

1-1-1998

# Inside Journalism

Columbia College Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.colum.edu/inside\\_journalism](https://digitalcommons.colum.edu/inside_journalism)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](#).

---

## Recommended Citation

Columbia College Chicago, "Inside Journalism" (1998). *Inside Journalism*. 59.  
[https://digitalcommons.colum.edu/inside\\_journalism/59](https://digitalcommons.colum.edu/inside_journalism/59)

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](mailto:drossetti@colum.edu).



# INSIDE JOURNALISM

A Newsletter Published by the Journalism Department of Columbia College

January 1998

## Echoing through Columbia's halls

By Allison Martin

Echo is coming. Echo is coming. Echo is coming. Like a billboard gone mad, posters claiming "Echo is coming" have been found plastered all over Columbia's halls for weeks now, gearing everyone up for the newest issue of the student magazine put together by the j-dept's Magazine Writing class.

The magazine promises to continue breaking new ground with a wide array of articles that include everything from a cover story on body piercing to the best hair wraps in town.

The ideas for the articles were the product of brainstorming sessions within the class. According to Echo Adviser Scott Fosdick, each issue "reflects areas the school specializes in," and is about the school, but not specifically for the school.

Echo is the result of a year-round class designed around one team of students who put the entire magazine together--from assembling the story list and working with the writers and photographers to creating everything from headlines and captions to the artwork. The Magazine Design class, now also designed as a

year-round course, completes the layout in Quark Xpress.

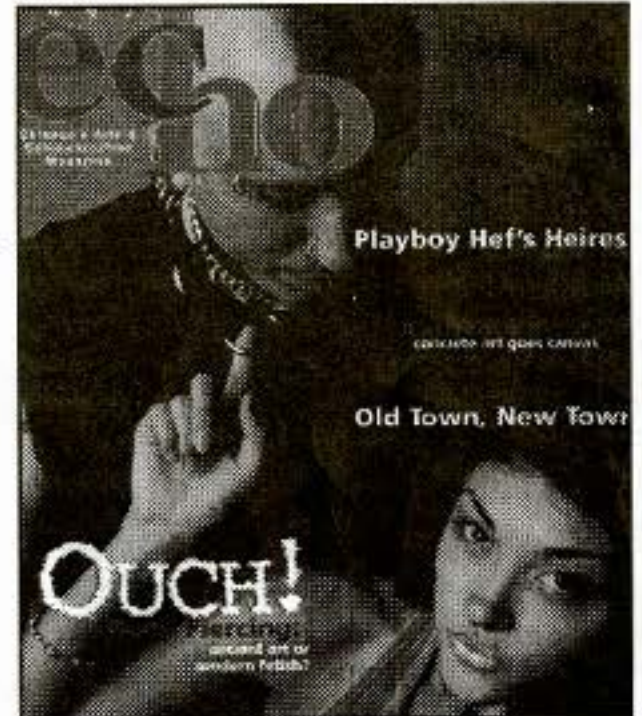
According to Echo Editor Rob England, the "whole idea of students putting together the magazine was an invaluable experience for us." Despite the presence of an adviser, it was primarily up to the students to determine the focus and style of the copy. This meant that they received an experience as close to the "real-world" as they could get.

And like the "real-world," it wasn't all smooth sailing. England and assistant Diane Bell ran into problems with students who did little for the magazine.

As he stated in the issue's editorial, "there are those who don't just sit there, they do something, and inversely, those who don't just do something, they sit there."

But despite the hitches, England emphatically believes the end result was well worth the struggles and long summer hours he spent at Columbia applying the finishing touches. He has "never been prouder," he says.

In a slight twist, this year's release party for the magazine charged a cover to help pay for it. In some form, the maga-



Columbia's award-winning Echo overcomes pretty painful moments.

zine has always been sold, but due to budget cutbacks, this year's students had to work extra hard to help raise funds to cover costs. Fosdick described the party as a "good kick-off to the selling season."

The 1997 issue is available in the j-department for \$2.

