

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY TOM BIVINS, NEWSLETTER EDITOR



A maybe-not-so-famous Italian author once noted, “There are two kinds of lies: those with short legs and those with long noses.” His name was Carlo Collodi, and he wrote *Pinocchio*.

Nowadays, even a long nose won’t necessarily betray a liar, probably because most of the lies we’re exposed to have short legs. In other words, short-legged lies are those that carry you a little distance but ultimately can’t outrun the truth. The truthful consequences usually catch up with someone who tells a lie with short legs. Lies that have long noses are those that are obvious to everyone except the person who told the lie, lies that make the liar look ridiculous. Collodi was pointing out that, unlike the common argument which frames lying as generally unfair or harmful to those being lied to, it is probably as likely that it also results in bad consequences for the liar. But does it?

These days, I am less certain of our ability to unmask lies and their effects than I was only a short time ago. As I was checking out in the grocery store the other day, I glanced at one of the many “celebrity news” magazines leering out of the point-of-purchase racks lining the gauntlet one must run to reach the cashier. There were two, large headlines (the print version of click bait) on the poorly Photo-shopped cover. The statements they made were so blatantly outrageous, and clearly not only untrue but impossible, that I was literally struck dumb by the publication’s brazenness.

Some team of otherwise unemployable writers, designers, and editors had conspired simply to sell us lies. That’s it. Just peddling lies for money. And, they seem to be doing pretty well, apparently without suffering the after-effects of being caught lying.

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I realize, of course, that this has been going on for a very, very long time. We have been lied to by advertising, by public relations, by journalism (none, of course, in their ideal form), and politicians and their “communications” cadres. The shame is that we are now becoming so used to being lied to that we risk assuming that all public communication may be an intentional falsehood (or “fake news,” if you will). A colleague of mine, Tom Wheeler, foretold many years ago when researching photo-manipulation, that if we are not diligent, we will eventually come to a point at which ALL editorial photography will be assumed fake. We are dangerously close to that point now.

How close are we, then, to assuming that most public communication is also false, or at least so manipulated as to be nearly pure propaganda? How close are we to becoming completely polarized, politically, economically, and culturally. And what part do those messages play in this (intentionally?) forced societal segregation?

Which, naturally, brings up the question of what we, as media ethicists, plan to do about it. If I have trouble measuring the length of the multitude of noses on the faces of those entities who are daily lying to me, how impossible must it then be for those who have less experience than me.

So, what are we to do? My immediate suggestion is to send your thoughts to me to be included in the next newsletter. Of course that’s self serving, but I would also like to publicize what you *are* doing to address this vitally important issue in your classes, in your research, and in your own lives.

Let’s talk about it.

Tom

WHAT’S AHEAD FOR MED

BY CHAD PAINTER, DIVISION HEAD



There were 208 members in the Media Ethics Division as of July 2017. This total ranks eighth out of AEJMC’s 30 divisions, interest groups, and commissions. That is the good news.

The disappointing news is that a lot of our membership is not very active within the division. So, one of the

leadership team’s major goals for the 2017-2018 conference is to increase the active involvement of our members, especially graduate students and junior faculty. This increased involvement is both necessary and vital for the long-term health of the division.

I am excited to announce one major initiative MED is piloting this year to increase active membership: A multi-tiered mentorship program that links senior faculty, junior faculty, and graduate students within media ethics. To that end, we are seeking senior scholars who want to serve as mentors, junior faculty who seek guidance as a mentee and/or want to mentor graduate students, and graduate students who seek mentorship from senior or junior faculty.

In the program, mentees will be paired with mentors who share similar research, methodological, and institutional interests. Mentors will meet on an informal though regular basis (via Skype, phone, or whatever works best for the pair) with their mentees to discuss questions and concerns related to their career path. For instance, mentors can provide feedback on dissertation or research

work in progress, tips on creating stellar job applications or tenure and promotion materials, and advice on phone and campus interviews—though this list is far from exhaustive.

- **Interested graduate student mentees should send**
 1. your name,
 2. institution and expected graduation year,
 3. a copy of your most recent CV, and
 4. a 1-2 paragraph summary of your dissertation and career ambitions following doctoral study to cpainter1@udayton.edu.
- **Interested junior faculty mentees should send**
 - (1) your name, (
 - (2) institution and years of service,
 - (3) a copy of your most recent CV, and
 - (4) a 1-2 paragraph summary of career ambitions as you work toward tenure and thereafter to the same email address.
- **Interested senior and junior faculty mentors should send**
 - (1) your name,
 - (2) institution and job title,
 - (3) a copy of your most recent CV, and
 - (4) a link to your faculty bio page to the same email address.

