

PF&R

Media Literacy and PF&R: Tools for the Trip



Tim Bajkiewicz,
South Florida,
PF&R Chair

Mention media literacy and the next question is often, “What’s that?” Keynote speaker W. James Potter from California at Santa Barbara provided both answers and perspective at the well-attended 2005 AEJMC plenary “Media Literacy and JMC Education: Oil and Water?” By session’s end Potter and the other panelists—even the “dissenting view”—agreed the two are complementary and sorely needed in today’s media-saturated world.

So what does media literacy have to do with Professional Freedom & Responsibility? A lot. Media literacy can be a bridge between our goals as educators and our responsibilities as media representatives, including PF&R missions like free expression and media criticism. It seems difficult to effectively address PF&R issues without having achieved some understanding and level of media literacy.

In 1979 the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (1984) expressed concern about “the place occupied by media in society, their social impact, [and] the implication of media communication” (p. 8). Media literacy does not lack for definitions, although Hobbs (1994) points out “considerable consistency” among them (p. 457). Many contemporary definitions derive from the 1992 National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy (Aufderheide, 1997). “A media literate person...can decode, evaluate, analyze, and produce both print and electronic media. The fundamental objective of media literacy is critical autonomy in relationship to all media. Emphases in media literacy training range widely, including informed citizenship, aesthetic appreciation and expression, social advocacy,

SEE “MEDIA LITERACY,” P. 8

Head Note

Recently I talked with a woman in a new tenure-track position who is getting married this year. Her dilemma?

Whether she should try for a child soon after the wedding or wait until she’s tenured—when she fears she may be past her childbearing prime.

The conversation mirrors many I’ve had with younger women who tell me they think they must postpone or abandon their motherhood plans because the tenure and promotion process and kids just don’t mix.

Women may be deterred because they’ve seen few other women successfully balance young children and the tenure process in journalism and mass communication programs. And those who’ve done it typically are pretty quiet unless asked directly about the issue.

In the spirit of pushing women who’ve done what so many think can’t be done into the spotlight, I’ve asked one upcoming and two former division heads to share their thoughts on getting tenure while raising children. You’ll find our stories beginning on page 10. ■



Jennifer Greer,
Nevada, Reno,
Division Head

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New MC&S Research Award proposals sought

In an effort to encourage high-quality research on media and society, the MC&S Division for the first time invites proposals for the MC&S Research Award, a cash grant of up to \$5,000. An article documenting research funded by the grant will be submitted to *Mass Communication & Society* for review. The \$5,000 may be awarded to a single project or to two smaller projects.

Deadline: May 1, 2006

Acceptable topics: Any topic that advances mass communication research, especially at the societal or macrosocial level. Proposals must emphasize the interaction with society and fit with the division's mission.

Methods: All methods are welcome, whether qualitative or quantitative.

Proposal format: The following should be submitted as a Microsoft Word document (with the .doc extension) no longer than 5 pages, single spaced: 1) An overview of the study, stressing the importance of the topic and the fit with the division's mission. This section should include the research questions and hypotheses, if applicable; 2) A brief literature review citing the most relevant articles and describing where your project fits with past research; 3) Proposed methods, with as much detail as possible. 4) A proposed timeline from inception of the project to submission to the journal for consideration. Note: The project must be completed within two years (and the selection committee encourages a faster timeline, if possible).

Additional materials: Submitters also should include a current curriculum vita and a detailed project budget, showing how the research funds would be used. For the most part, hosting/entertaining expenses and personal memberships and subscriptions will not be funded, unless justified by the researcher. If matching funds are promised by another source, please include a letter (or e-mail) of support from the department chair or other administrator responsible for those funds.

Who is eligible: Any member of the Mass Communication & Society division currently teaching, researching or studying mass communication full time. Members of the MC&S executive committee and the selection committee are ineligible.

