



ASJMC

Administrator

The Newsletter of the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication | April 2009

2009 ASJMC Election Candidates Announced



Jane Briggs-Bunting



Pam Johnson

The ASJMC Nominations Committee has announced the candidates for the 2009 ASJMC Officer Election, held from early April to early May. ASJMC members will be mailed an official ballot and a return mail envelope via first class postal service. Election results will be announced in the next issue of *ASJMC Administrator*.

Maria Marron, Central Michigan University, will be installed as 2009-10 president during the ASJMC business meeting at the Boston Convention in August. Paul Parsons, Elon University, will become president-elect. Candidates for vice president are Jane Briggs-Bunting, Michigan State University and Pam Johnson, Western Kentucky University. The Vice President elected for 2009-10 will move into the President-elect's position in 2010-11 and the President's position in 2011-12.

The association will fill two seats to the Accrediting Council during the election. Candidates for the accredited programs open seat are Douglas Anderson, Penn State University and

Corley Dennison, Marshall University. Candidates for the non-accredited programs open seat are Dianne Lynch, Ithaca College and Don Heider, Loyola University Chicago. The terms for these seats run from September 2009 to May 2012. All ASJMC members vote for all representatives to the Accrediting Council.

Two candidates are running to represent medium-sized programs on the ASJMC Executive Committee. Candidates are Peggy Kuhr, University of Montana and Maryanne Reed, West Virginia University. The person receiving the most votes will serve a three-year term. Representatives from the small programs (Pat Sutherland, Bethany College) and large programs (Jean Folkerts, University of North Carolina) will continue in office. Only medium-sized programs will vote for this office.

The slate is presented by the Nominations Committee: Tom Kunkel St., Norbert College (Chair); Marilyn Weaver, Ball State University; Dean Mills, University of Missouri, and Brian Richardson, Washington and Lee University.

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A Note from the President



Dear ASJMC Colleagues:

ASJMC held its winter workshop January 29-31 outside the United States for only the third time in its history, and Mexico City proved a productive and enjoyable venue. Ice and snow in the USA resulted in some last-

minute cancellations, but 40 ASJMC unit representatives were able to travel South of the Border to enjoy an especially focused program and the hospitality of Mexican journalism and mass communication academic programs and industries as well as wonderful 70-degree weather!

Alejandro Junco de la Vega, publisher of *Reforma*, mesmerized the Thursday opening night reception with his account of the risks journalists take in covering Mexican “narco-terrorism,” which in his case included secretly moving his family, twice, to what he hoped were safe locations.

University of North Carolina Dean Emeritus Richard Cole moderated a Friday panel of representatives from Mexican and Latin American journalism programs that explored journalism and mass communications education in the Latin American region. (Our hosts were the journalism faculty at Monterrey Tec University, to whom we owe immense gratitude: Dean Dr. Enrique Tomes of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Dr. Jesus Meza, Director of the Communication Sciences Academic program.) A panel of representatives from some of the world’s most prestigious public relations agencies – Ogilvy, Edelman, Fleishman-Hillard and Burson-Marsteller – and corporations such as Wal Mart made for a lively session that explored state-of-the-art public relations and ethical practices. *El Universal* sponsored the Friday on-campus lunch, with Ricardo Raphael, opinion and editorial page editor of *El Universal* providing the keynote address. Two afternoon panels — one dealing with the issues covered by Latin American-based journalists and the other focusing on the changes facing newspapers and multimedia in Mexico – rounded out the day at Monterrey Tech.

Saturday sessions dealt with changing roles of and opportunities for foreign correspondents, how to plan for your site visit from the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, and a new joint project of ASJMC and the American Society of Newspaper Editors to add news literacy courses to college curricula. Thanks to Steven Reiner of SUNY Stony Brook and Fred Blevens of Florida International for sharing what their journalism programs are doing to introduce news literacy into their curricula!

The buzz during the workshop was terrific – and the three new administrators who attended their first ASJMC workshop said they were eager to return for more contact with administrators in August in Boston.

