Building a VisCom Community

At the annual, summer conventions AEJMC feels alive and the visual communication division members are active and engaged. There are other moments throughout the year — when newsletters, paper calls and Visual Communication Quarterly, VCQ, arrive — that remind members of the work their peers are doing.

The challenge is maintaining the energy and spirit of the members at our in-person events — like the midwinter and annual conferences. But all too soon we retreat to our respective colleges and universities and gradually that sense of community dissipates.

Even though this is a longstanding challenge, it doesn’t mean that nothing is being done about it. Your division officers are keeping busy. Second vice head Byung Lee (Elon) is planning the next Midwinter meeting at the University of Oklahoma, March 2-3, 2012 — http://bit.ly/AEJMC-VisCom-MidWinter2012. Vice head Bruce Thorson (Nebraska) is compiling a great slate of potential programming for next year’s annual convention in Chicago — http://bit.ly/AEJMC-VisCom-Summer2012. New VCQ editor Berkley Hudson (Missouri) is starting to put his mark on our journal — http://vcquarterly.org/

This coming year’s in-person events should once again remind attendees of how valuable division contacts can be and how much fun it is to meet and collaborate with other division members. But the question remains: What can motivate division members to keep up that kind enthusiasm between events? What would get you more involved? What could help us build a stronger, more active community?

Division officers have some ideas. Bruce and Byung are exploring new ways social media can bring the division together — including reinvigorating our Facebook Group — http://on.fb.me/AEJMC-VisCom. They are exploring how to use Twitter and LinkedIn. And Co-Web Chairs Keith Greenwood (Missouri) and Quint Randle (BYU) are helping to re-imagine our website as a more collaborative space.

Newsletter co-editors Bob Britten (WVU) and Myles Ludwig (Lynn) are exploring how to build on our already successful newsletters. Our graduate liaisons Matt Haught (South Carolina), Victoria Bemker LaPoe (LSU), Liz Lance (Missouri) and Carolyn Yaschur (Texas) are helping to involve graduate students in our division and build bridges to other student groups.

Let me know what might inspire you to reach out via our listserv? Or participate with other division members on social media? Or contribute to our website?

The division will be stronger and more valuable because of your contributions. I look forward to hearing what you have to say.

Jeremy Gilbert is head of the Visual Communication Division and an assistant professor at the Medill School at Northwestern University. jgilbert@northwestern.edu
FROM THE CO-EDITOR

Your community is calling

The AEJMC Winter Meeting is coming. Unless you’re one of those few individuals attending, you probably haven’t given it much thought. After all, those term papers aren’t going to grade themselves.

Yet this meeting begins to set up the structure of AEJMC’s annual conference: Who gets what and how it might fit together. Put another way, these happy few band together to figure out how the rest of us will get together. It’s an unenviable job, but one that’s necessary to the existence of our community.

The Visual Communication Division is a smaller but more focused slice of that community, and in this issue, Division Head Jeremy Gilbert asks an important question: How can we maintain and capitalize on the sense of community present at our annual meeting? Sure, in August we collect business cards, meet interesting people and throw back some drinks with past colleagues, but how do you connect with the division in the remaining months of the year?

One way the visual communication division has worked to expand our community is through the creation of the graduate liaison position. In 2011, we had four students volunteer for the spot. Rather than choose just one, members chose to appoint all four to the position. In keeping with that spirit of inclusion, your co-editors have decided to present a column by a different liaison each issue.

This month, Graduate Liaison Matt Haught walks you through the process of looking beyond one’s chosen discipline when developing a course of study. Although many of our members are beyond their student days, it’s a great reminder of how we can find inspiration and insight by leaving our comfortable departmental lairs.

The easiest way to participate, of course, is through contributing your research and resources. Second Vice Head Byung Lee has provided details on how to submit research and panels to the Midwinter Conference (deadline: December 2), and Research Chair Robert Peaslee reminds us the division can always use willing reviewers for the annual conference. And as always, this newsletter provides you the details of what’s happening — but only if you tell us.

Help us to help our community. Exploring new ways to teach viscomm? Let us know. Want to promote social media discussion? We can spread the word. Seeking collaborators or submissions? Send your announcements our way.

This newsletter exists to deliver our community the news it needs. Connect with us, and we’ll do our part to connect us all.

