

APME

Journalism Education Committee Report 1995



**1995 Journalism
Education Committee**

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Introduction

Journalism education has been called everything from an oxymoron to the last best hope for professional ethics. The truth, as usual, lies somewhere between the extremes. One sure thing, though. There's no better way to stir up a passionate discussion than to ask educators and professional journalists what's ahead.

Deanna Sands

Some Things Haven't Changed

By Ham Smith
Washington and Lee University

Eleven years ago the Journalism Education Committee took a long, hard look at journalism schools and generally found them a bit healthier and doing a somewhat better job than critics claimed. This year a new committee decided to see how the 1984 study holds up.

Mostly, it seems, not much has changed.

Perhaps the most profound difficulty in the relationship between newspapers and J-schools is their conflicting perspectives about what journalism education is.

Ask an editor what J-schools do and most will say, "train entry-level reporters and copy editors." Educators bristle at that definition as narrow and inadequate. We are far more than trade schools, they insist. Certainly, they are far more than trade schools for newspapers.

Although about 80 percent of all entry-level daily newspaper jobs are filled by journalism majors, fewer than 20 percent of the students in journalism schools are in the news-editorial sequence, the program that focuses on print journalism. In addition to advertising, public relations and broadcast journalism, J-schools sometimes include speech communication and drama.

Plus, many graduates don't get jobs in journalism, sometimes because of a

poor job market but often because they had always planned to go to law school or learned, during their course of study, that they didn't like journalism or the jobs journalists have. In other words, J-schools have many more constituencies than the smaller newspapers that hire their graduates upon graduation.

Which leads to another conflict: Small newspapers that hire new journalism graduates need employees who can go to work the day they are hired. So they insist on job applicants who have been trained in newspaper skills, who can interview a cop, write a decent news story, snap a picture of the new fire auxiliary officers, bang out a headline quickly and, increasingly, design the paper on a Mac.

Big papers don't care much about the skills a budding journalist gains in college because they hire only people who have developed their journalistic talent at a smaller paper. Rather, they insist on an education, one steeped in political science, English and history. So J-schools are caught between the curricular demands of the small papers that hire their new graduates and the big ones that will hire those graduates five years down the road.

The educators also are not certain that the profession's insistence on a heavy undergraduate dose of the liberal arts and sciences is being met by their universities. Trevor Brown, dean of the School of Journalism at Indiana University, has complained of "cell

division" in arts and sciences departments that's a proliferation of increasingly narrow courses that often focus on how a discipline advances knowledge rather than on fundamentally useful issues such as how governments work or the underlying beliefs that hold a culture together.

This confusing and conflicting environment might partly explain why the deans of 21 of the biggest and best journalism schools bragged about process rather than education when they got together last February at the University of Maryland for a three-day conference titled "Professional Education as Liberal Arts: Building on Strengths." And these were the special strengths identified in their report: "A strong commitment to teaching, personal attention to students, mostly small classes, research quality, racial and ethnic diversity in enrollment, a major commitment to the education of women as professionals, high graduation rates, relatively high out-of-state enrollment (and thus higher tuition payments to the universities), alumni who have a strong identity with the school, relatively low cost to the university per graduate, and the respect of professionals in the field."

Reese Cleghorn, whose College of Journalism at Maryland was host for the conference, likes to distinguish between those programs that remain "addicted to journalism," — professionally oriented schools, and those that focus on communications studies, media criticism and the like — the academically oriented departments. There is such a diversity in the perceived mission of journalism programs across the country, he says, that generalizations are difficult, if not impossible.

"Most of the better ones are better than they were 20 years ago and will be better 20 years from now," he said. He leaves no doubt that they are better because they have retained their professional focus, "have not fuzzed (their) identity."

The most-imperiled programs, Cleghorn believes, are the non-professional programs that have been "swallowed up in the very big colleges." Without a natural base of support from the journalism industry, some have found that their more-traditional liberal arts and sciences colleagues are willing to eviscerate them when a financial crunch comes.

Speaking at the Maryland conference, Bob Giles, editor and publisher of The Detroit News and president of the accrediting council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, raised some serious questions about the nature and value of journalism-school accreditation as it now operates. (See Page 21 for an interview with Giles.)

Although the purpose of accreditation should be "an assurance of quality to students, parents and the public," he said, "it is clear that we can no longer give that assurance." He excepted the 21 schools at the conference from his criticism, but he questioned the quality of all the 77 accredited programs not represented there. "Our own process has contributed to the fact that some accredited programs today are not quality programs and that some who want in are not quality programs, at least by the standards represented" by the schools at the conference.

A number of the deans were less than enthusiastic about Giles' suggestion that the accrediting council identify those schools that exceed the basic standards. The critics included David Rubin of Syracuse, who said, "Schools that don't make the new elite will feel discredited." He said it would be better to start accreditation all over again with higher standards.

Some of accreditation's problems, Giles indicated, lie with the professionals' and the educators' different perspectives on what journalism education should be. Neither universities nor the industry has "embraced journalism education," he said. "Too many universities seem more comfortable with the idea of mass communications as a research-based discipline, while the industry wants graduates who can do journalism but is not willing to make a full commitment of support."

In addition, there is the perspective among some professionals that the worst thing a budding journalist can do is get a journalism education. These folks generally base their position on the assumption that a journalism major takes virtually no courses outside a journalism department that either focuses too narrowly on skills or spends too much time on communications theory.

An excellent recent example of that view is from Jane Pauley, co-anchor of "Dateline NBC," who told a June Freedom Forum Media Studies Center seminar on leadership in journalism education: "I do fear that too many mass communication degree recipients who are five years out (and without a job in journalism) are going to find themselves

not particularly well-educated in a world that demands education."

Such comments infuriate educators, who respond that such positions reflect a complete misunderstanding of what journalism education is and does.

All of this makes it very difficult to assess journalism education. You need standards to judge something by, and journalism schools simply don't have widely accepted goals. Near the end of the Maryland conference, Mike Kautsch of Kansas urged his fellow deans to "begin articulating an ideal and a vision."

So, then, what can a report like this do?

As long as expectations are kept low and narrow, some useful comments can be made. Virtually all journalism educators and professionals would agree that part of a J-school's mission is to prepare entry-level journalists. And, although precision gets difficult here, they would all agree that a journalism graduate needs a healthy dose of both liberal arts and sciences (knowledge and the ability to think critically) and of journalism skills (grammar, syntax, interviewing, story structure, headline writing and the like). With that hesitant definition in mind, how are J-schools doing?

