



# Intelligencer

[ajhaonline.org](http://ajhaonline.org)

VOLUME 29 NUMBER 3 Spring 2012

## 31st Annual Convention

Oct. 11-13, 2012

Raleigh, N.C.

## 2012 Convention Hotel:

Sheraton Raleigh Downtown

421 South Salisbury, Raleigh, NC

\$130 Room Rate

See [ajhaonline.org](http://ajhaonline.org) for updates

## DON'T MISS OUT!!!!

AJHA Dues for 2012 are now due. Dues are \$25 for students and retired folks and \$45 for regular members. Please go to the AJHA website ([ajhaonline.org](http://ajhaonline.org)) and download the membership form. Follow the instructions on the form and submit your renewal as soon as possible. If you have any questions about the status of your AJHA membership, please feel free to contact me ([carol.humphrey@okbu.edu](mailto:carol.humphrey@okbu.edu) or 405-878-2221). Don't miss out on all the fun and information that you gain through AJHA!

**Carol Sue Humphrey**

AJHA Secretary

## Table of Contents

**Page 2: President's Column**

**Page 3: Teaching Award**

**Page 3: Conference Report**

**Page 4: King honored**

**Page 5: MHX network**

**Page 6: Member books**

**Page 7: SE Colloquium**

# Attendance at NY Joint Journalism Conference continues to grow

By Kevin Lerner

The 2012 Joint Journalism and Communication History Conference was held on March 10 at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. AJHA co-sponsors the one-day conference with the History Division of AEJMC.

The conference is held on the second Saturday in March each year, which means that many scholars can spend one weekend of their spring break in New York City, sharing their work with an interdisciplinary group all sharing an interest in journalism and communication history.

This year, presenters came from both coasts as well as Great Britain and Spain, and the conference has grown to over 100 participants. Despite its newfound size, the JJCHC remains a casual, collegial meeting, a perfect place for graduate students to present their first papers or for established scholars to get feedback on work in progress.

For AJHA members, this is a great way to get feedback on your work before you submit it for consideration for the fall conference.

You've got about two months after you get home from the New York conference to go back to the archives or polish your prose.

AJHA President Dr. Therese Lueck attended the March conference this year, and came away impressed with the quality of the presentations. "This conference

is tapping the richness of its region," she said, "from having journalism students record the sessions as a class project to engaging a renowned historian for an inspiring keynote."

Renowned historian, biographer, journalist and activist (and John Jay College faculty member) Dr. Blanche Wiesen

Cook gave the keynote address. She is perhaps best known for the first two volumes of her projected three-volume biography of Eleanor Roosevelt, but her lunchtime speech revisited an idea she first grappled with when writing her book *The Declassified Eisenhower*: freedom of information. Cook has fought to open government archives to journalists and historians, and she drew a line from Eisenhower up through WikiLeaks in her lunchtime talk.



Lerner

Continued on Page 4

.....  
 from the president...

# The Lost Art of Contemplation

By Terry Lueck

Akron

To continue our discussion on the visibility of media history and its value in higher education, we should turn our attention to the benefits provided by our parent disciplines.

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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. E-mail is preferred, but you may also fax or mail to:

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Recent works bear attention in their challenges to journalism historians through opportunities aplenty for in-depth scholarship and informed discussion. However, heady intellectualism and lofty ideals must be set aside when the vagaries of legislative and administrative decision-making threaten the very viability of our field.

It's no secret that education in America is -- for those concerned with the collapse of an informed electorate -- in crisis. As professors, particularly those who have chosen to work with less-advantaged populations, we find ourselves in a Catch-22: We need to bring a higher level of learning to our students, yet we find little foundation on which to build new understandings of a rapidly changing world.

Academics are sandwiched between the demands of desperate students and administrators eager to cannibalize our disciplines. The daily indignity of having to search for foundational learning in unprepared students is compounded by having to maintain vigilance against attempts to eviscerate programs. The resulting irony is that academics have no time to think.

In a profession designed for the contemplation of the big pic-



ture, we find ourselves preoccupied with a circadian hunt to satisfy our basic needs. To prepare knowledgeable media scholars and practitioners, we must find the time to renew our own energies.

While exploring ways to make journalism history more visible and to communicate the value of

media history education to a wider public, I've identified one node in the turbulence of higher education that anchors me in the detritus of institutional culture: the distraction of chaos. To reclaim intellectual space, I've begun to redefine my academic routine, carving out time to read non-urgent news feeds and to treat myself to an extra newspaper or magazine.

