

Division Offers Multiple Opportunities for Involvement

Kathy Brittain McKee
Berry College

It's been three months since members of the division gathered in Miami Beach to discuss research, debate professional issues, network with colleagues, and play in the sun during the 2002 Convention. The enthusiasm and effort of our membership was evident in the number of members who submitted papers in the division's research competition -- 97 papers in all -- and by the 36 who were selected to share their work with us at the convention. The division co-sponsored an invited research panel, which looked at Latino communication research. Panels and plenaries addressed such key issues as how to teach critical thinking and computer-assisted reporting, the evaluation of civic journalism and popular culture's response to terrorism, the impact of terrorism on freedom of speech and information challenged members with new approaches to teaching and professional freedom and responsibility. The Promising Professors Workshop continued to offer fresh ideas about enhancing teaching from colleagues recognized for their achievements.

Our thanks are due to 2001-2003 division head Paul Voakes for his conscientious and creative leadership, to Dane Claussen for diligent work on the newsletter, and to Janet Bridges and John Beatty, co-chairs for research, Jennifer Greer and Stacey Cone, co-chairs for teaching standards, and Lois Boynton, PF&R chair, for their excellent guidance in programming and planning. Many thanks as well to those who participated in the research, teaching and PF&R panels as presenters, moderators or discussants.

Other opportunities for involvement lie ahead for the division this year. My goals for the division are for us to encourage members to become involved in a **mentoring network** where senior faculty agree to work with a junior faculty member or a graduate student to foster their professional development; continue to enhance the value of being a member by improving **communication** within the division through better use of the website and email and by encouraging attendance and participation at convention events; and to continue to focus on the **societal** emphasis of our division by continuing to enhance the Professional Freedom and Responsibility efforts of the division through convention programming and research efforts and by sponsoring again a special call for research on "Media and the Family." Your involvement in all three areas is essential. You'll soon receive a postcard or email invitation to visit our redesigned division website to see all the information and helps it contains. Visit it often. Interested in becoming a mentor or in being mentored? Email me to let me know of your interest, and we'll pair you with another division member with whom you can share ideas and information.

Opportunities for involvement continue. Participate in some of the calls for nominations, entries or applications that you'll find in other parts of this newsletter. Contact one of the committee chairs and volunteer to serve on a committee or to judge for a competition, or nominate someone to receive the division's highest award. Apply to serve as editor of *Mass Communication & Society*, or nominate someone you believe would be highly qualified. Plan now to attend the convention next summer in Kansas City. In short, you are invited, welcomed and encouraged to participate actively in the division this year. Please do!

Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication
2003 Convention
Kansas City, MO
July 30 -- August 2, 2003

Getting Ready for the 2003 AEJMC Convention

Dane S. Claussen
Point Park College
Vice Head and Program Chair

AEJMC's 2003 Convention will be held earlier than usual next year, from July 30 to August 2, at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center and Westin Crown Center in Kansas City, Missouri. AEJMC has special room rates at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center and the Westin Crown Center. Hyatt rates are \$124 singles and \$134 doubles. Westin rates are \$119 singles and \$129 doubles. All rates are plus 13.225 percent room tax. Reservation information will be available early in 2003.

As a former resident of Kansas City, I would like to introduce fellow MC&S Division members to the city. The convention is being held in an area that is between Downtown and Midtown, fairly centrally located for a number of sites. The convention hotels are literally across the street in one direction from the Liberty Memorial and museum, which recently has undergone a multi-million dollar renovation and restoration project. A towering monument, the country's only official national monument to World War I, looms over a museum of World War I.

Across the street is Union Station, completely rehabilitated and reopened in 1999 after sitting empty for 10 years and mostly empty for much longer than that. Built in 1914, Union Station served as an important link in cross-continental travel during the glory days of rail traffic. During its peak, more than 75,000 trains per year stopped at Union Station, and it still is the country's second largest railroad station. In 1933, mobster Frank Nash was shot to death in the Union Station parking lot, allegedly by Pretty Boy Floyd and an accomplice. Half of all U.S. military personnel during World War II passed through Union Station at some point, and in 1972, it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Today, the Station offers Science City (a science and technology museum), numerous stores, restaurants and exhibits.