While the mentorship program is the biggest initiative to increase participation, it is far from the only one.

Some steps are fairly simple and straightforward. First, moderators at the MED research sessions and panels pitched the business meeting during this year’s conference, and attendance ticked up slightly this year. Second, there are ongoing discussions to revive the division social

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and possibly add an offsite session during the 2018 conference, as well as the possibility of reviving the pre-conference in future years and centering it either on teaching ethics or on mentorship about media ethics research (similar to the colloquia that served as the first foray into many of our media ethics careers).

One step that already has begun is expanding the previous position of Graduate Student Liaison into a committee of graduate students focused on outreach and promotion of media ethics research and teaching. The inaugural Graduate Student Committee formed at the 2017 business meeting, and it includes Deborah Dwyer (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill), Yayu Feng (University of Illinois), Bill W. Hornaday (Indiana University), Kim Kelling (University of Missouri), Tara Walker (University of Colorado-Boulder), and Shiyu Yang (University of Wisconsin-Madison). The major tasks of the committee are to help increase graduate student membership, paper submissions, and involvement in the division.

Another step still in the planning and discussion stages is exploring how to restructure the role of the Teaching and PF&R chairs in order to enhance their duties and visibility within the division. Ultimately, the goal of the changes to the Teaching and PF&R chairs, as well as the development of a Graduate Student Committee, is to develop a “bench” of future division officers in order to ensure continuity of leadership.

My objective in these columns is to outline our division’s goals, as well as plans to reach them. Of course, none of our goals can be reached without you. I encourage every member to step up and become more involved than in previous years. There are a multitude of ways to become more involved, from submitting your own research and panel proposals; serving as a mentor, reviewer, panelist, moderator, or discussant; contributing to the division newsletter; letting your voice be heard during the annual business meeting; and encouraging colleagues and students to submit papers or join the division.

A BALANCING ACT IN THE CLASSROOM



BY DEBORAH DWYER, GRADUATE STUDENT COMMITTEE

Last week in the undergraduate media ethics course I teach, I noticed a pattern emerge during class discussion: liberal (and anti-Trump) viewpoints were numerous, emphatic, voiced as fact, and allowed to stand unquestioned. I decided to dive into the potentially volatile arena of political ideology and point out that conservative students were not voicing their perspectives in class.

At the outset of the course, I had taken care to emphasize that all viewpoints were welcome. I wanted to ensure students were comfortable discussing their personal positions on ethical challenges. After all, a personal perspective is all many students have before taking an ethics course and learning how philosophers such as Kant and Aristotle, or professional codes of ethics, can better inform their ethical decision-making. Students need to understand their political or ideological viewpoints aren’t sufficient as the basis for professional media-related ethical standards. Recognizing those conservative viewpoints instead of sidestepping them or offering the typical platitudes ignited one of the best class discussions I’ve experienced in my six or so years of teaching.

Once I addressed politics more directly, the floodgates opened. Students who had been mediocre participants in class discussion became engaged, offering

thoughtful perspectives that I could tell gave the majority of the students pause. They spoke about their fears to voice a minority opinion in the classroom, instances in which attempts to join the debate went wrong and even experiences with professors that ultimately prompted them to shut down. Points as simple as not conflating conservative viewpoints with support of President Trump illuminated some of the basic premises so detrimental to rational (and respectful) debate. This wasn’t a rhetoric-filled, partisan-fueled confrontation in which no real understanding would ever take place. Instead, the students heard one another. The feedback from that class and the real dialogue—informed, curious, and receptive—I’ve seen in subsequent classes have shown me that contrary to instinct, we need to be having more of these conversations, not fewer.

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Here is one of the many unprompted responses I received after the class:

“From my experience, it’s hard to feel comfortable speaking out because everyone assumes that you 100% back your party’s views, which in my case I do disagree with some of them. I lost several friends through the election on the basis that I was a Republican and was graded poorly based on my views even when I had facts to prove it. “

A 2016 New York Times op-ed accused academia of helping cause the type of dynamic I saw in my classroom until last week. The writer said “Universities are the bedrock of progressive values, but the one kind of diversity that universities disregard is ideological and religious.