Additional rules: Half of the awarded funds will be distributed at the start of the project, and the other half will be awarded when the project is submitted to *Mass Communication & Society* for review, as long as that submission takes place within the two-year deadline. Those not completing the project in two years from the date of award become ineligible for the additional funding; however, the journal still has first right of refusal on the article documenting the research. The proposals will be reviewed by the award committee, composed of: the current division head, the immediate past division head, the current journal editor, the immediate past editor of the journal, and one at large member appointed by the current head.

Submit to: Jennifer Greer, MC&S division head, electronically at jdgreer@unr.edu. Attach all required materials in either Word (with .doc extension) or Excel files. Hard copies will not be accepted. ■

MC&S seeks nominations for Trayes Award

Since 1985, the Mass Communication and Society Division has been honoring those who emulate the outstanding service to the MC&S Division, AEJMC, and the field of mass communication provided by Edward Trayes. Among Trayes' many contributions was his position as founding editor of *Mass Comm Review* (now *Mass Communication and Society*). Last year, Indiana's David Weaver was honored as the Trayes recipient during the 20th anniversary year of the award.

Please send nomination letters for the Trayes Award to Jennifer Greer, MC&S Division Head, c/o Reynolds School of Journalism, MS 310, University of Nevada-Reno, Reno, NV 89557. You may also send electronic submissions to Greer at jdgreer@unr.edu. Additional materials can include additional nominating letters and the curriculum vitae of the nominee. Self-nomination is permitted with at least one supporting letter. Letters should be sure to address service to the division, AEJMC, and the field.

The deadline for nominations is April 1, 2006. The winner will be announced in the spring issue of the MC&S newsletter and the award will be presented at the AEJMC convention in August in San Francisco. The division's Executive Committee serves as the selection committee.

Past winners of the Trayes Award are:

2005 - David Weaver
2004—Everette E. Dennis
2003—Donald L. Shaw
1998—Barbara Straus Reed
1997—Guido Stempel III
1996—Diana Stover Tillinghast and Bill Tillinghast
1993—Maxwell McCombs
1991—John Merrill
1990—Del Brinkman
1987—Keith Sanders
1985—Edward Trayes ■

Nominate a Distinguished Educator



Jennifer Fleming,
California State
Long Beach,
Teaching
Standards
Co-Chair

If you know a faculty member who has served as a mentor and role model for your teaching, please consider nominating her or him for the Distinguished Educator Award sponsored by the Teaching Standards Committee of the MC&S Division. The Distinguished Educator Award is given annually to a senior MC&S member whose personal teaching excellence and influence on pedagogy in the field is profound.

In addition to being honored at the MC&S business meeting on Thursday, Aug. 3 at 8:30 p.m., the Distinguished Educator will also make a formal presentation on teaching during the division's annual Promising Professor's Workshop, held this

year on Thursday, Aug. 3 at 8:15 a.m.

To formally nominate a candidate for this award, please send a letter of nomination along with a curriculum vitae from the nominee to: Jennifer Fleming, MC&S Teaching Standards Co-Chair, Department of Journalism, California State University, Long Beach, 1250 Bellflower Blvd. SPA 009, Long Beach, CA 90840-4601.

All nominations must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15, 2006. This year's Distinguished Educator and her or his nominator will be notified of the honor no later than April 28, 2006. ■

'Promising Professors' recognizes young educators

Jennifer Fleming,
California State
Long Beach,
Teaching
Standards
Co-Chair

The AEJMC Mass Communication and Society Division and Graduate Education Interest Group will honor our best and brightest teachers during the Promising Professors Workshop Panel in San Francisco.

Eligibility: Faculty who have taught no more than five years full-time and graduate students who have primary responsibility for teaching at least one course are eligible to enter the Promising Professors Competition. All entrants must be members of the Mass Communication and Society Division. If you're not a member, contact AEJMC at www.aejmc.org/about/memform02.html to join.

How to enter: To enter the competition, please send three copies of each of the following:

- Current vita
- Letter of support from your department chair or dean
- Brief statement of what makes your teaching unique and your assessment of your strengths and weaknesses as an instructor
 - At least two syllabi from classes you have taught within the past two years (Graduate students may send only one if they have not taught more than one class.)
 - At least two examples of assignments

used in the past two years in each of those two classes

- Other materials demonstrating teaching creativity.

