

Winter 1984

Columbia College Alumni News

Columbia College Chicago

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John Chancellor Guest Speaker at Weisman Luncheon



NBC News senior correspondent, John Chancellor, was the featured guest speaker at the November 15, 1983 luncheon benefit for the Albert P. Weisman Scholarship Fund where he delivered a stinging indictment of the Reagan administration's handling of news during the invasion of Grenada and called for increased vigilance in protecting and promoting first amendment rights. The overflow crowd at The Chicago Marriott Hotel's Grand Ballroom was also addressed by local columnist and TV host Irv Kupcinet, *Chicago Tribune* editor James Squires, and Columbia College President Mirron Alexandroff.

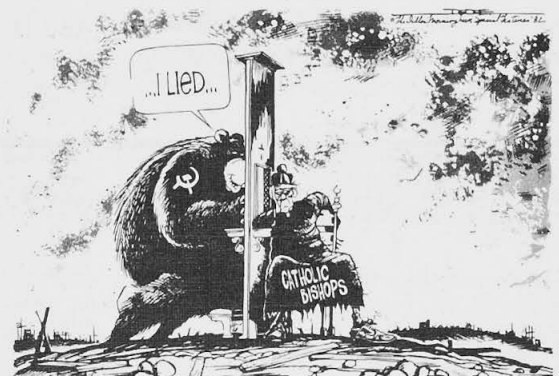
The annual Weisman luncheon, together with contributions from

business, organizations and concerned individuals in the Chicago area, helps fund a scholarship program that provides seed money for individual projects undertaken by Columbia College students. Since 1974, almost 100 communications-related projects have been financed and this year, for the first time, projects by Columbia graduate students were included. The 1983 Weisman Scholarship winners are: Gerald H. Benthin, Paul Berg, William Daum, Rita Halvorsen/Miriam Solon, Dale Heiniger, Virginia Karp, Mary Ann Lupa, Christine Pistone, Stephen R. Roszell, W. Thomas Rupnicki, Jr., Ken Saunders, Helene Smith-Romer, Ona Lee Smola, Larry S. Tuckman, Jill Everett and Jane Stevens.

Fischetti Editorial Cartoon Winners Presented

Bill DeOre of the *Dallas Morning News* and Dick Locher of the *Chicago Tribune* have been named first and second prize-winners respectively of the 2nd Annual John Fischetti Editorial Cartoon Competition sponsored by Columbia College. Mr. DeOre's entry, shown top right, depicts Russia's handling of the religious problem in Poland while Locher's charts the flight pattern of Reaganomics. More than 150 entries from all over the country and abroad were submitted to this year's competition whose panel of judges consisted of Jack Fuller, Editorial page editor, *Chicago Tribune*; Al Lowry, art director, *Newsweek*; Art Paul, retired art director, *Playboy*; Lois Wille, associate editor, *Chicago Sun-Times*; and Daryle Feldmeir, Chairperson of the Journalism Department, Columbia College.

The awards were presented at a dinner held November 22, 1983 at Chicago's Ambassador West Hotel to benefit the John Fischetti Scholarship Endowment. Guest speaker Seymour Hersh, author of *The Price of Power* and noted political correspondent and commentator, expressed concern over Americans' continued apathy in the face of an increasingly hostile global situation.



Columbia College in Retrospect

Second in a series by Professor Theodore V. Kundrat, M.S., M.A.

The Columbia School of Oratory, founded in 1890, thrived for ten years at 3358 South Michigan Avenue. A substantial increase in the student body enabled the school to expand adding courses in physical education such as: anatomy and physiology, eurhythmics and calisthenics, hygiene, pantomimic action and reaction, bodily expressiveness and dancing. A program in teacher education was in the offing.

Week-day evenings and Saturdays were relegated to private instruction for members of the clergy: theologians, preachers, and ministers and those in business and the varied professions. Adults from all parts of the city and the suburbs took advantage of private lessons in public speaking tutored by co-founders Mary A. Blood and Ida Morey Riley.

