 years of the movement (1991-2001). The bibliography should be divided into civic journalism's philosophy and a description of the movement, press coverage and criticism, academic research and case studies of civic journalism projects.

Pay someone (or a team) to create a Web page that includes everything on civic journalism that is online. Establish a small fund (\$100 per term) for someone (or a team) to check the links once a semester to make sure they are not dead and to add news ones.

Award \$200 for best faculty and students research papers, \$100 for second place, and \$50 for third place and advertise these awards early in the call for papers process.

Award grants for innovative research on civic journalism and for testing out new civic journalism course designs.

Encourage graduate student participation in the interest group's activities by establishing a scholarship fund.

Call for Papers

Civic Journalism Interest Group

AEJMC Annual Convention, Aug 7-10, Miami Beach

The Civic Journalism Interest Group welcomes both student and faculty paper submissions. A \$100 award will be given for the top student paper and the top faculty paper.

Entries should follow the requirements of the AEJMC uniform call for research papers.

Send papers by first class or priority mail, postmarked no later than April 1, 2002, to:

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Call for Judges

The Civic Journalism Interest Group invites full-time faculty members in journalism or mass communication to volunteer as judges in the research paper competition for the AEJMC convention. If you can serve as a judge, please inform CJIG Research Chair Mike McDevitt: michael.mcdevitt@colorado.edu.

CIVIC JOURNALISM INTEREST GROUP NEWS

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Membership in the interest group includes a subscription to this newsletter. Non-members can receive the newsletter by sending a \$10 donation to the Civic Journalism Interest Group with a request to receive CJIG News to AEJMC, 234 Outlet Pointe Blvd., Suite A, Columbia, SC 29210-5667. The newsletter is published two to four times each year.

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Covering a new America

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Marty Baron, editor of The Boston Globe, spoke at the Pew Center for Civic Journalism luncheon on Tuesday, Aug. 7, at the national convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication in Washington, D.C. Following are excerpts of his remarks.

A few weeks back, as some of you may recall, Fidel Castro was giving a typically interminable speech. Somewhere in the middle of it, he suddenly stopped, he faltered and he began to buckle. Aides came to his side. They grabbed him, and they gently guided him down to the platform. What happened is Castro had fainted.

Within minutes, Fidel was back on his feet. He looked pretty sickly but he was lucid enough to tell the crowd that he hadn't slept much the night before, that the heat had gotten the better of him, and they could rest assured he'd be back later in the day to keep going with that speech.

Sure enough, at six o'clock that evening he was back, and he was going on and on and on.

Now in most of the country, ... Castro's fainting spell was not big news.

But at *The Miami Herald* and other South Florida newspapers and at local television stations there, Castro's near-collapse was momentous news. *The Herald* actually gave it a banner headline, two stories on the front page, a sequence of pictures showing Castro's collapse and getting up again and two full pages of comprehensive coverage inside. ... Spanish-language television in Miami covered the incident nonstop. Telemundo carried a line at the bottom of the screen asking: El principio del fin (the beginning of the end)?

When 57 percent of the population of Miami-Dade County is Hispanic, about half of them of Cuban heritage, the definition of "news" may be far different than what you think it is and what it may be in the rest of the country. ...

Now the precise numbers escape me at this point, but I think *The Herald's* sales the next day went up something like 3 percent and those of *El Nuevo Herald*, the Spanish-language sister publication, rose in the double digits. ... If you already thought Miami was a country apart, this may confirm it.

Immigration affects news

But Miami is very much a part of the United States, and the disparate treat-

ment of the Castro story shows a lot about how news agendas are taking shape across the country, especially in major metropolitan areas that are feeling the effects of an enormous wave of immigration.

As many of you know, Miami-Dade County has the largest concentration of Hispanics anywhere in the country. You can hear Spanish as much as English. You'll hear talk about foreign policy as much as domestic politics. What happens in Miami, what happens in Cuba, what happens in Venezuela or what happens in Colombia is really local news. It's not considered to be foreign news, it's considered to be local news.

The question is: Is Miami a peculiar case? I don't actually think it is and increasingly it won't be.

The population of Boston is now over half minority. ... In the Boston area, in Lowell, an estimated 30,000 Cambodians live. That's about a third of the city's population. It's the largest Cambodian population [in America] outside of Long Beach, Calif.

California is now a state where minorities are in the majority with an increasingly influential Latino elec-

CJIG launched in cyberspace

The Civic Journalism Interest Group site on the World Wide Web went live in May at www.geocities.com/civicjournalism1/.

The site offers visitors the latest and several past editions of the CJIG News, and a bibliography of civic-journalism books and book chapters, journal articles, conference papers, trade publications, and reports.

Contributions are needed to the CJ

Teaching Resources page. If you have developed a civic journalism course or offer units on civic journalism with any of your other courses, please e-mail your syllabi and teaching tips to Webmaster Brian Massey at brian.massey@utah.edu.