Send all materials to Jennifer Fleming, MC&S Teaching Standards Co-Chair, Department of Journalism, California State University, Long Beach, 1250 Bellflower Blvd. SPA 009, Long Beach, CA, 90840-4601. Materials must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 15. All entries will be acknowledged but not returned. A panel of at least three judges will review the entries. Winners will be notified no later than April 28, 2006.

Awards: Three faculty winners will be selected and will receive awards ranging from \$250 to \$75. Two graduate winners will receive awards ranging from \$50 to \$75. To receive awards, winners will be required to attend the Promising Professors Workshop Panel.

Workshop: During the Promising Professors Workshop Panel, competition winners and the Distinguished Educator present tips for better classroom interactions, and those in attendance have an opportunity to share what has brought them success in the classroom. This year, the Promising Professors Workshop Panel and Continental Breakfast is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 3 at 8:15 a.m. ■

RESEARCH

MC&S accepted papers for 2006 Mid-Winter Conference

The Audience of Love: A Case Study of How One Radio Station in a Developing Nation Identifies Its Talk Radio Audience Share in a Market Void of Authoritative Ratings. Tosheena Robinson-Blair, Middle Tennessee State University.

The Communication of College Diversity: A Content Analysis of

Public College and University Viewbooks in the United States. Francey Ackerman-Edelen, Bowling Green State University.

Control versus Constraint: Construction of Gender Roles in Early 20th Century Sex Education Campaigns. Rebecca D. Swenson, University of Minnesota.

Diversity in the Newsroom and Coverage of Tragedy: How Ohio Newspapers Covered Hurricane Katrina. Stephen Siff, Wei Kang, Mohamed Sati, and John Wing.

Do women reporters use more women sources? A content analysis of front page news. John A. Palen and Donna Giuliani, Central Michigan University.

An Ethical Analysis of Promotional and Educational Cues in Help-seeking Pharmaceutical Advertisements. Jessica A. Duffield and Marc C. Seamon, Marshall University.

The Extinction of the *Einwandererzeitung*: German-American Newspapers in the Internet Age. Marcus Messner and Bruce Garrison, University of Miami.

Feminism on Record: New York Times' Coverage of Prime-Time Feminism, 1982-2001. Danielle Stern, Ohio University.

Fox 17's Tennessee Mornings: Reaching the Target Audience: A Case Study on Target Audiences. Ashley Eicher, Middle Tennessee State University.

Framing of the Chechen Conflict in American News Magazines. Julia Badryzlova and Marc C. Seamon, Marshall University.

Grassroots Journalism: Habermas' Public Sphere Realized. Kirsten Petersen and Marc C. Seamon, Marshall University.

Hurricane Katrina in the New York Times. Megan Distin McCabe, Cornell University.

Identity (Mis)representation in Cyberspace: Critique of Four Brands' Native American depictions. Truman Ryan Keys, Howard University.

Media and hurricanes: A historical review of newspaper hurricane coverage over the last century. Marcia L. Watson, University of Miami.

Public Knowledge vs. Private Power: The Moss Subcommittee and the Origins of the Freedom of Information Act's Exemption Four. Andrew Famiglietti, Bowling Green State University.

The Rise and Fall of the Fairness Doctrine and its Relationship to Freedom of Speech. Richard Knecht, University of Toledo.

The Shenandoah Crash: As seen through the national magazines of the 1920s. Tom Hrach, Ohio University.

Status Quo or Public Service? Examining National Public Radio's Support of HD Radio. Craig Stark, Pennsylvania State University.

Stem Cell Research: Visual Framing of the Ethical Debate in Time and Newsweek. Nicole Elise Smith, University of North Carolina.

The Study of Diversity and Marketing Strategies of Non-profit Religious TV Stations: A Comparison between Da Ai TV in Taiwan and EWTN in the United States of America. Chin-Chung Chao, Bowling Green State University.

