

6-1-1996

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" (1996). *Inside Journalism*. 51.
https://digitalcommons.colum.edu/inside_journalism/51

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.

June *INSIDE* 1996
JOURNALISM

A Newsletter Published by the Journalism Department of Columbia College

CHICAGO ARTS AND COMMUNICATION CAPTURES THE GOLD

Chicago Arts and Communication (CAC), the jewel of the Magazine Editing program, was given the royal treatment when The Columbia Scholastic Press Association awarded the magazine with a Gold Crown Award — the most prestigious honor possible for a college publication.

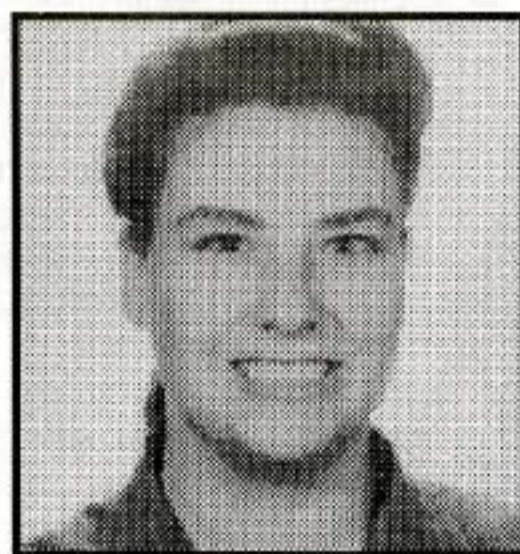
"It's the best we ever won. I'm very happy," says Don Gold, former magazine program director and faculty advisor for the award winning issue.

In its five years of publication, the magazine has received the competition's second place Silver Crown award three times. "It's a tough competition," remarks Gold. However, he and others agree that the magazine has been worthy of a Gold crown for quite some time.

"I always thought the magazine was one of the best in the academic world," Gold says. Nat Lehrman, chairman of the journalism department, agrees. "I'm surprised it took this long. I've

thought we deserved it many times these past years."

What makes these compliments possible is a magazine that is a collection of great articles that are truly an "extension of the students," says Gold. It is through these individuals that the magazine is written, edited and produced from editorial concepts to the final layout. The result is a magazine covering what makes Chicago unique in a way that



Georgine Panko

Scott Fosdick, new director of the magazine program, describes as "lively, fun and hard-hitting."

The flavor of Chicago as well as the individual voices of the writers can be tasted and heard as one reads articles such as "El Loco's Private thoughts about public transit," a rider's journal that describes the people and situations encountered while riding

Chicago's elevated train system; and "Making it in Chicago Theater," a story discussing the small yet thriving Chicago theater community, as well as interviews with various Chicago fashion designers, architects and artists.

As anyone familiar with magazine editing and publishing knows, any great magazine starts with a great editor-in-chief. It is his or her responsibility to establish criteria for the best writing and design. In the case of the winning 1995 CAC, the job was done by Georgine Panko, whose formula for success was quite simple, "I came up with a direction and followed it," says Panko, "I was on the magazine staff for three consecutive years so I learned what the magazine was all about — Chicago — and I also saw what needed to be done and what changes needed to be made."

Her formula was to have a magazine that was a staff effort. "I worked closely with the editors and writers and I got a lot of feedback," says Panko.

So what made this issue golden? "I think the look of the magazine carried us the extra step," Panko says.

Panko also believes that CAC will "set Columbia students apart



Job Search

By Paula Eubanks

Congratulations! You've just graduated and managed to land a prime job in journalism!

Now what? How do you transform your great performance in a job interview into great performance on the job?

A few weeks ago, I checked in with a Columbia '95 grad, Jon Bigness, who had just passed the sixth-month mark working as a staff reporter for the *Wall Street Journal* in its Dallas bureau. How had he made sure that this great job opportunity didn't turn sour? What would he say to Columbia j-majors about surviving—and thriving—after they start their professional careers?

Although Jon says he now feels like he's "just figuring things out," he offers these tips:

◆ Expect a bit of "hazing" and don't let it send you for a loop. Instead, take it with humor—but consider responding by dishing it back to the pranksters.

◆ Remember that working isn't much different than going to school. "People are people," Jon says. "So, start in school to show your interest: brown-nose, talk to your teachers after class, show you have a hunger to learn."

