

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AEJMC MAGAZINE DIVISION

MAGAZINE MATTER

VOL 27 NO 1 ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION IN JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION SPRING 2007



Photo by John Freeman, Florida

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AEJMC D.C. 2007

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AEJMC MAGAZINE DIVISION

Thanks for a Fabulous 40th!

A Letter From Our Division Head

by Carol B. Schwalbe, Arizona State

At my first AEJMC convention—Kansas City in 2003, I knew hardly a soul. Someone had told me (erroneously) that only officers could attend the Magazine Division members meeting. I went anyway. A few soon-to-be friends also named Carol (Zuegner, Holstead, and Fletcher) welcomed me warmly. Before I knew it, I was the newsletter editor.

I hope each of you will extend a hand of friendship and invite someone new to join you at the members meeting on Friday, August 10.

AEJMC UPDATES

- Mark August 9 through 12 on your calendar for the annual AEJMC convention in Washington, D.C. The fun starts a day later than usual (Thursday instead of Wednesday) and ends a day later (Sunday instead of Saturday). Don't miss vice head Scott Fosdick's hilarious story about the chip auction on page 5 and the terrific panels on page 4.

- We hope you can come a day early (Wednesday, August 8) for the pre-conference workshop on Teaching and Working in a Multimedia World. You'll go home with inspiration as well as lessons you can use in the classroom. You'll hear from leaders in multimedia at the *Baltimore Sun*, *washingtonpost.com*, *National Geographic*, and NPR. Other featured speakers include Brian Storm, who started MediaStorm.org, and Seth Gitner, multimedia editor at *The Roanoke (Va.) Times*. Seth created a full video studio in his newsroom and ran the daily newscast online for about a year before the paper hired someone just to do that.

- Since we're meeting in Washington, we're co-sponsoring a panel about visual storytelling at *National Geographic* on Thursday, August 9. A photographer, picture editor, designer, and Web producer will show how a story is shot, edited, and laid out for the magazine, then adapted for the Web. This will be followed the next day with an off-site visit to *National Geographic* headquarters.

- Thanks to everyone who submitted ideas for increasing the visibility of our division at AEJMC. We'll probably serve light refreshments at the members meeting. Brian Thornton has some surprises in mind. Your ideas are welcome.

- Heartfelt thanks to Carol Holstead for expertly running the Student Magazine Contest for a dozen years. This year we added a new category called Features for human interest articles about food, nature, science, and trends.

- It costs more than \$500 a day to rent an LCD projector for the



convention, so someone ends up bringing one. A few divisions have bought their own projector. We could consider doing the same.

- Carol Fletcher has kindly offered to tape the Magazine Division panels (with permission from the participants). We can then podcast them from our website. We'd be one of the first divisions to do this.

RESEARCH UPDATES

- Boosting the quality of magazine research is an important goal for our division. Now that all AEJMC divisions are accepting electronic submissions of research papers, research chair Joe Bernt is looking forward to a healthy competition.

- Please encourage senior scholars to submit papers to the Magazine Division and our journal.

- Also encourage grad students. Our grad student liaisons—Susan Sivek (UT Austin)

and Erin Coyle (UNC Chapel Hill)—presented papers in San Francisco.

- At the members meeting we can talk about offering a cash award for the top faculty paper and top student paper.

- For the second year in a row, Rachel Davis Mersey (UNC Chapel Hill) did a fabulous job as program chair for the Southeast Colloquium. Rachel has accepted a post as assistant professor at Minnesota this fall.

JOURNAL UPDATES

- Editor Steve Thomsen and managing editor David Sumner have been working hard to make the *Journal of Magazine & New Media Research* a top site for academics and professionals by increasing its visibility and submission rates. We've discussed sending letters to graduate directors asking them to encourage their students to submit research papers for the Southeast Colloquium, AEJMC, and our journal.

- We could fast-track the top student papers (with consent) presented at AEJMC but subject them to the same peer review as other papers.

- Both Steve and David tried several times to get our journal listed in The Iowa Guide. Nothing happened, so I followed up with a call to editor Carolyn Dyer. She said the site has been dormant for a while because she has no support to maintain it. She'd planned to take it down, but users convinced her the material there was still helpful, even if somewhat outdated.

- We're co-sponsoring a panel about getting published in our jour-

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nal and other AEJMC journals besides Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly. That's scheduled for Saturday, August 11.

