

11-1-1988

Inside Journalism

Columbia College Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.colum.edu/inside_journalism



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Recommended Citation

Columbia College Chicago, "Inside Journalism" (1988). *Inside Journalism*. 5.
https://digitalcommons.colum.edu/inside_journalism/5

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Publications at Digital Commons @ Columbia College Chicago. It has been accepted for inclusion in Inside Journalism by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Columbia College Chicago. For more information, please contact drossetti@colum.edu.

INSIDE JOURNALISM

A Newsletter Published by the Journalism Department of Columbia College

NEW FACE AROUND THE PLACE

Ken Smikle, Chronicle advisor

Dressed in gray pinstripe slacks and a crisp white shirt with a red tie, Ken Smikle looks like a successful publisher. And no wonder.

Ken is the publisher and editor of **Target Market News**, a monthly that he describes as "the Advertising Age of the black consumer market." Ken is also **Columbia Chronicle's** faculty advisor, a position he accepted this semester.

"I'm interested in students and I want to give them the benefit of the knowledge I've gained. I want students to make that connection between what we do here and the real world -- I want to give insight."

NEW POLICIES

Ken is not the only new addition to the **Chronicle**; coming with some fresh staff members and better equipment, there is also a new policy.

"I want to get students from all

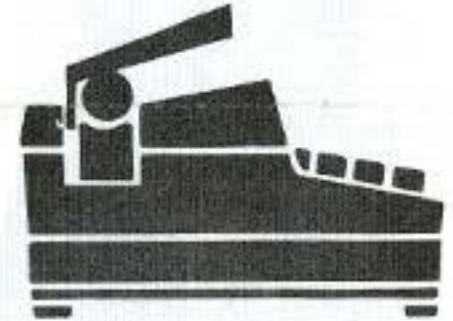
departments involved," Ken explains. "I want students from film, art and science to write for us. We have variable credit hours that allow the student to determine the amount of time to devote to the **Chronicle**. The avenues of participation are opening up."

Ken has been at the **Chronicle** only a short time, but he has already initiated these changes and plans more.

"We're moving the paper into a new format in terms of design and content. The primary focus will be on student life at Columbia, but we're going to add new things to every issue," he says.

Ken is also determined to make the work experience on the **Chronicle** as realistic as on any commercial publication. "This is a start in the business. We've taken over some means of production and we're computerizing as many steps in the operation as we can. The changes that are taking place here mirror the same changes taking place in most newsrooms today."

Ken started his journalism career



12 years ago and is still just as enthusiastic about his profession as when he began.

"I don't know of any other single endeavor where you can tap into everything: business, creativity and artistry. It's just an incredible business to be in; there are just so many possibilities." --Debra Matei

EXPERIMENTS IN WRITING

The Columbia College Science Writing Program

The world of science is becoming increasingly popular today and, in turn, the field of science reporting has expanded. Technology magazines have flooded the newsstands and newspapers often have special "Discovery" sections filled with science-related stories.

SCIENCE WRITERS ARE NEEDED

Columbia's journalism department has responded to this need by joining the science department in the formation of a Science Writing and Reporting Program. The objective of this curriculum is to give students the technical knowledge necessary for writing about scientific issues. This program is already grabbing public attention; it was recently mentioned in the weekly



Ken Smikle, new **Chronicle** advisor, gives pointers to writers Jeff Copeland and Tina LaPorta.

journalism magazine, **Editor & Publisher.**

The program is coordinated by Jeff Lyon, a 1987 Pulitzer Prize winner in explanatory journalism. Lyon works at the **Chicago Tribune** on its Sunday magazine.



Jeff Lyon, a Pulitzer Prize winning writer for the **Chicago Tribune**, coordinates Columbia's Science Writing Program.

"It's becoming increasingly difficult to get a job in journalism unless you specialize in something," says Jeff. With the science explosion, there are numerous jobs available for those journalists who possess the skills to write knowledgeably about scientific issues.