◆ Be prepared to report and write A LOT FASTER than you did in school. "You might have a week (at the most)—not half a semester—to do a story," he says.

◆ Develop an "iron butt" to help with the long hours of desk and phone work required in a newsroom.

◆ Be prepared to "work 'til the

work's done." Doing journalism is rarely a 9-to-5 job. And, eat your sack lunch at your desk—that's what Jon does.

◆ Do research before you start any story, and develop a strong story proposal before you pitch the idea to your editor. "The bar (that measures 'news worthiness') is a lot higher than in school," Jon says.

◆ Be familiar with computer on-line information services and the World Wide Web. Jon uses America On Line at home to poke around for trends and story ideas.

◆ Select a mantra or personal signal that you can use amid chaos to refocus yourself on the task of reporting a story. Jon says his is to say the odd phrase "monkey cheese." "You need this technique because when your source says something that's really interesting but which doesn't add directly to your story, it's easy to get thrown out of focus," he explains.

◆ Ask questions. Use your editors and your sources to learn about the topic you're covering. "And don't let them think you know it all, or they'll lapse into their lingo" that you don't understand, he warns. Learning the lingo "has been one of the biggest challenges," he says. "This is a business newspaper and I've had to learn all the business terms: 'net income,' 'revenues,' 'earnings per share,' etcetera."

(Paula is the j-department's career advisor. Seek her out in the Career Planning & Placement Office, Wabash Suite 300, Ext. 5284.)

from everyone else" as new graduates everywhere search for a chance to get a foot in the door of the magazine world. Panko says that "editors and publishers seeking to fill openings on their staffs will see that Columbia students can write about the 'real world.'"

Hair Trigger 17, the magazine produced by the fiction writing department, also won a Gold Crown award from the Columbia Press Association. This was their third in the last five years. They also won two Silver Crown awards.

Add the crowns together and you will see that Columbia College publications were crowned with the finest twice this year. This is an honor that, as Gold says, "just doesn't happen."

But it did happen and just when we thought things could not get any better, the Society of Professional Journalists named *Chicago Arts & Communication* 1996 Best Annual Collegiate Magazine in the Midwest.

— Jennifer Laboy

600 SOUTH STRIKES AGAIN

Remember when the magic of television was reduced to "Lights ... camera ... action?" As the staff of 600 South can tell you, it takes a lot more than that to create a half hour news show.

This semester more than 50 students cooperated on the monthly program. And it's not over yet.

In mid-April, the fruits of the classes' labor paid off in the tele-

vision department's semiannual "Premiere Night." As always, 600 South delivered more than a dozen stories about Columbia College and the city it calls home.

For instance, Dulcevit Daniel submitted a thorough package about last summer's heat wave, including tips on what to do now to prepare for Chicago's next scorcher. Steve Droz put his sports writing skills to work in a profile of Chicago Bull Steve Kerr. And Angela Bradley reported on radio department chair Al Parker's "Fifty Years at Columbia" celebration.

"In our department, Jim Disch and I oversee the reporting and producing aspects of the show," says Steve Corman, director of broadcast journalism. In the tv department, Pat O'Keefe's "Photographers and Shooters" class and Rich Bernal's "Studio Production" put it together.

While the four classes reap most of the hands-on experience,

only two students are crowned anchors for the semester.

"First and foremost, we're looking for someone with a good command of the English language," Corman said. Auditions for these much coveted positions are open to everyone and are held at the beginning of each semester. "Second of all, we're looking for a feeling that viewers are going to feel comfortable with this person." Television department chair Ed Morris and Corman also select an alternate anchor each semester.

Freshman Leon Tripplett and Sophomore Lisa Manna returned to the studio after anchoring three shows last semester.

"I tend to be more theatrical in front of the camera than behind a word processor," Tripplett says. After anchoring four shows since he enrolled in Columbia College, Tripplett says he's beginning to "learn the art of telling a story."

and after "action," talk to Steve Corman in Suite 1300-F.

