

STATIC

The Newsletter of the AEJMC Electronic News Division | Volume 56, Number 1 | Spring 2018

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All in for an END luncheon in D.C.

Tony DeMars, Division Head

Texas A&M University-Commerce

I hope everyone is having a great semester! I know your END officers have been busy behind the scenes doing all the necessary planning for the Electronic News Division to be well represented at AEJMC 2018 in Washington D.C.

I would like to start by focusing on the END Luncheon. There are two major reasons you should plan to attend. First, it's going to have a great program. We all know mobile is impacting all levels of journalism. That's why END is doing two major programming elements for the D.C. conference about mobile, at both a pre-conference workshop *and* as the luncheon program. Brant Houston and Gary Kebbel, two of our colleagues who are at the forefront with mobile journalism, are working on a great luncheon program, *Getting Mobile Media into Your Classes Now*.



The 2018 AEJMC annual conference will be held at the Renaissance Downtown in Washington, D.C. // Photo courtesy Marriott.

The luncheon will discuss how mobile technology aids our students as mass communicators and storytellers, and preview this fall's MobileMe&You conference on best practices in mobile media. For more information, see <http://www.mobileme-you.com/>.

The second reason you should attend? Well, we all need to plan for meals, and ones at the convention can be quite pricey. Thanks to support from Houston as the Knight Chair in Investigative Reporting at the University of Illinois College of Media, and Kebbel on behalf of the MobileMe&You 2018 conference and the College of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a meal that will cost upwards of \$70 a plate will only cost you \$30 to register and attend. That's quite a deal. So of course we hope we sell all 80 seats, and it would great if you plan to attend. It's on Mon., Aug. 6 at 11:45 a.m.

More from the Division Head, p. 3

RTDNA Director: What journalism students need to know in the ‘fake news’ era

Dan Shelley, Executive Director
Radio Television Digital News Association

The journalism students of today are about to enter a professional world in which the President of the United States has labeled responsible journalism he doesn't like “fake news,” and has called journalists the “enemy of the American people.”

These words, and other verbal attacks by the president and many of his supporters, have emboldened those who don't like the news media, or don't understand its role in society, to lash out against journalists, often too harshly.

According to the [U.S. Press Freedom Tracker](#), of which the [Radio Television Digital News Association](#) is a founding partner, there were 44 physical attacks on journalists throughout the United States in 2017. Thirty journalists were attacked while covering civil unrest – in Charlottesville, St. Louis, Berkeley, at Standing Rock, on Inauguration Day in Washington, D.C. and in other cities. Two were attacked by politicians – in Montana and Alaska.

But also consider these incidents:

- On January 9 and 10 of this year, a man from Michigan allegedly phoned CNN headquarters in Atlanta, [threatening](#) to commit a mass shooting there. During at least one of his calls, the FBI says he described CNN as “fake news.” He was arrested for a federal crime, but only because he is accused of using interstate communications to make threats, not because his purported targets were journalists.
- On January 21 of this year, American Urban Radio Networks White House correspondent April Ryan revealed on CNN's “Reliable Sources” that she had received [death threats](#).
- On February 9 of this year, WTSP-TV reporter Noah Pransky was “[forcefully \[and\] physically restrained](#)” in Ybor City, Florida, while attempting to ask questions of Hillsborough County Commissioner Ken Hagan about the Tampa Bay Rays' attempt to use taxpayer funding to build a new stadium.
- In September, blogger and former newspaper reporter Randy Turner was [attacked](#) at his home in Joplin, Missouri, by a man who'd been the subject of a post on Turner's blog, “The Turner Report,” revealing sexual misconduct at a local fast food restaurant.
- In March, three *OC Weekly* staffers were [attacked](#) by attendees of a “Make America Great Again” rally in Huntington Beach, California.
- In January 2017, WINK-TV reporter Nicole Valdes and photographer Channing Frampton were [nearly run down](#) by a car driven by a man angry with their reporting in Cape Coral, Florida. The car made contact with Frampton; Valdes barely escaped.