## Columbia's cream of the crop

By Trista Balcita

Rui Kaneya, a print journalism senior at Columbia, has earned nationwide recognition as a talented and aspiring reporter.

Last November, Kaneya won first place in the national "Reporter of the Year" competition, sponsored by The Associated Collegiate Press and Tribune Media Services.

His work was judged after submitting three news articles of his choice to the award committee. In his articles, Kaneya attacked the unknown complications of Columbia's elevator system and approached the issue of modern technological accommodations offered to disabled students. He also confronted the

new scandalous form of academic cheating through the use of the Internet.

Originally from Yokohama, Japan, Kaneya made his first trip to Chicago in 1994 and decided to attend Columbia College. News of his award back home brought his parents much content.

"I called them up the night that I won and they were very thrilled and excited that I won a national award," Kaneya said.

After Kaneya graduates in June of this year, he hopes to continue building a strong career in journalism in the Chicago area or in Japan.

"My ideal job would be in the area of investigative reporting or



possibly feature writing," Kaneya said. "I like working at a leisure pace when writing so as to get a thorough objective on the issue."

For now, Kaneya enjoys contributing his talent as news editor for The Chronicle and interning at "The Chicago Reporter" where he helps in research and reporting.



Lisa Manna won a \$3,500 scholarship from the Chicago Chapter of the Television Academy of Arts and Sciences. She now works at KQTV in St. Joseph, MO.



# The Joy of Sects

By Jennifer Nicole Channer

Through the years religion has become a hot topic in American newsrooms, but the so-called "popular religions" are not the only topics. The millennium is approaching and the religious scope is broadening. The Pope is not the only religious leader making news anymore. Recently The Branch Davidians, Scientology and Heaven's Gate have been in the news. This is where Norma Green's class, *Covering Religion In America* fits in.

"*Covering Religion In America*" will take a look at religion in everyday news. Students will be taught how to approach religion and where to find information, via the traditional resources or the Internet.

Green has several goals she hopes to accomplish in this class. One is to give basic information and give students background on where to look up information. The other is to look at news stories, look at how they were covered and discuss them.

"You can never be too prepared. The best journalists go in with an open mind and use a variety of skills to get the information," Green explained.

Green also plans on discussing how the press is handling religion. "Students will research American-born faith groups and a special module will offer the opportunity to analyze the apocalyptic belief and the millennium movements of religious groups," Green explained.

Reporters who cover the religion beat will be guest speakers, as well as representatives from the Council for a Parliament of World Religions.

"Students will also have the opportunity to go on field trips to cover various spiritual activities," Green said.

The final project for the class comes from a quote that "Chicago is the most religiously diverse place in the world." Green wants students to research this idea. In the end it is her hope, depending on the caliber of work turned in by the students, that the work may be published.

The three texts that will be used in the class are, *Joy of Sects*, *The Words of Religion* and *New Religion as Global Cultures*.

For students who are having a hard time finding this class in the spring schedule, it is listed under the Dynamics of Broadcast News. The class will be held on Wednesdays from 1:30 to 4:20 P.M.

