CSM needs to raise status of disabilities and media in AEJMC

By George Daniels

This semester I have been leading journalism master’s students in the development and execution of an accessibility audit for the University of Alabama.

The survey is being conducted as a part of the University’s plan for making and improving the accessibility of digital resources.

In helping the students develop the survey instrument, I had to quickly get up-to-speed on the literature in accessibility, especially as it relates to measures of perceived accessibility of digital resources. I found myself wading into lots of unfamiliar journals.

At the same time as our class was developing the survey, I have a graduate student in my diversity class who is conducting research on media portrayals of disabled athletes.

Robert “Bo” Hedges won gold at the recent London Paralympics and is now looking at how people like himself are shown in the media.

He did an outstanding “research-in-progress” presentation at our Communication Diversity Research Symposium, which was held earlier this month.

I had originally recommended that Hedges read some of the previous convention papers presented in the AEJMC Media & Disability Interest Group.

AEJMC 2013

CSM panel to highlight sourcing, reporting on diversity and politics

By the Rev. Kyle Huckins

The Commission on the Status of Minorities has an exciting panel, “It’s a Journey, Not a Destination: Sourcing in Diverse Communities and Politics,” slated for Thursday, August 8 from 5-6:30 p.m.

Research studies consistently highlight a disproportionate use of elites, males and non-minorities as sources in the media. We can see this in news as well as entertainment outlets.

This lack of representation for these groups leads to stereotyping – the Rev. Jesse Jackson speaking for all African-Americans, for example – as well as insensitivity to minority and gender concerns on the part of many newspeople and audience members. The increasing diversity of the United States demands greater voice be given these segments of society.
Dear CSM members,

As I write this, the temperature in Chicago is just a couple of degrees above freezing, so the thought of a hot summer day in Washington, D.C. feels good. And, of course, it will be good to see all of you again and to hear what you’ve been up to in the last year and what’s on the horizon.

Those of you who have worked with our commission for years know that the winter months is when a lot of the heavy lifting is done for the August conference. And CSM members have been hard at work making that happen.

Our assistant newsletter editor, Dr. Kyle Huckins and the CSM Panel Committee has been at work planning for our panel. It’s titled: It’s a Journey, Not a Destination: Sourcing in Diverse Communities and Politics. The panel will include CSM members as well as other academics and civil rights experts. More details will follow in a more extensive article in our pre-convention newsletter.

This panel will be especially informative as journalists are already positioned to cover the upcoming mid-term elections and the 2016 political campaigns. You can mark your calendars in advance as the panel is scheduled from 5 to 6:30 p.m. on Aug. 8.

Later this month, a CSM/MAC selection committee will meet via conference call will meet to select the next recipient of the Lionel Barrow Jr. Award for Distinguished Achievement in Diversity Research and Education. This selection process is especially important to us because it honors the man who was at the forefront of making sure diversity and inclusion were priorities on AEJMC’s agenda. In 2005, Barrow was recognized with one of AEJMC’s highest honors, the Distinguished Service Award for his outstanding service in promoting diversity within the association and the discipline.

Past recipients of the Barrow Award include Dr. Federico Subervi, Texas State University – San Marcos (2012); Felix Gutierrez, University of Southern California (2011); Robert M. Ruggles, professor emeritus at Florida A&M University (2010); and Paula Poindexter, University of Texas School of Journalism (2009). We look forward to announcing the next winner of this prestigious honor.

I also would like to thank our officers for their work throughout the year. They include: Sharon Stringer, vice-chair; George Daniels, secretary; Masudul Biswas, newsletter editor; and Kyle Huckins, assistant newsletter editor. And I want to offer a special thanks to Sharon for representing CSM at the winter meeting in Dallas.

