

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION ARTS

Alumni & Friends

FALL 2007

Professor Edwin Black

Alumni Survey Results

Thank you for your prompt and informative responses to the alumni survey last fall. More than 600 people responded, and from the comments, we learned that our alumni value the dedication of the Comm Arts faculty and the quality of the education they received as majors in the Department. Many stressed the positive impact their education has had on their lives, both with regard to specialized knowledge and critical thinking. Alumni gave high marks to their overall experience as a Comm Arts major, the effectiveness of the education, and the usefulness of the skills and knowledge gained. The responses also directed our attention to two areas most in need of improvement: course availability and facilities. We very much appreciate the time so many of you took to share your opinions with us as we strive to keep our major second to none.

Faculty News

Congratulations to Professor Kelley Conway and Professor Susan Zaeske on their recent promotions to associate and full professor, respectively.

This newsletter was printed through gift funds administered by the UW Foundation.

Remembering Professor Edwin Black

Edwin Black, professor emeritus, died January 13, 2007, in League City, Texas, outside Houston. He was born in Houston in 1929, attended that city's public schools, received his B.A. from the University of Houston, and earned his master's and doctorate degrees at Cornell University. He joined the Department of Communication Arts in 1967, where he taught with passion and commitment until his retirement in 1994.

Widely recognized as the single most important figure in the development of rhetorical criticism as an academic enterprise during the second half of the twentieth century, Ed vaulted to prominence with the publication of *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method*, a seminal book that redefined the nature, scope, and methodology of the critical enterprise. Over the next three decades he produced a stream of celebrated essays on topics ranging from Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address to Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream," from the sentimental style of nineteenth-century oratory to the cancer metaphor in the rhetoric of the radical right, from the aesthetics of American political discourse to the recurrent idioms of secrecy and disclosure, from the mutability of rhetoric to the malleability of Richard Nixon. Distinguished by their singular insight and gifted prose, these works kept Black at the forefront of his discipline—as did his co-editorship of the enormously



influential *Prospect of Rhetoric*; his highly successful term as editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*; his acclaimed book *Rhetorical Questions: Studies of Public Discourse*; and his participation in scores of professional meetings and conferences. Twice he received the National Communication Association's most prestigious discipline-wide awards for outstanding scholarship—in 1966 for *Rhetorical*

Criticism: A Study in Method, and in 1988 for his essay "Secrecy and Disclosure as Rhetorical Forms."

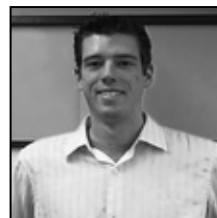
In addition to his achievements as a scholar, Ed had an exceptional record of service to the University. He served two terms as chair, during which time he oversaw the Department's emergence as one of the largest undergraduate majors in the College of Letters and Science and as a top-ranked graduate program. From 1981 to 1989 he was Associate Dean of the Graduate School for the Humanities, a post he filled with gusto and distinction. During this time, Ed held several other positions on campus. To all these posts he brought keen intelligence, astute judgment, unflinching decency, and scrupulous devotion to the highest ideals of the University.

Ed is survived by his wife, Sharon Ruhly, and his canine companion, Sammy. With his passing, the University has lost one of its most distinguished scholars and finest citizens.

Alumni News

Greenbergs Offer Internship Award

The Communications Industry Summer Internship Award, created this year by Edward (MA '76) and Janet (BA '73, MS '75) Greenberg, offers financial assistance to a Communication Arts student who is completing a summer internship with a business or non-profit organization in the fields of media communication or entertainment, located in Los Angeles or New York City. Knowing that internship experiences guide students professionally and assist them in securing employment after graduation, the Greenbergs established the fund as a way to help students link their passion for the industry



Andrew Parkhurst

to their career options. They specified Los Angeles or New York City as a way to encourage students to explore the unique richness of the communications and entertainment environments in these cities and to help students develop contacts for securing a position upon graduation. In addition, Ed and Janet hope this real-world experience will give students the opportunity to examine their passion for media outside the classroom.

After interning at Columbia Pictures in Los Angeles last summer, Andrew Parkhurst, the first recipient of the award, is certain he will return to

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A MESSAGE From the Chair: Internships and Alumni Support

In any given year, Communication Arts majors earn academic credit for over 70 professional internships which come to the Department through the goodwill of our alumni and supporters. Paid or unpaid, in the summer or during the academic year, these internships cover a wide variety of professional experiences and conditions across the country. Whatever the variables in the appointments, they all have one important thing in common: they are consistently praised by the students who have held them as the source of invaluable professional experience.

