

Come talk a little business- and eat a lot!

Mark your calendar for 6-7:30 p.m. Wednesday night, Aug. 4, for free food and a free-for-all at the annual Business Meeting of the Civic Journalism Interest Group.

There are b&issues to discuss this year. Most important is our renewal as an interest group. A proposal is due mid-June justifying the renewal. Please e-mail any thoughts you have on that to Jan Schaffer at jans@pccj.org. For example, would you like to see more interaction with practitioners? More research panels? More teaching ideas and resources?

With 125 members, CJIG is currently the second largest interest group in AEJMC. The largest, the Ethics Interest Group, is petitioning for division status this year, giving it twice as many programming slots at the annual convention.

CJIG is also interested in lining up an energetic cast of new officers. It's a great time to get involved: You can have a major role in convention programming, on research, on outreach, on the newsletter and on mid-year workshops.

Other business meeting topics include research standards for the group, a mid-year educators workshop and curriculum development.

A Common Challenge for Educators, Journalists Working 'Together is Workshop's Focus

Just as civic journalism has encouraged journalists to experiment with new ways of covering important public policy issues, so it has inspired educators to explore new ways of teaching those approaches. This has led to many interesting collaborations between journalists and educators. Educators have helped with research that has been valuable in civic journalism initiatives; professional and student journalists have collaborated on such efforts; and journalists have been invited into classrooms to teach new concepts that have grown out of the civic approach.

This year, the Civic Journalism Interest Group's

preconvention workshop, "A Common Challenge: How Educators and Journalists Can Collaborate in Teaching Civic Journalism," will focus on these innovative collaborative efforts.

The workshop, to be moderated by CJIG co-chair Cheryl Gibbs of Earlham College, will run from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 3.

Participants will learn about past collaborations and will imagine possible future collaborations that could further the development of civic journalism.

Registration is \$15, payable with the AEJMC convention registration.

Scholars, Reporters, Editors, Critics: It's Panel-mania in New Orleans!

Lambeth. McLeod. Friedland. McManus.

Mindich. Glasser. Meyer. Rosen.

And that's just a start. To the names you know in academia, add some names you will know soon, if you don't already: Pulitzer laureates Rick Bragg of The New York Times and Mike Jacobs of the Grand Forks Herald, along with Joe Hight of The Oklahoman, Steve Smith of The (Colorado Springs) Gazette and Jeremy Iggers of the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

And that's still just a start. CJIG's panels will also feature emerging scholars such as Gregory Selber of UT-Austin, author of the top research paper in this year's competition; civic mapping advocates Chris Peck of The (Spokane) Spokesman-Review, Teri Pinney of the Harwood Institute, and Chris Waddle of The Star; and chair of the Committee of Concerned Journalists, Bill Kovach.

And yes, there's still more. The CJIG panels and research sessions will

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Civic Journalism: Product or Process?

By Jack Morris, Adams State
CJIG Vice Chair

My research suggests that reporters and consumers who value audience interaction may see such interaction as a legitimate goal of journalism, in contrast to the traditional view that the goal of journalism is publishing the truth. One hypothesis that emerges from audience interaction research is this: "How can reporters interact with their audiences and still remain objective so they can provide factual information?" This differs significantly from "Should journalists interact with their audiences?"-the question that seems to dominate many civic journalism debates. Future research, then, should explore how journalists interact with audiences rather than whether they should interact with them.

The teaching of journalistic writing in American schools and colleges has already shifted from a focus on the product to a focus on the process of writing, which includes several distinct steps besides sitting down and stringing words together. These steps usually fall into these general categories: prewriting, writing, revising and editing. Rewriting is what reporters do before they put their hands on a keyboard, and it affects what they actually put on paper (or screen) when they get to that step. Two good hypotheses for future research can be inferred from this renewed interest:

1. What journalists think, say and do concerning a news story before it is written has significant affects on the nature of what eventually is written and published.
2. Civic journalists are primarily interested in how various prewriting activities affect the quality of news.