SCIENCE ISN'T FOR NERDS

A stodgy attitude towards science has kept students from recognizing its opportunities in the past. "Science has gotten a bad name," says Jeff. "People used to perceive it as a dull subject -- now they're realizing that it is a very interesting field.

"You don't have to be an Isaac Newton or an Einstein to become a science journalist. All you need is an interest in science and good writing or broadcast skills."

The program requires a total of 60 credit hours: 24 science, 33 journalism and three credits in an English Department technical writing class -- plus, of course, the credits needed for the bachelor's degree in arts. Because the course is new, upperclassmen may qualify for

special consideration. Students who complete the science writing program also receive a certificate, recognizing their specialty, in addition to their degree.

If you want to discover everything from A-bombs to zygotes and learn to write about them, consider the Columbia College Science Writing and Reporting Program. Make an appointment with Jeff Lyon in the science department (663-1600, ext. 360) for more information. --Lynda Horton

STUDENTS WRITING SPORTS

Columbia's working professionals

It's okay to dream of flying to Barcelona, Spain, to cover the next summer Olympics, but if you're really serious about being a sportswriter, the place to start is here -- with a local job.

Columbians Jeff Copeland, 21, a senior, and Bill Scheibe, 20, a junior are doing just that. They both work for the **Southtown Economist**, a Chicago daily paper.

Jeff is a sports stringer who got his position by networking with Bill while the two were taking a News Reporting I class.

"I mentioned I was interested in sports and Bill gave my name to the sports editor," says Jeff. "The editor called."

Jeff covers high school games in the Chicago area and the South and Southwest suburbs. He averages two stories per week.

Jeff has written 80 stories and has used his two years with the paper to fulfill the requirements for an internship. Upon graduation, Jeff plans to continue his sports writing-job on a full-time basis.

Bill found his position on the newspaper three years ago through a "cold" mailing -- in other words, he sent an unsolicited resume to the newspaper. He received a response, and started at a junior level, but, through persistence, was appointed as the high school sports coordinator. Although he has never had an internship, Bill plans to do one during spring semester.

"I decided this is what I want to

do and I am definitely going to stay in sports," says Bill. He coordinates the coverage of tennis, soccer, and wrestling events. He has covered the Bulls, the Cubs, and the Sting and he has, he says, "...like 1,000" clips to his credit.

When hiring a reporter for the paper, Ed Koziarski, metro editor of the **Southtown Economist** looks for an aggressive individual with good news sense, people skills, and the potential to become a good writer.

"Get professional experience as soon as possible by working with a newspaper, any newspaper," Ed advises.

Whether Jeff and Bill get to Barcelona remains to be seen, but they certainly have a headstart for the plane. --Mary Fleming

HEY! YOU GOT A PROBLEM?

The journalism tutor

Just because you're one of Columbia's brightest students doesn't mean you won't occasionally run into a writing problem--even in your journalism classes.

Sometimes you just can't write

AL VARGO, 1938-1988

Allen Vargo, an instructor in our fledgling magazine program, died of a heart attack on September 4. He was only 50.

I knew Al from my first days at **Playboy** where he was production manager. He left after 23 years to join **DDB Needham Worldwide** in 1984 as vice president, director of print resources.

I knew, when I asked him to teach at Columbia, that he would bring expertise, warmth and enthusiasm to the assignment. Indeed, the eulogist at his funeral talked more about Al's one semester at Columbia, about the fun he had and about how he loved his students, than about all the important jobs he had in magazine production.

Al was a good friend. I'll miss him, and so will Columbia. --Nat Lehrman

that lead or you've forgotten how to organize a news story. The Writing Center's Journalism Tutor is ready to help J-students address their special writing problems.

Kristi Hays, 22, is a senior at Columbia College, an editor of this newsletter and an excellent journalism student. In addition, she is this year's journalism tutor at the Columbia Writing Center, seventh floor of the Wabash Building.

