



VilasVoice

For Alumni and Friends of The Department of Communication Arts

The Path Taken

Neil Willenson and His Journey of Hope

A chance encounter with a suffering boy and a passing promise set Neil Willenson's (BA '92) life on an unexpected course that took him from his long-standing plans of becoming a movie director onto an incredible journey of hope. The young boy, Nile Sandeen, who was living in Willenson's hometown of Mequon, Wisconsin, was infected with AIDS, and when Willenson, who was finishing his degree in Communication Arts at UW-Madison, became aware of the discrimination Nile was experiencing at school, he was compelled to act. Willenson spent the next year trying to overcome the often cruel prejudice that Nile was experiencing, mostly to no avail. Among other things, the stigma and fear surrounding Nile's condition prevented him from participating in many school programs that most kids take for granted. So, Willenson decided to establish a summer camp where Nile and other children living with AIDS and experiencing similar alienation could have a place of refuge from the stigma they were experiencing. This was the beginning of a whole new direction for Willenson's life.

In explaining his motivation for setting up the camp, Wil-

lenson observes, "After spending more than a year with Nile and his family, I realized that Nile's pain did not come from the physical manifestations of HIV and AIDS, rather, it came from the isolation and cruelty he experienced. Although he was living with AIDS, Nile was healthy and experienced very few medical issues. Yet, he suffered everyday from the discrimination that often surrounds this disease." In response, Willenson developed a plan to provide an opportunity for children suffering with AIDS to have fun, meaningful camp experiences, while allowing them to come to terms with the discrimination they experienced. "The main purpose for our founding Camp Heartland was to provide thousands of children affected by HIV/AIDS with unconditional love, acceptance and the opportunity — often for the first time — to openly discuss HIV/AIDS." The first camp, held in 1993, started with 72 kids, and since then has grown into a more substantial program that has provided camp experiences to over 5,000 children from all over the U.S. All of these camp experiences were funded by generous donors, culminating in

a full-time camp being established in Duluth, Minnesota. In addition, Willenson started an AIDS awareness tour called the "Journey of Hope," which gives children who attend the camp an

opportunity to travel to schools and communities to raise awareness about the stigma of AIDS. The camp and the tour have gained national attention with *continued on page 3*



Neil Willenson

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THE UNIVERSITY
of
WISCONSIN
MADISON

Chair'sVoice

Securing Our Tradition of Excellence



Professor Susan Zaeske with Jon Sorenson

Our faculty's tradition of excellence in teaching, research, and artistic production is one of the many reasons that Communication Arts ranks as one of the most highly-desirable undergraduate majors on campus. This tradition has been strengthened over the past year with the garnering of several prestigious national awards. Stephen E. Lucas, who is best known to alums as the eloquent professor of Comm Arts 372, Rhetoric of Campaigns and Revolutions, has been named a Distinguished Scholar by the National Communication Association. This award honors a lifetime of scholarly achievement in the study of human communication.

Last spring Professor Lea Jacobs, a respected leader in the field of film history and the Director of UW Cinematheque,

was honored with a Kellett Mid-Career Award. This prestigious prize given by the UW-Madison Graduate School and funded by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation provides Jacobs with \$60,000 to support her current research project, which chronicles changes in film style during the transition to sound.

Congratulations are also in order for Sabine Gruffat, the Hamel Family Professor of Communication Arts, who this fall captured two top prizes at major film and video production competitions. Most recently she won the 2009 Best Experimental Film Award at the Chicago Underground Film Festival for "Jaws." Earlier this fall, Gruffat won the 2009 University Film & Video Association Best Faculty Jury Award in the experimental film category for "Head Lines: Hybrid Film Trilogy."

In this spirit of excellence, we welcome to our faculty Jonathan Gray, whose recent book *Television Entertainment* was selected by *Choice* magazine as a Top Academic Title of the Year for 2008. A highly prolific scholar, Gray's teaching and research explore new media and how they converge with television and film.

We also congratulate David Mortensen, who retired at the end of last year and was awarded professor emeritus status. In

his 34 years on the faculty, he taught countless numbers of students in courses large and small. We wish him a happy and healthy retirement.

In order to extend our recognized tradition of excellence, department faculty, staff, alumni, and students are engaged in a strategic planning exercise. Over Halloween weekend, CAPs (Communication Arts Partners), a new advisory group composed of alumni and friends of the Department, met to brainstorm ideas about how to mobilize resources to best meet the needs of students studying to become excellent communicators in the twenty-first century. The input from CAPs builds upon ideas generated by faculty and staff who this August participated in a strategic planning retreat. Strategic planning discussions already have proved invaluable as we seek to benefit from the resources afforded by the Madison Initiative for Undergraduates by demonstrating the extraordinary student demand for communication courses and envisioning innovative curricula to address those demands.

Crystallizing our mission also enables department advocates such as Jon Sorenson of the UW Foundation and me to clearly convey the goals and needs of Communication Arts. I am delighted that Jon has joined the Comm Arts development team and enjoyed working with him on a recent event to honor Walter Mirisch. Likewise, I am thankful to Toni Drake, also of the UW Foundation, for all of her work on our behalf.

