



# VilasVoice

For Alumni and Friends of The Department of Communication Arts

## A Journey of Passionate Possibilities

Media pioneer Koplovitz touts the power of ideas

"Let me explain how the precision of science and the art of communication took me on a lifelong journey," entreated Kay Koplovitz (BS '67), a pioneer in cable television networks and new media, when she spoke to approximately 5,000 graduates and their families and friends at the 2008 spring commencement.

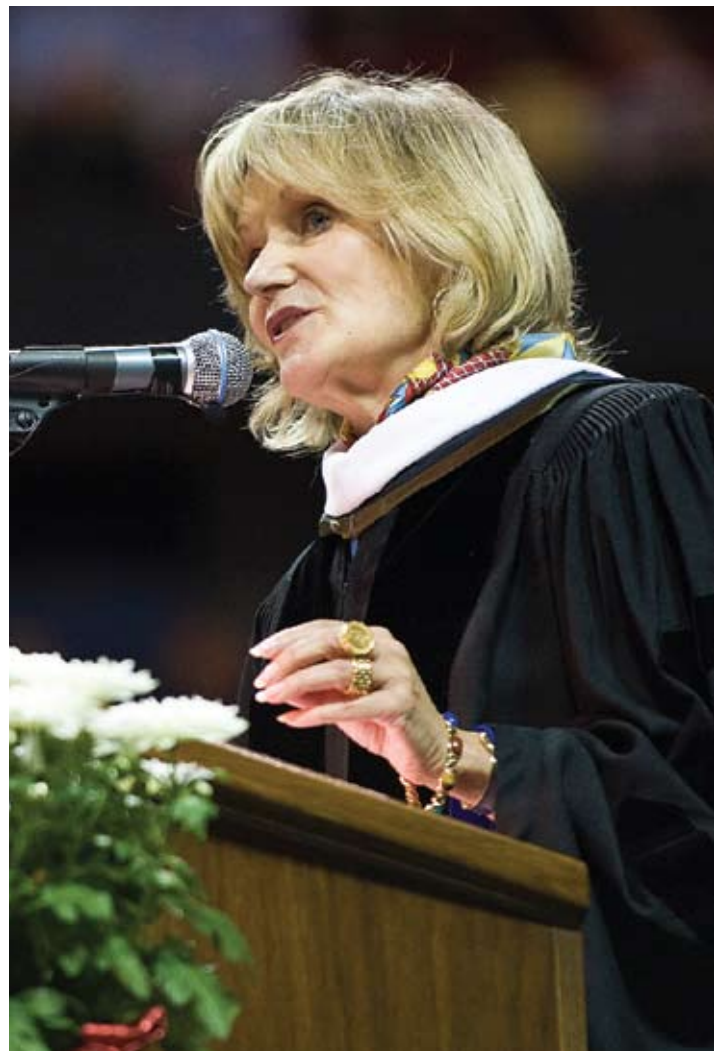
With the power of satellites and more recent cutting-edge technology, that lifelong journey has taken Koplovitz from her hometown of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, through classrooms at UW-Madison, to boardrooms throughout the world. Koplovitz earned a bachelor of science degree in the Department of Communication Arts (what was then the Department of Speech) with an emphasis on radio, television and film in 1967 and subsequently a masters degree in communications from Michigan State University. She went on to found the USA Network, making her the first woman network president in the history of American commercial television. In 1992, she founded the SCI FI Channel and saw it become one of the top-ranked specialty networks in the cable industry.

Koplovitz confessed to gradu-

ates that the idea that changed the focus of her life from science to communications happened when she was "out partying" in London between her junior and senior years at UW-Madison. It was then that she stopped by the London School of Economics and heard a lecture about geosynchronous orbiting satellites. "I thought this was a powerful idea. They had the power to connect people instantly around the world . . . I envisioned a world of instant communications beyond borders and beyond the iron curtain of the repressive Communist regime."

A decade later, in 1977, she launched the USA Network under the banner of Madison Square Garden Sports. A visionary of what sports television would become, Koplovitz managed to establish major professional and collegiate sports on cable television by negotiating the first ever contracts for Major League Baseball, the National Basketball Association and the National Hockey League. She also created the first cable coverage for the Masters Tournament from Augusta, Georgia, the U.S. Tennis Open and a collection of NCAA conference sporting events.

*continued on page 3*



University Communications

Media pioneer Kay Koplovitz addresses Spring 2008 graduates.

Inside  
Vilas

- 2 **Chair's Voice**
- 3 **Vital Statistics**
- 4 **Faculty Profile**
- 5 **Award Recipients**

- 7 **Author's/Artist's Voice**
- 8 **In the Classroom**
- 10 **Alumni Notes**
- 12 **Student Profile**



THE UNIVERSITY  
of  
**WISCONSIN**  
MADISON

# Chair'sVoice



This is a year of change for the nation, University, and the Department of Communication Arts.

We will have a new president in the Oval Office, we have Carolyn "Biddy" Martin in the UW-Madison Chancellor's office, and even in the front office on the sixth floor of Vilas Hall we have a new occupant. I am honored to have been chosen by my faculty colleagues to serve as chair of the Department of Communication Arts and look forward to working with faculty, staff, students, and alumni over the next few years.

While I hope to accomplish positive changes during my term as chair, I assure you that the Department will remain committed above all else to one goal. That goal is to achieve excellence in the teaching and research of human communication in its marvelous multiplicity of forms.

As you can see from the paper you are holding in your hands, one important change we have made already is the format of the Department's annual newsletter. By expanding its length and adding color, we aim to provide more information for you, our alumni and friends, in a more attractive design. I hope that you enjoy the VilasVoice. Changes to the newsletter are part of a multi-faceted effort to improve our commu-

nication with alums, present students, potential students, and the general public. We are also redesigning the department Web site to enhance our communication with you throughout the year. It is scheduled to go online in December. Please take a look at <http://commarts.wisc.edu/>

Another exciting change is that after a four-year vacancy in the video production faculty position, Professor William "Bill" Brown has joined our faculty. Bill specializes in documentary filmmaking and passionately appreciates landscapes. You can learn more about Bill on page 4 of this newsletter.