Kristi works in the Writing Center on Monday from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and on Tuesday from 1:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Also, journalism graduate student Molly Miller works in the Writing Center. While Molly isn't a designated journalism tutor, she can help J-students with their questions. Molly is at the Center on Wednesday from 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., Monday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The idea for a journalism tutor was first conceived last spring by Carolyn Hulse of the Journalism Department and the former director of the Writing Center, Rose Blouin. The new director is Garnett Kilberg. "Kristi has just started this year and already she's been very busy," says Garnett. "Anyone interested should sign up as soon as possible because open appointments are filling up quickly."

If this program is just what you were looking for -- or if you need help in other writing classes, too, call the Writing Center to make an appointment. The number is 663-

1600, ext. 698. Or stop by their office. --Brenda Herrmann

THE JOURNALISM DEGREE

More specialization and more students

If your journalism classes seem a little more crowded, there's good reason: The number of journalism graduates increased by 25 percent from 1986 to 1987. A study conducted by The Dow Newspaper Fund and Ohio State University School of Journalism surveyed 1987 journalism graduates from 58 U.S. universities, including Columbia College, in order to obtain timely information about employment opportunities in the media fields.

According to the survey results, approximately 26,350 students received a bachelor's degree with a major in journalism or mass communication in the spring of 1987. Of these students, 66 percent were female and ten percent were minorities -- about the same percentages as the two previous years.

Broadcasting was the fastest growing facet of the media, accounting for 22.7 percent of graduate degrees, up five percent from 1986. Specialties of advertising, public relations and news editorial all dropped, although it was found that women were most likely to study advertising or public relations while men and minorities were more likely to major in broadcast journalism.

GOOD GRADES, GOOD JOBS

Journalism students take their studies seriously: One quarter of the students reported grade averages of A or A- and another 51 percent reported B+ or B grade averages. News editorial graduates had the highest grades of any media-related field.

In addition to classwork, more journalism students are opting for internships and fewer for work on the college papers. The number of graduates who participated in college press (46.2 percent) decreased 12 percent, while the number enrolled in internship activities (78.5 percent) increased ten percent. Fortunately for school papers, however, most editorial journalists worked on school papers.

Despite the influx of journalism graduates into the work place, the number of graduates finding jobs remained steady with previous years. Approximately half of all 1987 graduates found jobs with media-related companies while 27.2 percent found jobs unrelated to their major. Less than ten percent went on to graduate school.

News editorial students were the most likely to get jobs in their desired fields and they were also the most likely to attend graduate school. About 40 percent of these students had jobs with a daily or weekly newspaper or wire service when surveyed. Only 17 percent had gone into non-media occupations.

Although the number of graduates in media-related studies increased in 1987, the average salary did not. Fresh graduates working at daily newspapers had a projected annual income of \$13,900, exactly the same as in 1986. Unfortunately, not everything changes! --Brenda Herrmann

GOLDEN CHANCE FOR MINORITIES

If you are a minority student with plans to graduate in January or June, a great way to get started in the journalism world is through a group called METPRO -- the Minority Editorial Training Program.

METPRO is a two-year training program operated by Times Mirror

WANT 1,000 BUCKS?

J-students have a chance to get \$1,000 for school next year with the new Columbia College Merit Scholarship.

The school recently announced this award which will be given for the first time for the fall 1989 semester. "The program was established to recognize student achievement and to assist students in paying tuition and fees," says Hermann Conaway, Dean of Student Services.

Each department--including the journalism department--will give \$1,000 and even undeclared majors can sign up for the scholarship as there will be categories for them, also.

To qualify for this scholarship, students need to have completed 30 credit hours at Columbia College, be full-time students, have a GPA of 3.0 or better and be able to demonstrate outstanding achievement--especially within their department. The award is not renewable.

Interested? Better rush to the Financial Aid office and get the pink Merit Scholarship Application because the deadline is December 16, 1988. --Dan Gilio

at the *Los Angeles Times* and at *Newsday*. METPRO's goal is to increase the number of minority journalists working at papers across the country by involving them in a hands-on program at a major U.S. newspaper.

METPRO has two branches to its program: Reporting, for photographers and reporters, and Editing, for copy editors.