Discussions with faculty, staff, students, and alums have helped us clarify our needs as we struggle to maintain excellence in teaching and research at a time of budgetary duress for the State of Wisconsin and the University. We are always

in need of contributions to the Communication Arts Fund, a flexible fund that supports teaching, faculty and staff retention, equipment updating, outreach and other efforts.

On behalf of my colleagues and our students, I wish to express the Department's gratitude to our donors who have generously supported Communication Arts through the general fund, facilities improvement, internships, and scholarships. Your contributions are crucial to sustaining our tradition of excellence.

On Wisconsin!

Susan Zaeske
Professor and Chair
(BA '89, MA '92, PhD '97)

VilasVoice

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Communication Arts Priority Needs

Greatest need of the department is the
"Communication Arts Fund"

Fellowships for graduate students
Endowed chairs to retain and attract excellent faculty
Funds to update facilities and equipment

continued from page 1

Willenson appearing on *Oprah* and *The Early Show*. Also, Willenson has published a book about Camp Heartland entitled *A Journey of Hope: Inspiring Stories of Courage and Unconditional Love*. And in recognition of his dedicated work, Willenson was awarded the GQ Local Hero of the Year award for 2008 and a 2009 Wisconsin Alumni Association Forward Under 40 Award.

This career path has been an educational experience for Willenson who notes that he has become very aware that some children lead

sad and lonely lives, often as a result of the cruelty and ignorance of others. But just as significant has been the realization that hope can come out of such tragedy. He has seen that hope manifested in the way the children's lives have been transformed. Willenson continues to be enthusiastic about the possibilities of education, and he talks encouragingly about the thousands of students, both high school and college, who have given time to the camp. They "have strong convictions, great compassion and work for a number of causes with a tremendous sense of

purpose," he says. Willenson believes such conviction and passion reflect the UW-Madison education experience, and he continues to be grateful for all the support he has received from the UW-Madison community, including the education he received as a student in the Communication Arts Department and the generous recognition of the Wisconsin Alumni Association. Willenson's remarkable journey is a reminder of the importance of providing social support and that the privilege of education can pave the way to a journey of hope.

COMMUNICATION IN ACTION

Healthcare activist Robert Kraig pushes for reform

As President Obama's new healthcare bill struggles to make its way through Washington's political trenches, an unlikely healthcare activist, Robert Kraig (PhD '99) of Citizen Action in Wisconsin, is burning the midnight oil trying to rally support for much needed healthcare reform, especially at the state level. What makes him an unlikely activist? Well for one, Kraig has a PhD in Rhetoric from the Communication Arts Department, and his first academic book, *Woodrow Wilson and the Lost World of the Oratorical Statesman*, was ranked number one in books on presidential rhetoric in a recent *Wall Street Journal* feature. As such, you would expect to find Kraig working away in the academic rather than the political trenches. But Kraig has always had a passion for activism, and when he found that his graduate work was curtailing his involvement in political activism, he faced a difficult choice — which of his two passions should he focus on. Activism won out.

For the last 10 years, Kraig has been bringing his passion to bear in a range of projects. Most recently he has worked as the program director for Citizen Action, where his unflagging efforts on healthcare reform have been recognized with the 2009 Families USA Consumer Healthcare Advocate of the Year Award. When asked about the relationship between his scholarly work and his activism, Kraig highlighted the importance of rhetorical studies in his political work. As he observes, the problematic spin culture in politics has led to one-sided message campaigns that focus on inconsistent, short-term political gains that undermine the development of long-term political culture. However, a rhetorical sensibility, Kraig argues, leads to more prudent political communication that "can promote social values that at the same time make much greater achievements possible in the long term." Kraig's activism would seem to exemplify such a sensibility.



Robert Kraig

Vital Statistics

For Communication Arts
as of Fall 2009

1930

Earliest degree
year among living
alumni

264

Of our alumni
live abroad

50

States where
Comm Arts alums
reside

55%

Of our alumni are
female

41

Average age of
Comm Arts alumni

3.2%

of all UW alumni

Investments Made with Pride

Chris DuPre, UW Foundation

In his role as associate vice president for institutional advancement at William Paterson University in Wayne, N.J., Stuart Goldstein knows the value of philanthropy in education.

"This is an incredibly challenging time for public higher education," said Goldstein, who earned his BA in Communication Arts in 1980. "Individuals can do so much to boost the institution, whether that's in the form of scholarships, research support or some other area, and it doesn't necessarily take a lot of money to do it."

Goldstein has been a regular annual donor to the Department of Communication Arts for years.

"It's so important for me to help to the greatest extent possible the university that has helped me in my career and my life," he said. "I'm a firm believer in public universities, having graduated from one and working for one now. I think it's incumbent upon us who have had some success thanks to the school to help those who are just starting out on their own journeys and to remember how we got where we are. I only wish I could do more."