- David will distribute Post-its advertising our journal at AEJMC.
- David has kindly volunteered to write to all those who present papers about magazines at AEJMC. We'll encourage them to consider the Magazine Division for future paper submissions, invite them to submit to our journal, and ask them to join us if they're not members.

- Steve and I discussed the possibility of finding a publisher to adopt our journal. We ran the idea past our advisory board of past division heads. David Abrahamson, who's been involved in recruiting a publisher for a new scholarly journal called Literary Journalism Studies, pointed out that this is "a big step." We'd need to find a publisher whose list of journals seems aligned with what we have in mind. Possibilities include Erlbaum, Routledge, Sage, Blackwell, and Elsevier. If we decide to go ahead, we'd appoint a task force to investigate the costs and benefits and present their findings to the entire division.

- If we switch to a print journal, we'd want to make sure the content is also available online. As David Sumner pointed out, "Too much academic research disappears into the deep hole of obscure print journals that sit on library shelves and rarely gets seen again. I think the major advantage we have as an online journal is that anybody anywhere can look at our journal at almost any time. It doesn't matter to me that many academics see traditional print journals as more 'prestigious.' They are behind the times. I think online scholarly journals will continue to grow in popularity as people realize that the accessibility is a tremendous strength."

- We'll be adding a list of the editorial board members on the journal website.

WEBSITE UPDATES

- Thanks go to our wonderful webmaster, David Sumner, for revamping and updating the division website <<http://aejmcmagazine.bsu.edu>>.

- My advanced online journalism class put their Web design skills to work by redesigning the site. We'll post the best examples and let you vote to see if we want to adopt any of the ideas.

- We've revived the Magazine Division Syllabus Exchange on our website. Look there for syllabi for courses on feature writing, literary journalism, magazine design, editing, management, and production. If you'd like to share your syllabus, please send it to David <sumner@bsu.edu> as a Word document or PDF file. If your syllabus is already online, just send him the URL.

- To honor the division heads who've led us for the past 40 years, David added a link on the home page to a list of their names.

DIVISION UPDATES

- At the 2006 San Francisco convention, we initiated the Magazine Division Exchange for anyone interested in swapping student magazines. For an electronic version of the mailing list, please e-mail David Sumner <sumner@bsu.edu>.

- We established an advisory board of former division heads. Every now and again, we bounce ideas off them. They have been generous with their time and counsel. Thanks to all!

- I'd also like to thank Scott Fosdick, the Carols (Fletcher, Holstead, Zuegner), the Carolyns (Kitch, Lepre), the Davids (Abrahamson, Sumner), Ted Spiker, Joe Bernt, Dane Claussen, Rachel Davis Mersey, and everyone else who has made our 40th anniversary a year to remember. I'm proud to follow in the footsteps of those who have served the Magazine Division so splendidly over the past four decades.

I look forward to seeing each of you in D.C.!

Calling All Entries

Important updates about the Student Magazine Contest

by Carol Holstead, Kansas

The Student Magazine Contest deadline is coming Monday, May 7, a day I expect to receive 200 of the 240 entries I anticipate this year. We don't stop behaving like journalists when we become professors. We still like to just make our deadlines.

And that's fine with me because you do make the contest deadline most of the time.

What you don't often do so well is the following:

- Enter only five entries from your school in each category (except for the categories in Single Issue of an Ongoing Print magazine, where you can enter only ONE issue of each magazine your school produces per category. For example, here at the University of Kansas, my students produce a weekly magazine, Jayplay. We can enter one week's issue in Design, another week's issue in Editorial, and still another in General Excellence. If we did another title, we could enter that one, too.)

- Remember to delete the writer's name from article tear sheets.

- Remember to put blind title pages on each article with the category and target magazine (and by target magazine, I mean "Men's Health," not "men's magazine").

Entries for this year's Student Magazine Contest must be mailed to arrive at the contest headquarters by Monday, May 7. The call for entries and entry form are available on the Magazine Division website at <http://aejmcmagazine.bsu.edu/>. There is a \$10 per entry fee. Please read all the rules carefully.

If you have questions, write the Carol Holstead, the contest coordinator, at holstead@ku.edu.

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And Now... Your Starting Lineup

The Magazine Division's program for the 2007 convention in Washington, D.C.