Still too many job seekers

The 1984 report found too many journalism majors for the job market. If anything, the newspaper hiring picture is bleaker now than it was then, as papers continue to tighten operations as newsprint costs skyrocket. Plus, entry-level salaries are woeful.

If journalism schools should take no more students than the industry will hire, then there are still too many journalism majors. The most recent survey, for 1993 graduates, reported a 15 percent unemployment rate six months after graduation. However, only half found jobs in communications — a figure that has held steady since 1988 — and a mere 26.8 percent of the news-editorial graduates found jobs with a newspaper or wire service. "This is a significant decline from the year earlier and represents the lowest percentage since 1988, when it was 20 percentage points higher," said the survey's authors, Lee B. Becker and Gerald M. Kosicki of Ohio State University.

If the law of supply and demand is working, then newspapers clearly are benefiting from a glut of job applicants. The \$350 entry-level median salary in 1993 was the same as in the 1989 survey.

However, the market also seems to be affecting the number of journalism students. The study of 1993 enrollments found 3.7 percent fewer undergraduates than in 1992 and a far more precipitous decline of 8.4 percent among freshmen.

Edward Bassett, director of the University of Washington's School of Communications, believes the glut of majors in print and broadcast journalism is largely over. He finds the growth in communications studies, advertising and public relations.

And, he says, a weakening of standards — if, in fact, that exists — is not entirely the fault of journalism programs. "Students, weaned on regular TV fluff, have not read as much or thought as much about things as

previous generations that might find their way into journalism. There are still quality students in our midst, but the swelling of their numbers has contributed in major ways to a dilution of talent."

But be careful about comparisons, he warns. Technological advances and changing definitions of news mean that "those entering the profession are required to bring much more to the job. No longer is it sufficient to know how to cover the cops, however important that still is for practitioners."

Separate schools of journalism

Although there is near-unanimous agreement among professionals and educators that journalism education should include more coursework in the liberal arts and sciences than in journalism, this does not equate with an interest in having journalism programs be part of a college of liberal arts.

Educators believe they can compete better for limited university resources if they are in a separate college of communications. Bernard S. Redmont, former dean of the Boston University College of Communication, says journalism programs "should absolutely be separate professional schools or colleges of journalism/communication." And Cleghorn believes independent status is among the strengths of the 21 schools that participated in the conference he organized.

Lawrence McConnell, managing editor the Tampa Tribune, echoes that sentiment: "I'm in favor of a stand-alone college of journalism, rather than

programs bobbing corklike in a sea of liberal arts."

McConnell, whose paper led Media General's leap into cyberspace with Tampa Bay Online on Prodigy, is most interested that J-school graduates be prepared for the digital world. "Stand-alone colleges of journalism need to become the crucibles in which the future of our industry is forged," he said. "We're reinventing this so-called 'new media' from scratch here in Tampa, for example. If there is such a thing as journalism school graduates prepared for this field today, I have yet to meet them."

Washington's Bassett also sees a need to educate for rapid technological change. "We need to have our students capable of serving in this expanded world. If we stick to our business and accommodate change, we will become fixtures in higher education rather than fringe operators required to justify themselves on a regular basis." (Coming from Bassett, that's a poignant statement. He recently survived a serious effort at the university to eradicate his program.)

Green eyeshades vs. pointy heads

Educators are more in sympathy than are professionals with academe's demands that journalism faculty have advanced degrees and do research. Bassett, who has outstanding credentials in both the newsroom and the classroom, says, "If a journalist is truly distinguished — apart from spending adulthood in the newsroom — he or she can move up through the academic ranks, especially if publication is serious and continuing." Regardless,

he suggests, the town-gown conflicts are not great at prestigious schools. "The doctorate is required in many of the smaller institutions for prestige purposes."

This doesn't mean he's thrilled with all the communications research he sees: "We suffer as journalism educators because too much incomplete work is being published or presented in the name of academic research."

Slightly better industry support

John Driscoll, who has retired as executive editor of The Boston Globe since writing part of the 1984 APME report, sees "baby steps" of improvement in newspapers' support of journalism education: "I see spotty progress and some slippage."

He's worried that "precious little thought is being given to the kinds of adjustments needed" to deal with the galloping spread of cyberspace. He uses the example of a videotape called "Blown to Bits" that was produced from a 1993 discussion among nine editors and nine educators on the future of journalism. ASNE offered the 50-minute tape at cost, \$10. "It was hoped the tape would be used as a stimulus to discussions about curriculum change on campuses. Alas, only 70 were sold."

But Driscoll also sees a brighter side. Papers are getting into high schools with workshops and job fairs, internships seem more numerous, Investigative Reporters and Editors, the Society of Newspaper Design and other professional organizations are opening

up their workshops to students, who are turning out in droves.

He makes two suggestions: Papers can offer used computer workstations to local J-schools, and the professionals should seek more contact with faculty and students.

"Long-standing lack of communication between professionals and educators is harmful to both groups," Driscoll says. "To quote Maya Angelou, 'We are more alike than we are unlike.'"

Both the Tampa Tribune's McConnell and ex-BU dean Redmont agree. Said Redmont: "Newspapers are doing more than they did 10 years ago, but not nearly enough. More scholarships and internships are needed, and more exchanges."

Everette Dennis also sees more bright than dark spots in the relations between journalism schools and newspapers. "Academics complain that financial support is missing. That's true, but other kinds of support and collaboration have greatly improved."

And he proudly points to the work of his organization, the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, in "connecting academics and professionals in the pursuit of the advanced study of media and technological change."

"There is evidence that this effort, along with activities by other foundations, centers and programs, has had an impact on teaching and research in the academy and has engendered better mutual understanding by media professionals and academics," Dennis said.

A word on ethics

"The ethical undergirding of today's journalists is poor and getting weaker. I see that with my staff of novice reporters and experienced editors. We see it in the O.J. Simpson coverage on the grandest scale, but more importantly we see it in the ethical and legal entanglements reported in E&P, Quill, AJR and the American Editor.

"After polling nine reporters and editors who graduated from college within the last 5-6 years, I found only an intern and a graduate of Syracuse who said they were required to take specific ethical/legal courses.

"We are already developing Internet experts. But the technical skill is not enough. We have to teach them how to manage that information well."

— John X. Miller, executive editor of The Reporter in Lansdale, Pa.

