

# spig news

Newsletter of AEJMC's Small Programs Interest Group

Fall 2012

## Journalism needs business in class

*Educators tackle the challenge of preparing entrepreneurs*

**By Sandra L. Combs**

Magazines and newspapers are cutting their staffs and, as a result, some graduates have to pursue other opportunities in the workforce.

Between 1989 and 2010, the number of full-time newspaper jobs was down by 27 percent, said Lisa A. Phillips of State University of New York at New Paltz. She added that job losses at U.S. magazines were down in 2008 by 1.9 percent, down by 12.3

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percent in 2009, down 5.8 percent in 2010 and down 1.7 percent in 2011.

With these statistics in mind, Phillips has developed a course, "Entrepreneurial Journalists," that

helps students explore and discover their passions and how best to use their education in journalism to further their careers.

Phillips, who has been a freelancer for seven years, said, "We can't allow our students to close doors and say what they won't do."

In addition to reporting and writing, Phillips said students must not be afraid to explore the areas of

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PHOTO BY JOHN MCCLELLAND

## 2012 GIFT winner

**CAROL SCHWALBE** of the University of Arizona talks to a scholar about her Great Ideas for Teachers poster display. Schwalbe won the competition at the 2012 AEJMC conference with an idea for an exercise to sharpen interviewing skills through feedback from the source. For a copy of all 25 GIFT finalists, send a \$5 check, made payable to the Community College Journalism Association, c/o John Kerezy, Cuyahoga Community College, 11000 W. Pleasant Valley Road, Parma, OH 44130.

## SPIG gains new AEJMC visibility

**By Kay L. Colley**

Thank you for another great year of programming at the 100<sup>th</sup> AEJMC convention in Chicago! It was my pleasure to help plan this convention when I was vice head, and I was so excited to see how wonderfully SPIG sessions and ideas were embraced by our panel partners, their members and AEJMC as a whole.

SPIG and SPIG members were well-represented throughout the convention, forming new relationships between groups and continuing to work together with our traditional partners who we have grown to know so well.

GIFT continues to be one of our showcase partnerships with CCJA and the Scholastic Journalism Division. This year, participants in the GIFT-dedicated poster session were from small schools and research-intensive universities, exposing

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SPIG to a group of people who have obviously found our programming valuable.

Our strong line-up of programming in Chicago has prompted the Council of Affiliates to seek a panel partnership for the upcoming convention in Washington, D.C., even as we were preparing panel proposals. That's the kind of visibility I'd like SPIG to have as we continue to grow and move forward in programming, research and our online journal.

If you haven't taken a look at SPIG's online journal, Teaching Journalism and Mass Communication, at <http://aejmc.net/spig/journal/>, you should take a few minutes to do that. Vivian Martin and her team of editors and reviewers have made this a bona fide source for thoughtful essays and research on what we do.

In the years to come, this journal will provide SPIG with more exposure among not only other AEJMC Interest Groups and Divisions, but also, because of its accessibility online, will continue to establish SPIG among



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mass communication educators throughout the nation and world.

Upcoming in the journal will be a special edition focusing on Service Learning edited by guest editors Michael Ray Smith of Bethany University and Michael Longinow of Biola University, so keep your eyes open for opportunities on how to contribute to continue to make our journal outstanding.

As we move toward the winter meeting in Dallas Nov. 30 to Dec. 1, let me remind everyone of AEJMC's challenge: The Interest Group or Division with the most people who have donated \$100 in honor of AEJMC's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary gets an extra chip. For SPIG, this could mean two additional panel slots.

This could really assist us in getting some of your wonderful panel ideas on the schedule for 2013 in Washington, D.C., so join me, and SPIG and send in your contribution. Don't forget to let the headquarters know that your donation should be credited to SPIG.

And finally, thank you for submitting your panel ideas. We received quite a few wonderful ideas for the 2013 AEJMC Convention. Now, put your research hat on and submit to the research call, which should be finalized soon. In the past, the deadline has been April 1, so that should give you plenty of time to create a research project and submit it. I'd like to see us double overall submissions, so don't wait. Start today.

Thank you for all of your help and support. I'm looking forward to serving you to make this a wonderful SPIG year!