Bob Britten is co-editor of the Visual Communication Division newsletter and an assistant professor at the P.I. Reed School of Journalism at West Virginia University. bob.britten@mail.wvu.edu

Join the VisCom listserv by sending a message with SUBSCRIBE in the message line to AEJMC-VISCOM @LISTSERV.MIAMI.EDU
FROM THE SECOND VICE-HEAD

Call for Midwinter Conference Submissions

The AEJMC Midwinter Conference is an annual forum for the presentation of research and debate in areas relevant to the 12 AEJMC groups (divisions, interest groups and commissions) sponsoring the event. The conference provides a platform for presentations and extended discussions in a relaxed setting.

The upcoming conference is scheduled for March 2-3, 2012, at the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication (University of Oklahoma) in Norman, Oklahoma. For the fourth year in a row, conference participants will be able to enjoy the College's state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities, as well as many winter diversions outside the conference activities, including world-class museums and art galleries.

Visual Communication paper abstract submissions

Authors are invited to submit research paper abstracts of between 600 and 800 words (word count excludes author information and references). Abstracts should give a clear sense of relevant literature, research objectives, methodological approach, stage of research project (conceptual, data gathering, data interpreting), findings and conclusions.

Submissions should be made by e-mail to the midwinter chair for the Visual Communication Division, Dr. Byung Lee at Elon University (email: byunglee@elon.edu), with “Midwinter submission, 2012” in the subject line. He will acknowledge receipt of the email. If you don’t receive an acknowledgement, please contact him. Note that authors can submit any specific paper abstract to only one particip-

See CALL FOR PAPERS, page 4

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

User-friendly multimedia storytelling: Using Flash Interactivity

Be part of the exciting opportunity to participate in the first pre-conference workshop at the AEJMC Midwinter conference at the University of Oklahoma.

This workshop introduces beginning Flash users (no prior Flash knowledge required) to Flash interactivity as well as Flash multimedia.

Interaction among Flash objects enables Flash users to produce nonlinear dynamic stories. Participants will learn how to convert multimedia (text, graphics, audio and video) into Flash objects and how to make objects interact with each other through Flash Actionscript.

Actionscript is hard to learn, so workshop participants will learn how to use templates to produce proper actionscript automatically (one example, http://www.answerq.org/project/eventmodel.swf) and how to write a few lines of code to import existing actionscript codes.

Instructor: Byung Lee, Elon University

Primary Sponsor: Visual Communication Division

Date: Friday, March 2, 2012

Time: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Location: Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Oklahoma

Cost: $30. This fee covers pre-conference workshop participation, snacks and refreshments. Note that this fee does not cover conference registration.

The workshop is limited to 12 participants and will be filled on a first come, first served basis.

Registration for the workshop is payable with conference registration and interested participants should indicate their participation in the workshop on the conference registration form. This workshop will fill up quickly, so register early to guarantee a seat.

For questions, contact the workshop instructor, Byung Lee at Elon University (byunglee@elon.edu.)
ing group – submitting the same paper abstract to several groups will result in disqualification and withdrawal from the review process. Do not submit full papers.

Authors of accepted papers will be notified by mid-January 2012. Papers presented at the midwinter conference are also eligible for presentation at the AEJMC national convention in August. Authors are encouraged to use the midwinter conference as an opportunity to get feedback on their research to improve and finalize it for submission to the national conference. Authors of accepted abstracts must submit complete papers (not exceeding 30 pages) to the discussant of their conference session at least two weeks before the midwinter conference.

At least one author of each accepted paper must register and attend the conference to present the paper. Failure to register by the deadline will result in authors’ names and papers being removed from the program. NO onsite registration will be available.

Visual Communication panel submissions

In addition, the organizers are also inviting panel proposals. These proposals should be sent to the midwinter chair for Visual Communication Division, Dr. Byung Lee at Elon University (email: byunglee@elon.edu) with “Midwinter submission, 2012” in the subject line. He will acknowledge receipt of the email. If you don’t receive an acknowledgement, please contact him. Panel submissions should include the panel title, a description of the session’s focus, the issues to be discussed, and a list of panelists (potential and confirmed), including affiliation. Panel proposals should not exceed two double-spaced pages.

Submission format

All submissions (for paper abstracts and panels) should include the name(s) of the author(s) or panel organizer(s) on the title page only. The title page should also include the author or lead author’s (or organizer’s) mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address. The title should be on the first page of the text and on running heads on each page of text. Authors should e-mail their abstracts or proposals as attachments (saved with the author’s last name as file name) in a standard word-processing format (preferably Word or RTF) to the relevant midwinter chair. Authors must ensure that they remove any identifying information from their document (with the exception of the title page).

Deadline

All submissions should reach the Visual Communication midwinter chair Byung Lee by noon, December 2, 2011.