I look forward to seeing you all in D.C.
Spring 2013                               3

ASU Communications Professor Rev. Dr. E. K. Daufin presents a plaque to Dr. Herman Otis Howard at the conclusion of the 2013 Ida B. Wells Lecture in the Buskey Building. (Janita Poe | AL.com)

Rev. Dr. E.K. Daufin chaired the Ida B. Wells Lecture again this year at Alabama State University. Dr. Daufin also was coordinating her campus’ participation in the annual Alabama Higher Ed Day Rally in the state’s capital.

Dr. Daufin’s research paper, “White Supremacy, Fat Hurdles and Thin Privilege in Media Representation: A Layered Model for Media Hegemony and Effect,” has been accepted for presentation at the annual conference of The Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association.

Dr. Anita Fleming-Rife, special assistant to the president for Equity and Diversity at the University of Northern Colorado, received the 2013 Distinguished Educator Award by the Education Center, a Denver-area nonprofit provider of training and programs supporting African-American education. The education group presented her the award at their annual awards presentations on March 1.

The award, considered by the center to be equivalent to an “educator hall of fame award,” honors an outstanding black educator who exemplifies the highest standard of excellence in the field of education and has dedicated his or her life to teaching, inspiring and motivating students, parents and other educators to become lifelong learners. Source: News Central, University of North Colorado.

CSM Panel
(Contd. from p. 1)

Scholars report that there are ways to improve source diversity, particularly in the realm of politics, through enterprise reporting or altered journalistic routines. For example, in my days heading a statewide radio network news division in Alaska, I regularly made visits to minority-dominated parts of Anchorage, the network’s flagship city, to develop contacts and search out stories. The result was strong coverage and listenership from people in those often-overlooked groups. I was blessed to receive a commendation from the Anchorage NAACP for my efforts.

Such information – and many other tales of successes, challenges, and other circumstances – will be taken up by a distinguished panel. Members will discuss ways to help students and encourage journalism organizations to shift their coverage routines to better reflect the whole of communities and the public dialogue on political issues.

The group features a recent media practitioner (Smith), media historian (Jackson), legal and journalism scholar (Watson), and pair of officials from top minority organizations. The exchange should be lively and educational.

Panelists, subject to final confirmation, are:
- Cathy Jackson, Norfolk State
- Marquita Smith, John Brown
- Julian Teixeira, La Raza
- John Watson, American
- Eric Wingerter, NAACP

College students need role models to guide them to better reporting regarding minorities and women as well as to hear from members of disaffected groups to tell how biased or insufficient coverage hurts them. This panel should provide professors and practitioners practical yet theoretically sound ways to understand and expound upon best practices.

I want to thank my fellow members of the Planning Committee for their valuable input in putting together this program. I hope all CSM members and supporters of minority rights and responsibilities will come to hear and see this session as it unfolds with the opening of the AEJMC convention.

Rev. Kyle Huckins, Ph.D., CSM Planning Committee Chair

Achievements

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The award, considered by the center to be equivalent to an “educator hall of fame award,” honors an outstanding black educator who exemplifies the highest standard of excellence in the field of education and has dedicated his or her life to teaching, inspiring and motivating students, parents and other educators to become lifelong learners. Source: News Central, University of North Colorado.
Report

As African American colleagues exit CNN, Lemon hangs on, lectures at Alabama

By George Daniels

The status of anchors of color in cable news has been brought into question recently after two prominent faces at CNN announced plans to leave the nation’s oldest 24-hour cable news network.

CNN analyst and Former Chicago Defender Editor Roland Martin’s last day will be April 6. His contract was not renewed.

Meanwhile Starting Point Morning Show Anchor Soledad O’Brien announced plans to develop long-form documentaries such as her acclaimed “Black in America” series for CNN through her own production company. She signs off Friday, March 29th.

Shortage of Cable News Anchors of Color?

Poynter Contributor and Tampa Bay Times Media Writer Eric Deggans made a point about the departures in a March 20th column on the Poynter Institute’s Web site.

“It’s not just at CNN. MSNBC has had its own set of anchor changes in recent weeks, so far centered only on white male anchors,” Deggans wrote. “When big anchor jobs open up in cable news, why are people of color so often left on the sidelines?”