How long has it been since you read something you didn't have to? Or perhaps you've moved your mediation well beyond catching up on e-mail. I invite you to share the strategies you use to recover the lost art of contemplation.

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This year to date, our association has been spared the death of treasured colleagues and the widespread destruction of natural disasters. However, we continue to share our compassion with those members who have lost loved ones.

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## Teaching excellence award deadline approaching

By **Ford Risley**

*Penn State*

Nominations are being accepted for the annual AJHA National Award for Excellence in Teaching.

The award honors a college or university teacher who excels at teaching in the areas of journalism and mass communication history, makes a positive impact on student learning, and serves as an outstanding example for other educators.

The winner receives a \$500 honorarium and will be recognized at the 2012 AJHA convention in Raleigh, N.C. Last year's winner was Leonard Teel, a professor of communication at Georgia State University.

Nominees may be tenured or untenured, and should hold either a full- or part-time appointment at a college or university that confers an associate, baccalaureate or higher degree in journalism, mass communication, communication studies, or history, as of the submission due date. Nominees must have responsibility for teaching the history of journalism and mass communication either as a stand-alone course or as part of a broader course.

The deadline for nominations is July 15. Nominations must include curriculum vitae, statement of teaching philosophy, course syllabus, letters of support and other materials. More information is available on the AJHA web site: [www.ajhaonline.org](http://www.ajhaonline.org)

Nominations should be sent to:

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AJHA Education Committee  
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University Park, PA 16802

## St. Peter's history conference draws more than 100 attendees

Saint Peter's College held its Fifth Annual Media and History Conference on April 12, 2012. Co-sponsored by the Departments of Communication and History, the daylong event coordinated by Jean Palmegiano focused on the relationship of technology to news.

Ira Chinoy, University of Maryland, gave the keynote address, "From Telegraph to Hologram: Election-Night Experiments in New Technologies for News."

Other presentations included panels titled "Back to you Bill and Steve: Reporting from the Shoulder of the Information Highway" and "Bergs and Bombs: Media Coverage of the *Titanic* and the Blitz."

Among the 400 plus attendees were guests from neighboring institutions, New York and New Jersey journalists, and SPC faculty and students. The College library also mounted an exhibit on the conference theme.

Continued from Page One



Elliot King (center) was recognized for his past work organizing the Joint Journalism Historians Conference held each spring in New York City. Also pictured are current organizers Kevin Lerner and Lisa Burns.

The conference, however, is casual and much more personal than a formal address would suggest. Most of the sessions had three or four simultaneous panels, with a mix of graduate students and senior faculty, often on the same panel (though the University of Maryland and Rutgers University each sent a full panel of graduate students).

Dr. Lueck attended sessions all day, and she was impressed by the amount of scholarly exchange. "The small-conference setting allowed an easy fellowship for discussion of the ideas that were brought forth in the research presentations," she said.

#### **AJHA Honors Elliot King**

But Dr. Lueck was attending for another reason as well. On behalf

of AJHA, she presented a plaque to Dr. Elliot King, who, through 2010, had single-handedly run the conference for more than a decade.

"AJHA wanted to honor the spirit of collegiality that went into developing this scholarly partnership," Dr. Lueck said. "We also wanted to recognize Elliot's commitment to sustainability, through his mentoring of coordinators to take the conference into the future."

Dr. Lueck was referring to a new organizational system for the conference coordinators, now that the meeting has grown from about a dozen scholars to its present size under King's leadership.

In 2011 and 2012, Dr. Lisa Burns of Quinnipiac University and I took over the conference,

with Dr. King supervising and mentoring us. Dr. Burns was appointed to represent the AEJMC History Division, and Dr. Lueck formalized my appointment as the AJHA representative to the joint conference.

The new system has each representative serve a two-year term, staggered with the other representative. Dr. Burns organized the call for papers and conference program in 2011, and I ran the site logistics, dealing with the host institution, technology and catering. In 2012, we switched jobs.

Dr. Lueck has appointed me to an additional one-year term for next year in order to set up the staggered terms, and Dr. Ann Thorne of Missouri Western State

**Continued on next page**



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### Continued from previous page

University will succeed Dr. Burns as the AEJMC representative.

