

CIVIC *and* CITIZEN Journalism

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

www.has.vcu.edu/civic-journalism
ccjig.blogspot.com

SUMMER 2010

Citizen sites taking aim at improved credibility

By **Kirsten Johnson**
CCJIG Co-Vice Chair

Citizen journalism sites have always been at a disadvantage when it comes to perceived credibility from the public.

First, many people still do not know what CJ sites are and don't have a clear cognitive model in place for how to approach the content. Second, unlike traditional media sources where managers have spent decades trying to build credible reputations, most citizen journalism sites do not have the resources to invest in crafting such an image. Third, lack of editorial oversight, and the words "unfiltered" and "unedited" content posted on the site itself and on stories can cause concern for users and hurt perceived credibility. As someone who studies web site credibility I am always on the lookout for how sites are trying to make strides in this area.

One site that is trying to make headway in establishing a sense of credibility is allvoices.com. Launched in 2008, allvoices.com

See **CREDIBILITY**, page 8

DENVER CONVENTION PREVIEW



Photo by Mary Beth Callie

CCJIG programming co-vice chair Deborah Chung, background, flings a marker toward the target during the "chip auction" convention-scheduling session at AEJMC's winter meeting in Jacksonville in December.

Inside

As usual, CCJIG has a terrific convention lineup set for Denver, Aug. 3 - 7. Details inside the newsletter:

- J-Lab luncheon offers update on Networked Journalism project, **p. 3**
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- Research sessions, **p. 5**. Listing **p. 7-8**
- Panels, **p. 5**

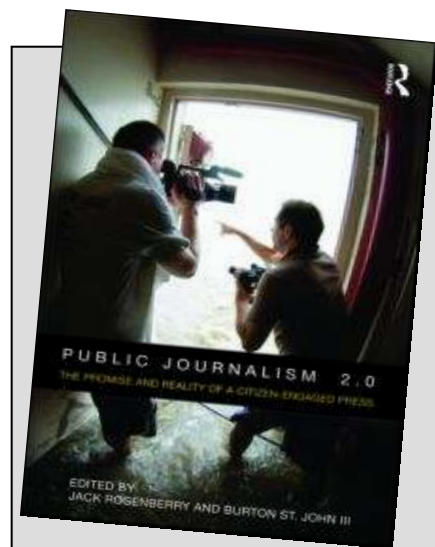
And be sure to attend the member meeting, 8:30 p.m. **Thursday Aug. 5.**

New book shows value of CCJIG as scholarly networking venue

By **Mary Beth Callie**
CCJIG Chair

As Burton St. John stood in front of his Scholar-to-Scholar poster at the AEJMC Convention in Washington, D.C. in 2007, several ex-reporters approached to discuss his findings on public journalism and propaganda.

St. John, who worked in public relations for 15 years, learned about the public journalism movement as a



See **BOOK**, page 9

JTM explores transforming journalism with innovation and unheard voices

By Sue Ellen Christian
CCJIG Teaching Chair

A group of journalists, educators, technologists, new media journalists and grantors met in Detroit recently as part of a three-and-a-half-day gathering to explore how to capture and represent often-unheard voices in communities. Detroit was an apt setting for this eclectic group of journalists and non-journalists looking for innovative ways to capture more diversity in community coverage as journalism looks to reinvent itself.

This was the third Journalism That Matters gathering I've been to, and each has emphasized the mission of bringing citizens and diverse communities into the news fold in relevant and sustainable ways.

This one was a bit different as it was capped by four presentations from JTM participants who pitched entrepreneurial ideas to four "coaches." Journalism educators of all stripes can get some cutting-edge ideas for curriculum planning, classroom discussions and even projects

simply by coasting through the various sessions that are formulated and led by participants. See the list at: <http://journalismthatmatters.org/view/detroit-2010-sessions>.

A session on community building and community outlook raised the plea of how new voices are being trained in the skills of storytelling and how to represent all communities. A session on "Transitioning Legacy Community Journalism to New Tools and Concepts," wrangled with community newspaper leaders' fears about change and the need for a toolbox of innovations. "Right now most online tools are for quick information sharing, not for in-depth news stories," say the session notes. "In a community, conversation is free, information is free, opinions and comments are free. What do we get people to pay for? People will pay for insight, depth, truth, connecting people with the issues that impact their lives, making connections that others cannot make, and solving community problems."

