



Intelligencer

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Nominations sought for teaching award

Nominations are sought for AJHA's national teaching award that honors excellence in teaching of the history of journalism and mass communications.

The AJHA Board of Directors unanimously approved by email vote to give winners of the National Awards Program for Excellence in Teaching in the history of journalism and mass communication \$500.

The board approved the annual award at its annual meet-

ing in October 2007 to foster excellence in teaching in the field of journalism and mass communication history.

The awards program recognizes faculty who promote effective and innovative pedagogy evidenced by successive years of sustained,

Send nominations, along with supporting materials, to: Barbara Friedman, AJHA Education Committee, UNC-CH, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, CB 3365, Chapel Hill, NC 27599.

meritorious and exceptional teaching.

The board believes excellence in the teaching of journalism and mass communication history is a key element in

developing knowledge in these fields as well as within the broader history discipline.

The awards program will honor college and university teachers who excel at teaching

in these areas, make a positive impact on student learning, and influence other teachers by example. The award will be given for the first time at the 2008 AJHA convention. The award recipient also will receive a plaque. Nominations, which may be submitted by a supervisor or peer, must be postmarked by July 1.

For information on eligibility and nomination criteria, visit <http://ajhaonline.org/awards.html#nationalawards>

Remembering the legacy of Molly Ivins

By Fred Blevens

Florida International University

When the *Dallas Times Herald* was purchased and closed by the owners of the *Dallas Morning News* in December 1991, Molly Ivins was unemployed.

Of the journalists left on the newspaper's depleted and demoralized staff, Molly was among the most visible and notable.

And certainly the most audacious.

Most of her colleagues were lining up at the *Morning News*, trying to bury their pride somewhere in the plentiful recesses of the huge, profitable cross-town rival.

Molly was lining up everywhere else. She said that if the

Morning News ever became her only option, she'd get out of the business. Selling shoes was better than writing for A.H. Belo, she said. It had been a bloody newspaper war, fought in a boom that symbolized the new Wild West. Molly's paper had lost the war, but she would not sacrifice her pride.

As state editor of the *Houston Chronicle*, I wanted to hire



Jen Sorensen is a nationally syndicated cartoonist whose new book is entitled "Slowpoke: One Nation, Oh My God!" (Used with permission.)

Molly. She wanted to work for the *Chronicle* because it was where she had started her

career in the late 1960s; it published in the town in which she was reared; and, well, it wasn't the *Morning News*.

Molly wanted one dollar more than her annual *Times Herald* salary, which was around \$60,000, a surprisingly low wage for a well-known columnist and author. No tricks, she said, as long as she had a guarantee of autonomy and a posting to the Austin bureau. Books were expected; time would be negotiated.

Unfortunately, my publisher was neither impressed by the bargain nor disposed to hiring a political "bomb-thrower," even if such a move might boost circulation and prestige.

The *Fort Worth Star-Tele-*

From the president . . .

AJHA recognizes teaching

By Tamara Baldwin
AJHA President

"And gladly would he learn and gladly teach."

--The Clerk in the General
Prologue to the *The Canterbury Tales*
by Geoffrey Chaucer

 On a Sunday afternoon a few weeks from now my university will hold its annual ceremony at which it recognizes employees for their years of service and those about to retire. Like always, those attending will enjoy really good hors d'oeuvres and a huge cake decorated with touches of red and black icing, our university's colors. The only thing different this year is that I'll walk across the stage and receive a pin for my 25 years of full-time teaching in the Dept. of Communication.

I've got mixed emotions about receiving this recognition. I am having a hard time realizing that I've been doing

anything for *half* of my life (more than half if my years as an adjunct are included). Then there's the disbelief that it could actually be 25 years—which in many ways passed in a flash—since I taught my first mass media class. As I struggle to get my head around these feelings, I keep coming back to another reaction, and that is one of gratitude that I have had the chance to do something I love—teach—for so many years. And for most of those years, I've been fortunate enough to get to teach mass media history in some form or other to hundreds of students. What a ride!

I know, though, that my love of teaching didn't spring forth fully formed that day I signed my contract those many years ago. For that I owe the

excellent teachers I have had in my life—and still have in my life—who were able to share their expertise and enthusiasm with me in their classrooms

and through their research and love for their subject matter. They make me want to provide my students with that same experience, and any success I might claim in that regard I owe to them.

