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# Inside Journalism

Columbia College Chicago

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# INSIDE JOURNALISM

DECEMBER 1989

A Newsletter Published by the Journalism Department of Columbia College

## MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

The scholarship awards for each department, first awarded last year, are now being doubled.

You can qualify for one by applying for the Columbia College Merit Scholarship.

Two students from each major area of study will be selected by departmental faculty for this \$1,000 award, which was established to recognize student achievement and to assist in paying tuition and fees.

Full-time j-students who have completed a minimum of 30 semester hours at Columbia (at time of application), with a 3.0 or higher G.P.A are eligible. Outstanding achievement in journalism is a plus. Sorry, 1990 graduates are not eligible.

Applications and information may be obtained from the Financial Aid Office, in the Michigan Building, Room 603.

The application deadline is January 5, 1990.

—Tanya Bonner

## WAR STORIES

*Are they always valuable lessons?*

Vezna Bozic is fed up with some j-department teachers. In a recent letter to the editor, published in the *Columbia Chronicle*, she says, "We want to know how, not who."

Bozic's letter complained of teachers using class time as a forum for their "war stories;" others argue that this kind of illustration makes the material come alive. Some students feel war stories, while they can be informative, are sometimes used as a substitute for real teaching.

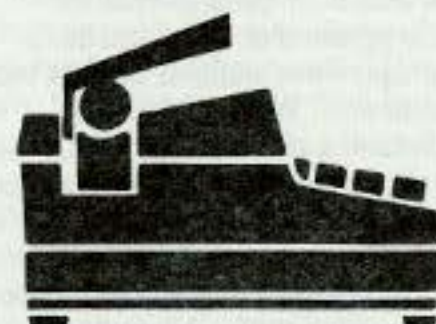
"I'm not learning what I need to know from this teacher," says a j-student. "All he ever talks about is where he works and what he did that day." She adds that this information would be helpful if she had already mastered the class material. "He feels that we can just read the textbook and know enough for the midterm and final. If that's true, why do we need him?"

Instructors agree that war stories are sometimes overused, but are

quick to point out their potential value.

"I can't think of anything that conveys knowledge in journalism better than an example of how problems are solved in the real world," says instructor Mike Lyons, chief investigator of the Better Government Association. He adds that two types of journalism exist—the kind taught in college and the kind practiced in real world newsrooms. "War stories give some perspective to the fact there are a number of ways to solve a particular problem. When you're confronted with the reality of a situation, it's a completely different decision making process."

Instructor P.J. Bednarski, a writer for the *Sun-Times*, says he thinks his students enjoy his tales from the front lines. "I teach a beginning writing course where you're trying to convey rather boring material to the students," Bednarski says his stories give students a glimpse of their future, and the exciting situations they will encounter, if they continue their education. But, Bednarski adds, "Stories should have a moral that is useful to the student."



Instructor David Silverberg, an ad salesman for *Woman's Day*, offers some guidelines. "War stories are bad when a teacher uses a personal reminiscence to aggrandize himself. But if the information is germane to the subject matter and conveys a substantive lesson, the story can benefit the students."

Silverberg sympathizes with students stuck with a di-hard war story teacher. "I can't imagine anyone wanting to listen to someone's life history every week."

The moral of the controversy over war stories seems to be: they're okay if they point the student in the right direction and help win the battle with boredom.

—Sheridan Chaney

## WGN'S JORDAN TALKS TV JOURNALISM

**Hairspray not included**

"If more TV journalists had the basic credentials and writing skills



Robert Jordan



that print journalists have, we'd have better newscasts," says Robert Jordan, WGN-TV reporter and anchor.

Jordan says broadcast news has developed a reputation for inadequacy, which stems from misconception. Students tend to assume a TV journalist's appearance is more important than his reporting skills.

"Journalism students with great writing talent tend to shy away from TV news," Jordan says. "They think their talent will be more appreciated and utilized in print journalism."

He refutes that belief and encourages these students to enter broadcast news. "We need them."

Jordan, a 19-year veteran of broadcasting, has worked in both local and network news. He says in the past TV journalists were hired for their appearance and charisma, rather than their writing skills. According to Jordan, news directors today take those qualities into consideration, but writing and communications talent head their priority list.

"Occasionally, a reporter or anchor will get hired because he has a great audition tape," he says. "But when he gets out on the street, he needs to be able to write in his head and think on his feet."

He says an effective TV journalist must be multifaceted. "A good reporter has to know how to gather information, sometimes on the spot, and be able to convey that information in a way that makes sense."