Goldstein grew up in Westfield, N.J., and he had an older friend who was a University of Wisconsin–Madison student. A visit to his pal sold him on the university's charms. "I had a phenomenal weekend," he said. "I could tell immediately that it was the type of place I wanted to be."

His major and work in the College of Letters and Science prepared him for work in media and, later, academia. "I've always believed in the value of a liberal arts education," Goldstein said. "I learned to look at the world critically; I learned ways to evaluate information and the media; I learned to write, and I learned how to react to the world.

"The world of media certainly has changed since I was in school, but the basic tools of how to ask the questions to learn what you need to know, those skills never go away, and they have benefitted me greatly in my career," he said.

Since childhood, Goldstein wanted to be a sportswriter. He got the chance just after graduation, working for a bureau covering high school athletics for *The Star-Ledger* in Newark, New Jersey.

"I learned how to be a good, solid reporter," he said. "There's something invigorating about finishing a story on deadline, going home and waking up the next morning to see your byline in the paper. I loved every minute of it."

Eventually, Goldstein decided to build on his skills through graduate school at Penn State University. "I hadn't really considered public relations as a career, but, working at the Public Information Office there, I got a taste of the field and realized it had many great aspects."

Exploring his options, Goldstein landed a position with a mid-sized, full-service New York City public relations agency, G.S. Schwartz, where he spent six years and rose to vice president. "I've been fortunate throughout my career," he said. "I've made job changes because new opportunities were presented to me, not because I was unhappy in any position."

His next move was into the academic realm, when he joined the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. As director of the university's news service, he brought a corporate perspective to the job and changed the way the unit went about its business.

That prepared him well for



Stuart Goldstein

his current position at William Paterson University. He manages marketing and public relations for the institution, one of the nine state colleges and universities in New Jersey.

As a donor, Goldstein chooses to give his gifts unrestricted, letting the Department decide where his investment can best be used.

"It's crucial for the Department to have the flexibility to respond to financial matters as they arise," he said. "I would rather leave it to the educators in the Department to decide how best to use those funds. They're the experts. I think they can decide better than I can."

Gifts such as Goldstein's help the Department in many ways, said Susan Zaeske, chair of the Department. "Gifts to the discretionary fund, like Goldstein's, are absolutely crucial to the Department's ability to provide the most up-to-date technology possible for students in our courses, to support research by faculty and students, and to

maintain connections with our alums," she said. "They are key to maintaining an environment where internationally renowned professors attract top-notch graduate students, creating a rich educational experience for our undergraduates."

"Taken as a whole, gifts to the discretionary fund promote excellence in teaching and research by improving the places and supporting the people in the Department of Communication Arts," she said.

Goldstein's pride in the university is such that "I perk up whenever I hear 'the University of Wisconsin' mentioned somewhere."

"I think so often of my years at Wisconsin, and it's much more than just personal history or nostalgia that connects me," he said. "The experiences I had there, the things I learned there, continue to shape me and my life. The school helped make me the person I am, and I am eternally grateful."

HONORS AND AWARDS

Professor Lea Jacobs, a respected leader in the field of film history and the Director of UW Cinematheque, was honored with a Kellett Mid-Career Award. This prestigious award, given by the Graduate School and funded by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, recognizes faculty members who are five to 20 years past their first promotion to a tenured position. Recipients receive \$60,000 to further their research. Jacobs's research areas include the institutional history of the Hollywood film industry; silent film, concentrating on the relationship between film and popular theater; and American film genres, particularly melodrama and so-called "women's" genres. She also has

an interest in methods of film analysis and how film analysis can be used in the context of historical argumentation.

Professors Mary Beltrán and Louise Mares (MA '90, PhD '94) received tenure this year and have been promoted to associate professor.

Professor Michele Hilmes received a travel grant from the Rockefeller Archive Center to further her research on the "photography in sound." Of particular importance to her research is the Library of Congress Radio Project led by Archibald MacLeish and Alan Lomax which used new sound recording technologies to capture the

voices and music of working class Americans in a new form of audio documentary meant to democratize the airwaves. Her project examines these new techniques of "photography in sound" as WWII brought them to the fore and broadcasters in the U.S. and Great Britain used them to strengthen social and political ties in support of the war effort.



Professor Stephen Lucas addresses the global importance of oral communication in Wuhan, China

Professor Stephen E. Lucas has been named a Distinguished Scholar by the National Communication Association. The award recognizes a lifetime of scholarly achievements in the study of human communication.

Professor Sabine Gruffat's film "Head Lines: Hybrid Film Trilogy" won best experimental film at the University Film and Video

Association conference in New Orleans and her film "Jaws" was awarded 2009 Best Experimental Film at the Chicago Underground Film Festival.

EMERITI/AE NEWS

Professor Tino Balio

At long last, I have completed my book manuscript on the postwar art film market from 1946 to 1973. The manuscript is now in the hands of the University of Wisconsin Press. This project is an outgrowth of an Academy Film Scholar award I received from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 2001.