Communication Arts majors explore concepts and develop critical and analytical skills through a curriculum rooted in the best traditions of the liberal arts education. Internships allow students to apply these skills in a professional setting and to learn about career options. Our majors' interests are as diverse as those of our alumni. You will find our students ready to respond to



constituent concerns for a public official, analyze market data for a publisher, plan a special event for a non-profit or edit in a video production facility.

These opportunities and many others are offered to our students by alumni and friends of Communication Arts. We are grateful to all the alumni who have contacted us about internships and we would particularly like to thank those who have dedicated a position to our students in highly competitive internship programs: Deborah Schindler (BA '77), Ben Karlin (BA '93), and

Kelly Kahl (BS '89). I hope anyone reading this newsletter who might be able to provide a new Communication Arts internship will visit the internship section of our Web site (http://commarts.wisc.edu/Under/ internships_resources.php) or contact our Undergraduate Advisor Mary Rossa (merossa@wisc.edu).

Through the special generosity of several alumni, we are now also able to provide stipends to a handful of our Communication Arts interns. The stipends defray travel costs and living expenses, an important consideration for students applying for positions outside the Madison area. In August, Madison's *The Capital Times* featured an article on UW internships which stressed the importance of such stipends and noted that Communication Arts was particularly fortunate to be able to support eight students. The thanks of the Department go to those alumni whose gifts or fundraising efforts made this possible: Kelly Kahl (BS '89), George (BA '80) and Pamela Hamel, members of the Hollywood Badgers alumni group, and the friends and family of Kevin Anderson (BS '98).

Thanks also to Edward (MA '76) and Janet Greenberg (BA '73, MS '75) for establishing the Communication Industry Summer Internship Award. I hope you will read the story in this issue about Ed and Janet and their generosity and consider how important such stipends can be for our students.

Anyone who would like to provide financial support for our student interns may consider making a gift through the UW Foundation. Please feel free to contact our Director of Development Anne Lucke (Anne.Lucke@uwfoundation.wisc.edu or 608-262-6242).

We have talented students who are ready to work hard. Thanks are in order for everyone who has, will, or might provide them the chance to do so.

Vance Kepley, Jr. (PhD '78)

Your Gift is Appreciated

The Department of Communication Arts has a tremendous number of exciting programs, initiatives and research under way. Opportunities are plentiful for you to participate in the life of the department by staying in touch with us, providing student internships with your company, and donating to the department. Private gifts are increasingly critical to ensuring our excellence. Your gifts help us attract top faculty and graduate students, provide scholarships to outstanding undergraduates, upgrade our technology/facilities, and so much more.

Please consider a contribution today. For more information on making a gift to the Department of Communication Arts or including the department in your estate plans, please contact:

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Madison, WI 53708-8860
608/262-6242, Anne.Lucke@uwfoundation.wisc.edu

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My/our contribution of \$ _____ is enclosed

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Please make checks payable to The UW Foundation—Department of Communication Arts,
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You will receive a receipt for your gift. We appreciate your support!

Group-Wise



Lyn Van Swol

Groups are part of our everyday life and although we regularly participate in group decisions, we rarely pay attention to the type of information being discussed within the group. Did you realize, for example, that groups have a tendency to discuss information known to all group members at the expense of unique information? As Professor Lyn Van Swol points out, "by only talking about information that they share in common, groups fail to learn from each other and use the unique contributions of individual mem-

bers. A common reason that organizations use groups to make decisions is because it is assumed that different group members will bring different perspectives to the table that will help make a better informed, more deeply thought decision."

Given this bias toward shared information, how can group members successfully introduce unique information to a group? According to Van Swol's research, members will be viewed more favorably by the group and will be more persuasive if they frame their novel argument with information already known by the others. The known information establishes a common ground with other group members.

The structure of the group can also

enhance the exchange of new information. Van Swol notes, "I have found that one way to make group members more open to unique information from others is to put the presenter of the unique information in the role of an advisor. When people view someone as advising them, rather than just another group member, they are more open to hearing new, unique information, and actually prefer to get a fresh viewpoint."

Establishing common ground and assigning an advisor are key factors for effective group decision-making. These are just a few of the practical lessons students will learn with the recent addition of Professor Van Swol to our faculty.

Hamel Family Professor



Sabine Gruffat

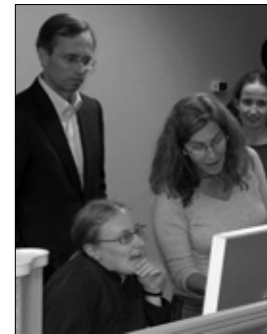
Our first Hamel Family Professor is Sabine Gruffat. This year, Professor Gruffat will introduce our students to the emerging field of digital media by offering courses in interactive multimedia, two-dimensional computer animation, and three-dimensional computer animation.