—Michel Schwartz

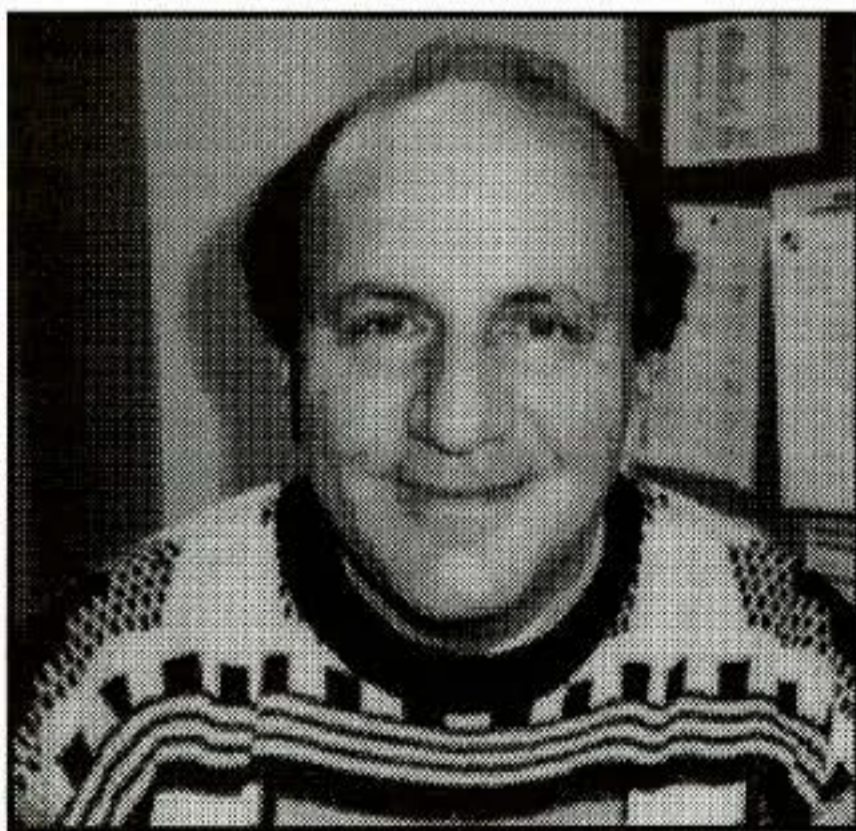
COLUMBIA GRAD WRITES FOR FUN

Good writing, internships and classes lead to a challenging, fun career in journalism for Columbia graduate Kathleen Flinn.

Flinn knew at the age of 11 that she wanted to be a writer, and she pursued her goal throughout school. "I wanted to write my way through college instead of waiting on tables," Flinn says. She free-lanced for Chicago's *Tribune, Sun-Times, Reader* and others. Flinn graduated in 1989 with a variety of experiences, including top marks in Columbia University's Student magazine competition in 1987. She is still winning top marks today as editor of *Internet Underground*, a five month old national magazine devoted to covering the "cool side" of the Internet.

Flinn says Columbia's instructors prepared her for a career in journalism with valuable lessons in investigative reporting and the history of broadcasting. "The history of broadcasting made me understand the media. It helped me put into focus what is happening with new media such as the Internet."

Flinn continued to focus her efforts on good writing. As a reporter for the Sarasota (Florida) *Herald-Tribune*, she covered health, education and welfare in the Manatee County bureau. Her top stories included uncov-



Steve Corman is director of Broadcast Journalism

O n May 1, the 600 South crew will come together for the final taping of the semester. In the meantime, if you want to find out what comes before "lights"

ering \$250,000 in unused sick and vacation time pocketed by a retiring superintendent, and "Learning to Teach," a year long series following three first-year teachers.

In 1995, her writing earned her first place for general excellence in reporting, from the Tampa Bay's Chapter of Society of Professional Journalists. In the same year, the Florida Press Club awarded Flinn second place in education reporting.

Flinn's competitive writing skills led her back to the Chicagoland area to launch the *Internet Underground* magazine. "There was a void on the newsstand. Other magazines targeted businesses for the Internet. IU is for people who want to have fun on the Internet at home," Flinn said. Since its launch in December '95, IU's distribution has grown to nearly 200,000. Flinn credits the magazine's success to its readers. "They love the magazine. They write us letters, telling us to keep up the good work," Flinn says.

Scott Fosdick, director of the magazine program is one of the *Internet Underground's* many readers. "I like *Internet Underground* because it does a better job of sifting and sorting the Internet than any other magazine of its kind," Fosdick said.