I've seen many of my AJHA colleagues demonstrate the same expertise, enthusiasm and love of their subject matter that impacted me so profoundly. It's there in their encouragement of their students to attend and present at national conferences and in their time spent offering feedback that helps to make a paper, a thesis, or a dissertation more effective. I see evidence of it when I open up a journal and see their

names—or the names of their students—listed in the Table of Contents. It's there when I go to conferences and listen to my colleagues—and their students or former students—give presentations, and I'm aware of it when I scan the lists of newly-published books from various publishers. And it's there in spades when I attend our conventions and see colleagues at coffee breaks conversing with students who were encouraged and helped to attend and present their research.

One of the most significant keys to good teaching is the learning experience that precedes it in the life of the teacher, and we all know that this experience doesn't end with the completion of our formal education, but indeed the excitement of learning is an ongoing process and is the immediate precursor of good teaching as Chaucer so memorably recognized in creating the character of the Clerk in his masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*.

See **Proud** on Page 3



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AJHA helped judge Molly awards

Continued from Page 1

gram took the deal, though, and Molly spent the next decade writing about the rise and fall of Ann Richards and the rise and rise of George W. Bush, whom she nicknamed "Shrub." Despite his moderate policies, she defended Bill Clinton because she thought the constant assaults on him were unfair.

Molly died in January of last year after three bouts with breast cancer. Her fight for life in her last eight years exemplified Molly's unflagging commitment to journalism and what it could do for the human body and psyche.

Her loyalties, never blind, built a foundation of deep, sharp and consistent thinking. Her Smith and Columbia pedigrees were nuanced, at times

disguised, by a wit that blended West Texas hardscrabble and Austin's liberal urbanity.

I recently completed the first round of judging for the Molly Award established by the *Texas Observer*, one of Molly's former employers, and the Texas Democracy Foundation. In June, the award will be given for the first time to someone other than Molly, who received the first one shortly before her death.

The AJHA board was granted two appointments to the national advisory board (the judging panel) and the honor went to Maurine Beasley and

myself.

The dozen or so entries I judged came from the predictable (*The Nation*) and the unlikely (the *Wall Street Journal*), from freelancers and staff writers, from columnists and investigative reporters. Most of

them were excellent; all were at least very decent. Not surprising, only one successfully mimicked Molly's wit.

But it's been a long time

(Molly's last column) since I've seen so much passion wrapped up in story lines that righteously describe our frayed social and political fabric.

Given the right circumstances, I'd hire most of them for a dollar more a year.

'Most [of the entries] were excellent . . . Not surprising, only one successfully mimicked Molly's wit.'

Proud of AJHA teaching award

Continued from Page 2

Although few if any of us will achieve the literary immortality of Chaucer's idealized teacher who preferred books and learning over life's other riches, we can all emulate him to a degree when we experience the thrill that comes with seeing our students "turned on" to the ideas and information that vitalized our own learning experiences.

In this vein, it makes me so proud to know that AJHA has instituted a National Awards Program for Excellence in Teaching.

I'm still conflicted about that 25-year pin thing. But the cake will help.

Cronkite misses big election scoop

CBS newsman thought computer must have been wrong and dismissed its correct prediction in 1952.

CBS News had the chance to offer American viewers the first computer-analyzed election night predictions in 1952 while reporting the electoral contest between Republican Dwight Eisenhower and Democrat Adlai Stevenson.

Nevertheless, because anchor Walter Cronkite didn't trust the computer's predictions, he didn't report them.

Remington Rand developed its Univac, dubbed the 701, which it planned to unveil to the public in January 1953. The company offered its use to CBS News on election night, and the network accepted.

The 16,000 pound computer

was housed at a laboratory in Philadelphia, and CBS constructed a fake computer for the newsroom in New York. The fake computer had blinking Christmas lights and a teletype machine, which reported what the real computer was concluding. Cronkite sat next to it on the air, awaiting word from correspondent Charles Collingwood, who was with the real computer in Philadelphia.

By 8:30 p.m. — about an hour after polls had closed in the eastern United States — the IBM computer offered a startling prediction. Its calculations indicated Eisenhower would win by a landslide, collecting 438 electoral votes.