In other areas of the JTM site, edu-

cators can get some good material. For example, the New News Ecology page (at <http://journalismthatmatters.org/content/about-journalism-matters>) offers some artwork that captures big ideas about the changing face of journalism, and hence, journalism education. These images are worth a presentation for a class discussion or a kick off to a semester. Another aspect of the site worth sharing with students for purposes of discussion and debate is an Open Letter to Journalists from one of the JTM founders, Peggy Holman (<http://journalismthatmatters.org/content/open-letter-journalists>).

Ask students what they think of Holman's list of what journalists can expect from citizens. Holman writes in part that as a citizen: "I'll offer you my stories, my questions, as well as my information, knowledge, expertise and creativity to support stories you are doing. I'll listen to your counsel because I know you are looking at a situation on my behalf and may have more information or see something happening before the rest of us. Between what I want and what you believe I need to hear, together, we'll get clearer about what is newsworthy, what stories need to be told."

CCJIG officers discuss personal ties to study of the field

By Anne Golden Worsham
CCJIG Secretary

You can sometimes feel overwhelmed as you peruse the list of the AEJMC divisions and interest groups and make your decision about which group to join and which business meeting to attend.

This task can be even more daunting as you look over the convention schedule and realize that many business meetings are scheduled at the same time, and therefore you have to make the agonizing choice between attending the business meetings of

Read more online

To read officers' thoughts on how they developed an interest in civic and citizen journalism and became involved with the group go to:

ccjig.blogspot.com

two or three (or even more) interest groups or divisions that appeal to you.

In the midst of all of these choices, you may wonder why you should get involved with the Civic and Citizen

Journalism Interest Group. There are several reasons to do so.

First of all, the interest group's scholarship involves the analysis of issues that are gaining importance in the world of journalism, as different media outlets are experimenting with various ideas that emerge from civic and citizen journalism.

Second of all, I can attest to the fact that the interest group officers are some of the nicest people you would ever hope to meet. They will help you get involved in this group and provide

See OFFICERS, page 3

J-Lab project participants in for 2nd year

By Jan Schaffer
J-Lab Executive Director

When Gannett shut down the *Tucson Citizen's* printing press last March, it left a web-only news site with few resources.

Then, last summer TucsonCitizen.com editor Mark Evans agreed to participate in J-Lab's Networked Journalism project to test how old, traditional media could collaborate with new media in their communities.

His partners of choice? Five local sports bloggers. Now, almost a year later, the TC Sports Network has grown to nine members and Evans credits it with driving "more than 30 percent of our site traffic from October to April."

"Our website didn't really start growing until we created the sports network through our J-Lab grant," he reported. In addition, the network has beaten the local newspaper on stories, his site's Google page ranking has jumped and each of the network partners has seen traffic increases. Now, they are talking with Phoenix partners about exchanging sports content.

"I believe this could be central to a statewide network of sports blogs," Evans said.

When J-Lab asked five legacy news organizations to try a one-year pilot Networked Journalism project to explore how they might collaborate with five of their local websites, little did we expect it would turn out to be such a win-win for everyone.

All the networks have added new local partners, shared content and

worked out official partnership agreements and codes of conduct. Recently, all five have signed on for another year. They want to see if they can further develop revenue-sharing and content-sharing models.

CCJIG members can hear project participants talk about their networks at the CCJIG-sponsored luncheon on 12:15 p.m. Friday, Aug. 6, at the AEJMC convention. The luncheon, sponsored by J-Lab is free but you must register. Sign up at J-Lab's website (http://www.j-lab.org/page/register_for_2010_aejmc_luncheon/).

Many Similarities, Some Differences

Snaring partners was easier in some communities than others.

The *Seattle Times* quickly locked in its first five partners and has since grown its network to 30. It faced the most competition in wooing local media makers because another local site and a television station were also signing on partners.

The network has worked on a synchronized story about graffiti, posts news feeds on a portal page, and the Times invited some of its partners to question mayoral candidates. The *Seattle Times* demonstrated its project with a video at this year's American Society of News Editors convention.