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On Saturday afternoons the assembly hall in the carriage house was invaded by youngsters who clamored for the special sessions in children's dramatics instructed by Miss Blood. Children's theater in Chicago had its roots at Columbia and Miss Blood was considered as the innovator.

In comparison to other educational institutions in the Midwest, Columbia was, indeed, unique. None could compare to the cultural advantages the school had to offer within its variant curricula. The refinement of thought, emotions, manners, tastes; the communicative skills, the arts, the instruments of personal development—all of these became the trade mark of a prominently reputable school—the Columbia School of Oratory. By 1901 Columbia had reached a comfortable summit of success.

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In 1901 the school also suffered a tragic set-back with the untimely death of co-founder Ida Morey Riley. Part of an obituary published in the STANDARD newspaper written by reported Helen E. Starrett on March 11, 1901 states: "Mrs. Ida Morey Riley, associate principal and co-founder of the Columbia School of Oratory of Chicago, died after a brief illness at the Chicago Baptist Hospital, March 7, 1901. This brief announcement which appeared in the Chicago papers of March 8 caused such a widespread feeling of surprise and sorrow as few such notices have the power to do. Relatives, pupils of the school, both former and present, associates in the work of teaching, both in Chicago and elsewhere, personal friends and acquaintances, all felt that a great, a most unexpected loss had come to them in the death of

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this excellent woman. Mrs. Riley's chosen life work which she loved so well and in which she had achieved such worthy and inspiring results will not be dismissed. It will take the all healing hand of time to reconcile her friends to her untimely taking off."

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Undaunted in spirit and affection for Columbia, Miss Blood would not allow tragedy to interfere with the school's progress. The loss of a dear friend and cohort only bolstered her desire to firmly establish the school's distinguished reputation as a permanent milestone in the field of cultural education. Miss Blood's sister, Hattie, came to her aid performing Mrs. Riley's scholastic duties. Three recent graduates, Bertha Martin, Anne Larkin and Irene Antoinette Skinner were added to the teaching staff. With the organization of a Speaker's Bureau, the first such agency in Chicago. Columbia's trained speakers served the many communities within and out of the city, presenting lectures, dissertations and demonstrations on a variety of subjects; sharing their knowledge and expertise for the profit, benefit and pleasure of all types of audiences. The Columbia School of Oratory continued to flourish.

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However, in the intuitive mind of Mary A. Blood there were other fields to cultivate. One: a new attractive location and a new enticing name; two: a fully equipped theater; and three: the realization of Mrs. Riley's dream—an institute for teacher education!

*Professor Theodore V. Kundrat '39
Vice-president/
Historian of the Board of Directors
Columbia College Alumni Association*

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Alumni Profile **A Conversation with Gayle Seminara, filmmaker's representative**

Gayle M. Seminara graduated with honors in June 1983 from Columbia's Television Department and is currently employed as the Chicago/Midwest Sales Representative for Dove Films, Inc. In a recent conversation, Gayle shared some thoughts on her education, her career and life after Columbia.

Q. Just what *is* the business of Dove Film, Inc.

A. Dove Films is a commercial production company that was founded 15 years ago by director Cal Bernstein and cinematographer Haskell Wexler and is today owned solely by Cal who employs 3 other directors. Vilmos Zsigmond is undoubtedly the best known. He did the cinematography for *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, *The Deerhunter* and many other films. He is also a director, as is Cal Bernstein whose expertise is in special effects and the use of animals in commercials.

Q. So just what does a sales rep do for these talents?

A. I try to find them work here in the Chicago market and once I've got a foothold here, I'll branch out to other midwestern cities like Minneapolis, Detroit, St. Louis. Dove also employs other full-time reps on the east and west coasts. There's a tremendous amount of phoning, door-knocking and networking that takes place before you make even one sale. It's not unusual to make 50 calls to get just one appointment to show your reel to ad agency creative directors and then you might show that reel to 100 different people before you make a sale.

