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AMONG THE MEDIA

Newsletter of the History Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

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AJHA conference brings scholars together



ERIKA J. PRIBANIC-SMITH | TEXAS-ARLINGTON

Blanchard Award winner Ira Chinoy and finalist Patrick Farabaugh listen as finalist Kristin Gustafson discusses her research about “Grassroots, Activist Newspapers from Civil Rights to the Twenty-first Century: Balancing Loyalties and Managing Change.” For more about the 2011 American Journalism Historians Association conference, see page 10.

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

In defense of 'bad' writing

Writing history is apparently something of a lost art. Prize-winning historian David McCullough, perhaps best known for his biography of John Adams, despairs that much of history is poorly written. McCullough told a *Wall Street Journal* reporter last summer that historians “are

Tim Vos



Chair
Univ. of Missouri

never required to write for people other than historians.” The result, predictably, is “boring” writing.

Journalism historians presumably write no more or no less poorly than their fellow historians. Indeed, panelists at the most recent American Journalism Historians Association

See **VOS** | Page 3

2012 AEJMC CONFERENCE

Division seeks papers, reviewers

The History Division invites submissions of original research papers and historiographical essays on all aspects of media history for the AEJMC 2012 convention in Chicago. All research methodologies are welcome.

Papers will be evaluated on originality and importance of topic; literature review; clarity of research purpose; focus; use of evidence to support the paper's purpose and conclusions; and the degree to which the paper contributes to the field of journalism and mass communication history. The Division presents awards for the top three faculty papers.

Papers should be no more than 25 double-spaced pages, not including notes or appendices. Multiple submissions to the Division are not allowed and only one paper per author will be accepted for presentation in the History Division's research sessions. Authors should also submit a 75-word abstract. The author's name and all other identifying information must be removed from submissions.

Papers must be electronically submitted using the services of All-Academic; the website is www.allacademic.com. The deadline is midnight, April 1, 2012. Authors are encouraged to read the Uniform Paper Call for detailed submission



information. The organization's website is www.aejmc.org.

Student Papers: Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled during the 2011-12 academic year may enter the Warren Price Student Paper Competition. The Price Award recognizes the History Division's best student paper and is named for Warren Price, who was the Division's first chair. Student papers should include a separate cover sheet that indicates their student status but omits the author's name or other identifying information. Students who submit top papers are eligible for small travel grants from the Edwin Emery Fund. Only full-time students not receiving departmental

travel grants are eligible for these grants.

Call for Reviewers: If you are willing to review papers for the History Division research competition, please contact Lisa Burns at Lisa.Burns@quinnipiac.edu and indicate your areas of expertise and/or interest. We will need approximately 75 reviewers for the competition. Graduate students are not eligible to serve as reviewers and, in general, reviewers should not have submitted their own research into the competition.

Contact information: For more information, contact History Division Research Chair Lisa Burns (Quinnipiac University) at Lisa.Burns@quinnipiac.edu or 203-582-8548. ■

NOMINEES SOUGHT FOR 28th ANNUAL COVERT AWARD

The History Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication announces the 28th annual competition for the Covert Award in Mass Communication History.

The \$500 award will be presented to the author of the best mass communication history article or essay published in 2011. Book chapters in edited collections also may be nominated.

The award was endowed by the late Catherine L. Covert, professor of public

communications at Syracuse University and former head of the History Division.

Nominations, including seven copies of the article nominated, should be sent by March 1, 2012, to:

Nancy L. Roberts
Communication Department
University at Albany
1400 Washington Ave., SS-351
Albany, NY 12222

VOS

Continued from Page 1

In defense of 'bad' writing

conference in Kansas City raised similar concerns about poor writing. Four prolific scholars shared their advice on the “art of writing history.” While the recommendations ranged widely, much of the counsel underscored the importance of narrative in writing journalism history. Histories need a well-crafted narrative, the audience was told, if readers are going to be compelled to turn the page. McCullough offers a similar antidote for poorly written history. Attention to character and plot — even a dose of mystery — keeps the story moving and the reader reading.

It's hard to disagree with such a commonsense remedy for what ails the writing of history. Nevertheless, I'm not quite willing to accept that better narratives are our best solution. In fact, I'm not convinced the problem was all that bad to begin with. Call this a defense of bad writing if you must; however, what I want to offer here is a defense of a different kind of historical writing — analytical or explanatory writing. Narrative writing and analytical writing, while no doubt similar in some respects, differ in important ways.