The University of Oklahoma is located in Norman, 20 miles south of Oklahoma City, with easy access to the Will Rogers World Airport. Details on conference registration, hotel accommodation and airport transportation will be available at http://www.ou.edu/gaylord.

For more information, please contact Elanie Steyn, Conference Site Host (elanie@ou.edu).

Byung Lee is Second Vice Chair of the Visual Communication Division and an Associate Professor at the School of Communications at Elon University. byunglee@elon.edu
FROM THE RESEARCH CHAIR

Thank you for your support

Hello fellow VCDers!

As the Division’s Research Chair, I want to begin by saying a few words of thanks. First, thanks to Felicia Greenlee-Brown at the AEJMC central office and Shahira Fahmy, past Research Chair, who last year helped shepherd me through my first term in this position. There’s a lot to learn and all kinds of ways to screw it up, and I appreciate their guidance and support greatly.

Also, thanks to all of you who served as paper reviewers, discussants, panel chairs, and last-minute fill-ins. It is so gratifying to work with a group of people who are so supportive and collegial to one another.

Finally, thanks to the Division leadership, particularly Jennifer, Jeremy and Bruce, all of whom were a great help to last year’s very successful conference experience. Jennifer, we wish you a restful retirement!

And now it is time for me to begin recruiting once again. Faculty and students are encouraged to serve as reviewers for the 2012 Visual Communication Division paper competition.

For faculty, reviewing substantially bolsters your service record and gives you first-look access to the new work being done in the field.

For students, reviewing provides these benefits along with giving you valuable experience editing others’ work, a skill that can only help your own writing and research. It’s also a relatively low-impact line on your CV.

If you are interested in serving the division as a reviewer, or if you simply have questions about what’s involved, please contact the Visual Communication Division Research Chair, Rob Peaslee, at: robert.peaslee@ttu.edu

Robert Moses Peaslee is research chair of the visual communication division and an Assistant Professor in the College of Mass Communications at Texas Tech University. robert.peaslee@ttu.edu

2012 Conference Reviewers Needed

Faculty and students are encouraged to serve as reviewers for the 2011 Visual Communication Division paper competition.

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If you are interested in serving the division as a reviewer, or if you simply have questions about what’s involved, please contact the Visual Communication Division Research Chair, Rob Peaslee, at: robert.peaslee@ttu.edu

Brochure available online!

Our division recruiting brochure is now available on the website at: http://aejmc.net/viscom/Contents/index_con/viscombrochure.pdf

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.
There has been a dramatic rise in arrests of both visual journalists and citizens with video cameras. Most cases are thrown out after the arrest has been made and the damage to the photographer’s story has been done. In at least three states, however, police have used existing eavesdropping laws to limit the right of citizens to record police officers in the discharge of their duties, sometimes even arresting videographers.

Eavesdropping violations consist of recording a conversation without consent. In most states the consent of only one party is required to avoid being guilty of eavesdropping. However, Maryland, Massachusetts and Illinois, have “two-party consent” statutes, meaning that all parties to the conversation must consent to the recording of the conversation (the visual part of the video is never at issue, only the audio recording). It is these laws that have been applied recently to photographers recording video.

The good news is that in each state, courts have declined to apply the laws to these circumstances, ruling, for example, that police have no expectation of privacy while doing their jobs.

A recent example is Glik v Cunniffe in Massachusetts. In October 2007, attorney Simon Glik used his cell phone to record Boston police officers attempting to arrest a suspect. Glik was arrested and charged with unlawful audio recording in violation of Massachusetts’ wiretap law as well as with disturbing the peace and aiding in the escape of a prisoner.

Ultimately, a three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit sided with Glik.

"According to the Court of Appeals, this case centered upon a narrow First Amendment question: “is there a constitutionally protected right to videotape police carrying out their duties in public?” The answer was an unambiguous and resounding: yes.

"In reviewing a long line of similar cases, the court also recognized “the fundamental and virtually self-evident nature of the First Amendment’s protections” of the “right to film government officials or matters of public interest in public space,” concluding that “the state of the law at the time of the alleged violation” provided a reasonable police officer in a similar situation with “fair warning” that their course of conduct in arresting and charging Glik was clearly unconstitutional.

“The Court also concluded that the police also infringed upon Glik’s constitutional right against unreasonable search and seizure when they seized his cell phone camera and his body (arrest)." 3

Even though the Constitution is on our side, journalists and those who teach them should be aware that law enforcement attitudes have changed significantly in the last decade. Many well-intentioned officers believe they are completely within their rights to limit photographer’s activities. In addition to wiretap laws, police continue to rely on traditionally vague charges such as “interfering with an investigation” and “failure to obey” a police officer to justify arresting photographers.

