

Ethical News

The newsletter of the AEJMC
Media Ethics Division

Fall 2003
Vol. 7, No. 1

Division chair:

Vice chair/program head:

Secretary/newsletter editor:

Sandra L. Borden, *Western Michigan University*

Kristie Bunton, *University of St. Thomas*

Genelle Belmas, *California State University, Long Beach*

sandra.borden@wmich.edu

kibunton@stthomas.edu

gbelmas@csulb.edu

Head for the frontier

MED needs new research, new commentary, new alliances

Sandra Borden
division head

If you live in the United States, you will be crossing the Canadian border next year for AEJMC's annual convention. As Vice Head Kris Bunton suggests in the call for panel proposals, Toronto provides a great opportunity for comparative work in media ethics.

But don't just think geographical boundaries. Much of what we still want to accomplish as a division will require that we cross other kinds of boundaries as well — boundaries within AEJMC, boundaries within the academy, boundaries between scholars and professionals, and boundaries between scholars and the public.

We achieved a great deal together last year: the largest amount of programming the division has ever had, our first mid-year meeting, the 20th anniversary of the teaching ethics workshop—the list goes on. We owe our thanks to outgoing division head Dave Allen and all those who worked so hard to make these accomplishments possible. But we still need to expand our horizons in a number of areas:

◆ We need to increase our research paper submissions. There were so many ethics-related panels proposed for Kansas City that MED was unable to co-sponsor all of them. If the sheer number of sessions having to do with ethics is any indication, there is intense interest in the topic among AEJMC mem-



bers. Yet our research paper submissions continue to be lower than we would like. Look for details in the next newsletter on a special themed call for papers we hope will spark interest among members of several divisions in addition to MED.

◆ We need to play more of a role as public intellectuals and media critics. We are uniquely qualified to make informed, reasoned judgments about media performance. Many of us do media interviews and the occasional op-ed piece, but I would like to see the division itself become a more visible source of expertise on media criticism, perhaps with the help of our web site.

◆ We need to draw on the wisdom of other disciplines. There is no shortage of such wisdom, and we saw the advantages of drawing upon it in the excellent papers that resulted from the "Ethics Across the Professions" colloquium organized by Jay Black last year. One development I hope will promote more intellectual border crossings is the pairing of our mid-year meeting in

2004 with the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, to be held Feb. 26-29 in Cincinnati (see APPE's call for papers elsewhere in this newsletter). Details are still being worked out; look for more information in the next newsletter. MED's paper call also will encourage interdisciplinary scholarship.

◆ We need to mentor young scholars. We have to nurture tomorrow's prophetic voices today. Many junior scholars have been helped through the years by the teaching workshop Ed Lambeth founded. The division also facilitated mentoring a few years ago by getting senior and junior scholars

together to talk about media ethics scholarship at the annual convention. We are working on a similar initiative for Toronto.

◆ We need to build bridges with working professionals. A couple of years ago, we decided as a division to pursue several strategies for enhancing our relationship with practitioners. We need to make sure we're following through on those recommendations and also pursue additional avenues for connecting with working media professionals.

I welcome your ideas about ways to accomplish these goals. Please send suggestions to me at

Much of what
we still want to accomplish
as a division
will require that we cross
other kinds of boundaries

See Boundaries, page 4

Oh. Canada.

**Don't forget:
Panel ideas for
Toronto due Oct. 15**

Kris Bunton
vice chair/program head

We're meeting in Toronto next summer, so let's capitalize on Canada in our 2004 convention programming.

At our recent convention in Kansas City, I collared many colleagues to learn what they knew about Canadian media and current affairs. Then, in late August, I spent a week in and around Vancouver. Reading Canadian newspapers and watching CBC newscasts solidified my belief that MED has the opportunity to present Toronto convention programming that raises compelling questions about how U.S. and Canadian media treat similar issues. Let me give you three quick examples.

