

# LeadTime

The Newsletter of AEJMC's Newspaper Division

aejmc.net/newspaper

Winter/Spring 2009

## CALLS FOR ACTION

*Deadlines are near for submitting to competitions the Newspaper Division sponsors in connection with the annual AEJMC convention -- Aug. 5-8 in Boston.*

- PF&R Professor of the Year  
Deadline: **March 21**  
Details: Page 5
- General call and one special call for research papers  
Deadline: **April 1**  
Details: Page 6
- **ROSENBERY** column: Page 3
- Student Newspaper Project Award  
Deadline: **April 7**  
Entry form: Page 7
- Educator of the Year Award  
Deadline: **April 15**  
Details: Page 5

## Boston will pack a peek at future

*On agenda: editing, convergence, non-profit models*

By **JACK ROSENBERY**  
Division Head

The Newspaper Division came away from the AEJMC winter meeting in Louisville with a full slate of programming and research offerings for this year's annual convention, with something scheduled in nearly every available time slot from Wednesday through Friday.

More details will be included in the summer newsletter, but here is an abstract of what the Division will be presenting in Boston.

Division activities actually

start with a pre-conference session Tuesday, Aug. 4, on "The Future of Editing." Separate panels will address editing for print, editing for online and instructional techniques for this new era.

There will be a sole-sponsored panel on non-profit news models Wednesday, Aug. 5. Also on Wednesday, Newspaper will co-sponsor a panel from the Media Management and Economics Division about emerging business models, especially online.

**See BOSTON, Page 4**

## Beat the press

Try this at home. **Tim Chapman (right)**, editor in chief of the twice-weekly **Breeze** at James Madison University in Virginia, goes one on one with the school's new basketball coach, **Matt Brady**, for the benefit of **The Breeze's** Web-video audience – and press-sports relations.



# Meaning takes a beating

I've been a copy editor at the *Sacramento Bee* for 30 years. I ran the news copy desk for seven years. I've learned to respect the power of words. I've learned to anticipate trouble and be cautious. I know that one person's "terrorist" is another person's "freedom fighter." I've also learned that it's all too easy to embrace weasel words and compromise your conscience.

That's how I've felt for the past five years as *The Bee* – and newspapers and wire services across the country -- embraced the word "abuse" as an umbrella term to describe the brutality inflicted on prisoners in Iraq and Afghanistan by U.S. forces. The word "torture" disappeared from our journalistic vocabulary unless it came with quote marks. It is only now, with the political climate changing, that newspapers are taking the shackles off themselves, ever so gingerly.

In the spring of 2004, when the photographs out of Abu Ghraib surfaced, I – and I think almost all Americans – recoiled in shock and revulsion. You didn't need the Geneva conventions or an attorney general's memos to tell you what was happening. You could see it with your own eyes. If these were photos of U.S. soldiers taken prisoner by Muslim radicals, the word "torture" would have been bannered in 96-point type in every U.S. newspaper.

In the months that followed, as military trials elicited details of human rights violations and "waterboarding" and "rendition" popped up regularly, "abuse" remained the go-to word. In one wire story we ran, a U.S. soldier was charged with the fatal beating of a prisoner in Afghanistan who was chained to a ceiling. The soldier admitted striking the pris-

oner 37 times. Army investigative reports said the prisoner's leg muscle tissue had been destroyed. "Even if he had survived, both legs would have had to be amputated," one report said, in describing the "abuse."

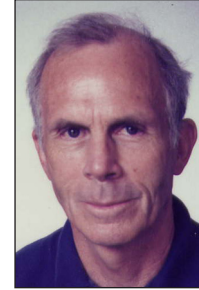
In a wire story revealing that 26 prisoners had died in U.S. custody in what investigators concluded or suspected were acts of criminal homicide, the story said that "severe abuse" was blamed for some of the deaths.

Our headlines in these stories dutifully used the word "abuse."

