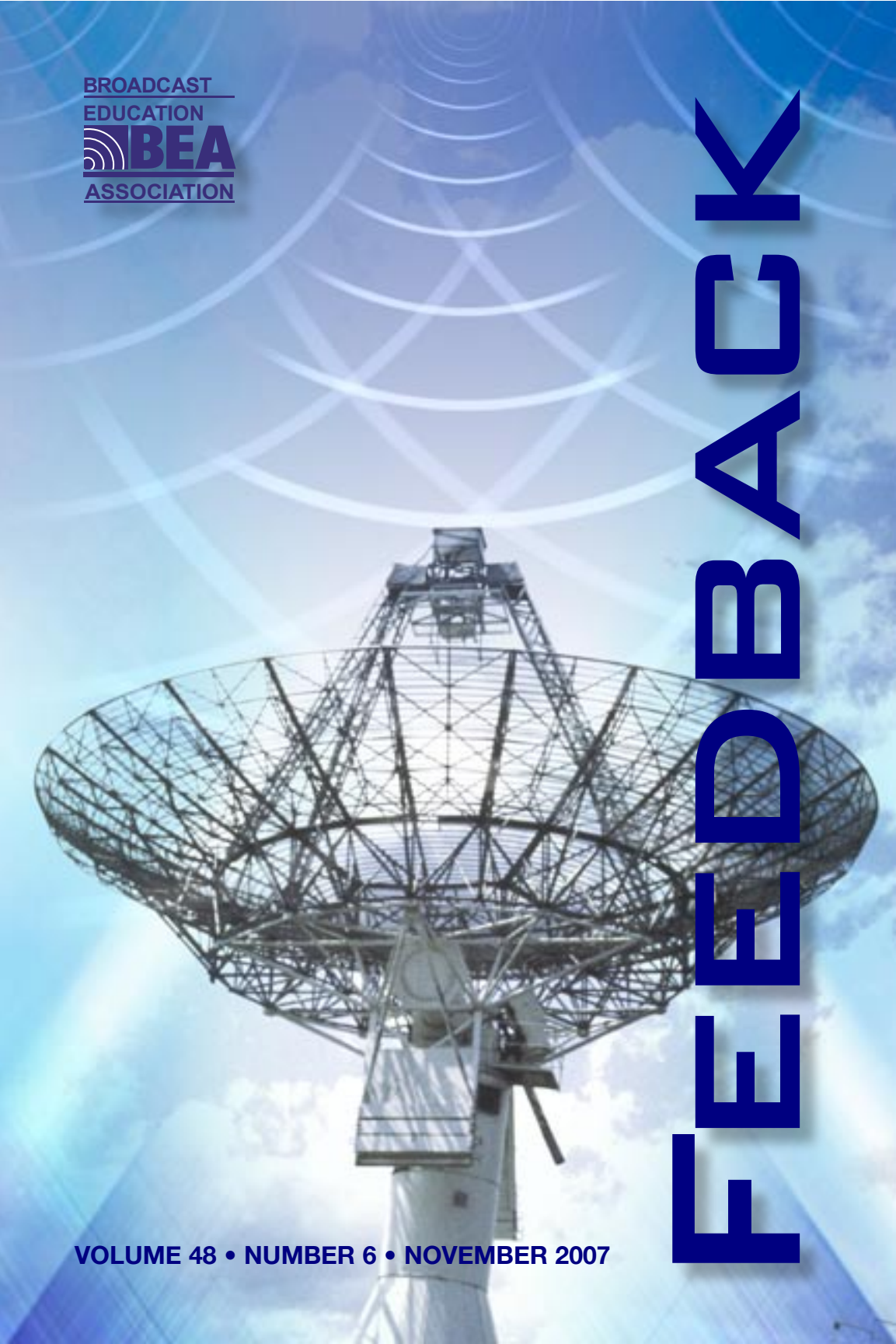


VOLUME 48 • NUMBER 6 • NOVEMBER 2007

# November 2007 (Vol. 48, No. 6)

Feedback is an electronic journal scheduled for posting six times a year at www.beaweb.org by the Broadcast Education Association. As an electronic journal, Feedback publishes (1) articles or essays— especially those of pedagogical value—on any aspect of electronic media: (2) responsive essays—especially industry analysis and those reacting to issues and concerns raised by previous Feedback articles and essays; (3) scholarly papers: (4) reviews of books, video, audio, film and web resources and other instructional materials; and (5) official announcements of the BEA and news from BEA Districts and Interest Divisions. Feedback is not a peer-reviewed journal.

All communication regarding business, membership questions, information about past issues of Feedback and changes of address should be sent to the Executive Director, 1771 N. Street NW, Washington D.C. 20036.


## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. Submit an electronic version of the complete manuscript with references and charts in Microsoft Word along with graphs, audio/video and other graphic attachments to the editor. Retain a hard copy for reference.
2. Please double-space the manuscript. Use the 5th edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style manual.
3. Articles are limited to 3,000 words or less, and essays to 1,500 words or less.
4. All authors must provide the following information: name, employer, professional rank and/or title, complete mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, email address, and whether the writing has been presented at a prior venue.
5. If editorial suggestions are made and the author(s) agree to the changes, such changes should be submitted by email as a Microsoft Word document to the editor.
6. The editor will acknowledge receipt of documents within 48 hours and provide a response within four weeks.

## REVIEW GUIDELINES

1. Potential instructional materials that can be reviewed include books, computer software, CD-ROMs, guides, manuals, video program, audio programs and Web sites.
2. Reviews may be submitted by email as a Microsoft Word document to the editor.
3. Reviews must be 350-500 words in length.
4. The review must provide a full APA citation of the reviewed work.
5. The review must provide the reviewer's name, employer, professional rank and/or title, email address and complete mailing address.

## SUBMISSION DEADLINES

*Feedback* is scheduled, depending on submissions and additional material, to be posted on the BEA Web site the first day of January, March, May, July, September and November. To be considered, submissions should be submitted 60 days prior to posting date for that issue.

Please email submissions to Joe Misiewicz at jmisiewicz@bsu.edu. If needed: Joe Misiewicz, *Feedback* Editor, Department of Telecommunications, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306, USA.

*Feedback* receives support from Ball State University's College of Communication, Information and Media.

# [ CONTENTS ]

Click on title to view page.

[ ARTICLE ]

# CONSIDERATIONS OF THE POLITICAL CONTENT OF TELEVISION BROADCASTS DOES THE MEDIA PROVIDE QUALITY POLITICAL CONTENT THROUGH TELEVISION BROADCASTS?

**Anthony Esposito,**
Ph.D
Assistant Professor
Department of Communication and Media Studies
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

Paper presented at the 49th Annual Convention of the Broadcast Education Association
Las Vegas, Nevada
April 2004

Does the media provide quality political content through-television broadcasts? This is not a cumbersome question to answer. Lippman (1965) refers to the press "as a restless beacon that jumps from one episode to another. It covers events, not issues, and we should ask that it only excel at this task (p. 229)." Lippman's argument is adroit in showing the media as a tabloid magazine that highlights scandals over hard news. I agree with him when he makes this inference. However, in opposition, I believe the modern day media is given the responsibility of providing paramount issues to the voting population, but in many cases, the public is given soft news that emphasizes stories not germane to understanding issues that impact their lives.

As the Democrats attempt to elect a candidate to oppose President Bush in November, it seems the media is busy covering stories about the candidates that at times dealmore with their rhetorical miscues and choice of dress, than their political positions. For example, should Howard Dean have screamed to his supporters after his loss in the Iowa caucus? As a person who teaches classes dealing with public speaking and interpersonal communication, I would have advised Mr. Dean that this mode of presentational style would only increase the barrage of media castigation that made him a legitimate target of the media. In addition, should it matter why Wesley Clark decided to wear sweaters on the campaign trail? These type of banal examples continue to push the media to a level that caters to ratings that emphasize quantity over quality.

Therefore I will pose the question, does television broadcasting promote quality political content that informs its viewing audience? Throughout this paper, I will argue the media incorporates a burglar alarm approach, that emphasizes expedi-

ent messages that focus on news that is either trivial or scandalous, and that does not promote the civil well being of our society. In order to adequately assess the significance of quality in television broadcasting, it will be important to do the following. First, to show the current trend in television broadcasting in the areas of soft and hard news. Second, to discuss Zaller's (2003) concept of the burglar alarm and its implication in determining news quality. Third, to analyze audience reaction and perceptions of the news. Finally, I will provide an overall analysis of the findings and some future research implications that communication scholars can explore in their potential research endeavors.

## SOFT AND HARD NEWS AS LEARNING TOOLS FOR THE AUDIENCE

Quality in general is a difficult term to define but, in dealing with political news, it sometimes depends on the stations procedures and the importance of ratings. Most of the discussion begins with soft and hard news and their importance to quality programming. According to Tom Peterson (2004), he defines "soft news as typically more sensational, more personality centered, less time bound more practical, and more incident based than other news" (P. 4). There are numerous researchers who find Peterson's definition to be germane and advantageous to a 21st Century population that prefers news that highlights stories of human affairs and tabloid journalism. For example, not only would the evening news be included as a form of soft news in some contexts, but such shows as *Entertainment Tonight* and *Oprah Winfrey* would be included in this category.