The buzz in weeks since the workshop has also been great — so much so that I will be proposing to the ASJMC Executive Committee that ASJMC plan to hold its winter workshop outside the USA every few years. Whether it is Mexico or Canada or Europe or Asia, I firmly believe that all of us benefit from contact with our counterparts in other countries and on other continents. If you have a suggestion for a workshop venue outside the USA, please let me know: jvturk@vcu.edu.

And speaking of outside the USA, stay tuned for information on a China tour/trip ASJMC is exploring that would bring together USA and Chinese journalism education administrators to talk about exchanges, joint/dual degrees and other forms of collaboration.

P.S. Please join me in wishing a speedy recovery to Dr. Maria Marron, ASJMC’s president-elect, who had emergency surgery two days before our winter workshop. Maria made a special trip last summer to Mexico City to plan for the workshop, and it was she who took the lead in organizing the fabulous sessions there. SO SORRY she had to miss the great program she had planned, but SO GLAD she is recovering nicely, soon to be totally back on her feet.

Judy VanSlyke Turk, 2008-09 ASJMC President
Virginia Commonwealth University

ASJMC in Boston, Aug. 5-8 2009 Convention Sessions

Schedule

Wednesday, August 5

7 to 10 a.m.

ASJMC Executive Committee

5 to 6:30 p.m.

ASJMC panel “Incorporating News/Media Literacy into the Curriculum”

Thursday, August 6

8:15 to 9:45 a.m.

ASJMC panel (Diversity Committee to program)

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

ASJMC panel on “Preach What You Practice” (co-sponsored by the Council of Affiliates)

3:15 to 4:45 p.m.

ASJMC Roundtable: “Strategic Ways to Use A Tough Economy to Enhance your Program”

Friday, August 7

8:15 to 9:45 a.m.

ASJMC panel “The Scoop on Surviving an Accreditation Site Visit”

1:45 to 3:15 p.m.

ASJMC Business Meeting

7 to 9 p.m.

ASJMC DSA dinner

Saturday, August 8

7 to 10 a.m.

ASJMC 2009-10 Executive Committee

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Off-program — Development Officers Workshop (*to be handled separately from convention. Would have its own workshop registration fee, etc.*)

See Additional Convention Details at:

aejmc.org/_events/index.php

- Convention registration rates
- Hotel rates and online reservations link
- Convention program advertising

Media Literacy Focus: Making Sense of all the Information Wednesday, Aug. 5

A series of three Wednesday sessions will focus on media/news literacy. In this constant information age, are we really better informed, or just flooded with too much information?

• **10 to 11:30 a.m. — “Demand-Side Journalism”** — As newspapers and other mainstream news sources struggle financially, citizens are turning to myriad other sources of information. But are readers and viewers able to distinguish verified impartial information from rumor, partisan opinion and propaganda? What is the role of journalism educators in helping citizens make these distinctions? (sponsor Council of Affiliates)

• **1:30 to 3 p.m. — “News Literacy and Democracy’s Future”** — Come learn about a new university-wide course at Stony Brook University. Its Center for News Literacy is training the next generation of news consumers to think critically about what they read, watch, and hear. (sponsor Council of Affiliates)

• **5 to 6:30 p.m. — “Incorporating News/Media Literacy into the Curriculum”** — Practical ideas for working news/media literacy into existing JMC curricula, or as a stand-alone course. (sponsor ASJMC)

2008/09 ASJMC Executive Committee

President, *Judy VanSlyke Turk*, Virginia Commonwealth University • **President-elect**, *Maria Marron*, Central Michigan University • **Vice-President**, *Paul Parsons*, Elon University • **Past President**, *Thomas Kunkel*, St. Norbert College • **Publication Committee Chair/ Executive Committee Representative**, *Jean Folkerts*, University of North Carolina • **Executive Committee Representatives**, *Patsy Watkins*, University of Arkansas; *Patrick Sutherland*, Bethany College • **ACEJMC Representatives Chair**, *Tim Gleason*, University of Oregon • **AEJMC President**, *Barbara Hines*, Howard University • **BCCA Representative**, *Jannette Dates*, Howard University • **Executive Director**, *Jennifer McGill*, AEJMC/ASJMC

Street Level Globalization: An Applied Research Funding Project

By Alejandro Junco de la Vega

*Speech to Association of Schools of Journalism
and Mass Communication, Mexico City,
January 29, 2009*

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me start... as I intend to go on today, telling you a little story about drugs, and trade, about globalization, and politics and a fundamental misunderstanding.