◆ One morning, I read a newspaper story speculating that a leading Canadian politician's re-election campaign might be complicated by his stance in this year's same-sex marriage debate. He had announced his opposition to same-sex marriages on religious grounds, and shortly thereafter, it was noted that he was himself a non-married partner in a long-term heterosexual relationship. The newspaper wondered how he might explain what he saw as religious differences in the two types of relationships. Interestingly, the story didn't delve into details about his partner or his relationship, but clearly focused on his policy stance. I found myself thinking that a U.S.

See Canada, page 2

Ethical Briefing

Send items for this column to:
Genelle Belmas, newsletter editor
gbelmas@csulb.edu

APPE seeks research papers for February meeting in Cincinnati

The Association for Practical and Professional Ethics invites faculty and students (graduate and undergraduate) who are interested in teaching, research or scholarship in ethics to take part in the 13th Annual Meeting, Feb. 26-28, 2004 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The keynote speaker is Howard Gardner, Harvard University psychologist and author of "Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century." Other highlights include an undergraduate paper competition and the annual national moral reasoning competition — the National Ethics Bowl. Graduate students interested in teaching ethics within their disciplines should think about attending the special four-hour seminar on the teaching of ethics. The exhibition room attracts more than 40 publishers, video distributors and others who provide the latest examples of materials for ethics teaching.

Paper submissions for the conference are due October 15, 2003. More specific information on the meetings can be found at <http://www.indiana.edu/~appe>

Submit intriguing cases for 2004 Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl

Each February at the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, teams from colleges across the United States gather to participate in the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl, a competition in ethical reasoning for undergraduate students. During the competition, teams are asked to address dilemmas in several areas of practical and professional ethics, including mass media ethics. Teams receive cases in advance and spend up to two months deliberating and preparing positions. During the competition, contestants are asked to respond to questions about the cases.

Ethics Bowl organizers are looking for intriguing cases to include in the next competition. Cases are typically one to two pages long and can involve any area of media ethics. Past cases and more detailed information on the Ethics Bowl are available online at www.iit.edu/departments/csep/EB/eb1.html.

The Media Ethics Division is making a concerted effort to strengthen ties with APPE. Submitting a case for the Ethics bowl is one way to do so. Please send cases (in the body of an e-mail or as a WORD or WordPerfect document) to Becky Cox White, chair of the Ethics Bowl case committee at bcwhite@csuchico.edu. The deadline for submitting cases is Nov. 15.

Panel ideas for Toronto due Oct. 15

Canada, from page 1

paper, by comparison, would have fallen all over itself to reveal as many personal details as it could have. Were different ethical standards at work here, I wondered?

◆ Another day, I read that Kalle Lasn, founder of the AdBusters anti-consumption magazine and media education foundation, has just launched a line of sneakers he hopes will pit AdBusters' no-logo philosophy squarely against the swoosh of corporate giant Nike. As the columnist I was reading pointed out, how can the most anti-corporate of critics itself get into the manufacturing and selling of shoes? Then, I thought, is there something about Canada that nurtures anti-consumption cool, as embodied by the success of AdBusters, and is that factor missing in the U.S.?

◆ Finally, I read an article suggesting that Canada receives more legal immigrants relative to its population than any other country in the world and that Toronto itself has accepted almost a quarter-million immigrants in the last two years. Apparently, at least 100,000 of Canada's immigrants arriving in the last two years spoke neither of the country's two official languages (English and French). Wow, I thought, how are news organizations and advertising clients reaching those new audiences? Are their news stories and advertising campaigns sensitive to non-English or non-French speakers? Do they fairly cover and depict immigrant groups? Better or worse than U.S. media do?

So, between my recent week in Canada and my conversations in Kansas City, I can easily compile a list of topics that might raise interesting themes for our Toronto program. Here are a few more: news coverage of the move to legalize marijuana use in Canada; public relations campaigns to allay travelers' fears and stimulate Toronto tourism after the SARS scare; the use of press councils to resolve disputes about media content; Canadian government standards about media conglomeration and ownership; and widely recognized efforts to stimulate media literacy in the country.

I hope you'll see the potential for some interesting, border-crossing convention programs, too. Think Canada, and think diversity. AEJMC's new president, Janette Dates, has identified diversity issues as a key focus of programming for the Toronto convention.