Flinn encourages students to learn as much as possible about electronic media. She said it is really important to know how to use the Internet and that it could be the determining factor in getting a job.

Patti Frey, desktop publishing

instructor, agrees with Flinn. Frey said, "It is to your advantage to know as much as possible about computers. The more you know about them, the more marketable you are."

Flinn's advice to students pursuing a career in journalism is, "Get as much experience as you can, even if you have to pay someone to let you write."

— Aretha Fouch

COVERING THE AFRO- AMERICAN STORY

As a tribute to its African-American Heritage program, Columbia College hosted an exciting and informative workshop on "Covering the African-American Story" earlier this semester.

The focus was on, "How should journalists cover the African-American Story?"

The distinguished panel, including Columbia faculty, staff and students, included: Warner Saunders of WMAQ-TV, channel 5, Laura Washington, editor of the *Chicago Reporter*; Ethan Michaeli, an investigative reporter for the *Chicago Defender*; and Salim Muwakkil, senior editor of *In These Times* magazine.

"This workshop was very much needed," said Warner Saunders, who facilitated the event. "It interfaced students with working journalists," and created a refreshing feedback from the students. "A student's opinion has the same validity as

one of ours, and what really made this workshop successful was that we talked to students instead of talking down to them."

The *Defender's* Michaeli was impressed by the vigor of the debate between panelists and students. "The students were very receptive and got heavily involved in the discussion."

Some of the panelists noted that the largest goal of journalists is to challenge popular assumptions.

"African-American's see themselves under attack by the Media," said Muwakkil. "The media has made some attempt to counteract minority stereotypes — like always associating drugs and crime with African-American and Latino men — but journalists need to work harder at bringing context to this story."

The workshop offered ways in which African-Americans could defend themselves. Saunders suggested that they write and call journalists, the NAACP, the Urban League and Operation Push, to get their attention and to help reprimand the mainstream media for its actions. "We as journalists are not marchers or protestors. It is our job to open our ears, hear what the people are saying, get community organizations involved and get them to march and clamor for change."

During the workshop, which was dedicated to Claude A. Barnette, the founder of the Associated Negro Press, the reason behind the beginning of such historic newspapers like the *Chicago Defender* was also discussed.

"They were created to help free us by hearing our side and our voice," said special guest Adolph Slaughter, former Washington Bureau correspondent for the ANP.

Slaughter's brief history of the African-American press began with a discussion of Frederick Douglass and James Bell, the first editors of the "colored American" weekly newspapers and magazines, including: the *Philadelphia Tribune*, the *Indianapolis Freeman*, *The Voice of the Negro*, *The Crisis*, the *Chicago Defender*, and *The Champion*.

"During the 50s and 60s, we as black reporters always knew our purpose and never strayed from it. You as journalists have a voice," concluded Slaughter, "and you can use it."

Saunders added that many African-Americans see the black press as something it is not—"another civil rights organization." "It is a deliberative body that should counteract the way the mass media is covering its communities," he said.

--April Knox

BELL RINGS IT UP TO FAITH AND HARD WORK

A professional attitude, friendly smile and a soft-spoken voice greets everyone who walks in or calls the journalism department.

For the last two years, Diane J. Bell has courteously assisted



Diane J. Bell

numerous people in the department as a work-aide who loves her job. Her professional attitude draws a rainbow of compliments from instructors, classmates and co-workers.

Fellow work-aide Jennifer Laboy describes Bell as a focused and determined person. "Diane is the most ambitious person I've ever met in my life. Whatever she wants she goes out and gets it. She's a very responsible and hard-working person. She's also a fun person to work with and to be around," Laboy says.

Nat Lehrman, j-department chair, recommended Bell for a project involving the public schools, and Bell wound up designing and laying out the organization's newsletter. So impressed was Lehrman with her work on this project, that he then recommended her for a part-time job writing and designing promotional material for Chicago's biggest health club.

Bell hears the future ringing in her ears as she's preparing her-

self for the challenges that lie ahead with her faith in God, a positive attitude and the desire to succeed and become a role model to her four younger brothers.

"God has given me a vision," Bell says. She believes strongly in scripture and says it has given her the strength and faith to succeed. "I have much faith in myself and in my future. I know as long as I stay in the 'Word' I will succeed."

The "Word" has inspired Bell to be the best she can be with a 4.0 G.P.A.