## Minutes of the 2012 SPIG membership meeting

### Welcome and Introductions

Susan Lewis, SPIG 2011-12 Head, welcomed new and returning members to the Saturday, Aug. 10, business meeting in Chicago, Illinois. She lauded the work of the 2011-12 officers. She mentioned how SPIG has something to offer all who wish to teach whether you're part of a small program in a big school or a smaller school.

### Discussion of membership recruitment needs

Susan Lewis praised the work of the 2011-12 officers for SPIG's increased exposure resulting in a 42% increase in membership or an increase to 170 members from last year's 120. The SPIG budget has grown to \$1,500 with membership dues at \$12 for professionals and \$8 for graduate students. The SPIG budget covers awards for the Teacher of the Year and the Great Ideas for Teachers (G.I.F.T.) programs as well as website

hosting.

### Discussion of Journal and Editor Call

Vivian Martin, Central Connecticut, noted the successful launch of the new online journal, *Teaching Journalism and Mass Communication: A Journal Published by the Small Programs Interest Group*, as evidenced through analytical data. Mitzi Lewis, Midwestern State, explained the SPIG website with the online journal moved to AEJMC.net allowing for one domain name and fee. From November through July, the SPIG website had 1,742 unique visitors. The five top referring sites to SPIG's website are AEJMC.org, LinkedIn, Facebook, AEJMC.com, and Twitter. Teaching Journalism and Mass Communication is the top driver to the SPIG website with three out of four hits for the online journal.

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## Michael Ray Smith

# Author focuses on community journalism

**What is your current primary job title and employer and what subjects do you teach?**

I spent a decade in the newsroom and more than two decades in the classroom. These days I am professor of Communication Studies at Campbell University, Buies Creek, N.C., and I teach the journalism sequence along with classes in convergence, ethics and research methods.

**Tell me an interesting fact about you.**

In high school, I drew cartoons for the campus newspaper. I had no idea that I'd ever work as a full-time journalist.

**What was your first job?**

In horse country not far from Washington, D.C., the swells enjoyed dressage and I opened the gate to let the contestants in and out. The first time I did the job, I was paid in cash and I promptly lost the \$20 bill.

**Tell me about your education.**

In the days of court-ordered desegregation, I attended a predominantly black high school, which was one block from the District of Columbia. Many of us went to a junior college while in high school, a first for Prince George's County, Md. Prince George's Community College now has about 15,000 students, nearly three times the size of the university where I now work. I graduated from University of Maryland, Shippensburg University, Regent University, where I earned a doctorate in communication; in 2012, I defended a second master's degree at Penn State in an interdisciplinary program.

**What was your dissertation topic and what is your current research**

### SPIG PROFILE



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**focus?**

I am interested in the intersection of Christian faith and mass media and wrote a book called "The Jesus Newspaper," which examined the life of Charles M. Sheldon who

**"Our program has three full-time communication professors and barely 70 students. When we succeed, we feel like David challenging Goliath."**

tried to apply his question "What would Jesus do" to the news and advertisements in a mainstream newspaper. That book was based on my dissertation. The Sheldon experiment did not catch on, but it

motivated reform-minded journalists to rethink newsgathering. Most of my work concerns some aspect of media history and community journalism.

In 2011, I published "A Free press, Free hand: The Spirit of American Blogging in the Handwritten Newspapers of John McLean Harrington, 1858-1869," published by Edenridge in Grand Rapids. That book explores the work of a North Carolina journalist who handwrote 302 newspapers during the Civil War period. In addition, I examine community journalism and not long ago wrote about the hyperlocal content of a community newspaper and its attempt to produce a supplement that featured faith as its primary content.

**What do you like about your job and your workplace?**

Our program has three full-time communication professors and barely 70 students. When we succeed, we feel like David challenging Goliath. Our modest student newspaper won second in the state against some well-funded private and state universities. Our student newspaper lost to a program with more than 600 communication students and 60 professors. We feel like we do much with little and, for the most part, students and others enjoy the satisfaction of succeeding against the odds.

**Tell me something about your personal life.**

Barbara, my wife, and I have been married for 32 years and have two children. Shannon, 30, works in hospital public relations and has two young children. Taylor, 20, is studying French in Paris and this summer

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video and audio while maintaining the integrity of the craft.