Sadly, the menace doesn't end with physical assaults. In 2017, there were 34 arrests of journalists, most of which targeted reporters who were covering protests.

One thing the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker doesn't document is the countless times federal, state and local public officials attempt to obstruct journalists' efforts to get access to public documents, public meetings, and court proceedings.

Despite these daunting statistics, it is critical to point out that today's journalism students will also be entering a professional world in which news organizations, reporters and photojournalists have heeded the call that the only antidote to attacks on responsible journalism is more and better journalism.

All across America, journalists are uncovering corruption and shining a light on problems that would otherwise go unnoticed. Many of their stories are serving as catalysts for positive change in their communities.

It is also worth noting that I, as a leader of RTDNA, the world's largest professional association devoted exclusively to advocating on behalf of broadcast and digital journalists, see on the horizon a resurgence among young people wanting to enter journalism, and in the public's trust of journalism as an essential part of the American way of life.

I predict that whenever today's red hot anti-journalism vitriol begins to cool, we'll see a dramatic increase in the number of responsible journalists – as opposed to cable news hosts and others who engage in the opinion media – that hasn't been seen since the years immediately following Watergate.

Shelley, p. 3

DeMars: Mobile pre-conference to kick off AEJMC 2018

Continued from p. 1...

The conference this year is Monday through Thursday, Aug. 6-9. That makes the pre-conference Sun., Aug. 8, from 1-5 p.m. Kim Fox (American University-Cairo) is heading up the planning for our workshop this year. Kim is passionate and talented with social media and mobile journalism, so she's arranging for hands-on training.



Photo courtesy Interaction Design Foundation.

“All too often we attend conferences and someone is talking at us,” Fox wrote. “When it comes to technology and tools, sometimes the best way to learn is to learn by doing. This four-hour hands on workshop will expose attendees to the content creation process using a mobile device by doing just that: creating multimedia content on mobile devices. Professors and industry professionals will lead this workshop and provide the participants with concrete knowledge and resources to take back to the classroom.”

SlingStudio will help sponsor this workshop, so you'll also get a chance to see a demonstration of their innovative new technology for easy multi-camera mobile journalism.

I'm excited about how the Electronic News Division will be represented at the 2018 convention. I hope to see everyone there.

Book reviews needed for JMCE

Have you recently adopted a new, first edition textbook for your class? *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator* would be interested in publishing your 1,000-word book review focusing on classroom usefulness and new ideas in teaching. Please contact Jeremy Harris Lipschultz, book review editor: jeremy.lipschultz@gmail.com or 402-203-7247.

Shelley: Empower student journalists to assert their rights

Continued from p. 2...

Until we get to that point, though, there are steps you can take as an educator to help journalism students prepare for the professional world. As a member of the Accrediting Council, I have a keen first-hand knowledge of what America's best journalism schools are teaching students. But do your curricula include subjects such as these?

- Do you encourage your students to follow RTDNA's [Voice of the First Amendment Task Force](#), formed last year to defend against attacks on the press freedom and help the public better understand why responsible journalism is important?
- Do you help them understand their rights while in the field reporting stories? Last fall, RTDNA and AEJMC sponsored a panel discussion at the National Press Club, [Know Your Reporting Rights](#), that provided valuable information for journalism students and young professionals.
- Do you discuss the issue of [safety and security](#) to help prepare students if they encounter threats, harassment or physical attacks in the course of reporting the news?
- Do you empower your students to act professionally yet assertively in their pursuit of their stories? As I wrote in a [New Year's Day message](#) to America's broadcast and digital journalists, “I ask – no, implore – journalists not to back down. Not to give up. Not to let those who attempt to keep secret public information intimidate you. Watch your backs, to be sure. But don't stop.”

Never in modern American history has there been a more challenging time to be a journalist. But never in all of American history has it been more important to send young journalists into the world armed not just with the tools and skills they need, but with the knowledge that the career they have chosen is not just a job.

It's a calling.

STATIC

is the newsletter of the Electronic News Division of the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication.
It publishes three times annually (Fall, Spring & Summer).

Static accepts articles focusing on the division, as well as anything related to the professional or academic sides of our field.

