

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY TOM BIVINS, NEWSLETTER EDITOR



Above normal temps in parts of the Northeast (and even some warmth in a few spots west of the Rockies. And, of course,

plenty of wetness in the west, especially the Northwest. Unfortunately, these gloomy days of seemingly endless rain lend themselves to gloomy thoughts.

Where I used to find funny cat videos and little movies of my younger colleagues' infants and cute toddlers on Facebook, I now find vitriolic, political diatribes either posted first-hand, or more often "shared" for my convenience. Recent warnings of "echo chambers" annoy me into thinking maybe I don't need to be constantly reminded that I have a lot of friends, most of whom already agree with my point of view. I'm not

sure I need the reinforcement any more. These cloudy days, I rarely look at my Facebook page any more. Nothing really changes there, except the infants eventually become toddlers and the toddlers become first-graders. At least that's progress.

In addition, I have mostly confined my news consumption to the sources I've always trusted, but in a more limited way, since even they tend to repeat themselves quite a bit. How many takes do I need before I get the gist of why the Republican-sponsored health care bill failed without even a vote? My email is littered with such tidbits as the Washington Post's "The Post Most," The New York Times' "Daily Briefing" and "Upshot," with numerous reminders to catch "The Best of Late Night" or pressure to subscribe to their magazine.

In a moment of weakness, I did subscribe last year to Times Cooking resource, which sometimes drops five or six emails a week into my inbox, many of which include the same

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

Table of Contents

WHAT CAN YOU DO 2

AEJMC is getting closer. Division Head Ryan Thomas outlines the possibilities.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR AT AEJMC 4

Vice-Head Chad Painter lays out some very interesting panels for AEJMC.

ADVERTISERS AREN'T COMPLYING WITH FTC'S NATIVE ADVERTISING GUIDELINES.... 5

Research Chair Erin Schauster reminds us that regulations alone sometimes don't work.

ARE WE WILLING TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE ...7

MED Grad Student Liaison Tara Walker reminds us that sometimes, we must challenge students to sit with their discomfort, their cognitive dissonance.

JAMAICAN GRIEF PORN: THE ETHICS OF COVERING TRAGEDY AND GRIEF.... 8

Guest columnist Kevin Smith looks at divided opinion on graphic portrayal of violence.

NOTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS... 9

- A Special Call for Strategic Communication Ethics.



recipes under different headings. How many mac-and-cheese recipes does one need?—Even if you do still have kids around the house. But, I digress.

I think we all may be growing tired of waking each day to some report further detailing the news story we read right before falling asleep the night before. Minor corrections are made, someone else was interviewed, an Oxford comma was discovered and summarily excised. My worst nightmare is that I will awake, reach for my tablet, open the Times online and shudder as I scream loud enough to wake the cat (who has just fallen back to sleep after meowing me awake at 4:00 a.m.), “What fresh hell is this!” Which reminds me—where is Dorothy Parker when we need her?

Don’t, however, think that I’ve given up. I just finished a superb biography on the life of Ms. Parker and another on the political debate (perhaps too mild a term) over the U.S. involvement in the Spanish-American War and its violent treatment of the sovereign nations it “freed” from foreign rule. And, now I am rereading passages from Mark Twain’s later correspondence and talks lambasting the government for its decidedly undemocratic actions under the guise of “Manifest Destiny.” Journalism played a mighty role in this process, with Pulitzer, Hearst and others pushing and shoving their way into their own news. But, more importantly, at least to me, is the role played by the vibrant satirical press of the time. They wielded a power not seen much in the following century, and, until only recently, the 21st.

We are on the term system here at Oregon. Spring break is this coming week, and Spring term begins the week after. For the first time in many years, I have developed a new course. In a way it is my antidote to these depressing times—an antidote and a partial suggestion as to what we might be doing when we’re not fact checking. The course title is “Satire, ethics, and free speech” (note the Oxford comma). I am a firm believer in the power of satire. We have seen that power at work over the past year.