What makes scholars read any scholarly article? What makes a chemist read a paper on polymerization or a mass communication scholar to read a paper on fear appeals in tobacco advertising? To point out the obvious, these scholarly articles are almost certainly not written as narratives. Yet, scholars read and cite these papers with great frequency, likely with far greater frequency than even the most artfully written media history article. The answer, it seems to me, is that scholars read a paper that promises to solve an important intellectual puzzle. Scholars then cite those papers that provide compelling, clear, and precise answers to a puzzle.

Likewise, journalism history should not only tell artful stories but solve important intellectual puzzles. Michael Schudson's *Discovering the News* is a classic example of analytical writing and puzzle solving

done well. Schudson endeavors to answer how objectivity came to be an occupational norm in American journalism and does so without well-drawn protagonists, suspenseful plots, or other such devices. Chapter 1 raises the most common explanations for the rise of the Penny Press and then methodically pokes holes in those arguments. He crafts a puzzle that must

If narrative is the
spoonful of sugar that
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modes of discourse.

then be solved in a new way. What follows is his own solution to an intellectual puzzle.

Historical sociologist Theda Skocpol concludes that narrative storytelling, for all its artfulness, cannot be maintained when the focus is on explanatory history. And while analytical writing “may seem rather unaesthetic,” according to Skocpol, it can rival other historical writing, “not for sheer aesthetic reasons but through the force of an explanatory argument put forward as more able than plausible competitors to answer a dramatically posed historical question.”

Skocpol's claim here that narrative writing is ultimately incompatible with explanatory, analytical writing may be a hard pill for some to swallow. Skocpol does not rule out papers and books that alternate between narrative and explanation. Rather she argues that a narrative thread will inevitably be broken when the author turns to explanation. This, I think, is the problem that is worthy of our attention — how to combine these two modes of writing. If narrative is the spoonful of sugar that makes the analytical medicine go down, then we shouldn't shy away from trying to combine the two modes of discourse.

This is not to argue that narratives

are without elements of explanation. As David Naugle has shown, narratives are “loaded with worldview expressions” that purport to explain roles persons play, “how they understand themselves and others, (and) how the world itself is structured and operates.” But explanation that is implicit in a narrative is its own kind of bad writing. An explanation should be explicit if it is going to make a contribution to disciplinary knowledge. This explanatory mode of discourse will inevitably rely on a specialized language to communicate insights with precision and clarity. That clarity, however, will seem anything but clear to outsiders. I take this to be the heart of McCullough's criticism of his fellow historians' poor writing.

But this development of specialized language is not necessarily a bad thing, particularly if it is specialized discourse common to our colleagues in journalism and mass communication. It's worth noting that McCullough did not entirely dismiss the work of his fellow historians. In fact, he concluded that most do fabulous work and that he draws on their work regularly. What I interpret this to mean is that McCullough has written for a broad audience by mediating the linguistic divide between specialists and non-specialists. Thus, if “boring” is simply an epithet for explanatory writing, then I'm not convinced the problem is all as worrisome as McCullough and his fellow critics say it is. Explanatory, analytical writing — at least when done well — is anything but boring. Indeed, the problem solving that good analytical writing displays can be as intellectually satisfying as any great mystery.

Sources cited: Bolduc, B. (2011, June 18). Don't know much about history, *Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304432304576369421525987128.html>; Naugle, D. K. (2002). *Worldview: The history of a concept*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing. (p. 301); Schudson, M. (1978). *Discovering the news: A social history of American newspapers*. New York: Basic Books; and Skocpol, T. (Ed.). (1984). *Vision and method in historical sociology*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (p. 383). ■

2012 AEJMC CONFERENCE

Papers sought for Law and Policy Division

Special call seeks legal history papers for AEJMC 100th anniversary

The Law and Policy Division invites submission of original research papers on communications law and policy for the 2012 AEJMC Conference in Chicago. Papers may focus on any topic related to communications law and/or policy, including defamation, privacy, FCC issues, intellectual property, obscenity, freedom of information, and a myriad of other media law and policy topics. Papers outside the scope of communications law and policy will be rejected.

The Division welcomes a variety of theoretical orientations and any method appropriate to the research question. A panel of judges will blind-referee all submissions, and selection will be based strictly on merit. Authors need not be AEJMC or Law and Policy Division members, but they must attend the conference to present accepted papers.

Paper authors should submit via the online submission process as described in the Uniform Paper Call. Please see submission criteria and instructions at

www.aejmc.org.

