



VilasVoice

Winter 2012-13 | For Alumni and Friends of the Department of Communication Arts

Can TV Teach Life Lessons?

Do children learn how to be good people from watching television?

The producers of Educational/Informational (E/I) programming for young children often incorporate life lessons like “tell the truth” and “be tolerant of differences” into their episodes through stories. The interesting question for Professor Louise Mares (MA’90, PhD’94) is how children interpret these stories.

In a typical study, Mares begins by asking pre-schoolers if they think there *is* a lesson and, if so, what it is. She then asks them about specific parts of the story—what happened, what the characters felt, how things turned out.

Mares observes that young viewers often have difficulty getting the intended point. Some take the story very literally: it’s about mice and cats getting along, for example.

Some get exactly the wrong message; for example, they might think the cat/mice disagreement means it’s okay for boys and girls not to get along. Some don’t get any message and answer with generic responses.

“Even when you simplify the task by offering three choices about what the story is trying to teach, they typically pick the wrong one,” Mares says.

Parents can help children understand the message by asking questions and making comments. In particular, if they are watching a show with their child and characters are being nasty to each other, parents should give a sign that they think the behavior is wrong. Mares cites the research of Ohio State Professor Amy Nathanson (PhD’98) that shows watching violence or hostility with kids and *not* commenting is worse than not watching it with them at all—it can seem like adults are okay with it, since they didn’t say anything.



istock

Questions about children’s media use? One useful resource for families is the website Common Sense Media. This nonprofit organization provides useful reviews of shows, films, and games. It also talks about how to negotiate new media issues like letting a child have a cell phone or a Facebook account.

VilasVoice

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Chair of the Department of Communication Arts

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Chair'sVoice

Leading the Digital Revolution

We've been through a revolution—the digital revolution. It started out slowly, but over the last 10

years the field of communication has changed dramatically. And no department in the University has been more affected by the digital revolution than the Department of Communication Arts.

To communicate in our present era is to communicate digitally. That doesn't mean that familiar skills like writing, visual presentation, speech, and audio/video production aren't as important as ever; it means they're accomplished via digital devices, using a new set of tools.

Over the last 10 years, we've learned to use digital media to teach—bringing our laptops into the classroom not only for power point presentations, but to tap the resources of the web. Online video and audio, interactive databases, websites, blogs, social media—all are part of today's classroom instruction. Knowledge lives online now, as well as in books.

And we've learned to teach digital media through new courses that combine research and writing with digital editing, website design, and online distribution. We've initiated new courses, like Comm Arts 155, Introduction to Digital Media Production, which teaches students the technical skills of digital

video, HTML, and CSS along with aesthetics, ethics, and design.

Furthermore, we're teaching our students to think critically about digital media and communication. Our new Digital Studies Certificate encourages students across the University to analyze digital communication from four key perspectives: as art, information, communication, and narrative. We initiated a new course on Video

Game Cultures, to get students to understand the industry, productive practices, and design of the interactive texts new to our era. Other new courses study the use of social media, online media and politics, and digital animation.

At UW–Madison, we're used to leading, not following. To lead in digital media we need your help. Communication Arts, of all departments, needs to stay ahead of the curve—in technology, in expertise, and in student support. University support is limited these days; departments are expected to raise resources on their own.

So, join us! Please consider a gift to the Department to keep our revolution going.

And let us know where you've gone with your Comm Arts degree. Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, and join our LinkedIn group. We look forward to hearing from you.



Professor Michele Hilmes

STAY CONNECTED!



Follow @uwcommarts on Twitter to learn about job and internship opportunities, upcoming departmental events, and what others in the Communication Arts network are up to these days.



Like UW–Madison Department of Communication Arts on Facebook to find ways you can get involved with the Department, see news from undergraduate and graduate students, and keep up-to-date on what's happening with the faculty and the Department.



Join the University of Wisconsin–Madison Communication Arts Group on LinkedIn to connect with other alums and find out who's in your area! Use this tool to network with other alums or connect with current students to help them find internships or jobs in your field.

