

AEJMC Student Magazine Contest

Articles—Places

Judge: Scott Stuckey, senior editor of *National Geographic Traveler*

First Place

“Billy Goat Gruff Goes to Washington,” by Sarah Bailey, Northwestern University

For *Washingtonian*

Why it won: Despite its goofy title, this piece precisely hits its target market. It tells the story of an iconic Greek restaurant planning a move from Chicago, where it had become an institution, to Washington, DC, where it may not fit in. Sounds inconsequential, but with thorough reporting and careful marshalling of the material, the writer manages to make the piece a comparison of cultures, contrasting the Windy City with the nation’s capital, and detailing all the reasons why the move is a huge gamble for the restaurant’s owners. *Washingtonian* readers would find this interesting on two levels—the details of the new dining choice heading their way as well as insight into how Washington is seen by outsiders.

Second Place

“Notes from Underground,” by Bob Perkins, University of Kansas

For *Jayplay*

Why it won: The article picked a novel subject—DIY (do it yourself) music venues—and portrayed a subculture unknown to most people. The writer hooks us with an anecdotal lead, taking us into a venue called the Haunted Kitchen. Then he immediately sets up a simple structure for the article with this line: “I set out to experience the world of DIY by hitting as many underground shows as I could in one night.” Now we’re interested and we know what the article is about. The rest is a fun ride through a quirky world. The piece is highly descriptive but keeps moving with a strong narrative line.

Third Place

“Missing Mumbai,” Reshma Trenchil, Boston University

For *Boston Globe* magazine

Why it won: This personal essay portrays the hardships of living in Mumbai with an insider’s knowledge of India. Particularly interesting are comparisons to other Indian cities—Madras, Bangalore, Kolkata—that the western reader has heard of but can scarcely distinguish one from the other. The writer vividly describes her experiences after reluctantly moving to this metastasized megalopolis, only to have her fears come true. Yet, in spite of the indignities, the assaults, the crowds, she develops an affection for Mumbai. The article is impressive for its detail and sheer spectacle. Technically and journalistically, the article has flaws, but the compelling personal story it tells overcomes them.

General strengths of entries: Several of the entries had the elements of professional magazine writing: thorough reporting; evocative, concise writing, and point of view. The entrants chose subjects of passionate interest to them—always a good idea—and imparted some of that passion to us. Several of the pieces were publishable in national magazines, though these tended not to be the travel articles.

General weaknesses of entries: Those pieces written for the travel market were the least successful. Most were travelogues—the plotting of a writer’s movements, with impressions and details of place but without much sense of purpose. Unfortunately, even interesting places and adventurous outings don’t necessarily make for interesting reading. These days our magazine avoids travelogues in favor of tight, punchy service articles. We reserve the long travel narratives to our best writers, and even then, when they suggest a trip, we ask, “Why now? Why us? Why you?” A good travel narrative sets up some sort of quest, finding a focused line, a narrative hook, to carry us through. That was lacking in most of these entries. Some other pointers to address weaknesses I saw: Start a narrative with action, not detailed description (don’t set the scene until after you’ve set the hook). Offer historical background in small measures, carefully placed. Big chunks of history, like rocks in a stream, disrupt the flow. Don’t fictionalize

historical events, writing as though you were there, making up details that readers will suspect aren't in the history books. Have a specific magazine in mind before you develop the idea. More precisely, don't suggest a broad treatment to a magazine that specializes in the subject you have in mind—you come off as a neophyte counseling experts. Study the magazine first to see which specific gap you might fill, then write your query to fit the niche exactly.

Articles—People

Judge: Dick Stolley, retired vice president of Time Inc. and founding managing editor of *People*

First Place

“Teeth in the Closet,” by Christopher Sheppard, Arizona State University
For *Phoenix Magazine*

Why it won: This is an intimate, hair-raising story of domestic violence that is both a close look at a victim and her abuser and a broader view of the problem and its messy solutions. The story of Pamela and Bob has all the dimensions of genuine tragedy—shattered love, unreliable friendships, the toll of drugs and alcohol, the immense difficulty of any kind of resolution. This is a hard and harrowing tale that makes clear the escape from abuse is hard and harrowing too.

Second Place

“Roadside Respects,” by Drew Bratcher, University of Missouri
For *Vox*

Why it won: One of the marks of a fine reporter/writer is to find unusual stories that have not been done again and again—and the Missouri Department of Conservation's deer cleanup man is certainly one of those. The subject could have been done either facetiously or tastelessly, but this story avoids both of those pitfalls. It makes clear that removing deer killed by autos is a public health necessity, and it treats the problem and the laconic, but not uncaring, John Stone sympathetically and thoroughly. This is a story that advances our knowledge of one, little-known aspect of rural Midwestern life.

Third Place

“A Habit that Sucks,” by Paige Greenfield, Northwestern University
For *Health* magazine

Why it won: Anyone who is skeptical of the phenomenon of adult thumb-sucking will not be after reading this extraordinarily well researched and cleverly written story. It not only presents credible people talking about their addiction to thumb-sucking, but bolsters the case with a real website, celebrity confessions and an upcoming major film on the subject.

