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Women's WORDS

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Women's WORDS

Strength in Diversity

FEATURE

"Women's Voices"

Provides Musical Refuge
in FM Landscape

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Gerrie
Blake

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Women Sportswriters

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Diversity in the Media

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Women’s Words is published by the Commission on the Status of Women, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. During the academic year 2005-2006, it is produced by the Department of Journalism at Central Michigan University. Articles for Women’s Words are welcome. Please send them to Maria B. Marron, Department of Journalism, 450 Moore, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan 48859 or via e-mail to: maria.marron@cmich.edu. Letters to the editor should be sent to the same address. Electronic copy, either via disk or e-mail, is preferred.



LETTER from the EDITOR

Maria Marron

Jan. 26, 2006

Dear Colleagues:

I hope 2006 is off to a great start for you.

When I wrote the editorial for the previous edition of *Women’s Words*, I had intended it to be my farewell. However, the 2005 AEJMC convention further impressed on me the power of CSW and the value of this forum – *Women’s Words*.

I hope you will find this edition informative and provocative. It features work by Erika Engstrom on the power and reach of Gerrie Blake’s “Women’s Voices.” Joanne Gerstner, president of the Association for Women in Sports Media, has put out a call to professors to encourage women to cover sports. Interestingly, as we are going to press, the latest edition of the *Newspaper Research Journal* features a study by Marie Hardin and Stacie Shain titled “Female Sports Journalists: Are We There Yet? ‘No.’” The researchers have concluded, among other findings, that discrimination and harassment continue for women sports reporters, and they must be addressed through education and advocacy, through networking and mentoring, roles in which organizations such as AWSM are vital. Gitte Laasby, a Dane now working in the American media, has written about the need to expand the concept of diversity to include “internationals.” Teresa Mastin has signaled the need for more CSW members to assume office, and we have reports on the Silent Auction, a new book on women and the press and a former CSW officer who is a Fulbright Fellow in Russia.

I encourage you to send articles and news items of interest to CSW members to me. We will plan to have the next edition of *Women’s Words* to you before the August convention in San Francisco.

Best wishes for the year ahead,

Maria

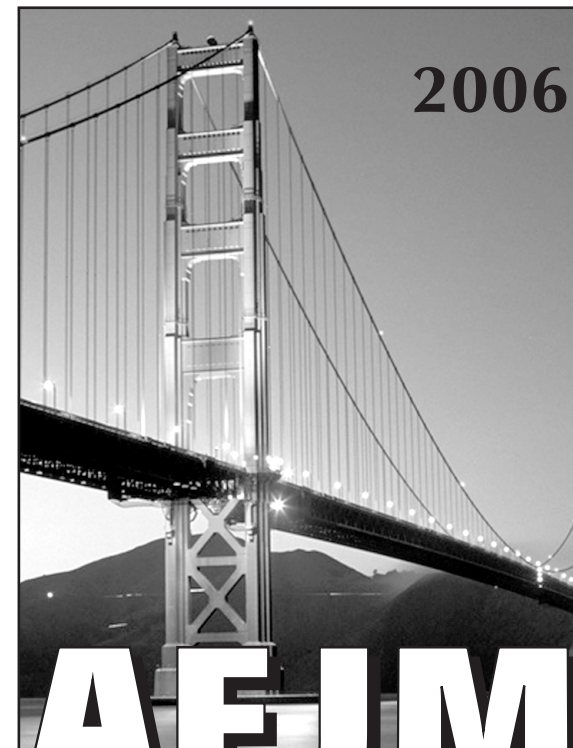
Former CSW Secretary a Fulbright Fellow



Beverly Merrick

Dr. Beverly G. Merrick, a past secretary of the Commission on the Status of Women, is a Senior Fulbright Fellow in Georgia, former Soviet Union, where she is teaching and coordinating research between American and Georgian scholars at Grigol Robakidze University. Merrick, also a 1995 Freedom Forum Ethics Fellow and a 1998 Fellow of the Institute for Journalism Excellence (American Society of Newspaper Editors), is lecturing on mass media ethics, journalism law, public affairs reporting and photojournalism.

Merrick teaches at the University of Nebraska-Kearney where she was recently awarded first place “College Newspaper Adviser of the Year” by the Nebraska Press Women’s association. Before teaching at UNK, she was honored as an “Outstanding Woman of New Mexico” for being the first woman to earn tenure and promotion in journalism at New Mexico State University.



2006 AEJMC CONVENTION

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

August 2-5, 2006

MARRIOTT SAN FRANCISCO

Future Convention Dates:

2007 AEJMC Convention
Washington D. C. - Renaissance
August 9-12, 2007

2008 AEJMC Convention
Chicago – Marriott Downtown
Aug. 6-9, 2008

AEJMC San Francisco

Paper call information, hotel information and more, on the website:

www.aejmc.org/convention/

Bradley Publishes New Book on Women and the Press

In her most recent book, *Women and the Press the Struggle for Equality*, published by Northwestern University Press, Patricia Bradley traces the history of professional female media workers in the United States.

Bradley charts their evolution from the sentimental magazine writers of the early 19th century – the only acceptable form of female writing at the time – to the present, in which women columnists, for example, are encouraged to be “ranters” in yet another personification of perceived female characteristics.

The book uncovers many of the “lost sisters” of the journey, many of whom had to negotiate their own understandings of themselves to find a place in a profession that only wanted them in limited roles. Early women journalists also had to address questions that remain relevant today: what is the responsibility of feminist journalists to change the world in which they operate?