Also, Brian is looking for hard copies of the CJIG News for these editions: Winter 2000, Spring 1999, Winter 1999, Spring 1998, Winter

1998 and Summer 1998. If you have one or more of them in your files, please snail-mail clean photocopies to Brian at the Department of Communication, 255 S. Central Campus Dr., Rm 2400, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112-0491.

Suggestions about the site — what to add and what (gasp!) to take away — are encouraged.

Journalism interactive

Survey pinpoints sea change in attitudes and practices; Engagement defines new era of journalism

WASHINGTON, DC — U.S. newspapers report dramatic changes in the way they define and cover news and even how they view their mission, a new survey of the nation's top editors reveals.

Key among the findings is that editors report a sharply increased appetite for more two-way connections with readers. Nine of 10 editors surveyed also say the future of the industry depends on even more interactivity with readers.

"This represents a sea change in the relationship between newsrooms and the public for a whole generation of journalists who joined the profession after Watergate," says Jan Schaffer, executive director of the Pew Center for Civic Journalism. The Pew Center sponsored the survey, along with the Associated Press Managing Editors association and the National Conference of Editorial Writers.

The unprecedented survey of all daily newspapers with circulation of 20,000 and more shows many papers are covering more topics than ever before. More than a third are covering more territory than ever before. Seventy percent of the newspapers responded.

"This survey tracks a hopeful and overdue trend in newsrooms," says Chris Peck, APME president and editor of The Spokesman-Review, in Spokane, Wash. "Journalists are realizing their role is to connect with readers and interact with communities, not be disconnected and aloof."

Peck released details of the survey on July 26 at a National Press Club luncheon in Washington, D.C.

"The poll reflects that newspapers finally have gotten the message that a press that too often emphasizes conflict and controversy to the exclusion of explanatory and public service journalism alienates readers," said Jack Nelson, chairman of the Pew Center's Advisory Board and Chief Washington Correspondent for the Los Angeles Times.

The study shows that the new communication technologies and the new geography of journalism "are forcing news organizations to pay attention. They are reassessing what they do — and how they do it," says Schaffer. "There is a higher comfort level for relinquishing traditional control and building journalism that is less of a one-way pipeline for information and more of a two-way conversation."

Few editors in the survey describe their newspaper's role

in the community as simply a disseminator of facts. Eighty-seven percent say newspapers should have a broader role in the community beyond just printing news.

The editors rank "news explainer" first among six specific roles that newspapers can play. "News breaker" comes in second; "investigative watchdog," third; "catalyst for community conversation" and "community steward" follow. The role of "disseminator of just the facts" finishes last.

Large majorities of editors say they now offer many entry points for readers to interact with reporters and editors. Interactive avenues include widespread use of e-mail addresses and phone numbers for reporters; tips lines for reader ideas; venues, aside from editorial pages, for readers' own stories; and Web postings of news-gathering queries. More than half the respondents say they have convened conversations about a key community issue outside the newsroom.

Editors see newspapers' primary role as that of "news explainer"

"So much of current newsroom focus in journalism is on the 'C' word — convergence," Schaffer says. "But this survey suggests the focus

should be on a different 'C' word — citizens. The kinds of interactions with readers will then dictate the appropriate news platform."

Editors who say they practice civic journalism, by seeking actively to engage readers in key issues, are more likely than professed non-civic journalists to have adopted a variety of outreach mechanisms. Forty-five percent of the editors surveyed say their newsrooms use both the tools and techniques of civic journalism.

Still, the survey found editors to be less comfortable with the label, civic journalism, although the philosophy and tools are enjoying broad acceptance. While 19 percent of the editors say they "embrace the label civic journalism," a much larger group — 47 percent — say they "like the philosophy/dislike the label." Just 10 percent say they "recoil" from the label; 9 percent say they dislike both the philosophy and the label.

Nearly two-thirds of the editors say their newsrooms have formed partnerships with another local organization during the development of stories.

The survey also shows considerable changes in the way

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Survey shows sea change

Continued from previous page

stories are written. More than half the editors say they have made a conscious effort to move away from building their stories around a conventional frame of conflict. Among the new approaches:

- ω Roughly one-third indicate they prefer to frame their stories around the potential impact of a news event on people or the community.

- ω Eight in 10 say they offer stories about potential solutions to community problems at least some of the time.

- ω Forty-three percent say they make an effort, most of the time, to include the views of all potential stakeholders.

- ω Fifty-seven percent say, most of the time, they try to report trade-offs their community might be forced to make in addressing problems.

The need to connect more with readers has prompted considerable shifts in the topics covered by many daily newspapers. One-quarter of the editors say their papers are covering education issues more than they did five years ago; nearly that many say they've increased coverage of health,

medicine and personal fitness over the last five years.

In addition, 22 percent report increased coverage of business and personal finance; 21 percent report more coverage of regional growth and development. Three-quarters of the editors say their papers are covering fewer routine government and school board meetings.

One editor explains his newspaper's decision to scale back coverage of routine governmental meetings by volunteering: "Political pissing contests and personality conflicts — these things, unless they actually affect real people, are pointless."