Why I Give to Communication Arts: Jeff Clarke

Jeff Clarke's (MA'78) career in broadcasting spans 45 years, beginning as a radio DJ in his hometown of Ripon, Wisconsin, in 1965.

Jeff was director of production at Wisconsin Public Television, CEO and general manager of Houston PBS, and president and CEO of Northern California Public Broadcasting before retiring in 2010.

He has won numerous awards, including a local Emmy and five additional local Emmy nominations. He is married to fellow Wisconsin native Gail Harms Clarke, and together they have one daughter, Melissa; a son-in-law, Brandon, who played JV hockey at UW–Madison; and three granddaughters. They all reside in the Houston, Texas, area.



Jeff Clarke

Courtesy of KOED

production while pursuing my graduate degree. UW–Madison also offered access to a rich archive of film, a well-respected faculty, and affordable tuition, with close proximity to my Wisconsin family, too.

VV: How did your Communication Arts degree affect your life?

JC: Graduate study in film was a rewarding experience that allowed me to think outside the box and gain the rewards of a highly successful and enriching career in the broadcasting and media industry. My MA in Communication Arts paved the way for my outstanding success over the next 32 years.

VV: When you had the opportunity to attend graduate school in the 70's, you chose to brave winter in Madison versus the sunny warmth of southern California. What brought you here?

JC: My applications to study film in graduate school at UCLA, USC, and UW–Madison were all successful, but the UW–Madison Communication Arts Department gave me the opportunity to work as a teaching assistant in television

VV: You've been a generous donor to UW–Madison and the Department of Communication Arts for more than a decade. Why do you give?

JC: I began to give back to Communication Arts in the 90s. My annual donations help to keep the Department on the cutting edge of undergraduate and graduate education. This is especially important now, with state funding cuts and the transition to digital communication.

Your Gifts Make a Difference

Your gifts, regardless of size, are essential to sustaining excellence in Communication Arts

Internships: Each year we supervise more than 80 internships, in the Midwest and from coast to coast. Help us build up funds to make this wonderful experience available to students across a range of income levels.

Technology: Your gifts are essential in helping us keep up with the constant demands of evolving technology. Only a small part of the funding for digital innovations comes from the University. The rest comes from you, our donors.

Faculty and staff: To maintain our cutting-edge teaching and research, we need talented and innovative faculty and staff. Department funds allow us to recruit the best job candidates, supplement faculty research, and reward excellence.

Giving Options

By mail: Send a check made payable to the UW Foundation (indicate "Comm Arts Annual Fund") to
University of Wisconsin Foundation
U.S. Bank Lockbox
Box 78807, Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807

Online giving: Make a gift online through the UW Foundation at: <http://commarts.wisc.edu/giving/>

Contact Jon Sorenson at the UW Foundation for all information about giving: 608-262-7211; jon.sorenson@supportuw.org

Thank you for your support!

Comm Arts Welcomes New Faculty

Six young scholars joined the Communication Arts faculty this fall—our largest group of hires ever! We're delighted to add so much talent to our classrooms and to our research productivity. Here's who will be shaping the next generation of Communication Arts graduates:

Professor Maria Belodubrovskaya

Belodubrovskaya's (MA'05, PhD'11) research interests include media history, film under authoritarianism, and propaganda and ideology. Her research on Soviet cinema investigates propaganda cinema under Stalin and the relationship between film producers and the state. Belodubrovskaya teaches Introduction to Film, Russian and Soviet Film, and The Western.

Professor Eric Hoyt

Hoyt added a new freshman class in digital media production to the Department curriculum. His areas of research include the changing value of Hollywood film libraries over time, the impact of copyright laws and contracts on global media industries, and how we can use digital technology to build new research tools. He is the co-director of the Media History Digital Library, a digital collection of classic media periodicals.

Professor Jenell Johnson

Students in Johnson's Rhetoric of Health course explore the intersections between language, culture, biomedical research, and clinical practice. They delve into topics such as how language and culture shape biomedical knowledge, the doctor/patient relationship, and our complex experiences with illness. Johnson's research interests include the rhetoric of science and medicine, disability studies, and bioethics.