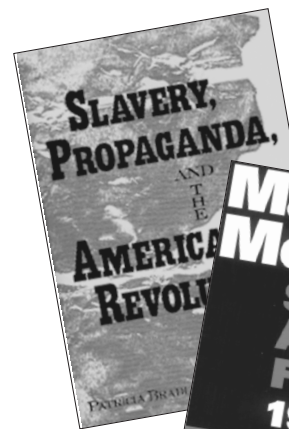
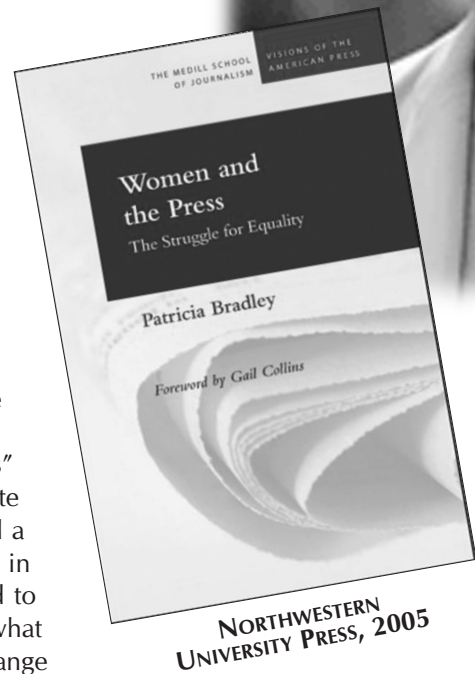
Women and the Press the Struggle for Equality follows Bradley’s 2004 book *Mass Media and the Shaping of American Feminism, 1963-1975*, described by Stephanie Blake of the University of Minnesota as making a “significant and lasting contribution to the fields of mass communication and women’s studies.”

In a much different period, Bradley’s first book, *Slavery, Propaganda and the American Revolution* found that American propagandists were not averse to making the continuance of slavery reason for revolution. In recommending the book in the *New England Quarterly*, Gary Nash noted: “Bradley’s arduous sleuthing has produced some surprising and important results.”

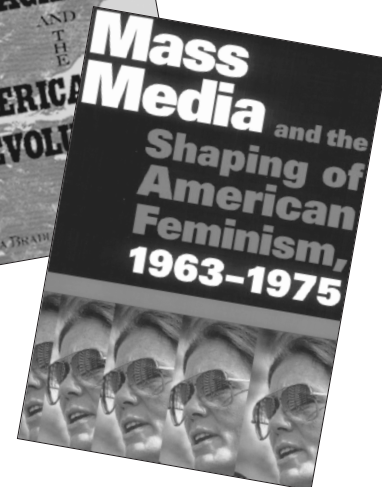
Bradley holds degrees from the University of Missouri (BJ), San Francisco State College (MA) and the University of Texas (Ph. D. in American Civilization). She is professor and the former chair of the Department of Journalism at Philadelphia’s Temple University. Her current work explores the intersections of mass communications and the shaping of the arts in the first part of the 20th Century.



Patricia Bradley



UNIVERSITY PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI 1998



UNIVERSITY PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI 2003

Encourage Female Students To Cover Sports

BY JOANNE C. GERSTNER



Joanne Gerstner

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See CONT

The question was innocent, articulated with a pleading tone. “Is it OK for women to work as sports journalists?” asked the female college sophomore who attended a major university. “I think I might want to try that, but my professor said women don’t do well in that job.” My heart sank. Indeed, I was the perfect person to ask as I have been sports writer for 12 years, a college instructor for three years, and have been the president for the Association for Women in Sports Media (AWSM) since June 2004.

But the very fact that this college woman felt she needed to ask permission to become a sports writer was desperately wrong. Academia had failed her. Her advisers had failed her. And the college frat-boy atmosphere at her college paper had led her to believe that maybe women were not “allowed” to excel in sports journalism. We sat down and talked. I told her about my job and my life. After about 10 minutes of give and take, she smiled and thanked me. She was going to try to write some sports articles for a local paper and see how things went.

Her final words will always ring in my head. She said, “Is there any way you can talk to my professor and let her know about what you do? She’s the one who told me women don’t do well in the field.”

Let her know . . . She’s the one. I had assumed the professor who had talked this talented young woman out of sportswriting was a man. I was wrong. The world has changed mightily in the past 25 years for women in sports media. We’re no longer pariahs.

We no longer need appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court to attain equal access rights in the locker room. Many important battles have been won. Women are staff writers, copy editors, photographers and designers in virtually every major newspaper. Female reporters and anchors are starring nightly on ESPN and FOX sports broadcasts. But the ugly truth is this: we’re in the door, but things are not perfect. Few of us have moved up into management or columnist jobs. Objectification, especially on TV, is still the norm. And some in academia still think this field is not the “proper” thing for women. The future of my business starts in college where the journalists are developed. If women are not encouraged, fostered, mentored and developed as sports journalists, we as a whole will not continue to advance. We gain in power and numbers, translating into advancement, it is hoped, through new blood entering the field.

The ground floor

I talk to many professors on the numerous campus visits I do every year on behalf of AWSM. Some are amazing advocates for women in sports. Those professors tell their students about AWSM and the history of women in the field. They prod their students to apply for our internships and scholarships. When they can’t answer something about how things are today for women in sports media, they ask us. Other professors are quizzical about female sports writers or still operate on misconceptions or outdated info. A professor recently proudly told me about his

Encourage Female Students (CONTINUED)

sports journalism students. He has them write an opinion paper each semester, centering on the discrimination of women journalists not being fully allowed into locker rooms.

When I kindly told him that we are indeed fully allowed into locker rooms, he was surprised. He thought we were partially allowed in, depending on the individual team's rules and regulations. He had been a sportswriter in the 1970s, and that's the way things were conducted back then. I was very happy to let him know about the Supreme Court decision and how times have changed.