Of course, there are those who say that satire only exposes a problem and doesn’t do anything about it. That’s probably true. Jon Stewart has consistently noted that the job of satire is to point out that the Emperor actually doesn’t have anything on. Satirists aren’t tailors, they are observers of reality, no matter how cockeyed that reality may have become. My hope this next term is to further educate students about the power of pointing out, because, if you don’t point it out, it will never be fixed. Isn’t that what good journalism does?

And, for those of you who want more from journalism than just exposing problems, I have something for you too—[Solutions Journalism](#). But, that’s another post. The sun is starting to peek out from behind the Douglas fir trees outside my office window, and I may be able to go for a partially dry walk. Cheer up. It’s spring.

Tom

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

BY RYAN THOMAS, DIVISION CHAIR



Dear MED colleagues,

The deadline for submissions is almost upon us! By now I’m sure you are putting the finishing touches on your papers – writing that discussion section, frantically trying to trim the number of words to meet the submission guidelines, and summoning the energy to write the

abstract!

In my (admittedly self-interested) view, one of the great strengths of this division is that we are organized around a core concern yet honor (and indeed welcome) theoretical, methodological, and topical diversity. We are both coherent and eclectic. Whether your commitment is to philosophical reflection or empirical explanation, whether your concern is for journalism, public relations, advertising, or something else entirely, whether you approach ethics from a qualitative or quantitative perspec-

tive – the media ethics division welcomes you all! (And all of this is to say: If you have a paper you’re working on but are still undecided about where to send it, may I suggest that you send it to us?)

Our research chair, Erin Schauster, has been hard at work behind the scenes lining up reviewers to ensure an efficient review process and arranging discussants and moderators for the conference. I’m really looking forward to seeing the final line-up of accepted papers. Given the intellectual diversity of our division, it promises to be interesting!

We are also at that point in the AEJMC calendar where we are putting the finishing touches on our program copy for our teaching and professional freedom & responsibility panels. I don’t want to spoil too much here, but I’ve seen the programming line-up and can promise you that we have some very exciting panels ahead in Chicago. Credit must go to Chad Painter, programming chair, for his work in assembling a really engaging set of panels for us.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

I also want to use this space to ask you what the division can do for its members. If you have any comments, suggestions, or concerns about any aspect of the division, please email me at thomasrj@missouri.edu. I want to be responsive to members to ensure that we are doing everything we possibly can to meet your needs.

You may have heard that the Political Communication Interest Group is seeking to be granted status as a Division. I support this process not only because of their ample membership numbers but because political communication, like media ethics, is a substantive intellectual area in its own right (rather than, say, a media platform) and, in my view, deserves to be recognized as such. It is also a timely reminder that no division can rest on its laurels and we must ensure that we are keeping our membership numbers up, keeping our paper submission numbers up, and generally presenting ourselves as a vibrant community

of scholars, teachers, and professionals. A division is only as strong as the depth of its members' commitment to it.

That brings me to my usual "Plus One" appeal. You should hopefully know the drill by now. Simply, we would like every division member (so, you – yes, you!) to get one other person (a colleague or, better yet, a graduate student) to:

- Join the division.
- Join the division's listserv and Facebook page.
- Submit a paper to the division's research competition.
- Attend the division's business meeting at the 2017 conference.

Thanks for all you do for the division. Happy Spring!

Ryan

WHAT TO LOOK FOR AT AEJMC

CHAD PAINTER, VICE CHAIR AND PROGRAMMING CHAIR



Media ethics research and discussions are not confined to one division or interest group. Instead, media ethics is interspersed throughout the AEJMC program. That idea was one of the major takeaways for me from "The Who, When, Why, What, Where, and How of Media Ethics Research" panel discussion at the 2016 Minneapolis conference. Ethics is the focus of our division, but every

AEJMC group routinely wrestles with ethical cases, issues, and debates.