My favorite spot in Kansas City, however, is the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, which is only a couple of miles from the convention—a short and

easy cab or bus ride. This museum was built beginning in 1915, when William Rockhill Nelson, owner of both the *Kansas City Star* and *Kansas City Times*, died. He willed that his house be torn down and an art museum be built in its place, and he left a fortune to build, stock and endow the museum. Parts of the Nelson-Atkins will remind visitors of the Chicago Art Institute, and much of its collection is worthy of the Chicago Art Institute or the Smithsonian.

Many AEJMC members will be excited by the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, which also is near the convention site, and your MCS executive committee will be proposing—at the December convention planning meeting in Palo Alto—an official off-site tour of the baseball museum. Next to that museum is the Kansas City Jazz Museum.

Many residents of Kansas City rave about Country Club Plaza, a large outdoor shopping mall near the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art that supposedly was one of the first organized and planned shopping centers or districts in the country back in the 1930s. It is handsomely lit up for the holidays late in the year, and surrounded by many upscale apartments and condos, but I've always thought the hype about Country Club Plaza exceeded the reality.

One favorite spot at Country Club Plaza, however, is the life-size statues of Winston and Clementine Churchill, called "Married Love." Kansas City, by the way, boasts more outdoor sculptures and statues than nearly any city in the world, which is hard to believe when you think about some European cities.

Another key site in the Kansas City area is the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum, which consists of the library and museum building itself—quite impressive—and his home several blocks away, which is open for tours. The Truman complex is in Independence, which now is essentially a Kansas City suburb, but you'll want to take a long cab ride or rent a car to get there. (Those on a presidential trek might want to come to the convention early or stay late, rent a car, and drive less than three hours west to the Dwight Eisenhower presidential library, museum and home in Abilene, Kansas. Both Truman and Eisenhower are buried at

The convention will be held in two hotels: the Hyatt Regency Crown Center and the Westin Crown Center.

their presidential libraries—Truman in a courtyard, Eisenhower in a separate, chapel-like building.)

A fun part of Kansas City is “Westport,” which at one time was a separate town and is located between Midtown and Country Club Plaza.

Westport includes numerous restaurants, brewpubs, bars and taverns, a couple of hotels, a movie theatre, coffee houses and so on. (I should note that much of Downtown Kansas City is not very interesting, although it has the usual collection of government buildings, banks, law firms, utility companies, hotels, etc.)

The Kansas City Star building, one of the most architecturally distinct buildings in the entire Kansas City area, is just a few blocks north of the convention site, located between the Crown Plaza area and the downtown’s central core. I don’t know what the Star’s current practices are for tours, but the building itself is interesting for architecture buffs and historians. The Star is building a new press building, and a glass wall will allow the public to watch the press from outside, but it apparently will not be completed before our convention.

The Kansas City area is home to a number of colleges and universities, including an urban-style university in a somewhat suburban looking area—the University of Missouri at Kansas City—which also is close to the Country Club Plaza and Nelson-Atkins museum. East of there, not too far, is Rockhurst University, which may be the area’s best, but not largest, higher education institution. The area also includes Avila College, Park University, the University of Kansas and University of Missouri medical schools, William Jewell University, two branch campuses of Saint Mary College (based in nearby Leavenworth, Kan.), and interestingly, American Islamic University and the University of Islam. (I’ve been an adjunct for both Avila and Saint Mary, whose main campus is quaint.) The University of Kansas, at Lawrence, is just a short drive from the metro area, while the University of Missouri is about two hours away.

The Kansas City area offers more museums than one can imagine, some of the others being the national Agricultural Hall of Fame, the American Royal Museum, Arabia Steamboat Museum, Thomas Hart Benton Historic Home, Black Archives of Mid-America, Hallmark Visitors Center, Harris-Kearney House Museum, Kansas City Fire Museum, Kansas City Museum & Planetarium, Kemper Museum of Contemporary

Art, Shawnee Indian Mission Museum, Toy & Miniature Museum of Kansas City, among others. Locals are most likely to recommend the Kemper and maybe the American Royal. The Kansas City Zoo is quite passable, but other than very large open spaces for African animals, doesn’t offer much that is unusual. A well-kept secret is the Overland Park Arboretum and Botanical Garden.