Honorable Mention

“Surviving the Guilt,” by James Carlson, University of Missouri
For *Vox*

Why it won: The story of an osteopathic doctor who was the only passenger to live through the fiery crash of a plane filled with his friends is told with such detail and empathy that any reader who flies regularly can only think, There but for the grace of God go I.

Honorable Mention

“All Hail the Queens,” by Misty Huber, University of Kansas
For *Jayplay*

Why it won: This story of an evening in the lives of performing Drag Queens is instructive, funny, emotional and kind. Instead of having fun at the expense of these young men, the writer tries to explain who they are and why they do it, and you realize he or she has succeeded when you want to know even more about them. The story is accompanied by valuable sidebar boxes of information on this unusual brand of entertainment.

General strengths of entries: I was impressed by the vast range of subjects and ideas. It seems clear that these student journalists have been searching for unusual stories or, at the very least, unusual ways of presenting more familiar ones. The best entries showed a flair for digging out fascinating stories and applying skilled, relentless reporting to them. There's an old saying in journalism: If you've got the story, tell it; if you don't, write it. The best stories in this category were non-obvious ideas, imaginatively reported and simply told.

General weaknesses of entries: Stories that concentrated on individuals rather than on groups or trends or events were almost always the most successful. Not enough stories recognized this. The reporting often seemed weak and limited, which indicates that the writer did not spend enough time with the subject, was not prepared sufficiently beforehand or did not ask the tough, non-obvious questions. There were far too many misspellings and faulty grammar.

Articles—Investigation and Analysis

Judge: Joe Ferrer, former editor of *Time International* and before that *Time domestic*

First Place

"Is Bernard Baran Guilty?" by Dori Berman, Carrie Lock, Richard Rainey and Lindsay Taub, Boston University

For *Boston Phoenix*

Why it won: This top-flight investigative piece uncovers serious challenges to the 1985 child-abuse conviction of a gay teenager who was working at a day-care center; at the time the article was published, nearly 20 years later, he remained in a Massachusetts prison. A team of Boston University graduate journalism school students, working with the Boston Phoenix, turned up numerous sources from all sides in the case including those who still support the verdict. But the most powerful findings detailed deep flaws in the prosecution, notably suppressed records suggesting that one of the children was actually abused by his mother's boyfriend and apparent evidence that the parents of two of the supposed victims coached their child's testimony in pursuit of large cash civil suit payments. The article also painted a strong picture of the hardscrabble community where the events took place and documented a pervasive antigay bias that may have influenced the jury. Despite the conclusions that the story points to, however, it is not a polemic. The reportage is clearly sourced, and the telling of the tale is enhanced by good human-interest material on the defendant. In sum, this is the standout of a very strong batch of contest entries.

Second Place

"The Face of AIDS in Africa," Joanne Mayhew, Boston University

For *Harpers*

Why it won: In many ways, I expect that this will prove to be the most unforgettable reporting I encountered in reading these entries. The article is a sort of reporter's diary of her months as a volunteer working to deal with AIDS in the terribly poor country of Benin. What she sees and tells us is exceptionally vivid and compelling, taking me well beyond anything I have read before about why local culture, at least in Benin, is making the AIDS fight so much harder. This is not "investigative" in the classic sense of shoe leather, phone calls and musty records. Rather she investigates using an open mind and thoughtful receptivity to plumb the import of what she is experiencing. With a lovely, soft, anecdotal style, the author lays out deeply set local attitudes about marriage, sex, abstinence, shame, glory and communal versus individual decision-making—all of which spin a deadly web for the wives of Benin. The piece, in my judgment, does have a few structural weaknesses and needs some reframing and tidying. But a good, gentle editor could easily handle that. Someone at Harpers ought to jump right on it. This is memorable material.

Third Place

"The Withlacoochee: A River in Balance," by Sarah L. Stewart, University of Florida
For *Florida Wildlife* magazine

Why it won: Climb aboard. You'll enjoy this lazy day on the river. Alternating between a beguiling 2-to-3 mph eco-tour by boat and broad reportage on Florida's efforts to deal with contamination in the state's 52 water basins, the author takes a potentially dry subject and brings it to wetland life with sunning turtles, swimming snakes, 1,000 year-old Cypress trees and the beady eyes and hooked beak of an immature Mississippi Kite flying right toward you. We learn as well about the dangers of excess nitrogen in the water, the progress in limiting industrial waste and sewage dumping, and the persistent damage from the air (waste burning releases mercury) and from ground runoff (fertilizers, highway car wastes). Good reporting, good writing, good story.

Honorable Mention

"Stream Cleaning," by Mike Burden, University of Missouri
For *Vox*

Why it won: Here is another good piece about a state's polluted waters. Missouri is struggling to meet EPA standards by 2006, and this article details the efforts and difficulties of achieving that. The biggest source of pollution? The author offers a graphic image: "Rain washes off the sidewalks, through the parking lots and down the streets and carries with it antifreeze, lawn chemicals, tons of trash and anything else that lies on the thousands of acres of impervious surface around town." This story was very close to as good as the third-prize winner.