Ethical discussions once again will be front and center throughout the 2017 AEJMC conference in Chicago. The Media Ethics Division has some really exciting and diverse programming scheduled during the conference, and I strongly encourage all of you to come to as many MED panels as possible.

Other divisions and interest groups, however, have programmed panels that should be of interest to MED members. Below are some highlights of ethics programming beyond the Media Ethics Division.

Who Am I and Who Am I Talking To?: Community, Identity and Culture in a Changing Media Environment (PF&R panel)

Sponsors: Community Journalism Interest Group and Cultural and Critical Studies Division

Date and time: 5-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 10

Advertising and the F-Word: What's race, sexuality, gender identity, and ethnicity got to do with it? (Research panel)

Sponsor: Commission on the Status of Women and Advertising Division

Date and time: 8:15-9:45 a.m. Thursday, August 10

Impartial Observers or Embedded Activists? Examining the Press as a Political Interest Group in Media History and Law (PF&R panel)

Sponsor: Law and Policy Division and History Division

Date and time: 11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m. Thursday, August 10

Differing Definitions: Conceptualizing Freedom of Expression in Sub-Saharan Africa (PF&R panel)

Sponsor: International and Communication Division and Law and Policy Division

Date and time: 1:30-3 p.m. Thursday, August 10

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

Fact-Checking in the Digital Age (PF&R panel)

Sponsor: Magazine Division and Newspaper and Online News Division

Date and time: 5-6:30 p.m. Thursday, August 10

Much More Than the Toy Department: The Role of Sports Media in Shaping the Discussion About Major Issues in Society (Research panel)

Sponsors: Sports Communication Interest Group and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Interest Group

Date and time: 8:15-9:45 a.m. Friday, August 11

Order in the Court vs. Transparency of the Court: The Clash of Judicial Values and the Journalist's Mission (PF&R panel)

Sponsors: History Division and AEJMC Council of Affiliates

Date and time: 12:15-1:30 p.m. Friday, August 11

Beyond the Ethics Lesson: Creative Ways to Incorporate Ethics in the Classroom (Teaching panel)

Sponsors: Magazine Division and Community College Journalism Association

Date and time: 1:45-3:15 p.m. Friday, August 11

Global Inequities in Health: The Ethics of Forgotten Communities (PF&R panel)

Sponsors: Communicating, Science, Health, Environment and Risk Division and International Communication Division

Date and time: 1:45-3:15 p.m., Friday, August 11, PF&R

Doing Good Work for the Greater Good: Creating Mutually Beneficial Service Learning Experiences (Teaching panel)

Sponsors: Mass Communication and Society Division and Internships and Careers Interest Group

Date and time: 3:30-5 p.m. Friday, August 11

Getting Religion, Getting Ethics: Analyzing Film as a Pedagogy Tool about Doing Good with a Faith Perspective (Teaching panel)

Sponsors: Small Programs Interest Group and Religion and Media Interest Group

Date and time 5:15-6:45 p.m. Friday, August 11

The Ethics and Efficacy of Native Advertising (PF&R panel)

Sponsors: Cultural and Critical Studies Division and Newspaper and Online News Division

Date and time: 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday, August 12

Active Voices: Supporting Press Freedom for High School Journalists (Panel session)

Sponsors: Commission on the Status of Women and Scholastic Journalism Division

Time and date: 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday



FUTURE RESEARCH ON ETHICAL AWARENESS IN ORGANIZATIONS IS NEEDED: ADVERTISERS AREN'T COMPLYING WITH FTC'S NATIVE ADVERTISING GUIDELINES*

BY ERIN SCHAUSTER, RESEARCH CHAIR



Yet another [study](#) finds that publishers aren't complying with FTC [guidelines](#) on native advertising, which leads me to ask, "Why?"

To answer this question, one must first address the relationship between law, self-regulation and ethics, specifically as it relates to native content.

Advertisers aren't entirely entitled to free speech. In fact, commercial speech is one of the least-protected forms of speech protected by the United States' First Amendment. Regarding advertising specifically, the Federal Trade Commission sets guidelines and governs how and what we can say about legal products.