There are lots of great resources to help us stay informed and take action as needed. One of the best is the blog of the Advocacy Committee of the National Press Photographers Association (http://blogs.nppa.org/advocacy). Media attorneys Mickey Osterreicher and Alicia Wagner Calzada relentlessly scan the legal horizon for threats to our Constitutional freedoms.

Educate your students about the laws in your state. Discuss what to do if confronted by an officer, and what to do if she/he is arrested. Give them tools they need to make informed decisions throughout their careers.

Denise McGill is PF&R chair for the Visual Communication Division, Secretary of the National Press Photographers Association, and an Assistant Professor of Visual Communications at the University of South Carolina. mcgilld@mailbox.sc.edu

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Further Reading

Massachusetts wire tap law:
http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI/Chapter272/Section99

Illinois wire tap law story:

Maryland wire tap law:

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2http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI/Chapter272/Section99
For the 2011-2012 year, the visual communication's graduate liaison position is held by not one but four different graduate students. Each will contribute a column to an issue of the division newsletter. This issue's liaison is doctoral student Matt Haught.

What completes a visual communication doctoral program?

A quick look at the degree requirements for doctoral programs of study in mass communication throughout the country shows a common requirement of study in an area outside journalism and mass communications. While this requirement gives young scholars a great opportunity to become well-rounded academicians, it also calls for a bit of soul-searching in finding the right topic.

As graduate students look for a few extra classes to round out their plans of study, visual communication doctoral students face a special challenge. While media effects researchers turn to sociology, historians turn to history, and health communication researchers turn to public health, there is no natural fit for visual communication scholars.

Now, you might be thinking “What about art?” Art classes offer the ability to understand the principles of art and design as well as the lineage of artistic movements through time. This doesn't always help viscom researchers, particularly those researching new technology. My advisers told me to explore the opportunities in a variety of outside areas and figure out what made the best fit. The first place I looked was anthropology. The core courses in the program were a social theory course, a research methods course, and a visual methods course — a perfect fit for my required nine hours of outside study. I started with the social theory and anthropological methods courses, which I am finishing this semester. Because of the flexibility of the department, I have been able to tailor my papers there to support my dissertation.

Of course, things did not work out perfectly. Because of the often-foreign focus of anthropological research, the professor who teaches the visual methods course is out of the country for the year and doesn't plan to teach the course until (possibly) my last semester in school. So that again puts me on the hunt for an outside class.

Because South Carolina allows its students to build outside areas of study from multiple programs, I turned to other departments. One of my advisers suggested I channel my interest in historical work and take a course from the history department. I looked through them all, every course offered for the spring semester, and I found a fit: a history course that examines film.

What started as a difficult decision left me enriched by scholarship across disciplines. Anthropology brought me a deep qualitative skill-set and an understanding of the thoughts of those who have studied people and culture. History will teach me how to use film in inquiry and how film is a source of culture. Each of these enhances my personal research interests. Other doctoral students in visual communication could similarly draw from the visual and theoretical aspects of multiple disciplines to build a program that explores the essences of communication and culture.

What began as a difficulty in finding the perfect outside area for viscom turned out to be a search for my identity as a researcher.

What started as a difficult decision left me enriched by scholarship across disciplines. What began as a difficulty in finding the perfect outside area for viscom turned out to be a search for my identity as a researcher.

Matt Haught is a graduate liaison for the Visual Communication Division and a doctoral student in mass communication at the University of South Carolina. haught@email.sc.edu.

HAVE A STORY IDEA? Let us know! Send us an email at BOB.BRITTEN@MAIL.WVU.EDU or NETMYLUDWIG@YAHOO.COM
White Coke: The Color of Culture

Coca Cola recently unveiled its new white can to remind us even polar bears need a refreshing pause.

For the past few years, we've accepted green and good as equivalents. But pity poor burnt umber, left on the Pantone slagheap, or the gilded luminosity and chiascurro of the Old Masters. Eugene Hutz and his mad band of Gogol Bordello-mates advise us to "start wearing purple." Maybe that's the color of a post-racial society.

There is no doubt culture influences visual communications. The culture in which we live and share, that surrounding evanescent atmosphere of history, ritual, memory and language, informs our looking and seeing and how we understand the meaning of it. As Edmund Carpenter put it, "they became what they beheld."

Many years ago, as a young editor of Art Direction magazine in New York's vibrant media scene of the 1970s, I recall meeting a passionate, pony-tailed Hungarian photographer who'd come to Manhattan to search for business.