First row (L to R): Maria Belodubrovskaya, Sara McKinnon, and Lori Kido Lopez. Second row (L to R): Jenell Johnson, Eric Hoyt, and Jeremy Morris.

Hamel Family Professor Lori Kido Lopez

How are Asian Americans working to improve their representation in entertainment media? How are minority groups using new media in the fight for social justice? These are among the questions Lopez examines in her research. She teaches courses on media representation of minorities, Asian American media activism, and gender and sexuality in the media.

Professor Sara McKinnon

Each semester, McKinnon introduces hundreds of students to the study of communication and human behavior in Communication Arts 260. In her

advanced courses, she explores topics such as social conflict and the rhetoric of globalization and transnationalism. McKinnon's areas of research include the study of political asylum policy and law in the United States.

Professor Jeremy Morris

Morris's courses explore the impact of new media, the digitization of the music industries, and the cultural role of technology patents. His research examines the digitization of cultural commodities and how new media affect the artists and industries that produce the music, books, movies, and other media we encounter in our daily lives.

Badgers Supporting Badgers: Connecting through Internships

In this increasingly competitive economy, students are turning to internships to gain experience in their intended careers before they graduate. For Communication Arts majors, internships provide opportunities to put classroom skills into practice and network with others in the field. This summer, students interned across the country in fields ranging from advertising to production to social media, many of them working side by side with UW–Madison alumni.

Senior Elsa Robins interned in the news division at WCCO-TV, a CBS station in Minneapolis, Minnesota. While there, she participated in a range of activities from shadowing reporters and photojournalists on location to learning the ins and outs of a television news studio: editing footage, reading a teleprompter, fielding tips, and researching stories. Robins also recorded a professional film reel—showcasing her skills as a reporter and anchor—that she’ll use when applying for positions.

While at WCCO, she was lucky enough to work with two UW–Madison alums: executive producer Matthew Liddy (BA’01) and reporter Rachel Slavik (BA’04). Working

with fellow Badgers helped her feel at ease in the unfamiliar, fast-paced environment of the newsroom, and they have remained in contact since her internship ended.

Senior Jane Roberts interned at The Firm Consulting in Madison. As one of six interns for the government relations strategies and public policy consulting firm, Roberts’s responsibilities included maintaining the company’s social media presence and researching government affairs pertaining to client needs. Working under communications director and Badger alum Kelsey Gunderson (BA’11), Roberts assisted with putting together presentations for clients and writing fact sheets on specific issues. According to Roberts, the best part of the experience was sitting in on business meetings with clients, which allowed her to see the planning process from both sides.

Communication Arts interns are consistently rated as excellent by their internship sponsors. Surveys are full of praise: “awesome addition to our team,” “willing to go the extra mile,” “eager to learn,” and “one of the best interns we’ve had.”

Do you want to work with an outstanding Badger? Connect with us on LinkedIn and post your opportunity there for current students to check out. Unsure how LinkedIn works? Complete the Internship Announcement Form on the website commarts.wisc.edu/undergraduate/internships and we’ll help you find an intern who does.



Elsa Robins with WCCO-TV executive producer Matthew Liddy.

Places Our Students Intern

Los Angeles

Authentic Entertainment
Marc Platt Productions
Welk Music Group Inc.
Oxygen Media
LOGO/MTVN
International Creative Management
FEARnet.com
CBS Broadcasting, Inc.
Anderson Group Public Relations
Mandate Pictures

New York

MTV News & Docs
Producer’s Advantage
Sesame Workshop
SiriusXM Radio
Brookside Artist Management
The Colbert Report
The Daily Show with Jon Stewart
Michael Kors
Siren Public Relations, Inc.
NBC Olympics
Saturday Night Live

Chicago

20 West Productions
Red Frog Events
Big Ten Network
WBBM-FM
The Gift Insider

Madison

Madison Children’s Museum
Fiskars Americas
Z-104
Dane101.com
WKOW-TV
Madison’s CW
Rotowire Inc.
Alliant Energy Center
Clean Lakes Alliance
Knupp & Watson & Wallman

From the Dean's Desk

I am delighted to write to you from the College of Letters & Science, the heart of UW–Madison where students learn to make a good living and lead a good life. When I think of the contributions that our departments make to the University, the state, and the world, through research, teaching, and public service, I am reminded why I have spent 30 of my happiest and most rewarding years here.

