

Caroline Dow—Teacher, Scholar and Journalist

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Clearly, we do not worship death. Once we die, the life we have lived becomes our memorial, our legacy. Sometimes others can do more for someone special: The Magazine Division is naming its Best Faculty Paper award after Caroline Dow.

Caroline belonged to 10 AEJMC divisions/interest groups. She served as head of the Magazine Division in the 1980s and as head of the Commission on the Status of Women in the 90s. She appeared annually of the AEJMC convention program for 25 years until her untimely death in 2004. In the Magazine Division, she served as research chair and as co-chair, secretary, awards chair, student contest chair, editor of “Magazine Matter in Depth,” representative to the Committee on Technology and Policy, Division representative to the Professional Freedom and Responsibility Standing Committee, and as Division Head. As program chair she developed a mini-plenary on inter-media competition and on magazine and newspaper fact-checking procedures. She served annually as a paper judge and regularly as moderator or discussant in convention paper sessions. She was a member of the AEJMC Publications Committee Magazine Development Task Force and a special committee to develop new AEJMC publications.

Before becoming an academic, Caroline, strong in her Quaker faith, went to Mississippi, for voting rights demonstrations, where a law enforcement official there beat her across the knees; her knees were a chronic problem from that time on. Her magazine experience included full-time work on Life magazine and head of the Detroit bureau of People magazine from its inception. As a journalist, she served as Senior Editor of *The Michigan Daily* at the University of Michigan and concurrently as a reporter for *The Detroit News* in the early 1960s. She was subsequently a reporter, stringer and photographer for *Women’s Wear Daily*, *The Detroit News* and *Time, Inc.*, including *Fortune* magazine. She was Chief of the *LIFE* Magazine Bureau in Detroit, then a stringer and photographer for People magazine until completing her Ph.D. in Mass Media at Michigan State University in 1985. One of her photographs was selected “for its photojournalistic merit” and is in the Detroit Institute of Arts collection.

Caroline Dow taught at Wayne State University, Michigan State University, Indiana University, the University of Evansville (tenured) and was Chair of the Communication Department at Flagler College. She taught magazine reporting courses at Flagler College, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, and at the University of Evansville, where she also taught Feature Writing. At Evansville she was internship coordinator, adviser to the student newspaper and yearbook publications, and founding adviser of the SPJ student chapter. She was Teacher of the Year two consecutive years at Evansville, and received the Sears Excellence in Teaching Award a third year. Her *Step-by-Step Guide to Mass Media Legal Research* (bound, 83 pp.) was used by journalism and political science students at Michigan State University, by mass

media law students at Indiana University School of Journalism in both Bloomington and Indianapolis, and mass communication students at the University of Evansville and at Flagler College. Her impact in the academic world can be measured also by her success as a college teacher, always earning the highest marks on student evaluations.

Dow's first formal contribution to scholarship was in 1978 with an AEJ Convention paper on "Privacy Law and Print Photojournalism," followed by another 15 juried papers, invited papers and journal articles. Her M.A. thesis was "The Detroit Workshop, 1949-1951: Robert Drew and the *LIFE* Photojournalism Essay Formula." Her Ph.D. dissertation was "Response of the Law to Visual Journalism, 1839-1978." Additionally, she prepared in legal brief form "A Proposal for Visual Reporting in Michigan Courts" at the request of Chief Justice Mary Coleman and presented to the Michigan Supreme Court. Her research on the effects of sound stress on women, in collaboration with husband Douglas Covert, former head of the Visual Communication committee, contributed to reform of international standards on the loudness of environmental sound in the workplace.

Caroline served as treasurer, vice president and then president of the Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame; and on the Jesse H. Neal Board of Judges for the American Business Press Editorial Achievement Awards for nine years.

She served on the Society of Professional Journalists Ethics Re-draft Committee. She received the Howard Dubin Award as member of the year, Society of Professional Journalists Region Five in 1990, and the Meritorious Service Award at the SPJ regional convention in 1996. She helped to rewrite the *SPJ Code of Ethics* and received two national awards from that organization. The second was her emphasis on service to others. Demonstrating this, students, not faculty, have formed a new service organization at Flagler College, where she was an administrator, and named it The Dow Advantage. She was held in such esteem by her students that, at her death, her students arranged—with the support of faculty—a memorial service on campus, the first ever held there.

Caroline was a strong person, strongly outspoken and direct. She never minced words, to be sure. Two personal influences appeared over and over again. One was the high ethical standards and personal integrity she demonstrated in herself and emphasized to her students. Yet, she was much more than that. Caroline Dow will be remembered by students, professional media colleagues and academic colleagues for her boundless enthusiasm for life, her ready laughter, and her smile. The stack of messages of sympathy and condolence grew to well over 300.