Your chance to submit proposals for con-

Your panel proposal needs:

- ◆ **Title**
- ◆ **Moderator** (feel free to name yourself)
- ◆ **Panelists:** Do provide the names of possible panelists, but if you discuss the panel idea with potential panelists, please make sure they understand you're submitting a proposal that is tentative and not guaranteed to happen.
- ◆ **Topic:** A one-paragraph description of the topic/issue to be addressed in the panel.
- ◆ **Possible co-sponsors:** A list of other AEJMC divisions that might be interested in co-sponsoring the panel (preference for inclusion on the program will be given to topics that appeal to both MED members and members of other divisions).
- ◆ **Estimated costs, if any:** Please remember that funds for speakers and audiovisual equipment are quite limited; also, please note that if your panel proposal is accepted and you need funding to convince a non-AEJMC member to be on it, you'll need to file a later request seeking funds for travel and lodging.
- ◆ **Your contact information.**

Send proposal by Oct. 15 as an e-mail attachment to: kebunton@stthomas.edu.

vention panels that address any of these topics — as well as other ideas — is now. The deadline for panel proposals is Oct. 15. To submit a proposal, please send the information outlined in the box above, in the form of a one-page Word document attached to an e-mail message, to kebunton@stthomas.edu:

If you've never proposed a panel and you want to see a sample proposal, please send me an e-mail message and I'll send you an electronic version of a panel proposal I wrote for the 2003 program.

So remember, think Canada. And do it between now and Oct. 15, when I'll hope to be deluged with a variety of interesting convention panel proposals. Send them to kebunton@stthomas.edu.

MED on the Web

http://jcomm.uoregon.edu/~tbivins/aejmc_ethics/home.html

'We need to define a new ethic that lends legitimacy to opinion, honestly disclosed and disciplined by some sense of propriety.'

— Robert Bartley, former editor of *The Wall Street Journal*

Dealing in class with the 'death' of objectivity

Patrick Lee Plaisance
teaching chair

Are we about to witness the death of journalistic objectivity? And if so, how can we best address this historic change in the classroom?

The cherished, peculiarly American notion of journalistic objectivity always has been an easy target for media critics, scholars and commentators. Communication research is rich with studies on newsroom decision-making and perceptions of credibility and bias, much of which can be used either to help deconstruct the "myth" of journalistic objectivity or to demonstrate the value of maintaining objectivity as a goal of professionalism. But objectivity, a mainstay of American journalism for the last century, has been attacked recently by some prominent voices in the news business:

◆ In July, Robert Bartley, a former editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, argued that "we are coming to the end of the era of 'objectivity' that has dominated journalism" and that the concept soon would be declared "dead."

◆ An article in the *Hartford Courant* in August quoted Kurt Anderson, former editor of *New York* magazine, saying the primacy that news outlets place on being perceived as objective will soon be a thing of the past: "Right now, everybody seems to be buying into the idea that the marketplace of ideas means the marketplace of ideas, and it's not

incumbent upon everybody to go right down the middle."

◆ In the September issue of *Atlantic Monthly*, James Fallows, author of *Breaking the News: How the Media Undermine American Democracy*, concludes in a feature on Rupert Murdoch that the news industry will soon follow Fox News and the *New York Post* by being "straightforward about their political identity." According to Fallows:

"There will be liberal papers, radio shows, TV programs, and Web sites for liberals, and conservative ones for conservatives.... Our journalistic culture may soon enough resemble that of early nineteenth-century America, in which party-owned newspapers presented selective versions of the truth."

As I prepared for the fall semester, I wondered how I and others might convey this potentially huge

shift to our media ethics students – the same students we're also teaching to write with detachment in our news writing and reporting classes. I'm also thinking about ways to highlight the implications of such a change: The ethical questions raised by any move to simultaneously shed the cloak of objectivity and still uphold the Society of Professional Journalists directive to "act independently" are enormous and enormously complicated. What exactly would journalistic autonomy look like? How would perceptions of press credibility change if we started to see news outlets realigning with political parties and partisan causes, as Fallows predicts, just as they were in the 19th century? What would

happen to the communitarian ideal on which the notion of civic journalism is based?