Findings of the 1984 report, which remain substantially accurate today

→ More journalism majors:

The number of journalism students had dramatically increased. Some editors believed there ought to be fewer, better J-school graduates. Educators responded with two points. First, fewer than 20 percent of journalism enrollments were in the news-editorial sequence, which is for students who want to be print journalists. Second, unlike law school or medical school, journalism is not solely a pre-professional program, and a number of students choose journalism as a good liberal arts major instead of history or psychology.



Solution: Put journalism programs in a separate school, apart from the liberal arts and sciences. This makes it easy to adopt entrance standards to limit numbers and ensure quality.

→ Tight money:

Journalism school budgets had not kept pace. The reasons were both simple and complicated. Many states were tightening their higher-education budgets, and universities find it very difficult to shift resources — especially faculty members — as quickly as students change their preferences for majors. Also, universities find journalism an appealing major because journalism students are required to take three-fourths of their courses outside the department, thus boosting head counts in the traditional liberal arts departments, where enrollments have been declining.



Solution: Again, create a separate journalism school. Raising funds and competing for university funds are easier and more effective.

→ Poor skills:

Journalism graduates probably can't spell or write as well as they used to. Several factors were involved. First, because a greater percentage of high school graduates were going to college, the general ability of college students had declined. Second, in some programs poorly qualified faculty members and graduate students were teaching the "skills" courses: reporting and editing. Third, faculty with doctorates and strong research interests were emphasizing theory courses over skills courses. Fourth, programs got caught between the accrediting council's 30-credit limit in journalism courses and the desire to add technological skills such as computer-assisted reporting and pagination. As a result, less time was spent on such basic skills as grammar and headline writing.



Solution: Get tougher. Give admission and graduation competency tests, require internships, establish solid academic requirements.

→ Tenure troubles:

Despite a widespread presumption that journalism teachers can't get tenure without a doctorate, many universities grant tenure to former professionals who continue to be active in their field. In fact, the better the schools, the more likely someone without a doctorate can be tenured. Educators emphasized that journalism schools should not be ivy-covered retirement homes for burned-out editors and reporters and that journalism faculty should be held to the same productivity standards as non-Ph.D. artists, musicians and dramatists.



Solution: Universities should adopt the Statement on Tenure and Promotion for Programs in Journalism and Mass Communication supported by the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, the executive board of the National Conference of Editorial Writers and the Radio and Television News Directors Association. Essentially, the statement says that publications in newspapers, magazines and professional journals should carry the same weight in determining tenure as publications in juried academic journals; it also emphasizes the value of professional contact through seminars, workshops and work in the industry. Media advisory councils can help, too.

→ Irrelevant research:

Much of the research done by journalism faculty is of little or no use to practicing professionals. This is partly because many journalism faculty members' research interests are in other areas, such as history, law, popular culture, media criticism and the like. Also, academic research is expected to break new theoretical ground; young faculty members don't get published or tenured by grinding out yet another readability study showing that readers prefer shorter sentences and less-technical words. But a good deal of newspaper-oriented research is useful to professionals, and it's written so they can understand it. The *Newspaper Research Journal* is a good example, and so are studies supported or financed by ASNE, newspaper groups and individual papers.



Solution: Faculty members should write for professional as well as academic audiences. Newspapers and professional associations can finance research in topics that interest them. ASNE, APME and NCEW can include programs on relevant research in their annual conventions.

Suggestions for newspapers

The 1984 report also listed a number of ways that newspapers could support journalism education, and they're still correct today. They include:

- ◆ Set up one-day seminars in cooperation with a journalism program on topics of interest to the staff, such as ethics, business trends, the welfare system and the like.
- ◆ Get involved in university job placement programs.
- ◆ Send staff members back to school for short mid-career programs.
- ◆ Participate in editor-in-residence programs.
- ◆ Become active in the journalism program by working with student newspapers, hosting SPJ meetings, appearing in classes, raising money for equipment, etc.

We Asked and They Answered

By Paul LaRocque
Writing Coach

In its extensive look at journalism schools 11 years ago, the 1984 APME Journalism Education Committee offered solutions to a list of problems posed by newspaper professionals and educators.

The 1995 Journalism Education Committee took that list and asked journalism schools what they were doing in the areas suggested for improvement in the 1984 report. The committee mailed questionnaires to 202 journalism schools, both accredited and non-accredited, and received 128 responses — a 63 percent return.

Sixty-nine percent of the universities that responded had enrollments of more than 10,000 students, 21 percent were in the 5,000 to 10,000 range and 10 percent had fewer than 5,000 students.

In addition to asking questions concerning the 1984 recommendations, the survey asked educators questions dealing with the journalism school-professional relationship. Here's a summary of those responses:

→ Do journalism faculty attend APME and other professional journalism conventions?

- Always 20%
- Sometimes 70%
- Never 10%

→ Do newspaper professionals teach journalism classes or serve as guest lecturers?

- Always 57%
- Sometimes 42%
- Never 1%

→ Are newspaper professionals invited to participate in journalism department functions and to teach courses?

- Always 67%
- Sometimes 32%
- Never 1%

→ Are newspaper professionals invited to participate in journalism program functions such as honor dinners, discussions and Society of Professional Journalists meetings?

- Always 48%
- Sometimes 52%

The following is a comparison of the 1984 suggestions and what journalism schools said they were now doing:

Suggestion: Journalism programs should break away from liberal arts colleges and become separate professional schools.

- 35 schools are separate
- 10 schools breaking away since 1985
- 92 schools are part of another school

Suggestion: Universities should consider faculty writings for popular media as well as for scholarly journals in making decisions on journalism faculty tenure and promotion.

Media	■ Always	41%
	■ Sometimes	47%
	■ Never	12%

Journals	■ Always	56%
	■ Sometimes	37%
	■ Never	7%

Suggestion: Universities should consider professional experience as well as scholarship in hiring, promoting and granting tenure.

- Always 52%
- Sometimes 39%
- Never 9%

Suggestion: Media advisory councils of prominent journalists should work with journalism departments.

- Always 42%
- Sometimes 37%
- Never 21%

Suggestion: Journalism departments should hire people who are both intellectually curious and skilled in professional journalism.

- Always 76%
- Sometimes 24%

Suggestion: Faculty members, not just graduate students, should teach skills courses.

- Always 94%
- Sometimes 6%

Suggestion: Students must pass a skills test before being admitted as a journalism major.

- Yes 36%
- No 64%

Suggestion: Students must pass a competency exam before graduation.

- Yes 24%
- No 76%

Suggestion: Journalism faculty should conduct continuing education programs for professionals.

- Always 18%
- Sometimes 62%
- Never 20%

Suggestion: Departments should encourage faculty to do research that is meaningful to professional journalism.