The UW Press surprised me this year by reprinting my two United Artists histories, which originally were published in 1975 and 1987, respectively. I wrote new introductions to the books and they came out as a two-volume set.

I am completing my second year as president of the University Club, which keeps me in touch with the campus. This year I have also served on the Town Center Planning Committee for the Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery, an innovative research facility that's going up on the west campus with special funding from private, state, and university sources.

Professor David Bordwell

Kristin Thompson (PhD '77) and I went to the Vancouver Film Festival in late September of last year, driving there by a weird western route that took us through Elko, Nevada, where we stopped to shake hands with Obama, who was campaigning there. After getting back from Vancouver, we buckled down to finishing the revisions on the third edition of *Film History* and to start the revisions on *Film Art* (ninth edition!). *Film History* came out in March, and *Film Art* is due to be published in December. In the meantime, we went to the Palm Springs Film Festival in January, and I went to the Hong Kong Film Festival in March, staying into April. After that we visited Ebertfest,

Roger Ebert's festival in Urbana, Illinois. We spent the first half of the summer in Europe, where I gave talks in Copenhagen; we attended Cinema Ritrovato in Bologna; and I went on to do research in Brussels and lecturing in Bruges. Many of our activities are chronicled, more or less, at <http://www.davidbordwell.net>.

Professor Joanne Cantor

The year has been filled with research projects and presentations. During the spring semester, Riitta Martsola, a Finnish clinical psychologist on a Fulbright Fellowship, came to work with me. Our main project has involved analyzing a data set Martsola collected from more than 900 educators and school-based support staff on their perceptions of the impact of the media on the emotional well-being and school performance of children in their care. In addition, I collaborated with faculty members at Cornell, Ohio State, and UW-Madison's School of Journalism on a study of television and children's fears. The article will appear in an upcoming issue of the *Journal of Children and Media*.

This year I also became a member of the National Speaker Association and formed a company called Your Mind on Media, through which I book my presentations. My most popular speeches, "This is Your Mind on Media" and "You've Got (too much) Mail" combine the findings of communication research, information-processing, and neuroscience to help people increase their productivity, boost their creativity, and reduce the stress in their lives.

In addition, I gave invited lectures at two of my alma maters, Cornell and Indiana University. I was surprised and delighted to learn, as I was being introduced at Indiana, that the Department of Telecommunications was awarding me its first Distinguished Alumni Award.

Professor Jonathan Gray: "The Simpsons Guy"

I spent all of my childhood moving (Canada, England, Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong), and so my fascination with popular culture and media is perhaps natural, as they always either formed the base language that my new schoolmates and I already had in common, or they were what I needed to learn in order to establish such a language. Thus, while watching and listening to many of the same things that kids around the world were watching and listening to — anything by Spielberg, *The Cosby Show*, Phil Collins, *The A-Team*, and always lots of *Star Wars* — I also learned to love *The Littlest Hobo*, *Black Adder*, Canto-pop, *Neighbours* (with a u), and any film with Chow Yun-Fat.

I've always loved a good story, and loved diving into them to see how they work. But while doing my BA in English Literature (at UBC in Vancouver), I began to tire of looking only at aesthetics, when I also wanted to talk about politics and ideology, and about how people used these narratives in their daily lives. My first postgraduate degree was in postcolonial literature (at Leeds in the UK), which allowed me to get political, yet I still wasn't allowed to talk about audiences, so it seemed. Frustrated, I left academia and returned to my other love, working with kids and teens.

Geek that I am, though, I missed theory and I missed writing. A friend kept telling me to give media and cultural studies a chance. When finally I broke under pressure, the second media book that I read was by Wisconsin's John Fiske. *Understanding Popular Culture* was exciting — it was political, it was about audiences, it cared about how popular culture was made, and it understood that popular culture can be a versatile language, at times a remarkably slippery and devious one, yes, but also one that lets us do and say things of great importance.

Four years later, I had a PhD in Communications from Goldsmiths College, University of London. I had also fallen in love with a Ken-



Professor Jonathan Gray

can have when it's good, but the challenge is to see (and to teach) how, when, and why it's good and how, when, and why it's not.

My first book, *Watching with The Simpsons: Television, Parody, and Intertextuality*, garnered me the title of "The Simpsons Guy," since I used Homer, Lisa, and company to examine how parody works, and how it complicates many models of media aesthetics, audiences, and effects. From there, I started to examine parody, satire, and comedy more generally, culminating in a recent co-edited collection, *Satire TV: Politics and Comedy in the Post-Network Era*. When watching *The Daily Show*, *The Colbert Report*, *The Simpsons*, and *South Park* becomes homework, one's life is pretty good.

I also became interested in how much a film or television program's meaning is created by those things that surround it — trailers, DVD bonus materials, ad campaigns, fan creations, toys, reviews, licensed videogames, etc. — and this interest led to my third single-authored book, out soon, called *Show Sold Separately: Promos, Spoilers, and Other Media Paratexts*. Along the way, I've also written *Television Entertainment*, and co-edited *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World* and an encyclopedia, *Battleground: The Media*.