If you are interested in doing the same for me as the AJHA representative beginning with organizing the 2014 Joint Journalism and Communication History Conference, feel free to be in touch, and I can discuss the process. It might be useful for you to be on the East

Coast, since the conference is always held in New York City, but that's not necessary.

This is a terrific opportunity, particularly for junior faculty who are interested in learning how to organize a conference. Past conference coordinators will continue to serve on an advisory board, so you will have plenty of support in continuing the legacy of this wonderful small conference.

## AJHA members encouraged to use MHX as archive and historian social network

By Elliot King

Loyola

The MHX is a social network and archive for the interdisciplinary community of scholars working in the fields of journalism, media and communication history.

In addition to posting conference papers, finished articles and other scholarly materials in virtually any format including audio and video clips, MHX members can easily identify, communicate, collaborate and network with other scholars doing similar research and access their posted content. (Posting material on the MHX is not considered publishing that material.)

Finally, a conference manager facilitates the management of small conferences and individual conference panels, including the blind peer-review process, and enables members to review conference programs, abstracts and other material.

Several small, interdisciplinary conferences and research groups are already working

with the MHX including the Joint Journalism and Communication History Conference (held in March and co-sponsored by the American Journalism Historians Conference), the Symposium on the Civil War and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Press, the International Literary Journalism Studies Association and the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals.

The MHX is member-driven and all members have access to all its functionality. If you are involved with organizing a small conference or conference panel, for example, you can use the MHX functionality in that area.

The MHX is a private, by-invitation-only community and currently has more than 240 members. The goal is to build a vibrant, worldwide community of scholars interested in journalism, media and communication history.

You can request an invitation to the MHX at [www.mediahistoryexchange.org](http://www.mediahistoryexchange.org). If you have any questions please contact Elliot King at [eking@loyola.edu](mailto:eking@loyola.edu).

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## New Books by AJHA Members

# AJHA member dresses part to promote family Titanic story

By Erika J. Pribanic-Smith

Texas-Arlington

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—As the nation commemorated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Titanic’s sinking on April 14, Julie Hedgepeth Williams donned her 1912 best and addressed a full house at a Titanic exhibit in Kansas City.

Kansas City is significant to Williams’ latest book, *A Rare Titanic Family*, because that is the city where her great-uncle Albert Caldwell and his wife Sylvia met. The couple and their 10-month-old son Alden were among the few complete families to survive the famous disaster together.

Williams, an American Journalism Historians Association member and past president, said that she grew up hearing stories about the voyage and its inauspicious end. Until Caldwell’s death at the age of 91, when Williams was a senior in high school, he recounted the tale every chance he got.

Caldwell’s openness surprised members of the Titanic Historical Society when Williams addressed them in April.

“Apparently, a lot of survivors were too traumatized to talk about their experiences, so I was able to tell even the big Titanic buffs things they didn’t know,” Williams said.

Following her great-uncle’s lead, Williams now shares the Caldwells’ saga every chance she gets. She’s been traveling the country promoting her book, which NewSouth Books published in January.

Despite a full schedule of appearances this spring, no weekend has been busier than the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary weekend. In addition



**Julie Hedgepeth Williams**

to multiple engagements in Kansas City, Williams did a book talk and signing that weekend at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

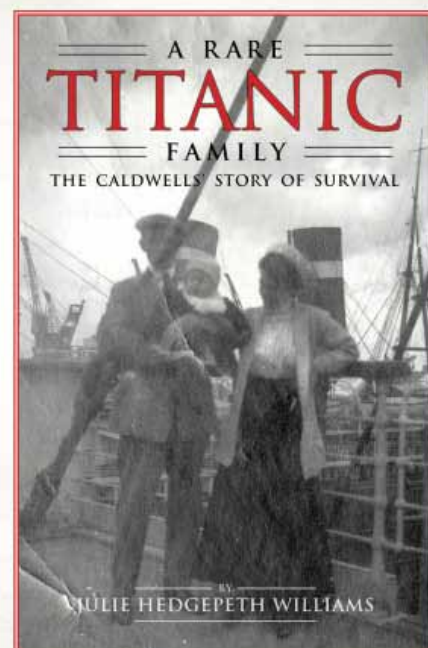
Williams said the most fun events have been those where the attendees have dressed in costume. Beehive Books in Monroeville, Alabama, started the trend by featuring Williams at a “Last Night on the Titanic” theme party.

“People came up with some really clever costumes,” Williams said.