It concerns a press conference on Free Trade. It was held some years ago by the Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien and President Clinton.

Someone had a question for Prime Minister Chretien: What did he think about **all the drugs** that were entering Canada from Mexico and the U.S.?

He thought for a moment or two, in silence. Then he said: "Well, it means more trade."

There was awkward silence...some muffled laughter.

The answer hung for a moment in stillness, and then Clinton leaned over to whisper in Chretien's ear. "Oh... **drugs!**" he exclaimed, "I thought you said **trucks!**"

If-only- it were trucks. If only.

Let me paint you a picture of the wreckage.

Perhaps you have seen some of these movies: 'Man on Fire.' 'Traffic.' 'The Godfather.' 'Scarface'. You may know the very clever TV drama 'Weeds'.

Most recently it took its Californian heroine south of the border and into the arms of a wealthy, urbane, blood-drenched politician whose drug ring was carrying vast quantities of narcotics and weapons across the border.

If you watched it, you must surely have flinched, to see his men take to the face of an FBI agent, with a power tool, and then summarily shoot him the moment his agonized confession had been extracted. You may have watched the story unfolding, and may have wondered if it was fanciful, exaggerated.

If only.

You may have been feeling in recent weeks, that with so much economic turmoil, and memories of the Great Depression that things could not possibly be more grim. Let me tell you: it can be worse.

It can be worse... when teenagers are kidnapped and murdered by people who drive police cars and wear badges and police guns.

It can be worse... when intimidation presents itself in the form of a decapitated head left on the hood of a car.

It can be worse... when you can find no one willing to take the job of Mayor because of the sentence of intimidation and - possibly - death, that it carries.

This is the world of narco-terrorism. This is our reality, here in Mexico. It pains me - immensely - to have to say so. It pains me as someone who has pride in his nation.

It pains me as someone who has been a lifelong campaigner for freedom of speech and justice and democracy and the rule of law.

I have spent my entire life publishing newspapers that have crusaded for those causes; we have argued that they will make Mexico a better country.

And so they have.

But invoking the names of democracy and justice and the rule of law hardly brings those blessings in a torrent and neither does it bring their bounty in a rush.

While they are absent, poverty remains, and poverty brings its own evil.

And so for all the change our advocacy has brought us, we, Mexico's journalists, nevertheless... find ourselves besieged today.

Not from businesses, Not from politicians, Not from the courts, Not from any of the adversaries who have stood in our way over the past four decades.

We find ourselves under the siege of drug lords. The more we expose their activities,

the harder they push back. Life is cheap. They push hard.

Two reporters from our Monterrey paper -some months ago- pursued a story.

They had heard that a man running a tire rethread shop in a nearby town was being shaken down for protection money because this is how the drug rings have been “diversifying”. Our reporter and photographer paid a visit to the town.

Not ten minutes after they had arrived, armoured vehicles pulled up outside, blocking their exit. They were thrown to the ground. Their laptops, their camera equipment, their phones, their ID with their addresses were all taken. And they were beaten.

With broken eardrums, shoulders, ribs...they both were hospitalized and both quit their jobs.

This is not the first time such a thing has happened and the criminals have made it plain that unless we leave them alone, it will not be the last.

That threat hangs over all our reporters. But as a newspaper, we remain dedicated to our creed: The truth must be known; it must be investigated; it must be published.

So we adjust, make changes, and our lives are the worse for it.

We no longer run our reporters bylines. Their beats are changed. We move them from homes to safer apartments. We vary commuting routes to evade kidnapers.

Our families cannot be habitual in their daily lives. And last year, for the second time in four decades, I had to move my entire family to a safe haven in the US.