Q. Is this a large field and what qualities are important to success?

A. There are about 50 to 60 full-time filmmakers' and directors' reps in Chicago. This is a highly competitive business but I've received a great deal



of help and encouragement from some of the pros. As to special qualities, you need to be persistent, confident, knowledgeable.

Q. This is obviously not an entry-level position. What kind of background developed the skills you rely upon?

A. It was a combination of my education and my other jobs. I attended Columbia on a full-time and part-time basis for 6 years, and, like many students, I held a number of jobs to pay tuition and living expenses. In 1976-79 I was the assistant to a film producer doing educational films and slides. I found out on the job that I wasn't detail oriented enough to be happy in that field. Just about the time I realized this, I attended a 1-day seminar on sales and found that I was pretty much of a natural. I spent 6 months as an account producer for a video house and then Jimmy Smyth of Optimum Films hired me as a rep in 1981. I was there until this past summer when the position with Dove came along.

Q. How did your education at Columbia prepare you for what you're doing today?

A. I cannot speak highly enough of the training I received under Thaine Lyman. Classes were every bit as demanding and competitive as my professional life has been, so you knew pretty quickly that if you couldn't make it there, you certainly wouldn't survive out here. My technical knowledge is greater than that of most sales reps, so I grasp what clients need quickly and, hopefully, can supply them.

In Memoriam: H. THAINE LYMAN



It was with deepest sadness that the Columbia College community noted the passing of H. Thaine Lyman, Chairman of the Television Department and long-time faculty member, on November 19, 1983 following a year-long battle with cancer. Thaine began his broadcasting career in 1948 when he joined WGN-TV as a technician, operating equipment for numerous shows including *Bozo's Circus* and coverage of the White Sox and Cubs. He served at WGN as technical director, audio engineer, film sound operator, cameraman and producer until retiring in 1981 to devote his full energies to his work at Columbia where he had taught since 1949. Here, he developed the "Fundamentals of Television" course that has been a basic college offering for 34 years.

An untiring watchdog of public broadcasting/cable television issues, Thaine received the 1983 Interlake Inc.-Columbia College Media Festival Award for his efforts on behalf of Chicago's young filmmakers and was working on a project to prepare Third World journalists for covering the 1984 Olympics when he died. His intelligence, enthusiasm and professionalism will be sorely missed at Columbia.

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Briefly Noted...

1983 graduate **Julie Usen** reports that she's keeping busy as the Assistant to the Executive Director of the Chicago Dance Arts Coalition and as Program Coordinator for the Illinois Arts Alliance ... **Kathryn Forestal**, a January 1983 alumna, was the Hospitality Coordinator for the 19th Chicago International Film Festival ... 1979 Film Department graduate **Hank Grover** is a TV producer with the University of Illinois-Circle Campus Public Affairs Department and was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the International Television Association (Chicago Chapter) ... **Marsha Conn**, M.A. 1983, has been awarded a Neighborhood Arts Project Grant from the Chicago Council of Fine Arts ... **Bob Blinn**, Class of 1973, has opened a recording and motion picture studio called The Right Track here in Chicago ... Photography major **Ron Terry**, '75, is president of Ron Terry & Associates, the first Black gospel network on the SATCOM TV satellite ... **Michael Gleason**, TV '79, is a G.E.D. instructor with City Colleges of Chicago and the Ancona Montessori School ... From Stamford, Connecticut, **Joan Brazas**, AEMMP 1983 grad, writes that she has accepted a position as Development Assistant with the Hartman Theatre ... **Ben Polus**, Film 1979, is a film

No Place To Be Somebody



Alumni Association theater party produced a full house on November 4. Above, Alumni reception enjoyed by Association members; below, members of student cast.

editor/production assistant with the International Film Bureau in Chicago, and is the proud father of a new daughter, Dinah ... **Bill Hoff**, Communications '75, is the owner of My Favorite Things, a gourmet/gift shop and was elected business manager of the Laguna Beach (CA) Chamber of Commerce.