In class, I might have my students mull over the claims of Bartley and Fallows and try to envision what the ethics of a journalism without objectivity might look like. I also might introduce the journalism history research of David Mindich, Michael Schudson, Hazel Dicken-Garcia and others to help students examine the pros and cons of a partisan press, and to understand why the concept of objectivity emerged as a professional standard in the late 1800s. And I also might discuss how the concept itself has evolved, since Walter Lippmann exhorted the press to use more scientific newsgathering techniques, which is quite different than today's practice of claiming to present news with perfect, value-free neutrality – a stance that is impossible for most subjective human beings to take. You may well have some other, more interesting ideas to share.

Clearly, we're not going to wake up next month to find that the *Denver Post* and other metro dailies have joined hands with political parties. We won't likely be tuning in to watch "The GOP News Hour with Bill O'Reilly" any time soon (though some might dispute the "newness" of any such animal). And I certainly don't want to leave my students with the impression that our media market will soon be filled with the same kind of vilification and vituperation of the British tabloid world (though in some corners, it's already happened). But even if our notion of journalistic objectivity may be changing, our notion of journalistic professionalism remains rooted in longstanding ethical principles.

Bartley, the former *WSJ* editor, wrote that "[w]e need to define a new ethic that lends legitimacy to opinion, honestly disclosed and disciplined by some sense of propriety." Maybe so, but I want my students to be able to discern whether this "new ethic" would be any different than plain old expediency.

The ethical questions raised by any move to simultaneously shed the cloak of objectivity and still uphold the SPJ directive to 'act independently' are enormous and enormously complicated

Success uncertain for new *Times* ombudsman

Erik Ugland
Research chair

Media accountability advocates are rejoicing at the news that *The New York Times* will soon hire a “public editor” or ombudsman to monitor the paper and serve as a liaison for its 1.2 million readers.

They have every reason to be hopeful. This was an extraordinary step for the *Times*, which has never been terribly solicitous of outsider opinion. But it’s a bit too soon for dancing in the streets.

Executive Editor Bill Keller has only made a one-year commitment to the position, and it is impossible to know whether the new appointee will have the authority, character, patience, resources and support needed to make a meaningful difference.

Keller decided to hire an ombudsman at the urging of the Siegel Committee – one of three committees established after the Jayson Blair scandal to assess the paper’s failings and find ways to prevent future meltdowns.

Hiring an ombudsman is a sensible move. But it is not a foolproof one. Newspaper publishers have fired almost as many ombudsmen as they have hired. Only a couple dozen ombudsmen are currently earning paychecks at daily newspapers, and a few of those are not taken seriously enough to be of any

real consequence.

If Keller’s new appointee is going to survive and succeed, there are a few things he or she will need:

Resources

The job is an enormous task that cannot be accomplished by a single person holed up in a cubicle with a stack of back issues and highlighter. To do the job well, the *Times* needs to establish an Office of the Public Editor – complete with the staff and resources necessary to handle the onslaught of complaints, comments and corrections that will inevitably follow. If the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* can support a full-time ombudsman, *The New York Times* – maybe the most scrutinized publication in the world – can support a small team of them.

Character

The success or failure of the initiative is entirely dependent on who is hired to lead it. Only the most savvy critic – one with both an incisive mind and a diplomatic flair – can be expected to survive, much less succeed, with so many competing stakeholders to satisfy. Keller’s new hire will need gumption, gravitas and an ability to nimbly walk the line between brazen know-it-all and feckless bureaucrat.

Experience

Keller has said he expects to hire someone “of unquestioned stature

The next and more difficult task will be to get the staff of the paper to buy into the concept.

in the field.” That is a reasonable enough. But he must be careful not to choose someone who is so steeped in the standard practices and conventions of his profession that he is unable to bring a critical perspective to the table. There are many journalists of “unquestioned stature” whose ethical framework is nevertheless so hardened and so conventional that their credibility with readers would be limited. An ombudsman whose perspective is too insular will only reinforce the persistent accusation that the *Times* is obsessed with the interests and concerns of right-coast insiders.