As you have heard, public higher education is at a crossroads. State support for this university now only comprises 15 percent of our annual budget. I have asked all departments to carefully consider innovations that give us new tools and strategies for ensuring a world-class 21st-century education.

The Department of Communication Arts has truly risen to this

challenge. The Department has developed a new freshman-level class in Digital Media Production that will teach students web design, recording and post-production techniques, digital distribution, and other cutting-edge skills they need to thrive in today's high-tech world. Communication Arts has also taken a leading role in the creation of the newly-launched Digital Studies Certificate Program, which empowers students to deepen their understandings of digital theory and practice.

As always, the Department continues to help forge career connections for their students. Communication Arts faculty supervise more than 80 internships each year for students in a wide range of media and communication enterprises from coast



Sarah Morton

to coast. Alumni and friends should feel proud of the Department's contributions to the student experience at UW–Madison.

I invite you to stay connected to your alma mater. I appreciate your feedback and support and I want to thank you for all that you do.

On, Wisconsin!

Gary Sandefur, Dean
dean@ls.wisc.edu

ALUMNI PROFILE

Alums assist local nonprofit

You may not have heard of Mentoring Positives, a Madison nonprofit that serves delinquent and at-risk youth throughout Dane County.

Kristin Schmidt (BA'11) and Samantha Winkler (BA'11) are out to change that.

The two Communication Arts alums are leading a pro-bono marketing and communications campaign for Mentoring Positives as part of Ad 2 Madison, a local nonprofit professional development organization for marketing and communications professionals and students under age 32. Each year, Ad 2 Madison's Public Service Committee—currently co-chaired by Schmidt and Winkler—works with an area nonprofit to create a professionally-crafted campaign to increase the organization's exposure.

"I don't think people realize how many nonprofit organizations are out



Communication Arts alumni Samantha Winkler, left, and Kristin Schmidt during a recent Ad 2 Madison gathering.

there that do great things every single day," Winkler said. "We hear a lot about larger organizations, but those are the generally the ones who receive

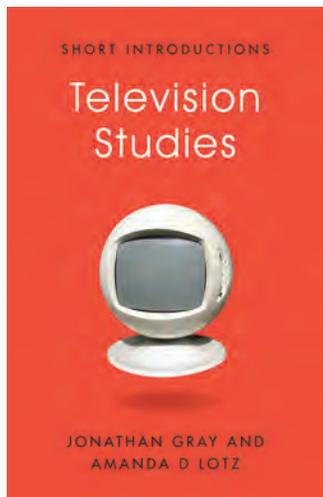
the most donations and can afford to market their cause.

"As members of Ad 2, the Public Service Committee is our way of giving back and helping some of these smaller nonprofits get their name out there and help their cause without using a huge budget."

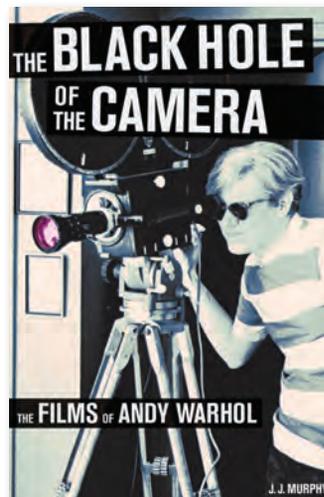
By day, Schmidt is a project coordinator at Madison-based marketing agency Kennedy Communications, while Winkler is the marketing coordinator for area bowling alleys Bowl-A-Vard, Prairie Lanes, and Ten Pin Alley. Through their work with Mentoring Positives, though, their passion for marketing is spilling over into their free time.