I don't recall his name, but I do remember his portfolio. Those were the Paleolithic pre-Photoshop days when portfolios were not iPadded; phototype moved from figment to form; and stats an expansive tool of page composition practiced by greats like Alexi Brodovitch and Alexander Liberman. Those were the days of Palladino, Lois and Hopkins; Seidler, Chwast and early-Glaser. Those were the days when the hand-lettered swashes of Lubalin, Smith and Carnase were an art rather than a TrueType font. This was long before Kodachrome became a Paul Simon sing-along, no one thought the aroma of rubber cement was toxic, and there was no such thing as PowerPoint.

He whirled through his Carousel like a late-Don Draper, projecting pictures of taxi cabs, telephone booths, shop signs, traffic signals, etc., all of which evidenced his point of view. That idea, rather than the particular colors, piqued my interest in cultural influence on visual communication that continues to this day. As Dr. Mario Garcia put it, "you cannot copy the color palette from one [city] and bring it to another city."

I've tested that idea in a variety of ways: Does night-vision green, black and white or color make combat photographs seem more real? Does gender play a role in color perception? Do the colors of magazine logos convey masculinity or femininity? Before I started teaching in a university, I worked professionally in numerous foreign countries and came to understand, on a practical level, color was a critical cultural clue to meaning.

To paraphrase the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, the limits of one's language represent the limits of one's world. Color is a language.

What color is your world?

Myles Ludwig is co-editor of the Visual Communication newsletter and an independent visual communications scholar completing his dissertation at Europa Universitaet Viadrina in Frankfurt von Oder, Germany. netmyludwig@yahoo.com
AEJMC’s annual logo competition challenges our students to design an effective, professional-looking logo by using their graphic design skills, aesthetic sense, and visual communication capabilities.

The rules for entering this year’s AEJMC logo contest will be announced soon. Logos designed for this year’s competition should have visual impact, should visually represent AEJMC, and should immediately communicate Washington, DC, the location of the 2013 AEJMC convention.

When people see the AEJMC convention logo, they should understand immediately how the logo brings to mind the conference city, whether through conveying the town’s flavor, by featuring a famous landmark that is visually synonymous with the city, or in some other visually creative manner.

The typographic element “AEJMC,” the word “August,” the year, and the name of the city should be well integrated into the logo design through use of effective fonts, placement, and balance. The logo should not be busy or cluttered.

For the AEJMC convention logo to “work” visually, the designer must successfully incorporate her/his creative concept for the logo into its design. The logo will be used in promotional materials, on conference nametags, and on the cover of the conference program guide. It must be reproducible for these purposes without losing image quality or readability.

Brian Cannon is chair of the annual AEJMC logo competition and an assistant professor of communication at Hawai’i Pacific University. bcannon@hpu.edu

**Design a Logo for the AEJMC 2013 Convention**

Design a logo for the AEJMC 2013 Convention in Washington DC. Student entries are being accepted for the official convention logo, which will appear on convention and promotional materials. The winning student will receive $100. A logo entered in the contest should represent the diversity of AEJMC and also visually suggest “Washington DC.” The logo should communicate immediately, effectively and be memorable.

A logo entered in this competition must:
1. Include the following type elements: AEJMC; August 2013; Washington, DC
2. Feature 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. NOT INCLUDE COPYRIGHTED ARTWORK. This means no clip art files of the Washington, DC, monuments, landmarks, etc. The student must create those elements if they are used.

For a logo entry to be eligible, entrants are required to submit their logo entry as both an EPS digital file (.eps) and as a JPEG file (.jpg). The JPEG version of the logo must be identical to the EPS version in terms of design, dimensions, proportion, etc.

The file names must bear the last name of the entrant (for example: SmithLogo1.eps and SmithLogo1.jpg). The EPS file format is required because it is a vector-based format that provides better reproduction. The EPS version must be a vector graphic with the type converted to outlines.

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. Logos must be submitted by a faculty sponsor. Faculty sponsors must also include a list of file names (such as: entrants.doc) with the entrants’ names, addresses, and email addresses, plus their own full contact information (office phone, address, etc.) Winners should be notified before May 15, 2012.

Entries must be successfully uploaded no later than April 1, 2012.

Please upload each logo entry’s EPS (.eps) and JPEG (.jpg) files to the online Dropbox of AEJMC 2013 Logo Competition Chair Brian Cannon at https://dropbox.yousendit.com/Dr-Cannon-Projects-Dropbox. Questions regarding the 2013 logo competition may be sent to Brian Cannon at bcannon@hpu.edu.

Students unfamiliar with the Association of Education in Journalism and Mass Communication can learn more at http://www.aejmc.org.