It is also important for Keller to find someone for the position who has a record of professional criticism. Too many journalists – even some whose stature is unquestioned – are about as likely to perform their own dental work as they are to publicly criticize their peers.

Vision

One thing the *Times* does not need is someone to field complaints about the most recent crossword

puzzle clues or to quibble over the complexities of “that” versus “which.”

There are specific complaints to which the public editor should be expected to respond, but it is even more important that she be able to identify broader trends and tendencies that do not always reveal themselves clearly in a single story or edition. The world does not need another ink-stained curmudgeon obsessed with Strunk-and-White minutia. It needs someone of insight and intellect who can engage people and initiate substantive conversations about the role of the press and the boundaries of professional ethics.

Support

Hiring the right person to serve as the *Times* public editor is only the first challenge for Keller. His next and more difficult task will be to get the staff of the paper to buy into the concept.

Former *Washington Post* ombudsman Geneva Overholser was an exceptional critic but her success in fomenting real change at the paper was minimal. That was not her fault. It was the fault of the editors who did not do enough to create an environment of self-examination and professional introspection at the *Post*.

Now it’s Keller’s turn. If he cannot do that, the new public editor – whoever it is – will be looking for work in 12 months.

Cross boundaries as you participate in MED this year

Boundaries, from page 1

sandra.borden@wmich.edu. I also encourage you to write about your ideas for the newsletter, which will be spotlighting articles this year that address the theme of “crossing boundaries” in media ethics. Please send submissions of 500-750 words to Newsletter Editor Genelle Belmas at gbelmas@csulb.edu.

In memoriam: Michael Perkins

Finally, a short word of appreciation for our colleague Michael Perkins of Brigham Young University. Mike, who was a MED member and incoming head of the Law Division, died in a kayaking accident shortly after we left Kansas City. He had a sincere interest in exploring the connections between law and ethics. In fact, the

last time I talked to him, he was enthusiastically pitching an idea for a teaching panel Law and MED might co-sponsor in Toronto. We will all miss him.

To read *BYU’s* obituary for Michael Perkins as well as information about how to make contributions to a fund created in his name, see the back page of this newsletter.

Covering politics in the age of 'Ahnold'

When entertainers enter politics, ethical considerations abound

William A. Babcock

California State University, Long Beach

The Oct. 7 recall election in California demands that members of the media once again ask themselves how they might fairly cover a popular media personality whose views on public policy issues are virtually unknown – and possibly unformed.

In a variety of past local, state and national elections, Clint Eastwood, Ronald Reagan and Sonny Bono all parleyed celebrity name recognition for votes. While it's nothing new that the personalities of politicians have often tended to overshadow their public policy plans, neophyte candidates with high name recognition are appearing increasingly attractive to voters. Such individuals — whether they be former professional wrestler-cum-Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura or former bodybuilder-cum-actor-cum-GOP frontrunner Arnold Schwarzenegger in California's current gubernatorial recall election — are mass media creations and commodities.

So how might the media most fairly cover a popular media personality whose views on public policy issues are virtually unknown (and possibly unformed)? And, when a neophyte political candidate enters a race against other well-known politicians whose records have been established

for a number of years, how should the media respond — give all viable political candidates essentially equal coverage in the run-up to the election, or shower the vast bulk of ink and airtime on politically viable newcomers, so that by election day voters might have essentially equal knowledge of all legitimate candidates?

Former National News Council member Norman Isaacs wrote some 20 years ago that fairness — rather than balance or objectivity — should be the goal of journalists. But what are the implications of pursuing the often elusive goal of fairness?

At a time when polls increasingly have been charting the public's thinking that both journalists and politicians are becoming increasingly less credible, the manner in which journalists cover celebrity candidates takes on added significance. Whether journalists are accountable, to whom they are accountable and the ramifications of such accountability issues would seem to beg a few questions:

◆ What does fairness mean and how can one be accountable — in other words what is the relationship between fairness and accountability?

◆ Do unaccountable media harm a democracy?

◆ Are people left more voiceless when the media are unaccountable?

◆ How does one define media accountability in a world where the lines between news and entertainment are constantly being blurred?