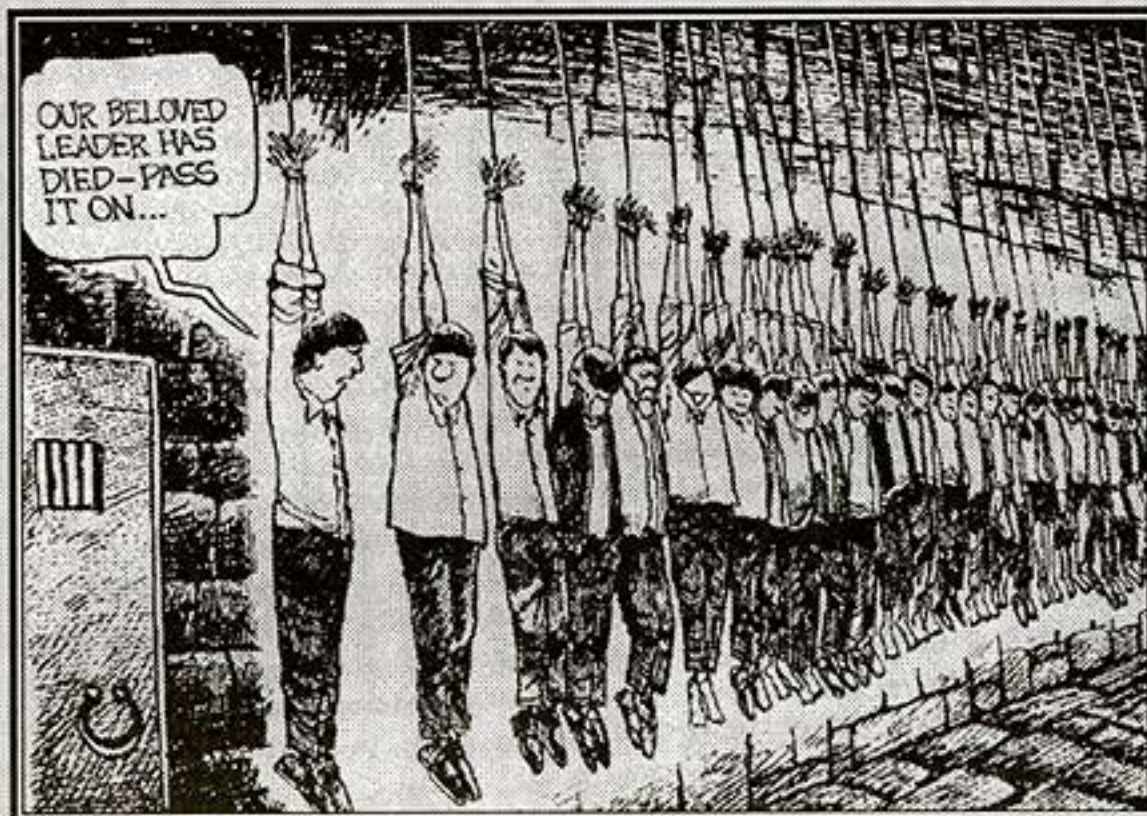
## Laughing all the way to the Fischetti

Editorial cartoonist Gary Markstein of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel grabbed top honors at the 16th annual Fischetti Editorial Cartoon Competition sponsored by Columbia College.

Markstein was honored at a fundraiser for the Fischetti Endowment, a scholarship fund administered by the j-department. This year, the Endowment awarded scholarships to 22 students, bringing the total number of scholarships to 225 since the program started in 1981.

The Fischetti Competition, which drew more than 300 entries from editorial cartoonists in the United States and Canada, memorializes John Fischetti, a Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist for newspapers in New York City and Chicago.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Studs Terkel was the main speaker at the luncheon. Robert Stevenson, managing editor of The Chronicle, and a recipient of a Fischetti scholarship award spoke on behalf of this year's winners.



By Gary Markstein, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel



# Tenacity and the Tribune

Or, how to get an internship at the Tribune without stalking the editors

*Inside Journalism Staff Writer Jonathan Bethely, 22, works as an editorial assistant at Chicago Tribune's Internet Sports.*

*Bethely is scheduled to graduate from Columbia in August this year.*

By Jonathan Bethely

The story of how I landed a job at the Tribune is more significant to me than actually working on the Internet Sports team.

I didn't walk into the Tribune, resume in hand and demand a job as an editorial assistant. The process began more than four years ago when I introduced myself to Sheila Wolfe at a diversity job fair in Detroit.

Most job fairs are similar. Row after row of recruiters line voluminous exhibition halls seeking to fill vacancies at their papers while anxious journalists, armed with their best clips in hand, meander nervously around each booth hoping to score the perfect interview. It's an intimidating and redundant experience that leaves you wondering how many different ways you can explain the same story to 30 different people.

So, green as a Washington Apple, with barely 10 good college newspaper clips in hand, I headed to Detroit to meet and greet fellow journalism students and newspaper recruiters from around the country. Needless to say, I was

a bit nervous.