Political news on television is often defined as intellectual junk food, according to most of the scholarly literature dealing with this topic (Graber, 2001). However, in opposition, others feel that soft news could be employed as a pedagogical tool that enhances non participate individuals to be informed on issues, even if these issues are sensationalistic in their content and style (Baum, 2003). Since our attention span is so small, it seems the issues that will most resonate with audiences are ones that grab their attention. For example, the Janet Jackson debacle during the halftime show at the Superbowl became a front-page news story covered by both local and national telecasts. The next evening, Nightline spent their entire program discussing sexual messages dealing with such topics as music videos, movies, and advertising. In sum, some researchers would argue that soft news in this context enabled the media to discuss an issue of both political and ideological significance that impacts the lives of American voters. Prior (2003) informs us that "by focusing on the more entertaining, shocking, or scandalous aspects of politics, soft news offers these people an alternative that maximizes their utility because it combines entertainment and information" (p.150). Adhering to this definition, it would seem that quality in news outlets that adhere to a soft news format would not lead to an informed and intellectual voting population.

However, there are some researchers who would disagree with the above assertion-based upon the concept of ratings and audience viewership. For instance, during the ratings period of 2002, the *Oprah Winfrey Show* reached seven million viewers (Baum, 2003). In addition, other shows with high ratings include *Entertainment Tonight*, *Access Hollywood*, and *Extra*. These shows are not exhaustive, but indicative, of some of the soft news formats available to discursive audiences. I am not making the inference that the above is quality programming. It seems like the term quality in this debate is subjective depending upon the researcher defining this term.

For instance, some argue that coverage of issues on soft news outlets enabled those dealing with the travesty of 9/11 to be more well informed on the issues (Baum, 2003). Moreover, soft news is said to rely more so than traditional news on episodic, rather than thematic, framing of stories. Research in social psychology, in turn, has found that people are more likely to recall information presented in an episodic manner, because it is more vivid and episodic frames tend to have a stronger impact on individuals' attention (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). According to Baum (2003):

> My findings in this limited statistical investigation suggest that exposure to soft news does most likely have at least some effect on factual knowledge, at least with respect to those aspects of high profile issues, like foreign crises, that attract substantial soft news coverage, and at least in the short run. (p. 185).

What is not included in Baum's research is whether this soft news can be labeled as something of quality that enhances the lives of everyday citizens. Following this paradigm, it seems the goal of the news is public attention more than public education. Therefore, even though others argue about the utility of soft news, it still seems this type of news format is more entertainment than quality. Lets now turn to looking at hard news and its implications to quality programming.

According to Bennett (1997), "hard news may be defined as information about current public affairs and government topics (p.3.)" Even though some of the research would purport sensationalized news is the hot topic at hand, it still seems hard news is a paramount variable in informing the public about important issues. According to Prior (2003)

> Soft news formats were mentioned most often as particularly disliked news format. While people like traditional formats, notably local news, and newspapers, or feel indifferent toward them, soft news seems to be loved by some, hated by others. Traditional hard news formats remain far more popular than soft news (p. 152).

There is evidence that states quality news actually sells. Some of the research illuminates the claim that quality news costs more, but is pushed away because of economic concerns (Bennett, 2003). In a society built on capitalism, it seems a final product that stresses sensationalism over substance would make sense in a world that embraces ratings over quality. The Project for Excellence in Journalism, that tracks the content and audience ratings of 146 local television news programs, finds the strongest performing stations currently are those emphasizing hard news.

However, numerous researchers would disagree with the above observation. Graber (2001, 2003) argues the media provides a plethora of examples of quality programming to their viewing audiences. According to Graber (2003):

> A viewer tuned in to 30 minutes of network news on ABC, CBS, NBC for six days a week, and a 60 minute CNN newscast once a week, would get a political lesson lasting two hours and 25 minutes-longer than the weekly classroom time for many college level political science courses. The lesson would be composed of roughly 43 minutes of foreign news, 32 minutes of general domestic news, 30 minutes of

> news dealing with various social issues, 24 minutes of news about the environment, and 16 minutes of economic news. Polls show the public learns from these genres of presentation: 76 percent of the respondents agreed in a nationwide 2000 Pew survey that news magazines like *60 Minutes*, *20/20,* or *Dateline* help them to understand an issue (p. 146).

Graber's rhetoric points to a society that seems to be well informed on issues. This point will be discussed later in this analysis but for now, it will be important to look at some statistics agreeing with Graber's assertions. It has been stated that people who like the evening news seem on average to be more educated and well informed on both local, national, and international problems. Prior states:

> The percentage of Americans who say they follow network news regularly is about three to four times higher than the percentage of regular viewers of any particular talk show or entertainment news program. It is even more interesting to observe that the popularity of soft news, at least of Pew's selection of it, did not increase noticeably over time (p. 154).

In the above instance, it would seem people who follow news that adheres to a more serious content, would be more well informed on issues not dealing with news highlighting sensationalistic journalism. Patterson (2003) espouses this point when he says "that hard news consumers" (p. 140). In sum, individuals who are regular viewers of hard news tune into the news for its information purposes rather than its entertainment function. Prior (2003) backs this up when he asserts "people with a preference for news are unlikely to enjoy formats whose mission is to entertain, shock, and scare, as well as inform-unless they also happen to have a strong preference for entertainment" (p. 156).

In the above paragraphs, information presented on both soft and hard news shows the discursive frames of reference researchers attempt to construct when arguing which type of news is productive to their viewing audiences. As one can see, both groups attempt to provide an adroit argument showing the utility for their news choices. In the following section, I will discuss how the burglar alarm makes it impossible for news to discuss political events or issues from an intellectual frame of reference.

## THE SOUND OF MEDIOCRITY: THE BURGLAR ALARM'S IMPLICATIONS

Since this paper is dealing with the quality of political coverage in television broadcasting, it is probably important to note that quality political programming no longer exists in the 21st Century. I will make a broad statement and say it probably has never existed. There are some programs that don't pander to audience ratings. However, these shows are few in number if one truly analyzes true quality. According to Bennett (2003), he says, "What has happened to the news in the past twenty years is that it has shifted in the direction of soft news and sensationalism, resulting in the continual sounding burglar alarms on any number of issues—often just because they are shocking—and turning citizens off in the bargain" (p. 131). I concur with Bennett's observations. In fact, it seems even once serious news agencies are pandering to an audience that wants stories focusing on the lowest common denominator. For example, one

current story in the news is the problems facing Martha Stewart. During the *ABC Evening News*, the story was covered three times on the February 9-11 evening broadcasts. Possibly the argument can be made that it shows white-collar crimes. However, this is not Enron, it is Martha Stewart. Should this be a topic of importance to the American people?

Some researchers argue for this type of approach. Zaller (2003) "refers to it as the burglar alarm. The key idea is that news should provide information in the manner of attention catching burglar alarms about acute problems, rather than police patrols that pose no immediate problems." (p. 110). Zaller's definition is interesting for several reasons. First, there is no reason to argue for this new paradigm because the news currently follows this template. Second, I tend to agree with Zaller that too many irrelevant stories such as shark attacks and violence escalate social anxiety on topics that are irrelevant to the viewing audience. However, to me, the media already is involved in both of these functions. Bennett (2003) has his own unique observation of this problem when he asserts:

> This incessant ringing of alarms about dubious problems, unseemly scandals, and daily threats to health and safety discourages citizens from taking the press, politicians, and public life seriously. And the news, unlike the ideal burglar alarm in homes or businesses, sounds false alarms at an alarming rate (p. 131).

Even though I agree with Bennett's observations, it still seems media spectacles constructed by various agencies make some audience members yearn for news that stresses entertainment over information. The news can be looked upon in comparison to a shark looking for blood in the water. Sabato (1993) says a "feeding frenzy as the press coverage attending any political event or circumstance where a critical mass of journalists leap to cover the same embarrassing or scandalous subject and pursue it intensely, often excessively, and sometimes uncontrollably" (p. 53). Defining this as quality depends on the individual defining quality in the evening news. Individuals purporting to embrace either a hard or soft news format have binary opposite frames of reference on this important topic. Some define news quality as whether news provides a sufficiently rich and engaging ration of political information to make democracy work (Zaller, 2003). If one follows the current template of soft news makers, it would seem to one the needs of an educated public are being established for their viewing population. However, in opposition, Patterson (2003) asserts that "soft news and critical journalism are weakening the foundation of democracy by diminishing the public's information about public affairs and its information about public policy" (p. 2). Both of the above researchers seem to be in conflict with each other, but it is this disagreement that enables communication scholars to debate this important and relevant topic.

One thing is certain; there are many people who feel the burglar alarm/soft news approach is performing admirably in meeting the needs of the general public. It is said that one of the most important parts for assessing quality is it should provide the information citizens need to discharge their democratic responsibilities (Zaller, 2003). However, in opposition, some individual definitions of democracy are certainly open to interpretation. Perhaps the idea of an informed citizen is being defined in a post modern way in the 21st Century. An informed citizen would keep themselves suffi-

ciently informed so they could judge candidates and issues objectively. Scuudson's (1998) book *Good Citizen* focuses on the idea of the monitorial citizen.