Study of Press Coverage Pre- and Post *Lawrence v. Texas*. R. Christopher Burnett, California State University at Long Beach.

Weapons of Mass Destruction, Beryllium and the News Media: Ohio Stories. Carolyn Stewart Dyer, University of Iowa.

Web of Impediments: Is Public Relations Spinning Out of Control? Jeanette Wenig Drake, University of Findlay.

What the F.C.C.?: Surveying the Impact of *freepress.org* on big Media and 'Militainment'. Lisa Barr, Southern Illinois University. ■

AEJMC Mid-Winter Conference

Feb. 24-26, 2006
Bowling Green State University,
Ohio.

Detailed program information
available at
[http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/
commst/temp/aejmc.htm](http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/commst/temp/aejmc.htm)

2006 AEJMC MIDWINTER CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

February 24-26, 2006
School of Communication Studies
Bowling Green State University
Bowen-Thompson Student Union

NAME: (FIRST, LAST) _____ UNIVERSITY/COMPANY: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____ TELEPHONE NUMBER:
Office/Home: ()

MAILING ADDRESS: _____ Cell/Mobile: ()

STATUS: FACULTY /INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS STUDENT

Emergency Contact Name: _____ Phone ()

Diet Restrictions: _____

BY WHAT MEANS DO YOU PLAN TO TRAVEL TO THE CONFERENCE? (CHECK ONE ONLY)

CAR FLIGHT (FLIGHT #) _____ AIRLINE: _____ AIRPORT: TOLEDO DETROIT CLEVELAND OTHER
 TRAIN GREYHOUND BUS Other (please state) _____

WHEN DO YOU PLAN TO ARRIVE TO THE CONFERENCE? (CHECK ONE ONLY)

THURSDAY EVENING FRIDAY MORNING (BEFORE NOON) FRIDAY AFTERNOON (BEFORE 5 P.M.)
 FRIDAY EVENING (AFTER 5 P.M.) SATURDAY MORNING Other Times (please state) _____

Graduate student escorts will be available Friday morning and afternoon at the Toledo Airport only. If you would like to be picked up by the student escorts at that airport, please give us a copy of your flight itinerary along with this registration form. We'll send you the escort schedule. If you fly to other airports, you have to arrange your own ground transportation.

Shuttle bus will transport participants from the Quality Inn to the conference site. If you plan to drive on Friday, please park your car at the Quality Inn and take the shuttle to the conference site as parking will be extremely difficult on campus Friday. The conference will begin officially at 1 p.m. on February 24. Registration packets will be available Friday morning at 9 a.m. at the hallway inside the Bowen Thompson Student Union next to Room 208. A lounge will be available for guests arriving before 1 p.m. Friday. An e-mail receipt of your registration will be sent to you when we received your registration. You'll also receive a written receipt at the conference registration desk on site.

Conference Registration

The registration fee includes a welcome reception Friday evening, a luncheon Saturday, and a social event Saturday evening for graduate students, and coffee breaks between sessions.

EARLY BIRD RATE (RECEIVED BEFORE FEB 1)

\$25 GRADUATE STUDENTS

\$30 FACULTY/INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

REGULAR RATE (RECEIVED BETWEEN FEB 1 TO FEB 21)

\$ 30 GRADUATE STUDENTS

\$ 35 FACULTY/INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

If money order is sent instead of personal checks, you can pay at the early bird rate.

ON-SITE RATE (FEB 24-26 or after FEB 21): Cash and Money Order only.

\$35 GRADUATE STUDENTS

\$40 FACULTY/INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

Payment: CHECKS OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY,

Mail: Ms. Linda Glomski

AEJMC Midwinter Conference

School of Communication Studies

Bowling Green State University

West Hall 302

Bowling Green, OH 43403

Hotel Reservation

HOTEL REGISTRATION IS SEPARATE. PLEASE MAKE ROOM RESERVATION AT THE OFFICIAL HOTEL OF THE CONFERENCE:

QUALITY INN

(419) 352-2521 or

(888) 492-7144. Mention AEJMC in your reservation

to get our special conference rate of \$50 single/

double, or \$55 up to four persons including breakfast.