Like other major metropolitan areas, Kansas City’s local media scene is dominated by a couple of television stations, a few radio stations, the *Kansas City Star*, and *PitchWeekly*, the alternative newsweekly that started out as a music publication. The *Star*, owned successively by Nelson, an employees’ cooperative, Capital Cities/ABC, briefly by Disney, and now by Knight Ridder, has its strong and weak points, as expected. *PitchWeekly* (where I worked in 1994-95), is now owned by the Phoenix-based News Times company. It won a long battle a few years ago against another now defunct alternative, coincidentally called the *New Times*, that was much more political. I’ll be interested to see what *PitchWeekly* is like under new owners and new editors.

The weather in Kansas City in late July and early August is usually hot, mid-80s to mid-90s, and very humid. But given the recent conventions in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and New Orleans, and to a lesser extent, Chicago and Miami, we’re all used to the humidity. Right?

Programming for the Convention

More about the convention: The Division’s entire Executive Board has worked hard to propose clearly innovative and important panels. We will again sponsor the Promising Professors Workshop and an off-site trip, and the division will host a business meeting followed by an informal social. Actual programming content and the schedule will be determined at the December “chip” auction. Details of MC&S programming will be contained in the Winter issue of *MC&S News*.

Submitting Research for the Convention

AJMC divisions and interest groups will post a formal call for papers for the 2003 Kansas City Convention in mid-December. Uniform postmark deadline for all papers will be **April 1, 2003**. Convention registration fees will be posted on the website in early January 2003. These fees will not be set until December.

Digital divide and society—Some issues to think about

Denis Wu

Louisiana State University
Chair, PF&R

Recent research from nonprofit organizations such as the Benton Foundation and the Ford Foundation indicates that the digital divide in our society is still quite serious. Even though years of effort seem to have narrowed the gender gap—women now constitute almost half of Internet users—the imbalance of technological resources clearly cuts across education and income lines, and to some extent across race lines and geographical regions. For example, the latest report paints a bleak picture of the technological future for households with an annual income of less than \$15,000.

In response to the problem, the Clinton administration initiated several plans to address the issue and called on major corporations to help out. Many high-tech companies are still sponsoring some projects to benefit those who live in deprived neighborhoods or regions. Yet the Bush administration announced earlier this year that two government programs, the Education Department's Community Technology Centers Program and the Commerce Department's Technology Opportunities Program, are likely to be discontinued in 2003.

Many advocates of Internet access decry the change. And communication educators and researchers have good reason to be concerned. Many experts argue that the problem actually got more serious in the last decade and that the government should not stop its efforts to assist those disadvantaged groups. The efforts, they argue, may need more time to see the real, solid improvement. Despite the disagreement on the policy and on the scope and magnitude of the issue, it may be fruitful to revisit the ramifications of the digital divide.

Andy Carvin of the Benton Foundation argues that digital divide concerns far more than Internet

access. I agree. The issue has multiple facets, each of which is interconnected. General computer literacy, broadband access, information processing skills, and software skills are all involved. One cannot access the Internet on one's own without having some basic computer skills. The knowledge and experience of turning on the computer, installing needed software to run Internet browsers, or fixing basic computer glitches is required. (For example, one should be able to distinguish the CD-ROM drive from a cup holder!) With more and more Web sites integrating multi-media features, having broadband access would be advantageous (but likely unaffordable to low-income households).

Even though one may have complete access to all kinds of hardware and software, to take full advantage of the Internet, one will need information-processing skills such as using search engines to seek the needed information or multimedia entertainment. Additionally, the experience and suspicion to check on the validity and accuracy of the information posted on the Internet are helpful.

Internet users should not naively, habitually, or wishfully think—like a lot of my students citing Web sites on their term papers—

that all information on the Web is true and trustworthy. This set of knowledge and skills may be lumped into the umbrella of "information literacy." The issue is related to all that relates to Internet use, and bridging the divide requires a holistic and long-term approach.

Let's brainstorm what kind of impact the digital divide has on our society. If a significant portion of the population cannot tap into cyberspace for information or entertainment, what harm can it do to our society? For one thing, in the political arena, full-range democratic and civic participation in our communities would not be possible. Some cannot access

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information on the Web, nor can they opine or exchange views in the cyber world.