The nation and the world are changing over to digital communication and so are we. The Department is dedicated to offering more courses that are either entirely devoted to or include a section on digital communication each semester. Communication Arts is a leader in teaching and research about digital communication thanks to the generous support of our donors. George (BA '80) and Pamela Hamel made this possible by funding the construction of the Hamel Digital Media Lab and a professorship in digital media. Hamel Family Professor Sabine Gruffat has taught courses in animation and interactive multimedia.

This spring Professor Robert Glenn Howard will teach a new course in the Hamel Lab called "Everyday Rhetoric Online." From the preparation of tamales at a traditional family gathering to the everyday rhetoric of a baker hawking kosher pastries, students in this course will explore how individuals throughout the Midwest use their diverse cultural resources to change their everyday lives through discourse. Students will generate online digital archives

both documenting and analyzing instances of communication where these cultural resources are used.

And thanks to a grant from the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel Corporation we are able to upgrade our equipment, allowing us to showcase our students' digital productions on the Internet for all to see and hear. This upgrade will facilitate the development of even more courses in all areas of the Department. In the spring semester, for example, Professor Lyn Van Swol plans to use the Department's digital resources to enable students in Comm Arts 368, Theory and Practice of Persuasion, to develop persuasive campaigns using podcasts, Web sites, YouTube videos, and so forth.

While many wonderful changes are happening in our classrooms, labs, and offices, a number of serious challenges remain before us. Most daunting, of course, is the recent economic downturn with its effects on the budget of the State of Wisconsin and subsequently, the University. One of the many effects of the downturn in state funding is that we are unable to offer competitive levels of support to potential graduate students. As a result, we are losing some of the best students to other institutions, oftentimes not because these schools have better graduate programs, but because they provide much better financial support. This is a serious problem because graduate students are key to the research and teaching mission of the Department and the University. The University has taken steps to do what it can to address this problem, yet we are compelled to call upon our alumni and friends to help us compete for the best graduate students.

Perhaps you remember a teaching assistant who made a difference in your life, or perhaps you were a graduate student

yourself? Please consider donating to the Graduate Student Support Fund. You will find a donation envelope at the center of this newsletter that can be used to support this fund and other Department initiatives. To donate online, please go to <http://commarts.wisc.edu/>. There you will find an Opportunities for Giving link.

Warm wishes to you from Vilas Hall during this time of change.

**On Wisconsin!**  
**Susan Zaeske**  
**Professor and Chair**  
**(BA '89, MA '92, PhD '97)**

## VilasVoice

is the alumni newsletter of the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 821 University Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin 53706.

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**University Communications**

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*continued from page 1*

Drawing a lesson from her experience of discovering that big idea during her undergraduate years, Koplovitz offered a bit of advice to her audience. "Whatever your passion is, follow it with persistence and focus, never straying from your compass's true north," she said. She is now CEO of her own firm, Koplovitz and Co., which provides advisory services to entertainment companies, sports organizations, advertisers and distributors, and advises companies on growth strategies. Koplovitz is also chair of the board of Liz Claiborne Inc., and previously served on the boards of such corporations as Instinet, Oracle, Nabisco and General Re. She is a trustee of the Paley Center for Media, the

Central Park Conservancy, and the International Tennis Hall of Fame.

As a ground-breaking business woman, Koplovitz remains committed to cultivating opportunities for women in the business sector. She has co-created Springboard Enterprises, a national organization that fosters venture capital investments in women-led high-growth companies. And she co-founded Boldcap Ventures, a venture capital fund backed exclusively by leading women executives that invests principally in early- to mid-stage companies in the media, technology and health care sectors.

Koplovitz concluded her commencement address by challenging graduates. "Today is your day to set out on your journey of passionate possibilities," she said,

leaving her listeners with four lessons she has learned in the course of her extraordinary life:

**Explore.**

Explore your interests with vigor and passion until your passion finds you.

**Pursue.**

Pursue your passions with relentless energy.

**Value.**

Value human capital. Find the mentors you admire and develop those important relationships that can help you grow. Above all, value your friends and your family.

**Collect.**

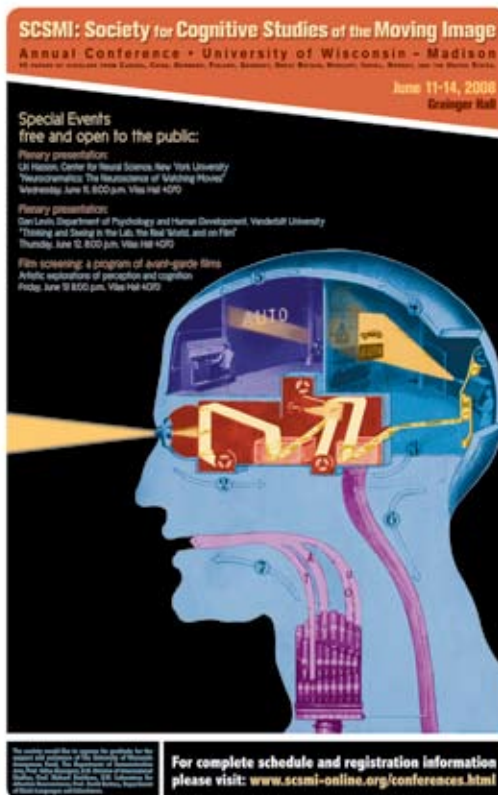
Collect memories and cherish them. I guarantee you they'll be more valuable than any other possession you will ever own.