Law and Policy Division papers must be no longer than 50-double-spaced pages with one-inch margins and 12-point font, including cover page, appendices, tables, footnotes and/or endnotes, and end-of-paper reference list, if applicable. (Footnotes and/or endnotes and reference list may be single-spaced.) Papers that exceed 50 total pages or are not double-spaced will be automatically rejected without review. Although Bluebook citation format is preferred, authors may employ any recognized and uniform format for referencing authorities, including APA, Chicago, or MLA styles. Papers that include author-identifying information within the text, in headers, or within the embedded electronic file properties will be automatically rejected (review the instructions on the AEJMC Web site for stripping identifying information from the electronic file properties). There is no limit on the number of submissions authors may make to the Division.

Student authors of single-authored papers should clearly indicate their student status on the cover page. Student submissions will be considered for the \$100 Whitney and Shirley Mundt Award, given to the top student paper. The Law and Policy Division will also cover

conference registration fees for the top three student paper presenters.

Special call for legal history papers: As part of AEJMC's 100th Anniversary celebration in Chicago, the Law and Policy Division will be hosting a special call for papers dedicated to legal history. Research papers for the special call should focus on the study of the history of law in the field of communication, broadly defined. Legal history is closely connected to the development of society and papers should be set in the wider context of social, cultural, and political history. Papers should be uploaded via the special call link on the All-Academic submission site, and should conform to all requirements of the Law and Policy Division Paper Call and the AEJMC Uniform Paper Call. Papers will be judged together with papers from the Law and Policy Division Paper Call. Submitters who qualify for presentation at the AEJMC 2012 conference will present their research at a special research panel dedicated to legal history.

If you have questions, contact: Derigan Silver, Law and Policy Division Research Chair, Department of Media, Film and Journalism Studies, University of Denver, 2490 S. Gaylord St., Denver, CO 80208-5000, Phone: 303-871-2657; email: derigan.silver@du.edu. ■

CALL FOR ENTRIES

Best Journalism and Mass Communication History Book

The History Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication is soliciting entries for its award for the best journalism and mass

communication history book of 2011. The award is given annually, and the winning author will receive a plaque and a cash prize at the August 2012 AEJMC conference in Chicago. The competition is open to any author of a relevant history book regardless of whether he or she belongs to AEJMC or the History Division. Authorship is defined as the person or persons who wrote the book, not just edited it. Only those books with a 2011 copyright date will be accepted. Compilations, anthologies, articles, and monographs will be excluded because they qualify for the Covert Award, another AEJMC

History Division competition.

Entries must be postmarked no later than February 3, 2012. Submit four copies of each book — along with the author's mailing address, telephone number, and email address — to:

John P. Ferré
AEJMC History Book Award Chair
Department of Communication
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292

Contact Dr. Ferré at (502) 852-2237 or ferre@louisville.edu with any questions.

TEACHING STANDARDS

Teaching to the genius within — even the napping genius

If you have met Leonard Ray Teel, winner of the 2011 American Journalism Historians Association Award for Excellence in Teaching, you understand why he—an avuncular fellow with the slyest-wryest sense of humor combined

Berkley Hudson

Teaching Chair
Univ. of Missouri

with journalistic street smarts and intellectual savvy—captivates his students at Georgia State University.

If you have not met him, let me point out how he does what he does and has done for decades in Atlanta and around the world from Egypt to Morocco, Germany, Jordan, Lebanon,

China, and beyond.

When he accepted his AJHA award in Kansas City at the group's annual convention, he disclosed one of his key teaching secrets. In his first class meeting with students, he said: "I tell them they all have genius."

Then he said: "If they don't believe they have genius, it's because their genius is taking a nap." And if their genius is asleep, Teel assures his students, he will help wake up their genius.

Yes, he is an unabashed optimist. That is an essential strategy that he has developed during twenty-eight years of teaching.

"There is genius in undergrads. You just have to find it and nurture it. Everybody has genius. It's just not always working."

He offers a living example of how to combine teaching with research and service—built on bedrock humility and a background as a journalist for major media outlets such as the *Miami Herald*, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, the *Washington Evening Star*, and CNN.

The Venn diagram of the component parts of his professional life reveals

a remarkable evolution of how a media historian is created: undergrad days of studying European history at the University of Miami in the early 1960s, then passing through an illustrious career as a journalist, earning a doctorate in British history from Georgia State, writing magazine stories, and serving on an Emmy-winning team for CNN as it covered the Oklahoma City bombings. All the while, professing at Georgia State, serving on P&T

their brains are puzzling out solutions to research, writing, and revision problems. "The brain actually does combine and associate things on its own. It will work while you're sleeping."