Breakfast is included in your Quality Inn hotel room fee.

UPDATES AND DETAILED PROGRAM OF THE CONFERENCE CAN BE FOUND AT THE CONFERENCE WEB PAGE AT <http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/commst/temp/aejmc.htm>

RESEARCH

Diverse programming planned for San Francisco



Marie Hardin,
Penn State,
Vice-Head

Although MC & S volunteered to give up some programming this year to make way for new AEJMC interest groups, creative planning and partnerships have enabled us to offer a full array of panels and research sessions in San Francisco.

Programming for San Francisco started almost as soon as the San Antonio convention was over. You probably remember receiving an e-mail early in the fall asking for programming ideas. Our officers collected your panel suggestions, prioritized them and sent them to me. I sent them on to the national office.

Our programming ideas were combined with those of other divisions, and the batch of proposals was sent out to AEJMC Council of Divisions (COD) leaders in November. I looked for proposals from other divisions that were similar to ours; when I found them, I suggested partnerships with those divisions. Other divisions also approached us, asking us to partner on panels they thought would be of interest to our membership.

Of course, as we were looking at panel proposals, we kept in mind the research needs of the division. Because of the large number of research proposals we get, MC & S must use about half of its programming slots on research. The Scholar-to-Scholar session and the poster session we co-sponsor with the Newspaper Division both help us to reach our

acceptance goal. Our goal is to accept around 50 percent of the papers we receive, depending on quality of submissions.

After reviewing our programming options, Jennifer Greer and I attended the



COD planning meeting in Savannah, Ga., at the beginning of December. There, we met with other COD members to plan days and times for sessions.

Our top priority for time slots went to the panel sessions because those involve other groups and are harder to schedule. However, we are pleased with the days and times for our research sessions, too. Overall, we think we have a schedule that offers members something of interest every day. We have several teaching sessions, including one on teaching about sports and society and another about teaching courses that focus on diversity. We will also offer a session that brings journal editors together to talk about

getting published. A similar session we offered last year (co-sponsored by the Law Division) was popular.

I could talk about all of sessions, but I'll highlight three:

- *A pre-convention workshop on teaching.* This session should be of special interest to graduate students and to new professors, as it will offer practical tips for teaching the Intro to Mass Communication course. The Graduate Education Interest Group (GEIG) is our co-sponsor. GEIG will help us publicize this workshop to graduate students.

- *An off-site session.* We're partnering with the Visual Communication Division to offer members a chance to visit the Cartoon Museum and to hear experts on comics talk about their role in U.S. culture.

- *A session bringing together top paper authors and experts on "Social Divides."* The panel will feature the top two or three research papers submitted as part of a special paper call (see page 8). Dori Maynard of the Oakland-based Maynard Institute and other diversity experts also will discuss media's role in uniting and dividing diverse groups in U.S. society.

If you have questions about any of the sessions listed in our schedule (at right) for San Francisco, please let me know. We want to make all of our programming as helpful to you as we can! ■

MC&S 2006 Convention Schedule

TUESDAY, AUG. 1

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Pre-convention workshop: Teaching the introductory mass communication course
Co-sponsored with GEIG.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 2

8:15 to 9:45 a.m.

Refereed research paper session

10 to 11:30 a.m.

Re-defining writing, panel co-sponsored with Magazine Division

11:45 to 3 p.m.

Laughing at ourselves: Comics and American culture, Cartoon Museum, panel and tour co-sponsored with Visual Communication Division

5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Social divides (will feature panelists and top papers), panel co-sponsored with MAC Division

THURSDAY, AUG. 3

7 a.m.

Outgoing officers meeting, off-site; New members breakfast

8:15 to 9:45 a.m.

Promising Professors workshop, panel co-sponsored with GEIG

11:45 to 1:15

Playing the Reviewing Game, panel co-sponsored with Law

3:15 to 4:45 p.m.