## UW–Madison Hosts 2008 SCSMI Conference

What parts of our brains are activated when we watch movies? What role, if any, does music in film play as an emotional enhancer? What parts of a film image do our eyes gravitate toward and how do filmmakers exploit this tendency in telling stories onscreen? These questions, and many others, were examined at this year's conference of the Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image, which was held in Vilas Hall and Grainger Hall from June 11–June 14.

SCSMI is a group made up of scholars devoted to interdisciplinary inquiry into film and television from a naturalistic research standpoint. This approach to moving-image media was very clearly reflected in the mix of papers presented at the conference, which included strands devoted to neuropsychological research, audience response studies, philosophical inquiry, and analysis of film style and aesthetics. Three Comm Arts faculty comprised this year's program committee: Professors Jeff Smith (MA '89, PhD '95) and Ben Singer along with Emeritus Professor David Bordwell.

Forty-three papers were presented by faculty and graduate students from 32 different universities. A truly international event, this year's SCSMI conference drew participants from Canada, England, Scotland, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Israel, China, and New Zealand.



# Vital Statistics

For Communication Arts  
as of Fall 2008

**10,804**  
Living alumni

**726**  
Undergraduate  
majors

**130**  
Years old

**73**  
Graduate  
students

**19.5**  
Professors

**16**  
Staff members

**1**  
Goal:  
Excellence in the  
teaching and  
research of  
communication

## PROFESSOR BILL BROWN: Non-Fiction Filmmaker

When I tell people I'm a non-fiction filmmaker, they ask me "what's that?" I explain that it's like being a documentary filmmaker, only a little more arty. At this point, whoever I'm talking to usually changes the subject.

My films all begin with a place. Then I get to work, correlating geographical coordinates with conceptual ones. I am drawn to castaway places: dying cotton towns in west Texas or coal towns in West Virginia. Places that are flown over or just plain forgotten. It is in these places, perhaps better than elsewhere, that we can take an inventory of our American dreams and desires, because they're piled up there, derelict, waiting for someone to take possession of them. My dream—the big, hopeless one—is to make a movie about every single one of these places.

Early on, I was inspired by the first-person cinema of filmmakers like Chris Marker (*Sans Soleil*), Chantal Akerman (*News from Home*), and Ross McElwee

tist in me knows better. It's too expensive, and it's bad for the environment. But the softhearted romantic in me can't give it up. I like the material presence of film. I like holding it up to the light, and threading it through the projector. I don't even mind when my movie prints get scratched, since that's how we all wind up in the end: scratched-up and battle-scarred.

In the aftermath of 9/11, I've been struggling to reconcile my political concerns with a lyrical approach to filmmaking. These competing, perhaps contradictory impulses are at the heart of my film, *The Other Side*, which is at once a portrait of the landscapes of the desert Southwest, a profile of border activists and undocumented migrants, and a meditation on borders and border policy. Where that film succeeds—and often it doesn't—gives me hope that one can find a poetics of politics, and a kind of filmmaking where poetry and politics meet.

My search for a politically



Professor Bill Brown peddles his films from D.C. to Denver.

films about undocumented immigration along the U.S.-Mexico border. I purposely avoided cities, heading instead to small towns and screening the films in Unitarian churches in Illinois, public libraries in Missouri, and even a fundamentalist Christian college in the suburbs of Kansas City. This trip opened up for me the idea of the film tour as political activism, as well as an art practice all its own. My next big touring fantasy is to construct a Huck Finn-style cinema raft and float down the Mississippi River, screening a program of films about the river as a landscape where natural processes and human desires compete.

This do-it-yourself sensibility finds a place in my classroom as well. It seems to me the best way to learn a craft is to roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty. I want my students in the introductory and the advanced production courses to learn useful skills, but I also want them to develop a critical practice, one in which they

question their assumptions about how to make films and how films can and do exist in the world. It's from this critical approach that filmmaking renews itself, finding new ways of telling stories, making meaning, and showing us the world.

A DIY sensibility also inspired Professor Sabine Gruffat and me to launch an independent screening series this semester called The Media Embassy ([www.mediaembassy.org](http://www.mediaembassy.org)). Our mission is to bring nationally and internationally-known media artists to town to present their work. In September, an animation performance-art duo called Cartune Xprez presented a multi-media spectacular to a sold-out crowd. Most recently, we hosted UK New Media artists Semiconductor. Our hope is that this series will become a laboratory for visual experimentation and risk-taking, as well as a gathering place for local audiences to explore contemporary media culture.

***"I am a true believer in the film tour, and in the chance encounters and conversations that happen when you toss your films in a backpack and take them on the road."***

(*Sherman's March*). These filmmakers make a virtue of uncertainty and ambiguity. Their films are not just documentaries, but meditations on love and memory. They dispense with the documentarian's pose of authority or objectivity, and explore instead their subjective relationship to the world around them.

I continue to shoot 16mm film, a bad habit I picked up in college and that I continue to this day. The hardheaded pragma-

relevant film practice also extends to the exhibition of my work. I'm inspired by the tradition of the roving cinema that dates back to the Soviet Kino-Trains of the 1920's: a cinema of nomads and hobos. I am a true believer in the film tour, and in the chance encounters and conversations that happen when you toss your films in a backpack and take them on the road. In the summer of 2006, I rode my bike from Washington, D.C. to Denver with a program of

## HONORS AND AWARDS

**Professor Mary Beltrán** was awarded a 2008–2009 Research Grant by the UW System Institute on Race and Ethnicity for “Latinos in the Age of Television: Visibility, Agency, and Authorship, from Ricky Ricardo to Ugly Betty.”

**Professor Kelley Conway** was honored with the 2008 William H. Kiekhof Teaching Award, which is a Chancellor’s Distinguished Teaching Award reserved for outstanding assistant or associate professors. The award recognized her teaching accomplishments that extend from Vilas Hall to the historic film theaters of Paris. This academic year, Conway is serving as the resident director of the study abroad program in Aix-en-Provence, France.