The brain, he asserts, functions as an "extra mentor" for his students.

"Undergrads don't understand the inner workings of the brain. There's so much research that shows that the brain is just incredible. It's nothing new, but it's new to undergraduates. They take their

"There is genius in undergrads. You just have to find it and nurture it. Everybody has genius. It's just not always working."

—Leonard Ray Teel

committees, and so on and on.

He has written books, including the monumental (559 pages), biography of legendary editor Ralph McGill of the *Atlanta Constitution*. The book won the Kappa Tau Alpha-Mott Prize in 2002 for the best researched book on journalism. Four times he has won media history research awards of excellence. He has served in AEJMC divisional posts. He was president of the American Journalism Historians Association.

He has published scads of journal articles, encyclopedia entries, journalistic stories, and book chapters. He has presented his research around the world. He has conducted workshops everywhere, too. He created the *Atlanta Review of Journalism History* as an outlet for his students' media history research.

He cites basic neuropsychology as underlying his approach to giving assignments and helping students to realize that even when they are sleeping

brain for granted as many of us do."

For his undergraduate media history course, he requires students to adopt the persona of a journalist they have studied. Then, after two rehearsals, students perform for one another in that persona. Twice, Georgia State has given Teel an instructional innovation award for the class.

In terms of student performance, he acknowledges he has witnessed student horror stories: "I've seen the worst, but I look for the best. If you expect excellence and give them a structure for achieving excellence, their chances of achieving it are much improved."

Teel told his approving audience that a lot of people deserved the award he had received. But this was clear to everyone in that Kansas City hotel ballroom: before us stood a genius of a teacher, sharing his secrets, so that all could benefit.

University of Missouri doctoral student Greg Perreault assisted with the research for this column. ■

PROFESSIONAL FREEDOM & RESPONSIBILITY

History and the IRB: Will pending changes threaten research?

When historian Susan Reverby went to study John Charles Cutler's papers at the University of Pittsburgh in 2005, she was unprepared for what she

**Dale
Cressman**



**PF&R Chair
Brigham Young U.**

found. In box after box she discovered research notebooks revealing that Cutler and his fellow U.S. government doctors had, between 1946 and 1948, deliberately infected hundreds of soldiers and prisoners with gonorrhea and syphilis, sometimes using inoculates,

other times hiring prostitutes. Reverby was shocked.

Her discovery led the U.S. government to formally apologize in late 2010 to Guatemala's president and for President Obama to order an investigation that continues to this day. It was Cutler's connection to the infamous Tuskegee syphilis experiment that sent Reverby to the archives in Pittsburgh. Between 1932 and 1972, U.S. government doctors studied 600 African-American sharecroppers in Tuskegee, Alabama. The subjects were told they were being given free medical treatment, but doctors did not tell 399 subjects they had already contracted syphilis. Nor were they ever treated for the condition—even after penicillin became the standard treatment after 1947. The study was finally terminated in 1972, after its existence was leaked to the press.

The experiment was, James Jones wrote in 1981, "the longest non-therapeutic experiment on human beings in medical history." It also led Congress in 1974 to pass the National Research Act, establishing a regulatory regime intended to safeguard the

subjects of biomedical experiments. As a result, faculty and students conducting research on human subjects must first gain approval from institutional review boards (IRBs) that assess subjects' risk, ensure their voluntary participation and informed consent, and protect their privacy.

Federal regulation, now known as the Common Rule, defines research as "a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to contribute to generalizable knowledge." Though originally intended to protect vulnerable human subjects in biomedical research, the Common Rule's vagueness led to mission creep, meaning even those in the social sciences and humanities—including some in history and journalism—are subject to IRBs.

The problem arises when IRBs have sought to impose restrictions that seem reasonable in the hard sciences, but are antithetical to historical research. This has particularly been apparent in oral history where there have been reports over the years of IRBs insisting that subjects remain anonymous or that tape recordings be destroyed after a study's conclusion.

Oral history is not singled out as a methodology covered by the Common Rule. In fact, in 2003, the Office for Human Research Protections, the body within the Department of Health and Human Services responsible for overseeing human subjects research, agreed with pleas from the American Historians Association (AHA) and the Oral Historians Association (OHA) that oral history be exempt from the Common Rule. A few institutions, such as Columbia University, completely exempt oral history from IRB oversight. However, most institutions, out of an apparent abundance of caution, continued to require that oral history

projects gain IRB approval. In some reported instances, IRB-imposed restrictions have been onerous enough to either kill projects, or put researchers in a position where they lie to get approval.