From this perspective, the citizen would only look for stories requiring responses. In many ways, he is advocating for the individual to scan the headlines for the most important information. According to Scudson (1998):

> Picture parents watching small children at the community pool. They are not gathering information; they are keeping an eye on the scene. They look inactive, but they are poised for action if action is required. The monitorial citizen is not an absentee citizen but watchful, even while he or she is doing something else (p. 311).

This is an interesting scenario. However, it is troubling to me from both the perspective of the sender and receiver of the message. What is inferred in this message is that the citizen becomes passive in the process of actually participating in the news or of really understanding the most important news of the day. McManus (1992) says, "From an economic perspective, news stories which are of general interest and arouse emotional responses such as human interest stories are more likely to attract attention from the audience, although they may do little to help consumers make sense of current events" (p. 801). As a tool of pedagogy, it would seem the news and media outlets in general are more worried about ratings than quality of their broadcasts.

Bennett (2003) says, "News alarms can misrepresent the magnitude or the direction of public issues, creating impressions of crises or worsening conditions where no such conditions in fact exist" (p. 134). For instance, escalating crime in specific areas, overestimating shark attacks, or any other story focusing more on scare tactics than substantive information. The burglar alarm approach would seem to attract this type of story. Additionally, if the effect of soft news is restricted to the most entertaining stories of the soft news topics, it seems to me it would be hard to defend it on the grounds that it informs people about politics (Prior, 2003). These include the story of Monica Lewinsky interview and other types of stories that attempt to take a serious subject from an entertainment perspective therefore, negating some of the real persisting in our society. One of the paradoxes of a culture of fear is that serious problems remain widely ignored (Glassner, 1999.). Possibly, it is the cause of what Gerbner would define as the mean world syndrome. In sum, the more you view television the more you will believe we live in a more cruel place than actually exists. The above would certainly lend credence to a burglar alarm that needs to be activated in order to find the criminal and charge them for the crime. However, in the case of some stories covered by the media, the public should be informed whether the crime really needs to be told as an epidemic of large proportions or an anomaly of society.

Crime is a topic often discussed in the media. Certainly this topic has some validity. However, individuals asked in a national poll why they believe the country has a serious crime problem, 76 percent of people cited stories they had seen in the media. Only 22 percent cited personal experience (Baum, 2003). This is not negating the seriousness of crime; it is showing how the media may manipulate a problem that doesn't effect more than 76 percent of the population. Glassner (1999) says, "The streets of America are not more dangerous than a war zone, and the media should not convey they are"

(p. 26). Drug abuse in some cases also falls into the above category. Whatever the category,it seems at times the media escalates the problem. Therefore, what we are receiving as a public seems to be news outlets focused more on irrelevant stories and less on stories that impact the average American.

This section attempted to show how the burglar alarm approach is examined by discursive critics. One thing is for certain; the burglar alarm approach is now a part of the mainstream media. The only question to ask is whether this approach is sounding the right alarms? This question is up for interpretation.

## AUDIENCE REACTIONS TO THE NEWS

Gauging audience reactions to the news can be a cumbersome process. Some research purports audiences are satisfied with the news. However, in opposition, people who believe in a hard news format feel this is a dichotomy because they are responding to news featuring a soft news format. This section will attempt to highlight the research findings of audience perceptions to the news.

Some argue it is impossible for the general public to be interested in issues impacting their lives. (Graber, 2003). Therefore, Graber and other researchers call for soft news, which at least makes the audience attracted to current events. According to Graber (2003):

> By and large, television viewers are pleased with much of current television fare. A vast variety of news, talk, and public affairs programs, available at all hours of the day and night, contain the same information about current affairs and political problems that viewers mention when asked what news offerings they would like to see (p. 3).

In addition to the above quote, some feel devoid of the hardness or softness of the issue, television provides needed information for its viewing audience, that differs both economically and educationally. Shows such as *60 Minutes* or *20/20* or *Nightline* provides important information to their audience members. Three quarters (76 percent) of the public agreed in 2000 with the statement in a Pew Survey that news magazines like *60 Minutes, 20/20* or *Dateline* help me to really understand an issue (Pew, 2000). Some don't see the difference between hard and soft news. To them, news people watch, whether ideologically significant or not, provides information to a society with an aversion to learning. Some of this distaste may be based on both educational and class status. Therefore, from a soft news perspective, it would seem the vast majority of the stories in prime time news magazines feature economic and social news with an emphasis on stories relevant to average people's lives (Graber, 2003).

Most of the research I have included in this section argues most individuals are satisfied with information they receive from media outlets. However, it must be stated most of this information has been derived from media scholars who embrace a soft news perspective. According to Pew (2001):

> Sixty-one percent of viewers claim to be very or fairly satisfied with news offerings. Satisfaction levels with general programming have risen four percentage points since 1994, while dropping one percentage point for news programming, when

> 'very' and 'fairly' satisfied ratings are combined. When asked "How good of a job does the evening news do in summing up the events of the day?" Eighteen percent of the respondents in a 2000 nationwide poll gave it an "excellent" rating and 50 percent called it "good", while 21 percent said it was "only fair" and four percent labeled it "poor". Seven percent gave no rating.

From my own individual perspective, I would not concur with the above information based on my preferences for more sophisticated news. However, the above information should not be taken for granted. Some individuals actually enjoy the entertaining aspect of the news. According to Graber (2001):

> Average Americans profess to cherish intellectual news that presents sophisticated analysis but, at the same time, they want it to be simple, personalized, and entertaining, though not too blatantly fluffy. They want in-dept, contextuailized coverage as long as it can be crowded into snippets measured in seconds and the whole newscast does not delay them from other pursuits for more than thirty seconds (p. 22).

The above observation is troubling. It seems the people watching news want what they are already receiving. This to me is an unfortunate circumstance, even though people view these programs, they may be viewing these programs for information that only entertains and not informs. Graber argued earlier that we receive 2 hours and 25 minutes a week of news. However, if the news is delivered in the above template, it might be wise to surmise we are not receiving anything that we could define as quality news. Whatever the case, the audience seems satisfied.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Defining quality is a nebulous task for anyone studying the political content of television news. To answer the thesis statement of this paper, I find that quality news does not exist in the current marketplace. If quality is defined by the number of people who tune into a broadcast, then some networks feel they are delivering quality programming to their audience members. In most cases, quality from this perspective would involve news from a soft news frame of reference. Some have argued this old/ new burglar alarm approach is enhancing the learning of the viewing audience. But Baum (2003) asserts that in "contrast to hard news consumers, individuals who watch soft news shows do so primarily in search of entertainment, not enlightenment." (p. 187) Therefore, to me, the networks have and still maintain that an audience should be entertained and not informed. But maybe the critic is more disturbed than the everyday consumer.

I am not advocating quality programming does not exist. I believe it does in certain instances. I believe quantity exists. However, quality is now being distributed evenly in such news outlets ranging from the evening news to the *New York Times*, to *Entertainment Tonight*, to *Cops*. This is further articulated by Patterson (2003) when he asserts "Information is a vital part of the public's influence today. Every community needs a sizeable group of citizens who are reasonably informed about what government

and groups are doing." (P. 141).

In some instances, some people would follow the above quote by being informed on issues. However, some of the issues presented by the media seem more interested in stories dealing with areas of entertainment. Learning does not seem to be part of the equation.

Future communication scholars need to continue to study quality programming and its impact on informing the public about important political news and events. At present, the alarm continues to sound without any emergency worth the urgency of the alarm system. The sound is not only annoying, but it is sounded too often where an emergency never existed.

## WORKS CITED


Baum, M.A. (2003). Soft news and political knowledge: Evidence of sbsence or absenceof evidence? *Political Communication*, 20, 173-190.

Bennett, L. W. (2003). The burgular alarm that just keeps ringing: A response to Zaller. *Political Communication*, 20, 131-138.

Glassner, B. (1999). *The culture of fear: Why Americans are afraid of the wrong things*. New York: Basic Books.

Graber, D. A. (2003). The rocky road to new paradigms: Modernizing news and citizenship standrads. *Political Communication*, 20, 145-148.

Patterson, T. E. (2003). The search for a standard: Markets and media. *Political Communication*, 20, 139-143.

Lippman, W. (1965). *Public opinion*. New York: Free Press.

Prior, M. (2003). Any good news in soft news? The impact of soft news preference on political knowledge. *Political Communication*, 20, 149-171.

Sabato, L. (1993). *Feeding frenzy*. New York: Free Press. Schudson, M. (1998). *The good citizen*. New York: Free Press.

Zaller. J. (2003). A new standard of news quality: Burglar alarms for the monitorial citizen. *Political Communication,* 20, 109-130.

