

VIEWPOINTS

The official newsletter of the Visual Communication Division of AEJMC

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FROM THE VISCOM DIVISION HEAD

St. Louis 2011

As we work to put the finishing touches on VisCom programming for the AEJMC convention in St. Louis, I wanted to take a moment to thank everyone who has contributed to the planning process. Your Vice Head Jeremy Gilbert (Northwestern) has put a lot of time and effort into ensuring that we have another great collection of panels. This year's list includes a diverse sampling of topics, from 3D visual media, to independent photojournalism, to multimedia storytelling. We also got quite lucky and landed some prime session times! So, I think you'll all find several options to be of interest in August.

Thanks also to Second Vice Head Bruce Thorson (Nebraska-Lincoln). Bruce is planning a luncheon for our division that will feature a number of photojournalists from the St. Louis area. And our Membership Chair Byung Lee (Elon), Teaching Chair Larry Dailey (Nevada) and Gilbert are leading the charge for what is sure to be another great pre-convention workshop on multimedia storytelling. Anyone who is looking for some tips on how to integrate multimedia design and development in their own work or courses should consider signing up.

I especially also want to thank the other officers who have gone the extra mile to ensure our division has a great convention. Thanks so Research Chair Robert Peaslee (Texas Tech), Creative Projects Chair Michael Cheers (San Jose State), Best of the Web Chair Phil Loubere (Middle Tennessee State), and Logo Chair John Freeman (Florida). Because of them, the convention will be an outstanding experience.



Be sure to seek these folks out in St. Louis, tell them you appreciate their service to the division, and ask how you can help! We will host our annual members meeting on Thursday, Aug. 4 from 6:45 to 8:15 p.m. If you're interested in serving the division in one of these roles for 2011-12, please attend.

Finally, don't forget that research papers are due April 1. Last year's research panels showed yet again how productive our members are and how interesting and diverse are these research efforts. Be sure to visit <http://aejmcstlouis.org/> for everything you need to know about the various workshops, luncheons, mini-plenaries and other convention programming. If you type *visual communication* into the search field you'll be directed to the paper call for our division, complete with submission guidelines.

I look forward to seeing you all in St. Louis. *Jennifer George-Palilonis is the Visual Communication Division Head and the George & Frances Ball Distinguished Professor of Multimedia Journalism at Ball State University.* jageorge2@bsu.edu

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2010-11 VisCom officers appointed

Head:

Jennifer George-Palilonis, Ball State Univ.

Vice-Head & Program Chair:

Jeremy Gilbert, Northwestern University

Second Vice-Head

Bruce Thorson, University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Research Chair:

Robert Peaslee, Texas Tech University

PF&R Chair:

Larry Dailey, University of Nevada

Teaching Chair:

Mary Bock, Kutztown University

Best of the Web Chair:

Phil Loubere, Middle Tennessee State

Creative Projects Chair:

Michael Cheers, San Jose State University

Logo Chair:

John Freeman, University of Florida

Membership Chair:

Byung S. Lee, Elon University

Newsletter Editor:

Ellen Mahaffy, University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire

Visual Communication

Quarterly Editor:

Paul Martin Lester, California State University, Fullerton

Webmaster:

Keith Greenwood, University of Missouri



FROM A VISCOM DIVISION MEMBER

Using New Media in the Visual Studies Course

Professors of visual media have long been at the front edge of the wave in using technology in the classroom. We're the ones who needed slides and projectors back when they were tangible slides and projectors with carousels. Today most universities have at least some digital support in their classrooms and most provide students with digital learning environments for any course. Those of us teaching visual rhetoric have a chance to use such tools for more than online quizzes and notifications.

At Cal State, for instance Paul Martin Lester (Editor of *Visual Communication Quarterly*) has met his students on Second Life, the online environment in which users can take on, and construct, an identity as an avatar in a virtual world. Lester does more than teach a class on Second Life, however, he uses the virtual world to teach the four basic visual cues. (He also has a no-flying rule during class, which is "lifted," in a manner of speaking, when his virtual world lecture is over.) In another class, Lester uses Twitter to foster class discussion. Twitter is also useful tool for Alec Hosterman, with Indiana University at South Bend, who found that shy students were more likely to participate in discussion if that discussion is advanced online.

Eric Meyer uses a variety of online tools for his classes at the University of Illinois for both curriculum and class administration. His students' visual work is collected over time in a gallery. Note Meyer, "The gallery section establishes an ever-rising floor of expectations regarding quality of finished work, virtually eliminates the chance for plagiarism and, because ALL student work, not just GOOD student work is offered, encourages students to critically examine on their own which approaches seem to work better than others." He also makes sure that a head

shot of each student is included in the online class roster, one of those simple things that makes group projects easier.