Comments, questions, or article submissions should be directed to
Dylan McLemore, END Newsletter Editor, dylan@dylanmclemore.com

Electronic News Division announces call for papers for 2018 annual conference

*Karen McIntyre, Research Chair
Virginia Commonwealth University*

The Electronic News Division invites faculty and students to submit original research on any aspect of electronic news content or production. This may include many topics related to broadcast journalism or electronic communication with a journalism emphasis, including television, radio or audio (including news podcasting), reporting for the internet, online journalism, journalism for new and changing media, social media journalism, or the role of social media in journalism.

We welcome research articles that employ qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methodologies. Some possible topics that may be relevant to the Electronic News Division are:

- The role of mobile technologies in electronic news production
- Global perspectives on electronic news
- The impact of social media and broadcast news on politics
- Diversity in the newsroom
- The impact of mobile technologies on traditional broadcast news
- Digital news production
- The impact of social media on consumers' news consumption habits
- Video news produced directly for social media or online sites
- The role of the broadcast journalist in the evolving media landscape

Authors of papers accepted for the conference will be encouraged to submit their manuscript for possible publication in *Electronic News*, the official journal for the Electronic News Division. Papers accepted for the conference are not guaranteed publication in the journal.

Papers submitted to the Electronic News Division competition should be no longer than 25 pages of manuscript, excluding tables, figures, references and appendices, and should be submitted in one of the generally approved academic bibliographic styles. Papers should be in 12-point, Times New Roman font, double-spaced and with one-inch margins. Additionally, a separate page consisting of a 75-word abstract is required.

Please be sure to submit a clean paper without author identifying information; otherwise the paper will be disqualified. Please refer to AEJMC's uniform paper call on how to upload clean papers. You are encouraged to submit your paper at least a day or two before the deadline so that you can check to ensure your paper does not contain any identifying information in its properties, as can happen sometimes when Word documents are saved as PDFs. An early submission will allow any and all individuals to fully check submissions as they are entered into the system so that a resubmission prior to the deadline is possible.

The Electronic News Division accepts only one paper per author. This rule is true even if you are the primary author on one paper and co-author on another. In that case, please submit one of the papers to another division. The division offers cash prizes for top student and top faculty paper submissions. Please note the student papers must be completely authored by students. Students with a faculty member as a co-author will not be judged as a student paper.

Authors of all selected papers are expected to present their work in Washington, DC. Cash awards for winning papers will only be awarded if the authors present their work at the conference.

Questions concerning conference paper submissions to AEJMC should be directed to the division's research chair, Karen McIntyre, at kemcintyre@vcu.edu. Questions regarding submissions to the division's journal, *Electronic News*, should be directed to the editor, Anthony Moretti, at (moretti@rmu.edu). All papers must be uploaded through the AEJMC website. Once you have created an account on the AEJMC All Academic site, you will be able to choose the Electronic News Division prior to submitting your paper.



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Website: aejmc.us/end | Listserv: aejmc.us/end/listserv
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Schedule announced for Washington conference

Lindsey Maxwell, Vice Head & Program Chair
University of Southern Mississippi

Please note some of the following titles are tentative as we finalize our program copy in the coming weeks.

Sunday, August 5

1:00 — 5:00 p.m.

Pre-Conference: Hands-On Mobile Journalism

Speaker: Neal Augenstein, WTOP

Cost: \$30

Monday, August 6

8:15 — 9:45 a.m.

Electronic News Division Refereed Research Session #1

Type: Refereed Research

10:00 — 11:30 a.m.

FCC v. Pacifica Foundation at 40: Is its Legacy an Enduring One?

Co-Sponsor: Law and Policy

Type: PF&R

11:45 a.m.

Getting Mobile into Your Classes Now

On-site Luncheon

Cost: \$30

1:30 — 3:00 p.m.

Electronic News Division Refereed Research Session #2

Type: Refereed Research

5:00 — 6:30 p.m.

Hurricane Coverage and Teaching

Sponsor: Electronic News

Type: Teaching

Tuesday, August 7

7:00 — 8:00 a.m.