I've also met professors – both male and female – who flat-out think women do not belong in the field because we don't "know" sports or they have morality issues with us being in locker-room atmospheres. They wear their resistance as a badge of pride, as if they are taking a stand against something that's contaminating the business.

We talk, and I am very glad for the open discourse. There is still some degree of fear about women in the field. We are integrating one of the last male-dominated, males-only professions – save for the Vatican – and change can be fearful.

The negativity can also be furthered if the female student wants to gain experience at the campus newspaper or radio/TV station. Encouraging environments are sometimes lacking. Male students frequently run the college sports departments, leading to a frat-house atmosphere.

I've talked to female students who have quit their student papers because they felt like outsiders. Yet others complain about not getting a shot to cover the campus football or men's basketball teams, often the marquee beats. Instead, because of their gender, they have to cover the women's teams.

Student media outlets are supposed to be teaching tools. And in this case, they're teaching some it's OK to discriminate in sports departments.

The future

The reality is: I probably will never cover the Detroit

Pistons in the next 50 years where the coach is female or the stars of the team are women. I walk into my job every day knowing I work with virtually all men, and my team is all male.

I have no problem with that, and my co-workers and the Pistons have no issues. I do my job, act professionally, they act professionally, and that's it.

But I've also covered women's World Cup soccer finals and the Olympics – events where female athletes shine globally.

Men cover women athletes. Women cover male athletes.

The world is changing, and we're part of it.

The strongest female journalism students have supportive professors. The unlucky have ones who sow seeds of doubt and derision, or simply stand silent.

Strong journalism and communications faculty advisers can dramatically impact these situations. The purpose of higher education is learning – and that means more than books and AP style manuals.

The women are out there, waiting for their chance.

AWSM received more applicants than ever – double over 2004 - for our summer 2006 internship and scholarship program. I have many professors contacting us for information, joining AWSM or simply asking us to come speak to their classes.

The word is spreading: women are getting ahead in sports media because this is a worthy and worthwhile field.

The change is happening. It's not as fast as we want it, nor is it as comprehensive.

The beautiful part is that you as college professors and instructors can be the first witnesses to this change – and you can also be the catalysts.

Joanne C. Gerstner is a sports writer with the Detroit News. She is an associate adjunct professor of communications at Madonna University in Livonia, Mich. She is a graduate of Oakland University and the Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University. For more information about the Association for Women in Sports Media, go to www.awsmonline.org.

“The future of my business starts in college where journalists are developed. If women are not encouraged, fostered, mentored and developed as sports journalists, we as a whole will not continue to advance.”

JOANNE GERSTNER

*AWSM PRESIDENT
Association for Women in Sports Media
DETROIT NEWS SPORTSWRITER*

WANTED: Torch Carriers

BY TERESA MASTIN

The flame atop the CSW torch is but a faint glimmer, and those of us who have served in CSW leadership positions during the past several years are aware of the great need to pump up the flame.

The voices representing the CSW membership need to become broader. Torch carriers are wanted.

I believe our best chance to strengthen the flame is through increased active involvement from existing members. Therefore, I'd like to strongly encourage all current members, especially associate and full professors, to become involved. If only six members who are passively involved would commit to making CSW a priority for the next two to five years, we could ensure a seamless leadership transition from conference year to conference year. This process would enable us to set goals and objectives beyond the conference calendar year. It also would mean that we would not be challenged to fill the leadership positions dictated by our bylaws, unlike the situation at the CSW membership meeting in San Antonio last August when such a challenge arose.

Whereas I totally understand that we are all extremely busy and overextended, it is critically important that we not pass up the wonderful opportunity to have our voices acknowledged and listened to at the highest level. Please consider this column my call for action to you personally. Contact me if you have a desire to help pump up the CSW flame. In the next newsletter, I'd like to introduce those of you who can become more involved so that we can begin planning before the San Francisco members' meeting. I look forward to hearing from you.

I have been a member of AEJMC for more than a dozen years. I first learned of AEJMC when I was a recipient of the Inez Kaiser Graduate Student of Color Awards. This award honors Inez Kaiser, the first African American woman to belong to the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and to head a public relations agency with national clients. The award provides graduate students of color with a free one-year membership in AEJMC and the Public Relations Division (PRD). The goals of the award are to encourage involvement and to broaden the diversity of voices within the PRD and AEJMC. I have maintained my membership ever since and began serving in AEJMC leadership positions while working toward my doctorate. I first became involved with the Internships and Careers Interest Group, then the PRD, and now the CSW.

Being active in AEJMC has provided me with numerous opportunities that have positively affected my career. Throughout the years, I have gained an insider's view of how the organization works. Being an active member has granted me visibility that has resulted in recognition from my chairs and deans, favorable annual evaluations, and much coveted travel funds even in the past few years when budgets have been severely restricted. In addition, when I decided to re-enter the job market, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that various programs across the country knew who I was and found my extensive AEJMC service attractive. Most recently, my AEJMC involvement was extremely helpful when I submitted the names of outside reviewers I believe most qualified to examine my tenure and promotion dossier.

Furthermore, it is through AEJMC that I have formed some of my strongest collegial research partnerships. I am certain that my path and that of several of my most trusted colleagues would never have crossed had we not had the opportunity to either work together on program planning or present on the same research panel. Simply put, my somewhat serendipitous introduction to AEJMC has had a tremendously positive impact on my academic career. Yes, it is a lot of hard work at invariably inconvenient times during the semesters, but the end results for both the organization and my personal gain have been tremendous.