Roxanne O'Connell of Roger Williams University in Rhode Island requires her design students to blog about different visualizations they create. She says, "It really cements the theory (Gestalt, dual coding, etc.) into their brains because they see it work." I've also used blogs, and each semester assign my students to post a profile picture and discuss its role in the construction of their online identity.

Warnings and Suggestions

As other scholars have suggested, using technology for technology's sake is an unhappy undertaking. If you are planning to use online resources, it's essential that you use the right tool for the job. If paper and pencil is still the right tool, stick with it. Our students and colleagues can smell a gimmick a long way off.

That said, if you do decide that blogging, Tweeting, or a virtual world might enhance your curricular plan, here is some advice, gleaned, for the most part, from my mistakes.

First, college students are not nearly as tech-savvy as conventional wisdom suggests. Some of my students are so advanced in their skill base that they could write apps for their own Droid phones. The majority, however, have never blogged before enrolling in one of my classes. Straightforward icons for creating a text box or adding a photo familiar to regular computer users are unfamiliar to students who haven't worked with advanced word processing or photo editing programs. Some of them do not understand what a blog is, how it works, or why I can't read their blog unless they share their URL with me. To offset early semester frustration, I've developed a worksheet to get them started, complete with screen shots. I also commit

part of a lecture at the beginning of each semester explaining what a blog is, how it works, and then I help one student sign up – showing the process on the projection screen, as I try to help them through.

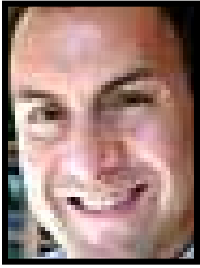
The second potential pitfall is related to number one: students without easy, home access to the internet may drift away. They might set up the blog, then never actually write a post. They might find the process so frustrating that they give up. If they have to go to the library to post, they might be less likely to participate. You are the best judge of your students' socio-economic situation.

Next, instructors need to be clear in their own minds – and make those standards known to their students, about what is graded, what is not, and how. Sometimes students mistake blogging for texting, and expect to be able to write with the lower case "i" and other text-speak acronyms. Be specific about your expectations. As I grade them and post public comments, I try to briefly and diplomatically explain where they went wrong (or right!). I've found that students look forward to an online comment in ways no pencil mark ever has.

Conclusion:

Using online resources to increase student interaction with the visual can be beneficial. Students seem to enjoy online feedback, especially when it is frequent; they are able to incorporate visuals into their posts; they can improve their writing skills without dealing with paper and printing and they benefit from writing for a wider audience. Instructors can expose their students to new sources and news sources; monitor their students' understanding of classroom concepts and assign more frequent, small assignments without added paperwork. Online resources are no cure-all, however, in that students may need extra help with the technology.

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FROM A VISCOM DIVISION MEMBER

Visual Journalism in Cairo

Hands over the lens. We see it a lot in photojournalism from war zones and repressive regimes (and sometimes at the police yellow tape lines down the street.)

But Cairo had about it something of the unexpected. This is a country that has had close ties with us for nearly a generation. It's where an Egyptian president shook hands with an Israeli leader in the 1970s with Jimmy Carter smiling behind them. There have been other photo-ops like that. It would seem to be a place where a free press is welcome.

Then we saw Anderson Cooper get walked. We saw network news cameras suddenly flipped up so we're looking at the sky — with shouts that had the tone of fury that photojournalists just capture in regard to others. Christiane Amanpour, as we watched, was forced, along with the cameraman, into her car while hands and fists pounded it. A rock smashed the windshield as the driver, embarrassed, shook it off. "Are you all right?" she asked on camera. He muttered something and kept driving.

Ahmanpour said the rock went through the window, and it probably felt like it did. But the spidering of the glass and the shards across the dash were enough to make the point.

As if we needed another reminder, the conflict in Cairo has brought back to us the limitations that visual journalists have in other parts of the world to gather truth. That truth, in raw visual meaning, is a very big thing. Susan Sontag, in *On Photography*, said when we bring a camera into places like Cairo's Tahir Square, we "help people take possession of a space in which they are insecure."

But we're learning (again) about insecurity and cameras — and ownership of spaces.

There's a certain perception that U.S. (and maybe other Western) journalists have as they approach a conflict as personal and passionate as the melee we've been watching — or trying to watch.