The *Miami Herald* was the only traditional news organization to require partners to use individual sections, which it calls "channels" on its content management system. Among its guidelines: It's OK to link to the

content of others, but not to lift it. The Herald also has suggested ad rates.

Among Miami's Community News Network were two weekly newspaper chains. Two more partners have been added and more are planned to cover the city's Orthodox Jewish, Haitian and Brazilian communities.

The *Ashville Citizen-Times* calls its network WNC Line for Western North Carolina Local Information Cooperative and has created a nifty widget with partner feeds that bloggers and other publishers can easily add to their sites. It has added three college newspapers to its original network and done significant advertising and social media training.

The Charlotte News Network has also conducted ad sales, marketing and social-networking workshops and conferences. Going forward, it is planning sessions to teach people how to start community websites. "Unlike our previous models," said *The Charlotte Observer's* project leader Steve Gunn, "we are anticipating structuring the geographic locations of the sites in advance and then finding citizen partners."

"We have found that content generation – and content sharing – is easy. Each week about a dozen stories trade hands between partners," Gunn reported. "The biggest barrier to success and sustainability is establishing a revenue stream and we believe we now see a way to make this work."

Track project progress at www.j-lab.org/page/networked_journalism.

Officers

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service opportunities for you, if this is what you desire.

Recently several officers took a few moments to answer some questions about themselves that would help you get to know them better. Their answers are posted in an online Q&A. Make sure you visit the CCJIG

blog (<http://ccjig.blogspot.com>) to read about how your CCJIG officers developed their passion for civic and citizen journalism. In the process, you will also learn some fun personal details about their lives.

Newsroom Classroom

**Explore the overlap of newsroom, classroom from 2 angles
with a pair of pre-convention workshops Tuesday Aug. 3**
(Both co-sponsored by CCJIG)

Newsroom to Classroom: Adapting from JMC Pro to JMC Faculty

(Presented in collaboration with the Newspaper Division and Radio-TV Journalism Division)

Part I (Noon – 1:30) Putting your Experience to Work in the Academy

Moderated by Chris Waddle, Jacksonville State, with panelists: Al Cross, Kentucky; Pam Fine, Kansas; Pam Luecke, Washington and Lee; Michelle Weldon, Northwestern

Part 2 (1:30- 3 p.m.) : Whittling Your Research Wish List to a Workable Agenda

Moderated by Mitch McKenney, Kent State with panelists: Hub Brown, Syracuse;
Frank Fee, North Carolina; Gary Hanson, Kent State; Chris Roberts, Alabama

Journalism Schools as News Providers: Challenges and Opportunities

Facilitators: Geanne Rosenberg, CUNY's Baruch and Leonard Witt, Kennesaw State
3:30–7:30 p.m., followed by networking session. Registration required (\$39 fee)

(Presented with the support of the Harnisch Family Philanthropies,
University of Colorado—Boulder School of Journalism and Mass Communication & BBC College of Journalism)

Part I – What Is Changing and Why

Moderated by Joshua Benton, director, Nieman Journalism Lab, Harvard with panelists:
Karen Dunlap, president and managing director, Poynter Institute; Lynda Kraxberger,
Missouri; Nicholas Lemann, Columbia; Geneva Overholser, Southern California; Paul Voakes,
University of Colorado at Boulder

Part II – Grappling with Legal Risks and Other Challenges

Moderated by Geanne Rosenberg, CUNY's Baruch with panelists: David Ardia, co-founder and
director, Citizen Media Law Project, Harvard; Jane Kirtley, Minnesota; Rose Ann Robertson,
American; Steven D. Zansberg, media lawyer, partner, Levine Sullivan Koch & Schulz, L.L.P.

Part III – Innovative Approaches to Community Journalism

Moderated by Steve Shepard, CUNY with panelists: Joe Bergantino, Boston University; Monty
Cook, executive producer, Reese Felts Newsroom, North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Lydia Chavez,
California, Berkeley; Richard Jones, faculty advisor, New York University's Arthur L. Carter
Journalism Institute's The Local: East Village Project; Leonard Witt, Kennesaw State

Research scheduled earlier this year

By Glenn Scott
CCJIG Research Chair

You can savor all of the CCJIG research-paper sessions during the first two days of the AEJMC national conference this August in Denver.