We have every reason in the world to drop the stories. We have every reason to look the other way. But how can we do so?

It is our resolve: We will continue to report all we know about the problem, and will continue to ask questions.

We hold to the faith that if we ask enough questions we may finally come upon a solution.

Let me take you - briefly - through what we know so far. I'll begin with a conundrum: In Mexico, crime pays. In this country, you are more likely to fail in business than you are in organized crime.

75 percent of Mexican business start-ups die within the first two years.

80 per cent are gone within the first three years

90 percent by the end of the first decade.

By contrast, your risk of failure as a criminal - outside of death - is ludicrously small.

Only 5 percent of crimes are reported. Of those, only 15 percent of victims press charges.

Only one criminal - one very unlucky criminal - out of 100 will go to prison.

You will very quickly find out why this is so if you are a victim of theft and decide to file a complaint.

We do not have anything like a District Attorney's Office. We do not even have anything that much resembles a law enforcement agency. What we do have in abundance are form filling factories.

Someone robbed you? Fill out this form; when the person responsible for that area is back then fill out this other one. Then go to this building do this, do that, wait in line. The forms you fill out will have many, many fields.

One of them is a field which requires you to prove that you can satisfy a condition called **pre-existence**, which is a little like the infamous Catch 22.

Let's say that someone has stolen the tire of your pickup truck. In order to file the complaint - successfully - you must demonstrate that: a. the tire exists and... b. that it is your lawful possession. Well now, would someone in the audience demonstrate to the group how you might go about proving those two things about a stolen tire: that it exists and that you are the legitimate owner?

Of course, this all assumes that the officer behind the counter will be honest and diligent. It assumes that his Chief is not in the pocket of the Mayor, and that he is not in the pocket of organized crime.

Keeping yourself out of such pockets is no easy thing, even for an honest official.

Let us imagine a mayoral election. During the campaign, an emissary of some Trans-NAFTA Corporation, dressed in a smart suit, walks into the candidate's office carrying a briefcase full of money. He is bearing good wishes - no strings attached - for a successful political career.

He leaves it behind and at that moment, the fix is in. The candidate has no choice:

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Plata o Plomo. Silver or Lead. As Mayor, he must collaborate.

In our country, the damage the drug trade has done is not so much public health as it is in the U.S.; it has been to the rule of law and our fledgling democracy. It has rendered it impotent.

What has been exposed by the success of the drug trade is the fact that we are powerless to stop criminal activities -in general-. Once lawless people see there is no rule of law, you have an altogether bigger problem. If you can run drugs without fear of being caught, then you can also kidnap, extort, rape and kill, and disregard any law that impedes you, all with impunity.

How has it come to this?

Perhaps the answer is rather less complicated than we might imagine. Perhaps it lies in this motto of many criminals in Mexico:

"I rather live a week like a King than a lifetime of eating shit."

Make no mistake: for millions and millions, daily life in Mexico can be one daily spoonful of manure after another.

At times it feels as though it is the national sport, not only of the government, to make your life difficult. Even the best days can be lousy.

Let's say your favorite football team finally gets to the national championship. Joy! And now for the bad news. If you want to buy tickets, you'll have to get up at 2 am, stand in line and weather the elements.

Red tape is everywhere, and it is so thick on the ground that daily life is Kafka-esque. Wages can be meager... prospects bleak.

Who can be surprised that a young man will risk a bullet for the possibility - at least a short time- of liberty from a joyless grind?

Of course the answer, we've been hearing, is supposed to be simple. Change your economic settings.

Free the markets, privatize, open the borders, unfetter the invisible hand and let all boats rise. For many years it has been regarded as all but heretical to question this wisdom.

The argument has been blunt: get these macroeconomic settings in place, stick to them and you will soon be on your way to first world prosperity.

Perhaps the turmoil of the past few months in the First World might persuade everyone to reconsider. Conceivably, simple recipes may not be enough. Let us look more closely at the human beings involved in the economy.

Let us ask what motivates them to work hard and contribute, and what discourages them from taking part. Let me put it this way:

The person who stands on the South side of the border can look like a lost cause: lawless, disaffected, unwilling to work, unwilling to contribute.