In terms of diversity, it’s worth noting that CNN has announced two “minority hires” in George Howell, an African American correspondent who will be based in Chicago and Alina Machado, a bilingual former Telemundo local anchor.

Deggans’ comments came just a few weeks after another African American anchor Don Lemon made a visit to the University of Alabama to address a standing-room-only crowd that packed a theatre of the student center. The openly-gay weekend evening anchor at CNN used the occasion to share some lessons from his 2011 book, TRANSPARENT and to tell what it was like wearing his emotions on his sleeve as he covered the recent tragic shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary.

Lemon’s Lessons

Even before his Feb. 21 campuswide evening address, Lemon talked with mass communication students in a small-group session earlier in the day, recounting war stories of moving from television market to television market in the early days of his career as a broadcast journalist.

He recalled the excitement of anchoring the news on NBC’s Weekend Today Show, a post he held before joining the team at CNN.

“You have to be bold. You cannot be afraid,” Lemon said as he recalled a professor at Louisiana State University, where he attended classes briefly, once telling him he would not make it as a broadcast journalist.

The story, which is detailed in his book, was one he shared twice during this Alabama visit.

Even as his colleagues Roland Martin and Soledad O’Brien transition to life after CNN, Lemon’s insights and lessons to the students seem remarkably appropriate, especially if one considers being on CNN the pinnacle of his/her career.

George L. Daniels is an associate professor of journalism at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa and secretary of the Commission on the Status of Minorities.
LSU to host a discussion on civil rights history and its implications

Pulitzer Prize-winning veteran journalists, civil rights leaders and scholars will congregate at Louisiana State University on April 17-18 to discuss the history of the civil rights movement and its implications for racial equality in contemporary society.

Jointly sponsored by LSU’s Manship School of Mass Communication, its Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs and the Media Diversity Forum, the program is a highlight of the school’s celebration of its 100th anniversary in journalism education.

The public is invited for April 18 panel discussions from 9 to 11 a.m. on the history of the movement and 2 to 4 p.m. on contributions history has made to understanding for equality and living together. Both will be in the Holliday Center of the Journalism Building on the LSU campus.

Keynote speaker for the event will be Dorothy Cotton, former education director for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) who worked closely with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders.

Speakers include: Pulitzer Prize winners Hank Klibanoff and Gene Roberts, who also co-authored “The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle and the Awakening of a Nation”; Moses Newson, a pioneering civil rights journalist with the Afro-American Newspapers, who covered stories throughout the South and the rest of the country during the height of the movement in the 1950s and 1960s; John Seigenthaler, former reporter and executive at The Tennessean in Nashville, who served as special assistant to Attorney General Robert Kennedy during the civil rights era; and Arlene Notoro Morgan, associate dean of the Columbia School of Journalism, co-editor of “The Authentic Voice: The Best Reporting on Race and Ethnicity.”

Adding the scholarly perspective will be Dr. Danielle L. McGuire, assistant professor of history at Wayne State University in Detroit and award-winning author of At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power and Dr. Frank Harold Wilson, professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, author of Race, Class, and the Postindustrial City: William Julius Wilson and the Promise of Sociology.

Source: Media Diversity Forum, LSU

Texas State organized Latino media conference

By Federico Subervi

The Center for the Study of Latino Media & Markets of the School of Journalism & Mass Communication at Texas State University-San Marcos hosted the 4th International Conference on the State of Spanish-Language and Latino-Oriented Media on February 21 - 23.

In 20 sessions, 52 presentations were made based on research papers and panel discussions on a whole range of issues.

Faculty, students, and media professionals arrived from 39 different universities, 14 states, and five countries: the US, Barcelona, Colombia, Mexico, and Puerto Rico. As a pre-conference activity, on February 21, the Center also hosted the all-day 4th Annual Summit of the Latino Public Radio Consortium, which brought media professionals working to improve public radio for the nation’s growing Latino populations.