I began thinking consciously about the win-win situation active involvement in AEJMC has afforded me while I was attending the AEJMC Board of Directors meeting in Savannah, Ga., this past December. As the second-vice head of CSW, I sit on the AEJMC Executive Board. This responsibility is not to be taken lightly as it is both an honor and a privilege to be entrusted with advocating for the status of women in both journalism and mass communication education and the workforce.

Please consider involvement in CSW. The following are the CSW positions and responsibilities as dictated in the bylaws:

SECOND YEAR CO-CHAIR—also known as the advocacy chair, is the person who served the previous year as the First Year Co-Chair. This person also serves on the AEJMC Executive Committee and assist the First Year Co-Chair in her duties as needed.

FIRST YEAR CO-CHAIR—also known as the management chair, oversees the activities of the Commission and shall appoint any committees and task forces deemed necessary. In addition the First Year Co-Chair coordinates liaison between the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on the Status of Minorities and other groups within AEJMC actively engaged in supporting the non-discrimination and multicultural inclusiveness clause in the AEJMC Constitution.

VICE CHAIR—assists the First Year Co-Chair and is responsible for preparation of the program for the annual meeting.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR—responsible for publication of a newsletter.

RECORDER—responsible for taking minutes at the annual meeting. The Recorder is also responsible for coordinating membership drives.

RESEARCH CHAIR—responsible for conducting competitions for research papers to be presented at the annual meeting in compliance with requirements of the AEJMC Standing Committee on Research.



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, AEJMC

Business Minutes

San Antonio, Texas • August, 2005

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY SECOND-YEAR CO-CHAIR JULIE ANDSAGER.

Approval of Minutes Copies of the minutes were distributed with no objections.

Old Business CSW has \$1,330 in its operating account. Special thanks went to Maria Marron for funding the newsletter. The Donna Allen Award could use more funding. Julie Andsager mentioned that the Mary Gardner Award funds could be increased from \$250 to \$300. Donations will be posted in the AEJMC membership form next year to support this effort.

Addendum CSW is part of a task force to create a resolution regarding the "Journalism Schools Initiative." After much discussion, Beverly Merrick motioned to draft a resolution. Teresa Mastin seconded the motion. A discussion followed, and the motion was carried with no objections. The resolution states the following:

Resolution The membership decided to present the following resolution at the AEJMC business meeting:

- Whereas the inclusion of women and minorities is integral to the mission of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication; and
- Whereas a diverse population of journalism educators, students and practitioners is necessary to fairly and accurately represent the views and the interests of a democratic society;
- Whereas the Carnegie-Knight Initiative has recognized the need to foster and encourage excellence in journalism education;
- Whereas the Carnegie-Knight Initiative, despite this worthy goal, has selected schools that are not representative of journalism and mass communication programs across the United States in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender;
- Whereas the Carnegie-Knight Initiative does not include a fair representation of journalism and mass communication programs, undergraduate and graduate, public and private, large and small;
- Whereas the Carnegie-Knight Initiative does not include the leading journalism and mass communication education organizations such as AEJMC and ASJMC as collaborative partners;
- Whereas the Commission on the Status of Women on the eleventh of August 2005 unanimously voted to recommend that AEJMC stand behind its commitment to diversity;

Be it resolved that AEJMC urge the Carnegie-Knight Initiative to be more inclusive by inviting a more diverse pool of schools, faculty and students to participate in the discourse and projects being undertaken.

Nomination and Election of Officers:

Immediate Past Chair – Julie Andsager

Second-Year Co-Chair/Advocacy – Teresa Mastin

First-Year Co-Chair/Management – Elizabeth Burt

Program Chair – Evonne Whitmore

Research Chair – Brenda Wrigley

Recorder – Cory Armstrong

Newsletter Editor – Maria Marron

New Business

Teresa Mastin reported that many cities were considered for the 2009 convention. CSW decided that Boston would be the first preference. Cincinnati and Montreal were secondary choices. Julie commented that March 1 is the 2006 deadline for the awards. The members are comfortable with this cut-off date.

Brenda Wrigley reported there were seven panels and six research sessions. She encouraged people to submit for next year.

Evonne Whitmore reported that there were 35 submissions, 19 faculty and 16 students. The numbers were slightly down from last year's papers.

Michelle McCoy shared that the breakfast for new members went somewhat well and thanked CSW for allowing her to serve on the board.

Maria Marron supported the need for more funding of the newsletter, along with broadening the content for more essay submissions and creative ideas.

Erika Engstrom was busy with the silent auction. More than \$1,000 was raised.

Awards

Mary Gardner Award for Graduate Student Research

Recipient: Kamille A. Gentles, University of Michigan
Title: West Indian Women, Body Image, and Television

Mary Ann Yodelis Smith Award for Feminist Scholarship (MAYS)

Recipient: Jan Whitt, University of Colorado, Boulder
Title: Secret Sharers: The Other Women in American Journalism
Jan thanked the organization.

Donna Allen Award for Feminist Advocacy

Recipient: Michele Weldon, Northwestern University, author, activist, focusing on surviving domestic violence

Outgoing Officers

Julie thanked the officers for their help this year, honoring their service with certificates.

– THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED –

Media Should Expand Concept of Diversity to Include "Internationals"

BY GITTE LAASBY

The population of foreign-born citizens in the United States is growing, but the U.S. media have not yet acknowledged that population as an element of diversity.

In 1995, 31.3 million out of 280 million American citizens were born outside of the United States, according to the U. S. Census Bureau. That's 11.1 percent – a number that will continue to grow in coming years because of globalization.