Native advertising, with its billion-dollar revenue potential, [estimated](#) to reach \$25 billion in 2018, is primarily occurring online and, therefore, hard to regulate. Publishers and their advertisers, and the agencies that represent them, aren't complying, in part, because the opportunity exists. And we also must consider how the FTC operates: in response to complaints related to truthfulness and the misleading nature of advertising.

Two avenues drive complaints against advertising: advocacy groups concerned for vulnerable audiences (e.g., Mothers Against Drunk Driving monitoring alcohol advertising reaching underage youth) and competitors trying to ensure a fair marketplace (e.g., see [Pizza Hut vs. Papa Johns](#)).

Organizations related to various causes, such as MADD noted above and those engaged with the industry such as the [Interactive Advertising Bureau](#), also serve a self-regulatory role by guiding marketers, advertisers and their agencies with best practices, thus avoiding the timely and costly impact of lawsuits.

Still, the FTC's guidelines along with self-regulatory practices aren't enough. Why? Because the regulation of native advertising is based upon the notion that content is misleading.

To perceive native advertising as misleading, is to perceive the moral qualities inherent in the practice and, therefore, to perceive the resulting conse-

quences as unjust. For the nature of native advertising is about more than the paid, strategic content and the disclosure of that content. The ethics of native advertising must consider the audience reached. Perceiving native advertising as misleading suggests that the audience is a free and autonomous agent capable of making his/her own rational decisions based upon truthful information. Morally speaking, truthful communication maintains an equitable or level playing field between the sender and receiver.

Furthermore, when using ethics to guide our decision-making, we think about our audience as worthy of dignity and respect, thus giving them the information necessary to make their own decisions. The alternative is treating the audience as a means to our own profit-motivated ends, enticing the use of misleading tactics.

As advertisers, and the agencies that represent them, the law is our baseline, our minimum effort, supplemented by self-regulation to hold the organizations of the advertising industry accountable to the law. Our maximum goal of doing what is right is ethics.

We often think about ethics as a perception, an awareness, or in terms of an issue or problem-solving. When moral awareness is lacking in advertising, we talk about [moral myopia](#), which is the inability to perceive a problem as ethical, and we discuss why it and subsequent unethical decision-making occurs.

However, ethics is intertwined with something much more complex: the organization.

Organizational intentions, leadership, and values serve as foundation and motivation when confronted with an ethical dilemma, such as how to prominently and clearly label native advertising and when to comply with the FTC's guidelines for native advertising.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)



Organizational culture defines a sense of style and values for an organization that serve as a frame of reference for members when faced with achieving goals and overcoming challenges, including ethical challenges related to creating and placing native content. An organizational leader is the first individual responsible for defining values and setting goals, which are taught to new members through the process of socialization. Regarding ethics, these values might be represented in a code of ethics that are used to train and test new employees and then serve as a guide throughout their employment. Employees are internal members, but an organization is also composed of external stakeholders that impact and are impacted by culture, which would include the advertiser's agency, media vendors such as publishers and other service providers.

The following are a few organizational considerations that impact ethical decision making in advertising, which lead to several empirical questions for future research.

1. Leaders develop the organization's mission and values and set an example for others.

Leaders, through clear and accessible communication, set an example for others. And the values, both personal and organizational, that guide them are not static but changing. Therefore, future research might examine:

- a) How do leaders in advertising stay current on the trends of the industry and share perceptions of the ethical implications of these practices with their employees?
 - b) How do leaders, and their employees, evaluate the extent to which these practices align with their organization's mission and values?
2. Socialization is the process of teaching new members the correct way to think and feel about the organization, including how to achieve goals and overcome challenges.

While socialization can happen implicitly over time, there are several formal processes that impact ethical awareness and decision making, which inform the following research questions:

- a) Ethical codes. Does the organization have a formal position on ethics? Does the organization have a formal position on native advertising? Do employees have access to these codes and best practices?
- b) Communication. How often do members meet to discuss the ethical implications of emerging practices? Do these meetings include discussions related to ethical problem-solving?