Michael A. Longinow of Biola University further explained the issue when he said, "The reality of our teaching is that for every group of 10 students in our classes, a third, maybe a half or more will not pursue journalism or even public relations as a career direction – initially, or even later in life. It begs the question whether the journalism and media concepts and skills we're teaching are valid for such a wandering group.

"...even in the most creative technological forms – news is still news, reporting is still reporting, and the importance of accuracy, competitive commentary, and inquiry about the future remain bedrock to what journalism is even for a generation of readers and viewers whose collective memory and attention span have been shrinking steadily over the last decades," Longinow said.

Meanwhile, Maribeth Vanderweele, formerly of the *Chicago Sun Times*, said she started working as a journalist in high school and

eventually was editor of her high school newspaper. Today, however, she says journalism students and those entering the workforce have different expectations placed upon them, mainly having more than one skill when they enter the workplace.

In addition, Cynthia Yanow of Southeast Missouri State University suggested that students expand their education before graduating, which

***"Journalism schools must wrestle with the three-legged stool -- content, audience and business."***

-- Richard Gordon, Northwestern

will make them better prepared to enter the workforce as entrepreneurs.

"Students need advertising classes, video classes, web design and will power," she said. "Students need elementary business classes and need to learn to create their own world, because traditional jobs are shrinking."

Richard Gordon, director of Digital Innovation at Northwestern

University, said he was hired in 2000 to create a "new media journalism concentration" and it was important because there are a few things all journalism schools should teach.

"Journalism schools must wrestle with the three-legged stool – content, audience and business," Gordon said. "They need to teach brainwriting instead of brainstorming; they need to understand the media business and teach media product development."

Brainwriting is an opportunity for everyone to participate in the idea session, Gordon explained. All participants write down their ideas before sharing them with the group. That way, those participants who are reluctant to share during brainstorming, will have something written out and might share after

brainwriting.

Finally, Longinow said, "Our classrooms and labs are not ends in themselves. They are a beginning of life formation in students that we as educators get to watch played out over many years."

*Sandra Combs is an assistant professor at Arkansas State University and co-editor of SPIG News.*

## Teaching job available in Texas

Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas, is seeking a Mass Media instructor, to begin Spring 2013 teaching Writing for Mass Media, News Reporting, Media Literacy and possibly an upper-level special topics course in the area of "new media."

Applicants must have at least 18 graduate hours in mass media/communication or journalism. Contact Cathy Johnson [cathy.johnson@angelo.edu](mailto:cathy.johnson@angelo.edu).

## Nashville school seeks PR teacher

Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn., is seeking a full-time, tenure-track assistant professor of public relations to teach undergraduate courses starting Aug. 1, 2013. Candidates should be a person of the Christian faith. Accreditation and professional experience in PR is preferred, and a Ph.D. or progress toward a terminal degree is required.

For additional information about the position and to complete the online application, candidates are directed to <https://jobs.belmont.edu>.

**spig news** is created by **Richard Hendrickson**, a Los Angeles-based associate professor for Cleveland's John Carroll University, and **Sandra Combs**, assistant professor in the Department of Journalism of the College of Communications at Arkansas State University.

You may call Dr. Hendrickson at 323-806-1427, or send email to [newsprof@iCloud.com](mailto:newsprof@iCloud.com). You may reach Ms. Combs at 870-972-2704 or send email to [scombs@astate.edu](mailto:scombs@astate.edu)

# A conversation with Kathy Richardson

## 2012 'Teacher of the Year' aims for clarity and consistency

By Mitzi Lewis

**How did you become a teacher?**

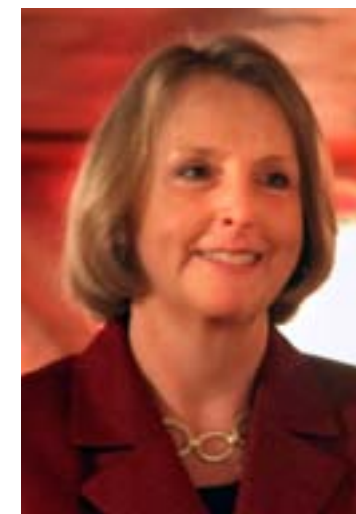
I was one of those children who always said that I wanted to be a teacher, but I really didn't plan to become one when I went to college and graduate school. However, as I was about to graduate with my master's degree, one of my professors encouraged me to apply for a position at his alma mater. I actually did so just so I could tell him that I had -- never intending to actually pursue the job actively. But, I was invited to interview, was intrigued by the opportunity, and then began my work as a college instructor.