Member's Meeting

8:15 — 9:45 a.m.

Electronic News Division Refereed Research Session #3 — Top Papers

Type: Refereed Research

10:00 — 11:30 a.m.

The Status of Graduate Teaching Assistants

Co-Sponsor: Graduate Student

Type: Teaching

11:45 a.m. — 1:15 p.m.

Breaking News (A panel featuring a late breaking topic prior to the convention)

Co-Sponsor: Newspaper & Online News

Type: PF&R

1:30 — 3:00 p.m.

Electronic News Division Refereed Research Session #4

Type: Scholar-to-Scholar

3:15 — 4:45 p.m.

Visual News and Photojournalism

Co-Sponsor: Visual Communication

Type: Invited Research

6:00 — 8:00 p.m.

Bliss & Burkum Awards Ceremony

Howard University

Wednesday, August 8

1:45 — 3:15 p.m.

Reading between the Lies: Addressing a Lack of Truth in Today's Political Discourse

Co-Sponsor: Critical and Cultural Studies

Type: PF&R

3:30 — 5:00 p.m.

Covering Religious Issues in Media

Co-Sponsor: Religion and Media

Type: PF&R

****A complete listing of papers and presenters will be published in the Summer edition of *Static*****

Encourage grad student membership in END

Ashley Gimbal, Membership Chair & Graduate Liaison
Arizona State University

As a graduate student, I know going to conferences can be a great experience. But often times, we are unaware of all of the additional benefits of becoming a member of divisions and interest groups. As we get ready for this year's conference, I ask that if you have any grad students (or are a grad student!) that might be interested in our division, please send them our way. Membership in END for grad students is only \$10!

Have a paper or award call, or other news for our next issue?

Email Static Editor Dylan McLemore, dylan@dylanmclemore.com

Naming and framing of severe weather coverage

Dylan McLemore, News Editor
University of Central Arkansas

This February has been one of the wettest on record here in Arkansas. Most of that rain came over a four-day period, resulting in significant flooding.

It reminded me of August 2016, when historic flooding in southern Louisiana killed 13 people. When the waters crested, many small towns had become islands, separated from hospitals, gas stations, and grocery stores.

I knew this largely because of family and friends on Facebook. From the outset, locals accused media of ignoring the story. Eventually, media turned a critical eye inward. The New York Times waited three days to move their staff writer in New Orleans to the scene of the devastation 75 miles away. Then-public editor Liz Spayd [lamented](#) the paper's aggregation of media reports instead of conducting original reporting.

Former CBS Evening News anchor Dan Rather [took to Facebook](#) to blame television news for choosing “the easy ratings of pundits playing the schadenfreude game in air conditioned studios” over sending reporters and resources to the flood zone.

But why?

Timing

The storm hit at perhaps the worst moment on the media calendar in four years. Not only was it the summer vacation days of early August, but there was also the Olympics and an ongoing presidential campaign.

“If you look at the national news, you’re probably on the third or fourth page,” FEMA head Craig Fugate said.

While media devoted investigative resources and considerable airtime to Ryan Lochte’s frat boy exploits in Rio, Louisiana remained in the margins, a dichotomy Rather called “ridiculous.”

Location

Baton Rouge is no media hub. And certainly rural areas of surrounding parishes weren’t easy locales for parachuting in to shoot a stand-up. Did where the storm hit matter?

“What I’ve been worried about for years is that people who live in rural areas away from large cities are discriminated against in news coverage, in weather coverage, in a lot of things,” said James Spann, chief meteorologist for ABC 33/40 in Birmingham, Alabama, and a prominent weather personality on social media.

“If this had happened in New Orleans, it would have been all cable, all news, all the time,” he continued.

Spann speaks from experience. He covered the April 27, 2011 tornado outbreak that killed 252 people in Alabama.

“That was on the news for a night or two and then it was gone,” Spann recalled. “We vanished because Alabama’s a rural state.”

It’s actually worse than that. Most of the national news attention was diverted from Alabama by something else... William and Kate’s royal wedding.