Looking to my future here at Madison, my loves for studying how television and film work and how they are merging with other media remain, but I also hope to do more audience research. I've always taught global media, and am now focusing my research on it more, having recently started a project in Malawi (not Maui, as a friend misheard!), examining how global media is consumed and circulated in a country with little official, legalized media trade, yet plenty of Dolly Parton, 50 Cent, Sylvester Stallone, and local reggae making the rounds.

I have tremendous respect for Comm Arts' history in the field, and am humbled to be a part of its present. The program has produced many of the scholars whose work I most admire, and I look forward to the challenge of helping to fashion future generations of the world's best media scholars . . . while enjoying some cheese, bratwurst, and Badger hockey games on the side.

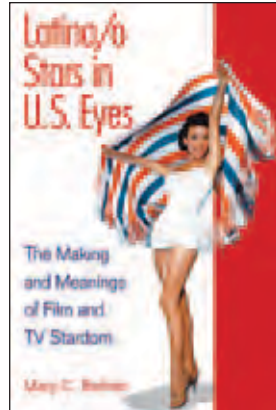
"... the second media book that I read was by Wisconsin's John Fiske. *Understanding Popular Culture* was exciting — it was political, it was about audiences, it cared about how popular culture was made, and it understood that popular culture can be a versatile language ..."

tuckian, so I followed her back to the U. S., where I've been since. I taught first at University of California, Berkeley, and most recently at Fordham University in New York City. All the while, I've tried to teach my students to examine the media with interdisciplinary eyes, as lit scholars and anthropologists, philosophers and artists, historians and sociologists, economists and, of course, as citizens. I still watch a lot and listen to a lot, loving *The Wire*, R.E.M., Akira Kurosawa, *Lost*, Pixar films, the Food Network, *Primeval*, fun summer blockbusters, and excellent trailers, and I recognize the incredible power the media



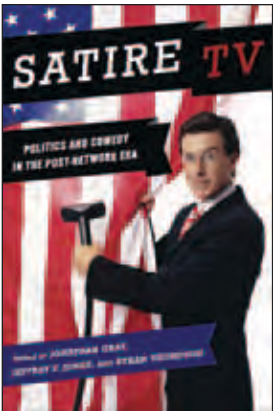
Rob Asen

Invoking the Invisible Hand: Social Security and the Privatization Debate



Mary Beltrán

Latino Stars in U.S. Eyes: The Making and Meanings of Film and TV Stardom



Jonathan Gray

Satire TV: Politics and Comedy in the Post-Network Era (edited with Jeffrey P. Jones and Ethan Thompson)



Bill Brown and Sabine Gruffat

Screening of "The Time Machine" at the Chicago Underground Film Festival



Ben Singer

American Cinema of the 1910s: Themes and Variations (edited with Charlie Keil)



Lyn Van Swol

"Extreme Members and Group Polarization," *Social Influence*

2009 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

Eric Wielochowski,
The Tonight Show with Conan O'Brien

CBS, Programming & Planning

Jason Quist

Charline M. Wackman Awards

Undergraduates

Samantha Moodie
Katherine Johnson
Caitlin Scherer
Kimberly Beauchaine
Jason Forbes
Andrew Knuth

Graduate Students

Michael Braun
Elsa Gassert
Nick Marx
Brad Schauer
Amy Tully

Christopher Neal Heinlein Memorial Scholarship

Allison Bernstein
Jenna Schapiro

Telluride Film Festival Student Symposium

Laura Daniels
Beto McQuade
Dave Resha

Helen K. Herman Award

Emily Acosta
Andrea Comiskey
Liz Ellcessor
Heather Heckman
Michelle Murray
John Powers
Josh Shepperd
Gayathri Sivakumar
Ryan Solomon

Departmental Teaching Award

David Resha

Pearce Award

Lindsay Hogan-Garrison
Paul Hendrickson
Kelly Jakes
Danny Kimball
Amanda McQueen
Wenjie Yan

Risser Award

Pamela Conners
Kyurim Kyoung
Erin Copple Smith

Wickhem Award

Josh Jackson

Frankenburger Award

Erik Hjalmeby

**Congratulations,
student award
winners!**

IN MEMORIUM

Winston L. Brembeck

This past spring we lost a valued member of the Communication Arts community with the passing of Professor Emeritus Winston L. Brembeck. Brembeck, who served on the faculty from 1946 until his retirement in 1984, passed away peacefully on March 7 at the age of 96. He is survived by his wife, Neva.

A WWII veteran, Brembeck earned his masters degree in 1935 and doctorate in 1947 at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, in what was then the Department of Speech and what was by the time he retired the Department of Communication Arts. For many years he directed the speech team, which was

known as the Wisconsin Forensic Union. During his first few years as director, Brembeck coached the team to a Big Ten debate championship and tremendous



Winston L. Brembeck

Courtesy of University of Wisconsin Archives

success in oratory, extemporaneous, and after-dinner speaking. Under his leadership the speech and debate team membership grew rapidly, the budget expanded, and they won numerous tournaments. In addition to his contribution to collegiate speech competition at UW, Brembeck was a founding member of the American Forensic Association, a national organization.