**Who inspired you?**

So many of my professors -- but, in particular, several of my undergraduate profs who were superb teachers and mentors: Betty Zane Morris, Joe Baskin, Bob Gardner and Terry Morris. Then, in graduate school, George Hough at UGA was a great mentor in helping me learn how to teach college students.

**What challenges do you think teachers and students face today?**

Keeping learning relevant in such a technologically



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overloaded culture. Understanding that words still matter.

**What is the single most important thing you've learned as a teacher?**

Clarity and consistency: Set clear objectives; be consistent with expectations.

**What advice do you have for other teachers?**

1) Understand that our field is constantly changing, and as a journalism or communications professor, we have to be as committed to learning and developing as we expect our students to be. 2) The role of a journalism and communications prof is often much more that of a coach than a lecturer. Find ways to help students identify their skills, talents and abilities and help them develop those.

**What question isn't here that should be and how would you answer it?**

What we "do" in our classes changes constantly, but the principles of good teaching and learning are almost unchanging. We too often focus on content to the neglect of context -- and consequence. A journalism and communications curriculum needs focus on all three if we want to foster great citizen communicators.

**Is there anything else you would like to share?**

Receiving this award was a wonderful honor. My great thanks to SPIG!

*Mitzi Lewis, Ph.D., is a journalism and mass communication teacher at Midwestern State University, Wichita Falls, Texas.*

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Vivian Martin mentioned submissions to the journal have been received from larger schools thereby helping to promote the legitimacy for having the journal. Plans for a future stylebook are in the works. She lauded Mitzi Lewis for formatting, registering the journal and paginating the journal for online, and Margot Wilson, California University of Pennsylvania, for copyediting.

With the success of the 2011-12 online journal Vivian Martin extended a call for a new editorial team for 2013-14. Margot Wilson will step down as head copyeditor for 2012-13.

**Special issue on Service Learning**

Michael Ray Smith, Campbell, and Michael Longinow,

Biola University, will serve as guest editors, and Wally Metz, Spring Harbor, as copyeditor, for the special issue on service learning issue. Michael Longinow discussed how the research essay might be more manageable for some. Some research ideas suggested included does service learning work as a teaching model, is service learning useful as an out growth of journalism, a round-up on what the journalism field thinks about service learning, coverage of service learning on campuses, public journalism involved with a community, or historical studies, gender and ethnicity approaches. Michael Longinow mentioned that journals are not judged by individual articles, but by sustainability. Therefore, SPIG

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## Journalist finds a home in the English Department

By Carol Schlagheck

WHEN I showed up in an English Department in 1994, I was disappointed in the antiquated computer lab held together by another journalism professor's chewing gum and good will. Students needed to learn desktop publishing software, I insisted, and they had to use the Internet. Months later, an administrator agreed to buy new computers because "If we are going to teach journalism, I guess we'll have to." IF???

It's fair to say journalism was an after-thought here. Writing teachers put a minor together in the '70s, but journalism didn't become a major until the 1980s. Yet, like many smaller programs, we bloomed where we sprung up. We now have 150 majors and 60 minors in our print and digital program, we work closely with the P.R. program (also in English) and we send our students to the Communications Department for broadcasting courses.

Yes, we periodically debate whether we belong in an English Department. In the meantime, we focus on the positives of working with other disciplines and, in the new multi-media environment, have found surprising ways to benefit from the arrangement.

### Word people

It's great to work with "word people." In grad school, a lofty broadcast guy once told me, "The words are superfluous." No one cares about anything but the images, he said.

It is great to work with literature professors and poets, who know the power and beauty of the written word. Those who teach composition and literary analysis appreciate students striving to make a living writing – whether crafting short stories, investigative reports or blog posts. Colleagues who teach Harry Potter don't laugh at me for using children's books to illustrate circle-story endings



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techniques for feature writers.

One of our journalism professors, an environmental reporter who focuses on blight and toxic waste in urban areas, collaborated with a creative writing professor/farmer who writes about rural areas and water pollution. They team-taught a course in creative nonfiction and environmental writing. Could that have happened if they had been in separate departments? Maybe, if they had met.