Most years, sessions devoted to research presentations tend to be split over the four-day conference, taxing our capacity to absorb all of the new research presented on civic and citizen journalism.

But not this year. Our first session begins at 11:30 a.m. on the opening day, Wednesday, Aug. 4, with presentations that will feature the top faculty and student papers.

Our group's two other sessions will take place the following day, Thursday, starting with an 8:15 a.m. session devoted to papers exploring aspects of citizen journalism. We'll conclude neatly with five interesting CCJIG poster presentations at the popular scholar-to-scholar session

starting at 1:30 p.m.

Researchers will present a total of 14 papers selected from a total of 27 submissions to CCJIG, for a 52 percent acceptance rate. These figures are similar to numbers in 2009. Some worthy papers didn't make the cut, but perhaps some suggested revisions will help them to qualify next time.

Our interest group benefitted this year from the hard work of 20 review-

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Programming covers wide range of issues

By Deborah S. Chung
CCJIG Co-Vice Chair

This year we have another exciting group of panels covering a range of current and critical issues, from collaborative student-industry projects, women entrepreneur endeavors, blogging and citizen journalism research.

We'll kick off our programming on Tuesday during the pre-conference with a session discussing the transition from journalism professional to academic, as a result of newsroom economics and other individual career changes. Invited experts will share tips on how to adapt newsroom experience to successful pedagogy and research. Chris Waddle, Jacksonville State, and Mitch McKenney, Kent State, are moderating the panel. Following this initial session, Leonard Witt, Kennesaw State, and Geanne Rosenberg, Baruch CUNY, offer a three-part workshop addressing the changes, challenges, and opportunities for journalism schools as news providers. The workshop will present case studies and share expert opinions in pro-am journalism, journalism education and media law.

Starting Wednesday Seunghan Nah, Kentucky will lead a panel on issues and prospects in citizen journalism research. The panel will share current research examining citizen journalists and their activities, including role conceptions, motivations for contributing journalistic news content, credibility issues and their civic engagement and social capital. Sue Ellen Christian, Western Michigan, will then host a teaching panel introducing student collaborations with industry professionals and also citizen journalists. Topics for discussion include discrete course assignments to grant possibilities and J-school-led experiments.

On Thursday, Jan Schaffer, J-Lab/American, will moderate a session on what new media women entrepreneurs are doing in the industry. Hear from female site founders about what they are doing and why. On Friday, Anne Hoag, Pennsylvania State, will lead a session about those who blog professionally for a living, where panelists will discuss profitable blogging strategies, including alternative business models. Later, Jock Lauterer, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, will

moderate a panel looking at journalism programs that launched hyper-local lab newspapers and Web sites covering inner-city/at-risk neighborhoods in marginalized urban communities.

Our programming will end on Saturday with a panel organized and moderated by John McManus, gradethenews.org, on teaching news literacy where experts who teach critical thinking about news media will present ideas, techniques and resources that have proven most effective with students.

This year's efforts also represent multiple collaborative sessions with other divisions and interest groups: Community College Journalism Association, Community Journalism, Communication Technology, J-Lab, Media Management and Economics, Newspaper, and Radio-Television Journalism. Additionally, these sessions represent three types of panels: professional freedom and responsibility, teaching, and research. We thank all our co-sponsors and hope you will enjoy the various topics that we have worked hard to include in this year's program. Come join us in Denver!

CCJIG marks 15th anniversary

The officers who have led the group throughout its history are:

1994-95

Ed Lambeth, Missouri, Chair
David Craig, Missouri, Newsletter Editor

1995-96

Ed Lambeth, Missouri, Chair
James Lemert, Oregon; Cheryl Gibbs, (school not listed), Newsletter Editor

1996-97

Terri Brooks, Penn State, Chair
David Rubin, Syracuse, Vice Chair
Cheryl Gibbs, Erlham, Newsletter Editor

1997-98

Cheryl Gibbs, Erlham, Chair
Jan Schaffer, Pew Center for Civic Journalism, Vice Chair
Carol Reese Dykers, Salem, Newsletter Editor

1998-99

Cheryl Gibbs, Erlham, Co-Chair
Jan Schaffer, Pew Center for Civic Journalism, Co-Chair
Jack Morris, Adams State, Vice Chair
Kathryn Campbell, Wisconsin-Madison, Secretary/Newsletter Editor
Carol Reese Dykers, Salem, Research Chair