But, before we accept the relative rurality of Baton Rouge as our explanation, what about other newsworthy events in the area? Remember Alton Sterling? Black Lives Matter protests? Police officers being gunned down on a Sunday morning? That all happened in Baton Rouge, and it got wall-to-wall national coverage.

Framing

Clearly, media can overcome location when the story matters. So why was the flood ignored? [It lacked a compelling media narrative](#), argued Salon’s Sean Illing. Police killings of African Americans and the subsequent protests, some violent themselves, fit into all sorts of larger frames about race and justice in America. So did Hurricane Katrina 11 years ago, where the botched federal response to mostly poor, Black neighborhoods triggered political frames that continued coverage for months.

In fact, politics might’ve been the only thing that got the flood back on our screens. President Obama’s decision not to pause his vacation and visit the area, combined with Donald Trump’s day-long tour and criticism of his Democratic rivals connected the story to the campaign circus.

Naming

“Since the flooding isn’t the result of a hurricane, it feels like the scope of the hurt and the loss isn’t being particularly well reported.”

That was ESPN’s Scott Van Pelt, [in a commentary](#) on his late night SportsCenter program. It was the first time the sentiment of Louisianans echoed on a national platform.

Media didn’t cover the Louisiana flood because the storm didn’t have a name? Could it really be that simple?

“Absolutely,” said Spann.

He pointed to Tropical Storm Hermine. When we spoke, it was called Invest 99-L, a title given to an area of potential tropical development. It wasn’t guaranteed to become a tropical cyclone or pose any threat to the Gulf Coast.

“If this thing wasn’t an invest, nobody would be talking about it,” Spann said at the time. “The title or name clearly gives it more attention.”

“I’ve seen more coverage about a potential hurricane that hasn’t even developed yet than what actually did occur in Louisiana,” said Jared Allen, senior forecaster at the



A Louisiana man navigates his neighborhood by boat after the 2016 floods. // Photo courtesy WGNO.

Journalism educators should defend world languages from budget cuts

Peter Morello, Teaching Chair
University of Missouri-Kansas City

As Missouri's public colleges and universities grapple with historic budget cuts, administrators on campuses across the state are conducting top-to-bottom reviews of all academic programs. Those with low enrollments face elimination.

High on the list are world languages. My university already cut Mandarin, Swahili and Arabic courses to save funds. (Of all languages to cut...Mandarin, Arabic and Swahili!) The only courses now offered at my university are Spanish, German, French and Italian.

For broadcast and mobile journalists, a familiarity with other languages is useful. For freelancers and field producers planning a career abroad, a working knowledge of other languages is often essential.

When I asked student journalists interested in global reporting about learning a language, many mentioned apps they believe could make their field reporting easier. Translator apps and devices are gaining popularity, but they do not translate nuance or interpret culture, and are unreliable when a journalist is under fire. Translator apps are just not there yet.

What is more important is that our students understand what languages will impact the world's economy, culture, technology and communication in the future.

According to leading language forecasters, Mandarin, Spanish, English, Arabic and Hindi-Urdu may be the world's top five most-spoken languages within 30 years. English and Spanish are likely to remain the two most widespread languages. The World Economic Forum, an economic think tank, suggests China and India will account for half the global GDP by 2050.

If these projections prove accurate, curriculum changes now will have an enormous impact on the future our students face. It is my hope to work with administrators at my university to get Mandarin, Arabic, Swahili, or another African language back into the curriculum.

"Competition today is fierce, and that is a good thing," wrote James Breiner of the Internet Journalists Network. "The only ones who will find work are those who are the best trained, who have acquired the most knowledge, who have mastered telling stories with multimedia, *who speak more than one language* [emphasis added], and, above all, who want to take on the world. This is a profession for people with passion, with fight, who are undaunted, relentless."



Flood exposes flaws in weather coverage

Continued from p. 6...

National Weather Service office serving Austin and San Antonio, Texas.

National media silence stood out because of how breathless (and erroneous) weather coverage has become in recent years. The lack of fancy graphics and talk of "millions in the path of a storm" may have upset people affected by the flood, but meteorologists say that's not the answer.