Honorable Mention

"Over Medicated," by Brad Parker, University of Missouri
Vox

Why it won: This look at "academic steroids" or smart drugs, such as Concerta and Adderall, made a clear case for why illegal use of these ADD pharmaceuticals to enhance concentration has become such a campus worry. Almost all of it was news to me (or do I suffer from hyper inattention disorder?) The reporting and writing here were just a tiny bit better than they were in another good article on the same topic ("Is Adderall Lethal?" targeted for Pulse).

General strengths of entries: Reading these stories was a bracing and broadening experience. Nearly a dozen more entries were worth an honorable mention. These strong pieces introduced me to numerous unfamiliar settings—Yavapai Native American children trying to keep their fading language alive, a rising Mexican middle class cross-border community enjoying an Americanized suburban lifestyle, shrimp farmers struggling in the Arizona desert, researchers working to genetically modify the manure produced by pigs, a Canadian publisher battling to keep his idiosyncratic magazine aloft. I learned about campus-related matters—such as the decline of foreign students, the undesirable and foolish consequences of limiting offensive speech, the impact of budget shortfalls on a student rec center—and about after-campus concerns such as the awkward twenty-something years and the conflicts facing working mothers. These were all so worth reading that I have a suggestion. Next year, why not create a website where you post all the best entries. If journalism is facing a decline of readers and respect—and it is—work like this from the next generation is wonderfully encouraging.

General weaknesses of entries: I don't want to leave the impression that each and every one of these articles was flawless, slap-it-into-print-as-is journalism. Promising as so many of these authors seem, they all need more experience and hard commitment. Perfectly natural. But there was no single strand of weakness. All those whose work was represented should be proud of themselves.

Articles—Service and Information

Judge: Valerie Latona, deputy editor and beauty director of *Shape*

First Place

“Look Familiar?” by Erin Rietz, Ball State University

For *Expo*

Why it won: This article detailing a very simple used prom-dress giveaway program held together from start to finish. The piece never lost its momentum and held my interest—critical in any magazine article. The information aspect of the article was strong: First and foremost, the idea itself was interesting. And the article didn’t let the reader down: it detailed the program—the Great Gown Giveaway—from how it got started and how it works to its growth and troubles. The style of writing was also smooth; each paragraph flowed into the next seamlessly (why the momentum of this piece never faltered). Also critical to the Service and Information category: This article included a helpful sidebar detailing how to donate to the program, how to get more information and how to get in contact with the important parties. Without this sidebox, the piece would have been missing a very important element.

Second Place

“You Can Refuse Booze!” by Dana Schmidt, Iowa State University

For *Girl’s Life*

Why it won: This article was extremely strong on the service element. Almost straight from the introductory paragraph, the writer began to offer advice to the reader with tips such as “Just Say ‘No,’” “Be Confident,” “Give an Excuse,” “Leave the Situation,” and more. The sidebar supported this strong service: Alcohol-Free Alternatives offered ideas—from the SADD National Leadership Council—on what to do instead of drinking. The writer also knew her target audience: her interviewees were all teens who had said no to alcohol. They offered their own advice based on their experiences. While this topic caters to a niche audience of teens, it never once falters from its promise to offer information on how to “refuse booze.” That is the hallmark of a strong Service and Information article. Added pluses: The writer is cognizant of the needs of a magazine; the writer offers abstract information for a web page, art suggestions and a source list—the only writer in the Service and Information category to do so.

Third Place

“Hoops and Hollers,” by Adam Wright, Arizona State University

For *Highroads*

Why it won: For basketball fans, this article is of great service. While a niche category, this article delivers—to its audience—all the information needed to participate in March Madness in Las Vegas. The article flows nicely from one subhead to the next (important for helping to break up what could be a long article into a manageable one for the reader—and his/her eye). But the winning strength of this article was in its sideboxes, which are critical for any Service and Information article because they help to break up a story into very readable and usable information (particularly for the time-pressed reader or the reader who is uninterested in reading an entire story about one topic). “A Bettor’s Primer” details how to place a sports bet; travel information about how to get to Las Vegas; and popular hotels (including prices and contact information) that are involved in March Madness. An additional sidebox includes contact information for Las Vegas tourists. Without these sideboxes, this article would not have placed in the top three. It’s the sideboxes that help to support the main story.

Honorable Mention

“Finders Keepers,” by Matt Beat, University of Kansas

For *Jayplay*

Why it won: This was an interesting article that shed light on a little-known subject: finding other people’s stuff—on purpose. It held together from start to finish, although it lost a bit of momentum on the back end of the article (one reason this didn’t place higher). A short sidebox offers information on websites that accept found material; another short sidebox gives information about events on found stuff.

What I would have loved to have seen: a sidebox detailing the most interesting or the most commonly found items of interest or a sidebox of interesting found facts (e.g., the number of people involved in finding things, the number of things found last year, etc.). One more informative sidebox would have ranked this piece higher on the awards list.

General strengths of entries: The topics were all interesting; the writers are definitely aware of what makes a good story. They all catered to lots of different interests.

General weaknesses of entries: There seems to be a lack of knowledge about what service really is when it comes to magazines:

- You need to offer readers usable tips/advice/information.
- You almost always need some sort of sidebar (or two) drawing information out of the article and elaborating on it; this is critical for readers who don't have the time or inclination to read the entire article.
- You don't need to write about everything; this isn't a college essay. The key is to offer information but be able to cut your own writing; concise writing makes for a strong momentum and an easy read. Longer, when it comes to magazine articles, is not always better.