Over the summer, Health and Human Services announced it was reviewing and intending to undertake the first significant overhaul of the Common Rule. The federal government is considering revisions because of advances in biomedical research, such as genomics, as well as changes in the way research is undertaken. Today, it is more common for biomedical research to be carried out in multiple sites—each needing its own IRB approval. HHS claims it intends to streamline the IRB process, while enhancing protections for human subjects.

The initial thirty-day comment period, commenced in July, was extended through October and both the AHA and OHA wasted little time in urging its members to comment. The OHA argues that oral history should be granted full exclusion from a revised Common Rule, precluding the need for historians to even have to apply to an IRB for an exemption. History, they argue, is not generalizable knowledge, and while not exempt from professional standards, is not subject to the same rules as biomedical research.

Some support the HHS undertaking, hoping it will, as the *New York Times* put it in October, "fix some longstanding problems with institutional review boards that held, say an undergraduate interviewing Grandma for an oral history project to the same guidelines as a doctor doing experimental research on cancer patients." Others worry HHS will come up with a regime that is even



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
School of Journalism and
Mass Communications

CALL FOR NOMINEES

Ronald T. and Gayla D. Farrar Media and Civil Rights History Award

Honoring University of South Carolina Professor Emeritus Ronald T. Farrar and his late wife, Gayla D. Farrar, this award recognizes the best journal article or chapter in an edited collection on the historical relationship between the media and civil rights.

Submitted articles or chapters should be works of historical scholarship and must have been published in 2010 or 2011.

We encourage submissions that address the media and civil rights from a range of historical contexts, periods, and perspectives.

Scholars may nominate and submit their own work or the work of others by sending four copies of the article/ chapter and a cover letter describing the merits



Dr. Ronald Farrar

of the work. A national panel of experts will judge the contest.

The winner will receive a plaque and \$1,000 and must agree to present his or her work in a public lecture at the University of South Carolina in the spring semester of 2012. The winner's travel expenses will be covered.

Mail nominations postmarked by Jan. 5, 2012 to:

Kathy Roberts Forde
School of Journalism and Mass
Communications
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208

For more information contact:

Kathy Roberts Forde
Phone: 803-777-3321
Email: fordekr@sc.edu

Submissions should be sent via first class U.S.
Mail or overnight delivery. Late or emailed
submissions will not be considered.

2011 winner Gordon Mantler, Duke University

"The Press Did You In: The Poor People's Campaign and the Mass Media," published in the Spring 2010 issue of *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics and Culture*.



Media & Civil Rights History Symposium

The symposium, a biennial conference hosted by the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina, is being planned for Spring 2013. Check <http://jour.sc.edu/mcrhs/> for more information.

Clio

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For information, contact Forde at (803) 777-3321, or the email address above.

Recent issues of Clio may be accessed at: <http://www.utc.edu/Outreach/AEJMC-HistoryDivision/histpub.html>.

SPEECH EXCERPT

What media myths tell us about media history

W. Joseph Campbell, Ph.D.

■ *This address was given at the 2011 Symposium on the 19th Century Press, the Civil War, and Free Expression in Chattanooga, Tenn., on November 11, 2011.*

In preparing this talk, I often thought about an observation by Gerard De Groot, an historian at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, who a few years ago wrote:



Campbell

“The good historian is a mythbuster.”

... Now, De Groot wasn't necessarily advocating that all historians go out and become fulltime myth-busters; rather, his observation was rooted in the importance and necessity of revisiting the historical record — of being prepared to challenge assumptions and conventional wisdom, of applying skepticism in assessing interpretations of important moments and events and figures of the past.

Busting myths is integral to good history — to good media history. It is an element of what Maurine Beasley of the University of Maryland has called “the never-ending process of interpretation and reinterpretation.”

It is fuel to the dynamism of historical research.

I argue that the health and integrity of the field, at least in part, rides on historians fulfilling an obligation to bust myths, to seek to set straight the historical record to the extent that's possible.

After all, to bust myths is to wage war against simplistic and reductive explanations — and to recognize and insist upon the complexity of the historical record.

Bringing coherence and enhanced clarity to the historical record can only be beneficial; after all, the study of history is under intense pressure as it is. As we know, in many journalism and mass communication programs, media history courses can be, and have been, among the casualties to the

timeless appeal to distill and simplify, the appeal of condensed, readily digestible historical accounts that are easily grasped, and a delight to retell.