Source: Media Diversity Forum, LSU
Disabilities
(Contd. from p. 1)
I searched on the AEJMC Web site and could not find a link to Disability Studies group. Finally after some generally web searches, I found an old list of AEJMC papers from several years ago. I sent several e-mails to people listed on the Media & Disability Interest Group web site.

“It went dormant a few years ago” said Beth Haller, professor of journalism and new media at Towson University. “Not enough people attended its sessions or participated.”

What a disappointment! Does this mean that AEJMC should not serve as a resource for instructors like me who provide instruction on disability as one type of under-represented group in the mass media?

Those who are disabled are a minority and their status should be of concern to us on the AEJMC Commission of the Status of Minorities. Maybe the topics of disabilities and media don’t warrant a separate AEJMC group or unit, but we bear some responsibility as a commission to advocate on behalf of this minority group.

At future conventions, the Commission should work with programming units such as the Minorities and Communication Division to ensure there is convention program focused on teaching, research and PF&R in the area of disabilities.

A viable emphasis on the nexus between media and disabled is not just of concern to those like my graduate student Mr. Hedges or others who are disabled. Able-bodied scholars also should have this on their radar. The disabled have not gone out of style or out of vogue at AEJMC. I believe it’s up to CSM to send that message.

Robert Hedges, a graduate student in George Daniels’ Spring 2013 Communication and Diversity class, shared his research on media portrayals of disabled athletes. Hedges won a gold medal in the London Paralympics last summer.

George L. Daniels is an associate professor of journalism at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa and secretary of the Commission on the Status of Minorities.

Share your diversity syllabus with Media Diversity Forum

The Media Diversity Forum, a project of LSU Manship School’s, maintains a Web resource on media diversity syllabi. If you teach a course on diversity in mass communication and journalism or in communication, you can share your syllabus with the Forum. LINK to syllabi page

You can email your syllabus at mediadiversityforum@gmail.com.

This resource page is an on-going project, and the Forum updates it with more syllabi and up-to-date versions of existing ones. This resource page currently includes 41 syllabi on media diversity.

Source: Media Diversity Forum
Report

Year of remembrances sparks discovery, dialogue about civil rights in the deep south

By George Daniels

We’re one-quarter of the way through a monumental year of remembrances of one of the most important 12-month periods in American history.

It was in 1963 that George Wallace stood in the Schoolhouse Door here at my institution, the University of Alabama, trying to prevent what were then called “Negro” students from enrolling. Hours after Gov. Wallace stepped aside on June 11 and on the same night as President John F. Kennedy gave a nationwide address on civil rights, Mississippi NAACP Leader Medgar Evers was gunned down in front of his home in Jackson, Miss.

August of 1963 Dr. King gave one of the most memorable and most quoted addresses of all time—“I Have A Dream Speech” during the historic March on Washington. A month later in September 1963 the deaths of four little girls in Sunday School at Birmingham’s 16th Street Baptist Church would capture the attention of the nation and the world. Later in November 1963, President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas.

While I wasn’t alive for those events, as a journalism professor and media diversity instructor at the University of Alabama, I am involved in my own personal journey of discovery to learn as much as I can about these events so that I can facilitate discussions with my students. The unit in my upcoming Race, Gender and Media Class on the media’s role in the Civil Rights movement will take on special meaning this summer.

Next month, I will make the 2 ½ hour drive from Tuscaloosa to Oxford, Mississippi to The University of Mississippi for a special address by Myrlie Evers-Williams, the widow of Medgar Evers, who will open the Society of Professional Journalists Mid-South Regional Conference April 5th. Her visit to Oxford is part of Ole Miss’ effort to celebrate the life of the slain civil rights leader.

Seeing Evers-Williams again will be a semi-reunion for me as I served with Evers-Williams over a decade ago on the NAACP National Youth Work Committee. You may remember back in January of this year Evers-Williams became the first woman to give the invocation at a presidential inauguration when she prayed for President Obama at his second swearing-in ceremony.

