

Spring 1983

Columbia College Alumni News

Columbia College Chicago

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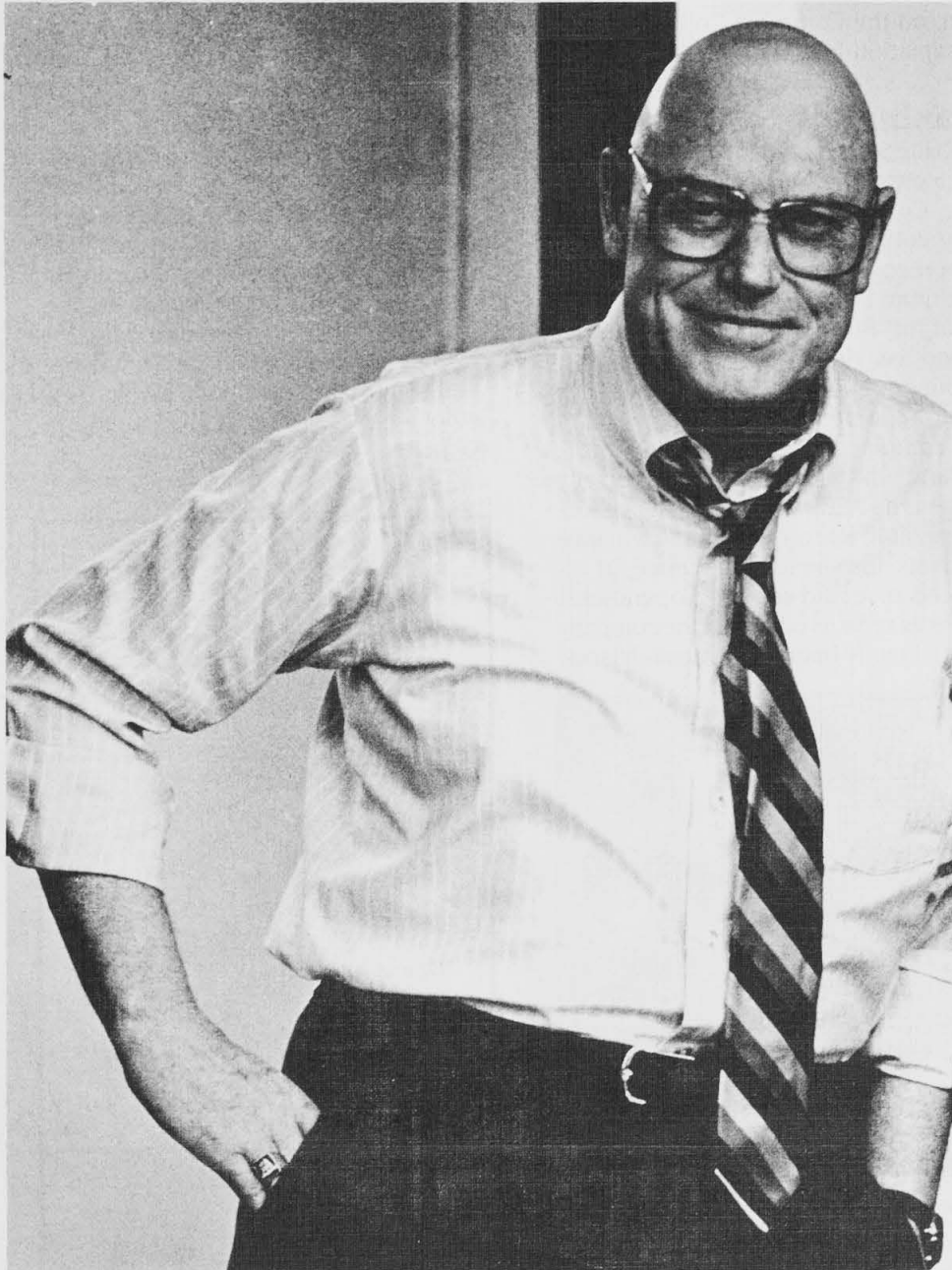


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Thaine Lyman

A lesson in Survival

Thirty five years ago, Thaine Lyman's bride of one month gave him an ultimatum: "Get a job, or else!"

Lyman, then a fledgling dance instructor, had recently settled in his hometown of Huron, South Dakota with his new bride and was just starting

to get used to the idea of an extended honeymoon when the get-a-job order was issued.

"I knew I wasn't cut out for watching fresh manure pushing up through my toes," he says of one of his options – to be a farmer – so he told his wife he

would go to Chicago to look for work. He was well acquainted with Chicago from his days as a radar expert in the Navy.

A week later, after he had hitchhiked some 500 miles to Chicago, he was hired by WGN-TV. He would stay there for the next 34 years.

"I always knew I would work in Chicago," he says, "but I had absolutely no idea that I would ever teach, least of all at the college level.

He started teaching at Columbia in 1949, when the college was in the Fine Arts building on South Michigan. That was shortly after a friend invited him to sit in on a radio class being taught by Clyde Caswell.

