

**PRESS RELEASE**

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For Immediate Release

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[gorbach@hawaii.edu](mailto:gorbach@hawaii.edu)**A Chronicle of the Press and Jim Crow Wins AJHA's 2022 Book Award**

The American Journalism Historians Association has selected *Journalism and Jim Crow: White Supremacy and the Black Struggle for a New America*, edited by Kathy Roberts Forde and Sid Bedingfield, as the 2022 Book of the Year winner.

The other three Finalists this year are: *The American Newsroom: A History, 1920-1960*, by Will Mari; *Shared Secrets: The Queer World of Newbury Medalist Charles J. Finger*, by Elizabeth Findley Shores; and *Sensational: The Hidden History of America's 'Girl Stunt Reporters'*, by Kim Todd.

This is the first year that edited volumes have been considered for the book award. *Journalism and Jim Crow* documents the role of the white press in building white supremacist political economies and social orders in the New South, from the end of Reconstruction through the first decades of the twentieth century, Forde and Bedingfield explained. It also examines the critical role of the Black press in fiercely resisting that effort.

"We hope readers of *Journalism and Jim Crow* come to understand the importance of the press in political, social, and economic conflict and change in the past and in our own moment. Much is at stake," the two editors said. "Journalists and news leaders today need to understand how white power and white normativity operate in their own newsrooms. We hope journalists across the country will discuss and learn from the ugly historical truth *Journalism and Jim Crow* lays bare: white journalists and mainstream journalism have too often served anti-Black, anti-democratic political purposes even as they claimed to be impartial, neutral, and objective."

The award committee emphasized the unique importance of Forde and Bedingfield's collection, to which Forde and Bedingfield contributed several chapters.

"No other volume in the book award's history has promised to make such an important intervention in our understanding of the role of journalists in negotiating systemic racism—insights that promise to affect change in our modern world," said one of the judges.

Another member of the award committee noted that the book offers a significant contribution "by documenting and analyzing with great depth the leading role that the Southern press played in strengthening segregation."

The judges recognized Mari's *American Newsroom* for providing "a compelling argument about the ways that the construct of the American newsroom operated as a metaphorical and relational space, an important prism through which we can understand the identity of the journalistic profession today and through which we can gain contextual clues about where the field is moving."

Shores' *Shared Secrets* earned praise for its insights into an understudied area.

"Shores does a masterful job of weaving in close readings of Finger's articles for *Polytechnic Magazine*, his *Jack Ransom* columns, his fiction and pseudo-autobiographical

polytechnic magazine, his Jack Randall columns, his fiction and pseudo-autobiographical stories, alongside observations from 200 book reviews and archival holdings," noted one committee member.

The judges commended Todd's *Sensational* for expanding our historical understanding of gender and journalism. As one wrote, the book "successfully makes the argument that the work of the 'stunt girls' was important investigative journalism that for too long has not been given proper consideration by historians."

Forde is a professor of journalism and associate dean of equity and inclusion in the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She received the AEJMC History Division Book Award and the Frank Luther Mott-Kappa Tau Alpha Book Award in 2009 for *Literary Journalism on Trial: Masson v. New Yorker and the First Amendment*. Forde has twice received the AEJMC History Division Covert Award.

Sid Bedingfield is an associate professor at the Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Minnesota. His first book, *Newspaper Wars: Civil Rights and White Resistance in South Carolina, 1935-1965*, received the George C. Rogers Award from the South Carolina Historical Association. He and Forde are co-editors of the book series Journalism and Democracy at the UMass Press.

Todd, an associate professor of English and creative writing, is a nonfiction faculty member with the MFA program at the University of Minnesota. Mari is an assistant professor of media history and media law with theanship School of Communication at Louisiana State University. Shores has spent 32 years in Arkansas and Mississippi as a copy editor, reporter, editor, and research associate. She is a resident of Little Rock.



Kathy Roberts Forde



Sid Bedingfield



Kim Todd  
Photo: Dani Werner



Will Mari



Elizabeth Findley Shores  
Photo: Buddy Johnson

Founded in 1981, the American Journalism Historians Association seeks to advance education and research in mass communication history. Members work to raise historical standards and ensure that all scholars and students recognize the vast importance of media history and apply this knowledge to the advancement of society. For more information on AJHA, visit <http://www.ajhaonline.org>.

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