In addition to being a full-time student, part-time work-aide and the Journalism Club Frontrunner political magazine editor, Bell is an entrepreneur. She founded Ding! Productions, an editorial consulting company, in January 1995.

Committed to being the best, Bell moves forward on her next project, publishing a magazine, called *Childlife*. "This is a Christian magazine for children. The first issue was out in early May," Bell says.

After graduation, Bell hopes to increase Ding! Productions output with the knowledge and skills she obtained at Columbia and through her internships. She hopes to produce more small magazines, training manuals and newsletters for churches, businesses and company organizations.

—**Aretha Fouch**

GRAD STUDENTS FOCUS ON CONSULAR CORPS

Columbia's journalism grad students have produced a program in cooperation with the International Visitor's Center this semester that focuses on the Chicago Consular Corps. The Corps is made up of 45 nations, and of those, Argentina, France, India, and Mexico are the focus. Graduate student and producer Maria Yannetos says the grad students put together a broadcast that presents a colorful and accurate presentation of the countries involved.

Director of broadcast journalism Steve Corman says, "This project gave these students the opportunity to work on a program that is actually now airing. It is going to help them from the standpoint that they experienced the feel of putting an entire broadcast together from start to completion."

Mike McGuire, long time foreign editor of the *Chicago Tri-*

bune, is hosting the program. Yannetos says of McGuire, "We are all very excited to work with Mr. McGuire on this project. He is very knowledgeable about broadcasting and foreign affairs."

Corman added, "Mike McGuire worked on this project with us from day one, and it's been a real thrill for them, as well as for me to hear him talking about these different nations involved, and what they mean to Chicago."

The graduate students feel that not only did they learn about other cultures, but they gained experience in a field that is expanding.

Don Woolf, whose feature is on India says, "This project provided an audition tape for any of us pursuing a career in broadcast journalism. From my perspective, the way that journalism is today with electronic media, I think that a journalist needs to expand their horizons, and this project has definitely expanded mine."

Bob Musker said of the project, "I think it's been interesting to work with people of another culture, and in the sense of broadcast journalism, it's been interesting to put together a story, video and audio combined in an appealing way." Musker is responsible for covering the French Consulate.

The program, titled "Chicago: Where the World Meets," now airs on City Cable Channel 23 on a rotation basis. It will be shown a few times each week throughout the summer.

—**Danielle Curley**

TO THE SEARS SKYDECK

A Columbia graduate student has risen to new heights in her journalism career -- 103 floors to be exact. Jennifer Keiper, a 1992 Columbia graduate who is currently completing her master's degree in the graduate program, works for the AAA Chicago Motor club and is the traffic reporter for WBBM-AM Newsradio-78. The job position requires her to be in the Sears Tower from 3 to 7 p.m. every day, giving one-minute reports about breakdowns or accidents on the highway. "Traffic stories turn into news stories," she says. But this job is just one result of her successful work in journalism.

After her second year submitting entries, Keiper won a third-place Illinois Broadcaster's Association Silver Dome award for her two-part (30 minutes each) radio series on domestic violence. During National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, last October, it was broadcast on WBBM-FM.

The series was her thesis project for the journalism master's program and, according to the graduate program director, Norma Green, is the first graduate student to win an award for a thesis project. "Now the stakes here have been raised for all other graduate students," Green says.

She holds two other jobs, one of which is for the Public Affairs Department at B96 where she occasionally fills in for the news director. The other is a paid in-

ternship at Media Tracks. This job is Keiper's final course requirement for the graduate program.

Keiper will be featured in Norma Green's next master's program newsletter.

—Diane J. Bell

ADVICE ON FINANCIAL AID

Many a good idea has been sideswiped by a well meaning, but ponderous bureaucracy. When decisions are to be made concerning the expenditure of billions of federal and state tax dollars in the form of student financial aid awards, many factors interact. Public policy decisions, politics, program management and oversight concerns combine; the synergy produced through these interactions establishes a bureaucratic environment, and *voila*, a good idea becomes thirty-pounds of paperwork.

Financial aid programs of a federal, state, institutional or other nature, usually begin with the dreaded submittal of appropriate paperwork. Then, if submittal of paperwork were not enough, there is a protracted masticatory period for processing information. Processing having been completed, there is the production of an award package and printing of a tentative award letter. A tentative award letter identifies specific financial aid program(s), and the potential maximum dollar amount of the awards for these programs based on full-time enrollment and other caveats. Your receipt of a tenta-

tive award letter is the payback for having having completed the financial aid cycle.