**Professor Michael Curtin** (MA ’86, PhD ’90) delivered the Van Zelst Distinguished Lecture in Communication at Northwestern University and a Mellichamp Endowed Lecture at the University of California, Santa Barbara, last year.

**Professor Robert Glenn Howard** was recently promoted to associate professor.

**Professor Lea Jacobs** received a grant to assist her in the re-development of the history of animation course.



**Professors Louise Mares** (MA ’90, PhD ’94) and **Joanne Cantor** along with alumna Professor Mary Beth Oliver (MA ’88, PhD ’91) received the

International Communication Association’s top paper honors for their paper on age differences in adults’ emotional motivations for exposure to films.



**Professor Zhongdang Pan** was appointed the Changjiang Scholar Chair Professor of Communication in the School of Journalism at Fudan University, China, for three years. The Changjiang Scholarship Award, established in 1998 and administered by China’s Ministry of Education, was designed to bridge China’s academic research with that of the world by bringing scholars from all over the world to work in top academic institutions in China. In 2008, 95 chair professorships in various disciplines were awarded via a competitive selection process that involved the nominations of scholars by leading academic institutions in China. Pan is only the third scholar from the journalism/communication discipline to receive this honor. He is working on collaborative research projects with scholars at Fudan University as well as spending his summers at Fudan contributing to graduate student training via seminars and workshops. During his appointment, Pan is also conducting a research project on media use in the new media environment of urban China with a research grant he received with the award.

**Professor Lyn Van Swol’s** article, “Differences between Minority, Majority, and Unanimous Group Members in the Communication of Information,” won the National Communication Association’s Dennis Gouran Research Award for the best published paper in group research.

**Professor Susan Zaeske** (BA ’89, MA ’92, PhD ’97) has been named one of the first Hamel Faculty Fellows in the College of Letters and Science. The award recognizes Zaeske’s outstanding achievements in teaching, research, and her service to the university.

## EMERITI/AE NEWS

**Professor Tino Balio** recently contributed a section on post-war globalization to the newly-revised edition of *The Cinema Book*, an in-depth guide to film history used throughout the world. Though retired, Balio is continuing his tradition of service to the institution as the president of the University Club for a term that runs from 2007 to 2009.

In late 2007, **Professor David Bordwell** received the Wayne Danielson Award for Distinguished Contributions to Communication Scholarship, given by the University of Texas at Austin. His book, *Poetics of Cinema*, was published within the last year and the third edition of his and Kristin Thompson’s (PhD ’77) textbook, *Film History: An Introduction*, will be available in February 2009.

Bordwell has also been traveling. In 2007–2008, he gave several lectures, and his hosts have included Communication Arts alumni Professor Richard Neupert (BA ’77, MA ’80, PhD ’86), at the University of Georgia; Professor Matthew Bernstein (BA ’80, PhD ’87), at Emory University; and Professors James Kreul (BA ’92, MA ’96, PhD ’04) and Timothy Palmer (PhD ’03), at University of North Carolina-Wilmington.

In 2008, Bordwell has so far visited Tokyo, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Bologna, Brussels, and Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, usually for film festivals. You can track his activities at his Web site, [www.davidbordwell.net](http://www.davidbordwell.net), where he and Thompson also maintain a blog.

Though officially retired, **Professor Joanne Cantor** continues to contribute to the Department in many important ways. She serves as director of the Center for Communication Research, which moved to expanded and improved quarters this past year. As well, she graciously lends a hand with a number of important administrative tasks in the Communication Science area. Cantor continues to pursue her ongoing program of research on the impact of mass media on children, adolescents and adults. She recently received top honors from the International Communication Association for a paper she co-authored on age differences in adults’ emotional motivations for exposure to films. A highly-sought-after speaker, Cantor offers keynotes and workshops about parenting and the media. You can learn more about her latest activities on her Web site entitled *Your Mind on Media* at <http://yourmindonmedia.com/>.

## LEE SHERMAN DREYFUS: Communication Pioneer, State Leader

Lee Sherman Dreyfus, a graduate and former faculty member of this Department as well as former governor of Wisconsin, passed away on January 2, 2008, at age 81. He is well remembered by Wisconsinites as an enlightened political leader (he signed the state's 1982 gay rights legislation), a successful grassroots campaigner, and a flamboyant public figure sporting a distinctive red vest. We are proud to recall Governor Dreyfus's special connection to the Department and the University.

Lee Dreyfus earned his BA ('49), MA ('52), and PhD ('57) degrees at UW–Madison in the Department of Speech, the earlier incarnation of what is now Communication Arts. After completing his studies he launched successful parallel careers in higher education and broadcasting, teaching at Wayne State University while working in public broadcasting. He combined those interests when he returned to the UW–Madison Speech Department as a Professor of Speech and Educational Television (1962–67). A popular and dynamic lecturer, Professor Dreyfus taught in areas ranging from public speaking to television studies. He pioneered forms of distance education, including an intercontinental classroom exchange between the U.S. and Europe using early satellite technology. He also served as general manager of WHA-TV and was an effective public advocate on behalf of educational television.

He left the Department to take over the leadership of UW–Stevens Point, and, as is well known, eventually launched



Photo courtesy of University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point

his maverick political career, leading to the governorship. The Department is honored by its connection to one of Wisconsin's leading public citizens.

## Farewell to Dave

After 41 years of commendable dedication to the University and to assuring the efficient sending and receiving of mail, our mailroom supervisor Dave Hellenbrand has retired. "The year Dave began working here, Lyndon B. Johnson was president, the Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour made its premier, and the Packers won the Ice Bowl," Comm Arts Chair Susan Zaeske told those assembled at Hellenbrand's retirement party. Staff and faculty from all the units that occupy Vilas Hall—Communication Arts, Theatre and Drama, the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, and Wisconsin Public Radio and Television—celebrated Hellenbrand's achievements with

a Hawaiian-themed party.