We’re fine with people who don’t look like us, as long as they think like us.” I would have argued that point logically before this particular class session; after all, I was already open to any and all voices in the classroom. Even so, students didn’t feel safe to speak. But by engaging the full class in a proactive, honest discussion about why listening to one another is so critically important—how opening ourselves up to (or, at a minimum, tolerating) discussions in which differences must be accepted and alternate arguments are made— is one of the biggest lessons my students could learn. I believe it will stick with them as they make their way into the working world, long after an ethics code or philosopher’s name has faded from memory.

The constantly changing Chicago skyline from (clockwise) the conference hotel at night, the ferris wheel at the Navy Pier, and the Chicago River architectural tour.



NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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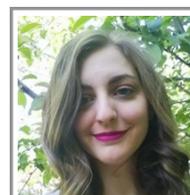
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The Media Ethics Division is going to invest a bit more time on social media efforts this year, and we could use your help.

Together with graduate students Shiyu Yang, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Yayu Feng, University of Illinois, I'm looking to expand some of the tools we use to connect MED members. We already have a Facebook group (search Media Ethics Educators on Facebook to join), but we could use more frequent posts and comments. Join us there to share your latest publications, ask for teaching ideas or suggest interesting events to attend or following online.

The division also would like to see us expand into Twitter and Instagram, particularly to post ideas and photos from events like the AEJMC annual conferences and ethics-focused efforts like the conferences held annually at Loyola Chicago, Kent State and UW-Madison.

We will use future newsletters to suggest hashtags and other ways to contribute content. In the meantime, I welcome your ideas about how to best attract members to follow us on various channels and participate in sharing content. Please email me at kbculver@wisc.edu with any thoughts you have. Thanks in advance!

CRONKITE CONFERENCE MOVES TO DALLAS

BY BOB BERGLAND



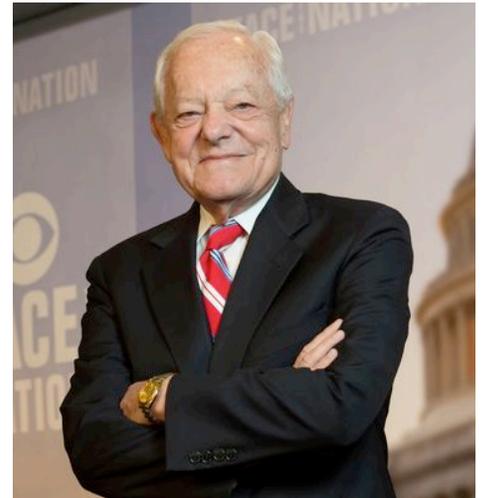
Highlighted by a keynote from Bob Schieffer, the fourth annual Walter Cronkite Conference on Media Ethics and Integrity will be held Oct. 28.

While the last three conferences were hosted in St. Joseph, Missouri, the birthplace of Cronkite, this year's conference will be held at the Sheraton Dallas in downtown Dallas, Texas. The conference is co-located with the National College Media Convention, organized by the College Media Association and the Associated Collegiate Press.

The morning program includes two academic paper sessions coordinated by the Media Ethics Division, which has co-sponsored the conference with Missouri Western State University since the conference's inception. The morning also features a panel of journalists from the Dallas Morning News, the Dallas Observer and the CBS TV affiliate, talking about the timely topic of the ethics of covering protests. The morning concludes with a presentation from Schieffer, a colleague of Cronkite's at CBS News and like Cronkite, a CBS Evening News anchor.

The afternoon sessions focus on ethical issues facing student media editors and student media advisers and finishes with a brief wrapup and a celebration of the end of Cronkite's centennial year (he would turn 101 on Nov. 4).

For more information about the program and registering for the conference, visit www.missouriwestern.edu/cronkiteconference or contact Dr. Bob Bergland at berglan@missouriwestern.edu or visit the conference Facebook page.



Bob Schieffer is an Emmy Award-winning political commentator and TV host who has worked for CBS News since 1969.

AEJMC MED PANEL PROPOSALS ARE UNDER REVIEW

MED members, thank you for contributing your ideas and submitting panel proposals for the upcoming 2018 AEJMC conference in Washington D.C. We received several PF&R, research and teaching panels, which are under review (as of Oct 16) in the AEJMC COD Chip Auction site.

If you submitted a proposal and are the contact, I will notify you after all deals are made and the program has been finalized so that you can make final edits and notify your moderator and panelists, which should be sometime in January. If you have questions before then, please contact me at erin.schauster@colorado.edu.

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

The annual MED business meeting at AEJMC was literally full of surprises, and awards. Pictured here are the ourstanding MED members being recognized for their hard work.