I decided to start off interviewing with small papers — hoping my chances of a receptive audience would be good. But, the first recruiter I talked to was obviously not impressed. And neither was I. The same was the case with three other recruiters at both small and medium circulation papers. They were all looking for someone with more experience.

Finally, I chalked up enough courage to walk over to the Chicago Tribune booth. I didn't know it at the time but I would be establishing a relationship with a woman who would remember me for years to come.

Sheila Wolfe was the woman recruiting for the Tribune. With no real expectations, I handed her my clips and began my somewhat rehearsed speech about how eager I was to become a journalist and how much I would value a summer internship at my hometown paper. Sure, it

rest of my stay in Detroit, but even that wouldn't have helped. I was devastated. Didn't she like my suit? Weren't my clips good enough

how I got the stories I chose to include in my package. This was working well. She went into a folder and pulled out a paper with a job description for an editorial assistant with the fast growing Internet Tribune. Damn, I thought, I can surf the web, but I don't know H T M L (H y p e r t e x t markup language). After several phone calls and two inter-

**"It's an intimidating and redundant experience that leaves you wondering how many different ways you can explain the same story to 30 different people."**

views, I was writing headlines, shoveling copy and building the Tribune Internet Sports site.

Internet sports is essentially what you see in the paper. However, because we're on the internet, we have more interactive flexibility with our audience. We can post breaking news within minutes and add live audio feeds to go along with stories. Message boards allow readers to post their opinions on hot topics of the day.

My job involves the day-to-day design and layout of the site, copy editing, photo assignments and converting stories into the HTML format. I'll never forget walking through the revolving doors of the Tribune Tower on my first day of work. Sure, I'd walked through those doors before on different occasions, but this time was different. This time I was walking through the doors of my career. Most journalists dream of working for their hometown paper. On the elevator ride to the fifth floor, my dream became reality.

**"I was devastated. Didn't she like my suit? Weren't my clips good enough to keep and maybe recycle when I walked away?"**

wasn't an original speech — she had probably heard it all before — but I was honest and sincere.

After what seemed like an hour, but probably closer to five minutes, she handed my clips back and that was it. She may have told me to enjoy the

to keep and maybe recycle when I walked away? For the next three years I continued to bump into Sheila Wolfe at different job fairs around the country. Each time I visited her I had added another line to my resume. After our initial meeting, the following visits seemed short in comparison.

Finally, during the summer of 1996 in Nashville, Tenn., I was determined to get something from this woman. After circling the Tribune booth several times, I said to myself, "I'm not leaving this chair without a job offer or at the very least a job lead."

I was ready and my suit was sharp. Fresh off consecutive internships at the Minneapolis Star Tribune and The Florida Times-Union, there was no way she could let me get away.



# Capturing crime

**Advanced Reporting class led by Sun-Times reporter attacks news beat by incorporating a touch of reality.**

By Trista Balcita

With extensive experience in news reporting, Michelle Roberts brings a refreshing agenda to Columbia College.

Roberts teaches Advanced Reporting to students in search of hands-on experience.

"During the course of the semester, we are spending a great deal of our class time going out into the field and covering assignments," Roberts said. "We're covering actual news events. Just recently, my students have covered a march against police brutality and a police board meeting."

Roberts currently is a crime and police reporter for the Chicago Sun-Times where her position has been both rewarding and challenging. Prior to that, she was an editor and reporter for the Times of Northwest Indiana.

"Most recently, there's been a lot of crime news going on with close ties to Chicago," Roberts said. "Last summer, I covered the Andrew Cunanan and Versace murder investigation at Miami Beach and that was definitely very interesting and challenging."

Roberts hopes to bring drive and intensity into the classroom. Her strong approach prepares students

for a fast-paced career in news reporting.

"By having them go out and cover actual news, journalism becomes more real to them," Roberts said.

"I hope that they not only have a broader understanding of the mechanics of journalism, but that eventually they'll build and develop more of a passion for journalism, as well."

"My students are a very good group and eager to learn," Roberts said.

Roberts, 27, received her Bachelor of Arts degree at Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and her masters at Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.

"Throughout college, I was reporting for different publications and was hired for a job before I graduated.