John Mitchell on Popeater.com, posted on Feb. 3 the dialogue between Ahmanpour and a small but fervent crowd in Cairo. The journalist, smart for doing it, slows down the fists and weapons by getting the angry ones talking. (We all did this on the playground when the bully showed up and we were either alone or outnumbered.)

"You want us to go?" Ahmanpour asked with the camera rolling. The only reason it worked was that the young man with most of his eyeballs visible, understood and spoke English.

"Yes, I want you to go from here." Ahmanpour had bought herself another minute to back into the car. So she tries for a minute or two more with a follow-up.

So she asks him why.

And the young man, the only one whose voice isn't an unintelligible scream, articulates what has become clear in Egypt and could be increasingly true in countries that have had enough of the democratic experiment and the free press that supports it.

"Because we hate you." She knew that. But he kept going.

"We hate America... you are not a good person."

If there was ever a time when American journalists were seen as noble, benevolent and useful to the causes of freedom in emerging countries around the world, that time appears to be either over or at its twilight.

The fortunes of U.S. foreign policy, the U.S. economy, and the perception of journalism in this country have made coverage a very hard thing.

But there's something interesting about journalism that comes out of hard times. It's better. It seems to matter more. And it weeds out those who think it should be easy. Yes, it's rough on the equipment budget. And it requires some tough, closed-door meetings with the risk management people. It's flat-out expensive.

But it's important — no less than ever. And our students need to see the worst of what it takes to get those tough visual stories. Some will change their major. Some will question the kinds of stories they're willing to go after.

And visual journalism will go forward, with a discernment and clear-eyed steel that will get the job done — like it has for a very long time.

Dr. Michael A. Longinow is a Chair at Biola University, Department of Journalism and Integrated Media, School of Arts & Sciences. Phone: 562-906-4569 or michael.longinow@biola.edu.

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Those without home broadband may become discouraged and new rubrics for assignments must be developed. Finally, and sadly, working online in no way removes the tedium from grading.

In the end going online merely to incorporate the latest technology can become a waste of everyone's time.

The decision on whether to incorporate student-instructor blogging, tweeting or virtual life into a course needs to be motivated by clear pedagogical goals well-suited to interactive, hyperlinked, and visual assignments.

Mary A. Bock, PhD is an assistant professor at Kutztown University, Department of Speech & Theatre, Rickenbach Learning Center #234, Kutztown PA 19530. Phone: 484-646-4319 or bock@kutztown.edu.



FROM THE VISCOM DIVISION CREATIVE PROJECTS CHAIR

Creative Projects Call for Entries, April 4th



2010 First Place Creative Project

Top Secret Rosies: Female Computers of WWII
by LeAnn Erickson, Temple University

If you're an educator involved in creative work that isn't traditional research, consider the VisCom Division's "Creative Projects" competition. It's an excellent opportunity to have your efforts recognized by peers in a juried forum. You would present the work at the national AEJMC convention in St. Louis, August 10-13, 2011.

What gets submitted and accepted? The format is non-restrictive, but an entry must include a strong visual component.

Accepted projects in the past have included historical studies, photojournalism exhibits of original work, book proposals or

published work, explanations of summer grants or activities, creative DVDs, commentaries on teaching effectiveness, and examples of innovative student projects and accomplishments.

Your submission should include a one-to-two page explanation of the work, stressing its significance to the study of visual journalism.

Did you receive outside support? Does the project examine cutting-edge technology that will enhance your teaching abilities?

How does this project fit in with your own interests and goals as a visual educator?

Your submission must be for work completed 2010/2011.

Normally there are about 15 submissions and five are selected for 15-minute presentations.

Internet access is not guaranteed, therefore you must show your work via a CD, laptop, thumb drive, etc. A computer and projector will be provided on-site.

Michael Cheers is the Creative Projects chair and an assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at San Jose State University. mcheers@casa.sjsu.edu

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

To submit your project, package **four** copies into four individual 9"x12" envelopes. Large and unusually shaped packages present handling issues. For example, instead of submitting an elaborate 11"x 14" leather-bound portfolio of archival photographs, send 8.5"x 11" inkjet or laser prints stapled together.

Instead of tubes with large rolled posters announcing

your film course's festival, send 8.5"x 11" versions. Also, if submitting CDs, use cross-platform common programs.

In one larger package, send your four envelopes (three copies without any identification) to the creative projects chair (see box for mailing instructions).

On the cover sheet of the fourth copy, include your

name, title, complete contact information (email, phone numbers) and a 75-word abstract summarizing the project.

Michael Cheers, the contest coordinator, will retain this copy. Submitted material will not be returned.