Only now do I fully understand the significance of people like Myrlie and Medgar Evers or Autherine Lucy Foster, the first student who made an unsuccessful attempt to integrate the University of Alabama in 1956. These aren’t just figures in history. They are real people who paved the way for me to be where I am leading students of all colors and backgrounds as a tenured faculty member at Alabama’s flagship institution.

Photo Credit: George Daniels

Barnett Wright, author of “1963”
Books on Diversity

By Felecia Ross


*Dr. Felecia Ross is the Chair of AEJMC’s Minorities and Communication Division.

Clint Wilson’s two books

The 4th edition of “Racism, Sexism and the Media” by Clint Wilson (Howard), Felix Gutierrez (Southern California) and Lena Chao (Calif. State, Los Angeles) was published by Sage Publications in September 2012.


Remembrances

(Contd. from p. 7)

Recently, I was able to bring to campus Barnett Wright, a former managing editor of The Philadelphia Tribune who now works as government affairs reporter for Alabama’s largest newspaper, The Birmingham News. This month, Wright shared with a roomful of University of Alabama faculty, staff and students lessons learned in writing his book, 1963: How the Birmingham Civil Rights Movement Changed America and the World.

The commemorations of 1963 should extend beyond Alabama and the region of the Deep South. How can we as journalism and mass communication instructors mark this anniversary in the research we produce, the teaching and service that we do? Perhaps there’s room for a special panel at our upcoming conference in the nation’s capital, which will occur just a couple of weeks before the historic March on Washington?

I challenge my colleagues in AEJMC to think of ways to join me in this quest for discovery and dialogue during such an important year for our nation.

George L. Daniels teaches courses in Communication and Diversity and Race, Gender and Media as an associate professor of journalism at The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. He is serving as his College’s coordinator of events for the THROUGH THE DOORS: Courage, Change, Progress, a yearlong commemoration of the integration of the University of Alabama in June 1963.
Minutes

Commission on the Status of Minorities/ AEJMC
Annual Members’ Meeting
Chicago, IL
August 11, 2012

Curtis Lawrence, Presiding

Submitted by Sharon Stringer, CSM Vice-chair

I. Call to order

II. Minutes 2011- Janette Dates of Howard University moved to approved last year’s minutes and Petra Guerra seconded.

III. Chair’s Report

Curtis thanked George Daniels of University of Alabama for his effort to get the CSM listserv up and running.

He acknowledged Federico Subvervi of Texas State for winning the Barrow Award. He also emphasized the need for more PR about the award and the need for more applicants.

Petra Guerra of Wisconsin, Paula Poindexter of Texas, and Calvin Hall of Appalachian State in North Carolina will serve with Curtis on the Barrow Award committee for 2013.

Curtis indicated that he will talk to Jennifer McGill about getting the Barrow Award and its winner highlighted in the conference program each year.

Janette Dates agreed to serve as reviewer for the Tankard Book Award.

Masudul Biswas of Shippensburg was acknowledged for his great production of the CSM newsletter.

IV. Newsletter- Curtis indicated that two editions need to be produced each year: one before the August conference and one before the Midwinter conference. Pictures are also needed for the newsletter and should be emailed to MKBiswas@ship.edu

V. Panel ideas for 2013 Convention- The following people agreed to work on the CSM panel for next year’s convention: Cathy Jackson of Norfolk State, Rev. Kyle Huckins of Indiana Wesleyan, Sherry Williams, and Marquita Smith of John Brown University in Arkansas. The topic for the CSM session was broadly identified as “Covering Race and Politics.”

VI. New Business- CSM has agreed to develop tipsheets acknowledging the efforts of AEJMC divisions and interest groups to incorporate diversity into the organization and the discipline.

Diana Rios of Connecticut and Kathleen McElroy, a doctoral student at University of Texas at Austin, will work on developing the sheets. Curtis will talk with Jennifer McGill to acquire the necessary data from AEJMC. The data are to be collected by the Midwinter conference.

VII. Adjournment.

Diana Rios moved to adjourn and Petra seconded.