WEDNESDAY, August 8

Teaching and Working in a Multimedia World
All day (1 - 10 pm, with break for dinner)
Pre-conference workshop; fee: \$35
Five-division collaboration

1 - 2:30 pm
Industry Leaders Confronting Convergence

2:45 - 4 pm
Practitioners and Pioneers in Media
Convergence

4:15 - 5:30 pm
Experience from On Campus: Multimedia
Reporting

7 - 8:15 pm
Finding Balance: Teaching Software vs. Critical
Thinking

8:30 - 10 pm
Resources for Teaching Multimedia Skills

Participants will go home with lessons they can use in their classes. This workshop will feature panelists from academia as well as stars from the profession—the founder of MediaStorm, a photo editor for the McClatchy-Tribune Washington Bureau, a senior photo editor from *National Geographic*, the founder of the independent photo agency Zuma Press, the managing editor of *washingtonpost.com*, an Emmy Award-winning videographer, a senior Web producer for *The Baltimore Sun*, and an online producer for NPR.

THURSDAY, August 9

8:15 - 9:45 am
Refereed Papers

10 - 11:30 am
Beyond the Boundaries: The New Journalism,
The New Passion, The New Globalism

11:45 am - 1:15 pm
Visual Storytelling at *National Geographic*
Magazine



Photo by John Freeman, Florida

1:15 - 3 pm
Behind the Scenes at *National Geographic*
Magazine: Creating and Saving an American
Icon

3:15 - 4:45 pm
Experiential Learning
Mini-plenary

5 - 6:30 pm
Images of War

FRIDAY, August 10

8:15 - 9:45 am
Visit to *National Geographic* Magazine, Off-site

11:45 am - 1:15 pm
Teaching Diversity Excellence: Best Practices in
Skills & Theory Courses

5 - 6:30 pm
Refereed Papers

6:45 - 8:15 pm
Magazine Division Members Meeting/Social

8:30 - 9:45 pm (or until the beer runs out)
Magazine Division Officers Meeting
Off-site

SATURDAY, August 11

8:15 - 9:45 am
Refereed Papers

1:45 - 3:15 pm
Beyond J&MC Quarterly: Getting published in
smaller journals

3:30 - 5 pm
What do today's print readers want?

SUNDAY, August 12

11:45 am - 1:15 pm
Refereed Papers

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Chips Ahoy! *How your division grabbed the best panel times*

by Scott Fosdick, San José State
Program Chair, Magazine Division

The Magazine Division's final chip zinged through the stale air of the New Orleans Sheraton, propelled by the middle digit of the vice head and program chair, yours truly, signaling the end of our quest for the best panels at the best times in Washington, D.C., this August. Division Head Carol Schwalbe and her lieutenant had stormed the Big Easy full of panel ideas generated by members in a year when the Magazine Division would labor under a rotating "chip reduction" imposed by the admittance of new divisions and interest groups needing conference slots.

Six weeks of looking for co-sponsors had culminated the night before in a sugar-induced frenzy of deal making (there was an open dessert bar) on Day One of AEJMC's mid-year planning meeting. Thanks to the brainpower of you, the most savvy division in the land, we had far more panel ideas than could be accommodated. But by working with other divisions, merging similar panels, and engineering an ambitious pre-convention workshop, many ideas will see the light of day (or of fluorescent hotel dungeons) come August.

Time slots are determined by a chip auction in which each division and interest group takes turns picking a time slot and announcing the panel for that slot. At the beginning of the battle royale, heads and vice heads sit at tables formed into a square around an expanse of faux-Oriental carpet. In the middle of the carpet sits a shining silver punch bowl, quite empty. It remains mostly empty as program chairs, having announced their latest panels, fling chips toward the bowl. And miss.

And miss and miss and miss. Hundreds of chips fly, and three, perhaps four, find their way into the bowl. The first to enter gets there by way of a lucky bounce off the carpet. Eventually a second swirls around the rim and in. There is an unspoken and completely daft notion that if only one could land a chip squarely in the center of the bowl, and stick the landing, that would ensure that this, finally, would be the perfect convention for the lucky division.

Our division had indeed been remarkable lucky this time, despite the reduction from seven to six chips that happens to each group every three years. The content if not the specifics of a few of our panels found a home in a pre-conference workshop on "Teaching and

Working in a Multimedia World," co-sponsored by four other divisions. Three other divisions benefited from our early first choice when we reserved a mini-plenary on "The Community as a Teaching Resource." We had managed to schedule a research session just before our members meeting, in the same room, in hopes of increasing attendance at both, and in collaboration with Media Management & Economics had scheduled two back-to-back panels in prime time (also in the same room). With few exceptions, most other panels found their ideal timeslots with remarkable ease.