Myths about media history often have contemporary relevance, pertinence, and application; they are often summoned to illuminate some

Busting myths is integral to good history — to good media history. It is fuel to the dynamism of historical research.

appeal adding technology courses to the curriculum — the “tools and toys” of new media that Fred Blevens of Florida International University has lamented.

So there's no need to complicate the study and teaching of media history with the barnacles of myth and misunderstanding.

My recent research has focused on what I call media-driven myths — those prominent, well-known stories about and/or by the news media that are widely believed and often retold but which, under scrutiny, prove to be apocryphal of wildly exaggerated.

Media-driven myths are false, dubious, and improbable stories about news media exploits that masquerade as factual.

Media myths can be thought of as the junk food of journalism — tasty and alluring, but not terribly nutritious, not terribly healthy.

Media myths are inescapably media-centric; as such, they tend to distort our understanding of the history, roles, and functions of journalism in American society; media myths typically confer on the news media far more power and influence than they necessarily wield.

Media myths often spring from the

large truth. As De Groot has noted:

“We mine the past for myths to buttress our present.”

These tales, these media myths, are often just too appealing and too delicious not to be true. They pop up throughout media history — including the history of the 19th century.

... [One] media myth of the 19th century is the Civil War-era quotation attributed to Wilbur F. Storey, editor of the former Chicago Times. Storey supposedly instructed a correspondent named Franc Wilkie to “telegraph fully all news; and when there is no news, send rumors.” Wilkie at the time was with General George Thomas' forces near Nashville, in late 1864.

Wilkie was a former war reporter for the New York Times who had joined the Chicago Times in 1863.

... [T]he Civil War-era “send rumors” quotation is undeniably appealing — and relevant in 21st century contexts. The quotation not only suggests journalism's inclination to compromise ethics in the gathering of news; it speaks also to the profession's

CAMPBELL

Continued from Page 8

What media myths tell us

unending appetite for rumor, gossip, and hearsay.

Reasons for doubting whether Wilbur Storey ever sent such instructions to one of his correspondents are many. Notably, they include the fact that the anecdote is thinly documented and uncorroborated.

The lone source for Storey's supposed instructions is a memoir by Franc Wilkie, titled *Personal Reminiscences* and published in 1891 — 27 years after the instructions supposedly were sent.

Moreover, by 1891, Storey had been dead seven years.

Personal Reminiscences was not the first book in which Wilkie discussed his reporting during the Civil War. He had done so in two previous volumes, both published in the 1880s. Neither of those books mentioned Storey's supposed instructions to "send rumors."

A further reason for doubting that Wilbur Storey ever sent such instructions is that they would have been superfluous: It would have made no sense for Storey to have instructed Wilkie to "send rumors" because the *Chicago Times* — like many newspapers during the Civil War — routinely printed rumors about battles, real and imagined; about troop movements, and about political developments — and

identified them as rumor. It would have been a superfluous message, to advise a seasoned correspondent like Wilkie to "send rumors."

The instructions also would have been illogical. In other words, Storey would have had no compelling reason to send such instructions to Wilkie, who had joined the *Chicago Times* in September 1863 and had worked closely with Storey. By the time Wilkie was sent to Nashville in 1864, he would have been well-acquainted with the *Times*, its content, and its policies.

Simply put, Wilkie would have required no reminder from Storey to "telegraph fully all news; and when there is no news, send rumors."

What's more, Storey's purported instructions were recalled in anger: Wilkie's account of the "send rumors" telegram was an element of a harsh and extensive personal attack on Storey, whom Wilkie described as vindictive, abusive, and debauched. "He was possessed by brutish instincts of a most abominable nature," Wilkie wrote of Storey. "He was a Bacchus, a satyr, a Minotaur, all in one." The "send rumors" anecdote appears in a portion of *Personal Reminiscences* in which Wilkie settles scores with his deceased former boss.

Wilkie, moreover, completed the memoir late in his life, a time when he suffered considerable pain and weakness from a years-long struggle with what his physician diagnosed as "sclerosis of the cerebral arteries." The disease, known

today as cerebral arteriosclerosis, led to Wilkie's death in April 1892, just five months after publication of *Personal Reminiscences*. He was 59-years-old. In the months before his death, Wilkie was depressed and may have suffered a stroke.

For all these reasons, it is exceedingly unlikely that Wilbur Storey ever instructed Franc Wilkie to "send rumors" if he could find no news from General Thomas' army in 1864.

So what do media myths tell us about media history?

They tell us to be wary about the conclusiveness. They tell us to take heed, that history — media history — is neither static nor infallible, that prominent and often-told stories about the media may be infused with error and exaggeration.