I want to list some general hints concerning how to maximize your potential financial aid dollars:

1. Put yourself in the game. Don't take yourself out of the financial aid process. Any assistance you receive will be more than you'll get by staying on the sideline.

2. Seek professional answers to your aid related questions. Don't rely on rumor or advice from nonprofessionals.

3. Complete all applications for financial aid completely and accurately. Errors or omissions will need to be corrected. Corrections take time, and a delay can cause a missed deadline.

4. Be aware of all deadlines, and beat them by at least 10-15 working days.

5. Forge a partnership with your Financial Aid Advisor. Helping your advisor is helping yourself.

6. Respond immediately to requests for documentation. Deadlines can be missed by delayed response.

7. Seek outside scholarship and grant information at a library, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (708) 948-8500, or other legitimate sources. Do research to help yourself access outside aid dollars.

8. Stay current. Know what is going on at the federal and state level

that may affect student assistance.

In closing, I encourage you to act in your own best interest in the matter of applying for financial aid. We can discuss the philosophies of financial aid programs and debate the relative goodness or badness of various political parties, but in the final analysis, it boils down to getting done what needs to be done.

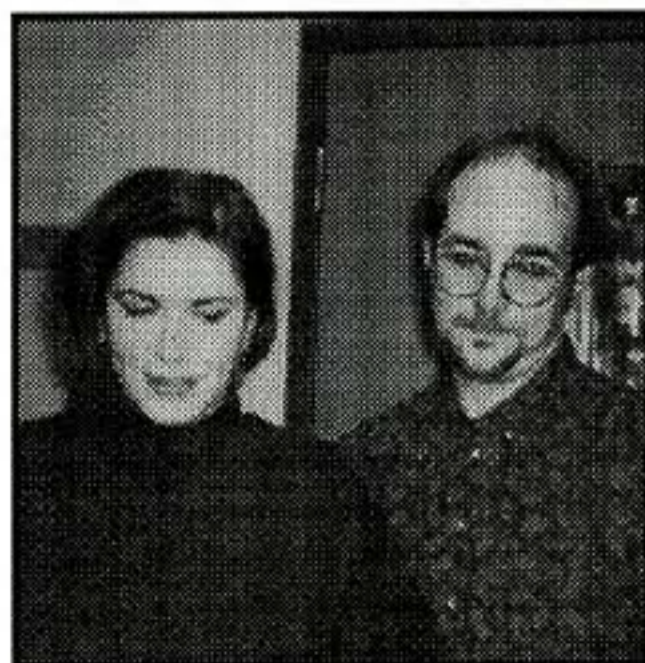
—John Olin

Olin is the guy who puts a human face on the impersonal bureaucracy that is financial aid. All his advice is solid, especially the part about getting to know your counselor. --N.L.