1999-2000

Jack Morris, Adams State, Chair
Cheryl Gibbs, Earlham, Co-Newsletter Editor
Charlyne Berens, Nebraska-Lincoln, Co-Newsletter Editor

2000-01

Kathy Campbell, Southern Oregon, Chair
Sharon Iorio, Wichita State, Co-Vice Chair
Walter Dean, Pew Center, Co-Vice Chair
Charlyne Berens, Nebraska, Secretary/Newsletter Editor
Frank Fee, North Carolina, Research Co-Chair
Renita Coleman, (school not listed) Research Co-chair

2001-02

Sharon Iorio, Wichita State, Chair
Kathy Campbell, Southern Oregon, Co-Vice Chair
David Loomis, North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Co-Vice Chair
Charlyne Berens, Nebraska, Secretary/Newsletter Editor
John Palen, Central Michigan, PF&R Chair
Cheryl Gibbs, Richmond, IN, Teaching Chair
Michael J. McDevitt, Colorado, Research

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CCJIG members publish books, gain other honors

• *Detecting Bull: How to Identify Bias and Junk Journalism in Print, Broadcast and on the Wild Web*, by **John McManus**, won the 2009 Sigma Delta Chi/Society of Professional Journalists research award. <http://detectingbull.com>.

• *Press Professionalization and Propaganda*, by **Burton St John III**, was released by Cambria Press in May 2010. <http://cambriapress.com/cambriapress.cfm?template=4&bid=396>

• *Public Journalism 2.0*, edited by **Jack Rosenberry** and **Burton St. John III**, with contributions from many current and past CCJIG officers and members, was published by

Routledge in January 2010. (See story, [page 1](#).)

• The College of Arts and Sciences at Western Michigan University has awarded **Sue Ellen Christian**, associate professor journalism and CCJIG teaching chair, the Outstanding Achievement in Teaching Award for 2009-2010. This award is based on outstanding teaching, including graduate and undergraduate classroom instruction, mentoring, independent study, field work, laboratory work, thesis and dissertation advising, undergraduate and graduate advising, curriculum innovation or any other work interacting with students to promote learning.

Research

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ers. Some of our faithful judged as many as five papers even as they dealt with the final exam period. They earned our gratitude for carrying out this important obligation to our discipline and interests. (See list of reviewers at end of this article.)

To those who have not often volunteered as reviewers, please take a shot next year. Our community of scholars relies on this service. We need everyone's expertise and generosity.

This year's group of reviewers lived up to CCJIG's reputation for providing useful feedback to help shape a meaningful research landscape.

Many submissions this year dealt with aspects of citizen journalism, a trend likely to continue as scholars examine more implications of developments in media technology and use. It's fair to imagine that the num-

ber of submissions to our group will continue to grow during the next few years.

Many thanks to this year's reviewers:

Cailin Brown, College of St. Rose
Mary Beth Callie, Regis University
Sue Ellen Christian, Western Michigan University
Naemah Clark, Elon University
Michelle Ferrier, Elon University
Anthony Hatcher, Elon University
Kirsten Johnson, Elizabethtown College
Jeremy Littau, Lehigh University
David Loomis, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Harlen Makemson, Elon University
Hans Meyer, Ohio University
Nikhil Moro, North Texas University
Mark Poepsel, University of Missouri
Sue Salinger, Rollins College
Glenn Scott, Elon University
Jeff South, Virginia Commonwealth University
Burton St. John III, Old Dominion University
Larry Taylor, Appalachian State
Chris Vaughan, Los Gatos, Calif.
Anne Golden Worsham, Brigham Young University

Officers

From page 1

2002-03

Cheryl Gibbs, Erlham, Chair
Kathy Campbell, Southern Oregon, Co-Vice Chair
Leonard Witt, Kennesaw State, Co-Vice Chair
David Loomis, North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Secretary
Les Anderson, Wichita State, Newsletter Editor
Michael J. McDewitt, Colorado, PF&R Chair
David Kurpius, Louisiana State, Teaching Chair
Chike Anyaegbunam, Kentucky, Research Chair