"It was fascinating watching him teach," Lyman muses, "but my reaction at the time was, 'Hell, I can do that!'" So he got an appointment with then Dean of the college, Dan Howard, who eventually hired him. Lyman's *Fundamentals of Television* course, still around after 34 years, was the foundation on which he built the television curricula at Columbia.

"We didn't have a studio in those days," he says, and his blue-gray eyes started to mist a little. "Our cameras were made out of cardboard boxes, and the center core of toilet tissue rolls were used to make lenses – no kidding!"

Cardboard television cameras were all right for awhile, but Lyman knew he would have to start using the real thing. His television fundamentals class, after all, was built around the idea of coping in the "real world" of television.

In 1952, Columbia moved again – this time to 207 South Wabash – and Lyman finally got his cameras. "They were hand-built by Guillermo Camerena in Mexico City," he says. Camerena, an internationally known electronics expert and close friend of former Columbia College president Norman Alexandroff, built two image orthicon cameras for Lyman's class – for only \$4000 a piece. "There was no way we could afford \$25,000 for an RCA camera," Lyman chortles.

Four years later, Camerena built Chicago's first color TV cameras. And guess which school and what class were the first to use them. "It was based on CBS's mechanical wheel principle,"

(continued on page 4)

News Briefs

Radio station bows

Columbia College's new radio station, WCRX-FM, went on the air Dec. 17, 1982. The 10-watt station, which potentially can reach some 425,000 listeners in downtown Chicago, the South Loop and Near North Side areas, replaces the college's former radio station that was heard only in the main campus building on South Michigan.

The new station uses frequency 88.1, previously licensed to the University of Illinois Chicago, and, pending Federal Communications Commission approval, the college plans to expand to 100 watts this year.

Columbia's journalism, theater/music and fine arts departments will be regular contributors to WCRX's programming.

When Brinkley speaks...

David Brinkley, host of ABC News' "This Week with David Brinkley," was the keynote speaker at the 8th annual Chicago Communications luncheon Nov. 16, 1982, at Chicago's Marriott Hotel.

Chicago Communications is sponsored by 31 communications and advertising organizations and was founded in memory of noted publicist and former Columbia College teacher Al Weisman. Proceeds from last year's luncheon, as in previous years, will benefit Columbia College students seeking funding for communications projects.

Previous Chicago Communications luncheons featured such prominent communicators as ABC network newsmen Frank Reynolds; Pierre Salinger, Paris bureau chief for ABC Network News; Helen Thomas, U.P.I. White House bureau chief; Ben Bradlee, editor of the *Washington Post*; and Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter/author David Halberstam.

Readings published

Theodore Kundrat's dramatic reading, *Once There Was A Village* (A True Story That Must Be Told), recently was published by the Coach House Press, Inc. Kundrat ('39) based his reading play on Edna St. Vincent Millay's poem, "The Murder of Lidice."

Kundrat currently is an assistant professor of speech at the University of Illinois' Chicago Circle campus and recently was elected to a three-year

term on the Columbia College alumni Association board of directors.

Making hits...for credit!

With the September 1982 filing of articles of incorporation for the AEMMP Record Co., Columbia College became the only college in the nation to form its own record company, reports AEMMP chairman Fred Fine. Lou Simon, president of Pulse Records and former executive vice-president of Mercury Phonogram and Polydor Records, has been appointed faculty supervisor of the company.

Part of the music business specialty area in the AEMMP Graduate Division, the AEMMP Record Company will give students first-hand experience in all aspects of record company operations. Students serve as officers of the company with a faculty board acting as advisors.



Photo: Virginia Leirens

Robert Edmonds

Tarini to head Ad Department

John Tarini, a veteran of 20 years in advertising, has been named Chairperson of Columbia's Advertising Department. Tarini comes to Columbia from Lee King Advertising in Chicago, where he was a partner and executive vice-president.

Tarini has a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Chicago, and held a joint appointment there in the Psychology Department and the Law School as a faculty research associate. He has published articles on motivation and consumer psychology.

An aesthetic experience

Robert Edmonds, Professor-at-large at Columbia College, has two books on the market: *The sights and sounds of cinema and television* and *Scriptwriting for the audio-visual media*. Both paperbacks are published by the Teachers College Press (Columbia University).

In the first book, Edmonds, organizer and first chairman of Columbia College's motion picture department, explains how the aesthetic experience influences feelings; in the second, he shows *how* — not what — to write for various audio-visual media.

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Marsha Wetmore
Alumni Relations Director

Alumni News

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Associate Editor Marsha Wetmore

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Class Notes

by Marsha Wetmore

Gaylon Emerzian's film "Giving Way" recently was shown on Netherlands TV. After the film aired, the 1976 film graduate was interviewed by phone from the Netherlands. Emerzian's film was also entered in Sydney, Australia's Women's Film Festival last fall, a few months before its Netherlands airing.

Will Husa ('79), a photographer at Automatic Electric in Northlake, says he "found out the hard way" about his profession. "When the economy is good, (you're) working," he said. "When it's bad, (you're) looking." Husa, with the help of Communications Dept. Chairman Thaine Lyman, managed to get a job in the video department at Michael Reese Hospital before going to Automatic Electric. He offers this bit of advice to aspiring communications specialists: "Don't specialize in any one media field. The best way to survive in this field is to know as many different media applications as possible."