With his wife, children, and grandchildren present for the festivities, Zaeske lauded Hellenbrand for the tender loving care he gave to millions of pieces of mail received as well as the many millions of dollars of postage he processed. Professor Lea Jacobs, Director of the Comm Arts Cinematheque, added to the chorus of praise, explaining that she could always count on Hellenbrand to handle extremely valuable film prints. These prints, often one of a kind, arrive from archives such as the Museum of Modern Art or the Library of Congress and from far afield, such as London or Munich. "We have never lost a print and I have never worried about losing one due to the expert handling of Dave and

his staff," Jacobs said.

Besides expert processing of the mail, Hellenbrand's career was



**Dave Hellenbrand and grandchildren at retirement celebration.**

distinguished by his ability to connect all occupants of Vilas Hall, noted Professor Robert Drechsel of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. Indeed, unlike any other employee in Vilas Hall, Hellenbrand's job responsibilities involved all units. As a result, he tied together the building with his friendly personality that warmed all floors of Vilas Hall.

The retirement party culminated with the presentation of certificates of gratitude for 41 years of service to the University and State of Wisconsin signed by Chancellor John Wiley and Governor James Doyle. Making use of gifts from the Vilas Hall community, Dave and his wife Karen are scheduled to embark on a trip to Hawaii. We wish them both a great trip and a happy retirement.

# Author's/Artist's Voice



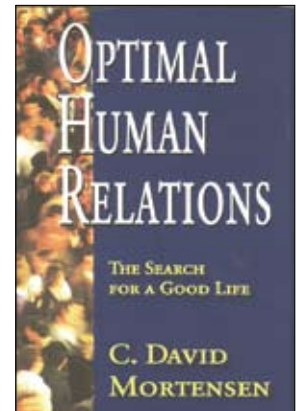
**Michael Curtin**  
*Playing to the World's Biggest Audience: The Globalization of Chinese Film and TV*



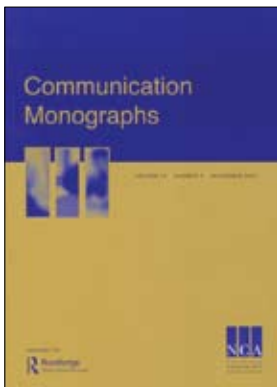
**Lea Jacobs**  
*The Decline of Sentiment: American Film in the 1920s*



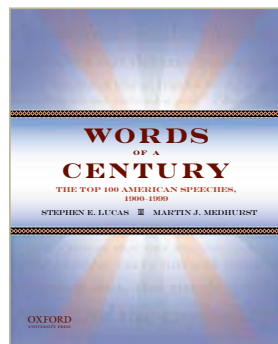
**J. J. Murphy**  
*Me and You and Memento and Fargo: How Independent Screenplays Work*



**David Mortensen**  
*Optimal Human Relations*



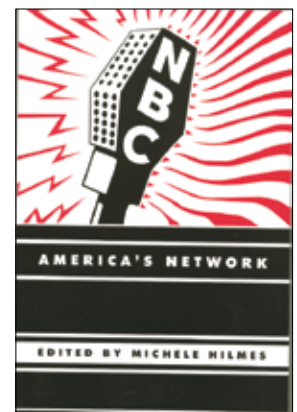
**Lyn Van Swol**  
"Discussion and Perception of Information in Groups and Judge Advisor Systems,"  
*Communication Monographs*



**Stephen E. Lucas**  
*Words of a Century: The Top 100 American Speeches, 1900-1999* (with Martin Medhurst)



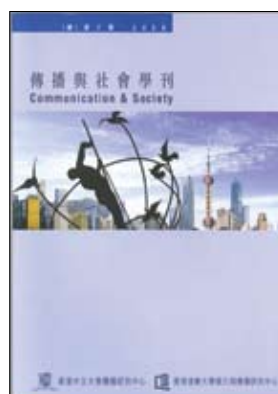
**Mary Beltrán**  
*Mixed Race Hollywood* (edited with Camilla Fojas)



**Michele Hilmes**  
*NBC: America's Network*



**Robert Glenn Howard**  
"Electronic Hybridity: The Persistent Processes of the Vernacular Web," *Journal of American Folklore*



**Zhongdang Pan**  
"The Publicness of the Media and Rejuvenation of China's Media Reforms, Introduction to the Special Issue on the Thirtieth Anniversary of China's Reforms," *The Chinese Journal of Communication & Society*



**Sabine Gruffat's**  
Installation "24 Hour Riot" at Dead Tech Gallery, Chicago

## International Dialogues

# Stephanie Dorman

While studying abroad in India her junior year, Stephanie Dorman examined the decentralization of villages and saw for herself that “words really can create change.” Based on her belief that dialogues need to occur between local people, government representatives and the international community for change to occur, Stephanie interned with the U.S. Department of State upon her return. Her goal was to gain an insider’s view of an organization that routinely engages in international dialogue. The experience surpassed her expectations:

*“I had one of the greatest times of my life at the U.S. Department of State this summer working on human rights issues for the India desk. I was given opportunities to write speeches and talking points for meetings with dignitaries, as well as collaborate on labor and religious freedom reports and recommendations regarding human trafficking. It was rewarding to learn from the complicated process of information gathering, deliberation of ideas, and collaboration with a wide range of individuals and organizations to find the right words to most effectively communicate ways to tackle important challenges facing the world. I know I will be able to take what I learned about international deliberation and communication with me as I pursue a career in international development.”*



Stephanie Dorman is surrounded by her students in Benaras, India, where she taught during her study abroad program.

## IN THE CLASSROOM

# The Presidential Campaign

This fall as the nation geared up for its most important election in decades, students in Comm Arts 470, Contemporary Political Discourse joined scholars and pundits in analyzing the rhetoric of candidates for the Oval Office and vice presidency. Under the guidance of Professor Robert Asen, they explored strategies and ethics of the candidates’ rhetoric in various forms including speeches, blogs, and media coverage.