2003-04

Leonard Witt, Kennesaw State, Chair
Tony DeMars, Sam Houston State, Vice Chair
Cheryl Gibbs, Erlham, Secretary
Les Anderson, Wichita State, Newsletter Editor
PF&R Chair not listed
Chike Anyaegbunam, Kentucky, Teaching Chair
Charlyne Berens, Newbraska-Lincoln, Research Chair

2004-05

Tony DeMars, Sam Houston State, Chair

Andrea Frantz, Wilkes, Co-Vice Chair
Jeff South, Virginia Commonwealth, Co-Vice Chair
Leonard Witt, Kennesaw State, Secretary
Les Anderson, Wichita State, Newsletter Editor
Tony DeMars, Sam Houston State, Program Chair
PF&R Chair not listed
Venise Wagner, San Francisco State, Teaching Chair
Sandra Nichols, Towson, Research Chair

2005-06

Jeff South, Virginia Commonwealth, Chair
Andrea Frantz, Wilkes, Vice/Program Chair
David Loomis, Indiana of Pennsylvania, Secretary
Venise Wagner, San Francisco State, PF&R Chair
Sandra Nichols, Towson, Research Chair/Paper Competition
Tony DeMars, Sam Houston State, Teaching Chair
Jack Rosenberry, St. John Fisher, Newsletter Editor

2006-07

Andrea Frantz, Wilkes, Chair
Nikhil Moro, Kennesaw State, Vice/Program Chair
Cheryl Gibbs, Miami, Ohio, Secretary
Venise Wagner, San Fran-



CCJIG 2009-10 officers Deborah Chung and Mary Beth Callie at the "chip auction" in December.

cisco State, PF&R Chair
Manuel Chavez, Michigan State, Research Chair/
Paper Competition
Glenn Scott, Elon, Teaching Chair
Jack Rosenberry, St. John Fisher, Newsletter Editor

2007-08

Jack Rosenberry, St. John Fisher, Chair
Nikhil Moro, Central Michigan, Co-Vice/Program Chair
Mary Beth Callie, Regis, Co-Vice/Program Chair
Cheryl Gibbs, Miami, Ohio, Secretary
Amanda Brozana, Still-

man, Newsletter Editor
Jeff South, Virginia Commonwealth, PF&R Chair/
Web Editor
Burton St. John III, Old Dominion, Research Co-Chair/Paper Competition
Sue Ellen Christian, Western Michigan, Research Co-Chair/Paper Competition
Glenn Scott, Elon, Teaching Chair

2008-09

Nikhil Moro, Central Michigan, Chair
Mary Beth Callie, Regis, Co-Vice/Program Chair
Serena Carpenter, Arizona

State, Co-Vice Chair
Kirsten Johnson, Elizabethtown College, Secretary
Clyde Bentley, Missouri, PF&R Chair
Burton St. John III, Old Dominion, Research Co-Chair/Paper Competition
Glenn Scott, Elon, Research Co-Chair/Paper Competition
Jeff South, Virginia Commonwealth, Teaching Chair/Web Editor
Deborah Chung, Newsletter co-editor
Kirsten Johnson, Newsletter co-editor

2009-2010

Mary Beth Callie, Regis, Chair
Deborah Chung, Kentucky, Co-Vice/Program Chair
Kirsten Johnson, Elizabethtown, Co-Vice/Program Chair
Anne Golden Worsham, Brigham Young, Secretary
Glenn Scott, Elon, Research Chair/Paper Competition
Burton St. John III, Old Dominion, PF&R Chair
Jeff South, Virginia Commonwealth, Web Editor
Sue Ellen Christian, W. Michigan, Teaching Chair
Jack Rosenberry, St. John Fisher, Newsletter Editor

RESEARCH SESSIONS

Conversations as Journalism: Civic, Delicate and Historic

Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Moderator: Mary Beth Callie, Regis University; discussant: Jack Rosenberry, St. John Fisher College

- Explicating Conversational Journalism: An Experimental Test of Wiki, "Twittered" and "Collaborative" News Models. Doreen Marchionni, Pacific Lutheran
- Perceived Role Conceptions of Citizen and Professional Journalists: Citizens' Views (top faculty paper) Deborah Chung and Se-

ungahn Nah, University of Kentucky

- Reconsidering Citizen Journalism – An Historical Analysis (top student paper). Justin Walden, Pennsylvania State University
- Paper Bridges: A Critical Examination of the Daily Dispatch's Community Dialogues. Rod Amner, Rhodes University

Identifying the Citizen Journalist: Distinctions & Determinants

Thursday 8:15 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.