Most of the losing entries lost because of one or all of these reasons.

Articles—First Person

Judge: Judge: Noelle Howey, senior editor at *Glamour* (and soon to be director of *Time Out New York Kids* and author of the memoir *Dress Codes: Of Three Girlhoods—My Mother's, My Father's and Mine*

First Place

“Daddy’s Girl,” by Nicole Williams, Arizona State University
For *Phoenix Magazine*

Why it won: Understandably, few topics inspire more black-and-white nuance-free pieces of journalism than pedophilia. And that’s just one reason why I was absolutely blown away by this essay about a daughter’s struggle to come to terms with her father, a convicted child molester. What impressed me so was the author’s unwillingness to play on the sensational aspects of her subject matter, or to infuse the narrative with lots of heavy-handed emotional hand-wringing (which could be tempting in a piece about so many difficult and weighty issues). Instead, we get a clear-sighted, cleanly written and compulsively readable essay that neither apologizes for nor vilifies her father. While I would have liked the writer to go even deeper in certain places (For example, did she ever feel the sense of jealousy and possessiveness that her brother did, in regards to her father and his actions?), her story ultimately feels real and human and truly lived.

Second Place

“Facing Myself,” by Neely Stratton, Boston University
For *Redbook*

Why it won: I found this essay to be the most ambitious of the pieces that I read, and frequently riveting. As William Styron and myriad other writers have noted, depression is deeply difficult to write about; Sufferers often refer to it as something beyond words. The writer here acknowledges as much when she says that “metaphors are the life-blood of manic depression,” but she never stops trying to convey throughout the piece how her disease makes her feel. I think she often succeeds masterfully. The opening passage in which she stands on the precipice of the Grand Canyon is a jaw-dropper, the rare extended metaphor that’s powerfully evocative and immediate, not just a clever device. A few caveats: The piece is too long, and meanders towards the end in its discussion of various doctors, therapies and educational/career changes, and based on my experience, this doesn’t read much like an article for *Redbook*. That said, it’s an accomplished and gutsy piece of work.

Third Place

“Everything Decided Forever,” by Jennifer LaLima, Hofstra University

For *Pulse*

Why it won: To be honest, I initially thought I would not like this essay. After reading the opening paragraphs, which recount the moment that the writer first heard her dear friend, Kathleen Roskot, had been killed, I worried that the pain of the loss was still too fresh and terrible for the writer to write effectively about it. I soon changed my mind. I found the writer’s evocation of her teenage friendship with Kathleen to be filled with powerful, evocative details and a nearly palpable yearning to return to those simpler times. As a portrait of a friendship, it succeeds. However, I did feel that sometimes the writer leaned too heavily on clichés and the language was sometimes awkward. Also, I’d like to know more about how Kathleen’s death affected the way the writer is now living her life. Is she more wary of men since Kathleen was killed by a boyfriend? If I’d gotten as clear a picture of the writer as I did of her friend, I would have ranked the piece higher than third prize.

General strengths/weaknesses of entries: Overall, I found the entries to be refreshingly candid and honest. I was pleased to see relatively little reliance on clichés and predictable takes on evergreen subjects. Instead, I saw a lot of writers trying to bring a fresh angle to their topics, attempts at humor (always welcome) and pressing social issues (gay marriage, religion). That said, I found many of the pieces disappointingly myopic. Writing in the first person is not synonymous with navel-gazing; you need to select subject matter and, more importantly, an approach that feels unique and surprising. I also feel compelled to say that the spelling and presentation was pretty dreadful on some of the entries. It does count.

Specialized Business Press Article

Judge: Sally Roberts, senior editor at *Crain’s Business Insurance*

First Place

“Gripping Reality,” by Kerrin McNamara, Humber Institute of Technology

For *Fine Cut for film and television*

Why it won: This article not only was short, focused and well-written, but also incredibly interesting and right on target for the trade magazine. I was drawn in from the beginning until the end and feel like I actually learned something about the documentary film industry. I loved all the insight that came directly from the documentary directors themselves. It actually made me want to go watch the movies. In addition, unlike many of the other articles in the contest category, this article remained focused on one subject—what it takes to make a winning documentary. It didn’t jump into lengthy tangents, which can lose the reader’s attention. Excellent work.

Second Place

“Reconstructing Harry,” by Geoffrey A. Drewyor, Boston University

For *The Writer Magazine*

Why it won: I loved the lead of this article. It may have helped that I am a big fan of the Harry Potter series, but I had no idea about the world of fan fiction writing, so I was immediately drawn in. In fact, I found the entire article to be incredibly interesting. I do, however, think that the article was too long and could have been condensed. For example, while the history of fan fiction and where it came from was interesting, I found myself wanting to hear more from the Harry Potter fan fiction writers themselves and what draws them to this form of writing, rather than reading about where fan fiction came from. That part of the article also comes from only one source, the MIT scholar—which raises credibility issues. Overall, though, I thought the article was truly fascinating and very well written.