### Assessment

The English Education professor in the next office has listened to me obsess about assessment, even though we added digital reporting before most thought it was necessary, then altered our lesson plans when alumni told us everyone needed to blog. "Write that down," my neighbor says patiently as I tick off things we have done to keep up with the changing media landscape. K-12 teachers have dealt with assessment for years and, as I've learned from them, so have journalism professors.

### Technology

After that false start with the old computer lab, we discovered people down the hall who actually knew a

whole lot about areas that were new to us. Technical and professional writing courses focused on rhetoric, book editing, grant writing and computer documentation, skills journalists could use. These days, they include things every journalist needs to know: from websites and Facebook to blogging and Twitter.

Also, the tech writing profs know how to fix our computer and projector glitches.

### Interdisciplinary education

The last few years have been nail-biters. Looking out from an English Department, the job market has been perhaps a little less frightening. Literature students understand that education isn't always about getting jobs in their major. They develop perspectives and skills that serve them well in whatever fields they choose.

Similarly, I unknowingly have trained journalism majors to be librarians, lawyers, veterinarians, software trainers, real estate salespeople and marketing executives. One grad ended up going to beauty school, while a successful freelance magazine writer became a nurse. These alumni keep in touch and tell us they are glad they took journalism classes because we taught them to ask questions, interview, analyze, write clearly, edit and think critically.

### Disconnects

Despite the overlap and collaboration, there still are disconnects. Few people in the English Department use quantitative methods. We got chuckles from an American lit scholar when we sought a mini-grant to buy Flip cameras. And there's a linguist who just cannot seem to understand that journalism and public relations are not the same thing.

*Carol Schlagheck, Ph.D., is a full professor and coordinator of the journalism program at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti.*

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she worked in the French embassy in Washington, D.C., first as a writer and then as the managing editor of "News from France." Barbara is a reading-recovery educator. We have a backyard that includes 300 trees, a spacious patio and deck with a canopy and it takes lots of attention to maintain. We spend about an hour a day puttering in the yard with landscaping.

### What other significant achievements have you had?

In 2012, Campbell University recognized me for the D. P. Russ, Jr. and Walter S. Jones, Sr. Alumni Award for Teaching Excellence and the competition included our graduate schools such as the law school and pharmacy school. Campbell University prides itself on teaching but like so much in this life, the award could have gone to most of my colleagues. I happened to be in the right place at the right time.

In 2012, I was selected along with Kay Colley and many others to be one

of 50 top journalism professors by journalismdegree.org.

In 2008, alumni honoree for Prince George's Community College Fabulous 50 anniversary; and also 2008 Jesse S. Heiges Distinguished Alumnus of the Year for Shippensburg University, the highest award presented by the university.

But if the truth be told, the most remarkable accomplishment for me is staying married after a career in the newsroom and work at so many universities in so many places. The mind reels.

### What are your personal or professional goals now?

I've had some opportunities to work with writers across the nation and overseas, and they are so grateful for so little. I'd love to have a chance to give back in short-term programs. I am working on an iPad book these days, which is a good way to provide interactive contact but I have given an entire how-to book to some ministries to use as they see fit in training.

### What leadership roles have you

had in the AEJMC and the Small Programs Interest Group?

These days I work with Kay Colley as her vice-head and we are planning the August program.

### What goal do you have for SPIG?

Michael Longinow, my colleague, introduced me to SPIG and I often wonder how I could have gone so long in AEJMC without knowing about this first-class group. I want to make sure that other AEJMC types who come year after year realize that others in small programs are wrestling with the same issues.

### If you had to describe yourself, what words would you use?

No question. I am impulsive, curious and quick to act. Most of the time these traits are good ones. I've been chair at three journalism programs and we got a lot done but, as you know, being aggressive in the academy isn't the best way to win friends. Nonetheless, the rush-in approach has proven a benefit overall.

*The SPIG profile is edited by Richard Hendrickson.*

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members are highly encouraged to think long-term. Jack Zibluk volunteered to write a research essay on What is service learning? Since it is an online journal, Vivian Martin reminded members to include any video that's a part of their service learning. The deadline for the special issue is Oct. 15, 2012 for submission of ideas and the final deadline for the publication is March 1, 2013.