By addressing such questions in the prolonged run-up to next year's U.S. presidential election, media ethics researchers might better explore the relationship

between democracy and media accountability in a way that would not only add to existing media ethics literature, but also help chart new directions of study for research in this area.

Dr. Babcock is a former chair of MED, and professor and chair of the Department of Journalism at California State University, Long Beach.

At a time when polls increasingly have been charting the public's thinking that both journalists and politicians are becoming increasingly less credible, the manner in which journalists cover celebrity candidates takes on added significance.

MED members to receive JMME as part of dues

Watch your mailboxes: The Media Ethics Division has entered into an agreement with the Journal of Mass Media Ethics (JMME) to provide a subscription as one of the benefits of MED membership. At the last division meeting in Kansas City, members voted to enter an agreement with JMME for a one-year trial basis. At the end of that term, the division will assess whether higher dues to pay for the subscription have resulted in unacceptable membership losses.

Members left it up to the executive committee

to decide on new dues to cover the costs of adding JMME. The committee voted to raise faculty dues to \$26 from \$10, and graduate student dues from \$5 to \$10. These rates reflect a partial subsidy of the cost of providing the journal subscription, in line with a recommendation by a committee appointed last year by former MED Chair David Allen to study allocation of funds saved through electronic newsletter delivery.

The dues increase will apply to membership renewals after Oct. 1. The JMME subscriptions

will begin after a few months of collecting the higher division dues to cover the first quarterly bill from Lawrence Erlbaum and related incidental expenses, including mailing labels.

JMME and MED have participated in several joint efforts through the years. JMME publishes winners of the Burnett graduate student paper award, chosen by MED each year, and sponsors and participates with MED in a decade-long series of colloquia intended to foster research on significant topics in media ethics.

Minutes of the MED business meeting Kansas City, Mo., July 31, 2003

I. Reports

The annual members' meeting of the AEJMC Media Ethics Division was called to order by outgoing MED chair David Allen (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) at 8:30 p.m. Thursday, July 31, 2003, in the Roanoke Room of the Westin Crown Center in Kansas City, Mo. Twenty-eight members were present.

Allen thanked all those involved in putting together the 2003 convention program and noted that MED currently has a budget balance of about \$5,000, less outstanding expenses incurred for the MED teaching workshop held just before the convention. He noted that this balance was about \$1,000 more than MED possessed at the same time last year.

Outgoing vice chair/programming chair Sandra Borden (Western Michigan University) reported that MED successfully presented a wide array of programming at the 2003 convention. MED was primary sponsor of six panels and co-sponsor of three, as well as co-sponsor of a mini-plenary session and a special panel session. She encouraged members to submit panel ideas for next year's convention.

Outgoing secretary/newsletter editor Kris Bunton (University of St. Thomas) reported that the division newsletter was issued quarterly and thanked Bill Reader (Ohio University) for designing the newsletter, Tom Bivins (University of Oregon) for posting it electronically, and division members for their contributions of newsletter articles. Allen noted that MED's newsletter continues to contain superior content.

Outgoing research chair Romayne Smith-Fullerton (University of Western Ontario) reported that 22 research papers were submitted for the 2003 convention. Nine of those were presented in paper sessions, and three were selected for a scholar-to-scholar poster session, for an acceptance rate of just over 50 percent. She thanked this year's paper judges and noted that submissions were down from more than 30 papers last year. She encouraged the division to consider ways to further publicize its paper call and attract more submissions next year.

Outgoing teaching standards chair Peggy Bowers (Clemson University) thanked the organizers of this year's teaching panel and noted she had contributed teaching-related articles to the MED newsletter.

Outgoing professional freedom and responsibility chair Jack Breslin (Iona College) reported he had organized a panel on teaching courses in which media law and media ethics intersect, and that he contributed four newsletter articles attempting to make connections between aca-

demics' views and the views of working journalists.

Bill Babcock (California State University-Long Beach) reported that this year's MED teaching workshop involved 38 participants and 13 presenters. It was followed by a banquet in honor of workshop founder Ed Lambeth (University of Missouri), which was attended by 70 people.