Move him just three meters forward, across the border and into the United States, and witness a transformation that is quite remarkable. No longer does he have his hand out for money, he has it out for work. He toils, he applies himself, he does what he can to embrace his new life. He flourishes. Sends money back home. Who is this man who changed - fundamentally - by moving just three short meters?

The answer is obvious:

Most human beings are not innately bad or lazy, or incapable, or lawless. Given the right circumstances and a chance, given the hope of a better life, they respond.

I know this. I have seen it with my own eyes, in our own newspaper. 40 years ago, we completely transformed the way we ran our business. We banned corrupt practices.

With the support of Dr. Mary Gardner, one of many great teachers to have led AEJMC, we educated our reporters to report the news without fear or favor. And our people changed. They came alive. The same people who had been taking bribes and cutting corners became dedicated reporters and principled citizens.

Mary brought about transformation at the personal level. This changed newsroom practices, then our profession. At her funeral, in church, I told her family and friends.

"One of the finest things you can say of a teacher is: she changed my life. What my Lord do you say of someone who changed the lives of so many."

And -today- I have no doubt, that the same spirit of transformation that took hold in one small enterprise could take place... in the same way right across the nation.

All our people need is the opportunity.

Consider these words from a retired US General, Barry McCaffrey of West Point, in an unusually candid report last month. He writes about Mexico:

"... the population is extremely hard working, humble, gracious, spiritually devout, patriotic, and family oriented. The culture and art are rich and fiercely admired by the people. The senior elite political and military leadership is world class—broadly educated, sophisticated."

But also consider these words, from the same report:

"Mexico is not confronting dangerous criminality, it is fighting for survival against narco-terrorism."

I endorse his words. Our people are inherently capable of so much more. It is only circumstance that thwarts them. General McCaffrey makes a grim and blunt prediction. Unless the lawlessness and violence ends, refugees will surge across the border by the millions. And yet he holds out hope.

He sees a bottom line: the drug cartels cannot defeat the government through direct violent confrontation. The Armed Forces are vastly more powerful.

But the cartels can nonetheless do great harm. They can corrode the soul and the will of the nation with their brutal intimidation. He sees this as a fight we can win, given the chance.

He has a message for the incoming Obama administration: *lend a hand to the Calderon Presidency; help them fight these people; help them to restore the rule of law.*

I endorse his call for allies. Those of us who have joined the fight are determined to prevail, ladies and gentlemen, and there is no doubt that we can.

Some of you may recall the great tennis player, Chris Evert. You may remember that she was renowned for her incredible powers of concentration.

There was a match she once played in, early in her career, in a junior tournament. Again and again, as she chased a shot, she ran into a chair which someone had -inadvertently- left near the back line.

After the match a reporter said to her: "Why didn't you move the chair back against the fence?"

Her reply was the answer of the supremely focused and committed. She said: "What chair?"

So it is for us.

Even as the pressure grows, we intensify our efforts. We expose the crimes... run the stories, and we keep chasing down answers to the overarching question: "how can we turn this around?"

And the pressure keeps piling on. Just a month ago, a TV station in Monterrey came under attack from grenades and machine guns.

There is -even- a certain dark humour to be found in this.

A few weeks ago, an expert from the United States was invited down here to offer advice on how to keep ourselves safe from kidnapers. His lectures went well. But within hours of the last one he was kidnapped and there is founded fear we'll never see him again.

And yet - none of this sways us. Like Chris Evert, absorbed with her mission to become the world's best, we also have an unwavering goal:

We want Love, Trust, Truth, Justice, Freedom, Democracy and progress for our people.

It may not sound like much, but if you ever discover, what it is like when any of those gifts vanish, you will quickly apprehend how much it means.

And in our search to establish, grow, extend and restore conducive ways to organize so that we may escape from poverty, ignorance, emigration and narco-terrorism, we are willing to recast the role of journalism, and, if we must, we are prepared to stare down the thugs.

That is not to say that we are not anxious, or worried; but in the same way that a young tennis player scarcely noticed an obstacle, so it is for us.