Cronkite, going on earlier estimates by reporters and public polsters that the election would be close, refused to



Veteran CBS anchor Walter Cronkite (right) checks print-outs from the Remington Rand Univac, which to the newsman's chagrin correctly predicted the outcome of the 1952 presidential election.

announce its prediction. He was certain the contraption was wrong.

Later that night, when the results were known, Cronkite realized it was he, not the computer, that had been wrong. The computer was wrong

only in the actual number of electoral votes. Eisenhower instead picked up a whopping 442, four more than what the computer had projected. Moreover, the computer missed the popular vote totals by only 3 percent.

Dissertation award winners for 2008 announced by panel

Noah Arceneaux of San Diego State University has been selected to receive AJHA's 2008 Margaret A. Blanchard Doctoral Dissertation Prize. Three honorable mentions were selected.

NOAH ARCENEAUX

San Diego State University

"Department Stores and the Origins of American Broadcasting, 1910-1931"

James Hamilton, The University of Georgia

When the technological and social practice of broadcasting became widespread in the early 1920s, radio stations were started for a variety of reasons. A few dozen department stores established their own stations, using the nascent medium to stimulate a demand for receivers and to



David Sarnoff operating Marconi station at Wanamaker's department store, New York City, fall 1911.

promote their overall business. Drawing from the prior literature on the early broadcast industry and the history of department stores, original archival research, and informed by the theories of the social construction of technology and the diffusion of innovations, this dissertation explores department store radio stations of the 1920s and early 1930s. This group of stations has never been studied in any systematic fashion, though many department stores facilitated

the growth of broadcasting through the stations they operated, shows they sponsored on others, and promotional activities that actively encouraged this new form of communication. The educational efforts of the department stores, including set-building contests, window displays, and classes, also reveal that the commercialization of a new media technology is not necessarily a later stage occurrence in the overall pattern of technological diffusion but may affect the initial stages of innovation itself.

Honorable mentions (in alpha order):

BRENDA EDGERTON-WEBSTER

Mississippi State University

"The Tale of Two Voices: An Oral History of Women Communicators from Mississippi Freedom Summer 1964 and a New Black Feminist Concept."

Ernest L. Perry, University of Missouri-Columbia

This study developed a new concept of Black Feminist thought and employs it to examine the intersection of press and communication practices among women involved in Mississippi Freedom Summer 1964. The study draws on oral histories of women participants in this project as a way to contribute these omitted "voices" to the canon of journalism, civil rights, and women's history. In analyzing these stories, this study discovered generational differences among the women in terms of Freedom Summer's influence on their worldviews and subsequent vocations. Although all the study's participants performed journalistic tasks, the older women of this group continued their lives as social activists and the younger women became professional communicators. The rationale for this phenomena helps explain, in part, the omission of women from the historical "image" of African American civil rights leaders.

Submit nominees for 2009 AJHA dissertation award

The AJHA Margaret A. Blanchard Doctoral Dissertation Prize, given for the first time in 1997, is awarded annually for the best doctoral dissertation dealing with mass communication history. An honorarium of \$500 accompanies the prize, and a \$200 honorarium is awarded to each honorable mention.

Eligible works shall include both quantitative and qualitative historical dissertations, written in English, which have been completed between Jan. 1, 2008, and Dec. 31, 2008. For the purposes of this award, a "completed" work is defined as one which has not only been submitted and defended but also revised and filed in final form at the applicable doctoral-degree-granting university by Dec. 31, 2008.

To be considered, nomination packets must include:

(a) One copy of the complete dissertation;

(b) Four copies each of the following items, with all author, school, and dissertation committee identification of any kind whited-out:

(i.) a single chapter from the dissertation [preferably not to exceed 50 manuscript pages, not including notes, charts or photographs],

(ii.) a 200-word dissertation abstract,

(iii.) the dissertation table of contents;

(c) a letter of nomination from the dissertation chair/director or the chair of the university department in which

Deadline for submission is Feb. 1, 2009

Award winners studied Porter, Mason

Continued from Page 4

TRACY LUCHT

Johnston, Iowa

"Sylvia Porter: Gender, Ambition, and Personal Finance Journalism: 1935-1975"