Third Place

"A Day in the Life: John Bubala," Abigail Bains, Northwestern University

For *Nation's Restaurant News*

Why it won: I keep asking myself why I liked this article so much. I didn't necessarily learn anything new from it, but I was drawn in from the beginning. It is very well written and aptly titled: "A day in the life*" It's not a profile with a bunch of outside people talking about how wonderful Bubala is and highlighting his achievements; it's just a short and sweet look at one particular day in the life of this one restaurant owner/chef, and I found it particularly compelling. With that said, I'm not a reader of *Nation's Restaurant News* nor a restaurant owner or chef, so while I found it compelling, I do wonder whether readers of that particular trade pub would find so as well. The thought of reading a day-in-the-life piece on another regular journalist, for example, doesn't appeal to me. Why would this person's day be any different from mine? I would, however, be interested in a day in the life of say Barbara Walters or Diane Sawyer, or someone of that caliber. I don't know if Bubala is on that scale in the restaurant world.

General strengths and weaknesses of entries: As a whole, the 14 articles submitted in the specialized business press category were generally well written and targeted their intended audiences. While it was hard to decide between first, second and third place, it was easy to distinguish the potential winners from the others. After reading each article the first time, I jotted notes on the front pages. Looking now to the front pages from those articles in the "non-potential winners" category, I wrote such things as: "too long," "yawn," "lazy," "used quotes and info from other interviews rather than conducting interviews him/herself," "one-sourced story," "begs too many questions" and "questionable facts."

The winning articles were just more compelling than the others. There was great use of sources (first and second place winners), and they were very well written. My attention was never diverted no matter how many times I read and re-read the articles. They were just a joy to read rather than a chore.

Online Magazine

Judge: Dan Cox, director of new media for *The Lawrence (Kansas) Journal-World* newspaper, which also produces *Lawrence.com* and *kusports.com*, all award-winning sites

First Place

The Devil's Tale, <http://cronkitezine.asu.edu/>, Arizona State University

The Devil's Tale design has a fresh, crisp look to it with an endearing flash animation on the homepage showing off the best content from the issue. Unfortunately, there aren't any playback controls for pausing or returning to a feature or even skipping ahead. Despite this slight usability issue, the cover does a good job of promoting stories with large art and custom typography. But where most designers add far too much content to their front page, here the designers didn't quite have enough to satisfy my desire to see more. I was hoping the large artwork from the front page would also show up on story layouts, but inside pages did have a good use of inline graphics and additional information. I was delighted to see pull quotes used consistently, and the liberal use of photos throughout stories.

I was pleased to see a lot of audio and video content, it made the magazine feel more thorough and immersive from a storytelling perspective.

Overall a nice site with attention to detail. Had this site featured more content on the front page and larger, more attractive artwork on the inside pages this would have been a clear winner - as it stands now it wins but just by a small margin.

Second Place

The Ball Bearings, <http://www.ballbearingsonline.com/aejmc/>, Ball State University

The Ball Bearings site has a pleasing, unique color scheme that combines a rich set of grays with saturated eye-catching color in focal content areas. The layout is simple and clean providing users with an easy browsing experience. Larger, more enticing artwork would go a long way in providing a more evocative story-telling experience.

Navigating the site is a comfortable, fluid process with a site-wide navigation that displays all currently available content. This, unfortunately, sidesteps the use of section indexes or even an issue index. The user is left with only having the front page as the primary browsing vehicle.

The use of flash for multimedia work is a compelling feature; users can experience photo montages, and listen to select audio clips throughout the site creating an enticing viewing experience.

Overall the design is very appealing, merging a sensibility of clarity and powerful storytelling while balancing the bulk of the site's content in a non-invasive way.

Third Place

The Burr, <http://burr.kent.edu/archives/2004/fall/index.html>, Kent State University

The Burr site design has a rigid layout that effectively juxtaposes space and color with attractive story imagery. The story features that occupy most of the layout space are attractive but somewhat overwhelming. Having fewer of the stories fall into this display pattern would add effective contrast to the stories. Story pages incorporate full use of the design layout displaying larger photos, additional story information framed in colored table cells, and effective use of pull-quotes. Overall the design creates an effective medium for storytelling maintaining a balance between line length, story media, and attractive layout that survives being extended across multiple pages.

Single Issue of an Ongoing Magazine—Design

Judge: Bob Gray, design editor at National Geographic

First Place

Orange and Blue, Joe Alewine, editor, and Stephen Bamonte, art director, University of Florida

Why It Won: This presentation was built for its audience. The typefaces and design quickly connect to the age group. It deftly picks up on the experimental approaches of magazines like *Found* and *Nest*. These guys are paying attention. I'm impressed with the way the designers built a structured format following the basic rules of design—formal grid, consistency, readable typefaces—and then created exciting and engaging pages. Margin space and interior spacing is pleasing. Column widths and leading allow for comfortable reading. *Orange and Blue* is fresh, contemporary and fun.

Cover—Provocative and well executed. Real. Page number lets me go right to the story. Made me want to open the magazine.