- Always 69%
- Sometimes 28%
- Never 3%

Suggestion: Departments should stress to the university administration the importance of having faculty with professional journalism experience.

- Always 82%
- Sometimes 15%
- Never 3%

Suggestion: Journalism schools should have adequate budgets.

- Always 13%
- Sometimes 58%
- Never 28%

Suggestion: Media companies should provide funding for journalism department equipment.

- Always 4%
- Sometimes 69%
- Never 27%

Suggestion: Media companies should help departments obtain funding from the university.

- Always 2%
- Sometimes 56%
- Never 41%

Suggestion: Journalism departments should teach a separate ethics course.

- Do teach course 67%
- Do not teach course 33%

It's Time to Take Notice of Accreditation

By George Kennedy
Columbia Missourian and University of Missouri

For most editors most of the time, journalism education isn't at the top of the priority lists. That space is more likely to be occupied by shrinking newsholes, tightening budgets or the perpetual puzzle of what to put on tomorrow's front page that somebody might actually want to read.

Well, it's time to pay attention. Accreditation, the system of quality control for journalism education that you've come to count on, is undergoing the most intense review in at least a decade. The outcome could be clearer identification of those programs that do a superior job of preparing your future staffers. Or, it could be a widening of the gap between industry and academy.

Now, while the review is in progress and before decisions are reached, is when editors can have a voice in the discussion. That's important for journalism programs, which are under scrutiny or under the ax on campuses from Arizona to Washington. It's also important for newsrooms, which rely on those programs for close to 80 percent of new hires.

Here's the background.

Journalism accreditation seemed on shaky ground a few years ago, when several major schools debated withdrawal from the voluntary system of standard-setting. Wisconsin, after being criticized in a review, did pull out. But now accreditation is growing as never before. Six new programs were

accredited in 1995, bringing the total accredited to 103. (Twelve years ago, there were 81 accredited programs.) Fifteen to 20 more will seek accreditation in the next five years.

Some critics and some of accreditation's strongest supporters say this growth has stretched the system so far that it's no longer clear what, if anything, accreditation really means.

It's easier, they say, to see the differences than the similarities when you compare the newly accredited Mass Communications Program at Texas Women's University, with only three full-time faculty, to the 2,000-student School of Communications at the University of Texas. How, they ask, can prospective students or prospective employers compare Northeast Louisiana University's newly accredited program to Northwestern's Medill School?

The question is complicated by the internal politics and budget pressures at many universities that often house journalism in units that include film or theater or speech. Then there's the traditional tension between theory and practice, between the academy's emphasis on research and the industry's insistence on training for jobs.

The search for answers is taking at least two directions. One is an effort by about two dozen major schools to build cooperation and communication on common ground. Twenty-three deans from such schools as Missouri, North

Carolina, Indiana and Columbia met in February at the University of Maryland. Two historically black schools, Howard and Florida A&M, were included.

Maryland Dean Reese Cleghorn, one of the organizers, describes the "deans roundtable" as an opportunity for leaders of professionally oriented programs to discuss shared problems and prospects. He and other participants insist that it was not a gathering of self-selected elite.

The report of the session published in the May issue of *American Journalism Review* summarized the subjects of discussion as "lasting values, a changing professional world and a need for further definition of purpose and content."

Florida Dean Terry Hynes, who attended, sees one of the lasting values as "our missions as professional programs tied to the profession for which we prepare students." Her cross-state colleague, Florida A&M Dean Robert Ruggles, says that when he hears other educators' continuing criticism of close ties to industry, "I want to scream."

Roundtable participants' "shared commitment to professional education," in the words of Arizona State's Doug Anderson, produced an agreement to gather again in September in Chicago, when the accrediting council also is to meet.

After that the 23 may decide to continue their get-togethers formally or otherwise. Even if they don't, Cleghorn says, "The meeting itself was a statement." The statement is that schools with high professional

standards and strong ties to the industry intend to maintain those standards and to thrive even in what he calls "a quivering field."

Certain to be on the agenda of both the deans and the accreditors is another approach to greater clarity in assessing educational quality.

This one is being conducted within the accrediting council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, the governing board of accrediting. In September 1994, Council President Bob Giles persuaded the council to study methods for recognizing merit that exceeds the minimum standards all accredited programs must meet.

The council's report of that meeting notes that the proposal was greeted "with a mixture of enthusiasm and caution." Much of the enthusiasm came from Giles' fellow professionals on the council. Much of the caution came from the educators.

Speaking to the deans' roundtable, Giles explained his vision of the need:

"Journalism education still seems to fall uncomfortably between universities and the industry. Neither has embraced journalism education. Too many universities seem more comfortable with the idea of mass communications as a research-based discipline, while the industry wants graduates who can do journalism, but is not willing to make a full commitment of support.

"In this environment, the accrediting council is struggling to preserve the ideal at the core of its mission: Accreditation is an assurance of quality to students, parents and the public.

"As the number of accredited programs has increased ... it is clear that we can no longer give that assurance.

"At best, there is an unevenness of journalism programs across the country.

"Also uneven is the work of the council itself. As it has grown in size, the quality of preparedness, the interest in quality as the core of accreditation, and the willingness of council members to work at their accrediting responsibilities is uneven."

His goal, he said, is this: "I believe we can change the wider perception and narrower reality that accreditation stands only for a base level of achievement. I believe we can re-establish the ideals of excellence and quality as part of accreditation."

At first, supporters of recognizing excellence spoke of a "two-tier system." One supporter likened the idea to the NCAA divisions that govern athletic competition. Schools with greater resources would constitute a sort of journalism Division I. Smaller or less-ambitious schools would be a Division II.

That approach immediately came under criticism from educators who saw it as producing a split between the haves and have-nots (or the haves and have-mores.) Critics such as Ruggles feared discrimination against smaller programs, including those at historically black schools.

In an interview, he argued, "You're either accredited or you're not. Degrees of accreditation make no sense." Small schools with well-focused programs can

provide excellent overall education and solid professional training, he points out.

Now the rhetoric, if not the goal, has changed. Giles and other supporters of the idea now speak of searching for ways to recognize exceptional merit within programs. "Two-tier" is no longer the term of choice.

Ruggles and other original critics are more comfortable. Highlighting the strengths of programs would be a consumer aid to students, parents and employers, he says.

Jerry Ceppos of the San Jose Mercury News, APME's representative on the accrediting council, is enthusiastic. All editors should be, he says.

The Giles proposal, he says, can provide an answer to "the perennial question: How can we do more than set minimum standards?"