Moderator: Kirsten Johnson, Elizabethtown College; discussant: Sue Ellen Christian, Western Michigan

- Blogging the Meltdown: Comparing the Coverage of the Economic Crisis in Journalism. Hong Ji, The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence and Michael

- Sheehy, University of Cincinnati Gatekeeping and Citizen Journalism: A Qualitative Examination of Participatory Newsgathering. Amani Channel, University of Central Florida
- Incremental Versus Impressionistic: Seeking Credibility Differences in Online Political News. Daniel Doyle, Chen Lou, and Hans Meyer, Ohio University
- Alternative and Citizen Journalism: Mapping the Conceptual Differences. Farooq Kperogi, Georgia State University
- Bloggers' Demographics, Blogging Activities, and Identity Disclosure. Nohil Park, JiYeon Jeong and Clyde Bentley, University of Missouri.

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Credibility

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posts unedited, unfiltered content. According to Forbes.com the site has about 300,000 contributors. A credibility rating is attached to each story. It ranges from 1-5, with 1 indicating the story scores low on the scale, and a 5 indicating the story scores high on the scale.

According to the allvoices.com site, the rating for each story is determined by a number of factors including: reader ratings of the content, whether the story has been flagged for inappropriate content, how many comments the report received, how many similar reports were posted on the site, and how strong the author's reputation is over time. It should be noted that this credibility scale is a beta version. Most stories on the site also include a link to the reporter's profile, how long ago the story was posted, what the reach of the story is, and how many people have viewed and commented on the story. This site employs a number of credibility measures and should be applauded for its efforts in this area.

CNN's iReport is also trying to add some perceived credibility to its site. Some writers on the site achieve "superstar" status. This rating is calculated by looking at how many stories the reporter has contributed, how popular the story is, and how much activity the person exhibits on the



AllVoices.com uses assorted criteria to assign citizen journalism posts a credibility rating that ranges from 1 to 5.

site. Each week the computer recalculates the numbers and those in the top 20 percent are that week's "superstars."

CNN also marks which content has been vetted and which has not. Also, content that has appeared on CNN is labeled. Visible on the stories are how many comments have been posted, how many times its been viewed and shared, and when it was posted. Readers can also access information about the citizen who wrote the story; however there are varying amounts of profile information available depending upon how long and how much the writer has contributed, and how much information the writer is willing to provide about him or her-

self. About a year ago the site also included a 5 star user rating system that allowed users to rate individual stories, but that rating system has since disappeared.

Given all of these new ways to help readers assess credibility on these sites, I still find it hard to trust a writer named candygirl46, luvmyself, or satan3. Also, profile picture selection can sometimes be quite disturbing. Maybe username and picture selection will be the next area of focus for these CJ sites?

Overall, sites are starting to make strides in the area of perceived credibility, but clearly more still needs to be done if these sites desire trust and loyalty from their viewers.

Research

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Calling Citizens and Communities: How to Share Ideas

Thursday 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.
(Scholar-to-Scholar poster session)
Discussant: Mary Beth Callie, Regis University

- What's in a (Missing) Name? Newspaper Online Forum Participants Sound Off About Civility and Anonymity. Jack Rosenberry, St. John Fisher
- Citizen Journalism and Cognitive Processing: An Experiment on the Perceived Intent of Traditional versus Citizen Journalism Sources. Heather E. Akin, Gerald Stoecklein, Melissa Tully and Hernando Rojas, Wisconsin-Madison
- Empowering Citizen Journalists: A South African Case Study. Guy Berger, Rhodes
- Can This Marriage Be Saved? The Love-Hate Relationship Between Traditional Media and Citizen Journalism. Jan Leach, Kent State and Jeremy Gilbert, Northwestern
- Hungry for News: How Celiac Sufferers Learn from Media, Each Other. Mitch McKenney, Kent State

Book

From page 1

doctorate student at St. Louis University. So when he joined AEJMC, St. John naturally signed up for the Public Relations Division, but he had submitted this particular paper to the Civic & Citizen Journalism Interest Group.