Please note: You cannot enter creative projects in any other convention category, including "Best of the Web"

Postmark Deadline:
Monday, April 4, 2011

Mail your projects to:
Michael Cheers
School of Journalism and
Mass Communications
San Jose State University
One Washington Square
San Jose, CA, 95192-0055



FROM THE AEJMC 2011 LOGO CHAIR

2012 AEJMC Convention Logo Design Competition!



image website: <http://www.sxc.hu/photo>

May might seem like a long way off, and so does 2012, but it's time to start working with your students for a 2012 Chicago convention logo. A logo entered in the AEJMC 2012 convention logo contest should be designed to represent the AEJMC annual conference to be held in Chicago in August 2012. It should also visually suggest "Chicago."

The logo should communicate immediately, effectively and it should be memorable. Entries must be the work of students enrolled in classes taught by AEJMC members. Each school may enter a maximum of 10 logos per design instructor. The logos must be submitted by a faculty sponsor. This might be an extra credit project for your design students or a spring 2011 assignment.

For a logo entry to be eligible, entrants are required to submit their logo entry as an EPS computer file (.eps). The filename must bear the last name of the entrant (for example: SmithLogo1.eps). The EPS file format is required because it is a vector based format that provides better reproduction. The logo must be a vector graphic with the type converted to outlines.

A logo entered in this competition must:

1. include the following type elements:
AEJMC August 2012 Chicago
2. include AEJMC as an integral part of the logo.
3. be adaptable to multiple uses, i.e., program book cover, nametags and promotional material. The logo should not lose impact or legibility when substantially reduced.
4. retain a sense of balance and internal

integrity when typographical elements are removed.

5. reflect the diversity of interests within AEJMC
6. be reproducible in solid tones using one color (black). No tints, no blends, no gradations are allowed.
7. **No copyrighted artwork**

Faculty sponsors must send a list of file-names with the entrants' names, addresses, and e-mail addresses, plus their own full contact information (office phone, address, etc.) Winners should be notified before May 15, 2011.

E-mail entries to: jfreeman@jou.ufl.edu by April 1, 2011.

John Freeman is the AEJMC 2012 Logo Chair and an associate professor in the Department of Journalism at the University of Florida. jfreeman@jou.ufl.edu

AEJMC VisCom Sessions, St. Louis 2011

TUESDAY

9 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Offsite Pre-Convention Workshop

User-friendly multimedia storytelling: Using Flash Interactivity

The workshop targets beginning Flash learners, not requiring any prior Flash experience. The participants will learn how to create movie clips and buttons and how to link them to premade Flash code (classes) for interactive multimedia projects. The workshop also benefits experienced learners who want to enhance their skills in interactive multimedia.

Sponsor: Visual Communication

Moderating/Presiding: Byung Lee, Elon University; Larry Dailey, University of Nevada Las Vegas; Jeremy Gilbert, Northwestern University

Pre-registration: Registration, \$50, will be handled through AEJMC. Please register before arriving there are a limited number of spots.

WEDNESDAY

8:15 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.

The Relationship between Images and Words in News

With the advent of digital imaging, web publishing and too-thin editing staffs, the historic close relationship between photo caption content and photo content seems to have been deeply eroded. Decades of common practice and instruction in editing seem to have been abandoned. The old truism about a naked picture being worth a thousand words was almost never true; it was better stated as: "A picture plus a few well-chosen words can be worth a thousand words or more."

Sponsor: Visual Communications and Magazine

Moderating/Presiding: John McClelland

10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Top Paper: Refereed research

Sponsor: Visual Communication

11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Documentaries Now!

America is in the midst of a celebration of the "real" - television networks and cable channels are awash with programming drawn from real life, keeping up with the Kardashians, going ice road trucking, or wondering what it is like to live in a family with 17 kids and counting. However these programs, seemingly rooted in the world first introduced by PBS's "An American Family," are a universe apart from the world of documentary storytelling, where producers tell unscripted stories based in the real world (in contrast to the "Real World"). What are the challenges facing documentaries in the multimedia world 21st century?

Sponsors: Radio-Television Journalism & Visual Communication

Moderating/Presiding: Kathleen Ryan, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Colorado, Boulder

3:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Best of the Web

Presentation of the Best of the Web awards.

Sponsors: CTEC and Visual Communication

5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

All That Flicker'ing and Flashing on the Political Big Screen: The creation and reception of Presidential imagery

Barack Obama's 2008 campaign may have been the first presidential campaign to win advertising awards, but presidents have long used staging, photographic imagery, and other visual means to shape public perceptions and opinion. The internet has only intensified this practice, as the White House makes strategic use of sites like Flickr, while at the same time it has become a major venue for analysis and critique of the visual discourse of power. This panel brings together participants looking at the topic from several perspectives: commentators, a visual media strategist, a photo editor and visual academics to focus on sets of images from a few themes including the careful creation of a "post-racial" image for the President.