"The accrediting process does a good job of verifying minimum standards. This takes accreditation to a new level."

To those concerned that distinction would only be found in the big schools, Ceppos offers the example of a school he visited as part of a review team last year. He was "blown away," he recalls, by the strength of the program's service to its state. Such a level of service could make the program a candidate for special recognition.

Definitions of distinction have not been agreed on. Nor have the more basic questions of whether and how to proceed with such a significant change

from the tradition of setting and measuring minimum standards.

Some prominent educators, such as Ruggles and Hynes, seem to agree with Arizona State's Anderson, who says, "In theory, it's a good idea. I think it is possible to look for excellence within the standards."

Some, such as Cleghorn, are noncommittal. Though he says, "I'm not sure what I think" about the Giles proposal, he adds, "It's a service that the question is raised."

The great and growing variety in program organizations and goals makes consistent assessment almost impossible, he says. The problem is not just the quality of programs but their very nature.

All that leads some skeptics to question the wisdom of the Giles approach. Dean Mills, dean at Missouri, thinks those who favor distinctions among accredited programs expect too much of the accreditation system.

It's hard enough, Mills says, for a visiting team to assess in a two-day visit whether a school or department meets minimum requirements of each of the 12 standards.

Attempting to make finer distinctions "is to be inviting pain and anguish and not to shed much light on overall quality. All of us ultimately have idiosyncratic views of what constitutes excellence in journalism education."

Mills concedes the limitations of the present system. "There is a danger that the seal of accreditation becomes in the eyes of parents and potential students a seal of approval." All 103 accredited programs are not equal, he agrees.

But instead of attempting to certify excellence, accreditors should just make clear that they are certifying minimum standards of quality, he recommends.

Ceppos disagrees. A system that can set minimum standards can also set higher marks, he says.

And, speaking from an editor's perspective, he says that the Giles approach "will help distinguish the schools that care about print journalism."

His conclusion: "Any time you can get journalism education to raise standards, that's a good thing."

So what should you do?

Make your views known to Ceppos or to Giles, editor and publisher of The Detroit News, who is the ASNE representative on the accrediting council.

Beyond that, the educators interviewed for this report had the same advice for editors:

- ◆ Get to know the journalism programs in your area.
- ◆ Support the good ones.

Cleghorn adds, "And increase starting salaries."

ACEJMC Accrediting Standards

The accrediting council also is exploring two other important, though less controversial, areas.

For the first time in a decade, the 12 standards used for assessing programs are being reviewed. The review committee is headed by Doug Anderson of Arizona State University and includes both APME's Jerry Ceppos and ASNE's Bob Giles.

Over the next year, revisions will be drafted. A final draft is scheduled to be presented at the council's meeting in September 1996. Any changes would take effect in fall 1997.

Anderson says that, so far, only Standards 3 (curriculum) and 12 (minority and female representation) have drawn much comment. Even those are unlikely to be changed significantly.

Susanne Shaw, executive director of the council, says she expects fine-tuning rather than an overhaul of the standards.

Another committee is studying the methods used to review professional master's degree programs. The goal, Shaw says, is to improve the quality of those reviews, which now are likely to be tag-ons to the reviews of undergraduate programs.

Editors with views on either of those issues should contact Ceppos at the San Jose Mercury News.

ACEJMC Accrediting Standards

The accrediting council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication reviews journalism and mass communication units that wish to be considered for accreditation. Here are ACEJMC's 12 standards:

1. The chief administrative officer of the unit and administrative associates must provide intellectual, academic, and professional leadership to advance the cause of the unit — both within the university and to outside constituencies. Faculty control over basic educational policy must be demonstrated. The chief administrative officer of the unit must have the expressed confidence of the faculty and of the higher administration.
2. The budget must be flexible and adequate to provide a high level of quality in administration, instruction, facilities, equipment, support services, and other operating expenses for each area of study.
3. The unit's curriculum must provide students with a solid opportunity to learn not only why and how to communicate but also what to communicate. This requirement calls for a reasonable balance between journalism and mass communications courses and courses in other disciplines, primarily in the liberal arts and sciences. Balance should also be provided between instruction in practical skills and in the more philosophical aspects of journalism and mass communications.
4. Student records must be accurate and up to date and cover all major aspects of each student's education. A systematic and effective advising system must be maintained.
5. High standards in instruction must be maintained by every means available, and a regular program of evaluation must be undertaken for all teaching staff.
6. Faculty must be academically and professionally qualified for their responsibilities, and full-time faculty must have primary responsibility for teaching, research and service.
7. Quality experience in journalism and mass communications should be encouraged. Academic credit may be awarded only for carefully monitored and supervised experience in fields related to journalism and mass communications. Academic credit may be awarded for experience in fields related to journalism and mass communications but should not exceed one semester course (or its equivalent) if the internship is away from the institution and, for the most part, supervised by media professionals rather than academics. Schools may have up to two semester courses (or their equivalent) at an appropriate professional organization where the institution can show ongoing and extensive dual supervision by the institution's faculty and professionals. Schools may have up to three semester courses (or their equivalent) at a professional media outlet owned and operated by the school where full-time faculty are in charge and where the primary function of the media is to instruct students.
8. The unit must have facilities and equipment in sufficient quantity and quality to carry out its stated educational objectives.
9. Units must have specific policies and take administrative actions to require faculty scholarship, research, and professional activities that go beyond the teaching function.
10. Unit records must indicate that the unit is providing a coherent, creative, state-of-the-art educational service to both the general public and to the journalism and mass communications industry. Regular evaluation of these programs must be undertaken.
11. A unit must assess regularly the experience of its graduates who seek work in journalism and mass communications and incorporate that assessment into its program evaluation process.
12. Organized efforts must be made to recruit, advise, and retain minority students and minority and female faculty members and to include in the curriculum information for all students about contributions to journalism and mass communications made by minority and female practitioners from early America to the present.

Q/A With Bob Giles

By Berl Schwartz
Michigan State University

What's eating Bob Giles?

The editor and publisher of The Detroit News, wearing his hat as president of the accrediting council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, shook up the deans of some of the nation's leading journalism schools at a conference in February. In what the American Journalism Review called an extraordinary statement, Giles said the accrediting council can no longer give students, parents and the public an "assurance of quality" about accredited schools. Giles also said the council will consider giving special recognition to accredited schools that exceed the council's standards — an idea participants said would create the disturbing impression that the rest of the schools are less accredited.