I took it upon myself to do an electronic word search through our archives to see how we used "torture." There it was at Abu Ghraib – in connection with Saddam Hussein's henchmen. Egypt and Syria engaged in the practice. Our reporters didn't hesitate to write about the "torture" of children and pets in the Sacramento area. We knew how to outrage our readers. But not in our stories related to Iraq and Afghanistan.

I assumed editors had adopted a play-it-safe mentality: Why give our myriad critics another excuse to blast us, call us unpatriotic, accuse us of undermining the troops? The facts were out there for anyone who wanted to read between the lines. Why throw it in their faces?

Editing these stories started to weigh on my conscience. The self-censorship struck me as another chapter in journalism's poor performance through the Iraq war. "Abuse" of prisoners was bad, but it suggested a few rogue types losing self-control in trying circumstances. "Torture" in military prisons suggested a deliberate policy that violated America's proclaimed values and concern for human rights.



*ProTalk*

**PAUL CLEGG**

**Copy Editor,  
The  
Sacramento Bee**

I decided to push the issue with *The Bee's* top managers. My goal was modest. I wanted to see "torture" used in stories that laid out gut-wrenching details of brutality. I wanted "torture and abuse" used as an umbrella term. In bylined stories from major news agencies, I suggested that we attempt to clarify what the reporter intended.

I made my pitch and presented my search data. The editors seemed to agree it was a legitimate issue. I was asked to contact major newspapers and journalism centers to see what their thinking was. Most of the folks I talked to acknowledged that they shied away from explicitly using the word "torture" in any U.S. war incidents that had come to light. They said it was too inflammatory in the post 9/11 world; it stigmatized the troops; "abuse" was a good, safe umbrella term; and "torture" was a gray area, given that the Bush administration both denied using it and had rewritten the definition of what constituted torture.

I presented my second report to *Bee* managers. Heads nodded thoughtfully. But nothing much changed. I wish *The Bee* had taken the opportunity to be a pacesetter on this issue. Down the road, scholars will examine this period in American journalism and call it shameful.

# Poster child? Not Bad

*"Dear Professor: I am pleased to inform you that your paper submitted to our division's research competition has been accepted for presentation at the AEJMC summer convention. ..."*

Typical submitter's response: ALL-Rig-g-h-t! It got ACCEPTED!

*"... It will be presented in the Scholar-to-Scholar Poster Session scheduled for 1:30 p.m. Friday afternoon ..."*

Continuation of response: Oh. A poster session. Hmph. I wonder what they didn't like about it.

Many of us who have had papers accepted for the convention have experienced this range of responses. Without a doubt, the idea of presenting in "just a poster session" carries a stigma that the research, while acceptable for the convention, is somehow secondary.

This is a belief that the Council of Divisions and Standing Committee on Research are hoping to change.

The simple fact is that with the growth of the organization and the convention, it's a physical impossibility to accept the number of papers that has become typical in recent years and have them all presented orally.

Last year's convention in Chicago saw about 700 papers accepted for presentation; for that many to be presented orally with four papers to a session, as is typical, would have required 175 sessions. The convention programming "grid" had about 250 available programming slots from 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. So to schedule oral presentation of all papers would have occupied literally 70 percent of the convention programming, and left only about 75 slots for other programming –

with 30 divisions and interest groups scrambling for them.

As important as research is, nobody wants a convention dominated that severely by it. And nobody wants to limit the number of accepted papers to such a small number that all can be presented in the limited number of oral sessions, either. That is why poster sessions and "high-density" sessions have become increasingly common at the convention. (In a high-density session, approximately 10 presenters each give a 3-to-5-minute summary of their work, a time limit that moderators strictly enforce. Then, presenters go off to different parts of the room and listeners can approach them for more in-depth discussion of the work.)