In the classroom, Gruffat emphasizes creativity, exploration, experimentation, and collaboration. She attributes her hands-on, perspective-changing instructional style to both her professional and personal experiences. Like many professors, her teaching methods have been enhanced through discussions

with colleagues and the advancements in technology. She also credits her unusual personal background with shaping her individual style. Gruffat elaborates with a reference to the various geographical locations she has lived throughout her life, "To adapt to living in several countries from childhood to the present—including France, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Hong Kong and, now, the United States—I feel my identity consistently shifted relative to context, enabling me to suspend judgment (cultural and otherwise), and to openly greet and consider diverse attitudes. The experience of being the foreigner, or 'other' in most situations, is one I cherish and draw upon, and hence welcome and encourage in other artists and students."

Professor Gruffat is a native English and French speaker, who is also fluent in Spanish, and moderately versed in Thai. We are excited to welcome her to the Midwest.

Hamel Family Digital Media Lab



George and Pamela Hamel with senior Siri Helleloid

On September 28, 2007, the Communication Arts Department celebrated the opening of the Hamel Family Digital Media Lab. This newly constructed, state-of-the-art classroom space is located on the third floor of Vilas

Hall adjacent to the Instructional Media Center. At the reception, George (BA '80) and Pam Hamel toured the new facility that bears their name in honor of their generous support of the Department. They marveled at the variety of student animation projects already in progress.

Comm Arts students are gaining hands-on production skills while creating digital and interactive media projects in the lab's specialized computer workstations. New media has been integrated into traditional media production practice, challenging students to develop fresh questions while using the tools of new technology. Several new communication arts courses will be introduced this year and existing courses, such as editing and post-production sound, are being transformed by the opportunities the Hamel Family Lab provides. Comm Arts students were thrilled to find this brand new cutting-edge facility awaiting them when they returned to campus this fall.

Comm Arts Classes Hit the Road

"It definitely changed my life," said Communication Arts major Njoki Kamuiru about Journey to the South, a civil rights study and service trip she embarked upon during spring break. This was one of two experiential education courses in which Communication Arts majors, graduate students, and faculty played major roles this past year. The second such class, devoted to the study of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) history, hit the road in June to meet with activists from the LGBT civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

The trip South brought to life what stu-



Njoki Kamuiru

dents were studying in the classroom with Professor Susan Zaeske (BA '89, MA '92, PhD '97) in CA 378, The Rhetoric of African American Discourse. The class traveled to Chicago, Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, Birmingham, Selma, the Mississippi delta, and Memphis. During the nine-day trip, students met with veterans of the civil rights movement, some of whom were leaders in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), others of whom were "foot soldiers" who had marched on Bloody Sunday, and yet others who as children defied snarling dogs and pummeling fire hoses in



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Greenbergs Offer Internship Award

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work in the entertainment industry upon graduation. He writes, “My internship at Columbia Pictures this summer has certainly meant a great deal to me, both as a student of film and as someone whose future lies in the industry. I have met some fantastic people. I feel that I have learned much from the experience and I have become more confident that I can be successful in this competitive environment.”

Ed and Janet, who contribute philanthropically in many different ways, note, “We can think of nothing more valuable than helping worthy students find and develop their passion. This gives us a very warm feeling and we believe that other alumni might very well benefit in the same way should they choose to help students in this way.”

Comm Arts Classes Hit the Road

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Birmingham. The group also toured museums, visited sites where historic events occurred, and attended services at historic Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. While in Selma, students did their best to give back to the community by cleaning a city park and cataloging hundreds of historical artifacts at the National Voting Rights Museum and Institute.

In June, Comm Arts and Women’s Studies graduate student Amy Barber, Professor Zaeske, and several Comm Arts majors made history by studying history. Theirs was the first class at UW–Madison — and, perhaps, anywhere — to employ the experiential education format to study LGBT history. They met with pioneers in the LGBT civil rights movement in Cleveland, Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York City. In Washington, D.C., the class visited the offices of the Human Rights

Campaign, where they spoke with David Stacy (BA ’90), who serves as a senior public policy advocate. In New York City, the class focused on the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion, a several-day clash in which police officers fought gay and transgender people protesting police entrapment of LGBT citizens. There the group also met with Elliott Imse (BA ’05), a communications research associate at the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD).

Barber, who supervised the video taping of the trip, stressed the significance of the course. “At the broadest level, very little gay and lesbian history is available to students in our libraries, our news media, or our classrooms. As we created this much-needed course on the topic . . . we created an environment in which history came alive.”