Students who model themselves after the handsome but dense network anchor William Hurt portrayed in the film *Broadcast News*, may never

make it in the world of broadcast.

"As the TV journalism market tightens, writing skills will continue to become more and more important," Jordan concludes.

—Irene Lobo

## CHRONICLE: NEW AND IMPROVED

This year the *Columbia Chronicle* received a much-needed facelift courtesy of editor Allison Mohr and her staff.

The most visible difference is the Chicago skyline complete with blue logo atop the front page. "I found out we could afford a color plate, so we added the blue."

Mohr's staff also replaced the much-maligned sports page with "The Backpage," which serves as an information center for busy people. "Students no longer have to read the whole paper to see what's going on," says Mohr.

The changes represent a brave step for the new staff. "The only way to get better is to take chances and try something different," says Mohr. She says other important changes affected the structure of the management. Executive editor Karen Brody and managing editor Mitch Hurst share equally in the decision-making process. "But I'll take the blame for anything," adds Mohr.

Only four or five seasoned staffers lay out the paper this year. "It's more work for us, but it's the only way we can insure the quality. We're not going to siphon off work because we have bodies here," explains Mohr.



Karen Brody, executive editor

The photo-journalism has also improved, due in large part to Lou Zimianitis, who is a well-organized photo editor.

Mohr says all students are welcome to get involved with the *Chronicle*, regardless of major. Between 15 and 20 of the paper's stringers aren't journalism majors. A number of these will help the paper devote more ink to a variety of stories, especially dance and theater. "We think the 11th Street campus has really been ignored in the past."

Unfortunately, the staff began the semester with a bomb instead of a bang. The first issue was put together under a tight—four-day—deadline. The editors were also confronted with antagonistic desktop publishing equipment. "The computer had a mind of its own that first week," recalls Mohr. Fortunately, with experience on the part of the staff, the computer is now editor-friendly.

Seniors Mohr and Brody will graduate at the close of this semester; managing editor Mitch Hurst and his senior staff will fill the vacancies, and should continue to produce what Mohr hopes is "something we can be proud of."

—Sheridan Chaney

## NEW SENIOR HONORS SEMINAR

In recognition of the rising quality of journalism students at Columbia College, the department is adding an Honors component to the major. Starting this spring, outstanding senior journalism students will be invited to participate in a Senior Honors Seminar that will lead to graduation with honors in the major.

The three-credit course, which will have an enrollment limit of 12, will offer students the opportunity to do a



Allison Mohr, editor-in-chief of the *Columbia Chronicle*



significant piece of professional-level writing, suitable for publication. Students will receive guidance at every stage of their projects from Carolyn Hulse, Director of the News Reporting and Writing program, and from a wide array of top media professionals who will run "clinics" on topics relevant to student work.

An important advantage of the seminar format is the opportunity it affords each student for "brainstorming" about his or her ideas and work with other honor students who are similarly motivated and equally talented.

Depending on individual interests, seminar students may write a magazine article, a feature or interpretive story for newspapers, or a piece intended for broadcast. Each project will involve extensive research, source development, interviewing and rewrite. The project in its final form should serve as a sample of the student's best writing, as he or she sets out to find employment in journalism.

Students who successfully complete the seminar project will be awarded a certificate designating that he or she is an Honors Graduate in Journalism. In addition, each student will be given a special letter of commendation that can be used in job applications or for admission to graduate programs.

Any first or second-semester senior journalism major who has completed News Reporting I and II and has a GPA of 3.0 or better is eligible to apply for admission to the seminar. Students who meet these qualifications and are interested in taking the seminar this Spring (Tuesdays, 10-12:50 p.m.) should see Carolyn Hulse in room 500-M or call 663-1600, ext. 426. Written permission is required before registration.

—Carolyn Hulse  
Director

News Reporting and Writing

## BROKAW OPENS NEW NBC TOWER

"We control the levers of criticism in journalism and we are inclined to draw attention to everyone else's wrong-doing but our own. . . we must not shy away from introspection."

So said NBC news anchor and

reporter Tom Brokaw at Chicago's new NBC Tower, a structure seemingly designed for introspection. He was speaking at a benefit dinner for the Better Government Association (BGA), an organization of lawyers and investigative reporters who expose corruption in government.

The BGA's executive director, Terry Brunner, and chief investigator, Mike Lyons, teach in Columbia's j-department.

Brokaw says it is time to rethink investigative journalism and scrutinize the practices within the profession.

He suggested making every new journalist the subject of an investigative piece, because "we need a personal appreciation of our effect on others."