Michael Theis ('72), now working as general manager of Telemation Productions in Denver, took a month off at the end of February to visit another alumnus, **Dick Voss**, who is a broadcast producer for J. Walter Thompson Ltd. in Australia.

Bradley Sanders ('76), who was part of the successful comedy team of Bohannon and Sanders during his student years at Columbia, has been doing quite well since moving to Hollywood a few years ago. Among the nationally televised shows he has ap-

peared on are: *Chips*, *LaVerne & Shirley*, *The Dinah Shore Show*, *Benson*, *The Richard Pryor Show*, *The Hanna & Barberra TV Special*, and *Bizarre* (a Canadian Broadcasting Co. special).

In the "Making It" department: **Judy Bailey** ('81), a broadcast major, now produces and hosts (under the name Judith Lynn) "Open Circuit," a weekly news and public affairs program, on WKQX-FM...**Jerry Doscoczynsky** ('80)

is with Editel...**Diane McGough** ('81), is a photography coordinator with Wesley-Brown Ltd., a communications search firm...**Matthew Duntemann** ('81) is an audio-visual technician at BHI Corp...**Robynecee Scott** ('81), works at Burrell Advertising...**Pam Roberts** ('81), a Graphic Design major, is doing production design for YMCA of the USA National offices...and **Sara Jo Schwartz** ('75), a Photo major, has joined Scott Foresman Publishers.



Marcia Richardson Best ('76) (pictured above) recently was promoted to associate director of publications at Chicago State University. A three-year veteran of CSU, Best began as an

editorial assistant, helping to update one of the university's publications: *A History: Chicago State University, 1967-1979*. Best also is a former editor of *Observer* newspaper.



Will Husa

Pamela Hanson ('75) held an exhibit of her works last fall at California State University in Long Beach. She titled the exhibit "Seismic Smears", and it consisted of seismographs of a series of California earthquakes.

Melissa Pinney ('77) exhibited her portraits, under the title "Remembrances", last November at Chicago's Public Library Cultural Center.

What's News With You?...Edward Johnson ('74) is a sales supervisor at Jos. Triner Corp...Lynn Lidbury (Fine Arts major '82) is working as a waitress at Rugens while pursuing a graduate degree in Art Therapy at the University of Illinois Chicago Circle...Les Grobstein ('73), WLS Sports Director, did play-by-play announcing of the University of Illinois Chicago Circle "Flames" basketball games this past season.

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Lyman points out. "But they were impractical for our purposes. I used them for one semester, removed the color wheels and quietly put them away – forever."

One thing that can't be put away so easily is Lyman's impact on Columbia College. Under Lyman, the Broadcast department, which includes video as well as radio and television, has grown from just two faculty members in 1949 to 80 today; it's the largest such department in the school, with some 800 students – roughly 20 percent of the student body – enrolled in a variety of radio, television and video (non-broadcast television, such as industrial and cable TV) courses.

"I worked very hard to build the department," he says. "It's been a real stroke to put it together, and now I don't think we need to take a backseat to anybody."

Part of a chairman's responsibility is to make absolutely certain that the industry knows who he is, where his head is at, and what the department is all about," he says. "I try to engender the most fertile ground possible in the job market."

With that kind of responsibility, Lyman says, "It was not uncommon for me to work a hundred hours a week." And he did just that for 17 years, from 1964-81, dividing his time between WGN and Columbia, working full-time at each. "I never gave either less than a full shot," he says.

What he had in dedication, however, he lacked in stamina. In 1981 he decided he could no longer handle both jobs, so he retired from WGN. "I needed the 100 hours a week for one job," he

says.

That schedule came to a halt in July of 1982 when serious problems with breathing put him into the hospital where the diagnosis was pneumonia and... lung cancer.

He has since cut back his workload at Columbia. Nevertheless, Lyman's optimism has not waned. "I've been very fortunate," he says of his bout with cancer. "I am a survivor."

There is equal optimism for the future of Columbia and his students. With the advent of cable, low-power TV and other technologies, such as satellite transmission, private video (industrial TV), multi-image, and videotex, Lyman predicts tremendous growth in the audio-visual industry, particularly television.

"But it will be tougher to get a job in

the industry, even with more places to look for a job. The day has gone where a person can go in and say, "I'm a director or I'm a producer," he says. "The video graduate today is expected to be able to wear the hats of director, writer, producer, cameraperson, sound engineer, lighting director, editor and, in cable access roles, public relations expert and master teacher."

Columbia's video students invariably get that lesson hammered into them by Lyman, because that's part of his responsibility too – to see that each of them live up to the standards he's set.

"Ego? Yes. I had an ego, and still have. But I am a rebel. I could never accept something just because it was there. I *never* worked for a director or a station. *I did it for me.*"

What's news with you?

Columbia College is always interested in the promotions, honors and activities of its alumni. Please send **your** news (along with photos, if available) with the coupon below to Columbia College Alumni News, 600 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60605. Please use this coupon for change of address, too.

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