Berl Schwartz, general manager of The State News at Michigan State University, interviewed Giles this summer in Detroit. Here are excerpts from their discussion:

Q: What did you mean when you said that some of the accredited journalism programs are not quality programs?

A. We're getting a significant increase in the number of programs that want to be accredited. Among these are some schools that are under pressure in their own states from their legislatures or their boards of regents to become accredited as part of the process of whether they're going to survive. We all recognize the budget cutting and downsizing that's going on. So, we've had applications from schools that I would say met the

standards most minimally. So there now becomes more of a difference between some of the schools at one end of the spectrum and the distinguished schools at the other end. As that distance becomes more established, I think you have a gap in quality. That is important because, after all, as an accrediting agency we represent to our consumers, the public, that these are quality programs.

Q: The reaction from some people was that you were going to create a two-tier system and some schools would be more accredited than others. Is that correct?

A: In our pursuit of a fair method of recognizing excellence we do not want to create a perception of haves and have-nots. We believe there is a way to do it so that any school could aspire and have a realistic chance to (have) components of its programs be recognized as being distinguished.

I think we probably would want to stop short of concluding that a particular program in its totality is distinguished. Perhaps the way to identify it would be to say that University X is accredited with distinction in its news-editorial

sequence, budget and diversity. That would serve our purposes of conveying information to the public about schools that would be helpful. Some students and some parents are looking for schools that have a strength in advertising or public relations or broadcasting, and they can't tell from accreditation information that's currently available which are the top schools in a particular discipline. This might help.

Q: Sounds like basic consumer fare — truth in accreditation.

A: It's just wrong for people to assume this is going to enable the 20 biggest state university programs, which have more resources, more faculty, more money, to become distinguished. We want to create it so a Howard

or Texas Women's or a Washington and Lee or Central Michigan can have components of their programs be truly outstanding and be recognized as such.

Q: What have you seen that makes you think that some accredited schools are achieving the quality you would like?

A: One is in the area of research. The results on research in some schools are very marginal. Too much research is being done simply to qualify for tenure. It's written in language that's arcanelly academic. It has little value to either students or the profession, and it's not making an impact. I think I can speak for the council here in saying that one dimension of journalism education

that would bring a lot more visibility into the industry as well as within academic circles is to have research that is making a contribution, that is being sought by the industry, that is being utilized, that is helping find ways to teach students better, and have it presented in a way that enhances its utilitarian value.

One of the things ... we hope accreditation can influence a change

in is the trend toward academic research and Ph.D.s as the essential hiring qualifications. Over time, that's going to dilute the value of professional experience. Students won't be learning from seasoned professionals, they'll be learning from academics who are doing this because it is part of their teaching load. This is not to demean Ph.D.s in any way. I know that on a number of faculties, there are some very bright new Ph.D.s who have extensive experience. One of the best

examples I can cite for you is the University of Oregon. They have a young faculty full of Ph.D.s who come from great professional backgrounds, and that's the best of both worlds. I think there needs to be a greater recognition of the value of a distinguished professional career that can become useful in the classroom, and we need to find ways to make sure that there are dual-track tenure programs that are legitimized in the academic eyes of the university.

Q: I've heard the complaint, though, that this 30-credit limit on journalism courses (imposed by the accrediting council) makes it very difficult at times for the faculties to get across what they think students need. Does it interfere?

A: I think you have to make the distinction between the courses that are truly related to the main purpose of the unit, which are skills courses and media law, media ethics, media history. And then you have to look at the courses that they have added to the unit that have a liberal arts foundation that they put a particular media spin on. I don't think those are essential courses. I think students ought to be studying in the mainstream of the university from the distinguished people in all of the academic departments. I think they ought to be using their liberal arts opportunity not to take simply the core courses but to develop a rigorous base in some specialty areas because journalists today have to know a hell of a lot about some very complicated things. I think there is more opportunity for the journalism major who has a solid grounding in writing and editing and information gathering but who is a double major in economics or environmental

science or whatever. I mean they are positioned to move very quickly into difficult reporting specialties, and we are trying to cover a world in which we're often overmatched by our sources in terms of what we know. That's one of the ways the media got in trouble with its audience in terms of credibility. We got conned over the last 10 years by a lot of special interest groups that are a lot smarter than we are. We bought their stories. We ran the scare stories on Page 1, you know, we misread the signs or let people misread the signs for us. I think part of journalism education is to prepare people to be smarter than that, and that has to be done outside of the unit. So it may be a tight squeeze to get in everything you want in 30 hours or 36 hours, depending on what campus you're on, but I think that the liberal arts component is a lot more critical today, and that's one of the great things about the accredited balance — basically 75 percent liberal arts, 25

percent journalism. And I think that one of the critical roles that ought to have a greater emphasis in the accrediting process is the role of the faculty as advisers and how they counsel kids on what to do with that

liberal arts opportunity — how to make it rigorous, how to make it work for your journalism career, not simply to meet the graduation requirements of your university.

Q: Do you see some of the accredited schools doing that?

A: It's a mixed bag. If we look at the accrediting standards, it's not defined in a way that would encourage or make that a special value, that kind of advising. Advising for a lot of faculty is fourth or fifth priority. They have teaching, they've got their graduate assistants, they've got their own research and writing to do, they've got the academic committees or public

service to do, and maybe they have a minimal number of office hours for the kids, who are coming in and whining about their scores, or what have you. It may be that not enough time or effort is put into training teachers on how to advise about this liberal arts component. This is an area you can define some language of excellence that can make a difference.

Q: Why do you think the deans were stunned by your comments?

A: I don't know. I didn't think too much about it. I just told them what

was on my mind and if they wanted to be set back, well....

Q: Do you think they are threatened?

A: It depends on what kind of spin you want to put on this process. If it is going to create haves and have-nots, a two-tier system, sure it's threatening to everybody. But that's not the purpose. We don't want a list of the 20 top accredited schools to

show up in Newsweek magazine. What we want is an opportunity for every school to use the accrediting standards to elevate the quality of the programs and make their program more effective for the students.

Research Means Good Business at University of Alabama

By Carol Nunnelley
The Birmingham News

When Birmingham's Southern Progress Corp. needs research for Southern Living and Cooking Light magazines, it turns to the journalism school at the University of Alabama.

Edward Mullins, professor of journalism and dean of UA's College of Communication, said the Time Warner Inc. division is the biggest customer of his school's Institute for Communication Research. Overall, clients pay that program about \$500,000 a year for surveys, content analyses, lab experiments and other research, he said.

This kind of business relationship between journalism educators and communications companies is rare, Mullins said.