[ ARTICLE ]

# THE NEW RADIO/AUDIO DOCUMENTARY: TEACHING THE GENRE IN THE ERA OF *THIS AMERICAN LIFE.*

**David Berner**
Columbia College Chicago
Faculty – Radio Department
33 East Congress,
Chicago, IL 60605
Phone: 312-344-8159
Fax: 312-344-81
dberner@colum.edu

There is a new era being born, one steeped in traditions but daring enough to forge new approaches to an older genre. Radio documentary, or now more appropriately called audio documentary, finds itself in an exciting new place. It's being revived and redefined and it's essential to embrace the emerging new styles and models, and, most importantly, to teach them in our classrooms.

National Public Radio's *This American Life* is partially responsible for extending the definition of what a radio/audio documentary is and can be. The stories told on this program, and others born from its style, are certainly not your father's documentaries. Yes, the fundamentals are there: facts and intelligent opinion based on fact, strong research, and impeccable observation. But the new-era documentary has a broader definition, one born out of storytelling models and reflections on the human condition.

## MODELS OF NEW-ERA DOCUMENTARY

To embrace the new models, one must first accept the new documentary as a broad discipline; one that has expanded to allow for new stories, new discoveries and shared experiences. One of the best places to discover and study the new models and styles of documentary is on National Public Radio. But NPR can be studied even more deeply on a website dedicated to the exchange of audio features and documentaries – www.prx.org. The Public Radio Exchange (PRX) describes itself on its website as an "online marketplace for distribution, review, and licensing of public radio programming. The mission of PRX is to create more opportunities for diverse programming of exceptional quality, interest, and importance to reach more listeners." Within this broad description, one finds audio storytelling through traditional journalism-based documentary reporting, as well as stories told through the models of audio diary, journaling, reflective writing, narrative essay, and even memoir.

To illustrate this point, consider one undeniably powerful piece told through a reflective and personal journaling style:

*My Lobotomy*, by David Isay and Piya Kochlar. This piece is about one man's quest to uncover the hidden story behind the lobotomy he received as a 12-year old child. This story is told through the eyes and thoughts of the main character. Instead of an observer telling the story, the details are brought into focus through the very personal approach of allowing the central figure to be the narrator.

In the piece *Diary of a New York City Bike Messenger*, a 10-minute documentary about the day in the life of a busy messenger, the narrator again is the central figure and the approach is audio diary. There's a storytelling design used in this work that employs clear narrative elements – pacing, conflict, and even humor.

These are not the only examples of what might be labeled new documentary forms. There are many more. Do they always work effectively? No. But that's true of any audio form. The significant features are the approach and the style. Each deserves recognition and consideration. Certainly, the new forms should take nothing away from traditional approaches with hard journalistic frameworks. You will continue to find effective pieces in this style on NPR, the BBC, in the work of countless independent producers, and even on-line venues like Audible.com. And certainly the strong work being done at the Salt Institute in Maine and at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University is viable and important. But what the new forms allow are more voices to be heard, more perspectives, more stories from people who may not have thought about telling those stories, and from people intimidated by the discipline believing they had to have a hard journalism background and or education to produce good audio documentary.

## ANALYZING AND USING THE NEW MODELS IN THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM

It is impossible and irresponsible to get to the truth of a story, or what may be the near-truth, without deep research, observation, and study. These key concepts remain core to the documentary discipline, but in the new-era one must allow reflection and the art of storytelling to have their place and, more importantly, permit them to drive the core focus of the documentary.

An example of a documentary that mixes traditional research-based work with reflective work is entitled *Just Another Fish Story* by Molly Menschel, a graduate of the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies in Portland, Maine. The piece is about the town of Lubec, Maine and the story of a 60-ton finback whale that washed up onto the beach of this coastal town. The story is told through the voices of the townspeople; there is no traditional narrator, and most importantly, it is told through observation and reflection.

Audio diary and journaling approaches are also being used more often. An example of this style is a piece entitled *My Struggle with Obesity* by Czerina Patel with Samr Tayeh. This is a deeply personal story that resonates for so many people who struggle with body weight or any other health issue. The style is one that allows the listener to feel as if they are entering a world where they previously had not been permitted; where the personal thoughts of the principle character are being revealed without boundaries. These are the stories found below the skin, not the investigative or journalistic approaches used to undercover social injustices and folly, but rather the deep self contemplation of human successes, failures, triumphs and tragedies, that we all share and are both unique to the individual and universal to all of us.

In the radio documentary class at Columbia College Chicago, I have been challenging my students to become storytellers and producers of their own personal stories.

Most of these students are not coming from disciplined journalism backgrounds, and although I heavily emphasize skills of research, observation, and journalistic interviewing, these students have only basic backgrounds in these skills. I insist they use them, but I emphasize the art of reflection and self-awareness in their work. I want them to tell a story of their existence that will leave a vivid impression with listeners. I want them to self examine and find a personal story that can also become, for at least the time the piece is on the air, the listeners' story too. This approach, at first, is met with some resistance. Many times, students don't want to delve into personal stories. But through exercises in class and a lot of listening to and discussion of pieces using this style, the students become more comfortable and, many times, enthused about the possibilities of their stories. It's important the students feel comfortable in the classroom setting, or they will not dig deeply enough to make an impact with their audio pieces. I suggest the faculty member tell some of his own personal stories. Take the time to show them the process of revealing stories through scaffolding; start with a small personal story and build to more intimate ones.

Here's an example of how a Columbia College radio major moved a more traditional story into a story of authenticity.

A student wanted to tell the story on his personal preparation for running the Chicago Marathon. He wanted to take the listener through the grueling physical and mental work needed to prepare to run the 26-mile event. It was the beginning of a good idea, but I told him I needed him to go deeper.

"Why are you running this marathon?" I asked.

"I don't know," he said. "I just want to."

I told him that wasn't good enough. He needed to spend time considering that question. Why is he running? I told him to think hard about it and come back to me. After a week he returned and looked me in the eye.

"I know why I'm running," he said. "It's my father. He's had heart trouble. It scares me. I can't imagine losing my best friend, and frankly, I don't want the same health issues. I'm running, not just to be in better shape myself, but maybe I can inspire my father to work on his own health."

Now we had a story. I told him to investigate his feelings, to interview his father and to interview himself about those feelings. I told him to journal his thoughts. He was now on his way to a better story, more authentic and impactful story.

My work with the students and their classmates gave us stories about high school girls trying to find acceptance in the world of competitive figure skating, a suburban soccer mom who devastated her family with a serious gambling addiction, and the personal story of how an Arab-American family faced discrimination after 9-11. (Portions of these pieces can be heard in the accompanying audio file.)

These stories and others came in many forms, all outside the traditional documentary style. The themes were human and universal with strong impact and legitimate purpose.

## TOOLS FOR THE CLASSROOM

An invaluable addition to classroom instruction in this genre is the CD package *Audio Documentary 101: A Guided Listening Experience for the Classroom*. This is a three disc series produced by The Third Coast International Audio Festival and Chicago

Public Radio with funding from the Illinois Humanities Council. The series gives a wide range of examples demonstrating several documentary styles and approaches, plus there is a series of questions after each piece to help the instructor move the class through a discussion of techniques used to make good audio documentary.

Along with this CD series, I use a guided listening document. Each student is given one to help prepare them to listen to any documentary in or outside of class. It provides the student focus on certain aspects of documentary design by asking a series of questions:

1. What is the overwhelming feeling you are left with after listening to this documentary? Describe it.
2. What is the overwhelming production value or technique you recognize after listening to this documentary? Describe it.
3. How does the writing complement this documentary? How does the writing drive the piece? What narration or scripting do you particularly remember? Why?
4. Who was the main voice of the documentary? Was it one of the subjects of the piece or a traditional narrator? Describe what you liked or didn't like about the main storyteller of this documentary.

Also, in and outside class, students are asked to write short essays about the subjects of their documentary work. They are given prompts designed to help them discover deeper meaning and more authentic elements about their subject matter.

Here are some examples:

1. Write an essay describing to your mother or father, or another member of your family, and tell why it would be important for people to hear about that person.
2. Write a short essay describing what emotional elements your documentary may evoke.
3. Write a one-page essay about what you believe makes good audio, creates deep impressions and leaves behind strong memories. How do you accomplish this?
4. Write a one-page essay about a significant time in your childhood. What emotions did you feel, why do you still remember this, and what were the details surrounding this event/incident?

These prompts are meant to help the student move closer to real human experiences, authentic experiences, that are the heart of good documentary work.

Another employed in class is designed to prompt students to consider new ways of telling stories and unique ways to use sound. I ask the students to record three different ambient or natural sounds with their sound equipment, but I am careful not to tell them why I am asking them to do this. When they return to the classroom, I assign this task: Create a one-minute non-fiction audio story out of these three sounds. You may use writing and narration, but must also use all three sounds in the piece. No other sound elements can be used.

I find this exercise gives students an opportunity to be creative within a certain boundary and to take risks without consequences. I encourage them to analyze what they discovered in this exercise and to think about using techniques that were successful in the exercise and then attempt to incorporate those successes in their final documentary development.