- c) Values. When and how often are the organization's values shared with employees? Do these values come up in discussions related to business practices? How do these values aid in discussions of ethical problem-solving?
 - d) Rewarded practices. Are people who project strong or weak ethics lauded or censored?
3. Organizations are composed of internal members and influenced by external members.

The advertising process is complex due to the many players involved. An advertiser, with its various stakeholders (e.g., employees, shareholders, community, public) works with an agency who places media with a publisher on its behalf. While it might be ideal to consider ethics a unilateral, internal decision, it's instead impacted by the various roles involved in the ever-changing and multifaceted marketing communications relationship. Therefore, when pursuing and securing a partnership, an advertiser might evaluate how their organization's values align with a vendor's, which leads to the following research questions:

- a) To what extent do an advertiser's, its agency's and a publisher's mission and values align? How do these various value structures inform ethical problem solving?
- b) What challenges arise as multiple organizations engage in ethical problem solving?

These are just a few considerations regarding the ethical nature of native advertising intertwined with complex organizational factors to generate ideas for future research.

Without consideration for the organizational impact on ethical decision-making, advertisers, and their service providers, are likely to falter when faced with an ethical, or even a legal, challenge. With these organizational considerations, advertisers increase awareness of dilemmas faced, can interpret the moral qualities of the situation, which ideally leads to a dialogue with affected members and allows for a solution that is fair and just.

** An earlier version of this blog post was published on Native Advertising Institute accessible [here](#).*

ARE WE WILLING TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE

BY TARA WALKER, MED GRAD STUDENT LIAISON



Last semester, Fall 2016, was my first semester as a PhD student in the Media Research and Practice program at CU Boulder. I took the required Pro-Seminar with my cohort, and we battled questions that have been baffling human beings since way before Marx or Mill or Kant. We read Horkheimer and Benjamin,

but once we got to Theodor Adorno, some of us found ourselves struggling with his pessimistic take on culture, including his famous vilification of jazz. Like millions of students before us, we squirmed talking about the exploitative nature of capitalism, the apparent perversion of art, the conflicting realities of a slippery concept called “modernity.” We squirmed, asking ourselves if Adorno was right. Was everything we saw simply a product of the culture industry? Were we all simply doomed by the over-commodification of our lives?

And then the bombshell hit. An election result that left us reeling. The apparent triumph of demagoguery over the dream of a rational democracy. It felt like the whole country was stunned and reeling. And for those of us in that Pro-Seminar, we struggled to reconcile the theory we’d been learning with this strange new reality.

The hardest part about studying media ethics, I think, is that ethics are often assumed to be embedded in institutions and practices. They are taken for granted. But we know that we often have to fight to even get people to pay attention to ethics. And the gray areas, where there is seemingly no right answer... those are the most difficult to discuss, because nobody likes being uncomfortable.

Why would we? That’s the whole principle behind cognitive dissonance theory. But could it be that these spaces of struggle are actually vitally important?

Despite the pessimistic nature of many of his writings, Adorno wrote that we should not let ourselves be terrorized into action. In his essay Resignation, he wrote that “the re-

pressive intolerance to the thought that is not immediately accompanied by instructions for action is founded on anxiety.” The implication here is that the urge for instant action is often a symptom of anxiety – it is a result of the discomfort associated with uncertainty. Despite the valid criticism that Adorno’s work provides little practical advice, it’s important to realize the radical, and even hopeful challenge that it presents us: in order to reach greater insight, we must sit still with our troubling thoughts, processing them fully. Critical thinking is not resignation. In fact, it is the opposite; it is the start of something powerful.