Since the 1990s, e-commerce has been the star industry in the United States. Even though we all realized in the beginning of the 21st century that the '90s boom may well be a bubble, the economic ramification of the digital divide is still worth considering. More and more industries expect their new hires to have at least technology literacy, if not advanced computer knowledge and Internet-authoring skills. So tech-savvy individuals are more likely to be hired or promoted.

Meantime, the regions that have established high-tech industries lure away technological manpower from other areas. And, as tech-savvy people come primarily from high-income families, the poor would likely miss the boat on opportunity, thus resulting in a vicious circle.

Let us not forget that the Internet is a world medium. Theoretically and conceptually, every citizen on earth should have access to the Web and also have means to contribute to the content. In reality, however, North America, the Asia-Pacific rim, and Western Europe are three major regions that possess a high volume of usage and access. A big portion of Asia and Africa seem to be left out.

As more information becomes available exclusively on the Internet, those who do not have the access, the knowledge or skill to utilize the technology will suffer. And so will democracy.

So the digital divide is not only a domestic issue but also an international one. The concern of the digital divide appears to echo the heated debate in

the 1970s about the New World Information and Communication Order. The gap between the resourceful North and the needy South did not seem to diminish after NWICO—partly the dysfunctional UNESCO should be to blame. The quiet return of the United States into UNESCO will likely rekindle discussion, even though the Bush administration may not like having it included on the agenda.

Digital divide can also be an issue of culture. Those who have the technological edge may have more power over the content on the Net, thus creating a cultural divide.

Globally speaking, the English language seemed to strengthen its status with the advent of the Internet since the content is predominantly produced in English and those "content providers" tend to know only English. So, the Internet may be a double-edged sword for cultural diversity: On the one hand, it makes creation and transmission of cultures a whole lot of easier; on the other hand, it

threatens the cultures that do not have the cyber power or technique to express themselves on the Net.

The issue of digital divide may be more complicated than we thought, and its impact on our society and on the world may be far-reaching. If you're interested in this issue, you may visit the following Web site, <http://owa.benton.org/archives/digitaldivide.html>, to join the discussion group. The Benton Foundation site also includes lots of relevant information about the issue. Hopefully, we can get to talk some more about digital divide in the upcoming convention in Kansas City!

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What do we mean when we refer to **PF&R**? The **AEJMC Standing Committee on Professional Freedom and Responsibility** has identified five areas of emphasis:

- ◆ Free Expression
- ◆ Ethics
- ◆ Media Criticism and Accountability
- ◆ Racial, Gender and Cultural Inclusiveness
- ◆ Public Service

For more information about this or other AEJMC committees, visit the AEJMC web site at www.aejmc.org.

Advocacy in the Classroom

Stacey Cone

University of Iowa

Co-Chair, Teaching

As a graduate student, I took not one but *two* classes in pedagogy, both of which were first-rate courses. I walked away from them with a deeper understanding of what constitutes good teaching, and I am grateful to the professors who taught them each and every time I walk into my classroom now. In both courses I practiced writing syllabi, considered problems of student evaluation, and thought about different learning styles.

There is nevertheless an issue we never discussed and is all too often overlooked as we consider our positions of authority in the classroom. Not only is this an issue of practical application every day in the classroom, but it also goes to the very heart of our general philosophy of higher education. Its proponents call it “advocacy” in the classroom, its detractors call it “propagandizing” in the classroom, and our students are left often calling it “surviving” in the classroom.

Not until my first semester as a new assistant professor with a full slate of classes did I become fully aware of just how deep this river runs, especially for those of us in journalism and mass communication. We are all encouraged to incorporate our research into our teaching and *vice versa*, and the question of advocacy in the classroom provides direct challenges and rich opportunities for us to do so. As we research questions of objectivity and persuasion, can we (or even should we?) move those various conclusions into our approach to pedagogy? In other words, should journalists practice what we preach, preach what we practice, or neither? Can we or should we remain objective and balanced about the question of whether or not remaining objective and balanced is a good thing? What are the boundaries between *encouraging* and *imposing* our values on our students, in the name of asking them to evaluate how the media does this as a professional practice?