For the first time in many years, audio/radio documentary has new life. The genre is important again, but only if we permit new and even unusual approaches to its style, presentation, and subject matter. Memorable radio documentary is about good stories that take the listener on a journey of experience. We must teach our students that stories can leave strong, lasting impressions and can come from almost anywhere, even from deep inside their own lives. This is not only the basis of good audio documentary, it is good teaching.

## AUDIO FOR REVIEW

All are selected segments from student written and produced short audio documentaries. They can be access at this Web site: http://www.columcast.com/blog/?page_id=19

1. "Gambling Mom" by Peter Kasper, senior, Columbia College Chicago
2. "Songwriting" by Katie Vinopal, senior, Columbia College Chicago
3. "Middle Eastern Delight" by Adam Abdula, senior, Columbia College Chicago

[ ARTICLE ]

# THE STATE OF ETHICS

**Christine Tatum**

Christine Tatum is national president of the Society of Professional Journalists and an assistant features editor at *The Denver Post*. She delivered these remarks to kick off the 2007 SPJ Convention and National Journalism Conference in Washington, D.C.

This time each year, about 1,000 journalists get together to discuss journalism ethics.

Yes, journalism ethics.

As humorous as that may sound to some, these news gatherers — attendees of the Society of Professional Journalists' annual national conference — are serious. SPJ, the nation's largest journalism-advocacy organization, is the guardian of an ethics code widely considered the news industry's gold standard.

The code is a guide aimed at helping journalists practice their trade ethically and responsibly. Those who honor it do so voluntarily. They believe trust in journalism starts with journalists' commitment to ethical news production, which is, above all, accurate, fair and independent of special interests.

The Society doesn't conduct hearings about code violations, much less issue sanctions. Its leaders believe everyone is qualified to interpret the code — not just journalists.

It was in the spirit of educating the public and helping journalists make more ethical decisions that SPJ's top ethicists — a committee composed of members representing a variety of media, journalism specialties and experience levels — reviewed ethical lapses that occurred since September 2006 and stirred some of the most passionate debate within the industry.

The committee grouped lapses into larger categories where journalists appear to have had the most trouble. For the first time, the committee is publicizing its findings. The categories, supported by specific examples, are listed here in no particular order and may be viewed fully at www.spj.org/ethics:

## POLITICAL ACTIVISM

A commendable MSNBC.com investigation revealed that at least 140 journalists contributed to political parties, movements or candidates. SPJ's ethics code states that journalists should "remain free of associations and activities that may compromise integrity or damage credibility." The code also encourages journalists to shun "… political involvement, public office and service in community organizations if they compromise journalistic integrity."

## JOURNALIST/SOURCE RELATIONSHIPS

Journalists must maintain a healthy distance from people they cover.

A former Telemundo anchorwoman reported about Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's marital difficulties without mentioning that she was dating him.

Getting too close to sources sorely compromises a journalist's ability to "act independently," as SPJ's code instructs.

## PLAGIARISM

It's unclear whether the number of violations of this fundamental of responsible journalism is on the rise — or if technology is making plagiarism easier to find. In a video segment on her blog, CBS News anchor Katie Couric read an essay after it was ripped off from The Wall Street Journal. A CBS producer wrote the item for Couric, who read the piece as if sharing her personal thoughts. That's worth questioning, too.

## NEWS/ADVERTISING RELATIONSHIPS

Times are tough economically for the news industry, and many organizations are responding with problematic news-advertising hybrids. For example, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* runs a business column under a Citizens Bank label. Though the paper says the bank won't have a say in the column's content, the appearance suggests otherwise. "Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived," the code states.

## FAIRNESS

Last year, SPJ awarded several journalists at the *Santa Barbara (Calif.) News-Press* an ethics award for resigning in protest of co-publisher Wendy McCaw's influence on news content. That battle reached a new low when the newspaper ran an unsigned front-page story implying that the paper's former editor downloaded child pornography on his office computer. The story fell far short of an airtight case and appeared to be bent on attacking the former editor more than serving readers with truth. "Test the accuracy of information from all sources, and exercise care to avoid inadvertent error," the code instructs.

## PHOTO MANIPULATION

After the shootings at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, news organizations may have thought they were doing the right thing by altering photos that appeared to show a wounded student's genitals. They weren't. The image organizations edited out was actually a tourniquet. Photographs should be respected as a form of truth. "Never distort the content of news photos or video," the code instructs. "Image enhancement for technical clarity is always permissible."

## THE BLUR OF NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT

NBC's *To Catch a Predator* series is fraught with ethical problems, such as the hiring of a crusading nonprofit group to set up stings. "Avoid … staged news events," the code states. It also urges journalists to "deny favored treatment to … special interests and resist their pressure to influence news coverage." While these problem areas are cause for concern, they are, thankfully, exceptions to the rule. Thousands of journalists make ethics a top concern, and we commend them.

# CREATING CANALS IN DIGITAL SANDBOXS: HOW DISTRIBUTION MODELS BEING DEVELOPED TODAY COULD IMPACT FUTURE MEDIA

Graduate Student Notes on Technology and Media

**Shane Tilton**,
Doctoral Student,
Ohio University
tiltons@ohio.edu

It is hard not to notice the rise of Apple over the past six years. The creation of the iPod ushered in a new era of portable media. In 2001, one could store and play 1,000 songs on a unit the size of a cassette tape. Today, one can store and play 150,000 songs or 150 hours of video on a unit slightly smaller than a cassette tape. Also, this unit can be hooked up to a television set and play the videos stored on the iPod[i]. However, what made the iPod a success and continues to help Apple sell iPods is the distribution model Apple uses for its media content. Many, if not all, of the iPods sold use iTunes as the program to download music from CDs to the computer, organize playlists and libraries on the computer and the iPod. More importantly, it has a built in music store, that increases the profitability of the iPod and brings in new revenue to Apple[ii]. This integrated system between the iPod and iTunes gives Apple a bridge between consumers and artists. Artists can sell their songs and videos on the main music and video pages and connect with their fans through a series of podcasts (digital audio recording distributed through a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) program, such as iTunes). Integrated distribution models not only impact Apple, but have and will continue to impact the recording industry and television networks.

According to Jeff Howe, a writer for Time Magazine, there are four key themes that dominate this mediated landscape: user-generated content (the media itself), folksonomy (how the media and users are organized), crowdsourcing (the workforce behind this new media) and the long tail model of business (all creators of media can find their niche in this new market). All of these themes factor into the grander picture of this new Web 2.0[iii]. Bigger media businesses seek out successes in the nexus between the entertainers, the toolmakers, and the gatherers on the World Wide Web. Where the iTunes/iPod model fits into these four key

themes is that Apple created a network that reflects all four of these themes. Podcasts and vodcasts (video podcasts) on iTunes Music Store are dominated by the amateur artists/educators/critics/experts/whomever, rather than a professional podcasters. Many of the podcasts are free. The folksonomy occurs in the form of a rating system of user-generated content and reviewing others content. Individual users within the system are identified with their review(s) and are judged on their review(s). The user-generated content on iTunes acts as a portfolio for the artist and those artists can post a link to their website, thus generating those artists work. Finally, due to the vast amount of subject matter that can be explored, experts rise from the ranks of users and create their own niche of material. This narrow-narrow casting allows creators of media to find their audience, no matter how small it is.

The creation of new distribution models must expand beyond traditional media content or even the new digital user-generated content; it must be sensitive of emerging trends in new media technologies. Web 2.0, along with the different pieces of software and hardware, allows for the creation of websites and software services dedicated to the exposure of the avant-garde. These websites explore new topics framed in the context of these new media sources. For example, interactive technologies can exist within the confines of Web 2.0 as long as those designing the website/distribution model understand the competencies of their audience[iv]. It must allow individual users a way of playing within the environment of the website. This is why most developers create a sandbox within the system as a way of teaching new users how to manipulate content. The sandbox is nothing more than a node on the system that allows user to make edits to a node without impacting the entire network[v].

The sandbox function is a learning tool the basic user to the network can use to manipulate their environment. Sandboxes represent the virtual starting point within the network. They are the canvas for users to generate new content. This also marks a change in the traditional approach to creating mediated content. The level of experience is not a barrier to create new media within the sandbox model. It is also for the advanced user as a safe place to experiment and push the limits of the network. It is through this experimentation that helps the user create new interactive and non-sequential media products. Once finished and posted onto the network, sandboxes can be linked with other finished projects. These linkages help inspire new users to create and explore media with the confines of the distribution model.

There will be two major issues that will define the discussion of media distribution models. The first is the conflict between the demands of consumers for free to low-cost media products and the need for artists to make money for their creative works. Napster and KaZaa could arguably be some of the first successful models of digital distribution. These models operated in favor of the consumer. Then the artists rallied for compensation. Thus, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) gained ground, that begat the rise of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) power, that begat rounds and rounds of lawsuits filled by lawyers representing the RIAA. This motion will reach a critical mass forcing lawmakers to step in and provide rights for the consumers. The pendulum of power will swing back and forth between these two ideals[iv].