St. John remembers the moment that CCJIG incoming chair Jack Rosenberry and outgoing chair Andrea Breemer Frantz walked up to thank him for participating and to invite him to join the interest group. St. John not only joined CCJIG, but went on to serve as Research and PFR Chair, and to co-edit a book with Rosenberry, *Public Journalism 2.0: The Promise and Reality of a Citizen Engaged Press*, which was published by Routledge earlier this year.

Networking

For Rosenberry, *Public Journalism 2.0* is an outcome of CCJIG mentoring and networking. Rosenberry's first experience with the interest group was in Toronto in 2004, at a pre-convention program organized by then-chair Len Witt on the fusion power of public and participatory journalism. Witt approached Rosenberry and invited him to join what was then the Civic Journalism Interest Group. It was at the conference that Rosenberry also remembers first meeting Frantz and others active then and now with CCJIG.

As chair of CCJIG in 2007-2008, Rosenberry developed a pre-convention program for the Chicago convention that explored the past, present, and future of public journalism, to honor the 20 year anniversary of the start of the public/civic journalism movement. At the same time, he had begun to collaborate with St. John on an edited book proposal that ad-

ressed the same ideas.

At the Chicago convention, Rosenberry and St. John attended convention sessions, introducing themselves to presenters. Kirsten Johnson recalls the moment she was approached at the pre-conference in the lobby. Rosenberry shared that he had seen her work about wetown.com and invited her to contribute a case study of citizen journalism. She responded, "Yes, I'd love to do to that. I've never done it before, but it will be a great way to get the we-town name out there."

"It was truly through networking that it happened," Johnson said. "That would have never happened if I wouldn't have become part of the interest group. No question about it."

Johnson, who worked in the broadcast industry for 10 years, had stumbled upon the interest group on the Internet. She found the group's blog when typing in "citizen journalism" and something else, and it came up on Google. Prior to this she said she didn't even realize it existed.

Johnson read through the blog posts and noticed a debate about redefining the interest group's mission. After Johnson weighed in on the debate, Rosenberry contacted Johnson to invite her to come to the AEJMC conference and join the group.

"Jack reached out to me to get me involved. And he said, 'Hey, would you want to be the secretary? OK sure, why not, I said,'" Johnson recalls. "Had I not seen the blog [in the first place], I don't think I would have submitted a paper and have gone to the conference."

Purpose and Barriers

Rosenberry and St. John organized *Public Journalism 2.0* into three distinct sections that provide perspective on the promise and reality of a citizen-engaged press. The first section includes pieces by early leaders in pub-

lic journalism: Knight-Ridder CEO James Batten's 1990 talk at the University of Kansas, and a present-day reflection by Davis "Buzz" Merritt, former editor of the Wichita Eagle.

Through interviews, research, and case studies, *Public Journalism 2.0* offers readers a strong sense of both the "why" (helping public life go well, community problem solving) and the barriers to engaged participation (habits, time, expectations, private perspectives). Interviews with Lewis A. Friedland, Tanni Haas, and Jan Schaffer provide perspective on the roots, evolution, and shared challenges of civic and citizen journalism.

In the end, Rosenberry and St. John stress that "since professional news workers have the benefits that come from both practice and education, they also should have the responsibility of provoking a resurgence in meaningful, community-focused news by collaborating with citizen-contributors" (186).

As a resource for research and teaching (upper-division undergraduate and graduate courses), *Public Journalism 2.0* offers the opportunity for students, faculty, and practitioners to join the conversation about the roots, evolution and potential of a citizen-engaged press. And, if they get hooked, and find common cause, they just might join CCJIG or end up at an August convention.

Contributors to Public Journalism 2.0, in alphabetical order, are Aaron Barlow, Serena Carpenter, Cathy DeShano, Lewis Friedland, Tanni Haas, Kirsten Johnson, Suzanne McBride, Donica Mensing, Davis "Buzz" Merritt, Kim Nakho, Joyce Nip, Sue Robinson, David Ryfe, and Jan Schaffer. The republication of Jim Batten's speech was done with permission of the University of Kansas and the William Allen White Foundation, and was arranged with help from Susanne Shaw of Kansas.