Lee Wilkins (University of Missouri) presented the first Clifford Christians award for best scholarship in communication ethics presented to NCA, ICA or AEJMC. The recipient, Patrick Lee Plaisance (Colorado State University), was congratulated by Christians (University of Illinois).

II. Other Business

Beth Blanks Hindman (Washington State University) reported on behalf of a committee established to recommend how MED might allocate funds saved by publishing its newsletter online. On behalf of committee members Maggie Patterson (Duquesne University), Ginnie Whitehouse (Whitworth College), Babcock and Plaisance, she suggested three recommendations: 1) offsetting the cost of a proposal to "bundle" subscriptions to *The Journal of Mass Media Ethics* with memberships in MED; 2) making a financial award to the top faculty research paper received by MED; and 3) providing stipends to senior scholars for mentoring the research of junior scholars.

Babcock presented the proposal to bundle JMME subscriptions with MED memberships. He said the intent of the proposal was to promote synergy between MED members and media ethics scholarship.

Allen opened discussion of the proposal. He asked what members thought would be the effects bundling might have on MED membership renewal, particularly when MED research paper submissions are down and a new interest group will be seeking slots on the AEJMC convention program. That group's slots will have to be secured from existing divisions' slots, as the overall program is not going to expand. If divisions have to give up programming slots based on their membership size or their research paper submissions, MED might be concerned about the effect of bundling on membership. Allen noted that MED membership currently is about 300 people, and that moving from the current \$10 membership fee to a bundled fee in the \$30 range would make MED one of the more expensive AEJMC divisions.

Members expressed some concern about

keeping the MED membership affordable, especially since many members purchase memberships in other divisions as well. Other members suggested MED should not spend all its surplus funds to offset the cost of bundling, but hold some funds in abeyance for future programming.

A motion by Babcock, amended and seconded by Wilkins, proposed the MED executive committee be authorized to investigate bundling JMME subscriptions with MED memberships for a trial period, with the combined cost of the JMME subscription/MED membership to be between \$25 and \$32 per person. MED officers would review the plan at the end of the year. The motion passed unanimously, concluding the division's old business.

As incoming MED chair, Borden asked for members' other ideas about using the division's funding. Tom Brislin (University of Hawaii) suggested a journalist in residence program for MED that would involve newsletter articles, participation in workshops and the convention, and noted that the Carol Burnett fund at Hawaii might be used to support such a program. Other members suggested funding grants to support ethics research or to provide travel support for graduate students. Members said they were not interested in funding awards for faculty research papers.

Borden also asked for members' views about MED participation in the ongoing series of spring colloquia on media ethics. The next colloquium will be held at the University of Missouri under the direction of Wilkins, who noted that her institution could not provide the level of financial support that made it possible for the March 2003 colloquium at the University of South Florida to also serve as a MED spring meeting. Rather than fund a separate spring meeting, members suggested MED investigate ways to encourage participation in the spring meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics. Deni Elliott (University of Montana) said that as a member of APPE's executive committee, she would be willing to serve as a liaison between MED and APPE. Jay Black (University of South Florida) moved, with a second by Bivins, that MED not sponsor a stand-alone spring meeting in 2004 but investigate ways to participate more fully with APPE. The motion passed unanimously.

Stephanie Craft (University of Missouri) suggested MED develop a meaningful mentoring program for graduate students, and Breslin suggested exploring the use of Web sites, e-mail messages or phone calls to support a mentoring network. Borden said MED officers would consider these ideas.

Minutes of the MED business meeting Kansas City, Mo., July 31, 2003

III. Election of officers

Borden conducted elections for MED's 2003-2004 officers. She noted that under the division's structure, Kris Bunton (University of St. Thomas) would automatically succeed from secretary/newsletter editor to vice chair/program head.

Members elected Genelle Belmas (California State University-Long Beach) secretary/newsletter editor. Eric Ugland (Marquette University) was elected research chair. Patrick Plaisance (Colorado State University) was elected teaching

standards chair. Wendy Barger (University of St. Thomas) was elected professional freedom and responsibility chair.