So out of sheer relief and a lagniappe of whimsy, your faithful servant felt that our final chip, a special blue one saved for this moment, deserved a better fate than the previous five that had been hurled willy-nilly like slop at swine. With the precision of an artillery officer



Master chip tosser Scott Fosdick and Carol Schwalbe at the programming auction.

aiming to pierce a machine gun nest on the bluffs of Normandy, the Program Chair of the Magazine Division placed the cerulean disk on the slick surface of his officer's binder, elevated it to 45 degrees, and flicked mightily, carom style, while shrieking in his best Cajun howl, "Laissez les bonne temps roulez!"

And the good times did indeed roll: Up and away flew the circle of blue, and with it the hopes of a great division for a great convention. In a moment it was over. Down it came, squarely in the middle of the mighty silver grail—no wobble, no bounce, no hope of resting anywhere but smack dab in the middle.

The room exploded with cheers and amazed laughter. Everyone knew: This, the 40th year of the Magazine Division, would be its best yet. It is ordained.

Why I Attend AEJMC

by David E. Sumner, Ball State

Last year I wasn't planning to go to the AEJMC Convention in San Francisco since I had not submitted a paper or planned any other formal participation. But in June I decided to go anyway. Even though I've been to San Francisco before, it turned out to be more fun than I ever expected. I made unplanned visits to a redwood forest, Sausalito, and Chinatown. This convention had a record attendance of more than 2,300 journalism professors and media professionals.

ESSAY

My department's travel allowance allows a maximum of \$500 for AEJMC conventions, and you know how far that goes in San Francisco or Washington, D.C. I've been tenured for ten years and a full professor for seven years. So I don't have to go so I can put it on my vita.

But I keep going anyway. I've only missed one AEJMC convention since 1991. I enjoy the conventions and always come back with dozens of new ideas. I wish to share with Magazine Division colleagues why I attend AEJMC conventions and why you should, too.

1 New classroom ideas.

The teaching panel discussions, the "great ideas for teaching" presentations, and the interaction with colleagues never fails to give me some new ideas to put to work in the classroom. I am the only full-time faculty member who teaches magazine courses in a journalism department with 30 faculty members. Therefore, there's no one else in my department with whom I can swap ideas or seek advice in my field of expertise. That's one reason I like to visit with Magazine Division colleagues at the convention.

2 New research ideas.

The research panel discussions, the papers, and the interaction with colleagues keeps me up-to-date on what's going on in my field of research and, likewise, never fails to give me new tips and leads on research ideas.

3 New books.

You can't innovate in the classroom or in research unless you know what's being written in our field. I want my students to have the best textbooks available that have the most up-to-date information. Since I write textbooks, I keep up with the competitors and look for new book ideas when perusing the marketplace. I make several trips through the publishers' book displays to make sure I've seen every title and browsed every table of contents of possible interest.

4 New professional trends and issues.

The plenary speakers, panel participants, and dinner conversations all contribute new information and help me know what trends and issues today's journalists are debating. I want to

know what's going on, and my students want to know, too.

5 New friends.

Unless you stay in your room most of the time, you will engage in meaningful conversations with at least a dozen new friends. You will make contacts who can help you with teaching resources, freelance writing, scholarly writing, job leads, and professional networking for students. Don't forget to take your business cards when you pack your luggage.

6 New places.

You will have fun. The only convention I didn't attend was in Miami Beach. Having grown up in Florida, I'm not really a Miami Beach fan. The state has much nicer beaches on both coasts. One of my favorite locations was Toronto. While the location isn't the main reason to attend or not attend, it's probably a factor in everyone's decision. While some cities in which the convention has been held have bored me, I've never been bored by the convention itself.

7 New jobs.

It's time to confess; I browse through the "jobs available" notebook at the AEJMC Placement Booth at every convention. Job listings are always here before they are published on the AEJMC website, newsletter, or *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. At the convention last year, I interviewed for a department chair position, which I did not pursue. While I'm not really "looking," it's always fun to see just what's out there.