The process of writing has long been ignored in journalism scholarship; one need only scan the list of AE JMC divisions and interest groups to note that none focuses on the writing process. Perhaps this is one need CJIG is filling, &d perhaps this is why some of the movement's leaders have refrained from narrowly defining it. In other words, it is possible that civic journalists are simply interested in studying and practicing the process of news writing rather than advocating whatever may be implied by "civic," "public" or "community journalism."

Indeed, as technology reduces the time and distance between news events and publishing the news, some media critics believe the art of writing news in a way that offers meaning to the audience is being squeezed out of journalism. For example, after watching television images of students running from two gunmen at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., English

Professor Gary Wolfe said: "It was just an unmanageable mass of material. It was raw data. We want such events to have meaning. But they don't. They don't start with meaning."

Julia Keller quoted Wolfe in the Pueblo Chieftain: "What ultimately imbues those horrors with meaning, Wolfe believes, is art: the imaginative recapitulation of events that would otherwise be too traumatic to contemplate. 'Unless it's represented in art,' Wolfe said, 'it's chaos. Confronting certain historical moments without the mediating powers of words is like staring at the sun.'"

The study of prewriting activities and how they affect the art of news writing offers a rich vein to media effects research. If news consumers are considered part of the news process, research can identify types of consumers for journalists as they attempt to know and communicate with their audience while remaining objective in attitude and independent in thought.

Thus civic journalism research can be used not only for the study of media effects, but it represents a valuable market research tool for reporters who want to know more about their audiences.

The study of how reporters interact with the news audience has implications for journalism teaching as well as practice. If a connection can be established between levels or types of audience interaction and qualities of news writing, teaching methods can be developed to capitalize on this knowledge. If audience interaction gains more widespread acceptance, perhaps newsrooms will develop special practitioners to direct and guide interaction between news staffs and news consumers in an ongoing program of audience analysis.

AEJMC Civic Journalism Interest Group News

is published quarterly by the Civic Journalism Interest Group of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. CJIG membership includes a subscription, which is also available for non-members: send \$10 donation and newsletter request to AEJMC, University of South Carolina, 1621 College St., Columbia, SC 29208.

CJIG co-chairs are Cheryl Gibbs, Earlham College, and Jan Schaffer, Pew Center for Civic Journalism; vice-chair is Jack Morris, Adams State; secretary/newsletter editor is Kathy Campbell, University of Wisconsin-Madison/Southern Oregon University.

Newsletter submissions are welcome; contact Kathy Campbell at kbcampbeafacstaff@u.wisc.edu.

CJIG Convention Schedule

August 3-7, 1999

New Orleans

Tuesday, Aug. 3

1 p.m.- 6 p.m.

PRE-CONVENTION WORKSHOP

A Common Challenge:

How Educators **and** Journalists Can Collaborate in Teaching Civic Journalism

Wednesday, August 4

8:15-9:30 a.m.

Can You Do Good by Doing Well? Can Civic Journalism Overcome Market Forces?
Moderators: Kathryn B. Campbell, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Southern Oregon University
 Bob Pondillo, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Panelists: Lewis A. Friedland, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 Dennis Hartig, managing editor, The Virginian-Pilot
 John McManus, St. Mary's College, CA; author, "Market Driven Journalism: Let the Citizen Beware?"
 Steve Smith, editor, The (Colorado Springs) Gazette

9:45-11:15 a.m. **Defining What's News: A Forum on "Objectivity," "Balance" and "Civic Journalism"**

Moderators: Jack Morris, Adams State
 Dhavan Shah, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Panelists: Ed Lambeth, University of Missouri
 Jack McLeod, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 David T.Z. Mindich, St. Michael's College
 Steve Smith, editor, The (Colorado Springs) Gazette
 Marty Steffens, editor, Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin
Discussant: Jan Schaffer, Pew Center for Civic Journalism

1-2:30 p.m.