For its part, the Newspaper Division received about 80 paper submissions for Chicago and accepted about 40, a typical acceptance rate across all units that hold research competitions. About half of those 40 were presented in five oral sessions, leaving the other half for two poster sessions: the Scholar-to-Scholar event and a special poster-research session co-sponsored with the Mass Communication and Society Division.

The same number and format of sessions is on the schedule for Boston this year. So, if your paper is accepted by the Newspaper Division, there's about a 50 percent chance it will be presented in a poster session.

One hypothesis about the stigma against poster research is that some institutions consider them to be "lesser" accomplishments that don't carry as much weight in the tenure case because of fears that posters are a dumping ground for secondary work.

But within AEJMC, all papers



## HeadLines

**JACK  
ROSENBERY**

**Newspaper  
Division Head**

are accepted using the same criteria. Only after all acceptances have been made are papers divided into their presentation venues, which ideally is done on the basis of a theme that combines related papers in a given presentation.

Research chairs are instructed to divide the best papers between the oral sessions and the poster or high-density ones, and especially to make sure some of the best papers are allocated to the Scholar-to-Scholar session. All papers, regardless of venue, are read by a discussant who offers a critique of them.

So within AEJMC, at least, no stigma should be attached to poster or high-density sessions. Absolutely no distinction is made in the judging or standards for acceptance based on the presentation venue.

I have done both traditional research presentations and posters in recent years and actually have come to prefer posters. A bit more preparation needs to go into the poster presentation materials. But once that is done, the rest is very easy. I find it easier – or at least less nerve-wracking – to make a poster showing than to deliver a formal presentation to a room full of colleagues. (Or to a room devoid of them, which is even worse!) The sessions allow for a lot of informal chatting with

**See ROSENBERY, Page 4**

# Loaded with features?

Grading a style test is easy. Grading a feature can be a cloud of uncertainty.

After grappling with that challenge for about six semesters and perusing other profs' syllabi, I've stitched together a system that seems to work:

Number of drafts allowed before the final version is turned in: one.

Is there a deadline for the draft? Yes.

Is there a penalty for not turning in a draft? No.

Likely grade if skipping the draft and turning in only a final: terrible. And I tell them so.

On their drafts I jot the improvements needed, from grammar to re-reporting to rethinking the angle, scope or voice.

Here's the leverage: I write the grade their draft would get if it were the final. That's averaged from grades in each of five criteria, with the instruction "Easily improved as shown." If they don't

**GOT A GOOD SYSTEM  
FOR GRADING FEATURES?**

Share it with LeadTime readers.

E-mail grundmmj@jmu.edu

like the grade, they know exactly what to do. All it takes is willingness to follow directions to turn a C into an A. The criteria:

**REPORTING/INFO:** Is it accurate, on-target, novel, dogged, current, experiential, meaningful, thorough?

**SOURCE QUANTITY/  
QUALITY/VARIETY:** Each adds a meaningful, unique perspective?

**WRITING:** Clean, clear, concise, organized, cinematic, original, punchy, elegant?

**LEDE/KICKER/NUT GRAF:** On-target, lively, compelling, original, meaningful?

**QUOTES QUALITY:**



*TeachTools*

**MIKE  
GRUNDMANN**

**LeadTime  
Editor**

On-target, meaningful, pithy, verbatim?

Grading is also subtractive: Getting names and key facts wrong cost entire letter grades.

And this saves time: They first get an online catalog of "Do's and Don'ts" with common errors, which they must spot in their stories and fix by themselves.

Last step: They get 100 points in the class-exercise category if they make all the fixes indicated on their final version, so it can be offered to the campus newspaper. We've built a nice pipeline. Now the paper's editors hunger for stories from class.

## Boston

### From Page 1

Newspaper also will co-sponsor panels Thursday, Aug. 6, on coverage of economic news and Friday, Aug. 7, on coverage of public health issues.

Two teaching panels – Wednesday and Thursday – will focus on teaching multimedia and convergent skills, and another teaching panel Thursday will address getting students outside their comfort zones.