I am always bemused by the "fly-ins." These people fly in one day, present a paper, and fly out the next day. They must feel that the only reason to attend an AEJMC convention is to put another line on their vita. I feel pity for them because that's the most expensive line they'll ever type into their vita. And then there are the "camp-ins" who come for a few years until they get tenure or the promotion they want. They also miss out on a lot and haven't yet learned the joy of mentoring and passing down to others what they've learned.

Now I am trying to concoct a cleverly worded conclusion. Be-in? Stay-in? Remain-in? Be involved; stay involved; remain involved? Definitely. But don't do it for your department, the Magazine Division, or anyone else. Do it for yourself.

David E. Sumner is webmaster for the Magazine Division and a professor of journalism at Ball State University. He is the co-author of Feature and Magazine Writing: Action, Angle and Anecdotes (Blackwell, 2005) and Magazines: A Complete Guide to the Industry (Peter Lang Publishing, 2006).

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Southern Progress

*Here's to another successful
Southeast Colloquium*

by Rachel Davis Mersey, North Carolina

There is no doubt you are in New Orleans when Mardi Gras beads hold your conference nametag, and this year the Big Easy and Tulane University played host to the 32nd Southeast Colloquium. At a hotel in the French Quarter, members of the Magazine Division gathered with five other divisions—History, Open, Law, Newspaper, and Radio-TV—over budding research and beignets.

Research presented in the two Magazine Division panels represented a wide range of work from professors and graduate students from four universities. A special “king cake” congratulations to Mai Tang of Ohio University. Mai won the division’s best paper award with “Friend or Foe? Extramedia Influences on *Newsweek's* Post-war Coverage of Vietnam, 1976-2005.” Her work, which traced the historical presentation of Vietnam following the end of the war, brought to light many modern-day lessons.

It coupled well with the colloquium’s moving keynote address. James O’Byrne, features editor at *The Times-Picayune*, spoke to a new mantra in the rebounding city: “living with purpose.” O’Byrne, a reporter and editor on the teams that won Pulitzer Prizes in 2006 for public service and breaking news reporting, was one the first to discover the devastating impact of the unexpected levee breach that ultimately flooded 80 percent of the city. He supervised the construction of a satellite newsroom following the flood and spoke to the power of a local newspaper

regardless of this displacement. New Orleans is no doubt still a recovering city. O’Byrne confirmed this truth while warmly welcoming the return of visitors, such as those from the colloquium.

The visitors, too, thank New Orleans. Thank you to colloquium co-coordinators Mary Blue, Tulane University, and Nancy Dupont, University of Mississippi.

Thank you also to the judges, discussants, and moderators who gave of their time.

Judges: David Abrahamson, Northwestern University; Joe Bernt, Ohio University; Claudia Caruana, Long Island University; Carol Fletcher, Hofstra University; Rhonda Gibson, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Dennis Hale, Bowling Green State University; Donna Hale, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; Carolyn Kitch, Temple University; Teresa Mastin, Michigan State University; Quint Randle, Brigham Young University; and Carol Zuegner, Creighton University

Moderators: Kathy Bradshaw, Bowling Green State University; and Erin Coyle, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Discussants: Joe Bernt, Ohio University; and David R. Davies, University of Southern Mississippi

The 33rd Southeast Colloquium is scheduled for March 6-8, 2008, at Auburn University in Alabama. Please consider joining the Magazine Division for another sure-to-be-successful event by submitting a paper or serving as a volunteer.

Recruiting graduate students

*by Sue Westcott Alessandri, Syracuse
AEJMC Membership Committee member*

As a Ph.D. student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I found that it was pretty much expected that we would join AEJMC. From almost the first day we arrived on campus, my cohort and I started hearing about “presenting at AEJ.” I believe this culture helped set the proper expectations for graduate students who would one day be faculty.

AEJMC is an integral part of a graduate student’s socialization into academia. Yet while it is in their best interest to join the organization as early as possible, some students might hesitate to take that step, whether it’s because they don’t know the organization exists or because they’re not sure their research will fit in. A nudge from a trusted faculty member might be just what they need.

Here are some proven ways that you can get graduate students involved with AEJMC

early in their academic careers:

1. In your classes, require a research paper that can be submitted to a regional or an annual AEJMC conference. Set due dates with the AEJMC deadlines in mind, so timing isn’t a factor.

2. Partner with graduate students to conduct research beyond coursework to be presented at AEJMC-sponsored conferences. This research adds credibility by linking students’ work with nationally known scholars.