The Trauma Trilogy: Tracking the Shockwaves

Moderator: Cheryl Gibbs, Earlham College
Panelists: Rick Bragg, reporter, Pulitzer laureate, The New York Times
 Joe Hight, AME, The Oklahoman
 Mike Jacobs, editor, Grand Forks Herald
 -Roger Simpson, University of Washington

4:15 -5:45 p.m.

CJIG RESEARCH SESSION

Diagnosis and Prescription: What's Broken in Journalism and How to Fix It?

Moderator: Carol Reese Dykers, Salem College
Panelists: "Journalists Say Standards Slipping." Bill Kovach, Curator, Nieman Foundation and Chair, Committee of Concerned Journalists
 "Resurrecting Critical Theory: Public Journalism." Gregory Selber, University of Texas-Austin

6-7:30 p.m.

CJIG's "More than just hors d'oeuvres" and BUSINESS MEETING

(Continued on reverse)

1999 CJIG Convention Schedule

(Continued)

Thursday, August 5

8:15 -9:45 a.m.

CJIG/ SCHOLAR TO SCHOLAR POSTER SESSION

- “Civic Journalism and Community Policing: Potential for Partnership.” Kathryn B. Campbell, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Southern Oregon University
- “Media Coverage of Sports and Politics: An Examination of the Press’ Role in Campaigns for Professional Sports Stadium Construction.” Robert Trumpbour, Penn State
- “Constructing Meaning: The Role of the Audience in News Writing.” Jack Morris, Adams State

2:45-4:15 p.m.

Reactive or Interactive Journalism: Where are the Lines?

- Moderator:** Jan Schaffer, Pew Center for Civic Journalism
- Panelists:** Ted Glasser, Stanford University
Jeremy Iggers, author and reporter, Minneapolis Star-Tribune
Mike Jacobs, editor, Grand Forks Herald
Philip Meyer, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Marty Steffens, editor, Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin

4:30-6 p.m.

Mapping the Swamp: How to Penetrate a Community’s Uncharted Civic Layers

- Moderator:** Jan Schaffer, Pew Center for Civic Journalism
- Panelists:** Lewis A. Friedland, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Chris Peck, editor, The Spokesman-Review, Spokane, WA
Teri Pinney, Harwood Institute
Chris Waddle, editor, The Anniston Star

8-9-30 p.m.

CJIG RESEARCH SESSION

- Moderator:** Dave Kurpius, Louisiana State University
- Panelists:** “Being a Better Neighbor: A Look at How the Syracuse Newspapers Listened to Readers to Improve Neighborhood News Coverage.” Carla Lloyd, Syracuse University, and Jan Slater, Ohio University
- “Civic Journalism and Gender Diversity in News Story Sourcing.” Brian L. Massey, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- “Following Their First Steps: A Lesson in Launching Public Journalism.” Rebecca Payne, University of Arizona
- “Actor vs. Outsider: The Washington Post on Public Journalism.” Jay Rosen, New York University

Friday, August 6

Noon - 2 pm.

PEW CENTER LUNCHEON (keynoter to be named)

2:45-4:15 p.m.

Civic or Subversive? What is Responsible – and Responsive-Journalism for the Student Press?

- Moderator:** Candace Perkins Bowen, Kent State University
- Panelists:** Dermis Cripe, Franklin College
Mark Haab, Scholastic Press Group
Tom Eveslage, Temple University

Batten Awards Honor Civic Journalism

Winners' work reflects ever deeper, meaningful reporting

Two newspapers and one television station shared the 1999 James K. Batten Award for Excellence in Civic Journalism: the St. Paul Pioneer Press, the Portland Press Herald and Maine Sunday Telegram, and KRON-TV, San Francisco's NBC affiliate. The Pew Center for Civic Journalism sponsors the annual awards.