As a scholar, Brembeck helped to establish the field of social influence and was known for his work in rhetoric, debate, critical thinking, and speech as well. His book *Persuasion: A Means of Social Influence*, first published in 1952, proved to be a foundational text in the communication discipline. Not only did this book, which went into multiple editions, lay out

theories of persuasion, but also it was used to teach students methods of strategic communication. Brembeck was a dedicated teacher, who believed that students living in a democracy must see persuasion as a way of life and that communication courses should provide pragmatic skills that prepared them to do so. Along those lines to this day Brembeck is quoted as saying: "To know another's language and not his culture is a very good way to make a fluent fool of one's self."

Up until just a few years ago Winston attended a faculty meeting every year or two, visiting with former colleagues and meeting new professors in order to stay connected with the Department of Communication Arts. He will be missed.

Public Enemies in Wisconsin

Michael Mann's (BS '65) decision to film several scenes of *Public Enemies* in Wisconsin gave Comm Arts majors an opportunity to participate in many aspects of a big screen production.

Justin Daering (BA '08) took on several roles during the production of *Public Enemies*. As a location scout, he helped to evaluate possible locations around Wisconsin for particular scenes within the movie. He spent one day, for example, at Mirror Lake State Park filming test shots of armed gangsters running through the wooded trails. On set, Justin often served as a production assistant locking down traffic. Although keeping spectators at a safe distance from the set could be challenging, Daering was rewarded with up close views of the explosive gunfights. Off set, he warmed up the crowd each evening before Johnny Depp came out

to greet them. Daering also had his turn in front of the camera, serving as an extra for a scene shot in the state capital building. When asked to sum up his experience, Daering said, "For young filmmakers in Wisconsin, having a production of this scale is an incredible opportunity and I hope that such opportunities will be available for future Comm Arts majors."

On a whim, Stacey Nuzbach went to the open call for extras at Monona Terrace. Two months later, she was on her way to Little Bohemia Lodge in northern Wisconsin for a 10 day shoot. Stacey played Marie Conforti, one of the few women seen regularly with the Dillinger gang and said to have been the girlfriend of Homer Van Meter, who was played by Stephen Dorff in the film. "Watching Johnny Depp, Christian Bale, and all the cast and crew work with Mi-

chael Mann to put together such a great story was inspiring," remarked Stacey. The 10-day shoot translated into seconds on the screen, but Stacey did make the final cut.

When Tom Hopfensperger went to work on the project, all the film sets had been dismantled. As an intern with Film Wisconsin, Tom focused on creating a statewide publicity effort for *Public Enemies*. In collaboration with staff from Film Wisconsin, the Department of Tourism, and Public Enemies, he helped to create a plan which included fundraising events centered on the opening of the film in Madison, Milwaukee, and Oshkosh and a



Illustration courtesy of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism.

press tour of historical locations relevant to the gangster era and the film shoot. Tom also worked with the Department of Tourism to create "Gangster Tours," a travel destination package. In the final phase of his internship, Tom produced a series of press releases announcing the premier dates for the film.

DECISION RULE

Professor Asen awarded grant to study school board deliberation

A majority of Americans, including President Obama, continue to call for educational change. But the exact nature of that change, especially in the wake of No Child Left Behind and an emphasis on outcome based learning, remains a contentious

issue. Surprisingly, the crucial role of our school boards, who regularly deliberate and enact educational policy, has been overlooked in this debate. As a result, we lack an understanding of how school boards deploy educational research, and more importantly, how local community members, especially parents, participate in specific policy-making decisions.

Professor Rob Asen together with Deb Gurke (MA '04, PhD '08), governance consultant for the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, have been awarded a prestigious two-year grant from the William T. Grant Foundation to address these issues. As Professor Asen explains, the goal of this particular research project is to better understand

the specific tensions faced by school boards as they attempt to understand, incorporate, and weigh education research in light of the needs and interests of diverse community stakeholders. "No Child Left Behind," he observes, "called for evidence-based decision-making in schools, and placed a premium on testing and like measures of student 'performance.' With this in mind, it's important to know what factors school boards consider in their deliberation and decision-making."

Asen is especially concerned with understanding the role of school boards in sustaining democratic practice, something that is potentially under threat in a changing educational environment. As such, Asen brings a uniquely rhetorical perspective

to this project, and he believes this will provide a much-needed alternative perspective to educational policy research. "Rhetorical scholarship has important things to say about public policy, and this grant gives us a chance to say it. A rhetorical perspective can show how policies are tied to our beliefs about the world, our views of government, the market and society, and our understandings of our connections and commitments to each other."

The significance of this project goes well beyond the issue it will investigate. This sizeable grant, at a time of fiscal crisis for the university, will certainly be important in continuing to raise the profile of our extremely productive Department. Congratulations, Professor Asen.