The division's executive meeting and general members' meeting will both be Thursday, as they have in the past.

The members' meeting is

scheduled for 6:45 p.m., one time block earlier than it was held last year.

The division also will present four traditional research sessions – Wednesday morning, Thursday morning and two Saturday morning – in addition to a special session on research into industry issues co-sponsored with the Council of Affiliates and scheduled for Friday morning.

Newspaper research presentations also will be part of a special poster session co-sponsored with the Mass Communication and Society Division on Thursday afternoon and at the Scholar-to-Scholar poster presentation on Friday.

## Rosenberry

### From Page 3

people who are really interested in your work, and I've met colleagues at such sessions who have become close friends and collaborators because of our similar interests.

So, if your work is destined for a poster session, don't despair. Know that it met the same high standards that every other accepted paper did (and save this column to show your chair or tenure committee if you need validation of that). Enjoy the more relaxed setting to show off your fine efforts. And look for me, because I like attending them as much as I like presenting in them.

Call for Nominations  
**OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD**

AEJMC Newspaper Division  
**Deadline: April 15**

The AEJMC Newspaper Division seeks nominations for its Outstanding Educator Award. The award is open to any journalism professor who is a full-time faculty member of a bachelor degree-granting institution of higher education in the United States.

The nominee should have a demonstrated track record of achievement in preparing journalism students, advancing journalism education and promoting career development.

Please attach a nomination package consisting of the following:

1. A letter of nomination of no more than two single-spaced pages. This letter should indicate the nominator's name, title, school/organization/affiliation, e-mail address and phone number.
2. A two-page document from the nominee that lists the nominee's achievements. Links to the nominee's personal Web site, books, blogs, etc. may be included.
3. A maximum of three letters of support from the nominee's students, former students or industry professionals may also be included. Each of these letters should be no more than one page, single-spaced. These letters should be included in the submission, attached to the ONE e-mail, and not sent separately from individual letter writers. Each letter should include the following statement: "This person deserves the Newspaper Division's Outstanding Teacher Award because ..."
4. The names of two colleagues or professional associates provided by the nominee whom the selection committee might call for additional information. Include the title, e-mail address and phone number of each colleague.

Please e-mail applications and letters by April 15 to:

Brian Carroll  
 AEJMC Newspaper Division Teaching Standards Co-Chair  
 Berry College  
 bc@berry.edu

Please note in the subject line of the e-mail that it is a nomination for the AEJMC Newspaper Division Outstanding Educator Award.

## Nominations sought for PF&R Professor of the Year

The Newspaper Division is seeking nominees for the 2009 Professional Freedom & Responsibility Professor of the Year (PF&R).

The award honors an individual whose life and work show a commitment to one or all of the five areas that comprise professional freedom and responsibility values: free expression; ethics; media criticism and accountability; racial, gender, and cultural inclusiveness; and public service.

The award is open to any journalism classroom teacher who is a full-time faculty member of a bachelor's degree-granting institution of higher education.

It will be presented at the Newspaper Division meeting during the 2009 AEJMC convention in Boston.

Please send a nomination letter of no more than two pages, providing the information that explains your nominee's commitment to PF&R.

You also need to include a copy of the nominee's vita. Please note that self-nominations will not be accepted. The deadline for nominations is March 21, 2009.

If you would like to send the materials as an e-mail attachment, the e-mail address is jin-yang@memphis.edu. (Also use this e-mail address if you have any questions.)

The postal mailing address is:

Jin Yang  
 Department of Journalism  
 3711 Veterans Ave.  
 310 Meeman Journalism  
 Building  
 Memphis, TN 38152

## Special Call for Newspaper Industry Research Papers

A special refereed paper session at the national convention sponsored by the Council of Affiliates and the Newspaper Division will focus on industry-related research.