Front of the Book—Lively, well organized and easy to read. The pattern background is a nice touch; holds the space but doesn't interfere. The "rounded" typeface design matches the "round-corner" boxes used for pictures and breakout items. The color hues and weights are harmonious and fit the design. I am less than impressed with the illustration for "For the People." A vintage picture of the Three Stooges might have been a better choice. The color panels used to separate advertising from editorial are a good idea, although I would have chosen only one color.

Features—I like the experimental use of different typefaces while maintaining a consistent look and feel. Good photography is appropriately sized, and white space is well orchestrated as in the "Gainesville 9" and "Pickup Artist" stories. The illustration(s) style and their strategic placement with the pull-quotes work well in "Cheating." The information graphic depicting how some students cheat is fun and instructional to students and teachers. Finally, the end page about parking was a light and playful way to go out. A little more text (plus a couple of typographic hiccups) than I would normally want on an ending page, but the picture draws me in enough to want to read it.

Second Place

Drake, Jessica Sokol, art director, Drake University

Why it won: Overall strong design and photography. Layout is fast-paced, lively, and bold. Typesetting is clean. The grid shows ample margin space and comfortable interior spacing. Column widths and leading allow for comfortable reading. I struggled with the decision to award this magazine second place instead of first. I felt that while it has a strong unified look, it suffers from lack of pacing. The reader never gets a chance to breathe. Next to *Orange and Blue*, it felt slightly less fresh and controlled in its design.

Cover—Clean, edgy, and fun. Nice design of cover lines.

Front and Back of the Book—The creative conceptual photography and its placement and size on the pages are excellent. The use of the vertical color bars to hold the sections together is effective, but it would have been nice to relate the different colors to titling on the contents page. Hierarchy of information is well thought out and executed in heads, decks (when necessary), and pull-quotes. I do miss captions for pictures. I wished for fewer, bigger, better pictures on “Dugout” and “Urban Art.” Four pictures in “World View” would have been far more effective than the tricky treatment of multiples. But overall, the front and back sections hold together nicely.

Features—“Time Capsules” has a great opener and promises an informative exploration into the fine houses of Des Moines. The following pages could have used fewer color panels and more captions. I really like “False Confidence” and “Campus Cover-up.” The contemporary illustration styles connect with the reader and the design shows good integration of type and image.

Third Place

Vox, Renata Turk and Kari Engel, art directors, University of Missouri

Why it won: Accessible and easy to navigate. They made all the right design and typographic choices for an unbound, folded, newsprint publication. Technical clarity and information hierarchy is evident. A reader can scan at three levels (headlines, decks, and box items) for information. It’s clean, smart, and no-nonsense with a small family of four typefaces. While some of the photography is a little newsy and straightforward, some pictures are noteworthy. The design is tightly formatted for consistency but doesn’t inhibit creative expression in the features. I am attracted to its crisp, clean presentation, clarity, and control. It conveys importance and stability. I’d pick this up regularly.

Cover—The logo and contents design is smart and quickly informative. Photo-illustration is engaging. The type design and color choices are strong. It wasn’t apparent right away that it is a wraparound... a design hint would have been nice.

Front and Back of the Book—The right signposts are in place. Rules help define pages and nicely separate advertising from editorial. There is no color in the front and back, but the use of grey tint boxes and black-and-white type create strong visual markers on pages. Different type sizes and family weights are used effectively to address many levels of information. My only suggestion would be to close up the letterspacing on the slab-serif headlines a little. I also wonder if silhouette photographs would help offset the strong modular format a bit.

Features—There’s only one—a ten-item profile of people of varying ages. It’s nicely done. The designer broke out of the grid and experimented with vertical (some, not all) headlines. The introduction shows strong typographic design. Better photographs and a little more white space would have made this stronger.

Honorable Mention

Expo, Lori Herber, art director, Ball State University

Why it won: Two features—“Dirty Hands” and “On Edge”—have stellar opening-spread designs. Strong typography and use of white space for “On Edge.” Great conceptual type design and use of color for “Dirty Hands.” The cover of the magazine is also well done.

Honorable Mention

Jayplay, Johan Kallstrom and Becka Cremer, designers, University of Kansas

Why it won: With a little more control and improved typesetting, this newsprint publication could rival *Vox*. I like the playfulness in the front sections, but too often this approach attracts unnecessary attention. I like the display typeface choice, but the design team should revisit the grid and work harder on improving typesetting.

General strengths of entries:

- Lots of experimentation and high energy.
- Most incorporated a grid and had some sense of magazine design approach.

- Attention to design for ease of navigation and in most cases information hierarchy.
- Attempt to effectively convey the editorial message via appropriate visual concept.

General weaknesses of entries:

- Reliance on digital gimmickry.
- Inclination to decorate pages rather than design them.
- Inattention to quality typesetting such as appropriate face, size, character spacing, leading, and color.
- Inattention to grid and pleasing interior and marginal spacing.

I applaud the hard work of the students and teachers publishing these magazines. The quality of publication design worldwide has improved tremendously over the years with the support of these schools and sponsors. Reviewing the entries made me confident that magazines are going to be more successful at visually conveying information than ever before.