The three news organizations will split the \$25,000 award. They were honored May 3 and 4 in Minneapolis at the Batten Symposium and Awards Dinner, which focused on "A Citizen's View: Civic Journalism, Civic Engagement."

The Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram's winning entry, an eight-part series, "The Deadliest Drug: Maine's Addiction to Alcohol," delivered such startling statistics and personal stories that it prompted a year-long grassroots effort in 1998 that mobilized nearly 2,000 people to participate in study circles on the impact of alcohol abuse in their community. Their final action plans were compiled in a book as well as followed up in the newspaper.

In "Poverty Among Us," the St. Paul Pioneer Press chronicled, once a month for seven months, what it was like to be poor in Minnesota at a time when the official welfare safety net was replaced by welfare-to-work programs. The paper told the story through the eyes of schoolchildren, the working poor, immigrants and others. But the paper didn't stop there. It tried to pull readers into a conversation about poverty by conducting a major public opinion poll on attitudes toward poverty, by forming book clubs on the literature of poverty with the St. Paul Public Libraries, by publishing interviews with the poor on its web site and by providing discussion guides and tool kits for those wanting to organize discussion groups.

KRON-TV launched "About Race," its yearlong exploration of how race and ethnicity shape how people live together in the Bay Area, with an unprecedented five-part series during the 6 p.m. newscast in February 1998 sweeps. The first story ran 13 minutes; total time for the week was 60 minutes. Coverage explored the genetics of race, diversity in the workplace and in schools, talking about race and a look at efforts to bridge the racial

divide. KRON's 18 stories over the year included a one-hour special, since provided to more than 90 local schools and three community access cable stations. Collaborating with KRON were the station's long-standing civic journalism partners, the San Francisco Chronicle, KQED-FM public radio and the BayTV cable affiliate.

The winners were selected from 91 entries. Notable this year was the evolution of civic journalism to deeper explanatory and investigative reporting on issues that are meaningful to people's everyday lives, observed Batten Board member John X. Miller, managing editor of The Sun News in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Semi-finalists included "Hunger in the Land of Plenty," The Charlotte Observer's look at the changing face of hunger; "A Turning Point," the Wilmington (Delaware) News-Journal's examination of the 1968 race riots and current race relations; "Motel Children," The Orange County Register's saga of the one of the fastest growing segments of the

poor, children living in residential motels; "Community Conversation," the Grand Fork Herald's efforts to engage its flood-damaged community in a rebirth; "Pottstown: It's Do or Die Time," The Mercury's examination of problems and possible solutions to the plight of Pottstown, PA; "What Corporate Welfare Costs You," Time magazine's series on government job-creation subsidies; "The State of Secrecy," an effort by seven Indiana newspapers to test statewide compliance with open-records laws.

The symposium examined citizens' experience with civic journalism efforts, new research on civic engagement, and on-line efforts to engage citizens.

The Batten Awards are named in honor of the late James K. Batten, former chief executive of the Knight Ridder newspaper chain, who pioneered some of the earliest civic journalism thinking. The awards are funded by a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts.

This year's Batten Symposium and Awards Dinner were hosted in Minneapolis by the Star-Tribune, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, KTCA-TV, Minnesota Public Radio and the Minnesota Journalism Center of the University of Minnesota's School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

"I think if civic journalism's sweeping goal is to rekindle a broad interest in civic life, then the building blocks must include news organizations with a sharp, gutsy, locally defined, locally tailored, clearly articulated sense of purpose."

**-Zack Stalberg
Editor, Philadelphia Daily News
Excerpt from Batten Awards Dinner
speech: More on Pages 6-7**

A Stalberg's-eye view of civic journalism

(Highlights from the Batten Awards Dinner speech by Zack Stalberg, editor and executive vice president of the Philadelphia Daily News, a tabloid with a circulation of 200,000-90 percent of it from street sales. See Page 5 for Batten Awards story.)