Professional Relevance Award Presented by Erin Schauster to Marlene Neill and Amy Barnes (not present).

Top Faculty Paper Award went to (left to right) Katherine Hoad Reddick, Margaret Patterson, and Romayne Fullerton.



Patrick Plaisance (left) is recognized for Outstanding Service and Dedication to Media Ethics Division.



The Teaching Excellence Award goes to Erin Schauster (left), presented by teaching guru Jan Leach.



The winner of the 3rd place student award was Kimberly Kelling (right) for her exploration of journalistic integrity.



2nd place student award, Shiyu Yang for hilighting an "emotional approach," to risk communication.



1st place student award, went to Yayu Feng, for spotlighting virtuous journalism in practice.

RECENT RESEARCH

As part of what we hope will be an ongoing section on current research, long-time MED member Wendy Wyatt of St. Thomas University offers her AEJMC 2017 PF&R panel presentation.



SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL THREATS TO THE U.S. PRESS AND WHAT MUST BE DONE TO ADDRESS THEM

BY WENDY WYATT

We've each been asked to consider a particular domain – mine is the social. And then, from the lens of that domain, to do two things: First, address contemporary threats to the professional freedom and responsibility of the press. And, second, propose resolutions to these threats. Simple, yes? Well, no. In many ways, this is the million-dollar challenge, but I'll give it my best shot.

In terms of threats, let me first briefly describe what I mean by the social domain because all the domains we're talking about today are interrelated. I'm going to focus simply on the ways in which we talk with one another. As Jim Carey would have said, the ways in which we carry on the conversations of our culture.

This panel is primarily interested in conversations about matters of public importance, but several of the points I'm going to make apply to the private realm as well. And with the emergence of communication tools like social media, the lines between public and private often blur.

In terms of threats, I hardly need to describe them. They're all too familiar.

First, digital media have paved the way for a kind of communication democratization where many more voices have access to many more channels of communication than ever before. This sounds like – in fact is – a good thing. Barriers for communication have surely broken down. However, along with barriers coming down and more voices joining in, we've also seen a rise of niche media, which has resulted in fragmentation of audiences and the rise of ideological – rather than physical – communication barriers.

This is where threats start to emerge.

I very distinctly remember an article by James Poniewozik of Time Magazine that I used to ask my students to read. The year was 2004, and the article was headlined "The Age of iPod Politics." It was one of whole series of articles that appeared around that time with headlines like

"News with a view" and "Some like the news slanted their way." In Poniewozik's article, he astutely observed that we were patching together customized networks of pundits, political comics, online news feeds and talk shows that would reinforce – in thorough and robust ways – how "entirely right we are about everything."

Poniewozik called this "virtual-self-gerrymandering," and he said it makes for a kind of happy apartheid. In the article, he says, "You know my naive ideas will lead America to crumble like Rome, and I know that morons like you are going to get me killed by a dirty bomb. But we never need to actually say a cross word to each other. Or anything at all, for that matter."

But – Poniewozik predicted – that blissful isolation would break down eventually.

Indeed.

His article, which was really so prescient, seems almost quaint today. We're no longer interested in simply fashioning our own insular, niche worlds. An attitude of blissful isolation has become one of aggressive obliteration. Beyond wanting our own world views constantly reinforced, we want to take down those who don't agree with us.

If she isn't doing so already, Deborah Tannen should be thinking seriously about writing a new edition of her classic text *The Argument Culture*. We have certainly arrived there. And this is the second point I'll make about threats journalism faces.

Back in 1998, Tannen made the claim that in public discourse, argumentation had become ritualized. We had learned to prize contentiousness and aggression over cooperation and conciliation, and that had led us to an ethic of aggression.

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From Tannen: “It’s the automatic nature of this response that I’m calling into question. This is not to say that passionate opposition and strong verbal attacks are never appropriate. . . . What I’m questioning is the ubiquity, the knee-jerk nature of approaching almost any issue, problem, or public person in an adversarial way.”

And – just as a reminder – Tannen said this in 1998, before the arrival of social media, which has led to moments such as the president of the United States tweeting a video of himself wrestling to the ground a man who has a CNN logo superimposed on his head.

This was before internet trolls would use free expression as justification for a harassment campaign that attacked women who were critical of video game culture.

This was before fake news became an everyday concern – before, for example, anti-government conspiracy theories like pizzagate could easily gain widespread traction. And before our president, his spokespeople and a handle of media organizations would very effectively appropriate the term and turn it on its head for their own use.

