Spring 2019 Newsletter

Invitation from the Division Head

Head
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Only two months left before our annual conference in Toronto!

Don’t forget to send in your conference registration soon. We have an excellent line-up of sessions this year thanks to the hard work of our vice-head Gabriel Tait, and a full slate of paper and research presentations organized by Eric Palmer and Martin Smith-Rodden, teaching sessions with Carolyn Yaschur, Creative Projects with Lisa Villamil, Best of Digital led by Mike Fagans and Su Jung Kim, and PF&R with Bob Britten. We’ll be sending out a final, updated schedule including a list of all competition winners soon.

Come to our division’s business meeting where you can participate in governance and
volunteer for an officer position if you’re interested. We’ll also have our annual luncheon
with one or two local media professionals—make sure to sign up for that when you
register—and a social co-sponsored with the CTEC division.

If you’re on the fence about attending the conference, I can say that, having attended
almost every one in the last ten years, I have always found it a rewarding experience and
I’m glad I went to every one. I have found it invaluable to my professional development to
see colleagues from other institutions present their work, to meet and talk with others
facing the same academic, pedagogical and administrative issues, and to make
connections with others in the same or related fields in which I work. I rarely felt that, after
attending a session, I had wasted my time.

This conference, our division, and AEJMC function as they are intended, to help us
advance in our academic and professional careers. Every year there are opportunities to
present your work, to propose sessions, and to get involved in the division. We are always
looking for new volunteers for officer positions. Please come to our business meeting to
find out which positions are open or just to participate in the discussion. If there are topics
you’d like to see discussed at the meeting, please let me or Gabriel know. We hope to see
you there.

One more reminder, the conference is in Canada, so remember to have everything you
would need for foreign travel, including a passport or other accepted ID. If you’ve never
been, Toronto is a fantastic city, and our conference is in the city center, with plenty to see
and do.

Phil Loubere, Viscom Division Head 2018-2019
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The summer conference season is upon us. As we prepare for our AEJMC conference in Toronto, I am in a moment of reflection. I am nostalgic, because I see our division progressing because of members like each of you. I also have had the pleasure of working with our division leadership to program this year’s meetings. I believe this meeting represents the quality of scholarship, commitment to service, and support from its members to the larger organization that is bar none.

The purpose of this column is to give a preview of our sessions and to congratulate you all on your commitment to make our division one of the best.

**Research**

Our research sessions bring new faces and seasoned scholars. Our first research session, *Connecting the Dots: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Visual Communication*, Wednesday 8:15 to 9:45 a.m., examines innovative ways of developing and visualizing current trends in Visual Communication. Our second Wednesday research session, 3:15 to 4:45 p.m., addresses *Visual Journalism Today* through projects that examine video convergence, social media, the environment, and U.S. front-pages. Our final research session, Wednesday from 5 to 6:30 p.m., highlights the winners of our *Creative Competition* through their documentary film, data visualization and photo essay projects.

On Thursday, 8:15 to 9:45 a.m., we begin our first research session with *Emerging Genres & Platforms in Visual Communication*. Scholars present out-of-this-world research like, *Venus, Mars and the Sun: Gender Differences in the Persuasive Efficacy of GIFs with Positive and Negative Emotional Valence on Promoting Sunscreen Use* and *You Are What You Post: The Interaction of Personality Traits and Visual Content on Instagram*. This session will offer members a unique way to process topics in emerging media. Our *Scholar-to-Scholar (Poster)*, 1:30 to 3 p.m., will feature posters that cover topics from Race, Gender & Rationale, to the #MeToo movement, to Plastics and Polar Bears. This should be an informative group of posters.

Our final research session of the day features the *Top Papers* of our division at 5 to 6:30 p.m. Seasoned scholars and leaders in our division discuss their research ranging from the creditability of stock and staff photography, to an assessment of the impact of imagery, to data distraction and the horror in Charlottesville. These papers should provide members with a robust discussion of visual communication topics.