Obviously, there are times when swift action is needed. There are moments when quick moral judgments must be made. There is no time for agonized deliberation when you’re faced with direct bodily harm or someone you care about is being threatened. But I would argue that there is value in being uncomfortable sometimes. When our students report that there are inconsistencies between what they’re studying in class and what they grew up believing, that’s where learning happens and that’s where growth happens. Sometimes, we must challenge them to sit with their discomfort, their cognitive dissonance. This kind of struggle can be good for us.

After the most recent election, people all over the country struggled to find an explanation. Newspapers spouted a thousand theories about why polls got it so wrong, why people voted the way they did, or didn’t vote at all. I spent the day after the election clicking on anything and everything I could find that might offer some analysis – some means of wrapping my head around the outcome. But there was no clear explanation. In many respects, there still isn’t.

But we don’t need a fast explanation. We don’t need a BuzzFeed top 10 list or a snarky Facebook analysis to explain reality to us. The answers we seek may not come quickly, and they will not be as simple as blaming everything on a specific gender, race or class. In media ethics, we are used to grappling with difficult questions, but we are



not immune to wanting solid ground to stand on. We are not immune to wishing the answers were easier to come by.

In my own work this past semester, I've been studying direct-to-consumer-advertising, (DTCA), looking at the ethical implications of marketing drugs to consumer populations that are often vulnerable. I don't have a definitive answer on whether DTCA is good or bad or what should be done. Sometimes, when I get really frustrated with a particular practice or case study, I wonder if all of advertising is too deeply ethically flawed to be

sustainable. But I know that the answers are much more complicated than that. It's easy to write things off as good or bad while ignoring all the nuance, but in order to have any hope of clarity, I must dive into the dissonance. I must embrace all the conflicting arguments in my head and allow myself to believe that thinking is not resignation.

JAMAICAN GRIEF PORN: THE ETHICS OF COVERING TRAGEDY AND GRIEF

BY KEVIN Z. SMITH, OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY



The photo on the front of the Jamaican Gleaner was a shocking precursor to the inside, double-page spread. A mother, gripped in agony at her son's funeral, greeted the reading public that morning. The memorial service played out inside the daily tabloid

with full-color, up-close-and-personal photos that included the minister, the casket procession and more tear-streaked faces of family and friends. It was not what someone of an American readership would expect.

This funeral was a galvanizing moment for a nation that sports the fifth highest homicide rate in the world. Fourteen-year-old Nicholas Francis was stabbed to death in Mid-October over his cell phone. The media made its presence felt at every chance, both in print and on the airwaves, culminating now with his funeral.

As much as the people of Jamaica have grown weary of the violence, they have also shown an evaporating tolerance for the media's portrayal of the violence and its aftermath, like this funeral. They've dubbed this gawking "grief porn."

Why must the victims and the family be showcased on the pages of the paper? Why must every death be complete with blood pools and explicit details of the deaths? Why does the public need to be guaranteed that body bags and wailing family members are important parts of most story?

I spent four days in Jamaica at the request of the U.S. Department of State and the Jamaican Embassy to talk about the ethics of reporting on grief and tragedy. Admittedly, I'd never heard the term grief porn, but I understood immediately what it meant.

What I didn't understand was why it was so prevalent in the Jamaican press. In America, we've come (for the most part) to understand that graphic images and salacious details of murder and mayhem serve little public good. It's usually viewed as sensationalism.

It didn't take long for me to learn that the attitudes on this island are clearly divided.

Much of the public wants it to end, some even calling on the government to create laws to punish the press for its excessiveness. Journalists are resisting because they contend most of the public understands its value. Journalists and lawyers balk at any legislation.

In a public forum hosted by the Press Association of Jamaica and the U.S. Embassy, members of the public complained about the coverage and asked that more discretion is applied. Others in the public, and some journalists, scoffed at that notion.

Some press members talked about their duty to report the truth. Others noted that the truth can be told without an endless flood of graphic images.

The mixed sentiments are found beyond the island capital of Kingston. Speaking at two universities the next day, the student audience at the University of West Indies – Western Campus in Montego Bay was more defensive of grief porn imagery than those at Northern Caribbean University in Mandeville, a private university run by the Seventh-day Adventists.