Just nine years later, in 2004, the Census Bureau estimated that 34.3 million out of almost 286 million American citizens were foreign born. That's 12 percent – or one-eighth – of potential newspaper consumers. And the number is growing.

In recent years especially, culture clashes have been the source of major conflicts and news events. A better intercultural understanding could help prevent such conflicts and change the reputation of America as isolationist and culturally egoistical.

Corporate policies may not reflect this, but the

United States is part of a global environment and economy in which cultural knowledge and international understanding are more important than ever. Those are just some of the aspects where international employees are assets. Yet, the number of internationals in newsrooms is stagnant at minimal levels.

The lack of understanding of what internationals can contribute to the U.S. media, and the resulting lack of commitment to employing them, becomes a hindrance to internationals like myself who want to work in American

newsrooms and contribute what we regard as "real" diversity.

I'm frustrated by



Gitte Laasby

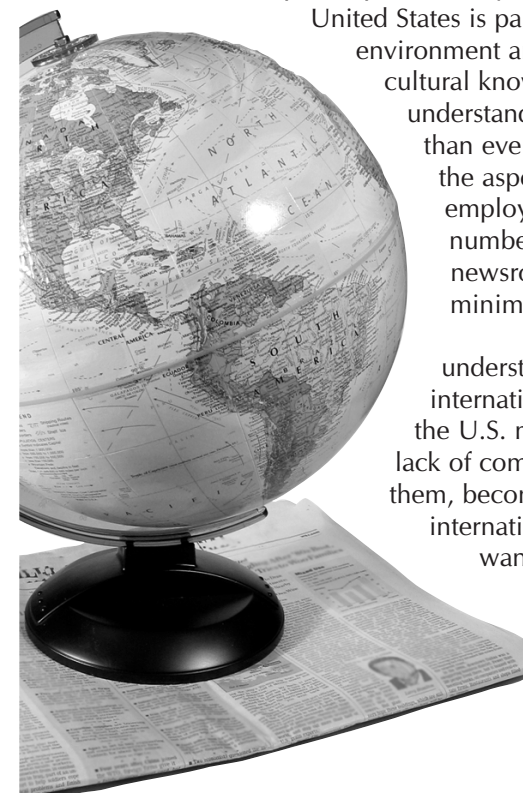
the way media corporations interpret "diversity" in the newsroom. While much attention is given to fostering greater racial diversity in newsrooms around the country – with some success – there appears to be a reluctance to offer the same consideration to another minority whose views are just as diverse: internationals.

When I came to the United States from Denmark about three years ago, I had a somewhat idealized view of what this country stands for.

My American history teachers in Denmark taught me that America was the "melting pot" where people of all nationalities and skin colors have the opportunity to fulfill the American dream. My professors in graduate journalism school at Michigan State University emphasized a similar ideal with lectures about diversity in the newsroom.

Being only one Dane out of 45,000 students at MSU, I figured that I would certainly count as a minority and diverse. But I would soon find out that reality rarely lives up to that ideal, at least by my definition.

After graduating with my master's degree in journalism, I took advantage of the opportunity that international graduates have to get a year's practical experience to work within their field of study: I landed a job as a reporter at a small Michigan daily in May 2004 and spent the following year putting in my best effort. I excelled at my job and impressed my editors in the hope



Diversity: Include Internationals (CONTINUED)

that the company would want to sponsor a work visa to keep me once my employment authorization ran out.

I approached my editor about my situation, armed with visa facts and numbers from the human resources department, documenting that it was cheaper to keep me than to train a new hire. My editor and publisher supported my request, but the corporate division declined twice, claiming it was "corporate policy" not to sponsor visas and that the company didn't want to set a precedent with my request.

Armed with great recommendations from my editor and former professors, I started looking for another job.

Corporate Policy

Lots of U.S. news outlets project the image of being diverse and offering so-called "multi-cultural" coverage. Many people consider Gannett, the largest media conglomerate in the United States, the frontrunner in that respect. Alas, having read its policy to "offer a diverse environment where opportunity is based on merit," I applied for reporting jobs with the company at two small Michigan newspapers whose requirements easily matched my qualifications and experience. At both places, the editors complimented me for my clips and skills and enthusiastically approached corporate officials to find out whether they could sponsor a work visa for me.

The response from corporate was clear. One editor simply told me, "We can't do the visa." When asked, she admitted that the visa requirement was the only reason they couldn't hire me although, as she added, "We really liked you."

The other editor said corporate officials had been "less than supportive" about the visa issue and had told him, "Don't bother." Based on these cases, I have no other option than to conclude that the so-called diversity policy isn't practiced at Gannett when it comes to international candidates at the corporation's smaller papers.

My experience in the seven months that followed indicates that other corporations – not editors – have the same policy or perception. My résumé lists a master of arts in journalism, a master of arts in English, a bachelor of arts in English and a year's experience in journalism. Yet it took 44 applications to newspapers in six states before I finally got a job offer from a family-owned paper in northern Indiana. That happened nine days before I was scheduled to fly back to Denmark and never come back.

The challenge for many internationals is to persuade a potential employer that it's worth it to pay at least \$3,000, including lawyer fees, for a work visa – a financial burden legally placed on the employer – and to wait for a month or more for the new hire to be authorized to work.

Perhaps it plays a role that employers don't hear any kudos or complaints about the ratio of internationals in their newsrooms. We aren't counted in traditional "diversity" employment statistics the way that other groups are, although we contribute as much, if not more, to diversity.

For newspapers to be successful, diversity groups argue, they must be relevant to all perspectives and, of course, their readers.

Can newspapers – and news media in general – in the United States be truly diverse and culturally sensitive without hiring "internationals" as reporters and editors?