**Teaching and Professional Freedom and Responsibility (PF&R)**
On Wednesday, our first teaching session is a partnership with the Communication Technology division. *The Pedagogy of Coding for Media Production* session is from 10 to 11:30 a.m. The second teaching session from 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., is *Innovative Teaching Tips* (formerly the Teaching Marathon). This partnership with the Magazine division highlights 15+ educators who will deliver some of the greatest innovative teaching tips. Presenters will cover everything from *Thinking Visually on the First Day of Class* to *Design for Non-Designers*.

The third teaching session, *Opportunities for Diversity & Inclusion in the Visual Communication Classroom*, 1:30 to 3 p.m., is a partnership with the Minorities and Communication division. This panel examines why some visual communications curriculums shy away from critically analyzing media for diversity and inclusion. The panel also helps instructors develop class content through discussions and inclusion, and provides a safe space to talk diversity.

One of the highlights for our Thursday teaching sessions is our *Spiked Cartoons vs. the Freedom of Expression* teaching panel, 3:15 to 4:45 p.m. This Cultural and Critical Studies division partnership brings a truly international flavor to visual communication and cultural studies by addressing the tension of editorial cartooning as it relates to First Amendment and freedom of expression. This panel helps people “properly” decode editorial cartoons which are presented in an often emotional context.

On Friday, our first teaching session is a partnership with the Small Programs Interest Group. The *How Do We Measure That? Strategies Evaluating Digital Portfolios* session, 8:15 to 9:45 a.m., explores strategies for assessing student portfolios, including standardizing grading methods across disciplines, measuring students’ expression of core values, and assessing students’ ability to articulate the value of their work.

Our first PF&R session Friday is a partnership with the Participatory Journalism Interest Group. The *Hot Topics panel on Using Emerging Tech* session, 3 to 4:30 p.m., brings *Mickey Osterreicher*, General Counsel, National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) and *J. Lee Williams*, OCCUPIED VR, Director, Toronto and others to the conversation to discuss *Tools in a Participatory Society: Visual Journalism Now*. Visual journalism is undergoing rapid transition. Tech tools are empowering both journalists and citizens to tell meaningful stories. This panel incorporates educators & professionals as they share the latest tools in visual journalism.

Our final PF&R session, *Visual Technology Changes Us*, scheduled Saturday
9:15 to 10:45 a.m. is a partnership with the Communication Technology division. This session acknowledges every visual recording technology, from simple point and shoot cameras to digital optical implants, between which there is an observable transition. This transition is often in the production and presentation of pictorial messages from specialized innovators. Panelists will discuss how to harness this change in an empathic and ethical manor.

**Best of Digital**

On Thursday, **11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.**, our division partners with Communication Technology to recognize and showcase the *Best of Digital*. Winners will show individual and team projects that features *Websites, Apps and other Visual Communication techniques*.

**Business, Luncheon, and Social—**

During our Thursday *Businesses Session, 6:45 to 8:15 p.m.*, members help discuss current issues and chart the direction of our division for the next academic year. We conclude our Thursday with a *CTEC and Visual Communication divisions Off-site Social, 8:30 to 10 p.m.* The location is still being determined.

Our annual *off-site luncheon* will be held **11:30 a.m. To 1 p.m.** at *Little Anthony's Italian Ristorante*. The anticipated speaker will be from the *Toronto Star*. We are also hoping to hear a bit from our own Jim Kelley as he discusses his Fulbright research in Kenya.

We have a full schedule of some amazing work. As we prepare for this year’s meeting, let's come together as learners, colleagues, and friends committed to our changing division. I appreciate each of you. See you in Toronto.