**Michelle Roberts toughens it up in the classroom**

the market with their clips and resumes."

Roberts stresses the importance of staying active within the college curriculum and taking advantage of the internship program or any other means of gaining experience. "Becoming involved with your school publication or participating in the internship program will make a huge difference," Roberts said, adding that great clips reflect an understanding of the field.

What advice does Roberts have for young, aspiring journalists?

"Don't be afraid of hard, hard work," Roberts said. "Although it may take some time and patience, eventually it will all pay off."

**"One of our upcoming projects is that students will be able to select a beat and cover all of the breaking news within their own beat. By having them go out and cover actual news, journalism becomes more real to them."**

**--Michelle Roberts**

People gradually became more familiar with my work and my name," Roberts said. "I can't emphasize enough how students have to blanket

## INSIDE JOURNALISM

### Editor

Rui Kaneya

### Staff writers

Trista Balcita

Jonathan Bethely

Jennifer N. Channer

Yasmin Khan

Allison Martin

Michelle Pocock

### Faculty advisor

Ed Planer

### Production advisor

Omar Castillo

### Administrative advisor

Lena Renteria

**INSIDE JOURNALISM is a student publication that is published twice a semester during the fall and spring semesters.**



# Of Mema and Men

The Chronicle's Editor-in-Chief talks candidly about herself, the school paper, her weekly column "The Love Loft," and why all men, yes *all* men, are jerks.

By Eileen La Valle

Mema Ayi lights another Newport cigarette, draws a deep breath through its golden filter and releases a stream of smoke with a tired, exhausted sigh. "Are you still working on Page 3?" she asks with a hard-lipped look of extreme seriousness. "C'mon, we've gotta get done tonight. I don't want to spend another Saturday here."

It's Friday night, and while most people are partying, Ayi, The Chronicle's editor-in-chief, has more serious business at hand: putting together this week's issue.

As she floats between the duties of copy-editing, layout and leadership, Ayi is all smiles, delighted with the opportunity to work in a way she has long dreamed of.

"I've come from a situation in which nothing was given to me. It forced me to learn early on that if I didn't want to fail in life I'd have to kick myself in the ass and work for it," said Ayi.

And kick herself she has. "If they could place Mema's energy in a bottle," said The Chronicle's faculty advisor and freelance writer Jim Sulski, rolling his eyes to the sky, "they would really have something."

Ayi walks to the water cooler with her Newport in hand, fills a cup and makes quick work of drinking it. As she crushes the empty cup in her hand she sees the photo editor who, as usual, is late with his assignment. "Got those pics?" she asks.

Ayi doesn't enjoy having to chase down writers and photographers. But when she gets the chance to call them on it she doesn't avoid it either. Some staff members find this intimidating. Others look up

to her authoritative disposition and view her as more of a friend than a boss.

"People may find me intimidating, but I am 5'3" and 110 pounds. I am the one who gets frightened when confrontations happen," said Ayi. "But in order to be the boss I must be determined and decisive."

Few would guess that six years ago, Ayi was a high school dropout. She left due to pressures with her family life that pushed her into a deep state of depression. When Ayi's mother learned of her dropping out, Ayi was soon pressured into returning to school. Now that she is back, she keeps herself too busy to be depressed.

"Work comes first and I'm a busy, aggressive, young woman," said Ayi as she prepares to write her weekly column "The Love Loft."

"I'm really into 'The Love Loft,'" said Ayi. Of all her duties, it's her favorite part of The Chronicle experience. "'The Love Loft' has given me the opportunity to write about things I wouldn't write about otherwise. As I have said many times before, all men are jerks."

Ayi uses the column to vent her dating frustrations. "It is a vehicle for bashing men. When men learn how to play the

game right, I won't have to talk smack about them anymore," said Ayi.



Mema Ayi: Running The Chronicle with an iron fist and a lot of cigarettes.

"I'm taking what I want from my life," Ayi said. "And damn whoever gets in this woman's way." This is not such a surprising statement considering Ayi's philosophy is "If you don't like what I'm doing, you can kiss my black behind."