Surveyed were 512 U.S. dailies with circulations of 20,000 or more. Responses were collected via mail, e-mail and telephone and analyzed by the Campaign Study Group of Springfield, Va. Seventy percent, some 360 editors, responded.

The "Journalism Interactive" survey was funded by the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, an initiative of The Pew Charitable Trusts. To read the whole study, visit www.pew-center.org or call the Pew Center at 202-331-3200 for a copy.

Pew-supported projects involve citizens in policy choices

WASHINGTON, DC — Clickable Web maps that let the public chart choices around growth, reapportion their Congressional districts, track water-supply consequences and simulate family scenarios are ushering in a new era of high-tech engagement in several of the 14 initiatives the Pew Center for Civic Journalism will fund in the coming year.

"Advances in technology have sharpened newsroom appetites to find ways to engage citizens directly in tough issues and figure out some solutions," said Jack Nelson, chairman of the advisory board and chief Washington correspondent for the Los Angeles Times.

The following media received grants for the coming year:

KGW-TV (NBC), kgw.com, Portland, Ore.; Portland Tribune, Beaverton Valley Times, Tigard Times, Gresham Outlook, Clackamas Review: To help plan for future growth in the Portland area.

BET.com, Black Entertainment Tele-

vision News, Washington, D.C.: To engage the black community interactively in current family issues.

The Savannah Morning News, Savannah, Ga., savannahnow.com, Georgia Public Radio: To help the community manage competing demands for water.

WXXI-TV and Nycitizens.org with WPBS, WCNY, WNET, WLIW, WMHT, WCFE, WSKG, WNED public television stations: To involve New York state citizens in redrawing Congressional districts.

The Spokesman-Review, spokesman-review.com, Spokane, Wash.: To develop three Web-based beats to cover virtual communities of interest.

WFAA-TV (ABC), Dallas: To use video boxes to elicit stories of racial discrimination.

The Cincinnati Enquirer, WCET-TV (PBS), WCPO-TV (ABC), Kettering Foundation, National Issues Forums: To stimulate dialogue around tensions that sparked recent race riots.

The Orange County Register, Excel-

sior, Santa Ana, Calif., OCRegister.com., Myoc.com, California State University-Fullerton: To build a community map and create coverage relevant to Hispanics.

The Herald-Dispatch, Huntington, W.Va., West Virginia Public Broadcasting: To examine the exodus of young people from the state.

The News Tribune, Tacoma, Wash., KCTS-TV (PBS), KPLU-FM: To explore the state parole system's future.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Pittsburgh, Pa., KDKA-TV (CBS), KDKA Radio, Pennsylvania Newspapers Association: To help citizens access open records.

WTVJ-TV (NBC), Miami, Fla., The Miami Herald, Ocean Drive Magazine: To engage the community in looming environmental issues.

WGBH radio and television, Boston, Mass., The Boston Globe, WILD-AM, WRCA-AM: To track education reform efforts in the state.

Herald & Review, WILL-TV (PBS), Decatur, Ill.: To explore the highschool dropout rate.

Jan Schaffer, Pew Center honored at CJIG's August business meeting

Chair Kathy Campbell opened the annual business meeting on Sunday, Aug. 5, at 6 p.m. following a short social gathering with refreshments. The first order of business was the presentation of a plaque to the Pew Center for Civic Journalism in recognition of its contribution to the work of the interest group.

The plaque was presented to Jan Schaffer, executive director of the Pew Center; in addition, the groups' appreciation was extended to Pew staffers Rebecca Wyhof, Dana Felty and Katie Lee, who had also been invited to attend. They were also presented with a box of the Northwest's finest chocolate truffles.

The chair distributed copies of the annual report and the current balance sheet, which reflected a balance of \$6,8224.69. She also summarized the preliminary reports from the standing

committees on PF&R and Teaching Standards, which had been received earlier in the day. Current membership was reported at 113.

The chair announced that the mid-winter meeting of AEJMC would be held in Dallas on Nov. 30 -Dec. 1. The interest group has been invited to participate in a midwinter research conference hosted by the University of Georgia; after brief discussion, a group consensus emerged directing the officers to proceed with planning for the event, and authorizing the reasonable expenditure of any necessary funds.

The chair reported on the ongoing debate about Web publication; she was directed to continue to voice CJIG's opposition to a proposal in count web postings as publications. (NOTE: AEJMC has subsequently tabled this discussion indefinitely.)

The members discussed the future of

CJIG. The consensus was that CJIG should go forward with vigor and that the incoming chair and vice-chair would draft a mission statement for review, with input from the group. The mission statement will serve as the goals statement for the annual report.

New officers were elected as follows: Sharon Iorio, chair; Kathy Campbell and Dave Loomis, co-vice chairs; Charlyne Berens, newsletter; Cheryl Gibbs, Teaching Standards chair; and John Palen, PF&R chair. The research paper competition chair will be filled pending the nominee's return to his campus and his assessment of the duties of his new faculty post.

Annual dues for the interest group were not changed from the current \$10.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Kathy Campbell, chair 2000-2001