3. Walk your advisees around at an AEJMC conference to introduce students to the people who might one day hire them. On a personal level, introducing graduate students to established faculty members helps to make students feel more comfortable as scholars – rather than merely as students.

4. Encourage your advisees to get involved in a division related to their research interests. This helps graduate students realize that they are accomplished enough to take part in the organization.



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LAUNCH PAD

5 keys to a successful magazine start-up

by David E. Sumner, Ball State

Ruby Gottlieb, a senior vice president for Horizon Media, said she's seen lots of magazine ideas that don't really have an audience. For example, she cited Smart TV, a failed magazine geared toward the "educated, intellectual television viewer." She told *Folio*, "That's like an oxymoron: How many people are there out there who really could be classified as 'smart' TV viewers?"

Many who teach magazine editing or publishing courses require students to develop a prototype and business plan for a new magazine launch. The business plan requires students to prove that an audience and marketplace niche exists for the concept that they propose. Inevitably students choose a concept because it's focused around their personal interests or "there's no other magazine like this in the marketplace." Over years of teaching this course, I've developed five criteria that are necessary for a successful launch. Student business plans must demonstrate that their idea meets these criteria.

1. The concept must meet a need in the magazine marketplace

It's good to love your subject matter, but narcissism will not succeed in the economics of publishing. "A magazine exists because people have an interest. If that interest is strong enough — and a magazine satisfies it — the magazine will be profitable," said magazine expert James B. Kobak.

For example, can you think of a magazine aimed at helping the newly divorced with the difficulties they face after going through a divorce? When millions of Americans experience divorce every year, you would think a magazine was needed to serve this population, but there really are none.

It's not hard to understand why. Practical problems resulting from divorce may last less than a year. Therefore, a publisher has little chance to acquire thousands of long-term subscribers. Nobody wants to read about divorce for the rest of her life. Most people read magazines for pleasure. Divorce is a painful and unpleasant topic. People want to get through it and get on with their lives. They don't want to read articles reminding them month after month that their marriage has failed.

College students developing ideas for new magazine concepts often focus on entertainment, music, or travel magazines aimed at students. Yet magazines aimed solely at college students also face difficulty succeeding. College students are a transient audience with a constantly changing composition. Not only do students frequently change their residence, their interests change quickly once they graduate and face new challenges. Therefore, a publisher faces difficulty finding the high percentage of long-term subscribers that are necessary for any magazine to succeed.

2. Simple and easily understood concept

Second, the concept for a magazine must be succinct and simple. You must be able to state what your magazine is all about in a few words. Successful publishers call it the "lighted match test." If you can't explain your concept in the time it takes for a match to burn and go out, then you don't have a clear concept.

One of the most successful launches of the last 25 years was Rodale's *Men's Health*, which has a simple concept and clear target audience. Ted Spiker, former articles editor, explained its success: "I think it talks to real men—it gives them good, useful, surprising advice and insights into their world. And it does it with a tone and a voice that you trust, that you laugh at, and that's not afraid to kick you around if you need it. A big brother, in a way, that knows what you need to know."

Why is simplicity so essential? The answer is marketing—to customers, to advertisers, and to investors. New magazine entrepreneurs have to sell their concept to all three sets of customers. If you don't immediately grab their attention with an innovative concept, or if it requires a complex explanation, then you're likely to lose them before you ever get their money.

3. Sustainable content

Third, sustainable content means that the field of interest served by the magazine generates constantly evolving news, developments, and innovations. In other words, it must create a constant source of material for news and feature articles. If the potential editorial material is new—but not constantly evolving—then perhaps a book is a better idea than a magazine.

4. Clearly defined audience with mutual interests

Fourth, the magazine entrepreneur must clearly identify the group of people who are interested in the particular content. Not only must the publisher identify it, he or she must prove to advertisers and investors the size and demographic characteristics of this group. It's not enough to say "many people are interested in such-and-such." The response from direct mail tests and other market research must yield the precise size and characteristics of this audience.

The entrepreneur must also prove that this audience has mutual interests and values that the magazine will reflect. This requirement is why so few magazines are targeted at residents of particular states. While every state has a clearly defined population, people in most states have such diverse interests and values that no magazine can successfully serve all of them. The best-known exception is *Texas Monthly*, which has achieved success perhaps because of the state's unique cultural identity.