The second issue is the role of users inside and outside the distribution model. The first group of users would be the artists creating content for the network. The second group is those actively consuming the media present on the network. It is the symbi-

otic relationship that maintains the network and the distribution of the content on the network. The last two groups are less connected to the newer distribution models. The third group would be those who feel information overload and choose to wean themselves away from the media and limit media consumption. Finally, there are those who are unconnected to the digital spectrum; either through a lack of access, a lack of motivation, a lack of skills and/or a lack of a sense of agency[vii]. It is this disconnect to network that displays key digital-divide issues. To be a success in this long tail business model, businesses must be flexible enough to handle the emerging media technologies while meeting the needs of those using traditional media. With these considerations, not only will the emerging technologies affect distribution models, distribution models will affect emerging technologies. The lesson learned from Apple demonstrates this circular relationship and will be the true impact of future media.

## ENDNOTES

[i] Apple Inc. (2007). "Apple – iPod + iTunes." Retrieved April 14, 2007 from the Apple website: http://www.apple.com/itunes/.

[ii] One could buy third party software to transfer songs from the computer to the iPod and back again, several companies exist that have created such software and posted it online.

[iii] Howe, Jeff. (2006, Dec 17). "Your Web, Your Way." Retrieved April 13, 2007 from the Time Magazine website: http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1570815,00.html

[iv] Tweney, Dylan. (2007, April 13). "Tim O'Reilly: Web 2.0 Is About Controlling Data." Retrieved April 14, 2007 from the Wired website: http://www.wired.com/techbiz/people/news/2007/04/timoreilly_0413

[v] Venugopalan, Vivek. (2005). "Developer Sandbox." Retrieved April 14, 2007 from The Linux Documentation Project website: http://www.tldp.org/REF/CVSBestPractices/html/section1-devsandbox.html

[vi] Bangeman, Eric. (2007, February 28). "RIAA slams FAIR USE Act." Retrieved April 12, 2007 from the Ars Technica website: http://arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20070228-8948.html

[vii] Dijk, Jan A G M. (2005). "The Deepening Divide: Inequality in the Information Society." Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA

# TURNING THE TABLES

The following was presented during the CCA Swap Shop Panel at the 2007 BEA Conference. Phil Bremen (pbremen@bsu.edu) from Ball State University made the presentation and offers the following outline and student comments.

1. Exercise title: Turning the Tables

2. Subject area: News (reporting, writing)

3. Description:
Each student speaks briefly about himself or herself to the entire class. Probing that student's revelations, the student seated next to him or her finds a story of interest to a general audience. Outside class, each student writes that story, then submits it to the instructor and to the student featured in that story.

4. Exercise purposes:
   a. Putting students on the receiving end of questions and the subsequent news story.
   b. Giving students supervised practice in finding and framing the story.

5. Learning objectives:
   a. Listening intently.
   b. Persisting tactfully. (People don't always volunteer all the facts you need.)
   c. Zeroing in on the facts that count. (Dull, incomplete information makes a dull, incomplete story.)
   d. Obtaining and using contact information to follow up after class.
   e. Experience answering questions as well as asking them. (Empathy matters.)
   f. Experience seeing your story told by someone else. (Especially when he or she gets facts wrong or misses your point.)
   g. Finding a compelling lead and supporting it.

5a. What I get out of it:
   a. A better understanding of what each student needs from the course.
   b. A sense of each student as three-dimensional.
   c. A relationship that's more collaborative and less didactic.

6. Where executed: In-class exercise; out-of-class follow-up, writing

7. Exercise directions:
   a. Students introduce themselves with six types of facts.
      1) Name.
      2) Age and year in school.

3) Hometown.
4) Academic emphasis.
5) Career goal.
6) Something distinctive about themselves that they don't mind sharing.

b. The student seated next to him or her follows up with a few questions to flesh out a story of interest to a general audience.

c. Other class members and the instructor may ask questions, too.

d. The instructor may guide the questioning, suggesting a focus.

e. If the interviewee discloses embarrassing information, the instructor suggests how to handle both that information and the interviewee's feelings.

f. Each interviewer arranges to contact his or her interviewee later to follow up.

g. Outside class, each interviewer wraps up his or her interview.

h. Then each student writes a short news story about his or her interviewee.

i. Finally, each student submits that story to both the interviewee and the instructor.

j. A follow-up assignment – for extra credit – asks each interviewee to evaluate the experience.

8. Grading.

a. Is it fair, interesting, clear, accurate?

b. In particular, has the writer found and presented a story that's relevant and engaging to a general audience?

9. Typical outcomes:

a. This is my most popular reporting assignment.

b. Students love to learn more about each other.

c. It focuses on their world. It's about them!

d. They discover new dimensions to people who had been with them in previous classes.

e. More importantly, they appreciate the hands-on practice in interviewing and focusing.

f. They experience an interview as a conversation, not an interrogation.

g. Most figure out the central point – taking care to do justice to the person in the story.

10. Tips for running the exercise:

a. Some students have more interesting stories to tell than their classmates do.

b. Both types require probing – to flesh out a strong story or just to find a marginal one.

c. Students get upset if time runs short by the time we get around to them.

d. So I try to hold most interviews to a time limit, determined by the size of the class.

11. Experience level of students:

a. Sophomores, juniors and seniors.
b. Either their first or second semester of reporting.

12. Time needed to run exercise: For 15-20 students, two full 75-minute class periods.

13. Facilities used: Any old room will do.

14. Equipment used:
a. A circular seating arrangement. (I sit, too, adding to the collegial feel.)
b. Dry-erase board listing the six points each student will cover in introduction.

15. Materials provided: Seats.

16. Student provided supplies/tools: Pen or pencil and paper.

17. Additional information:
a. Some stories are simply interesting:
1) A lone female in the male domain of video gaming.
2) A young woman resolving that she doesn't need a man to be complete – because her grandmother wouldn't even open a can for herself.
b. I urge students not to reveal any information that makes them uncomfortable.
c. But some disclosures are riveting. Each of these is from a different student:
1) Becoming shocked and saddened while volunteering at a shelter for victims of domestic violence. That disclosure prompted the next student to reveal:
2) Being beaten regularly by her mother for the first seven years of her life – and being emotionally abused, along with her siblings, ever since.
3) At the age of 20, getting a clean bill of health after battling cancer for years.
4) Defending a beloved brother who is gay – after their small town, and part of their family, turned against him.
5) Having two close friends who were raped and murdered, the first when my student was only 12 years old.
6) Being told by her teachers that she would never make it through middle school. That's because of a severe learning disability, which she had tried desperately to hide throughout her college career. Later she wrote this about this exercise:
"My whole life, I have looked at my learning disability as a horrible affliction. When I was reading the news story, I was surprised how that horrible affliction wasn't so horrible after all."
d. These make the best stories, of course.
e. They also provide great teachable moments.
1) Are you sure you're okay talking about this?
2) Are you sure you're okay with my reporting on this?
3) Polite people at these moments typically scramble to change the

subject.

4) But a good reporter follows the facts wherever they lead – with delicacy.

5) We don't have to report everything we know – but we can't report what we don't know.

6) A single story may have a lasting impact on the subject's life.

7) For the reporter, on the other hand, it's just a story.

8) This sensitivity is especially important when the subject is not a public figure.

f. After any troubling disclosure, I touch base one-on-one and recommend the university's free – and compassionate – counseling services. I also follow up later.

18. A few student responses:

"As a journalist, I am used to asking other people questions. When the tables were turned and it was me answering questions, I found that I felt awkward and uncomfortable."

"It really put me in other people's shoes. I have never really had a story done on me before."

"I can see how careful reporters need to be, because the whole time I read it, I was just hoping that my words weren't skewed and that the right message got across. I said some other things in my interview that may have been more pertinent to the story (than what was written)."

"I did not like the story written about me.… I know that some of the facts were backwards and, for a news story, facts have to be accurate."

"Once I read what ****** wrote about me…. I was a little disappointed, to be honest."

"Reading a story about me was a little overwhelming. Everything that she wrote about me was true…. The story reminded me of why I am here at Ball State and why I do what I do."

"It was a little weird to see my thoughts and quotes put together by someone else. I was a little worried to see how everything came out but it was put together very well."

"It was interesting to see how someone perceives what you say…."

"I learned to start building a focus while asking questions during an interview."

"This assignment taught me more about interviewing and where to focus my questions."

"I learned to go deeper when asking questions. You have to try and get some good details that the readers may be able to relate to."

"This assignment taught me how to be completely aware of the individual that I am interviewing. In order to get a complete and factual story I needed to use all of my senses. I had to watch *****'s body language…."

"I learned how to be sensitive to an interviewee while still getting the story."

"The students in the class made it very evident that each individual is different and each has many different layers, which may be pulled back to find both beauty and darkness."