Tom Brokaw

"Reckless behavior by the media is absorbed by Americans and it lands in their consciences as fact," he says.

Brokaw also criticizes the media's tendency to rely on anonymous information and attribute it to "an insider" or "a source."

"Anonymity is too frequently relied on and given," he says. "Although anonymous sources are crucial to the free flow of information, offers of anonymity ought to come last, not first."

Brokaw concludes that the First Amendment, which guarantees free speech, "Protects us from unjust laws, but it can't protect us from ourselves—only we can."

—Jacqueline Podzius

## HAVE YOU COME A LONG WAY, BABY?

When Mary Richards was hired as an assistant producer at WJM-TV on

the first episode of "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" 19 years ago, women across the country saw something rarely seen before on television: A woman with a powerful position in broadcast.

Women thought this would be the beginning of a beautiful friendship between them and television, which traditionally had portrayed them as inferior, both intellectually and emotionally. But they were wrong. Nothing happened.

Today, television has tried to patch things up, with "Murphy Brown," a sitcom about another female TV Journalist (Candice Bergen). But, according to panelists at the semester's first meeting of the student chapter of Women in Communications Inc., the comedy succeeds in showing "the more things change, the more they stay the same."

Images of women in media roles were discussed after viewing the first episodes of these two shows.

J-instructor Norma Green said even though Mary Richards was named an assistant producer, she comes across as very vulnerable, and expects to start off in an entry-level job, because a woman at that time was not viewed as capable of holding a higher position.

Joan Erdman, anthropology instructor, said the sitcom "Murphy Brown" goes to the opposite extreme in its portrayal of women. She said there is a complete gender reversal. "She's a woman playing a man," Erdman said. "She's rude and selfish. She puts people down. She's breaking all the rules."

"There is a myth that when women do get the power, they're going to use it to hurt people," said advertising instructor Margaret Sullivan.

Murphy Brown is a lovely but tough investigative reporter for a news magazine show called "FYI." In the first episode, she has just returned from taking a cure at the Betty Ford Clinic. She discovers that the show's new producer (Grant Shaud) is a mere kid. "While I was getting maced at the Democratic Convention in '68," Bergen complains to her new boss, "you were wondering if you'd ever meet Adam West [of Batman fame]."

Panelists saw Murphy Brown as Mary Tyler Moore 19 years later be-



## COMING SOON TO A J-DEPARTMENT NEAR YOU...

The j-department is planning to expand its list of publications by turning students on to a magazine that tunes in to what's happening in Chicago.

The magazine will step into dance, look into photography, paint a picture of the art scene and listen to the sounds in music. Tentatively titled *Chicago Arts and Entertainment*, the magazine will cover events in Chicago that relate to students' majors at Columbia. A prototype will be completed this spring and the first issue will be printed in April of 1991.

"Because the magazine is annual, it can't be timely, but it will survey the state of the arts in the city," says Don Gold, director of the project and of the j-department's magazine program. "The publication will note what's new and how the arts are changing as they are practiced in Chicago. Some critical judgment will be added to spice it up."

Gold and four j-students have been planning the content, design, balance and budget of the 96-page publication. In the fall, Gold will be looking for a few "smart, imaginative and informed students who know how to write and edit" to complete the final product. Those students will receive independent study credit. "If you want to understand magazines, you have to learn the detailed mechanics that form the final product," says Michael Kiefer, Magazine Article Writing instructor. *Chicago Arts and Entertainment* will be one tool j-students can use to learn these mechanics.

A New York Times article reviewing the recent American Magazine Conference said the industry is doing well in comparison with the newspaper business. During the past four years, the number of consumer magazines has increased by an average of 80 magazines annually. The j-department is joining in the enthusiasm.

—Arlene Furlong

cause underneath the toughness, she is a very vulnerable woman. Sullivan pointed to parts of the show where Bergen says, "My dad always told me..." or when she snaps at the secretary, or the mere fact that her boss is a male—all of which show that perhaps nothing has changed.

J-instructor Carolyn Hulse said TV tends to make successful women look as if they're always suffering by giving them very little, if any, time for their personal lives.

—Svetlana Lalic

### SPOTLIGHT:

#### *Alex's Fabulous Mag*

When she needs an example of a publication in her Magazine Production class, j-student Alex Levin just opens her purse.

Levin, 24 and a senior, is putting together her own soon-to-be-published magazine called *Fabloid!* — or as Levin translates, Chicago's Fabulous Tabloid.

"It will give the inside scoop on what's happening in Chicago. It encompasses nightlife, the arts and people that make Chicago a cool

city," Levin says, enthusiastically.