5. Advertisers with products aimed at those interests

Finally, common interests and values in an audience create a need for products and services to meet their needs. Some generic consumer products do serve a wide range of interests—automobiles, household products, health and beauty products, etc. But a small, niche magazine has little hope of attracting advertising from producers of these products, such as General Motors, Procter & Gamble, or Johnson & Johnson.

The best hope for a new publisher is finding a small market niche that advertisers interested in that niche have difficulty reaching through existing media outlets. For example, widget manufacturers can always advertise on television or in local newspapers. But in doing so, they will pay a lot of money to reach a lot of people who have no interest in widgets. They can reach thousands of widget enthusiasts for a much lower cost by advertising in a magazine devoted to these devices.

Adapted from Magazines: A Complete Guide to the Industry (Peter Lang Publishing, 2006) by David E. Sumner and Shirrel Rhoades.

Eye Love Writing

This writing tip won a 2006 GIFT award

by Renee Martin-Kratzer, Florida

Many of my feature writing students have mastered the basic interviewing and reporting skills before they step into my classroom. Their stories are filled with essential information, but they rarely include the little descriptive details that can elevate a bland story into a lively read.

The following game lets students practice writing vivid descriptions. I like to do this activity before the profile assignment so that the students will be inspired to capture details about a subject's environment.

- Following a brief lecture on descriptive writing techniques, students are instructed to explore campus and find a favorite building, location, sign, room, statue, etc.

- Students have 30 minutes to observe their chosen location and capture the setting in words. They are not allowed to name the setting, so they have to rely on using imagery instead of labeling the scene. They are instructed to use such vivid description that

everyone in the class will be able to identify the scene.

TEACHING TIPS

- After the students return to the classroom, they take turns reading their descriptions aloud. The rest of the class then tries to guess what scene is being described.

- As the game progresses, the goal is to help students understand that the scenes with the best descriptions are

easier to guess. Being able to correctly identify the scene means the writer was more successful in making us feel like we were at the location. The students begin to see that a location is much more than simply a name.

- The discussion then broadens to how they can use these skills in their feature stories. A few examples from award-winning stories are shared to further make the point.

Students enjoy the guessing game, and it livens up the classroom dynamic. Additional benefits are that it gives them practice at writing on deadline and lets them share their writing with peers in a non-threatening situation.

MEMBER NEWS & NOTES

Sam Riley, Virginia Tech, has authored a two-volume work coming out this spring with Greenwood Press. Its title is "African Americans in the Media Today: An Encyclopedia." He has written about individuals who work or very recently worked in the nation's media. Quite a few magazine people are included, such as Monroe Anderson (Savoy), Lerone Bennett (Ebony), Kyle Donovan (NV), Alfred Edmond (Black Enterprise), Earl Graves (Black Enterprise), Hermene Hartman (N'DIGO), John Johnson and Linda Johnson Rice (Johnson Publishing Co.), Edward Lewis (Essence Communications), Marcus Mabry (Newsweek), Wilbert Rideau (Angolite), Terence Samuel (U.S. News & World Report), Clarence O. Smith (Essence Communications), Susan Taylor (Essence), Mark Whitaker (Newsweek), Jack E. White (Time), and Rober Wilkins (The Crisis). Others appearing in the books have worked for magazines but are best known for other media work.

David Sumner, Ball State, was one of four winners in a contest co-sponsored by *Time* magazine and Media Industry Newsletter to predict *Time's* "Person of the Year." His prize will be a framed copy of his favorite *Time* magazine cover, any issue since it started in 1923. The Dec. 25 issue had a mirror on the cover, and the person of the year was "YOU." It was all about how the Internet, especially sites like Google, Youtube, Myspace, etc., has empowered each of us to become "publishers" and share our lives with the world through text, photos, and videos "ad nauseum."

THE JOURNAL OF MAGAZINE AND NEW MEDIA RESEARCH

The *Journal of Magazine and New Media Research* is a biannual electronic journal published by the Magazine Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. The focus of the journal is the promotion and publication of research dealing with magazines and new media and the pedagogy related to those two areas. The journal publishes research reports and interpretive articles refereed by individuals on the editorial board. The journal also prints opinion pieces and critical reviews of books and teaching materials that deal with the field of magazines and new media. Our acceptance rate is approximately 35 percent.