They tell us that there's plenty of room for skepticism, plenty of room for challenging assumptions — for applying tests of evidence and logic to well-known tales and dominant narratives.

They also tell us to embrace complexity and to be wary about the reductive fallacy — that what is most easily remembered and easily grasped isn't necessarily the interpretation that's most accurate.

I'll grant that challenging the dominant narrative — challenging orthodoxy — can be uncomfortable, and even unappetizing. But challenging revered and deeply held narratives is to court controversy. It is to shake up the field. A bit. But bringing a bit of edginess to the scholarship of media history wouldn't be such a bad thing at all. ■

CRESSMAN

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History and the IRB

more restrictive. While recognizing the revision could provide "a tantalizing opportunity to free some historical research from the ham-handed review of IRBs," the AHA sees potential danger. AHA's Linda Shopes has warned

that IRBs might even reach into the archives, "simply because they deal with the activities of human beings." Furthermore, there are concerns that HHS' desire to standardize its rules on privacy could lead to restricting historians' use of, for example, census records. As the AHA pointed out in its online newsletter, such an eventuality is not too far out of the realm of possibility. Even under the existing rules, a historian was forced in 2010

to go to court in Connecticut to access treatment records of Civil War veterans. According to some observers, some measures now being considered would prevent the kind of archival research that allowed Susan Reverby to uncover the abuses suffered by human subjects in Guatemala.

HHS is expected to issue proposed changes to the Common Rule in 2012, then solicit additional public comment before making any changes final. ■

AJHA honors local journalists, explores history in Kansas City

By Erika J. Pribanic-Smith
University of Texas at Arlington

Attendees of the American Journalism Historians Association's 2011 national convention got the "star treatment" during their three-day stay at an historical Art Deco hotel that has entertained the likes of Tina Turner and John Barrymore—not to mention that it once housed a haberdashery run by Harry S. Truman. Hotel Phillips in Kansas City, Missouri, hosted AJHA from Oct. 6-8.

In addition to sharing research on a variety of historical topics, conference-goers enjoyed fêtes honoring local journalists and educators and explored much of Kansas City's rich history and culture.

A highlight of the convention was the historical tour. After riding buses past Occupy Wall Street protesters and an installation of shipping containers emblazoned with the letters IOU/USA in front of the Federal Reserve Bank, tourists explored exhibits of weaponry, artwork, uniforms, and other artifacts at the National World War I Museum. They also took in a unique, though blustery, birds-eye view of Kansas City at the top of the Liberty Memorial Tower.

From there, they traveled to the 18th & Vine Jazz District. Developed as a haven for African Americans during the 19th century, the neighborhood now is home to museums celebrating the history of American Jazz music and Negro Leagues baseball. In addition to visiting those, some AJHA members dropped in on the 18th Street offices of the *Kansas City Call*, a newspaper with a mission of presenting a positive view of the African-American community. Its



ERIKA J. PRIBANIC-SMITH | TEXAS-ARLINGTON

Maurine Beasley admires the Margaret Blanchard Dissertation Award plaque presented to her student, Ira Chinoy.

editor and publisher, Donna Stewart, shared anecdotes about her role as a committed journalist when she spoke at AJHA's Donna Allen Luncheon.

The conference program also featured 38 papers on topics running the

gamut of historical time periods and encompassing a number of journalistic, entertainment, and commercial media. In addition, 20 scholars previewed their

CALL FOR PAPERS, PRESENTATIONS, PANELS AND PARTICIPANTS

The Joint Journalism and Communication History Conference

The American Journalism Historians Association and the AEJMC History Division joint spring meeting

When: SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 2012

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Place: John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York, 899 Tenth Avenue, New York, NY 10019 (website: <http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/>)

Cost: \$50 (includes continental breakfast and lunch)

You are invited to submit a 500-600 word proposal for completed papers, research in progress or panel discussions for presentation at the Joint Journalism and Communication History Conference—the American Journalism Historians Association and the AEJMC History Division joint spring meeting. Innovative research and ideas from all areas of journalism and communication history and from all time periods are welcome. Scholars from all academic disciplines and stages of their academic careers are encouraged to participate. This conference offers participants the chance to explore new ideas, garner feedback on their work, and meet a broad range of colleagues interested in journalism and communication history in a welcoming environment. Your proposal should include a brief abstract detailing your presentation topic as well as a compelling rationale why the research is of interest to an interdisciplinary community of scholars.