The first year of the program finds participants in intensive training in the newsrooms of the *L.A. Times* or *Newsday*, two large dailies. Those who complete the first phase successfully are then assigned to the staff of a Times Mirror newspaper. (These papers include the *L.A. Times*, *Greenwich Time*, *The Morning Call* and the *Baltimore Sun*.)

During the first year of the program, participants are provided with housing or a housing allowance, a weekly stipend and medical benefits. During the second year, when the trainee is working at a paper, he will receive pay and benefits according to the paper's policies.

METPRO is open to Blacks, Latinos, Asians and Native Americans who are interested in a newspaper career. Trainees are selected through writing or photography samples, letters of recommendation, college transcripts, personal interviews, editing tests, essays and an evaluation by a panel of editors.

To receive a METPRO Reporting application, contact METPRO Reporting Director, *L.A. Times*, Times Mirror Square, Los Angeles, California 90053. For a METPRO Editing application, contact METPRO Editing Director, *Newsday*, 235 Pinelawn Rd., Melville, New York 11747. --Kristi Hays

A FUNNY THING

...happened to me on the way to becoming a writer

This is the first in, we hope, a series of anecdotes about some of the strange things that occur on the way to our profession. Instructors

and students are encouraged to contribute.

I was 20 years old and a sophomore at Brooklyn College, majoring in English, and dreaming some day of becoming a writer. It was winter of 1950, and we enjoyed a three week intersession, during which I sought "full-time" employment to squirrel a few dollars away for spring.

I saw an ad in the *New York Times* for a typist with a large textile house in downtown Manhattan. I could touch-type fairly well, and I applied for it. I took a test, was interviewed perfunctorily by the personnel director and was waiting in the ante-room of his office to be escorted to the typing section.

While waiting, I was approached by a very non-descript looking man. He said to me, "Who are you?"

I didn't feel at all intimidated by this man, because I didn't know him, and all that was at stake was a three-week job in any case.

"I'm Nat Lehrman," I replied. "Who are you?"

He didn't respond. He simply said, "What can you do?"

"Anything," I replied, with uncharacteristic cockiness. But, as I said, who the hell was this guy anyway?

"Can you write?" he asked.

"Of course, I can."

"Are you a good writer?"

"I'm terrific."

With that, he turned to the personnel director and said, "I like this guy. He's got spunk. I'm taking him with me."

At this point I began to get nervous. This man had more authority than I'd given him credit for.

We went up to a conference room, where there was a meeting of vice presidents. It turned out that this man was the senior vice president.

He said, "This is Nat Lehrman. He's got a terrific attitude. He's going to write for us. But I guarantee he'll go a lot farther than that."

Now I was terrified. I sat through the meeting, sweating profusely, and then the senior VP led me out and down to another department.

"This man," he said to the department head, "is going to be one of our

rising stars. And he can write. Put him to work."

The department head looked puzzled, walked me to a desk, and gave me a large piece of graph paper. "Here are a bunch of bills," he said. "Record them on the graph paper."

Anyone who has ever worked with me knows that my handwriting is absolutely undecipherable. But I did my best and turned the graph paper in at the end of the day.

"Good God," said the department head. "I thought you could write!"

Write? They meant **handwriting**? After that terrific build up, they hired me as a scribe?

The next day I was in the typing department.

It wasn't a bad experience. I stayed on part time after my three weeks was up, and worked myself up to 80 words per minute on an IBM electric. Now, when I write, I may not write well, but I write faster than hell. --Nat Lehrman

INSIDE JOURNALISM

A newsletter produced by and for students of the Journalism Department

COLUMBIA COLLEGE
CHICAGO

600 S. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60605

EDITOR

Brenda Herrmann

MANAGING EDITOR

Mary Fleming

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Crystal Downs

Daniel Gilio

Kristi Hays

Debra Matei

Carol Soldat

CONTRIBUTORS

Lynda Horton

Carla Jones

ADMIN. EDITOR

Bobbi Rathert

FACULTY ADVISOR

Carolyn Hulse

CHAIRMAN

Nat Lehrman

Nov., 1988, Vol. 3, No. 1