Media Literacy, panel co-sponsored with Scholastic

5 to 6:30 p.m.

Poster session, refereed research co-sponsored with Newspaper

8:30 to 10 p.m.

MC&S members meeting

FRIDAY, AUG. 4

7 a.m.

Incoming officers meeting, off-site

8:15 to 9:45 a.m.

Refereed research paper session

11:45 to 1:15 p.m.

Scholar-to-Scholar session

1:30 to 3 p.m.

It's about more than scores, panel co-sponsored with RTVJ

5 to 6:30 p.m.

Off-site social (location TBA)

SATURDAY, AUG. 5

7 a.m.

Mass Communication and Society Editorial Board meeting

8:15

New officers training sessions (all officers should attend)

8:15 to 9:45 a.m.

Refereed research paper session

10 to 11:30 a.m.

Out of the comfort zone, panel co-sponsored with MDIG

11:45 to 1:15 a.m.

Refereed research paper session ■

Graduate research papers sought for Moeller Award

The MC&S Division encourages graduate students to submit papers on any topic related to mass communication and society to the Leslie J. Moeller Award competition. Papers for Moeller are submitted following the same electronic process described on page 8, but all entries must clearly note the Moeller competition on the title page. Theses and dissertations are not eligible. Papers must be accompanied by a letter—e-mailed from the sponsoring faculty member

to the research co-chairs— indicating that the paper was written for a class during the previous 12 months. First prize is \$100; second prize, \$75. Winners will present at the August convention in San Francisco; student submissions not chosen for the Moeller awards will be placed in the division's general paper competition.

For more information, visit the MC&S Web site at www.aejmc-mcs.org or contact one of the division's research co-chairs. ■

SPECIAL CALL FOR WORK ON "MEDIA AND SOCIAL DIVIDES"

Wanted: Research papers for San Francisco convention



Diana Knott Martinelli, West Virginia, Research Co-Chair

The MC&S division seeks research paper submissions from both faculty and students for the AEJMC national convention in San Francisco in August. Papers may be on any topic related to the general field of mass communication and society. In addition, the division is issuing a special call for papers on the topic "Media and Social Divides" for a dedicated research panel.

Cash awards will be presented for the top papers in both the general competition and in the special call. Graduate students may also compete for the Moeller Award (see box, page 7).

For the "Media and Social Divides" competition, the division seeks research that deals with the role of media in areas of ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, country of origin, religion and other social divisions in the United States. All papers not accepted for presentation at the special panel will be considered for presentation at the convention's other MC&S research sessions. Papers sub-



mitted for the special call must be clearly noted as such on the title page.

For all papers, any recognized research method and citation style may be used, and all text and supporting materials should not exceed 30 double-spaced pages. Work previously presented, published or under consideration for publication, or papers submitted to another AEJMC division are not eligible.

All papers must be submitted by midnight Eastern time, April 1, via the division's online process, accessed through the MC&S division Web site at <http://www.aejmc-mcs.org>. For questions, contact either of the research co-chairs: Janet Bridges at jabridges@shu.edu, 936/294-1341 or Diana Knott Martinelli at diana.knott.wvu.edu, 304/293-3505, ext. 5420. ■

self-esteem, and consumer competence" (p. 79). The *Dictionary of Media Literacy* (Silverblatt & Enright Eliceiri, 1997) defines it as "a critical thinking skill that enables audiences to decipher the information that they receive...and empowers them to develop independent judgments about media content" (p. 48). Potter (2004) identified four key elements common to more than 20 definitions: 1) It is not limited to one medium; 2) It requires skills; 3) It requires certain types of knowledge; and 4) It must deal with values (p 32-33).

Media literacy's broad definitions and goals have contributed to confusion among not only media literacy advocates, but also media scholars and educators (Christ & Potter, 1998). What should be emphasized? By whom? In what kind of setting?