The competition offers \$300 to the top paper in this competition, which is based on a list of research ideas for research suggested by Earl J. Wilkinson of the International Newspaper Marketing Association.

That list may be found at the Newspaper Division Web site at <http://aejmc.net/newspaper/news-research.html>.

Papers are accepted on the understanding they have not been presented or published elsewhere and are not under consideration by a scholarly journal or by another scholarly or trade organization at the time of submission.

Papers submitted in response to this special call are eligible for the division's student paper and top paper awards. Papers cannot be submitted to more than one AEJMC division, nor to both the regular research competition and to a special call for papers.

Submission of papers: Papers submitted to this research panel should be marked INMA Competition in the accompanying cover note. Papers must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. (EST) April 1. All entries should follow the AEJMC Uniform Call for Papers.

Two especially important points of this call that contributors should note are that (1) all papers must be submitted electronically; no hard copy will be accepted and (2) papers with any sort of identifying information will be automatically disqualified.

Full instructions on submit-

# AEJMC Newspaper Division Call for papers: 2009 Convention, Boston

The Newspaper Division of AEJMC invites faculty and students to submit research papers regarding newspaper topics for presentation at the AEJMC Annual Convention, Aug. 5-8, 2009, in Boston.

Sessions will be devoted to theoretically based studies of newspapers or issues concerning the newspaper industry. Both qualitative and quantitative research in newspaper history, law, policy, effects, processes, use, ethics and new technologies are welcome. Papers may not be longer than 25 pages, excluding tables, figures and references. Papers must be submitted electronically no later than 11:59 p.m. (EST) April 1.

The Newspaper Division offers an open competition in which student papers compete with faculty papers. However, student authors are encouraged to submit their papers for consideration for the MacDougall Student Paper Award, \$200 and a plaque given to the author of the top student paper. Papers to be considered for the MacDougall Student Paper Award should be noted as such in the accompanying cover note. All

ing papers are posted on the AEJMC Website at [http://www.aejmc.org/\\_09call.php](http://www.aejmc.org/_09call.php). Authors will be notified whether their papers have been accepted and will receive a copy of the reviewers' comments by May 15, 2009. Questions may be directed to the Research Co-Chairs John Carvalho at [carvajp@auburn.edu](mailto:carvajp@auburn.edu) or Chris Roberts at [croberts@bama.ua.edu](mailto:croberts@bama.ua.edu).

authors of the paper must be students for the paper to be considered for this award. In addition, awards are given for the top three Newspaper Division papers. Winners receive a \$100 prize and a plaque. All papers submitted to the division are automatically considered for the top three paper awards.

All submissions will be blind refereed by a panel of independent readers.

Authors will be notified whether their papers have been accepted and will receive a copy of the reviewers' comments by May 15, 2009.

Papers are accepted on the understanding they have not been presented or published elsewhere and are not under consideration by a scholarly journal or by another scholarly or trade organization at the time of submission. Papers cannot be submitted to more than one AEJMC division, nor to both the regular research competition and to a special call for papers.

Submission of papers: All entries should follow the AEJMC Uniform Call for Papers.

Two especially important points of this call that contributors should note are that (1) all papers must be submitted electronically; no hard copy will be accepted and (2) papers with any sort of identifying information will be automatically disqualified.

Full instructions on submitting papers are posted on the AEJMC Web site at [http://www.aejmc.org/\\_09call.php](http://www.aejmc.org/_09call.php). Questions may be directed to the Research Co-Chairs, John Carvalho at [carvajp@auburn.edu](mailto:carvajp@auburn.edu) or Chris Roberts at [croberts@bama.ua.edu](mailto:croberts@bama.ua.edu)

## CALL FOR ENTRIES

### 2009 AEJMC NEWSPAPER DIVISION NEWSPAPER PROJECT AWARD

The AEJMC Newspaper Division's Newspaper Project Award recognizes publications produced by students and professors in journalism classes or as special curricular projects connected to courses. These publications must be special projects, not routine stories that were published in a newspaper. To qualify, the publication must have been edited and produced as part of the curriculum, text reported and written by students, and professors must have been responsible for editing and/or advising. Magazines, newspapers or Yellow Page-like compilations will not be accepted. Eligible publications must have been published in either the 2007-2008 or 2008-2009 academic years. Online newspaper publications are eligible and may be submitted on a DVD or CD.