Professor Rob Asen

STUDENT PROFILE

Samantha DeZur's fashionable internship

"One premiere fashion magazine. Three coveted internships. Do you have what it takes?" asked the email message sent to Comm Arts majors and thousands of college students across the country. Samantha DeZur (BA '09) had it. The senior put her studies aside for a semester, moved to New York City, and became a reality star in Style Network's *Running in Heels*, a docu-series that followed three interns with *Marie Claire* magazine as they worked and lived together for five months. At the end of the internship, one of them was offered a position with the magazine.

The constant eye of the camera documented Samantha's achievements and challenges as an intern. It captured

Samantha on the red carpet among celebrities as she assisted with *Marie Claire*'s welcoming party for the new fashion director Nina Garcia during NYC fashion week. Viewers also saw Samantha as she tackled another prized assignment, a photo shoot in Mexico.

In addition to the accomplishments, the camera caught and caused battles among the interns. Samantha explained, "The pressure of the camera affected our performance at work and inevitably created drama between me and the other two girls, Talita Silva and Ashley Gosik. Not only did the tension rise between us on-camera at work and at our apartment, but off-camera as well. We not only had to live together, but we had

to share one bedroom!"

Throughout the internship, Samantha learned a great deal about the fashion industry and about herself. She remarked, "The most important thing I learned from the whole experience was how important it was to stick up for myself in the professional world. My ideas, opinions, and personal character were challenged everyday and I was forced to defend myself." Although Samantha doubts she will pursue a career with a fashion magazine in the future, she admitted she would consider another on-camera role.

DeZur completed her degree in May and is now a graduate student at Georgetown studying public relations and corporate communications.



Intern Samantha DeZur

Courtesy of The Style Network

FROM CELLULOID TO PIXELS

Film and Theater Center Digitizes Three New Collections

By Gwen Evans,
University Communications

Some 2,000 miles separate Madison and Hollywood's star-making machine, and it's a 1,000-mile journey to New York's Great White Way.

Yet Madison is home to more than 240 collections of film, theater, television and radio history and memorabilia — a treasure trove of cultural history held by the Comm Arts Department's Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research (WCFTF) at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, in cooperation with the Wisconsin Historical Society. The WCFTF will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2010, making it one of the oldest centers of popular culture archival material in the country.

And now, thanks to a special project, three new collections have been sifted, winnowed, digitized and posted to the WCFTF Web site (<http://wcftf.commarts.wisc.edu/>), joining a collection from legendary Hollywood star and producer Kirk Douglas that the center digitized and launched as a pilot effort in fall 2007.

These newly digitized collections include:

- **acclaimed costume designer Edith Head,**
- **early radio pioneers in Madison,** and
- **nine slideshows taken from the center's Stills and Flat Graphics Database, which will soon be searchable online.**

All three offerings are supplemented with short essays and background information researched and written by UW–Madison film and media studies faculty and graduate students. Links to other key electronic resources and published information are also provided, adding extra context and understanding.

Those who delve into the three new online collections can take a fascinating journey. Head, for example, was nominated for 35 Academy Awards for costume design; she took home the Oscar eight times. Head worked on more than 1,000 films during her 44 years as head designer at Paramount and 14 years at Universal, receiving 35 Academy Award nominations along the way. The online collection features some of her personal papers, but is largely watercolor, pencil, and pen-and-ink sketches by Head and her teams of designers. It reveals the thought process and the business behind

designing film costumes.

The Douglas and three new digital collections were made possible through contributions from UW–Madison alumnus Stephen P. Jarchow (BBA'74, MS'76, JD' 76). His support funded four graduate students, Megan Sapnar Ankerson, Liz Ellcessor, Heather Heckman, and Josh Shepperd, as summer fellows to develop the featured collections for the Web.

So what comes next? "Eventually we'll create an online catalog of photos and visual materials in all the collections," says Professor Michele Hilmes, director of WCFTF. "But besides paper, we have film collections and video collections . . . thousands of audio recordings . . . [and] a wonderful set of collections around the Hollywood blacklist."

This is an excerpt from an article that first appeared in the May 6 edition of Wisconsin Week. Please see the Comm Arts Web site for the full story.



Edith Head designed a white gown for Grace Kelly to wear in Alfred Hitchcock's "To Catch a Thief" (1955). The photo from the film shows that the final version of the dress is nearly identical to her signed watercolor sketch.

PROFESSOR DAVID MORTENSEN

Pursuing Life's Passions

Professor David Mortensen retired last December after more than 38 years with the Department. An expert in the field of interpersonal communication, Mortensen taught a variety of courses throughout those years, including courses in communication theory, psychology of communication, conflict resolution, and his signature course, miscommunication. His students found his teaching style insightful, engaging, and intellectually stimulating:

"He is very worldly and wise and there's a lot he can teach us. He's one of the best profs I've ever had because he's totally engaged in the subject matter."

"The best teacher I've ever had!!! Very knowledgeable about the material. He is excited about what he is teaching. This

makes me excited about what I am learning."

"He is caring, compassionate, and very committed to his students."