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**Southeast Colloquium Report**

2nd Vice Head  
Tara Mortensen  
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The Visual Communication Division of AEJMC was well-represented at the 2019 SouthEast Colloquium, hosted by the School of Journalism and Mass Communications in beautiful Columbia, South Carolina. The colloquium, which took place March 7-9, featured 13 research pieces from visual communications scholars around the region. Paper acceptance this year was more competitive than in the past several years. Five full papers and eight research-in-progress pieces were presented out of 17 total submissions. Garrett Pilgrim (University of Memphis) received the Top Graduate Student award for his paper, “Holy smokies! Information design, humor and trail safety.” This research explored a path to implement humor and design through information design digital books and print to mitigate preventable accidents on National Park Trails. The top-faculty paper was “Cost-efficient, Copious, and Not-so-credible? An examination of the credibility of staff and stock photography,” by Tara Mortensen (University of South Carolina), Brian McDermott (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) and Khadija Ejaz (Barry University). A panel was organized by Jason Porter at the University of South Carolina titled, “The Reality of Interactivity: The misuse of AR/VR as an educational tool.” It was a successful and exciting colloquium year in Gamecock country! See you all next year in Memphis from March 19-21 at the FedEx Institute of Technology at the University of Memphis!
VCQ Special Issue

Visual Communication Quarterly Editor
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The editorial staff of *Visual Communication Quarterly* will be announcing a call for a special issue about the visual aspects of campaign politics and politicians in the 26.2 issue of *VCQ*. The call for research, book reviews, and creative visual projects is coming out well-ahead of the January 15, 2021 deadline in order to give everyone time to plan possible projects, especially related to the 2020 Presidential Campaign. Research and projects, however, need not focus solely on the presidential campaign. Look for this call for papers in your next issue of *VCQ* this summer.

The first issue under my editorial leadership, 26.1, was a learning experience and a happy start to my first editorial endeavor. I have a great group of helpers including my Associate Editors, Nicole Dahmen, Associate Professor in the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon, and T.J. Thomson, Lecturer in the School of Communication at Queensland University of Technology in Australia, and my Editorial Assistant, Rylee Taylor, Graduate Assistant in the School of Public Policy and Leadership at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The journal’s new Book Review Editor, David Staton, Assistant Professor in Journalism & Media Studies at the University of Northern Colorado has been doing a fantastic job and Dennis Dunleavy, Associate Professor in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communications at Benedictine College is continuing his wonderful work with the VizBib section of the journal. And of course, there’s our hard-working Editorial Board who help keep our journal high in quality.

Speaking of the Editorial Board, there’s been a bit of turn over with a couple of our members retiring, so if you’re interested in getting involved with the journal and would like to review papers, please let me know.

As alluded to above, issue 26.2 is currently in production and will be out in a timely manner this summer. Submissions to the journal continue to come in at a steady pace.

I plan to be in Toronto for the annual conference, so I hope to see many of you there!
Visual Research at the Annual Conference

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We are pleased to report that the Visual Communication Division will feature 21 accepted papers at the national convention, spread across four peer-reviewed presentation sessions, and one Scholar To Scholar Poster session. The full schedule is being processed by the AEJMC national office, and will be available at the conference microsite soon.

We also want to thank all of the reviewers and moderators who have helped bring our competition to a successful conclusion. In other news, I will be on sabbatical for the 2019-20 academic year, and Martin Smith-Rodden of Ball State University will take over as Research Chair for the 2020 conference.

Social Media Improvements

Social Media Chair
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This marks my third year as the Division’s social media chair and the first when we’ve been able to track traffic on our website thanks to a plugin we installed in October 2018. Within the past three years, we’ve been able to centralize our accounts' logins to a new, generic Visual Communication Division email account rather than have those credentials tied to any one member’s private address, which we anticipate will make future leadership transitions easier. In addition, we’re working with the web team to transfer domain name
registry from a member’s private hosting account to the Division itself to prevent future issues with transfers. Our social media presences have experienced growth in the past period both in terms of members and views. We celebrated in February 2019 our Facebook group’s 10-year anniversary and our Twitter page has been operational for a bit shorter at seven years.

More granular insights and analytics on each of our Division’s platforms are included below:

- **Facebook** ([https://www.facebook.com/groups/aejmcvis/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/aejmcvis/)). Our Division has had a presence on this platform for 10 years and marked this milestone in February of this year. As of April, we have 415 members, a two percent increase since October 2018 (when statistics were last compiled for the previous year’s report). In that time, we’ve had 46 posts (an average of six per month).