"It's overhyped," said Allen. "It's clickbait. Those big flashy headlines – millions of people or however many miles of coastline are threatened by a hurricane – might potentially be desensitizing folks to where you have all these people under the threat, but do they personalize the threat? Do they really think that severe weather is going to impact them in some way?"

Spann calls it consultant-driven "hyperbole."

"What happens when you get a real disaster?" he said. "They don't listen to you if you're hyping up everything that comes along, and [the Louisiana flood] caught these guys flatfooted because there was no name, no title."

Does It Matter?

In an era of media distrust and audience fragmentation, does it even matter if traditional national media are paying attention to natural disasters? The answer is a resounding "yes" if you buy the agenda-setting function of prominent legacy media – that is, they can influence what smaller publications find important, all the way down to your Facebook feed. National coverage, particularly in the aftermath of tragedy, raises awareness and mobilizes support.

"The reality is that recovery purse strings are tied to America's heart strings," New Orleans Times-Picayune editor Mark Lorando [told CNN](#). "The recovery that occurred in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, for example, would not have been possible if viewers and readers and consumers of news across the country had not been completely and emotionally drawn into what was happening here. If people are not aware of what's happening in Louisiana and the scale of the devastation then donations to relief efforts don't flow."

"This was a humanitarian crisis," Spann said. "By not telling it nationally, they probably lost some resources people would have been glad to donate."

National coverage also has the potential to positively affect morale. We Southerners take pride in pulling ourselves up by the bootstraps, but that doesn't mean it feels good to be alone.

"I would imagine people want to feel valued in some way," Allen said. "They want to know that what happened to them means something. What happened to them can be shared with other people."

Whatever the combination of when it happened, where it happened, who it happened to, and what it was called, an historic natural disaster was portrayed as an aside. That matters, and we should think more about news judgments that made it seem acceptable.

'But I don't want to do news...' Engaging journalism majors who don't want to cover hard news

Maria Fontenot, Professional Freedom & Responsibility Chair
University of Tennessee

Each semester, I encounter more and more journalism and electronic media majors who don't want to cover hard news. Many students on the journalism side are more interested in covering sports and/or entertainment. So, I've altered some content in my writing and reporting classes that better reflect the students' interest. Like my colleagues, I continue to teach to basic principles of journalism. But

now, I also point out that many "hard news" stories originate in the sports and entertainment sectors. In fact, some of the biggest and most recent news stories have come out of both the entertainment industry and the sports world.

The #MeToo Movement is an excellent example - a

hard news story that comes from the entertainment industry. Industry outlets such as The Hollywood Reporter and Variety have gone from covering the glamour of Hollywood to shining light on Hollywood's darker secrets. Students need to know that, whatever non-news area they cover, hard news stories are always a possibility.

The same can be said for stories coming out of the sports world. Over the past few years, many of the biggest stories in sports have been about off-field happenings, i.e. domestic violence, sexual misconduct, etc. I always try to include such examples in my teaching as many students who aim to cover sports believe that being a sports reporter only entails covering games, team practice, and scores. I also want them

to understand that there is a time and place for certain facts. For example, reporting about on-field performance is not always appropriate when covering an athlete who is accused and convicted of a violent crime.

Another powerful example from the world of sports is the horrific story of the sexual abuse of many gymnasts on the U.S. national team.

This story had so many layers to it and my students and I discussed it at great length. This story seemed to really affect them. The passion they expressed was moving. Such stories that graced the headlines were covered as hard news stories. These stories were lead stories in

print, broadcast, online, and social media. And many of these stories were uncovered by dedicated journalists who worked to uncover the truth.

The sexual misconduct that is plaguing Hollywood and Olympic athletes were supposedly some of the best-kept "secrets." But thanks to solid investigative journalism, these issues have been exposed and victims are finally free to tell their stories. These stories have made quite an impact on my students. Many now understand the universal applicability of the principles of good journalism and that entertainment and sports reporting go far beyond the red-carpet and the stadium.



Survivors of sexual abuse march in Hollywood in November 2017 as part of the #MeToo campaign. // Photo courtesy Los Angeles Times.