Sponsor: Visual Communication

Moderating/Presiding: Loret Steinberg, Rochester Institute of Technology



THURSDAY**11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.*****From Flat to 3-D: Implications for Visual Communicators***

This session would provide an overview of the historical and scientific context for three-dimensional visual media, including the essays of Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., a medical doctor who wrote essays about the nature of stereoscopic photography in The Atlantic Monthly 150 years ago. A timeline ranging from Charles Wheatstone's stereoscopic drawings in the 1830s to the digital stereoscopic cameras available today would be presented, and a list of terms associated with depth perception, such as "stereopsis" and "motion parallax" would be provided.

Sponsors: Visual Communications & Radio Television Journalism

Moderating/Presiding:
John Neal, Brookhaven College

1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Scholar-to-Scholar — Research Session
Sponsor: Visual Communications

5 to 6:30 p.m.

Creative Projects — Research Session
Sponsor: Visual Communications

6:45 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.

Member's Meeting
Sponsor: Visual Communications

8:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Executive Meeting
Sponsor: Visual Communications

FRIDAY**8:15 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.*****Research Session***

Sponsor: Visual Communications

12:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.***Offsite Lunch***

Home Grown Photojournalism
This luncheon panel will feature professionals and educators who have overseen stories about local communities, service learning opportunities, and day-in-the-life projects with students and others interested in photojournalism in order to strengthen the bond between the public and journalists.

Sponsor: Visual Communications

Moderating/Presiding: Paul Lester,
California State University, Fullerton

Pre-registration: Registration, \$30, will be handled through AEJMC. Please register before arriving there are a limited number of spots.

1:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.***Magazine & Visual Communications Teaching Tips Marathon***

This panel differs from most AEJMC panels because 10 to 12 profs have five minutes each to present a cool technique or tip for designing a syllabus or teaching magazine/visual communication writing, editing, design, production, management, or publishing. Everyone in the audience will go home with a stack of tips.

Sponsors: Visual Communications and Magazine

5:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.***We handle the rest: Taking the load off independent photojournalists***

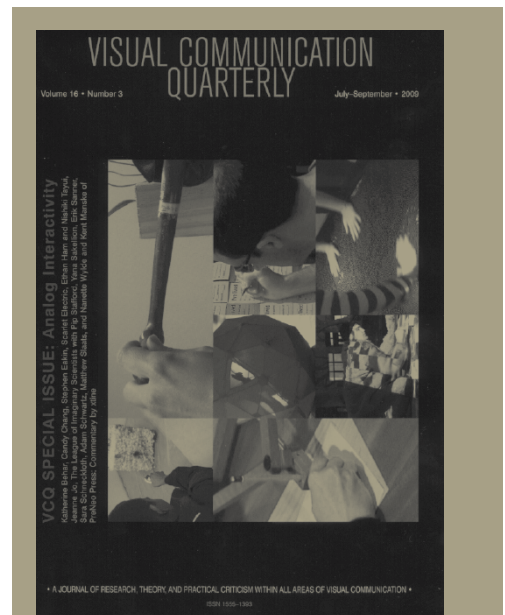
The recent economic shifts in the media industry have changed photojournalism. With a decrease in staff positions at media organizations, photojournalists increasingly are working independently, seeking to provide images to multiple clients.

Sponsors: Visual Communications and Community Journalism

Moderator: Keith Greenwood, Missouri School of Journalism

Saturday

No Visual Communication programming scheduled.



For papers submitted to the Visual Communication Division to its annual conference in Denver, the papers judged to be the top three will be accepted for publication for the Visual Communication Quarterly without additional review. However, authors will need to make any changes suggested by the reviewers or explain why they think such changes are not necessary. A paper should be sent to the editor as per the instructions at <http://vcquarterly.org/submit.html> with a note identifying it as an award winner. Any questions or concerns should be sent to Dr. Paul Martin Lester at lester@fullerton.edu.

**Brochure Available Online!**

Our division recruiting brochure is now available on the Web site at aejmc.net/viscom.

Please feel free to download it, print it and hand it to a colleague or graduate student in your department who may have an interest in joining our merry band of teachers and researchers.

Join the VisCom listserv
by sending a message with **SUBSCRIBE** in the message line to **AEJMC-VISCOM @LISTSERV.MIAMI.EDU**