This was before we encountered phrases like “alternative facts.”

And this was before college campuses – the places where dialogue and healthy debate should be most valued – became central sites of the culture wars. On several campuses this year, dialogue and debate were superseded by violent protests and, in at least one case, by campus shut downs.

So all of what I’ve been talking about gives a glimpse of the landscape that describes how we’re carrying on conversations with each other about matters of public importance.

But how does this landscape threaten press freedom and responsibility?

First, I think we’d all like to believe that the press should present reasoned, rationale discourse. But that’s not being valued. We’d like to believe that the press should give us evidence – facts – to help us assess a situation and make good decisions. But what counts for evidence and facts is continually – and pretty effectively – being challenged. And we’d like to believe in the press as an institution that supports a marketplace of ideas. But many people are interested only in the stall within that market that sells exactly what they want.

Taking all these things into consideration, we’re living in an environment that, at best, is ambivalent to the idea of the press as a leader in public discourse, and at worst, is outright hostile.

So where do we go from here. What are the resolutions?

Let’s just say it’s a lot easier to identify the problems than the solutions. But let me, very humbly, offer a few ideas.

Anyone who happened to attend last year’s [2016] AEJMC panel on speech equivalency will hear echoes of some things I said then. I think the challenges are closely related.

When considering solutions, I’ll say first that I don’t believe the press itself can solve this problem. It’s deeper and more fundamental than that.

We’ve seen some great journalism this year – work I’m so thankful for – and I think many people in this country have been reminded of the importance of good journalism. We all heard that subscriptions to organizations like The New York Times got a real boost after the election.

But even if the press does all the right things all the time, that’s not going to solve the problem. So where does change need to originate?

I thought I might find an answer in the ideas of others so I went searching. One of my favorite reads was this one by James Hoggan: *I’m Right and You’re an Idiot: The Toxic State of Public Discourse and How to Clean it Up*. When I found the book, I thought – perfect. The solution!

While the book includes some really thoughtful ideas from really smart people, I wasn’t sure how we could convince the citizenry at large about the need for emotional dialogue, for warm-heartedness and for nonviolent speech – some of the resolutions offered in the book. Lovely ideas, but how do we enact them?

Having not found convincing solutions elsewhere, I had to go back to the drawing board. And here’s where I ended up:

I contend that the K-12 school system is the locus for change. Yes, we may be able to change existing attitudes of some adults, but if we’re talking about real change – systemic change – we need to think about our kids.

And in primary and secondary schools, we need to do three things: First, we need to foster in our young people a cosmopolitan attitude. By this, I’m referring to a specific theoretical approach advanced by, among others, philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah and legal scholar Martha Nussbaum.

In brief, cosmopolitanism is about taking seriously the value of all human lives and making all human beings part of our community of dialogue and concern. It’s about cross-cultural inquiry and the commitment to becoming “philosophical exiles” from our own way of life – to seeing it from the vantage point of an outsider. It’s about be-

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ing willing to doubt the goodness of our ways. And it's about looking at ourselves in relation to others, which then helps us see ourselves more clearly. A cosmopolitan approach recognizes that we may have disagreements, but most of those don't have to be resolved for us to get along. We can criticize, but we have to do so from a position of respect and understanding. All of this happens through a method of conversation among people from different ways of life. This conversation leads to respect, tolerance, friendship, and mutual understanding. It doesn't have to lead to consensus, Appiah says, it's enough that people simply get used to one another.

As he says: "When it comes to change, what moves people is often not an argument from a principle, not a long discussion about values, but just a gradually acquired new way of seeing things."

I'm an advocate of cosmopolitanism, and I believe that the very best place to start fostering a cosmopolitan attitude is with our kids. To put it bluntly, we want to shape their young and impressionable minds. Of course, this would work best in an environment where we provide robust public education for all and schools full of kids who represent this country's rich diversity. We need to give all students access to a really great K-12 education. And wherever possible, we want to give students a chance to practice this cosmopolitan attitude with others who aren't like them.

So, first our schools need to foster in students cosmopolitan thinking. But beyond that, what else can help remedy the state of toxic public discourse?

My second idea – and, again, I'd argue the best site for this is primary and secondary schools – is that we need to encourage an ethics of restraint.

Thinking about communication in the digital age has gotten me interested in this idea, and I've played around with it a little. The call for restraint focuses on the responsibility side of the freedom/responsibility continuum. It also speaks directly to what I see as one of the biggest challenges in our current public discourse: the tendency to leave nothing unspoken. We certainly don't see much restraint in our culture. But, in an age of communication saturation, we could often use less, rather than more speech.