A major issue the class explored was the relationship between the candidates and the news media. Students considered,

discussed, and debated the democratic responsibilities of an independent press, and compared the coverage of the 2008 campaign to their ideals. They found reason for both concern and optimism. On the one hand, they identified instances where the press simply repeated dubious claims circulated by campaign officials. On the other, the class discovered inspired cases of investigative reporting where journalists undertook the important task of fact-checking.

A hot topic was the role of traditional and new media. Students read essays charging comedy



Professor Rob Asen

news programs like *The Daily Show* with promoting an anti-democratic cynicism. In response, many class participants noted that *The Daily Show* actually promoted civic engagement, since so much of its humor depended on a knowledge of public affairs. They also studied new media like blogs, which often host vigorous debates on public issues by ordinary citizens, and hybrid organizations, such as Moveon.org, which organize online and offline political activities.

“By providing insight into how the media fulfills its func-



tions both as an infotainment business and government watchdog, this course has taught me to be a more active consumer of news," reflected Ari Edelheit, a senior Comm Arts major enrolled in the course. "In a presidential campaign that is worthy of its claim to be the most important election in decades, it is vital that Americans are aware of the mainstream media's aptitude for perpetuating the cynical perception of Washington D.C." Edelheit praised the course saying, "It is important that people learn to

see past the narratives and clever framing techniques in order to become truly informed (if that is even achievable)."

Professor Asen expressed his satisfaction that students' discussion of the increasing prominence of new media "has fostered an appreciation of the changing dynamics of presidential campaign rhetoric, which, more so than at any point in our nation's history, circulates across many diverse sites of discourse and makes itself available to the judgment of ordinary citizens and

various groups."

The course also challenged students to reflect on their roles as citizens by asking difficult ethical questions about campaign rhetoric. For instance, they explored the question of whether the shortcomings they found in the news media and campaigns arise, in part, from our expectations as citizens. In the end, the class retained a sense of optimism, believing that campaigns can be improved and we can all play important roles in the electoral process.

## Posthumous Degree for Rebecca Swender



The Department was saddened by the loss of Rebecca Ann Swender (MA '02, PhD '08), our graduate student and respected colleague, who passed away on June 14, 2008, after a valiant struggle with cancer. On September 11, 2008, Dean Gary Sandefur conferred a posthumous degree on Becca, as she was known, for her doctoral dissertation "Sound Stages:

Acting, Technology and the Transition to Sound in America, 1928–1931."

Becca had lived in Madison for eight years. She was an extraordinarily brilliant, witty, elegant, and caring person. After receiving her BA from Wesleyan in Film and Religious Studies, she spent five years working in the film industry in New York as an aspiring film editor. Once she embarked upon her graduate career in film studies, she used many of her technical skills as a teaching assistant and lecturer of film and video production. A superb teacher, her courses included Introduction to Media Production, Advanced Video Production, Cinematography and Sound Design, and History of Documentary Film. Becca felt strongly that one of

her tasks as a teacher was to help women students overcome the pervasive notion that they were incapable of mastering the use of technology. She tried to instill in her students the belief that they could master any and all technical skills and equipment, and could take leadership positions in a male-dominated industry.

Becca was an accomplished and published scholar, with interests in silent cinema, film acting, the history of film technology, and documentary film. While Becca's illness prevented her from finishing her thesis in the way that she hoped, even in its partially completed state it stands as a tribute to a brilliant young scholar: to the originality of her project, and to the boldness, vigor and precision of her thought.

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## ALUMNI VOICE

**What advice do you have for Comm Arts majors who are graduating this academic year?**

**Please email your response to [alumnivoice@commarts.wisc.edu](mailto:alumnivoice@commarts.wisc.edu)  
Responses will be shared on our Web site.**

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**2008  
Scholarship  
Recipients**  
A special thanks to our generous donors who continue to support our students, both in and outside of the classroom.

**Communications  
Industry Summer  
Internship Award**  
Sam Brandl,  
Fox Broadcasting Company

**Communication Arts  
Summer Internship  
Award**  
Stephanie Dorman, U.S.  
Department of State  
Paul Hansa-Ogren,  
*The Daily Habit*  
Derek Paulson, This is that  
Sean Pinnow, Disney's  
Hollywood Studios  
Jennifer Polan, Luber/Roklin  
Entertainment

**Kevin M. Anderson  
Memorial Film  
Mentorship**  
Bradinn French, Endgame  
Entertainment  
and SMASHfilms

**CBS, Programming &  
Planning**  
Mallory Mason

**Christopher Neal Heinlein  
Memorial Scholarship**  
Sam Brandl  
Julia Shiplett  
Kristina Spandau

**Nietzchka Keene  
Memorial Fund**  
Advanced Motion Picture  
Production Workshop  
Students

# Alumni Notes

## 1960's

**Chris Sterling** (MA '67, PhD '69) continues to teach at George Washington University. His latest two books are *Military Communications from Ancient Times to the Present* and *Sounds of Change: A History of FM Broadcasting in America*.

## 1970's

**Dave Anderson** (BA '77), author of *University of Wisconsin Football* and *University of Wisconsin Basketball*, is currently the director of branding, media & client services for Digital Flannel marketing agency.



**Candice Gaukel Andrews** (BA '77) returned to Wisconsin after working as a script analyst at Paramount Pictures in Hollywood. She is the author of four books: *Great Wisconsin Winter Weekends*, *Minnesota Almanac*, *Explore Wisconsin Forest*, and *An Adventurous Nature: Tales from Natural Habitat Adventures*.

**Jeff Clarke** (MA '78) is the president and CEO of Northern California Public Broadcasting in San Francisco.

**Chip Duncan** (BA '78) is a filmmaker and writer with the Duncan Group. Their offices are located in Milwaukee and New York City.