The following volunteers offered to serve as liaisons between MED and several organizations: AEJMC Commission on the Status of Women: Stephanie Craft (University of Missouri); AEJMC Graduate Student Interest Group: Bastiaan Vanacker (Washington State University); AEJMC Law Division: Liz Hansen (Eastern Kentucky University); AEJMC Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Interest Group: Genelle Belmas (California State

University-Long Beach); AEJMC Public Relations Division: Tom Bivins (University of Oregon); Investigative Reporters and Editors: Lee Peck (Franklin College); Association for Practical and Professional Ethics: Deni Elliott (University of Montana); Society of Professional Journalists: Liz Hansen (Eastern Kentucky University); International Communication Association and National Communication Association: Cliff Christians (University of Illinois).

With thanks to David Allen for his work as MED chair, the meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

How to contact MED officers for 2003-2004

Division Chair

Sandra L. Borden
Western Michigan Univ.
sandra.borden@wmich.edu

Secretary/Newsletter Editor

Genelle Belmas
Calif. State Univ., Long Beach
gbelmas@csulb.edu

Teaching Standards Chair

Patrick Plaisance
Colorado State Univ.
patrick.plaisance@colostate.edu

Past Chair

David S. Allen
Univ. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
dsallen@uwm.edu

Vice Chair/Program Head

Kris Bunton
Univ. of St. Thomas
kebunton@stthomas.edu

Research Chair

Erik Ugland
Marquette Univ.
erik.ugland@mu.edu

PF&R Chair

Wendy Barger
Univ. of St. Thomas
wnbarger@stthomas.edu

Webmaster

Tom Bivins, Univ. of Oregon
tbivins@oregon.uoregon.edu

Associate Newsletter Editor

Bill Reader, Ohio Univ.
reader@ohio.edu

MED liaisons to other organizations

AEJMC Commission on the Status of Women: Stephanie Craft (*University of Missouri*)

AEJMC Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Interest Group: Genelle Belmas (*California State University-Long Beach*)

Association for Practical and Professional Ethics: Deni Elliott (*University of Montana*)

AEJMC Graduate Student Interest Group: Bastiaan Vanacker (*University of Minnesota*)

AEJMC Public Relations Division: Tom Bivins (*University of Oregon*)

Society of Professional Journalists: Liz Hansen (*Eastern Kentucky University*)

AEJMC Law Division: Liz Hansen (*Eastern Kentucky University*)

Investigative Reporters and Editors: Lee Peck (*Franklin College*)

International Communication Association and National Communication Association: Cliff Christians (*University of Illinois*)

MED on the Web

http://jcomm.uoregon.edu/~tbivins/aejmc_ethics/home.html

In Memoriam: Michael Perkins

BYU department chair, member of MED and Law Divisions, dies in kayaking accident

From Brigham Young University NewsNet

Michael Kennon Perkins, age 45, of Provo, died August 14, 2003 in a kayaking accident on the Salmon River in Idaho.

Michael Kennon Perkins was born April 2, 1958 in Jefferson City, Missouri. He then studied at Ricks College and Brigham Young University, earning a bachelor's degree in 1982. He earned a law degree at the University of Utah in 1986. From 1977 to 1979 he served in the Guatemala City, Guatemala Mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

While attending law school, Michael worked as a reporter for the *Deseret News*, a job that was

to lead him toward a career in journalism and communications.

After teaching at the University of New Mexico and working as a reporter at the *Albuquerque Journal*, he took a job as a professor at Drake University in Iowa, where he served as the assistant dean of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

In 1999 he accepted a position at Brigham Young University, where he became chair of the Department of Communications.

A lover of the outdoors, Mike was participating in a family rafting trip when the accident occurred.

He is survived by his wife, Donnette, and by his two children, Nathaniel and Caitlin.

Those who wish to contribute to the Michael K. Perkins fund, in support of higher education, should contact the Department of Communications at Brigham Young University.



If you wish to give to the Michael K. Perkins fund at BYU, contact the Department of Communications at commsec@byu.edu or call 801-422-2997.

AEJMC Media Ethics Division
234 Outlet Pointe Blvd., Suite A
Columbia, SC 29210

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
Columbia, S.C.
Permit No. 198