Single Issue of an Ongoing Magazine—Editorial

Judges: Will Palmer, copy chief, Alex Heard, editorial director, and Amy Linn, senior editor, at *Outside*

First Place

Drake, Rachel DeSchepper, editor, Drake University

Why it won: *Drake* is a great, highly readable mix of material, skillfully executed. While it doesn't go for the same range of ambition and serious journalism as many of the others, this is the most consistently high-quality publication we reviewed. Many of the stories are offbeat and original. While much of the credit for the overall quality goes to the designers (not the purview of our category), it's clear that the edit side played an important part in the conception of the stories and layouts. The organization, as reflected in the user-friendly contents pages, is well thought out. Display copy is smart. Above all, the judges found *Drake* to be more lively than any of the other entries. As an indicator of the talent that went into the publication, this one shows the most promise.

Second Place

Expo, Laura Torrey, editor, Ball State University

Why it won: Also a very readable student publication, made up of a variety of student-life issues that range from serious to fun, as nicely lined up in the TOC. Good writing, and fairly good display copy. In most cases, the stories feel like someone gave them real love and attention. One judge thought this publication took too many of its cues on style and content from an alumni magazine, making it a little straighter and less challenging than a student publication ought to be. But no doubt there are some interesting stories here, some humor, and attempts to touch on the big issues.

Third Place

Convergence, Peter Armstrong, editor, Humber Institute of Technology

Why it won: This magazine contained some of the best stories in the whole bunch. The writing is solid, and we felt that these articles taught us more than any of the others. What this one lacked was a sense of a lively mix and an attempt to touch on more diverse subjects, even though it's clearly bound by a narrow subject matter. We couldn't place it higher simply because it was more locked into a formula and didn't display as much originality in concept. Still, the issues addressed are serious ones, and the editors and writers show real potential for putting together high-quality journalism.

Honorable Mention

The Burr, Jaclyn Youhana, editor, Kent State University

Why it won: *The Burr* was a serious finalist because it showed a lot of initiative, especially in the Ciudad Juarez story, for which they traveled on their own dime, and didn't give up on their goal. If we were awarding a single story, this one might be it. This publication also did a good job of mixing up the stories

with other serious topics as well as humor. Unfortunately, the quality of writing and editing didn't shine through on every page. But an ambitious attempt, no doubt.

Single Issue of an Ongoing Magazine—General Excellence

Judge: Alison Gwinn, deputy editor of *InStyle*

First Place

The Burr, Jaclyn Youhana, editor, Kent State University

Why it won: The fall 2004 edition of *The Burr*, produced once a semester by Kent State students, does everything well: It's a smartly written, attractively designed magazine that seems to clearly understand its target audience (fellow students at Kent State). The selection of stories satisfies a range of tastes and points of view, from the newsworthy (surprising, sometimes grim accounts of the experiences of three students who served in the war in Iraq and have returned to life at Kent State) to the poignant (a story about several Kent State students who've decided to convert to Mormonism in the hopes of finding a faith that can answer their needs) to the trendy (a piece on college students' newfound affinity for Adult Swim on the Cartoon Network) to the silly (a first-person account of a novice bowler who joins Kent State's bowling club and lives to tell about it). A short photo portfolio that follows a former Kent State student as he prepares himself to appear in an Akron drag performance is fascinating, and there are a couple of nice pieces covering the local scene: one on a barber who has been cutting students' hair for 35 years (and has seen it all) and another on a prep school that sits just down the road from the university. Finally, the cover story (and centerpiece of the magazine)—about the hundreds of unsolved murders of women in Juarez, Mexico—is the kind of ambitious story few college magazines would even attempt. The magazine is consistently high quality throughout.

Second Place

Expo, Laura Torrey, editor, Ball State University

Why it won: *Expo* magazine, published three times a year by students at Ball State, is a beautifully designed, crisply edited and truly engaging publication. *Expo* takes topics relevant to its students and adds a fresh spin. One piece, titled "Off Target," deals with what happens when students can't understand their foreign professors' accents. Another fascinating piece, complete with more than a page of informational graphics, dissects the state of faith at Ball State, a place with 31 distinct religious organizations. But the piece that is perhaps the most helpful tells *Expo* readers how they can learn to be smart tenants and avoid the pitfalls so often associated with student rental housing. The magazine is especially adept at adding relevant sidebars: A piece on student stand-up comics, for example, has a cute box of pointers telling everyday folks how they can be funny, too. And interspersed throughout the magazine are fun elements like "The Count," a collection of interesting stats about the campus (like the total value of all Ball State buildings), and "We Saw, We Tried..." a compilation of hot new books, websites, music. This magazine is so brightly illustrated and so enthusiastically executed, the reader can feel on every page how much enjoyment the staff had putting it out.

Third Place

5/5 Magazine, Andrea Schmidt, editor, Drake University

Why it won: Though published by Drake University students, *5/5* looks beyond the campus to the Des Moines community at large. The cleanly designed magazine is smartly organized, with a clear, lively front-of-the-book section that gives a thumbnail view of cool things around the city: not-to-miss events in the coming months, hot new items to buy at local stores, services to know about (including the crème de la crème of local car mechanics and a great Bosnian bakery), interesting Des Moines stats (such as the average local commute time and the number of city employees) and great local bars and restaurants. The centerpiece feature profiles five up-and-comers on the Des Moines scene, from a DJ to a preservationist, and makes them all seem like people you'd want to know. Another piece takes the reader on a vivid guided tour of the various big redevelopment projects taking place across the city, demystifying them in the process. A travel piece tells readers about four fun destinations within shouting distance (or a little

more) of the city—a perfect example of good reader service. All in all, the magazine makes a reader happy to be living in Des Moines.