Although relatively new in the United States, such questions have been answered by educators in western Europe, Canada, and Australia since the 1970s as they integrated media literacy into K-12 education (Masterman, 1997). Schools are also where you will find most American media literacy efforts today (Hobbs, 2004), fighting against the tide of decreased resources and increased standardized testing. Even though "most faculty in higher education media programs would probably argue that they teach students to become media literate," (Christ,

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

2004, p. 92) media literacy education has yet to become a focus for most collegiate journalism and mass communication programs.

With that quick primer in mind, let us put media literacy in the context of two PF&R missions. First, free expression is implicit in media literacy's mandate and explicit in the Free Expression Policy Project's report "Media Literacy: An Alternative to Censorship" (Heins & Cho, 2002). The authors note concerns regarding potentially disturbing media content, especially relating to youth, but recommend information rather than legislation. "Education in media literacy is thus not simply an alternative to censorship; it is far preferable...for it enhances rather than curtails young people's intellectual growth and their development into critically thinking adults" (p. 3).

Second, media criticism seems a favored sport among faculty, but often we are criticized for unfounded "media bashing." To facilitate analysis and productive discussion, especially among K-12 audiences, The Center for Media Literacy created "Five Key Questions that can Change the World" "Who created this message? What creative techniques are used to attract my attention? How might different people understand this message differently than me? What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message? Why is this message being sent?" (Share, Jolls, & Thoman, 2005, p. 7). Such plain-English questions belie

their impressive intellectual roots, while making media analysis accessible to everyone.

American schools may be slow to adopt media literacy, but the mass communication academy should seize this opportunity to join intention and initiative as media education leaders. Pressing and delicate PF&R issues are everywhere as we traverse today's endless media landscape. On the road we will need both oil and water, plus the maps and tools media literacy provides. ■

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Media literacy can be a bridge between our goals as educators and our responsibilities as media representatives, including PF&R missions like free expression and media criticism.

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Mixing the tenure track and the mommy track



Jennifer Greer,
Nevada, Reno,
Division Head

When my husband and I were both working at daily newspapers in the early 1990s, I looked around the newsroom and could find not one woman with children who was in any position of authority. The only female reporters with children were part time and in entry-level positions, despite years of experience. They didn't socialize with the staff and editors, and were passed over for promotions.

I made the decision to go into academia so I could have a meaningful career while raising a family. When I tell that to young women in graduate school or early in the tenure process, they look at me as if I'm crazy. "You chose this profession so you could have children?" they ask. Yes, and it's the best decision I ever made.

I've been lucky enough to have formal and informal mentors, including Mary Ann Ferguson of Florida and Shirley Staples Carter of South Carolina, who not only were granted tenure and the rank of full professor but also managed to become administrators—all while raising children. Mary Anne, for example, told me she thought having a child in graduate school was easier than having one while on tenure track.

I listened, and had my first daughter a year before earning my Ph.D. But I had my second and third daughters while

on tenure track. When I was surprised by my third pregnancy in four years, I walked in the office of my then dean, Bill Slater, and said I wanted to resign. Bill calmed me down and told me to take a few days off and get out of town. When I came back, we worked out a plan that gave me time with the kids *and* time to get my research in order. I'm forever in his debt. Bill, father of three sons, got it.

I stopped my tenure clock twice and eventually went up for tenure and promotion in my eighth rather than my sixth year, earning a "commendable," rather than "excellent," research rating. But the extra time at home with the girls was well worth it for me. In 2003, I was the first woman tenured since the Reynolds School of Journalism was founded in 1984, something I say with pride. At the time, my daughters were 8, 5 and 3.

The key to me was being in a supportive environment, both at work and at home. I chose to work at the Reynolds School of Journalism rather than a larger, more research-oriented program. And my supportive spouse not only put me through graduate school, he is also a terrific dad.

While I know men struggle with the work family balance as much as women, I purposely asked only women to comment on the family/tenure balance for this article. For women, the tenure-track years coincide with our childbearing years, and we face physical demands in pregnancy

and nursing. (Perhaps our next male division head will give our male colleagues the equal time they deserve.)