This inside scoop will have a slight twist to it. "We will cover facts that aren't the usual. We'd like to find out where Mayor Daley buys his suits. I'd think it's funny to find out what cereal a rock star's baby eats."

Levin says these unusual details give readers insight into the human side of the subject, more than a traditional interview could.

Levin began developing her magazine last spring, with a grant from the Albert P. Weisman fund which helps students complete independent communications projects. "I started brainstorming about what project I could do and it just dawned on me 'Oh, a magazine,'" she said.

"The money was basically a start-up fee. It wasn't enough to get me to print; just enough to cover photocopying expenses and other things."

The lack of money has made for some interesting challenges for this first-time publisher. Levin has a staff of only six, two of whom are photographers. Because of this, she has to wear many hats, including receptionist—and even cheerleader.

"Everyone is working without fee.

It's hard to press people working for free to go out and meet deadlines," Levin said. What Levin lacks in age, she makes up in life experience. She's been a regular "attendee" of the nightlife scene for years.

Levin has already got some key publicity for her publication. It's been mentioned twice in "INC.", the popular Chicago Tribune gossip column—once as "the magazine that so far is all talk and no mag."

Levin hoped to be no talk and all mag sooner, but has had to push the publication date back at least three times due to financial and time constraints. Besides handling two classes and an independent study this semester, Levin also works 30 hours a week as a waitress.

Yet, for someone who has always enjoyed nightlife, Levin doesn't feel she's missing out on anything socially. Instead she is continuing a life long hobby.

She hopes to have her magazine published by January. But, she had better hurry—"INC." is waiting.

—Tanya Bonner

## INSIDE JOURNALISM

A newsletter produced by and for students of the journalism department

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# INSIDE JOURNALISM

SUPPLEMENT

A Newsletter Published by the Journalism Department of Columbia College

## SPECIAL REPORT: The 1989 Fischetti Scholarship Winners

*This year, 21 journalism students have been awarded the department's ultimate accolade: a Fischetti scholarship. This tuition award is given to deserving students who show outstanding achievement, in scholarship and in service.*

**T**anya Bonner, 20, is a junior concentrating in news reporting and writing. She has interned at **The News-Sentinel** in Fort Wayne, Ind. and in the spring of 1989 she interned at **Target Market News**. Bonner is the managing editor of **Inside Journalism** and a staff reporter for the student newspaper, the **Columbia Chronicle**. She hopes to work for a newspaper covering social issues, education and science.

**L**ance Cummings, returning to academia after a 20-year absence, is a sophomore concentrating in news reporting and writing. He is the editorial page editor of the **Chronicle**. A licensed commercial pilot, he is an avid reader whose aspiration is to someday write a syndicated column.

**M**eg Evans, 23, is a freshman concentrating in news reporting and writing. She is embarking on her first full-time semester while working as a copywriter for **Manufacturers' News**.

**M**ark Farano, 24, is a junior in magazine editing. He interned this summer with the Chicago Board of Health.

Farano writes features and does correspondence work for the **Journal and Topics Newspapers** in Des Plaines. He has published more than 100 articles. His goal is to write and edit for either a newspaper or magazine.

**M**ary Fleming, 35, is a senior concentrating in news reporting and writing. In addition to the Fischetti, she is also the recipient of the college's Merit Scholarship for Journalism and the Herman Kogan award from the Chicago Bar Association. Recently she completed a freelance writers' guide. Fleming plans to attend law school next year.

**K**elly Fox, 21, is a junior concentrating in news reporting and writing. She interns with **Adweek** magazine. Fox plans to attend graduate school at Northwestern University and hopes to get a job on a small paper after graduation. She eventually plans to move on to a prominent paper in a major city. She is interested in political reporting and hopes to become an anchorwoman in Washington, D.C.

**M**itchell Hurst, 27, is a senior concentrating in news reporting and writing. Hurst, managing editor of the **Columbia Chronicle**, says he plans to work at a daily, probably in a small town. He realizes he may have to become a religion writer or cover elementary school spelling bees, but he hopes eventually to get into the big time.

**D**eborah Kelly, 22, is a senior concentrating in radio broadcasting. She works for radio station **WCKG** as a producer for the mid-day shift and also toils for **WJMK** as a music research assistant. Kelly has a variety of other vocations, such as professional clown, hairdresser and airplane parker. She plans to continue in radio or in the magazine field as a copy editor.