In my own experience, with a background in constitutional and media history, intellectual history, media law and civil liberties, what leaps to my

mind first is the tension that classroom advocacy creates between an instructor’s academic freedom and a student’s expectation to be educated, not indoctrinated. Progressive educational philosophy stipulates that democratic traditions are maintained not by teaching students *what* to think, but by teaching them *how* to think. The question that advocacy raises, it seems, is can we in some way teach students how to think at the same time we expressly articulate an ideological perspective in the classroom?

The question has been controversial for some while now. The debate remains a major issue in the ongoing “culture wars” taking place on campuses, and opinions usually hinge on the assumption of whether or not ideology is unavoidable in the first place. For those who say it is, it becomes a question of academic honesty: we owe it to our students

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to lay our cards on the table and to drop the pretense of impartiality. Some theorists such as Frank Lentricchia and Terry Eagleton go so far as to say that extreme advocacy for social causes is nothing less than our urgent *responsibility* as intellectual leaders, and neutrality

serves as an assertive endorsement of the status quo. For others on the other end of the political spectrum, such as Dinesh D’Souza, leftist ideology has no place in a pluralistic classroom, and it becomes a question of conservative students’ rights to feel comfortable with their protected freedom of speech.

The September issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* featured an article titled “Guidelines of Discussion, or Thought Control?” It raised the question of whether rigid guidelines for class discussions established ostensibly for politeness in a women’s studies class were not also an ideological litmus test that, at worst, imposed a political viewpoint on students and stifled dissenting views. The guidelines asked students to “acknowledge that racism, classism, sexism, heterosexualism, and other institutionalized forms of oppression exist” and to “acknowledge that one mechanism of institutionalized racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc., is that

we are all systematically taught misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups ... [a situation true for members of privileged and oppressed groups]." These guidelines and eight others, written eighteen years ago, were shared with other professors over the years and eventually began to be included in syllabi all around the country. Their author, Professor Lyn Webber of the University of South Carolina, maintains that they help foster a "high level of participation . . . where multiple realities are revealed in respectful and enlightening ways." But critics argue that Weber's guidelines cloak a political line that students are required to regard as unquestionable truth. "It would be a lot simpler if she wore an armband and handed them out in class," one critic was quoted. In 1995, the issue of advocating a political line in college classes became the basis for a whole academic conference. It was sponsored by a variety of organizations representing divergent collegiate areas, including communication. One result of the conference was a book of collected essays edited by Patricia Spacks, *Advocacy in the Classroom*, which has been praised as being the most comprehensive study of the subject to date. Although the book has received some mixed reviews (not surprisingly, given the subject), it is regarded by many scholars as a valuable source for clarifying the various arguments.

Among the more conservative voices included in the text is Gertrude Himmelfarb, who draws associations between classroom advocacy and the post-modern tendency toward academic orthodoxy. She is disturbed by "denials that there is any such thing as knowledge, truth, reason, or objectivity, and a refusal to even aspire to such ideals, on the grounds that they are not only unattainable but undesirable." If we are overly suspicious of objectivity, she suggests, we have little left but subjectivity. Thus, her implicit question: how can we teach core bodies of knowledge on the basis of subjectivity alone? Other opponents claim that advocacy intimidates students, especially the overly grade conscious (is there any other kind these days?). Rather than creating a diverse intellectual environment, they argue, advocacy leads to a coerced consensus, discrediting all other points of view until no meaningful dialogue can be had outside of a reinforcement of the teacher's unilateral position.

The first job of a professor is to profess; that is the doorway into our chosen world of mass communication, and from there we can each chart our own maps and targets for our students' path of discovery.

The majority of contributors to Spack's book, however, refuse to be drawn into a narrowly binary debate. Instead of committing completely one way or another, they instead endorse a *qualified* compromise. While indoctrination is unethical, they insist, advocacy is acceptable—even preferable—within certain parameters. For one thing, they argue, teachers can never truly be disinterested. Regarding intellectual neutrality as a myth, one essayist argues that everything from a teacher's textbook selection to word choice in lectures is saddled with subjectivity. Consequently, teachers should acknowledge their biases to themselves and to their students. The very last thing we should do when confronted with moral issues, these scholars say, is stand on the sidelines.