An approach based around restraint encourages everyone – all of us – to slow down and think through our intended communication. Just because we can say something doesn't mean we should. An ethics of restraint also calls on us to listen more. We can't really listen if we're always talking. And, what's more, a little silence from those who are always talking – often those with the power and the voice – opens up space for those who aren't.

I'm an ethicist, so I often think about things through an ethical lens, and the idea behind restraint comports nicely with the moral theories we tend to rely on:

- Restraint represents temperance from the lens of Aristotle,
- respect for human dignity from the lens of Kant,
- the duty of nonmaleficence from the lens of Ross,
- the greater quality long-term good from the lens of Mill,
- the thing that best protects important relationships from the lens of Gilligan...

I could go on. In many ways, when we put classical moral philosophy in the context of our digital age, an ethics of restraint naturally emerges.

I'm sure you can all think about these ideas as they relate to interpersonal or small-group settings, but also think about how they might work in more expansive ways, where the goal is more civil conversations in the public sphere. Like cosmopolitanism, a norm of restraint – fostered early on, with our kids – could serve as a remedy for our toxic culture, and this could, subsequently, serve to build appreciation for a free and responsible press.

My final remedy comes in the form of information literacy – an umbrella term that incorporates media, visual, research, quantitative and science literacies. I clearly don't need to say much about the importance of information literacy to this group.

I've been a proponent of media literacy education for nearly 20 years, but I've recently started to talk about it in the broader sense of information literacy. The U.S. is woefully behind other countries – even some post-Soviet states – when it comes to media literacy, and there's really no longer an excuse – if there ever were one – not to teach these essential literacies for the 21st century.

Some interesting things are happening at universities. In fact, beginning in the fall, I'm spearheading an initiative on my own campus – one that involves the libraries, faculty, our student affairs division, and our Faculty Development Center. But building skills in information literacy needs to happen before college, and it needs to happen for young people who don't go to college. That takes us back to the K-12 system.

I'll end with some challenges to making these three things happen and a few small ideas for getting around them.

Once I started developing these ideas, I connected with a colleague, a dean in my university's School of Education. I wanted to know what education students – what teachers of the future – are being taught that might help them do the kinds of things I've been talking about.

Are education schools talking about the way we talk with one another? The state of our public discourse? And are they working to give future teachers theoretical approaches and concrete tools like the ones I've suggested

– or any others – that might provide that all-important remedy?

My dean colleague, who happens to be the one who works with licensure and accreditation, wasn't that optimistic. Education schools, she said, are caught in the standards accountability movement. Helping students learn how to engage in authentic dialogue, fostering in them a commitment to restraint and giving them information literacy skills are important, she said, but they aren't tied to content standards. And that means we have no coursework for our future teachers to help them learn how to do these things.

But right after I spoke with that dean, who is admittedly very compliance-orientated, I got a note from one of my childhood friends. She's been an elementary school teacher for 26 years, and she mentioned that she's recently been inspired to bring mindfulness practices and social justice issues into her classroom. Those things, she said, "light her up" around teaching.

Now I realize that a 26-year veteran teacher is different than someone just earning his or her teaching degree, but it demonstrates, I think, that there can be space in a K-12 classroom. And even with the standards imposed by state and federal governments, teachers have terrific opportunities to do more than teach discipline-based content.

This was backed up by another friend who works in education policy in D.C. She said there is literally no one

checking on all of these standards. Yes, there can be space for teachers to do innovative and creative things if they have support from their administrators.

So here's my final suggestion for all of us. Most of us work at universities. Many of us work at universities with education schools. We need to start outreaching to the faculty, administrators, and students in these schools. We need to talk to them about why a free and responsible press matters and how our current public discourse is threatening that. We need to offer future teachers ideas for transformative things they can do with their kids. And we need to help give them the background and tools they need to run with these ideas.

We might need to be a little subversive. Based on where things are currently going with education policy, I don't envision the arrival of, for example, a media literacy standard anytime soon. But my dean colleague noted that both the economics and the engineering disciplines were able to introduce their areas into K-12 schools through this kind of outreach. And, importantly, I think most teachers – at least most future teachers – are idealists. They want to create change, and they believe they can do it.

Some of *our* time and *our* energies – as journalism educators – should be spent working with those who are going to teach our kids. I think – I hope – this has a chance of being time very well spent.