**S**vetlana Lalic, 20, is a junior concentrating in news reporting and writing. She is an intern with the Chicagoland Chapter/American Society for Training and Development and an associate editor for **Inside Journalism**. Lalic is interested in reporting political issues and wants to make her mark in Chicago.



Bonner



Scheibe



Soldat



Hurst



Podzius





Cummings



Kelly



Smith



Lalic



Farano

**Gayle Mitchell, 22**, is a senior concentrating in news reporting and writing. In addition to being senior j-workaid, she is the computer lab manager for the j-department and an associate editor of **Inside Journalism**. Mitchell completed her second internship this summer with the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities. She plans to work for a Chicago newspaper or social service organization and pursue a master's degree.

**Allison Mohr, 24**, is a senior concentrating in news and magazine editing and writing. She has pursued a 10-year interest in photography/illustration/cartoons and is the editor-in-chief of the **Columbia Chronicle**. Mohr plans to write scientific features, about health/nutrition/fitness and to become an editor.

**Jacqueline Podzius, 20**, is a junior concentrating in news reporting and writing. Her work has been published in the **Chicago Sun-Times**. She began her journalism experience as a copy editor for the Mother McAuley High School yearbook in 1986-87. Podzius has written for **The Reporter Newspapers** since 1986 and interned there this summer. Her goal is to write for a newspaper.

**Julia Rossler, 20**, is a senior concentrating in news reporting and writing. This summer she interned with the American Association of Medical Assistants and was awarded a stipend from the Field Corporation Fund. She is the copy editor for the **Columbia Chronicle** and writes bi-monthly articles for the **Beecher Herald**. Her goal is to work as a copy editor for a newspaper or magazine.

**MacArthur Savage, 38**, is a senior concentrating in magazine writing. Married and the father of three daughters, he left a career in social casework to pursue a journalism degree. He works part-time for the **Associated Press** as an office assistant. His goal is to be a freelance writer.

**William Scheibe, 21**, is a senior concentrating in news reporting and writing. He spent the last nine months at the **Southtown Economist** as an intern and has covered sports for the daily for the last three years. He has won more than two dozen awards for his coverage of high school sports and has written and published more than 1,000 sports stories. His goal is to continue to cover sports for a major newspaper and to write the great American novel.

**Tamara Sellman, 24**, is a senior concentrating in magazine editing and minoring in fiction writing. She is an intern at the public relations firm of Hill & Knowlton in Custom Publishing and an associate editor for a new magazine, **UNIQUE**, which will premier in March. Sellman's former positions include being managing editor and entertainment editor for the **Clark College Independent** and staff

reporter for the **Clark College Progress**. She is a two-semester member of the dean's list. She plans to become a magazine editor and hopes eventually to write fiction.

**Tammy Smith, 23**, is a junior concentrating in news reporting and writing. An alumni member of Phi Theta Kappa, she was a reporter for the **Kennedy-King College** newspaper, and an intern for the Mayor's Press Office in 1985. She is a staff writer for the **Columbia Chronicle**. Smith plans to complete her degree, work on a newspaper, go into education and possibly write children's books.

**Carol Soldat, 21**, is a senior concentrating in news reporting and writing. She has written for **Inside Journalism** and is an intern at **The Reporter Newspapers**, where she has published 32 articles. She would like to receive a masters degree in journalism and eventually become a magazine feature writer.

**Mary Stockover, 22**, is a senior concentrating in news reporting and writing. She interned this summer at **Variety** magazine, where she wrote features and entertainment stories. She is the senior editor of the **Columbia Chronicle**. Her goal is to land a job in any field related to journalism, preferably in feature writing.

**Susan Tengesdal, 22**, is a senior with a concentration in news reporting and writing. This summer she was one of 50 students in the country chosen to participate in a rigorous political journalism program at Georgetown University. While there, she interned for a cable business show, "The Nations Business Today," at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. She was named to the dean's list last semester. Tengesdal hopes to receive a master's degree in broadcast journalism or return to Washington, D.C., to begin a career in political journalism.

**Stephanie Wood, 22**, is a junior concentrating in news reporting and writing. She is a member of the dean's list and was a recipient of the Outstanding Student Award at Elgin Community College. Her many goals include pursuing a master's degree, writing for a Chicago newspaper covering the police beat or courts and doing on-the-street reporting for a television station. —(These bios were compiled by Gayle Mitchell.)

*The students were honored at a dinner on November 28 at the Chicago Hilton and Towers. Students wishing to apply for a Fischetti scholarship should be full-time, either undergraduate or graduate, with an interest in editorial art, political cartooning and/or journalism. Applications for next year will be available at the beginning of spring semester in the journalism department.*