During his academic career, Professor Mortensen furthered the study of interpersonal communication, particularly in the areas of communicative difficulty, problematic interaction, and conflict. His work cut across academic disciplines and provided penetrating observations about the many ways communication is at the core of one's personhood. Mortensen authored several books, including *Human Conflict* (2005), *Communication Theory* (2007) and *Optimal Human Relations: The Search for a Good Life* (2008).

When he finished his last book, Mortensen said he knew



Professor David Mortensen

he had reached a pinnacle and he wanted to start a new, very different career. His new passion is creating stained glass art. Un-

like most stained glass artists, his pieces do not follow a pre-set pattern. His work is an abstract composition inspired by landscapes and geometric designs, such as Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater, or concepts, like the fountain of youth. Each piece begins as a rough sketch which will be tinkered with for a year until the artist falls in love. After drawing it to scale, Mortensen begins to create his art, spontaneously changing the arrangement, as he imagines the colors exploding in the brilliant afternoon sun or cooling in the gentle evening. Having completed several pieces, Mortensen has begun showing his work to area galleries and shops. Four of his pieces are currently available for purchase at the Century House in Madison.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Go Big Read

In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto

by Michael Pollan was chosen among hundreds of submissions for UW-Madison's first, shared, academically focused reading experience, Go Big Read. Pollan's



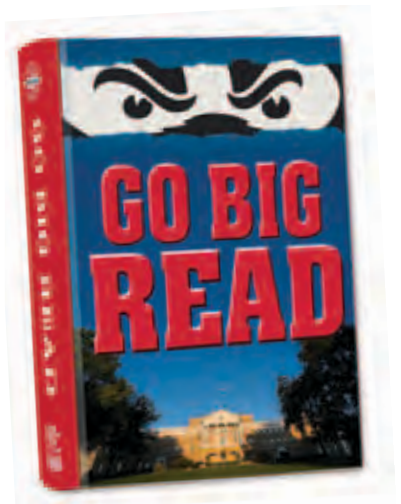
Michael Pollan

thought-provoking, controversial perspective on American food and the Western diet is being explored and grappled with across campus, within the community, and in the classroom. Comm Arts 181, the honors section of speech composition, and Comm Arts 262, argumentation and debate, for example, will examine the text throughout the semester.

The honors section of public speaking is focusing on the themes of food and food politics this fall. Students are reading Pollan's book, attending his lecture, and writing four speeches that deal with subjects such as the social and political uses of food and the history of farming. Instructor Tom Yoshikami's objective this semester is "to give students an opportunity to explore both our society's and

their own relationship to food and food production."

Ryan Solomon also believes this book is an excellent teaching tool for CA 262, Theory and Practice of Argumentation and Debate. Solomon, who is the lecturer for the course, notes, "It is an interesting, controversial example of public argument on an extremely important issue; it unsettles boundaries between public and private, science and culture, expertise and vernacular knowledge." *In Defense of Food* will be discussed throughout the course as they study arguments, consider what constitutes evidence, learn how evidence can be deployed, and generate topics for final class debates. At the end of the semester, Solomon hopes students will recognize that "Pollan's book represents



the inability to completely establish the 'facts' of any issue, and that there will always be a place and a need for argument."

We invite you to read the book and join the discussion. Alumni can participate through the blog and other interactive technologies. Go to the Go Big Read Web Site (www.gobigread.wisc.edu) for additional details.

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Honoring a Legend

The Department of Communication Arts held a special event honoring distinguished alumnus Walter Mirisch (BA '42). Over 100 guests from the Department and campus recognized and learned about Mirisch's many achievements. Chancellor Biddy Martin and Wisconsin Alumni Association Director Paula Bonner were among the campus leaders in attendance.



Professor Susan Zaeske, Chancellor Carolyn “Biddy” Martin, and alum Walter Mirisch at a Comm Arts event honoring Mirisch.

Communication Arts Chair Susan Zaeske and Dean Gary Sandefur welcomed guests and thanked Mr. Mirisch for his support of the Department and the College. Professor Tino Balio then hosted a discussion with Mirisch reviewing his remarkable career.

After graduating from UW-Madison, Mirisch launched a brilliant career as a film producer that eventually spanned 60 years. He produced such popular hits as *The Magnificent Seven*, *Some Like It Hot*, and the *Pink Panther* films. As head of the Mirisch Company, he garnered three Academy Awards for best motion picture in the course of his career (*The Apartment*, *West Side Story*, and *In the Heat of the Night*). Mirisch was awarded the University's Honorary Doctorate in 1989. He recently published his autobiography with UW Press, *I Thought We Were Making Movies*.

Mr. Mirisch has been a long-time friend and supporter of the Communication Arts and UW-Madison. His gifts to Communication Arts made possible the creation of the Mirisch Seminar Room (3155 Vilas Hall), a state-of-the-art teaching and conference room. He has also served for many years on the College of Letters & Science's Board of Visitors and has been active in alumni outreach on the west coast. The reception provided the Department of Communication Arts with an enjoyable opportunity to convey a message of thanks.