I hope that corporate officials will one day realize that foreign nationals have an equally "diverse" perspective to contribute to the news business as people of other ethnicities.

True diversity in the newsroom is not just a matter of skin color or gender, but it is about having a wide spectrum of thought and opinion from people of diverse backgrounds.

Gitte Laasby is a Danish citizen who works as a reporter for the *Truth* in Elkhart, Ind. She first came to the United States from Denmark as an exchange student at Michigan State University in 2001. She has a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in English from the University of Aarhus in Denmark and a master's degree in journalism from Michigan State University.

"True diversity in the newsroom is not just a matter of skin color or gender, but it is about having a wide spectrum of thought and opinion from people of diverse backgrounds."

GITTE LAASBY

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Tara Connell, vice president, corporate communications, Gannett, said the company "weighs all the considerations," when hiring. "Someone who is a Caucasian from England is not considered unless they contribute to diversity," she said. "Gannett's desire is to reflect the community."

GANNETT'S DIVERSITY CATEGORIES:

- AFRICAN AMERICAN • ASIAN AMERICAN • AGE • DISABILITY
- ECONOMIC STATUS • GENDER • HISPANIC AMERICAN
- MULTICULTURAL • MUSLIM-ARAB AMERICAN • NATIVE AMERICAN
- PACIFIC ISLANDER • SEXUAL ORIENTATION

WEBSITE URL:

<http://timewarp.gannett.com/newsdept/files/diversityfront.shtml>

2005 Mary Gardner Award Silent Auction Raises More than \$1,200

The Commission on the Status of Women's Mary Gardner Graduate Student Research Award fund now stands at \$4,474, thanks to some \$1,200 raised at our second (annual, we hope!) silent auction held at the AEJ convention in San Antonio.

The brainchild of CSW member extraordinaire Kitty Endres, the 2005 silent auction offered some 40 items, from signed books to feminist-oriented collectibles. Thanks to Kitty's hard work collecting a variety of auction goodies, we had a slew of great things up for bid, including signed copies of Lynn Sherr's *Failure Is Impossible*, *Founding Sisters* and *Madam President* by Eleanor Clift, and *Founding Mothers* by Cokie Roberts.

Organizers Julie Andsager and Erika Engstrom also spent hours on the Internet over the summer, looking for unusual items and exploring the fun world of e-Bay. Andsager donated several signed books and book/collectible packages, including the *Fountain of Age*, signed by Betty Friedan, an Ida B. Wells books and stamp lapel pin package, and an art book on female photographers. Extra items were donated by AEJMC "convention guy" Fred Williams (our bud!) who also helped with getting our set-up arrangements squared away, and Linda Steiner, who donated her collectible, framed photo of Babe Ruth.

Also contributing to our array of journalism-related items were generous authors such as David Mindich, who signed a copy of his book *Tuned Out*, Judith Sylvester and Suzanne Huffman, who donated signed copies of *Women Journalists at Ground Zero* and *Reporting from the Front*, and David Nord (*Faith in Reading*). CSW member Michelle McCoy went shopping at the Rivercenter next door and brought back a beautiful spa basket, rounding out the variety of auction goodies. Other collectibles included tote bags, a place setting of "Votes for Women" china, classic Rosie the Riveter souvenirs and an Iowa Hawkeyes memorabilia package, donated by Pamela Creedon. The item receiving the highest bid was a rare "Jessica the Journalist" doll, which went for \$100!

During the set-up before the CSW Signature Session on Feminist Advocacy, Julie, Erika, Michelle and Brenda Wrigley quickly decided on how to create an aesthetically pleasing display while passersby looked curiously at the hubbub. Ann Colbert, Brenda, Michelle, and Erika kept a watchful eye on bidders and refreshment seekers (admonishing those who grabbed a cookie or two to bid—or else!).



Items offered at the 2005 Mary Gardner Silent Auction included reproduction "Votes for Women" chinaware, Rosie the Riveter souvenirs, and a hard-to-find Jessica the Journalist.

Once the CSW business meeting was over, several bidders anxiously waited for the auction to end – then headed straight for the checkout table, where Julie took command and worked the credit card machine with true élan. Help with closing up shop came from other volunteers (draftees, actually), including Erika's husband, Ted, and her boss, Dean Martha Watson of UNLV. Once the money had been counted and recounted, it was off to AEJ convention headquarters and Rich Burke, who kindly took our hard-earned dough.

On behalf of CSW, we thank everyone who gave so generously, both as item donors and bidders, and, especially, those who made extra donations to the Mary Gardner Scholarship. A special "thank you" goes to Kitty Endres, who was instrumental in making the auction a success. The hard work really paid off, and we are able to continue to foster feminist-related research within AEJMC. Some of us are already doing some sharp-eyed shopping for next year's auction. If you come across anything journalism-, mass media- or feminist-related, be sure to grab it and donate it for the 2006 silent auction!