- **Twitter** ([https://twitter.com/aejmcviscom](https://twitter.com/aejmcviscom)). Our group’s Twitter page (initially launched in 2013) has 304 followers (an increase of 18 since the last report). Over the past seven months, our Tweets received an average of 4,095 impressions per month (up from 2,677 impressions during the last reporting period).

- **Website** ([http://aejmcviscom.org/](http://aejmcviscom.org/)). This site was launched in 2009 and, in October 2018, we installed an analytics plugin so we can start to track traffic numbers. In the last three months of 2018, our site accrued 524 page views and, so far in 2019, it has accrued 1,687 views. We averaged six views per day in 2018 and are average 15 views per day so far in 2019.

If you haven't already, please "like," "follow," and/or "join" these accounts so we can grow our community, its reach, and its benefits to members. If you’d like to post using any of these channels to share resources or promote information for the good of the group, you can do so in some cases directly or, if you’d prefer, you can send items to me (tj.thomson@qut.edu.au) and I can post them on your behalf. Please do try to include images with any posts, as these markedly boost engagement. You can do this by including photos or videos, links (which on Facebook and Twitter) often populates media from the linked site), or by creating a text graphic.

**2020 Conference Logo Winner**

**Logo Contest Chair**
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Congratulations are in order for the winner of the AEJMC 2020 Conference Logo Design Competition, Leah Behling. Leah is advised by Adriane Grumbein at the University of Kentucky College of Communication and Information. The official conference logo will appear on all conference and promotional materials.

Advice on Academic Job Searches

Grad Student Liaison
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AEJMC Job hub is just around the corner, which means formal job application deadlines are right behind. From my limited experience of going through the job market last year, I thought I’d share some tips I found useful (along with some tips that I wish I had followed).

Above all, be prepared to give a lot of your time and emotional state to the job search. It takes a lot of time to customize your submission documents, track jobs, prepare for phone/Skype/in-person interviews. It’s terrifying but exciting.

Spend time this summer getting all your job materials together. This means your basic cover letter, research statement, teaching statement, diversity statement, research/teaching samples, etc. I feel like I waited too long to start drafting these. Ask your advisor and other trusted colleagues to review them for you. It probably wouldn’t hurt to start thinking about your research talk and potential teaching demo topics, too.

This also forces you to start thinking about who you are as a scholar and how to present yourself to others. I had a general idea of how my work fit into a broader research mission, but writing my research statement really forced me to see how it all fit together in a clear and concise manner. It also helped as I evaluated job listings to see if it was a good fit.

Begin setting up job alerts on HigherEdJobs, ChronicleVitae, and any other sites. Test your keywords to make sure they’re capturing what you want. It’s also worth signing up for CRTNET to scan their postings (http://www.natcom.org/CRTNET). Finally, the jobs wiki… it’s somewhat useful but also dangerous. Take it with a grain of salt. I found it to be sporadically updated and that many jobs were never listed on it. Here’s last year’s wiki: https://academicjobs.wikia.com/wiki/Communication_and_Media_Studies_2018-2019

I highly recommend the GSIG/NOND pre-conference (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSei-Oj17dRfjYCUbljnMrUKtYMBG_GkAD8e6VkJ5z5xruMhsQ/viewform), which was very useful to me last year. It’s a great jump-start to the job market season.

Finally, consider reading The Professor Is In, a book (and blog) that came highly
Above all, I wish everyone on the market the best of luck this upcoming season. I’m moving on from my position as Graduate Student Representative, but am staying active in the division in the future. We have a great group of scholars in VisComm and I look forward to being a part of its growth!

Paper Call: "Visual Politics"

A paper call for a special issue of *The International Journal of Press/Politics* is well suited to members of our division. The Upcoming issue will be titled "Visual Politics" and will be guest edited by Erik Bucy (erik.bucy@ttu.edu) at Texas Tech University and Jungseock Joo (jjoo@comm.ucla.edu) at University of California at Los Angeles. The manuscript submission deadline is December 15, 2019. See the call here: https://cristianvaccari.com/2019/05/14/call-for-papers-for-a-special-issue-of-the-international-journal-of-press-politics-visual-politics/amp/?__twitter_impression=true

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