Honorable Mention

Planet Oz, Leigh Beadon, editor, Humber Institute of Technology

Why it won: The magazine takes difficult, complicated subjects (wind-generated power, biodegradable cellphones, “the enviropig” and reforestation, for example) and turns them into clear, thought-provoking, engaging pieces.

Start-Up Magazine Project—Team

Judge: Roger Tremblay, Media Networks Inc.

First Place

Wager, Loyola College

Why it won: I’m surprised that this isn’t actually being published. Talk about tapping into the hot cultural phenomenon! I don’t know if the gambling fascination is a long-term trend but it could be another Nascar. There will always be plenty of material to cover. Conceptually, this was the strongest entry. The product captures the energy and excitement of gambling and reflects the lifestyle of the participants. Generally, very well-thought-out plans and strong evidence that the team learned a lot about the magazine publishing business.

Second Place

The Egg, Beth Cox, Rob Green, Jeremiah Rigsby and Andrew Strickland, Trinity University

Why it won: Humor magazines are really hard to do but I agree with the premise that connects with the success of the Daily Show. I think a lot of Americans look at the news with a feeling of “You got to laugh to keep from crying.” Execution might be tricky since different views of “funny” are not uncommon but if the magazine gets its “voice,” it could be very successful. There are several categories of advertisers who love the wise-ass environment. Also, good knowledge of magazine publishing principles.

Third Place

Part, Laura Gleason, Loyola College

Why it won: Speaking as someone who lived through raising three teenagers, I think this makes a lot of sense. But from a pure business standpoint, service journalism, when done well, always connects with readers and the readers of this kind of magazine would be attractive to a lot of advertisers. There is a lot of opportunity for interaction with readers and between readers. Online extensions are an obvious play. This is the kind of magazine Meredith Publishing would love.

Honorable Mention

So Lucky, Lauren Bettinger, Ashley Epperly, Lesley McCormick and Kate Skelley, Trinity University

Why it won: This is another idea I can’t believe isn’t actually being published. Conde Nast seems totally infatuated with both teens and shopping, so this is a natural brand extension. A crowded category for teens (*Seventeen*, *YM*, etc) shouldn’t stop this from being successful—the concept is dead on. Good, logical plan and very good execution. The odd size may be a problem, but a minor one.

Honorable Mention

Minx, Samantha Joaquin, Leigh Pankonien, Renea Topp and Ray Valencia, Trinity University

Why it won: I agree with the premise that women should have magazines like *Maxim* and *FHM*. The popularity of “Sex and the City” confirms the niche, which I believe is bigger than most people realize. I also think *Cosmo* and *Glamour* are dated. This could be a fun magazine that generates a lot of buzz. Dennis Publishing could be an ideal home for this. A lot of good thinking and good work here.

General strengths of entries: Very good knowledge of business principles. Strong sense of marketing and advertising issues. Amazing creative executions—most publishing companies would be proud to show this work.

Start-Up Magazine Project—Individual

Judge: Jerry Okabe, vice president / audience marketing of Primedia Business Magazines & Media

First Place

Home Front, Kimberly Sweet Rubenstein, University of Kansas

Why it won: This entry is consistently strong in all areas of the proposal, especially in the concept purpose/proof of need and the financial analysis. The competitive review and strategies to compete were well thought out and thorough, as was the audience profile and circulation strategy. A key reason this entry was selected as the first place winner was the balance and emphasis presented in the proposal. Each area of the launch project was addressed with sufficient detail to justify and support the proposed magazine, and the appropriate emphasis was given to important factors. A few of the assumptions are overly optimistic (like the 75 percent pay-up on circulation direct mail), but in general the statistical data is realistic and appropriate.

Second Place

re:design, Jeanette Crawford, University of Kansas

Why it won: This entry's purpose, proof of need and editorial philosophy are presented very well. The analysis of the competitive environment is presented in excellent detail; the strategy for competing could be stronger. The circulation development plan and financials are also well done. Once again, balance in the presentation of the details and data required to make this launch publication a reality is evident. The concept, advertising, circulation staffing and financial data are all presented in sufficient detail to show careful thought and research. This entry was a very close second to the first place award.

Third Place

PlayBook, Katie Moyer, University of Kansas

Why it won: This entry's strengths are in analysis of competition, development of the audience and in financials. The purpose of the magazine and proof of its need were also presented clearly. Balance in analyzing and developing strategies for all the important aspects of publishing a magazine are evident, as in the first and second place winners. Financial data is presented in good detail.

Honorable Mention

Shawty, June Straight, University of Mississippi

Why it won: This entry is very close to the third place winner (only a couple of points separated the first and second place entries and the third place and honorable mention entries). As in the winners, this entry was well balanced in presenting the concept's purpose, proof of need, audience development and editorial philosophy. There could have been more detail in the advertising and circulation development, as well as the financials.