We are also looking for participants for our “Meet the Author” panel. If you published a book in the past year (2011) or have a book coming out in the spring of 2012 and would like to spend a few minutes touting your book at the conference, please contact conference co-coordinator Kevin Lerner (kevin.lerner@marist.edu) with a

brief blurb about your book.

This year, submissions will be processed through the Media History Exchange, an archive and social network funded by the National Endowment of the Humanities and administered by Elliot King (Loyola University Maryland), the long-time organizer of this conference. To join the Media History Exchange (membership is free) go to <http://www.mediahistoryexchange.org> and request a membership. Once you have joined, follow the step-by-step instructions describing how to upload an abstract to a specific conference. If you have any questions or run into any problems contact Kevin Lerner at kevin.lerner@marist.edu or Elliot King at eking@loyola.edu. Upload all submissions (electronic submissions only) by January 6, 2012 to the Media History Exchange at <http://www.mediahistoryexchange.org/>. Also, if you are willing to serve as a submission reviewer or panel moderator, please contact Kevin Lerner at kevin.lerner@marist.edu or by phone at 917-570-5104.

Acceptance Notification Date: February 3, 2012.

Any questions? Contact conference co-coordinators Kevin Lerner (programming or submission questions, kevin.lerner@marist.edu) or Lisa Burns (logistical or travel questions, lisa.burns@quinnipiac.edu). ■

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AJHA

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A memorable conference

research in progress, and 42 panelists exchanged insights on effective teaching, researching, writing and manuscript reviewing, as well as cultural stereotypes and diversity in the media.

In his opening address, outgoing President Jim McPherson commended AJHA members on their fine teaching and scholarship, but he also encouraged them to be educators beyond academia. McPherson charged the organization with using means such as popular books and articles in local newspapers to keep history relevant for the general public.

Among the AJHA'ers already working toward that goal is Mark Feldstein, who received the group's annual Media History Book Award under the watchful eye of a giant bull (statue) at Kansas City's famous 801 Chophouse. Feldstein penned *Poisoning the Press: Richard Nixon, Jack Anderson, and the Rise of Washington's Scandal Culture*, which award reviewers noted would appeal to a wide audience, not just an academic reader.

"The author understands that it is important to keep the reader turning the page," wrote one judge. "The result is a highly readable two-scorpions-in-a-bottle narrative that will introduce to some and remind others of what the thirst for power did to some politicians and one reporter."

Feldstein's fellow University of Maryland faculty member Ira Chinoy received AJHA's Margaret Blanchard Dissertation Award for "Battle of the Brains: Election Night Forecasting at the Dawn of the Computer Age," directed by Maurine Beasley at Maryland. Patrick Farabaugh (Pennsylvania State University), Philip Glende (University of Wisconsin-Madison), and Kristin Gustafson



ERIKA J. PRIBANIC-SMITH | TEXAS-ARLINGTON

Wally Eberhard presents his namesake award for outstanding paper on media and war to its inaugural winners, Pat Washburn and Mike Sweeney.

(University of Washington) received honorable mentions as finalists for the dissertation award.

All four finalists presented their work during a special session at the convention. As McPherson introduced the session, he noted that it has been said scholars reach their peak when they complete their dissertations.

"If that's the case," he joked, "these four panelists are the smartest people in the room."

Other awards presented during the convention include the following:

- National Award for Teaching Excellence – Leonard Teel, Georgia State University

- J. William Snorgrass Award for Outstanding Paper on a Minorities Topic and Robert Lance Award for Outstanding Student Paper – Lorraine Ahearn, University of North Carolina

- Maurine Beasley Award for Outstanding Paper on Women's History – Caryl Cooper, University of Alabama

- Wally Eberhard Award for Outstanding Paper on Media and War – Michael Sweeney and Patrick

Washburn, Ohio University

- David Sloan Award for Outstanding Faculty Paper – Kimberley Mangun, University of Utah

- Best Article Published in American Journalism – Michael Stamm, Michigan State University

- Distinguished Administrator Award – R. Dean Mills, dean, The Missouri School of Journalism

- Local Journalist Award – Lewis W. Diuguid, columnist, *Kansas City Star*

The organization bestowed the latter two awards at its opening reception and silent auction in Hotel Phillips' opulent, dark-paneled basement. As auction bidders scoured tables full of books, historical magazines, postcards, T-shirts and assorted pop cultural items, Amy Lauters, convention registrar and newly-elected second vice president, commented that she could envision the room in its heyday—full of well-manicured men in velvet dinner jackets smoking cigars and sipping scotch. ■