"I have volunteered and been involved in community service my entire life," Schmidt said. "This is going to sound cliché, but volunteering and doing community service make me happy."

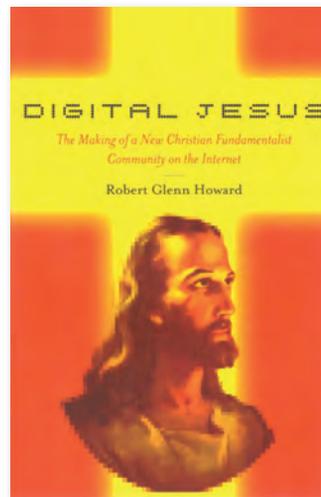
Author's Voices



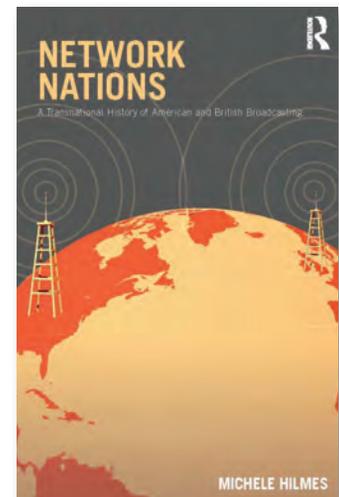
Jonathan Gray
Television Studies (with
Amanda D. Lotz)



J.J. Murphy
*The Black Hole of the Camera:
The Films of Andy Warhol*



Robert Glenn Howard
*Digital Jesus: The Making of a
New Christian Fundamentalist
Community on the Internet*



Michelle Hilmes
*Network Nations: A Transna-
tional History of American and
British Broadcasting*

Class News & Notes

Warren Lada (BA'76) was recently named the Executive Vice President of Operations for Saga Communications, Inc., owner of more than 100 radio and television stations and three state radio networks in the United States.

Lynn J. Bodi (BA'84, JD'87) is co-founder of The Law Center for Children & Families, a Madison law firm. She has served on the Board of Trustees of the American Academy of

Adoption Attorneys. In 2011, she was awarded the U.S. Congressional "Angel in Adoption," which recognizes and honors the good work of individuals who have enriched the lives of children through adoption. Lynn is an owner, officer, and board member of Adoptions of Wisconsin, Inc. She is also a founder, owner, and officer of The Surrogacy Center, LLC.

Cori Abraham (BA'94), née Finkelstein, is currently the Senior Vice President of Development for Oxygen Media, the NBCUniversal cable television channel targeted to young women. Based in Los Angeles, she oversees the development of all of the network's original programming. She has previously worked in television development at Comedy Central, VH1, Bravo, and FX.

Erica Lenard (BA'01) is the Senior Manager of Promotions at The Walt Disney Company's Disney Interactive Media Group. Her work focuses on online advertiser promotions for the

Disney.com and the Disney "Family" suite of websites. She previously worked at MTV.

Franklin Zitter (BA'02) moved to New York City after graduating in May 2003 to pursue a career in television production. He has worked on a number of TV productions, including *The Howard Stern Show* (E!), *The Apprentice* (NBC), and *Celebrity Poker Showdown* (Bravo). Zitter is currently lead producer for the design and animation studio FlickerLab, where he works on a variety of multi-platform projects for the likes of A&E Networks, Bravo, Comedy Central, and Planned Parenthood.

In Memoriam

Professor Don LeDuc (PhD'70) passed away Oct. 3. He served as a faculty member in the Department from 1972 to 1984, pioneering in the study of the new medium of that era, cable television. After taking up the Ronald Reagan Chair of Communication at the University of Alabama from 1985–87, he returned to the state by joining the faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, retiring in 1997.

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The Daily Show with Jon Stewart interns Erin Shannon (BA'12), Corey Dome (BS'12), and Hope Carmichael (BA'12). Read more about Communication Arts internships inside.

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