After watching the idea operate at UA for two decades, Mullins sees a lot of pluses for journalism schools and their customers — and a few hazards as well.

For customers, the institute offers educators' expertise and well-equipped facilities.

Mullins said the institute grew with the help of equipment gifts worth about \$2 million and the creation of a \$1.5 million endowed chair. Jennings Bryant now holds the Reagan Chair of Broadcasting and is director of the institute.

Bill Gonzenbach, another faculty member, is the part-time associate director of the institute. Five research assistants also are a part of the core staff.

Business comes to the institute two ways.

UA faculty members and other researchers with their own businesses can pay the institute to use its facilities. For example, professors with a polling business pay to use the computers and phones in the Survey Research Center.

Most income, however, comes from contracts between businesses and the institute, and other UA faculty members and students join the core staff for particular projects.

The institute has done content audits for newspapers, for example, and an evaluation of television language instruction for the Center for Educational Television.

For UA's journalism educators, the institute underwrites research that's useful for them as well as the business customers, Mullins said. It's a built-in way to keep UA educators in touch with the communications world they teach about.

It also is a major source of assistantships and part-time work for UA graduate students, he said.

The institute is a welcome income producer at a time when it's tough to maintain programs with the traditional support from tax money, tuition and gifts, Mullins said.

So what's the downside?

Mullins said the institute has affected the tone of research done by faculty members at UA. Most work done through the institute is quantitative rather than qualitative in nature, he said.

And the kind of work businesses want to buy means that a minority of his college's faculty members get research support there — perhaps 8 or 10 out of 50 during a typical year. Also, graduate students are much more involved in the institute's programs than are undergraduates.

The institute has taken care to avoid potential controversies.

"We've never taken on a project we didn't see some academic value in," Mullins said. The institute stays away from proprietary work for politicians and

projects deemed "too crassly commercial."

Also, the institute sticks with its policy of making public its research findings after an embargo agreed to with the customer. Mullins sees allowing access to information the institute develops as a matter of "academic and press freedom," and graduate students often use the material for their research papers.

A lingering complaint from some private research competitors is that the UA institute is subsidized and works too cheaply. Mullins counters that it offers community service, faculty development and student education and employment.

Mullins believes there's an overriding value to underwriting research the way the institute does: It keeps journalism educators engaged with the world of professionals and readers.

Other journalism research is not nearly as practical as that from UA, he said.

"Most I don't read," Mullins said. "I can't imagine who would."

A Dangling Conversation

By Dick Thien
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

One of the best reporters in the country was stuck in the middle seat on a long bus ride from Albany, N.Y., to Portland, Ore., recently. On the right was a wonderful editor. On the left was a journalism teacher, one of those who leaves a mark on students forever.

The reporter was the friendly sort, like most good reporters. He was curious about the chemistry between the editor and the educator. He posed his first questions to the educator, then took turns as he found himself in the middle of some disagreement:

Q: The woman next to the window is one of the best editors in the country. Have you met her?

A: No. I don't get to meet many editors. I used to go to Associated Press conventions, but when they read you name tag and see you're a teacher, they look past you, searching for their own kind. And on

the rare occasions I see them at a journalism educators' convention, they sit by the door and duck out as quickly as they can when we start presenting our papers.

Q: The man seated on the aisle is an outstanding journalism teacher. Have you met him?

A: No I don't get to meet many journalism teachers. Sometimes I see them at APME, but they hang around the edges of the room. I did go to an AEJMC convention once and it scared the hell out of me listening

to the gibberish that those people thought was legitimate research. In fact, they don't read their papers, they have "presenters" present them, whatever that means.

Q: Some editors say journalism teachers don't mix at APME, and they say AEJMC is a bunch of pointy heads babbling about useless research published in journals that nobody reads. Is that so?

A: Oh, really? That sounds like something so-called professional journalists would say. After all, they're the same people who take our

bright, idealistic young people, put them into their newsrooms — and drive them out disillusioned within five years.

Q: Some journalism educators say their brightest students leave the business because newsrooms fail to reflect why they got into journalism in the first place. Is that so?

A: Is that so? Those are probably the same so-called teachers who brainwash students into believing that we're nothing but a bunch of money-grubbing wimps who cater to stockholders rather than readers. If

they would spend half their time teaching the basics to students, rather than pouring their not-so-hidden hidden agenda into students' heads, we'd all be better off.

Q: Some editors say your students can't write, can't spell, have no idea where Nebraska is, much less Bosnia-Herzegovena, and are little more than clock watchers. How about that?

A: Right; just like they've been saying for 30 years. These are the same people who complain about journalism programs, then shamelessly go there year after year

and hire our students for \$300 a week. After taxes, that's about \$210 a week. Not only that, but recruiters leave campus without even a thank you.

Q: Some educators say the industry — excluding Dow Jones and Hearst — takes and takes and gives nothing back to colleges and universities that are pinched everywhere for money. Is that failing to invest in the future?

A: (Long pause.) I'm afraid they're right.

Q: Some editors say that educators are out of touch, including those who haven't been inside a newsroom since Bill Gates was a boy. Others say some journalism professors don't even know who Bill Gates is.

A: (Long pause.) I'm afraid they're right.

Q: Some educators say the reason the smartest students fail to go into journalism is because the professional and financial rewards are so low. Are they right?

A: Of course not. Find me an editor, reporter, photographer or graphic artist at the five-year level living in a poor part of town and I'll show you a person who is paying double palimony. Besides, why should our dollars go to a journalism program that uses them to expand its advertising sequence or, worse,

public relations? Some editors think advertising, the language of commerce and persuasion, belongs in the business school, anyway. And lots of editors think a public relations major is something you should get by filling out a form on the back of a matchbook cover.

Q: Some editors say that advertising and public relations drive journalism programs today, which they see as the major reason for the recent folding of some journalism programs and the decline of others across the land. The numbers back them up, don't they?

A: So what are they doing to help us? Administrations are going after quality journalism programs everywhere, looking at the student-professor ratio that doesn't compute as well to their bean counters as arts and sciences, where one teaching assistant is, in effect, responsible for a class of 200 students. If a

journalism program is going to keep its accreditation, it has to keep its class size to 16. Rather than moan and groan, it would be a lot more effective if editors and publishers went to administrators, regents, and, yes, even legislators and said, "Stop this erosion of quality — now."

Q: Some educators say the only time they see a live, working journalist is when one comes to campus to hire cheap summer vacation help (interns) or full-time beginners who must sink or swim in cynical newsrooms that have no lifeguards. Isn't burnout a big problem?