Entries will be judged on writing and visual storytelling. As a result, photojournalism, layout and design that aid in storytelling will be evaluated. Online-only publications will be evaluated using the same criteria as the print submissions. However, they must be college, weekly or daily newspapers that were published online. Blogs and Web sites not affiliated with newspapers are not eligible.

The following form should be filled out and accompany the entry:

Professor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone with area code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Newspaper Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) Published: \_\_\_\_\_

Course/s or project affiliated with publication: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTACH a one-page double-spaced explanation about the newspaper project. Address why you chose this project, its target audience, special challenges the publication faced, what you and the students learned in completing this project and how it fits into your journalism curriculum.

Submissions: Entries will consist of 5 copies of a single issue of the newspaper or DVDs or CDs. Please be sure to staple copies of the entry form and the one-page explanation about the project to each of the 5 copies you submit. They must be postmarked by April 7, 2009. Address queries to [rrankney@samford.edu](mailto:rrankney@samford.edu).

Send entries to: Dr. Bernie Ankney, Samford University, Journalism and Mass Communication, 800 Lakeshore Drive, UCA 105, Birmingham, AL 35229

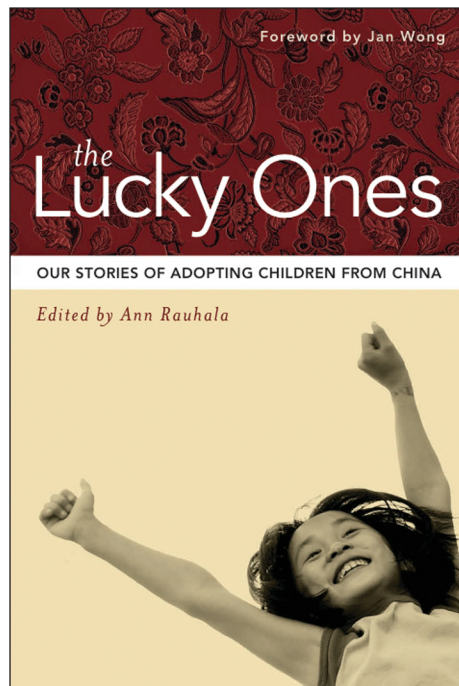
Non-Profit Organization  
US Postage Paid  
Columbia SC  
Permit No. 198

Association for Education in  
Journalism and Mass Communication  
243 Outlet Pointe Blvd., Suite A  
Columbia SC 29210

## LeadFolks

### Recognition for division members

**ANN RAUHALA**, director of newspapers in the School of Journalism at Ryerson University in Toronto, edited "The Lucky Ones," an anthology of accounts by 20 people on adopting children from China. The book was listed as a "Best of 2008" by *Adoptive Families* magazine. Rauhala is a former columnist and foreign editor of *The Globe and Mail* in Toronto.



#### **DONE SOMETHING NOTEWORTHY?**

(Except for an academic paper?)

Share it! E-mail [grundmmj@jmu.edu](mailto:grundmmj@jmu.edu)

## It's your newsletter

*The floor is open.  
Three conversation starters:*

1. **NEWS QUIZZES:**  
*Vital, Optional or Forget It?*
2. **WAYS YOUR CAMPUS  
PAPER INNOVATES**
3. **BEST JOURNALISM FILMS  
YOU'VE SHOWN IN CLASS**

*E-mail your ruminations  
or ravings to  
[grundmmj@jmu.edu](mailto:grundmmj@jmu.edu)*