I've become a true believer in civic journalism or whatever you'd call it. I guess I'd like to call it potent journalism. . . . And my conversion was sort of a surprise to me. It basically because we just sat down with a bunch of loyal readers and asked them what they expected of the Daily News. While they did not use the term, obviously, their definition of what the Daily News should be very much included what I think those of us in this room would call civic journalism.

I work out there on sort of a frontier of journalism. The Daily News has to prove its worth every day to every reader, and I think we've had to figure out how to try to make civic journalism work daily as a result of that. It's almost entirely single-copy sales. It's got the highest masthead price in the country. It is hopelessly bound up with the Philadelphia Inquirer, which is a little like the comedy team of Jerry Lewis and Madeleine Albright.

I want to talk for a few seconds about "Rethinking Philadelphia," which is our big adventure in civic journalism, if you don't count Beergate [reports on beer prices, and ultimately a vendor's contract, at Veterans Stadium.]

It was, like most things at the Daily News, an accident. It started out as a story, and then a one-shot project, and then a campaign and now it's a permanent department . . . with its own department head and its own staff, just like the sports department, which at the Daily News is really saying something.

Its purpose is to help Philadelphians imagine: "What if?" . . . We're trying to get people in the Philadelphia suburbs and in the city to say: "What if? What if this took place? What if that took place?"

So it's not a civic journalism project in the more traditional sense. . . . But it's an effort to mobilize people behind that idea of "What if?"

There have been a lot of critics in the newsroom, a lot of critics outside. The mayor called me right before this was about to run and said, "You've got to stop this. I hate it." And I said, "How could you hate it? You haven't read it yet." And he said, "I don't hate the story yet. I hate the name."

This was the first time I ever got a call from anybody in authority seeking to change the name of a story. He had seen the logo promoting the next day's

story and, at the time, he hated the idea that Philadelphia had to be rethought.

Over the course of time, he's become something of a believer in "Rethinking" content. So have the people in town. So have the people in the *newsroom*.

There's a woman who covers wine for The Inquirer. And Joe Sixpack covers beer for the Daily News.

Anyway, Joe (his real name is Don Russell) was at Veterans Stadium, which is city-owned, and bought a glass of beer. He expected it to be warm. He expected it to be bad. And his experience as a beer drinker told him that this was not the advertised 18 ounces of beer. In fact, it was 16 ounces of beer for, I think, \$4.75.

So Joe goes on a tear with a lot of civic involvement. He had a lot of fans who really got invested in this story. There was a City Council investigation. Underneath all of this there was a very smelly 15-year vending contract. . . . In the end, this year the concessionaire dropped the beer prices and is now serving the full 18 ounces of beer. So it was a great victory.

The meaning here for me is that because of things like that, because we're willing to get very emotionally involved about topics that the readers really care about, we found that there's a bit of a quid pro quo here. That they are willing to get very seriously involved with some of the more serious topics we're dealing with in "Rethinking Philadelphia."

So much of what we view as civic journalism is intelligent, elegantly packaged and utterly bloodless. Like the rest of the newspaper or the news report that surrounds it, there is no life to the work and even less humor. We talk about civic engagement as if we really don't know what engagement means. If you say engagement to a journalist they think, Monitor vs. Merrimack or Battle of Bull Run. If you say engagement to me, or at least to the civilian in me, what I think about is (my wife) Debbie and me walking down the Mall in Washington in the springtime, arm in arm, a relationship with its share of passion, or more than its share of passion. That's engagement to me.

... An engagement is an emotional state, whether you're talking about romance or really whether you're talking about citizen action. That's really why I dragged Beergate into the conversation. . . . What we're striving for is a chain reaction. When the Daily News goes to the wall on an issue the readers really understand and care about, say beer or the stolen van of a crippled child, we win a little piece of their hearts for the larger battles. If we invest more feeling in our work, and not just in the work we consider to be momentous, the citizenry might just take our serious work more seriously and perhaps move a little bit closer to action.