### Other new business

a. Election of 2012-13 Officers: Susan Lewis introduced the new slate of officers for 2012-13. Ralph Hanson, University of Nebraska, moved the election of Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan, as the incoming head, as well as the other officers. Brian Steffen, Simpson, seconded, and the membership unanimously approved her election and the election of the other officers with a voice vote. The officers for 2012-13 are:

Head: Kay Colley, Texas Wesleyan,

Vice Heads: Michael Ray Smith, Campbell, and Gail Henson, Bellarmine University,

Secretary: Sonya DiPalma, UNCA Asheville

Research: Patrick Sutherland, Bethany College, and Michael

Longinow, Biola University

Teaching: Pam Parry, Belmont, and Liz Atwood, Hood College

PF&R: Kenneth Pybus, Abilene Christian University, and Katherine Orloff, Hood College

Newsletter Editors: Richard Hendrickson, John Carroll University, and Sandra Combs, Arkansas State

Website: Mitzi Lewis, Midwestern State

Listserv: Brian Steffen, Simpson

Membership: Cindy Simoneau, Southern Connecticut State  
Social Media: Sonya DiPalma, UNC Asheville, and Carolyn Kim, Biola

G.I.F.T Liaison: Mary Jean Land, Georgia College & State University

Hot Topics: John Jenks, Dominican

Liaison, Commission on the Status of Women: Sandra Combs, Arkansas State

Liaison, Commission on the Status of Minorities: Lona Cobb, Winston-Salem State

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## Chicago ethnic media add Twitter, Facebook channels

By John McClelland

Bilingual and other non-mainstream media in multi-ethnic Chicago are both broadly diverse and sometimes narrowly focused.

Rapid change has been constant and will continue, some panelists said in the SPIG- and Community Journalism panel at the AEJMC convention.

Community Media Workshop helps non-profits, community groups and media work together. Its representative, **Diana Pando**, said she has conducted about 80 how-to events. She said CMS found media with these roots: 24 African, 36 Asian, 34 European, 32 Latino, five Jewish and three Arabic.

An unrelated but relevant website is <http://ChicagolsTheWorld.org>

Non-profits suggested a popular CMS service: Drafting op-ed articles to be offered to editors both print and online. "Neighborhood portals" are evolving: At one, a dense 35-page PDF became an interactive site.

**Fabiola Pomareda** of LaRaza ("The People") said the print weekly circulates 152,000 copies, and began using Facebook and Twitter in 2011. She said LaRaza's digital work "uses very colloquial Spanish."

Tweets alert people to details on the website. She asserted, "Followers want to see something new every day."

**Igor Golubchik** said he has

run a Russian language-related site since 1999. His site is <http://chicagoethnicmedia.com>. An immigrant at age 14, at age 35 he speaks precise English with a hint of an accent.

He said his audience is split: Fewer aging people still want stories about the old country. Growing numbers of young adults "who grew up here are not interested in news from the motherland.

"They have assimilated really fast," he explained. "Most don't rely on (us for) Russian language news. They get news from Facebook, Twitter and so on just like everyone else of their age."

He publishes online monthly and weekly, does radio and cable-TV, and runs a small business.

Problems he has faced included a lack of resources for promotion, lack of an effective trade group, and great difficulty hiring professional journalists. Even so, he said passionately, "We are having fun."

*"Most don't rely on (us for) Russian language news. They get news from Facebook, Twitter and so on just like everyone else of their age."*

-- Igor Golubchik, Russian site

**Rui Kaneya**, managing editor of The Chicago Reporter magazine,



JOHN MCCLELLAND PHOTO

**Diana Pando** glances down at her Mac laptop as she describes the work of Community Media Workshop.

said it is not ethnic, "but we do cover issues of social justice in Chicago, and that often means race and ethnicity.

"Only a certain kind of people" turn to the serious, often investigative, work," he said. Many of these people prefer email to social media, he said, but the magazine wanted someone part-time "to spend time daily, to use social media to engage people... not just to read ... so they actually care."

*John McClelland is an emeritus professor at Roosevelt University in Chicago.*

## Hot topic: Florida shooting a cautionary tale

Story by Michael Longinow  
Photos by John McClelland

He wasn't just a teenager in a hoodie — not then, and not now, said a panel of experts at this year's Hot Topic session in Chicago. And the man who shot Trayvon Martin was not an enormous, hulking adult either.