Our preoccupation is not with the danger, but with finding a way out of the crisis.

And that is what I want to emphasise this evening.

I believe that journalism can play a significant role in solving problems.

The journalism we have practised here over the past decades has delivered profound change; not the least being our contribution to the first true democratic election in Mexico in 70 years.

We wonder if it can deliver still more. We know that our **people** are innately capable of transformation. And what is a country... but the sum of its **people**?

The country is capable of change. This is of course what many a politician will tell you.

But we are somewhat weary of the grand words of politicians that go no further.

It's one thing to take the view from 30,000 feet high and pronounce everything to be capable of betterment. It's another to descend from that great height and get to grips with the hundreds of intricate details at street level that frustrate any hope of transformation.

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Let us consider again, the man in the police station reporting the theft of his tire. Leave the mile-high rule-of-law view behind now. Consider the micro one. Not from the stratosphere... from the street! This is where it all turns to custard.

I respectfully propose that we team-up experts with communicators to document in a multimedia, multi university, multi regional applied research project the street level practices that separate the people and progress and ways of life of two neighbouring countries.

What if we were to research and document what makes certain systems operate with excellence... while others are a disaster?

What if we were to illustrate how practices in the classrooms, or courtrooms or doctor's room in Mexico compare with that of San Francisco, or Chicago, or Peoria.

Suppose that the answers to our problems lie, not so much in the alignment of macro economic variables, but in the thousands of small daily impediments to a productive and meaningful life.

In this era of globalization, should we **not** be investigating this?

Earlier today my colleagues Jesús Rangel, Sergio Miramontes and I made a presentation that dwells on this question and proposes an action plan.

Numerous Journalism and Mass Communication Schools in the US and Mexico will be invited to participate. We will not be asking for funds; we will be offering them.

More important - for this project - is the time... the talent of those that believe in the potential of human beings to embrace that which is conducive, and to shed and let go paradigms and practices that impede progress, justice and joy.

Let me just offer you some preliminary thoughts.

Suppose you could have graduate students in health, education, rule-of-law, energy or the environment, working in conjunction with **your** journalism students.

What if their combined efforts were to investigate, document and expose contrasting practices between Mexico and the US in key critical areas.

These graduate level dissertations could generate a very provocative - and new - body of knowledge: understanding the drive shafts of effective social engineering.

What if we - professors and students - could shift political, economic and social agendas to make conducive practices a priority? What if journalism could bring hope to young democracies by identifying and sharing proven solutions to key problems? Could we create a new kind of journalism one that seeks to aid nations in crisis?

I foresee a vast - intricate puzzle - being solved as data and insights get drawn together. I imagine teams of highly capable people giving careful thought... to why social systems that honour the right principles are more successful than those which do not. I can see cases being documented of how systems that respect people's merits are more effective than those that deny them.

What might come together in such a cross-border, multi disciplinary, collaboration? What could be learned about journalism from all of this? About the role of investigators and reporters in this new electronic era? And what might we derive, about a vast problem, as we draw the disparate stories and pictures and threads together? Could journalism help to avert a crisis? Can our profession serve as a means of rescue?

And if it should do so, what might we all take from that?

Is there a new role for reporters in an age in which citizen journalism seems to be crowding our profession into a crisis of its own? Perhaps a recasting of our role might not be a bad thing. We constantly debate the role of our profession at GR.

You may know that we involve our communities in editorial direction to an extent that no media organisation, anywhere in the world, has been willing to do.

The sole true constant to which we work is that we aim to serve our community by making the product of our work, information, be conducive to development and the generation of value.

And so, even as lawlessness swirls about us and the machine guns and the grenades, and the weapons and the kidnappings... and evil -in its many dark forms- casts a pall upon our day, we remain intent, like the earnest young Tennis Champion, focused solely on her swing.

I don't doubt - that all of us - who make our lives in journalism arrived at this gathering with some uncertainty in our minds about the future.

Let us all ask ourselves, to what are we paying the most attention: the chair in our way... or the ball and the match that must be won?

Thank you.