Schudson Shares ideas on the 'Good Citizen'

(Excerpts from the keynote address of journalism scholar and author Michael Schudson, Professor of Communication and Sociology, University of California-San Diego, at the Batten Symposium, May 3, in Minneapolis. (See Page 5.) Schudson is a former Guggenheim Fellow and recipient of a MacArthur Foundation Genius Grant. His most recent work is The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life.

Why "the Informed Citizen" is too much to ask -and not enough.

As citizens, we should learn not to accept any analysis that tells us the game is over, that the world can't get better, because the corporations have the politicians in their pockets, or because the corporations run the media, or because technology dictates certain outcomes, or because capitalism is an unstoppable dynamo, or because ethnic and racial hatred runs deeper even than capitalism.

Of course, you'd have to be crazy not to acknowledge the power of technology and money and hate. But if that's all there is then we'd have no civil rights movement, we'd have no women's movement, we'd have no fall of communism. And we'd also have no civic journalism.

We tend to be obsessed, I think, with one of the four models of American citizenship, the one we know as "the informed citizen." The citizen who takes an interest in and participates in government, within norms of equality and the rule of law, is indeed the heart and sole of democracy. But this is not the same thing as what we've taken to calling "the informed citizen."

"The informed citizen" is a very specific late 19th-century, Progressive-era invention with a troubling dark side of its own, with an unrealizable and therefore demoralizing ambitiousness, and with a strong contempt within it for other models of citizenship that can still serve us well.

Being well-informed, I think, is too much to ask of our fellow citizens and, at the same time, not nearly enough.

It's hard for a teacher to say this, just as it may be hard for a journalist to agree to it, but it must be said: The link between information and democracy is not as tight as we've made it out to be. It is important. It is not all important.

Many journalists, like many Americans in general, have views of American history that are, to historians' views, something like creationism is to science. Editorial writers, by and large, are creationists. God and Tom Jefferson brought forth on our continent a nation conceived in liberty and equality and our job since then has been to work out the details.

It's not so. The founders experienced a very different world and assumed a very different model of the good citizen. Their good citizen was a citizen of deference, a citizen who knew his place. That was "the virtuous citizen." That's stage one. There's something to learn from that sense of trust in others in one's community.

The ideal of "the informed citizen" has been, in part, an ideal of a restricted educated franchise. The ideal of "the informed citizen" has been directly and explicitly a rejection of partisan politics, of machine politics, of a politics intertwined and inextricable from everyday social life and social relations.

The ideal of "the informed citizen" created essentially impossible intellectual demands on the ordinary citizen.

We have to find a place in popular rhetoric and a democratic theory for the use of specialized or expert knowledge. That's a task that merits renewed attention, the request for a language of public life that reconciles democracy and expertise.

Civic journalism will be making a mistake if it opts for a kind of sloppy populism. Anything the experts do must be tainted. Anything that happens at the grass roots receives the benefit of a doubt. That, I think, is the wrong impulse. I think we have to rely on expert knowledge. We just have to know, and we don't, how and where and in what manner that expertise fits into a democratic process.

Panel-mania to erupt in New Orleans

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present a range of media scholars and practitioners engaged in lively dialogue on issues critical to our common future. Occasionally, you'll want to take time out to eat, so CJIG and the Pew Center for Civic Journalism will host two affairs featuring food. The first is the CJIG business meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 4 at 6 p.m.; the second is the Pew luncheon on Friday, at noon.

A complete schedule of CJIG events is printed on Pages 3 and 4 in a handy, one-page, take-along back-to-back format.

CJIG members invited to lunch; RSVP to Pew

Mark your calendars again!

All CJIG members are invited to attend a luncheon sponsored by the Pew Center for Civic Journalism from noon-2 p.m. on Friday, August 6, during AEJMC's annual convention in New Orleans. Sign up with the Pew Center, 202-331-3200.

And stay tuned for an announcement of the cutting-edge keynote speaker!

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