## NAB/BEA ANNOUNCE FUTURE CONFERENCE DATES

| Year | NAB Show | BEA Show |
|---|---|---|
| 2008 | April 14-17 | April 16-19 |
| 2009 | April 20-23 | April 22-25 |
| 2010 | April 12-15 | April 14-17 |
| 2011 | April 11-14 | April 13-16 |
| 2012 | April 16-19 | April 18- 21 |
| 2013 | April 8-11 | April 10-13 |
| 2014 | April 7-10 | April 9-12 |
| 2015 | April 13-16 | April 15-18 |
| 2016 | April 18-21 | April 20-23 |
| 2017 | April 24-27 | April 26-29 |
| 2018 | April 9-12 | April 11-14 |
| 2019 | April 15-18 | April 17-20 |
| 2020 | April 20-23 | April 22-25 |

## BEA INTEREST DIVISIONS

BEA's interest divisions are a great opportunity to become an active member in the Association. Each division offers newsletters, paper competitions with cash awards and networking for research, curriculum and job opportunities. Leadership in the divisions provide visibility for your own work to other BEA members and to the electronic media industry. The following links take you to a information about each division and a listing of leadership you can contact if you would like more information.

Visit http://www.beaweb.org/divisions.html to see information on each division.

Interest division bylaws (requires PDF reader):

- Courses, Curricula and Administration
- Gender Issues
- History
- International
- Law and Policy
- Management and Sales
- Multicultural
- News
- Production, Aesthetics & Criticism
- Radio & Audio Media
- Research
- Student Media Advisors
- Two Year/Small College
- Writing

<< RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

## [ COMMITTEES & TASK FORCES ]

**Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication (ACEJMC)**
BEA Representatives
Joe Foote
Doug Boyd

**Convention Porgram Committee**
**2008 Convention Chair**
Stan LaMuth
**2009 Convention Chair**
Anthony Moretti
**Members**
Louise Benjamin, Festival Chair
Bob Avery, Publications Chair
Sam Sauls, Interest Divisions Rep
Scott Davis, Webmaster
Kim Zarkin, 2007 Convention Chair
Mark Tolstedt, Vice President for Academic Relations

**Distinguished Education Service Award (DESA) & Lifetime Member Committee**
Chair
Mark Tolstedt
Members
Dave Muscari
Max Utsler

**Committee on Scholarship (DSA)**
**Chair**
Bob Avery
**Vice chair**
Alan Rubin
**Members**
Donald Browne
Joseph Dominick
Susan Tyler Eastman
Don Godfrey

**Research Promotion**
**Chair**
Mark Tolstedt
**Members**
Steven Dick
Fritz Messere
Greg Newton

**Diversity Committee**
**Chair**
Lena Zhang
**Members**
Gary Corbitt
Greg Pitts

**Long Range Planning and Membership Committee**
**Chair**
Fritz Messere
**Members**
David Byland
Dave Muscari
Max Utsler

**Finance Committee**
**Chair**
Joe Bridges
**Members**
Greg Pitts
Mark Tolstedt
Glenda Williams
Lena Zhang

**Nominations Committee**
**Chair**
David Byland
**Members**
Greg Newton
Dex Allen

**Publications Committee**
**Members**
Robert Avery
**Members**
Glenda Balas
Allison Alexander
Paul Haridakis
Michael Keith
Rebecca Ann Lind
Joe Misiewicz

**Festival Committee**
**Chair**
Louise Benjamin

**Scholarship Committee**
**Chair**
Peter Orlik
**Members**
Marilou Johnson
Bill Parris
Marianne Barrett

**Council of Professionals**
**Chair**
Gary Corbitt

**Strategic Alliances Committee**
**Chair**
Joe Misiewicz
**Members**
Gary Corbitt

Dex Allen
Drew Barry
Erica Farber
Ric Harris

**District Conference Planning Committee**
**Chair**
Glenda Williams
**Members**
Lena Zhang
Sam Sauls
Gary Corbitt (ex-officio)

**Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC)**
**BEA Representatives**
Joe Foote
Doug Boyd

**Council of Communications Associations (CCA)**
Thomas Berg
Mark Tolstedt
Heather Birks

**Council of National Journalism Organizations**
Thomas Berg
Heather Birks
Mark Tolstedt
Steven Dick

**Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media**
Don Godfrey, Editor

**Journal of Radio Studies**
Doug Ferguson, Editor

**Feedback Electronic**
Joe Misiewicz, Editor

**BEA Membership Directory,**
Rebecca Ann Lind, Editor

## FEEDBACK INDEX

*Feedback's* index is now in Microsoft Word format. It is available by clicking on the link below:
http://www.beaweab.org/feedback/feedbackindex0907.doc

## BEA DIVISION WEB SITES

Course, Curricula and Administration Division: http://beaweb.org/divisions/cca/
Gender Issues Division: http://beaweb.org/divisions/genderissues/
International Division: http://beaweb.org/divisions/international/
Law and Policy Division: http://beaweb.org/divisions/lawpolicy/
Management and Sales Division: http://beaweb.org/divisions/managementsales/
Production, Aesthetics and Criticism Division: http://beaweb.org/divisions/pac/
Research Division: http://beaweb.org/divisions/research/
Two year/Small Colleges Division: http://beaweb.org/divisions/twoyearsmallcolleges/
Writing Division: http://www.marquette.edu/bea/write/

<< RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

# [ DIRECTORY ]

## [ STAFF, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD MEMBERS ]

### Staff

Broadcast Education Association
1771 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-2891
(202) 429-3935
Fax: (202) 775-2981

Heather Birks
Executive Director
HBirks@nab.org

Traci Bailey
Office Manager
TBailey@nab.org

J-D Boyle
Director of Sales and Marketing
jdboyle@nab.org

### 2007-2008 Board of Directors

Thomas Berg
President of Academic Relations
Middle Tennessee State University
Electronic Media Communication Department
MTSU P.O. Box X025
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
(615) 898-5867
Fax: (615) 898-5682
tberg@mtsu.edu

Mark Tolstedt
Vice President for Academic Relations
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Division of Communication
1101 Reserve Street
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 346-3920
Fax: (715) 346-3998
mtolsted@uwsp.edu

Dave Muscari
V.P. for Industry Relations
Electronic Media Professional
WFAA-TV/The Dallas Morning News
606 Young Street
Dallas, Texas 75202
(214) 977-6490
Fax: (214) 977-6590
dmuscari@wfaa.com

David Byland
Immediate Past President
Oklahoma Baptist University
Box 61177
500 West University Drive
Shawnee, OK 74801
(405) 878-2064
Fax: (405) 878-2064
david_byland@mail.okbu.edu

Joseph L. Bridges
Malone College
Communication Arts
515 25th Street, NW
Canton, OH 44709
(330) 471-8305
Fax: (330) 471-8478
jbridges@malone.edu

### 2007-2008 District Division Directors

Fritz J. Messere
District 1
(2nd year, 1st term)
(Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Western Europe including Britain)
SUNY Oswego
Communications Studies
2 Lanigan Hall
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 312-2357
Fax (315) 312-5658
messere@oswego.edu

Glenda Williams
District 2
(2nd year, 1st term)
(Alabama Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Caribbean and Africa)
The University of Alabama
4328 Phifer Hall
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487
(205) 348.8661
Fax (205) 348-5162
glenda.williams@ua.edu

Greg Newton
District 3
(1st year, 1st term)
(Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, DC, West

Virginia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe including Russia)
Ohio University

Gregory Pitts
District 4
(1st year, 1st term)
(Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Canada, and Scandinavia)
Bradley University
Department of Communications
1501 W. Bradley Avenue
Peoria, IL 61625
(309) 677.4116
gpitts@bradley.edu

Max Utsler
District 5
(2nd year, 1st term)
(Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, Mexico, Central America, South America and Australia)
William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications
2066 Dole Center
1000 Sunnyside Drive
Lawrence, KS 66045
(785) 864-0608
Fax: (785) 864-0614
ulster@ku.edu

Lena Zhang
District 6
(1st year, 2nd term)
(Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Asia and Pacific)
San Francisco State University
BECA Department, CA 133
1600 Holloway Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94132-4157
(415) 338-1780
lzhang@sfsu.edu

E. Ray Burton
District 7
(2nd year, 1st term)
(All two-year schools in the USA)
Long Beach City College
4901 E. Carson Street
Long Beach, CA 90808
(562) 938-4564
Fax (562) 938-4940
rburton@lbcc.edu

Sam Sauls
District 8
(1st year, 1st term)
(BEA Interest Divisions)
University of North Texas
3700 Cooper Branch West
Denton, TX 76209
(940) 565-3222
Fax (940) 369-7838
sauls@unt.edu

**2007-2007 Electronic Media Professionals**

Dax Allen
California Communications
P.O. Box 9077
Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067
califcom@pacbell.net

Erica Farber
Radio & Records
2049 Century Park East, Suite 4100
Los Angeles, CA 90067
(310) 788-1616
efarber@RadioAndRecords.com

Dave Muscari
WFAA-TV/The Dallas Morning News
606 Young Street
Dallas, Texas 75202
(214) 977-6490
Fax: (214) 977-6590
dmuscari@wfaa.com

Ric Harris
NBC Universal
30 Rockefeller Plaza
26th Floor
New York, NY 10112
eric.harris@nbcuni.com

**Ex-officio, Publications Committee Chair**
Robert K. Avery
University of Utah
Department of Communication
225 S. Central Campus Drive
Salt Lake City, UT 84112
801.581.5343
801.585.6255-Fax
rka@utah.edu