Donna Allen

Call for Donna Allen Award for Feminist Advocacy

The Donna Allen Award recognizes feminist advocacy by a woman or group. This award honors Donna Allen, founder of the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press in Washington, D.C. The award is bestowed by the AEJMC Commission on the Status of Women. Submissions should demonstrate how the nominee's feminist media activism promotes the rights and freedoms of women and minorities across the world. Nominees need not be AEJMC members.
Deadline: Feb. 20



Mary Gardner

Call for Mary Gardner Award for Graduate Student Research

Graduate students who conduct research on women in journalism and mass communication are invited to apply for the Mary Gardner Award. This award is designed to fund research that has the potential to make an excellent contribution to the scholarship on women and journalism and mass communication. The award honors the late Mary Gardner, the first woman elected president of AEJMC. Applicants send four copies of a three-to-five page description of the project and its potential contribution and the application's qualifications for undertaking the project. A three-person panel judges the applications.
Deadline: April 15



*Mary Ann
Yodelis Smith*

Call for Mary Ann Yodelis Smith Award for Feminist Scholarship

Applications are invited for the Mary Ann Yodelis Smith (MAYS) Award which funds feminist scholarship that has the potential to make significant contributions to the literature of gender and media. First presented in 1995, it honors Mary Ann Yodelis Smith, a past president of AEJMC and long-time advocate for women in the academy. Applicants send four copies of a five-to-seven page description of the project and its potential contribution to the scholarship on gender and the media and a brief one-page description of the applicant's qualifications for undertaking the project. A three-person panel, including a past recipient of the award, judges applications.
Deadline: April 15



Call for Outstanding Woman in Journalism and Mass Communication Education

This award honors a woman who has represented women well through excellence and high standards. Nomination letters must detail that individual's contributions to journalism and mass communication education.
Deadline: April 15

PLEASE SEND APPLICATIONS, SUBMISSIONS, AND NOMINATIONS TO:

Teresa Mastin, CSW second-year co-chair, Department of Advertising, Public Relations, & Retailing
309 Comm Arts Bldg., Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1212



Gerrie Blake

Radio host Gerrie Blake brings "Women's Voices" to listeners of KUNV-FM in southern Nevada every Sunday afternoon.

"Women's Voices" Provides Musical Refuge in FM Landscape

BY ERIKA ENGSTROM

For two hours every Sunday afternoon, radio host Gerrie Blake casts a magical spell over the airwaves of the Las Vegas valley. If one could translate the beauty of an exquisite jewel into music, that is what Blake offers listeners on her show "Women's Voices" on KUNV 91.5 FM.

As a volunteer deejay at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas' public radio station, Blake, a formally trained illustrator with past ties to the art, music and literary scenes in New York and Los Angeles, has hosted "Women's Voices" since 1989. The show is marked not only by its unique musical format, but also by a sort of women's music "classroom" that Blake creates by providing listeners with album liner notes, record label information, and news and career histories of the artists she features.

Part of KUNV-FM's weekend cultural programming, "Women's Voices" serves as an example of the "second access model" of women's radio, where publicly owned stations devote a portion of air time to women who produce programs about and for women, as described by Susan Carter in her 2004 article, "A Mic of Her Own: Stations, Collectives, and Women's Access to Radio," in the *Journal of Radio Studies*. Begun in the 1970s by women's collectives around the country, these feminist programs continue today on public and university radio stations around the country, in the form of magazine, talk, and music shows. Examples include "Amazon Country" (WXPB-FM at Penn State), "Amazon Radio," (WPKN-FM in Bridgeport, Conn.), "Suffragette Station" (KTUH-FM, Honolulu), and "Estrogen Nation" (WRFL, Lexington, Ky.),

“Women’s Voices” (CONTINUED)

which went off the air in 2004. One can find lists of feminist radio shows like these on feminist and folk-music sites on the Internet, such as amazonradio.com, offourbacks.org, and CreativeFolk.com.

Women’s Music Defined

Originally, “women’s music” was defined as “music by women, for women, about women, and financially controlled by women,” notes Cynthia Lont in her chapter, “Women’s Music: No Longer a Small Private Party,” in *Feminist Frontiers IV* (1997, p. 126). In that definition, women were involved in all aspects of performance, recording, production, and distribution. Women’s music was created in the late 1960s and early 1970s to counter the male-dominated mainstream music industry, which was based in patriarchy, where women’s experiences were subsumed or completely ignored, according to Lont.

Thus, the impetus for women’s music was the symbolic annihilation of women and their experiences apart from men within popular music. The term “women’s music” referred to more than just the music, as Lont explains: “The individuals and groups that produced the music were a tangible example of the power of women organized apart from the dominant culture” (p. 127).

Unfortunately, notes Lont, “Unlike other subcultural music forms, women’s music has received little attention in either mainstream or music industry media” (p. 126).

Today, radio programs like “Women’s Voices” literally serve as keepers of the faith – ensuring a place for women’s music and enlightening listeners to a whole world of music they otherwise wouldn’t hear. Blake sees her mission as giving the “thousands and thousands” of unknown artists an outlet, and educating listeners about a world of music otherwise ignored by conventional radio.

“All these wonderful records are out there that don’t get heard,” Blake says. “I play music written and performed by women – all genres. People that you know and people you should know.” Much of the music she plays comes from her personal collection, and she learns about new releases by reading “a passel” of music magazines.

No longer just about songs featuring “a girl with a guitar,” women’s music as presented on “Women’s Voices” encompasses a range of musical formats and subject matter. The basic criterion for inclusion is that the material must feature a female voice. The “Women’s Voices”

playlist reflects the inclusiveness of the feminist – and feminine – communicative world view. “The gamut runs all over the place!” Blake says. “Sensitive singer-songwriter, political activist, hip jazz, punk, experimental – both vocalists and instrumentalists, country/alt[ernative] country, blues, folk, alternative rock and pop, too, are important to me, even some spoken word now and then and humorous song – yeah, you name it, I’ve probably played it.”

A Musical Buffet

Indeed, Blake offers listeners a veritable musical buffet of genres and artists. One can hear the powerful voice of Annie Lennox, from both her solo and Eurythmics albums, the delicate beauty of Natalie Merchant from 10,000 Maniacs singing “Trouble Me,” the sweeping, “power country” ballads by the acclaimed band Sugarland, which includes male and female members, and the chanteuse-like jazz stylings of Diana Krall. New Age and Celtic music fans get treated to the many-layered instrumentals of Loreena McKennitt and her driving, exotic-sounding “Night Ride Across the Caucasus.”