She described one attendee who dressed in an antique nightgown and life jacket and another who dressed in pajamas with a tuxedo jacket and no shoes.

“When people asked him where his shoes were, he said, in character, ‘I got up on deck as fast as I could,’” Williams said.

For that event, Williams tried



to dress similarly to how Sylvia Caldwell was dressed in a photo from that era. Since then, Williams has purchased two 1912 costumes that she alternates wearing on her appearances. She admits, though, that she’s not as hardcore as some people.

“I went to an event where one couple changed costumes for every different speaker,” Williams said. “I realized then that I definitely wouldn’t have been cut out for First Class.”

Williams is assistant professor of journalism and mass communication at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. Her prior books include *Wings of Opportunity: The Wright Brothers in Montgomery, Alabama, 1910* (NewSouth, 2010) and *The Significance of the Printed Word in Early America: Colonists’ Thoughts on the Role of the Press* (Greenwood, 1999).

# AJHA members dominate SE Colloquium

**By Erika J. Pribanic-Smith**  
Texas-Arlington

Four members of the American Journalism Historians Association recently participated in a research paper session that Mike Sweeney called one of the best he's seen in any conference at any time.

Sweeney served as moderator and discussant for the session, which was the History Division's lone event at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Southeast Colloquium in Blacksburg, Va.

Frank Fee, Michael Fuhlhage, and Erika Pribanic-Smith had their research on the program; Pribanic-Smith's work earned the History Division's Top Faculty Paper honors at the colloquium.

Sweeney credited the excellence of the March 9 paper session to "great papers, good questions and discussion from the audience, and very supportive comments all around."

While Fuhlhage's paper focused on Civil War correspondence, Fee and Pribanic-Smith dealt with antebellum topics. The fourth presenter on the program, Georgia graduate student Cayce Myers, discussed colonial journalism.

Fee co-authored his paper with North Carolina School of Science and Math student Sarah Parsons, who presented their research at the Southeast Colloquium.

Fee said that Parsons contacted him in the spring of 2011 asking him to work with her as part of a program that connects students at her high school with faculty at North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Duke. He jumped at the opportunity to mentor a budding scholar and spent the fall semester giving her the same instruction on the historical method that he would give to graduate students.

Parsons carefully read all of the primary sources and analyzed

them. Fee said that she has become an expert on the writings of Julia Griffiths, a British abolitionist, and that Parsons is continuing to research Griffiths' work on her own.

Sweeney, who read the paper for his discussant role, said he never would have known that it was substantially the work of a high school student.

"Yes, Dr. Frank Fee helped shape the work, but you can't make bricks without straw," Sweeney said. "Ms. Parsons has a bright future as an academic, if she wants it."

Parsons said that she plans to continue her study of history at Wake Forest, where she will be a freshman in the fall. She said that before she worked with Fee, she planned to pursue journalism with a possible minor in history.

"After conducting research and learning more about Dr. Fee's work, I have decided that I enjoy studying history even more than my previous interest in journalism," Parsons said. "History fascinates me; I love seeing connections and trends of our past."

Parsons called her work with Fee one of the best experiences of her life and said that she learned a lot. She also said that she benefited tremendously from attending the colloquium.

"I was surprised to find that the range of research topics was so diverse," Parsons said. "In our [history] division alone, although there were several projects that focused on the same time period, the topics were quite different."

Overall, Parsons said her first



Scholars in the History Division paper session were (from left) Sarah Parsons, Frank Fee, Erika Pribanic-Smith, Michael Fuhlhage, and Cayce Myers.

conference experience was wonderful because everyone she met was welcoming and passionate about research. Parsons recently learned that her second conference experience is forthcoming; she had another paper dealing with Julia Griffiths' work accepted to the AEJMC National Convention in Chicago.

Fuhlhage noted that Parsons showed remarkable poise in her presentation. He said the feedback he received from Sweeney on his own research was thoughtful, constructive and encouraging, and gave him more confidence to take the next step toward publication.

In addition to moderating the history session, Sweeney talked about his study of Italian journalist Luigi Barzini Sr. during the Russo-Japanese War in a research-in-progress session.

The panel featured scholarship on a diverse range of topics, both historical and otherwise. The audience was equally receptive of all of the research presented.

"Good scholarship is good scholarship," Sweeney said. "Perhaps the walls we erect around our disciplines aren't all that important."