**Council of Professionals**
Gary Corbitt, Chair
WJXT-TV
4 Broadcast Place
Jacksonville, FL 32207
(904) 399-4000
GCorbitt@wjxt.com

**BEA Web Manager**
Scott Davis
Multimedia Editor,
The Star Press

## [ BROADCAST ASSOCIATIONS ]

Alaska Broadcasters Association
Arizona Broadcasters Association
California Broadcasters Association
Connecticut Broadcasters Association
Florida Association of Broadcasters, Inc.
Georgia Association of Broadcasters
Idaho Broadcasters Association
Illinois Broadcasters Association
Kansas Association of Broadcasters
Kentucky Broadcasters Association
Louisiana Association of Broadcasting
Maine Association of Broadcasters
Maryland Broadcasters Association
Massachusetts Broadcasters Association
Michigan Association of Broadcasters
Minnesota Broadcasters Association
Missouri Broadcasters Association
Nebraska Broadcasters Association
Nevada Broadcasters Association
New Hampshire Association of Broadcasters
New Jersey Broadcasters Association
New Mexico Broadcasters Association
New York Association of Broadcasters
North Carolina Association of Broadcasters
North Dakota Broadcasters Association
Ohio Association of Broadcasters
Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters
Oregon Association of Broadcasters
Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters
South Carolina Broadcasters Association
Tennessee Association of Broadcasters
Texas Association of Broadcasters
Utah Association of Broadcasters
Virginia Association Of Broadcasters
Washington State Association of Broadcasters
West Virginia Broadcasters Association
Wisconsin Broadcasters Association
Wyoming Association of Broadcasters

## [ MEDIA PUBLICATIONS ]

| | |
|---|---|
| Broadcasting & Cable | http://www.broadcastingcable.com/ |
| Cable Connect (Cable In the Clasroom) | http://www.ciconline.com/default.htm |
| Cablevision | http://www.reedtelevision.com/ |
| College Music Journal (CMJ) | http://www.cmj.com/ |
| Editor & Publisher | http://www.editorandpublisher.com/eandp/index.jsp |
| EQ Magazine | http://www.eqmag.com/ |
| Mix Magazine | http://www.mixonline.com/ |
| Multichannel News | http://www.multichannel.com/ |
| Production Weekly | http://www.productionweekly.com/site.html |
| Pro Sound News | http://www.prosoundnews.com/ |
| Radio & Records | http://www.radioandrecords.com/ |

# [ MEMBERS ]

## [ ASSOCIATE ]

Academy of TV Arts & Sciences Fndtn
Anton/Bauer, Inc.
Automated Data Systems
Broadcasting Development Fund / Program Distributor
Intercollegiate Broadcasting System
Lee University
Michaels Media, Inc
Montana Broadcasters Association
Nagle Hartray Architects
Ohio/Illinois Centers for Broadcasting
Post Newsweek Stations

Public Broadcasting Partners
Saga Communications
Texas Association of Broadcast Educators / Del Mar College
WGVU - TV

## [ INSTITUTIONS ]

Aims Community College
Alabama State University
Allegheny College
American Intercontinental University
American University
Appalachian State University
Arizona State University
Arkansas State University
Arkansas Tech University
Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale
Ashland University
Azusa Pacific University
Ball State University
Barry University
Baylor University
Belmont University
Bergen Community College
Bethany College
Bloomsburg University
Bob Jones University
Bossier Parish Community College
Boston University
Bournemouth University
Bradley University
Bridgewater State College
Brigham Young University
Brookdale Community College
Brooklyn College
Butler University
California State, Chico
California State University - Fresno
California State University at Fullerton
California State University at Northridge
California State University, Dominguez Hills
Cameron University
Cardiff University
Cayuga Community College
Cedarville University
Central Michigan University
Central Missouri State University
Chattahoochee Technical College
Christchurch Polytech Inst of Techn
City College of San Francisco
City University of New York
Clover Park Technical College / Radio Broadcasting
Columbia College at Chicago
Community College of Southern Nevada
Cosumnes River College
Cuesta College
Delaware State University
DePauw University
Drake University
Duquesne University
East Tennessee State University
Eastern Connecticut State University
Eastern Illinois University
Eastern Illinois University
Eastern Michigan University
Elizabethtown College
Elon University
Emerson College
Evangel University
Ferris State University
Fielding Graduate University
Finger Lakes Community College
Flagler College / Communication Department
Frostburg State University
Georgia College & State University
Georgia Southern University
Golden West College
Grambling State University
Green River Community College
Harding University
Henry Ford Community College
Howard Community College
Howard University
Hudson Valley Community College
Illinois State University
Indiana State University

Indiana University
International College of Broadcasting
Iowa Western Community College
Isothermal Community College
James Madison University
John Carroll University
John Carroll University
Kansas State University
Kent State University
Kingsborough Community College
Kutztown University
Lamar University
Long Island University
Louisiana State University
Lyndon State College
Madison Media Institute
Madonna University
Manchester College
Marist College
Marshall University
McNeese State University
Meridian Community College
Michigan State University
Middle Tennessee State University
Mississippi State University
Missouri Southern State University-Joplin
Missouri State University
Montclair State University
Montgomery College
Montgomery Community College
Morehead State University
Mt. Wachusett Community College
Mudra Institute of Communications
Murray State University
Muskingum College
Nanyang Technological University
New England School of Communication
Normandale Community College
North Central College
Northern Arizona University
Northern Illinois University
Northern Kentucky University
Northwestern College
Northwestern University
Northwestern University
Oglala Lakota College
Ohio Northern University
Ohio University
Oklahoma Baptist University
Oklahoma City University
Oklahoma State University
Onondaga Community College
Oral Roberts University
Otterbein College
Pacific Lutheran University
Palomar College
Parkland College
Pennsylvania State University
Piedmont College
Pittsburg State University
Plattsburgh State University of NY
Regent University
Richland College
Rogers State University
Roosevelt University
Rowan University
Saddleback College
Saint Xavier University
Salisbury University
Sam Houston State University
San Antonio College
San Diego State University / School of Theatre, Television & Film
San Francisco State University
San Jose State University
Santa Ana/Santiago Canyon College
Santa Monica Community College
Savannah State University
Scottsdale Community College
Sheridan College
Shippensburg University
Slippery Rock University
South Suburban College
Southeast Missouri State University
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Southern Utah University
St. Bonaventure University
St. Cloud State University
St. Francis College
St. John's University
St. Mary's University
Staffordshire University
Stephen F. Austin State University
Stephens College
SUNY - Brockport

SUNY - Oneonta
SUNY - Oswego
Suny Alfred WETD
Susquehanna University
Syracuse University
Temple Univ/Dept of Broadcasting, Telecom. & Mass Media
Texas Christian University
Texas State University - San Marcos
Texas Tech University
The American College of Greece / Communications
The University of Akron
Towson University
Towson University
Trinity University
Truman State University
Univeristy of Wisconsin at River Falls
University of Advancing Technology Education
University of Alabama
University of Arkansas
University of Central Florida
University of Central Oklahoma
University of Cincinnati
University of Delaware
University of Denver
University of Georgia
University of Hawaii, Manoa
University of Houston
University of Illinois, Springfield
University of Indianapolis
University of Iowa
University of Kansas / Willaim Allen White
University of Kent
University of Kentucky
University of La Verne
University of Louisiana, Lafayette
University of Maryland, College Park
University of Memphis
University of Miami
University of Minnesota
University of Missouri
University of Montana
University of Nebraska at Kearney
University of Nebraska at Omaha
University of Nebraska atLincoln
University of Nevada at Las Vegas
University of Nevada at Reno
University of North Carolina - Greensboro
University of North Carolina at Wilmington / Communication Studies
University of North Carolina Pembroke
University of North Dakota
University of North Texas
University of Northern Iowa
University of Oklahoma
University of Oklahoma
University of Oregon
University of San Francisco
University of South Carolina
University of South Dakota
University of Southern California
University of Southern Indiana
University of Southern Mississippi
University of St. Thomas
University of Tennessee - Martin
University of Tennessee at Chatanooga
University of Texas at Arlington
University of Texas at Austin
University of Texas at El Paso
University of the Incarnate Word
University of Toledo
University of Western Ontario / Faculty of Info & Media Studies
University of Wisconsin - Madison
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh
University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire
University of Wisconsin at Platteville
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Utah State University
Valdosta State University
Vincennes University
Virginia Polytechnical Institute & State University
Wake Forest University
Washington State Community College
Washington State University
Wayne State University
Western Illinois University
Westminster College
Winthrop University


Feedback
Broadcast Education Association
World Headquarters
1771 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
USA
http://www.beaweb.org

## 2007-07 BEA OFFICERS

President, Tom Berg, Middle Tennessee State University

V.P. Academic Relations, Mark Tolstedt, University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point

V.P. Industry Relations and Strategic Alliances, David Muscari, WFAA-TV/Dallas Norning News

Secretary-Treasurer,, Joe Bridges , Malone College

Immediate Past President, Dave Byland, Oklahoma Baptist University