This journal is interested in articles that explore the fields of magazines and new media. All areas of inquiry and methodologies are welcome. Contributions should add new knowledge, challenge current opinion, or inform the readership about scholarship and research that would not otherwise be known by communication specialists. The editors and the journal's Editorial Board make every effort to review manuscripts thoroughly and promptly. The process typically takes one month from the date of the first reading. Manuscripts that are judged to be outside the journal's scope are returned immediately by the editors.

Authors should submit four copies of each manuscript. The journal can accommodate monograph-length manuscripts, although articles between 2,000 and 5,000 words are preferred. A 100-word abstract should accompany all manuscripts. Submit manuscripts to either the editor or managing editor:

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AEJMC MAGAZINE DIVISION

Long Live Mags!

Someone recently posted a message on the JHistory discussion board, saying that magazines were so boring to research. The division's Brian Thornton says, "I got outraged, as you can tell." His responding post:

>>I am so happy some people in our little group remembered the magazine division.

>>Yes, Virginia, there is a magazine division in AEJMC.

>>As a former magazine division head, I am here to attest the group exists.

>>And does great work.

>>Clap your hands if you believe.

>>Every year at the convention the magazine division presents some of the most exciting papers.

>>But the mag division is like the dearly departed Rodney Dangerfield - we get no respect.

>>Please go to the magazine division website and check out the newsletter and the on-line peer-reviewed scholarly journal.

>>There are many fascinating studies there of a wide variety of magazines from Life to Playboy to Popular Mechanics and everything in between.

>>I must take offense at the suggestion that magazines are boring.

>>That kind of a sweeping statement is akin to saying TV is boring.

>>Yes, you can find boring, stupid things on TV - such as American Idol.

>>But there is also the Jim Lehrer News Hour - and Frontline with its great new series about journalism.

>>And then of course there is that great sociological study of the California surf culture - the O.C.

>>Let's all have a moment of silence to mark the passing tonight of this intellectual giant. Anyway, I digress.

>>Magazines reflect nearly every interest under the sun. To say magazines are boring is to say humanity is boring. Have you seen Surfer magazine? or Tai-chi ? What about Cosmo, Vogue and Runner's World? Or there are magazines devoted to wrestling and comic-book collecting and psychology and racing cars and stereos. These colorful, exciting, graphic-oriented publications are often many things - sensationalistic, sexist, crude - but never boring.

>>Wally is right, however, that libraries often neglect magazines and toss out back issues.

>>Try to find Surfer magazine from 1971, for instance, at your local university library.

>>Or even getting hold of Jimmy Carter's famous Playboy interview is tough.

>>So what is the solution? Maybe all our collective brains can come up with some suggestions.

>>I was lucky - when I was earning my Ph.D. at the University of Utah the school had a great collection of the famous muckraking magazines from 1902, such as McClures, Munseys, Everybody's, Ladies Home Journal and a much different Cosmopolitan. In those days you could put your hands on the original magazines in the special collection section. Now I understand the library has had to severely limit contact with the old magazines because they are crumbling - and giving off bad chemicals as they do so.

>>Many libraries now just trash old issues of magazines - my library at NIU does it regularly.

>>The big problem with studying magazine is that most "intellectuals" have long looked down their noses at magazines for the masses, such as People and US and Rolling Stone.

>>So many of the safe magazines they collected were sorta dull.

>>Most libraries have failed to subscribe to Skateboarder, let alone keep back issues. So we need to conduct a campaign - convince libraries to open themselves up to magazines for the masses. And then keep them, not just on microfilm.

>>Every library I know has back issues of the NY Times, even my little neighborhood library.

>>But what about Crawdaddy?

>>(It was a cool counter-culture mag from 70s. Way better than Rolling Stone.) My students don't read many newspapers voluntarily - but they subscribe to eight or nine magazines.

>>So let's think about a collective Save Our Magazines campaign. SOM? We need a catchier acronym.

>>I am also interested in working together with someone on an updated history of magazines.

>>Such a work is way overdue.

>>With best wishes, and I hope I wasn't boring, Dr. Brian Thornton, Northern Illinois University.

Brian Thornton has recently accepted a position as associate professor at the University of North Florida.

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AEJMC MAGAZINE DIVISION

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MAGAZINE MATTER, VOL 27, NO 1 Editor and Designer: Ted Spiker
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College of Journalism and Communications, University of Florida. Send
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