Not one to mince words or spare others' feelings, Ayi tells it like it is in order to solve every and any problem that arises in both The Chronicle and in her everyday life.

It is this initiative that landed her an

internship last summer at "U.S. News and World Report."

One of her articles was published in the magazine and she says it was not only instrumental in boosting her confidence but helped her gain valuable insight on attaining the high goals she has set for herself after college.

Until then, as she has been every Friday night this school year, Ayi will be in The Chronicle office, confronting deadlines, missing photographers, proofreading pages and effortlessly reaching for her Newports.

"I don't always look forward to it, but I do it," said Ayi. "I just have to do it."

**Got a job that thrills, spills, chills and comes complete with all the frills?**

**Tell Inside Journalism about it!**



# The engaging environment

*A journalist, an author of two investigative books and a Pulitzer Prize winner come together to create a new course designed to address environmental concerns.*



**Mars Attack!!! Jeff Lyon takes us to Mars and back as part of a new course.**

## Environmental Reporting

Columbia is taking bold steps into covering the environment with a new course designed to give students a much-needed introduction to environmental journalism.

Beginning this spring, "Environmental

Reporting" will be offered on Thursday from 6:30 p.m. to 9:20 p.m. The course seeks to address the fact that -- even though most news organizations now have full-time environmental writers -- all reporters, broadcast or print, are regularly asked to cover environmental stories these days because the beat is generating so much news.

The course will be team taught by Debbie Schwartz, a journalist and Columbia instructor who specializes in environmental news; Jim Schwab, senior research associate with the American Planning Association and author of two investigative books about environmental dangers; and Jeff Lyon, Pulitzer Prize winner and coordinator of the j-department's program in "Reporting on Health, Science and the Environment."

## Medicine and Science in the Media

Another aspect of the course is "Medicine and Science in the Media," offered on Tuesdays from 1:30 p.m. to 4:20 p.m. It will be a required class for those in the Reporting on Health, Science and the Environment program.

Using a round-table format, the class will examine and debate a wide variety of medical and scientific issues that affect the public, then evaluate the media's performance in covering them intelligently.

The subjects will be as fresh as the news, such as manned expedition to Mars; human cloning; transplants using animal organs such as pig livers; childbearing by women in their 60s; the related issue of having perfect "designer" babies through genetic manipulation; and global warming.

# Cozying with Costas

By Michelle Pocock

"The best way to achieve success in journalism is to pursue a well-rounded education," said Bob Costas, sportscaster for NBC-TV, as he addressed the 1997 Weisman Scholars. "Take as many different classes as you can, and learn about everything."

Costas hosted the luncheon to raise money for the Albert P. Weisman Scholarship Fund at the downtown Marriott in November. Founded 23 years ago, the fund has awarded almost \$500,000 to Columbia students in all of the communication arts.

Currently a commentator for NBC TV's NBA basketball coverage, Costas talked openly about his beginnings. After graduating from Syracuse University in 1979, Costas took a job covering college hockey games. Unfortunately he knew nothing about hockey, but studied it religiously until the day of the game.

"The day of the game I sat down and talked with anyone that knew about the game, and I studied and re-studied the roster with all of the players from both teams. But the night of the game, the away team decided to get brand new uniforms with different numbers on them," said Costas.

Costas made it through the game, and today he is one of the most well-respected broadcasters in the business. After countless interviews with athletes, Costas remembers one interview that sticks out in his mind.

"He was a college educated man who was just down on his

luck and he was what you would call a street person. He knew exactly who I was, and he just started talking to me about current events in the world. But what was really amazing was when I told him I was from St. Louis, Mo., he asked me how the new Lord & Taylor department store in the Galleria was...I couldn't believe he knew all that," Costas said.

Stressing that knowledge is power in the field of journalism, Costas practices what he preaches. He says he approaches sports reporting differently than others. Costas sees the story behind the story, the personal side of each athlete. "These people have lives outside of sports, with problems and happiness, and people need to realize that," Costas said. "The best broadcasting is history giving context to the excitement, flavor and human emotion—that's a sense of what people can relate to."