Panelists said the encounter, the shooting, and the media frenzy that followed it made this teenager, and

how he died, a cautionary tale for all American media, whether they use narrative, photos, video, or a mix of these to tell complex stories.

But it was as much a cautionary tale about social media as it was about a teen and alleged shooter.

Panelists included **Kenny Irby**, visual media expert with the Poynter Institute, **Laura Washington**, long-time former editor of the *Chicago Reporter* and

now a columnist with the *Chicago Sun-Times*, **Keith Longmore** of *West Orlando News Online*, and **Eric Deggans** of the *Tampa Bay Times*.

The panel brought out questions and tensions that the Trayvon Martin story raised for journalism educators and editors nationally — tensions that focused not just on the story, but on methods and attitudes that have application to stories that have polarized audiences nationally for decades.

Panelists said the national media explosion had the effect of taking iconic images — visuals that were deceptive and misleading, but were all that could be obtained on a tight deadline — and catapulting them into viral status.

Local media knew better. And they covered the story better, over the long haul, as local media tend to do — given time and resources.

But the story became less about the real facts of the shooting and subsequent trial and more about what audiences wanted the story to be. It became an emotional, larger-than-life drama about racism, about teenage vulnerability, and about law enforcement's unwillingness to pursue justice in a timely manner.

"Facebook galvanized media," said Deggans. But Irby added that though national media — and viral media — painted it as a racial story, "the story was about injustice."

*Michael Longinow is the chair of the Department of Journalism and Integrated Media at Biola University, La Mirada, Calif.*

*John McClelland is an emeritus professor at Roosevelt University in Chicago.*



HOT TOPICS PANEL, clockwise from top left, Kenny Irby, Laura Washington, Eric Deggans and Keith Longmore.

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The Journal: Vivian Martin, Central Connecticut, and Mitzi Lewis, Midwestern State

b. SPIG goals for 2012-13: Kay Colley, newly elected SPIG Head, outlined her primary goals for the upcoming year:

1. Engage members and continue to add members.
2. Promote the listserv/journal to AEJMC through our social media. Increase social media traffic – Facebook likes, post on Facebook and Twitter on a continuous basis, continue listserv discussion on Facebook.
3. Continue the trend of partnering with divisions for panels that are relevant to our mission. This year SPIG partnered with PR COMM Theory, Community Journalism, Internship and Careers Interest Group and CCJA.
4. Continue growth in the research competition
5. Transition our founding journal editors into past editors

d. HQ Report: Kay Colley

The 2016 AEJMC conference will be held in Area 4 and has been narrowed to the following cities: Indianapolis (\$179s/\$189d), Minneapolis (\$169s/d or \$189ss/d with \$179s/d – two hotels), Nashville (\$175s/d or \$179s/\$189d – two hotels), and New Orleans (\$129s/\$149/d or \$169 s/d – three hotels). Members voted on their preference of location by a show of hands. The most preferred

location was Minneapolis, followed by Nashville.

Challenge from the board of the Centennial Anniversary: Should SPIG donate as a group as well? Jack Zibluk offered a motion for SPIG to donate \$100 to the AEJMC Centennial Fund. Cindy Simoneau, Southern Connecticut State, seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

1. Change the way that programming will occur. Kay Colley explained the “chip” auction for programming which helps to ensure a random, democratic process. SPIG has three chips as an interest group, and with the Community College Journalism Association, a total of six chips as a division. SPIG seeks to address prospects for the following: Virtual meetings options for the annual AEJMC conference, staggering business meetings in order to allow AEJMC members to attend business meetings for more than one section or interest group, and study other professional groups using a random, democratic process for programming.
2. Donna Bertazzoni offered a motion for adjournment, and several members seconded. Kay Colley adjourned the meeting and invited everyone to the SPIG Off-site Social with CCM and History at Emilio’s Tapas, 215 East Ohio Street, Chicago, Illinois.

*Minutes submitted by Sonya DiPalma, University of North Carolina Asheville.*

## Awards luncheon gathering in Chicago



JOHN MCCLELLAND PHOTO

**Susan Lewis**, far right, reads the tribute to “Teacher of the Year” Kathy Richardson, fourth from right, at the annual luncheon in Chicago. (For an interview with Dr. Richardson, see page 5.)