The most convincing proponents of advocacy argue that teachers should simply adopt an approach that gives students the tools to learn truth (small "t") for themselves. Advocacy is one of those approaches, and if it is used intelligently and with discretion, it can support the best parts of a liberal arts education. To do this, they suggest, teachers need to recognize when they are advocating something and make their approach explicit. Advocacy should be reasoned and informed, and students should be given a rationale for what we ask them to believe. Their autonomy should be respected, and they should be invited to say what they think in an open environment.

When we think back on the classes we took as undergraduates and as graduate students, quite often the teachers that we remember best and most fondly are those who moved us, motivated us, and challenged us to see one little corner of the world in an entirely new way. The people who make the most impact on students are often the ones with the clearest visions of *why* learning matters to them and should matter to us. In short, wimps make lousy teachers. There are clearly potential dangers to unchecked advocacy in the classroom, but perhaps as teachers of communication we should also be particularly aware of the potential dangers of unchecked timidity. The first job of a professor is to *profess*; that is the doorway into our chosen world of mass communication, and from there we can each chart our own maps and targets for our students' path of discovery.

Promising Professors Offer Teaching Tips

Jennifer Greer

University of Nevada-Reno

Co-Chair, Research

To the outsider, Wayne Wanta, winner of several teaching and research awards, seems to manage both aspects of his job effortlessly. But the new professors attending the "Promising Professors" workshop in Miami were let in on his secret.

"The feeling of being unorganized is standard operating procedure," said Wanta, the invited distinguished educator for the workshop, which honors outstanding teaching efforts in teaching by new professors and graduate assistants. "We all dig ourselves into holes and we all dig ourselves out."

Wanta spoke to the six competition winners and about 45 others in the audience about balancing research and teaching. He also suggested taking a big-picture look at the academic year and planning tests and papers due so they coincide with research deadlines. He also suggested having several ongoing studies, all at different stages, so that research productivity never grounds to a halt.

Another tactic is to look for opportunities to integrate research into teaching by involving students in the project, as interviewers, coders, or co-investigators. This benefits the students as well, because they "learn by doing," Wanta said. Above all, Wanta told the audience to expect—and learn to deal with—setbacks: "Don't make everything a do-or-die situation, because if you do, you're going to die a lot."

The six competition winners also shared their teaching tips. Jon Hyde, St. Michael's College, first-place winner, stressed finding trusted colleagues to use as sounding boards before trying out new teaching ideas. "I've come up with some real doozies," he said. He also suggested having students work in pairs on difficult assignments or quizzes, especially in the early weeks of a new class. This technique improves accuracy, lessens anxieties, and gets students talking to each other, he said.

At the workshop, he had participants pair up to identify countries on a world map, an exercise he uses in the first days of his global communications class to help students realize how little they know about the world outside the U.S. borders. Work from that class, and others, is online at <http://tlweb1w2k.smcvt.edu/TheWall.htm>.

Alyse Lancaster, University of Miami, second-place winner, said one of the first things she does each semester is learn every student's name, no matter how large the class. Students are motivated to work harder if you know who they are, she said. You may then call on people and encourage discussions, even those who don't seem to be engaged.

"Even people who sit in the back of the class want to be heard," Lancaster said. Encouraging debate is vital in the classroom. "Often times they're encouraged to be lazy - you need to break that mold." But professors need to make sure they set the rules for discussion and stick to them, she said.

Jean Grow Van Dorn, Marquette University, third-place winner, had three succinct tips: "Be myself; Be relevant; Make them think." Of the first, she said she surprised herself when she revealed some of the personal issues she's faced to her students.

"Integrating my life into my classroom has made me a very different teacher than I thought I'd be," she said. But the experience showed how powerful a connection she could make with students when they saw that "we're all human and we all have to deal with things." The nine books she assigns for one class are part of her crusade to make them think critically, she said. But she divides the books so that half of the students read a book, and half respond to the ideas presented, making both active participants.

Kathleen Wickham, University of Mississippi, honorable mention, said a little chocolate can go a long way in teaching j-students statistics. She brings in bags of M&Ms, sometimes enough for 150 students, to demonstrate the polling concepts of margin of error, confidence levels, etc. The students get the idea of what numbers really mean, as well as some candy to take home. Some of her best math teaching tips can be found in *Math Tools for Journalists*, published this year by Marion Street Press.