Below are thoughts from mothers who've successfully navigated graduate school and the tenure process. I hope you'll pass this article along to the next young woman who asks you whether she can be on the tenure track and the mommy track at the same time.

*Ginger Carter Miller, MC&S
Division Head 1998-1999,
Georgia College & State University,
Tenured*

The Commission on the Status of Women held a symposium in Toronto where we discussed this issue as a "false dichotomy." From that discussion, I'm not surprised it's still being discussed.

I had one colleague here put off tenure for two years because she had delayed scholarship activities while she had a child. I know at least three at various other universities across the country who waited to have a child after she was awarded tenure. I heard another tenure track faculty member, who is expecting her second child (in three years) say, "I'm not willing to sacrifice my family for this."

So to quote the old commercial, what's a mother to do?

My suggestion – the one I have lived with for the past 14 years as I pursued tenure and promotion with a disabled child

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—is to seek the highest common denominator, and plow ahead. Find the school that meets your highest needs both academically and parentally, and bloom where you're planted.

Does this mean sacrifice, as my friend said? Balance is probably more like it, or maybe educated choice. What matters most, though, is you make a choice you can live with. That you own your choice is what matters.

Carol Pardun, MC&S Division Head 1999-2000, Middle Tennessee State University, Tenured

I always tell women who ask me that academia is fabulous for motherhood. The key is to work hard and work smart. I didn't have babies while in grad school. The twins were in first grade when I started my PhD.

I'll address concrete ways to make it work first, and end with a philosophical thought.

When you wake up in the middle of the night, don't worry about not sleeping. Instead, get up and write for an hour or so. This serves two purposes: 1) You'll get an amazing amount of writing done over time; and 2) It will make you tired and let you go back to sleep, but without the worry of not getting enough done.

Find a woman friend who is flexible and believes in what you're trying to achieve. Ideally she'll have kids your kids' ages. She can step in and "take the kids" when other child care falls through. You can tell her how she helped you get tenure. You

can dedicate your first book to her, too.

Realize that getting tenure is not rocket science (well, unless you're studying rocket science). So, if you work consistently, over time, it should all work out. Don't try to be perfect in every area. For example, you can *always* make your lecture better, but there comes a point of diminishing returns. A successful professor has an uncanny ability to recognize where the point of diminishing returns begins.

Jennifer Jacobs Henderson, MC&S Teaching Co-Chair and Incoming Law Division Head, Trinity University, Working toward tenure.

First, I've found that women who have children are often more (not less) productive than their colleagues. This is what I refer to as the "can-juggle-a-hundred-tasks rule." Mothers learn very early that they must be able to do 10 things at once. Mothers, or at least the vast majority I know, rely on chaos as an organizing theory. Put out the hottest fires first, then work your way down the emergency list. This approach, actually, works quite well in academia.

Mothers are also used to interruptions. They don't even skip a beat when a student arrives at their door unannounced, much like they don't skip a beat when their child appears at their bedside at 2 a.m. In both cases, it's just part of life.

Mothers don't expect peace and quiet. They can work through anything. My office is located immediately behind the main auditorium for our university. I hear every production. All day long. Some of my colleagues complain about the noise, and retreat to the library or their homes to work. You have got to be kidding, I think. This is the most peace I will have all day – even with the drug-free schools rally blasting in the background.

Finally, I'd like to mention that this is not just a concern for mothers. I know quite a number of new fathers who both have primary care giving responsibilities for their children and are trying to get tenure. They face many of the same battles, often because their partners have more prestigious, higher-paying positions (not a bad thing, for sure). They also learn to become balancers.

This gives me great hope, actually. Once these fathers and mothers become administrators, the institutional bias against families will break down, I think. I am lucky. My department chair is a father who loves children. He has a wall in his office devoted to the craft projects of *my* daughter. He not only tolerates, but also embraces the fact that family is important. This is the world of academia I hope will one day be the norm rather than the exception. ■

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◆ 15 March

◆ Distinguished Educator nominations due

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◆ 1 April

◆ Traves Award nominations due

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