Maurine Beasley, University of Maryland

This dissertation examines the career of Sylvia Porter (1913-1991), a syndicated newspaper columnist who developed the genre of personal finance journalism. The author uses primary sources to trace Porter's evolution from a media curiosity to a nationally recognized expert amid changes in women's social and economic status. The author argues that Porter carved a niche for herself within the male-dominated field of financial journalism by using seven professional strategies: (1) She accepted a job in



Sylvia Porter on the cover of Time, 1960.

a non-prestigious field of journalism, (2) she allied herself with her readers rather than her peers, (3) she formed alliances with men who could help her career, (4) she used preconceptions about gender to her advantage, (5) she mythologized herself in interviews with other journalists, (6) she used multiple media platforms to reach different audiences, and (7) she appropriated the labor of other writers. The author also argues that although gender was an important facet of Porter's public persona, her development of personal finance journalism was driven more by market forces and her eventual use of ghostwriters than by prevailing gender norms. Nevertheless, the author argues, Porter opened a door for women in financial journalism and left a complicated legacy.

ROGER MELLEN

Arlington, Va.

"A Culture of Dissidence: The Emergence of Liberty of the Press in Pre-Revolutionary Virginia"

Rosemarie Zagari, George Mason University

This historical research broadens our understanding of the origins of the First Amendment right of freedom of the press. Focusing on the popular prints of eighteenth-century Virginia and Maryland before 1776, this study reveals that press liberty was valued as a bulwark against political abuses, consistent with English "radical whig" ideology. Examination of newspapers, almanacs, political pamphlets, and related primary sources reveals an evolution from radical English politics, the local struggles between printer and governor, and the larger political rift between British policies and the American colonists' assertion of rights. This



George Mason, author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights.

The award winners are expected to present their work at the convention in Seattle next October.

emerged from important changes that evolved from spreading print culture, education and literacy. Utilizing media ecology theories, this work demonstrates how changes in the dominant medium of communication were an enabler of the cultural development that allowed for the growth of political dissidence. Virginia's traditional culture of deference was gradually replaced by a "culture of dissidence," and from that emerged the first constitutional right for press freedom in the Virginia Declaration of Rights. From a waning of deference emerged a resistance to the legal concept of seditious libel, a finding in contrast to generally accepted theories as to what free press meant to the founders.

Deadline for submission is Feb. 1, 2009

Continued from Page 4

the dissertation was written; (d) a cover letter from the nominee indicating a willingness, should the dissertation be selected for a prize, both to attend the awarding ceremony and to deliver a public presentation based on the dissertation at the 2009 American Journalism Historians Association Annual Convention, Oct. 6-8, 2009, in Birmingham, Ala.

Material on dissertation award winners and next year's contest submitted by David Abrahamson.

Note: Regarding Paragraph (b.)(i.) above, as a guide to selecting a chapter for submission, the Award Committee has in the past expressed a preference for a chapter which, if possible, highlights the work's strengths as a piece of primary-sourced original research.

Nominations, along with all the supporting materials, should be sent to: Prof. David Abrahamson, Chair, AJHA Margaret A. Blanchard Doctoral Dissertation Prize Committee, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University, 1845 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60208.

The deadline for entries is a postmark date of Feb. 1, 2009.

Credits

- ① Cronkite article. Photo: www.ced-magic.com; text: www.flatrock.org.nz
- ② George Mason photo: research.history.org
- ③ Sylvia Porter: www.time.com
- ④ Lewis W. Hine: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Collection at www.flickr.com
- ⑤ Sarnoff photo: www.geocities.com/.../sarnoff.html



Intelligencer

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 2 SPRING 2008

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Got News?

The newsletter is published in November, February, May and August. Submission deadlines are Nov. 1, Jan. 15, April 15 and July 15. Email is preferred, but you may also fax or mail to:

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Sites

2008: Seattle
(Oct. 1-4)
2009: Birmingham
2010: Tucson

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Rosy and Joseph, 8 and 10 years old, sold newspapers from sunup to sundown on the streets of Newark, N.J. They were photographed in 1909 by Lewis W. Hine, who helped reform child labor laws through his photographs.

Reminder

Paper and Panel submission deadline for the October 2008 convention is May 15. Go to ajhaonline.com for complete details.

Inside

Nominate best teachers for award, Page 2

Molly Ivins remembered, Page 2

Veteran anchor Cronkite missed a big scoop, Page 3

Dissertation award winners announced, Page 4

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