Songs reminiscent of Latin-inspired big band music, such as Pink Martini’s “Let’s Never Stop Falling in Love” (from their whimsically titled album, “Hang On, Little, Tomato”) add a funky, fun flavor to the mix. Blake also includes experimental-type, spoken word recordings from avant-garde performers such as Laurie Anderson and, from the 1960s, the French artist Nico. Listeners are transported to the New York jazz club scene of the 1950s when Blake plays vocalist Blossom Dearie’s recordings (you might remember the delicate, “doll-house” voice heard on the Schoolhouse

Rock song “Figure Eight” from the early 1970s).

Listeners get schooled in women’s music history as well, as Blake also features “classic” women’s music performers from the 1970s, such as Holly Near and Judee Sill. During one show, listeners not only heard Sill’s ballad “The Kiss,” which Blake called “just divine,” but also learned it was from the album “Heart Food,” produced in 1973, the first release by David Geffen, and available in a limited, 5,000-copy edition on the Rhino label. In addition to songs by contemporary women’s music artists, such as Sarah McLachlan, Ani DiFranco, and Shawn Colvin, Blake includes new material by mainstream pop acts such as Blondie and rocker Joan Jett, who’s added a unique, hard rock twist to “Love Is All Around,” the theme to “The Mary Tyler Moore Show.”

Lyrics are of utmost importance as well. While Blake, a self-professed, “unapologetic lesbian-feminist,” doesn’t consider herself an activist, her politics are revealed in the choice of songs that include a political bent. For example,

she played songs about HIV, such as Lisa Coke’s “Three Times a Year,” to mark World AIDS Day. Other material addresses environmental issues, such as Heather Lev’s “If Cars Were Banned,” anti-war protests, or, during election time, politics. Blake devotes considerable time to gay/lesbian programming as well: “I think I owe it to my gay listeners and for diversity’s sake. Besides, I like it!”

A Sense of Humor

Blake’s sense of humor comes across in her choice of upbeat, melodic “novelty” songs such as “When Cats Take Over the World,” by singer-songwriter Jamie Anderson, and “There’s Viagra in the Water” written and performed by Camille West of the group Four Bitchin’ Babes. Humor and social commentary combine in Deirdre Flint’s self-produced upbeat, folk rock tune, “Sister Catherine Claire,” about “the coolest nun in the whole darn world” who taught her Catholic school students the rock ‘n’ roll “Our Father.” While the song is funny, it also has an underlying feminist message, as Flint sings that she’ll “come back to the banquet” one day when white smoke rises from the Vatican “declaring Pope Catherine Claire.” (Incidentally, Blake was among the first two students to graduate from a Las Vegas Catholic high school).

While the female voice serves as the key characteristic of “Women’s Voices,” Blake is conscious of the fact that the songs she chooses appeal to both men and women, songs that “are universal, relevant to both sexes.” Indeed, she estimates 90 percent of listener calls comes from men.

“Every one of these fellows thanks me for opening his eyes to the female point of view and the way women speak to their hearts and souls in a way male artists simply cannot or will not do,” she says. “I’m very happy with my male listenership.”

Newer artists receive airplay and exposure otherwise not available. The community radio nature of KUNV-FM allows Blake to create ties with local artists – and their families. For example, the group Switchyard includes Las Vegas native Rachel Belinski, whose uncle is a long-time listener and sent Blake the group’s album, and whose mother called Blake to tell her the story behind the album. Singer Janet Bates sent a preliminary cut of her anti-war protest song, “Women in Black” to Blake directly. Such personal connections to local artists allow Blake to incorporate new material and

help promote women artists in a way that no commercial, mainstream station possibly could.

Today, the women’s music scene is “booming,” especially women who are producing their own CDs, compared with just 10 years ago, says Blake. The Lilith Fairs of the 1990s helped to bring women’s music to the forefront and inspired a new generation of women to write and record their own music.

“The Lilith Fairs were a turning point in women-making-music,” she notes. “And all these attendees saw women working together onstage, famous and not-so, all sharing their music, leaving vanities in their trailer: no ego-tripping!”

In her pursuit of finding music that “takes your breath away,” Blake finds herself “constantly amazed” at the wide scope of the music women are writing and performing. “I had no idea of the diversity of women in music when I took over the show because, until then, my musical world had been folk and classical and jazz, and I never had heard what was going on in alternative rock, for instance, and my ears were opened! So I want to bring as much of that diversity as I can to my listeners and just keep learning and expanding horizons, for me and for them.”

An Endangered Species

In today’s world of governmental deregulation, media conglomeration, and station automation, community radio, with its locally based and original radio programming, is becoming an endangered species. Programs such as “Women’s Voices” and others like it across the country provide a welcome respite from the cookie-cutter radio world of 20-song playlists, and advance the progress of women in culture, the media industry, and society in general. These havens of creativity need our involvement, not only in terms of listenership, but financially, as public radio finds itself increasingly dependent on private support.

Regarding the future of women’s music, and its status on the airwaves, Lont rightly observed, “The question remains whether the message of women’s music has been heard by enough people to result in more changes than just the acceptance of a few women performers in mainstream music” (p. 126). Today, women broadcasters like Gerrie Blake continue the work started by our feminist foremothers to have our voices heard – in words and music that speak to all.

Today, radio programs like *Women’s Voices* literally serve as keepers of the faith – ensuring a place for women’s music and enlightening listeners to a whole world of music they otherwise wouldn’t hear.

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