When I raised awareness of the Gleaner's coverage of the funeral at UWI, veteran newspaper editor Floyd Smith of Montego Bay says such public displays of grief are tied to both African heritage and Jamaican money.

"Funerals are events in our country. This is part of our culture that ties us to our African roots. Death is to be a time to show up and showcase. It's as much of a fashion show for people and a celebration of life as it is for the family and we display that very publicly."

It also is good for the bottom line. "If there is a killing and a funeral and I don't run it, my circulation goes like

this,” he said with a downward hand gesture. “People will call up and say, ‘why didn’t you cover the funeral?’”

Journalism students at UWI agreed that the images are usually harmless and necessary, even if viewed over and over. Besides, if the papers and TV won’t show them, they are easily found online. It’s become common place for Jamaicans to video and photograph such crime scenes when they come upon them. They share them on social media or sell them to the media for use.

An opposite view was taken by journalism faculty and students at NCU, who find the images to be voyeuristic.

“We used to use the argument that ‘What if this was your family? How would you like that?’ but that has no impact on their thinking. They seem happy to do these things and can’t be shamed,” a student in the audience said.

The public’s interest is the linchpin to the discussion. It says most of what it views on a daily basis is not beneficial. Convincing some journalists otherwise when they see a spike in paper sales or nightly viewers will be difficult.

You can read the full story at:

<http://www.kiplingerprogram.org/grief-porn-overwhelming-jamaican-public/#more-6063>

Smith is the Acting Director, Kiplinger Program in Public Affairs Journalism at Ohio State University. He was a 23-year member and former chair of the Society of Professional Journalists’ national ethics committee. He’s taught media ethics for 13 years. He is a Fulbright Speaker Specialist and has trained journalists in Sierra Leone, Uganda, Pakistan, Korea, Jamaica and Zambia.

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The AEJMC deadline is days away. But there’s still time to submit, so please remind your colleagues and students of our special call focusing on strategic communication ethics, the open call, as well as various monetary awards: top faculty paper, top graduate student paper and professional relevance paper. In addition, top student submissions receiving the Carol Burnett Award will receive financial assistance for travel to the conference.

Here’s more information about the special call:

Special Call for Strategic Communication Ethics

In addition to our regular call, the Media Ethics Division is sponsoring a special call for papers pertaining to “Strategic Communication Ethics.”

Ethical considerations of advertising abound including its intrusive and ubiquitous nature, invading privacy, using offensive appeals, promoting harmful products and targeting vulnerable audiences. By comparison, public relations practitioners see themselves as ethical conscience of the organization by counseling senior management on potential consequences for inappropriate actions. Historically and presently, the practices of advertising and public relations are intertwined and organizational roles continue to overlap. The blurring of boundaries, along with emerging media and new technology add to the increased complexity and challenges firms and individuals face when establishing ethical guidelines and enacting ethical behavior.

This special call asks scholars to examine the blurred boundaries of strategic communication, including but not limited to the practices of advertising, public relations, sales promotions, marketing communications and integrated marketing communications, to better understand related ethical challenges.

Papers may address, but are by no means limited to, emerging media and its impact on ethical decision making in strategic communication practices, codes of ethics and how they ought to address the blurring of boundaries in strategic communication, the role of organizational conscience and moral exemplars in strategic communication, the ethics of employer branding, case studies on social responsibility and corporate social responsibility, the social impact of advertising and advertising as social impact, and sustainable brand practices.

Special call papers can be critical, pedagogical, philosophical, theoretical as well as empirical scholarship representing a range of methods including qualitative, quantitative and mixed-method. Special call papers must be marked “Special Call” on the title page. All papers must conform to the style and length rules outlined above and in the AEJMC Uniform Call for Papers.

Looking forward to seeing you all in [Chicago](#).

Erin Schauster, MED Research Chair

AEJMC 2017 CONFERENCE

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