**S. Loraine Boos Hull** [Lorrie Hull] (MA '71) is the co-owner of Hull Actors Studio in Santa Monica, CA with actress daughter Dianne Hull and she is the author of *Strasberg's Method As Taught by Lorrie Hull: A Practical Guide for Actors, Teachers, Directors*.

**Kim Kachelmyer** (BA '79, MA '82) legally changed her name to **Kimora**. She is a professor of correctional education at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, NYC. Last year, Kimora received "It Takes a Village Award" for her work in correctional education from the Lincoln Correctional Facility, New York City.

**Warren Lada** (BA '76) oversees Saga Communications, a NYSE company with approximately 100 radio and television stations throughout the U.S.

**Tom Reason** (BA '76), associate director of admissions at UW-Madison, is serving as the president of the Wisconsin Association for College Admission Counseling. Tom notes that many Comm Arts alumni work or have worked for UW-Madison Admissions.

## 1980's

**Jonathan Dumont** (BA '84) is the head of television communications for United Nations World Food Programme. During his career, which has included positions at WHA-TV, Madison; ABC, NBC, CBS Chicago/Rome; BBC News in Rome; and CNN in Washington, D.C., Jonathan has earned several honors including Emmy and National Headliners awards.

**Jim Evanger** (BA '89) is the CEO of DOTI Design Stores and DOTI Commercial. He notes that he currently resides in Florida, where it's WARM.

**Denise Hartsough** (MA '82, PhD '87) is the director of community investment for the Greater Kalamazoo United Way.

**Craig C. Johnson** (BA '86), a life member of the Wisconsin Alumni Association, Memorial Union, and the Bascom Hill Society. Craig, who served as the president of WAA, Los Angeles chapter from 1994 to 2000, is a senior vice president at Morgan Stanley.

**Cori Lynn (Crogon) Prah** (BA '85, JD '90), a shareholder at Hills Legal Group, Ltd. in Waukesha, WI, practices insurance defense litigation.

**Ron Vincent** (BA '82) the current president/CEO of Vincent Consolidated Commodities, Inc. and CEO of Wisconsin Sports Development Corporation (non profit) was

on the UW Badger Hockey NCAA Championship team in 1981 and the team captain and MVP in 1982.

**Jenni Wabers** (BA '83) is a senior account executive with Charter Media in Madison, WI.

**Cary B. Wilson** (BA '85) has been an extra and set medic on many movies. Currently, he is a physician assistant in Big Sky, Montana, where he and his family own a commercial apple orchard.

## 1990's

**Cori Abraham** (nee Finkelstein) (BA '94) is the vice president of development and original programming for Bravo. She is an executive producer on *Kathy Griffin: My Life on the DList*, for which Cori won a Primetime Emmy in 2007 and 2008 in the Most Outstanding Reality Series category. At Bravo, she has also been the executive producer of many pilots and series including *Workout*, *Date My Ex*, *Hey Paula*, and *Top Design*.

**Pete Fiutak** (BA '93) is the publisher of CollegeFootballNews.com, a weekly contributor for the NFL Network, and a college football columnist for FoxSports.com.

**Farrah Flanagan** (BA '98) began her career at CNN as a video-journalist and now is the editor/producer. Her travels for CNN have taken her to a variety of locations, such as Normandy for the 60th D-Day anniversary, Rome for the Pope's funeral, and New Orleans for post-Katrina coverage in 2005. Her honors include winning an Emmy, a National Headliner, a Peabody and a duPont.

**Dara Klatt** ('97) is a senior publicist at National Geographic Channel, Washington, D.C.

**Susan Sobotta Mayhew** (BA '92) is an oncology specialist who has been working in the biotech/pharmaceutical industry for over 10 years.

**Heather (Larson) Mills** (BA '95) has spent the last year building her own house by hand.

**Jennifer Larson Hanna** (BA '91) is an executive writer with the World Wildlife Fund in Washington, D.C.

**Nathan Rabin's** (BA '99) debut memoir, "The Big Rewind: A Memoir Brought to You by Pop Culture" will be published in late spring or early

summer of next year. He promises Madison-related content and that it will be Madisontastic. Nathan is in his eleventh year as an *Onion* writer and is the head writer for The A.V. Club.

**Ben Sprague-Klepzig** (nee Klepzig) (BA'92) is the marketing director for the United Way of Dane County. Having lived in Madison for all but 6 months since coming here for school, he now considers himself a Madisonian.

## 2000's

**Clare Bratten** (PhD '02) is completing a documentary on the Kurdistan of Iraq for which she traveled to northern Iraq in 2005 and 2008.

**Elizabeth Graham** (BA '01) is a special education teacher in the Chicago Public School system.

**Jessica Gurtowski** (BA '00) opened a bicycle shop, Retro City Cycles, in Orlando, Florida, last year. Jessica is also the marketing manager for Thomas D. Wood & Company.

**Daniel Simon** (BA '03) is a copy editor for the English language daily newspaper, *The Daily Yomiuri*, based in Tokyo, Japan.

**Jonathan Michael Stewart** (BS '03) received the Presidential Volunteer Service Award, George W. Bush, for his volunteer work with USAID in Rumbek, Sudan.

**Aaron H. Teeter** (BA '03) recently accepted a training specialist position with U.S. Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. He also co-wrote in the book *Mosh the Polls: Youth Voters and Popular Culture* which was published this fall.

**David Villar** (BA '01) is coming to your TV screen. He recently shot a co-star role on ABC's *Eli Stone* and a national McDonald's commercial. You can also see him performing weekly at the World Famous Comedy Store on the Sunset Strip.

**Brynn Wexler** (BA '03), a freelance TV producer in Los Angeles, has worked on shows such as *Top Chef*, the *Real World*, NBC's *Grease: You're the One That I Want*, ABC's *Dance War*, Discovery's *Green G Word*, and many more. Brynn has two shows premiering this fall, MTV's *Top Pop Group* and the CW's *Stylista*.