A: It depends how you define it. Journalists don't have tenure. That means they have to prove themselves — every day — to their readers. If journalists had tenure,

there would be no newspapers. In fact, some editors say tenure is a code word for time-warped incompetence on campus.

Q: Some editors wonder whether journalism educators have any guts at all. They see quality programs folding and marginal programs kept alive. They see journalism educators acquiescing to speech codes, so-called political correctness and, at some institutions, agreeing to let administrations approve — beforehand — what reporting students will ask on assignments. When was the last time they read the First Amendment?

A: Somebody's fibbing here. Most editors don't know the journalism faculty in their city — or state. And they sure don't know good programs

are folding or they would have been fighting on the editorial page and in the legislative hallways to stop it.

Q: Some educators wonder if the industry even cares if programs fold as long as they can hire a \$300-a-week warm body to replace the latest \$600-a-week journalist who packed it in.

A: It's not that we don't care; it's that we don't know. How can we convince the faculty to talk to us? How can we be helpful if we don't know what administrators are doing to them? How can we be blamed for things that aren't our doing? If we

know the reason was to enroll a bunch of advertising and public relations majors who later can't find jobs, you bet we'd be in the face of university administrators, regents and legislators.

Q: Some editors say politics at a university get in the way of common sense. For example, tacking on the tacky phrases "mass communications" and "visual communications" to a journalism school's name. They are so clumsy, even the academics shorten them to "mass comm" and "viscom." Nobody says "journ."

A: Many do that to appease insecure faculty in departments other than news-editorial. Others do it to keep speech departments from gaining power and resources. It

reinforces what the late John Bremner of the University of Kansas said: "The reason politics are so vicious at a university is that the stakes are so low."

Q: Some educators say that corporate America's downsizing has strained newsroom staff so severely that they are near the breaking point, making newsrooms an unsafe place to be.

A: George Bernard Shaw was right when he said, "He who can does. He who cannot, teaches." There's no question that today's news staffers are doing more with less — unlike academics off walking in the woods on sabbaticals. Rather than spend a summer in a newsroom

where professors just might learn something valuable to pass along to their students, too many academics change the date on their syllabus, then go write unintelligible papers with unintelligible titles that they pass along to uninterested audiences.

Q: Some editors say there's nothing wrong with journalism education that a normal work year wouldn't cure. It would be hard to publish a quality newspaper if the staff got a week off for Thanksgiving, a month off for Christmas, another week off for spring break and all of that followed by three months off during the summer.

A: That attitude shows the industry's failure to adapt to the 1990s, where talented men and women could and would do better work with flexible work schedules, day care assistance, professional

training and development or even an office that failed to resemble an Army barracks on the weekend. This is 1995, but too many editors and publishers treat their staffs — and their readers — like it's 1885.

Q: Some educators say teaching the basics in 1995 is like spitting in the wind. Reporters who report are becoming extinct. Our graduates tell us they have to write 10-inch stories that have a lead, a nut graph, a quote, six bullets and a refer to a graphic. They say they spend more time getting information for a graphic than they do tracking the misdeeds of public officials.

A: That sounds like the same moss-backed pedagogues who were in journalism schools 30 years ago. The issue is time. Readers are in a hurry. They have lots of resources to get information and they are calling on those resources. Journalism educators have failed to make the adjustment. In fact, some moss backs haven't been inside a

newsroom in two decades. Others who claim they have professional experience are playing it loose with the truth. Many count three years as valid credentials, which is a joke; and I know one who fails to tell students that his professional experience was a summer internship.

Q: Some editors say they'd rather hire liberal arts graduates because journalism education's ivory tower cocoon has been sealed.

A: The butterflies are alive, but they are in publishers' bellies as they worry about whether their newspapers are dying. We're the folks surrounded by young people, and we know why they don't read. But the industry doesn't bother to ask us. It's like the chairman of the dog food company whose product

was made out of the finest ingredients, had the best-looking can on the prime display spot in the story with the best marketing campaign in the history of dog food. But there was a big problem: The dogs wouldn't eat it. It's content, stupid; it's content.

Q: Some educators say on-line newspapers are nothing more than an electronic version of that dog food. They see an industry that is slower to adopt and adapt to change than academics and that simply is not imaginable.

A: Editors would love to call on journalism teachers to help improve their newspapers, but they already spend too much time unteaching entry-level reporters and editors what they have been taught in school. They say that the needs of

the '90s — data base reporting, diversity issues and understanding the business (news, advertising, circulation and marketing) — are foreign to academics because they never did it, at least not well. That's why they're teaching.

Q: Some editors say that graduates are more interested in their own free time than they are in the tenets of journalism. And they say beginners concentrate more on their next job rather than mastering the one they have in front of them. They wonder whether educators — so quick to defend academic freedom over silly issues — even mention principles and ethics in the classroom.

A: Surely you jest. This from an industry that out-tabloids the tabloids? This from an industry that has anywhere from a 15 to a 30 percent return on investment? This from an industry that settles frivolous lawsuits out of court because it costs too much to win? This from an industry that panders to readers,

rather than aggressively showing the nation why there is a First Amendment? This from an industry that refuses to recognize that lots of other industries are after quality journalism students? Newspapers no longer are the only game in town, and it's time the grown white men who run them understand that.

Q: Some educators — and their students — wonder why an industry that so desperately needs diversity continues to be dominated at almost all corporate decision-making levels by middle-aged (or beyond) white men. They see too many women and minorities with titles but no power; a bunch of corporate minions. They see foundations providing minority programs that, to be blunt, ought to be provided by newspapers. They question the industry's commitment.

A: Wait a minute. How many news-editorial faculty are as diverse as the industry's? How many journalism educators go with their local editor into local grade schools and high schools to recruit minorities

for their college or university? How many work with their local editor to do something about a problem that is serious for both sides, if sides must be chosen?

The reporter had heard enough.

He turned to the teacher.

"Why do you teach?"

"I love it — and if I do it right I can make a difference."

He turned to the editor.

"Why are you in journalism?"

"I love it — and if I do it right I can make a difference."

Then he introduced them to each other, and said:

"It sounds like you two have one wonderfully important thing in common.

"Maybe you ought to get together at APME and AEJMC and talk out your differences and misconceptions. You have so much to offer each other. If you shared more and stereotyped less, mankind — and your newsrooms and classrooms — would be a lot better off."

Dick Thien has been on both sides of this conversation. He was a newspaper editor for more than 20 years, and now is a professional lecturer of journalism in the College of Journalism at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He omits "and Mass Communications" from the college's official title.