LETTER FROM AN ALUMNUS

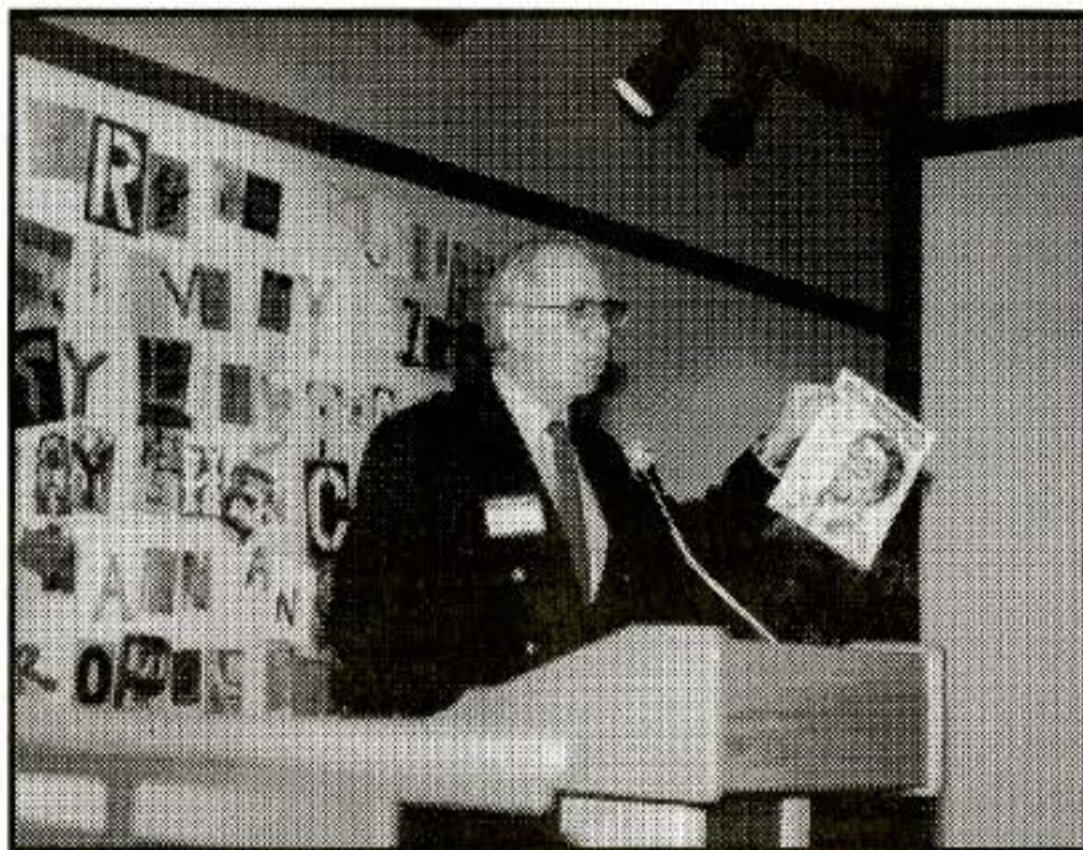
Ms. Nancy Laichas
Editor-in-Chief
The Columbia Chronicle
Dear Nancy:

As a former editor of *The Columbia Chronicle* (Spring 1990), I was pleased to read in the latest



Editor Laichas and Advisor Sulski

edition of *Inside Journalism* Association Awards that were about the Illinois College Press recently presented to members of



Nat Lehrman, chairman of the journalism department, stands at a podium and brags about the college magazine, which he is so proud of. "*Chicago Arts and Communication* has got to be a major landmark for Columbia College," he says. "For a young institution like ours to cop a first prize in the nation's most important college magazine contest, as it did this year, is astonishing." Lehrman will be retiring from Columbia College this semester. Obviously, he considers the magazine one of the high water marks of his decade as chairman. "I'm also pleased with the growth of the department," he says. "It has doubled in enrollment during the last ten years, while adding magazine and broadcast segments to its newspaper core. And I'm tickled at the development of the student newspaper, which won seven statewide prizes this year. We never breathed down the students' necks. We always hoped they would develop their own stride with a minimum of supervision. And they have done just that. The college now has a fine student paper. And," continues Lehrman, "we mustn't overlook the little sheet you're reading now — *Inside Journalism*. This paper was created to develop a sense of community among all Columbia journalism students and teachers. At the same time, it gave a great number of students the opportunity to practice their skills in a supervised situation. And it, too, has won prizes." Lehrman says he will continue to stay in touch with journalism and with the alumni of Columbia's department. "It knocks me out to see how many of our graduates have been successful in the media world," he concludes.

the *Columbia Chronicle's* staff.

I've seen a couple of editions of the paper this year and you and the staff have managed to put together a fine quality publication with crisp writing and thought-provoking opinion. I must admit that while I thought we had improved the paper considerably during the time I was there, you've greatly exceeded our efforts.

Congratulations on the awards and keep up the good work. It's nice to have some validation that all the (underpaid and unpaid) time put in to make the paper a success. Good luck in the future.

Sincerely,

Mitchell Hurst

INSIDE JOURNALISM
A newsletter produced
by and for students of the
Journalism Department.

**COLUMBIA COLLEGE
CHICAGO**
600 S. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60605

Managing Editor
Omar Castillo
Contributing Editors
Diane J. Bell
Danielle Curley
Aretha Fouch
April M. Knox
Jennifer Laboy
Michel Schwartz
ADMIN. EDITOR
Lena Renteria
CHAIRMAN
Nat Lehrman

June 1996 Vol. 10, No. 5