Brian Carroll, University of North Carolina, graduate winner, lamented, "I'm an analog guy, and I'm teaching digital folks," a sentiment shared by many in the audience. But he assured attendees that professors of a certain generation can teach critical evaluation skills to the "When it doubt, Google it" generation. He shows students rogue Web sites and cyber-squatters to demonstrate that everything on the Web is not created equal. He points to sites such as the *CIA World Factbook 2002* that have information that students probably haven't seen before (<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>).

Victoria Ekstrand, University of North Carolina, graduate student winner, directed audience members to take off one shoe and toss them toward the front of the room, a technique she uses with students in her media law course. She then encourages several groups of students to come forward and pick out a group of shoes to open shoe stores. Inevitably, straggler shoes are left over. This demonstrates the concept of "the marketplace of ideas," she said. Each shoe is an idea that needs to find a place, but many don't make it into the marketplace.

2002-2003 Research Opportunities

Jennifer Greer

University of Nevada, Reno

Co-Chair, Research

Successful "Media and Family" Research Special-Topic Competition Returns

Returning to a successful topic from the 2000 convention, Mass Communication and Society again will sponsor a special research competition on "Media and Family." The top papers dealing with this topic will be selected for presentation at a special research panel in Kansas City. The first-place paper will win a cash prize.

Any established research method may be used, and the division welcomes a wide variety of topics that fall under this broad heading. The division is particularly interested in research not commonly the subject of research in this or other divisions.

All papers not accepted for presentation at the special "Media and Family" panel will be considered for the general paper competition. Top papers for the general competition will be presented during other research panels at the convention. Both the general competition and the special competition are open to faculty and students.

Moeller Prizes for Graduate-Student Research to Be Awarded

Graduate student research prepared for class between April 1, 2002, and April 1, 2003, can be submitted for the Mass Communication & Society division's Leslie J. Moeller Award competition. This competition, which includes a \$100 first-place prize and \$75 second-place prize, is open to any work done entirely by graduate students for a course on any topic related to mass communication and society.

A letter from a sponsoring faculty member **must** accompany these submissions; the letter should state that the paper was written for a class during the previous 12 months. Theses and dissertations are not eligible for the Moeller competition.

The official for all research competitions will be published in the January 2003 AEJMC Newsletter and in the next newsletter. In the meantime, contact Research Division co-chairs Jennifer Greer, jdgreer@unr.edu (775-784-4191) or Donica Mensing, dmensing@unr.edu (775-784-4187) with questions.

Judges Needed; Cash Incentives Offered

Mass Communication and Society often is near the top of the divisions in number of papers submitted for the annual AEJMC competition. For 2002, the division received 97 papers, each of which was read by three judges, following AEJMC rules. Nearly 60 judges reviewed papers for the 2002 competitions. Judges are asked to review no more than five submissions.

As in the last two years, the division is offering cash incentives for judges. Any judge who returns his or her paper evaluations before the deadline will be entered into a raffle. Three judges will be randomly selected to receive either a \$50 or \$25 cash prize.

If you can serve as a judge this year, please send an e-mail to Donica Mensing at dmensing@unr.edu or Jennifer Greer at jdgreer@unr.edu. Indicate what type of method you prefer to judge and list topics of interest to you. The research division chairs will work hard to include at least a few papers that match your interests.

Submissions to a Co-sponsored Research Session on "Disability in Media and Society" for 2003 Meeting Needed

Nearly 40 percent of Americans have what could be considered a disability. A special research session at the 2003 convention co-sponsored by the Mass Communication and Society Division and the Media and Disability Interest Group will focus on the societal effects of media coverage of disability.

Have you ever wondered how society's attempts to accommodate this growing minority are portrayed in the media? Whether media are including a disability perspective? How portrayals of disability in media affect social perceptions and/or acceptance of disability? Questions such as these, as well as many others, are welcomed in this special research session,

Submissions for this special co-sponsored session should be clearly marked on the **outside envelope** and **title page** and may be directed to Laura Deen Johnson, Communication Arts Department, University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, 300 Campus Drive, Bradford, PA 16701. Telephone: (814) 362-5014, Facsimile: (814) 362-5094. E-mail: ldj1@pitt.edu.