# Bravo for Bitzer

## Event marks 40th anniversary of "The Rhetorical Situation"

"Exigence," "audience," "constraints." Do you remember these terms? Likely they ring a bell because for at least the last 25 years, students in Communication Arts courses have employed them to analyze persuasive messages. They are elements described in "The Rhetorical Situation," an essay that is required reading for students of communication throughout the nation and the world.

Students and scholars alike gathered this fall to mark the 40th anniversary of the publication of this landmark essay by Comm Arts Professor Emeritus Lloyd F. Bitzer. Speakers discussed the essay's significance as a teaching tool as well as a theoretical contribution to the understanding of rhetoric.

"'The Rhetorical Situation,' is arguably the single most influential essay by a rhetorical scholar in the communication discipline during the second half of the twentieth century," stated Comm Arts Professor Stephen Lucas. "It is required reading any place in the world where rhetoric is studied, and I would wager that it is among the most frequently cited works by any member of the communication

discipline, regardless of his or her area of specialization."

James M. Farrell (PhD '88), Professor of Communication at the University of New Hampshire, praised Bitzer's article and his larger body of academic writing as "clear and precise." Said Farrell, "His ideas are distilled and refined . . . his reasoning is grounded in common sense yet marked by an irresistible momentum, and his arguments are sharply focused, carefully structured, and ultimately (as some of his critics discovered) unassailable."

Bitzer, who served on the faculty from 1961 to 1994, came out of retirement for the afternoon to share his thoughts about the essay on its 40th birthday. After expressing gratitude for the celebration, he offered intriguing details about the origins of his essay. He also responded to controversies sparked by "The Rhetorical Situation" and explained the refinements he would make to the essay if he were writing it today.

The celebration of Bitzer's essay was just one part of the highly-successful Eleventh Biennial Public Address Conference, held during the last week of September at the Fluno Center.



**Bitzer came out of retirement for the afternoon to discuss his landmark essay.**

The conference brought together scholars from throughout the United States and abroad to consider the theme "Representing the Republic."

Many of the conference presentations analyzed the discourse of the 2008 presidential election including speeches, blogs, YouTube videos, and campaign advertisements. Comm Arts Professor Robert Glenn Howard, for example, analyzed the role of religion in campaign discourse posted on the Internet.

Professor Vanessa Beasley of Vanderbilt University, remarked upon an intensified interest among the American public in analyzing public address. "Speech—instances of oratory, genuine public address—seems

to have taken center stage in the electoral process this time," observed Beasley. "Mainstream media journalists in particular have paid more attention to the role of public address in the campaign, at times even detailing for their audiences the specific demands of what we would call the rhetorical situation. What must Obama say so that he and the Democrats can hit one out of the ballpark? What must John McCain say about the economy in order to make himself sound studied and not scared?"

The Public Address Conference was made possible by the support of a generous donor, the Comm Arts Rhetorical Studies Fund, and the College of Letters & Science Anonymous Fund.

## Cinematheque Turns Ten

This year the Cinematheque celebrates its tenth anniversary. To commemorate the occasion, the fall 2008 season kicked off with a screening of "Singin' in the Rain," which was the first film shown back in spring 1998 during the first Cinematheque. The screening of the recent Warner Bros. Pictures restoration packed the house and, in fact, several dozen people were turned away. Carrot cake was served courtesy of the Willy Street Co-op. All in all, it was the perfect way to celebrate ten years of innovative film programming in Madison, from 1998's Glorious Technicolor series to 2008's Vote Cinema series.

Visit the Cinematheque Web Site ([www.cinema.wisc.edu](http://www.cinema.wisc.edu)) to see what's playing when you're in Madison.



**Singin' in the Rain, courtesy of the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research**

**Department of Communication Arts**

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Madison, WI 53706

## STUDENT PROFILE

### Movies in the Mountains

#### Students Attend Telluride Film Festival

Thanks to the generosity of George (BA '80) and Pam Hamel, recent Comm Arts graduate Derek Paulson (BA '07), fellow Comm Arts graduate student Tom Yoshikami (MA '03), and I had the pleasure of attending the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Student Symposium at the 35<sup>th</sup> annual Telluride Film Festival last Labor Day Weekend. The pace was grueling—we attended seminars and films from 7:30 a.m. until into the night—but the experience was well worth the sleep deprivation.

We saw some wonderful films, including the ground-breaking animated documentary, *Waltz with Bashir*, excerpts from the stunning Czech documentary, *A Private Century*, and Mike Leigh's refreshingly optimistic new film, *Happy Go Lucky*. If you get the chance, see these films. But Telluride isn't only about contemporary cinema; we also had the pleasure of seeing the Nicholas Ray classic, *On Dangerous Ground*, the George Eastman House restoration of an early Buster Keaton short (*The Cook*, directed by Fatty Arbuckle), and Josef Von Sternberg's brilliant *The Last Command*.

Arguably, though, the most valuable aspect of the student symposium was not the films, but the speakers. Over the course of the weekend, we participated in seminars with the symposium organizers including renowned feminist film scholar Linda Williams, film critic and programmer Howie Movshowitz, festival guest-curator and celebrity film scholar Slavoj Zizek, and Pordenone curator and celebrated film archivist Paolo Cherchi-Usai. We met notable directors



**Derek Paulson, Heather Heckman, Tom Yoshikami**

like Mike Leigh, David Fincher, and Tom Shadyac of *Ace Ventura* fame, skilled producers Kathleen Kennedy and Frank Marshall, gifted novelist Salman Rushdie, theatrical impresario Peter Sellars, and up-and-comers like the inspiring actress/director/social worker Andita Das, not to mention Laura Linney.

In short, I had a great time at what is an absolutely incredible opportunity for Comm Arts students, present and future.

— Heather Heckman (MA '07)