

2 AEJMC Panels

MCS will sponsor six panels and have slots for 65 papers at AEJMC.

5 Predatory Journals

Research committee offers advice on not falling prey.

7 Mentors

MCS seeking students, faculty to launch mentoring program.



NEWSLETTER

Vol. 49, Issue 2, Winter 2016

New MCS Awards

MCS will be offering a number of new awards in 2016. There are several awards available for the Midwinter meeting in February. Two graduate students will be awarded \$500 each to attend the Midwinter meeting and present their research. MCS will offer graduate student travel awards for the Midwinter meeting as well as research paper awards. Please visit the MCS Division website for more information on the Midwinter awards.



Michael Haigh,
Awards Chair

Five new Division awards will be presented at the 2016 annual meeting in Minneapolis. The Division's teaching committee will present three, **Adjunct/Instructor awards**. The awards will range from \$250 to \$75. All teaching faculty in the field of mass communications with a full time equivalent (FTE) less than 100% (e.g., on a semester-by-semester basis, or on bargaining-unit appointments) are welcome to apply as long as they are MCS members.

The Division will also launch the **Teaching Ideas Competition** to recognize innovation and excellence in teaching in the field of mass communications. This award builds upon the idea of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), which

CONT. AWARDS, 8

Member Survey



In regard to Programming, 55% of respondents thought the Division should have special calls for research papers fitting particular themes/topics, 59% thought the Division should center research panels around particular themes/topics, and 59% were satisfied with the sessions programmed with other divisions.



Jensen Moore with Piktochart

The full report is posted online at <http://aejmc.us/mcs/reports-and-newsletters> Results in each section are measured by percentage of respondents who selected "agree" or "strongly agree."

Taking the Temperature of the MCS Division

In 1856 Carl Reinhold August Wunderlich, after taking armpit measurements from 25,000 patients, told the world that the normal human body temperature was 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. What he failed to tell people was most of us range from 97.5 to 98.9 (and this changes throughout the day) and approximately 5% of the population has baseline temperatures that are higher and lower than these ranges.

Why am I sharing this information? Because we recently surveyed MCS Division members and graduate students to find

CONT. SURVEY, 3

Journal Wraps Up Strong 2015

Special issue proposals sought by Jan. 31, 2016

Happy New Year *Journal* readers, reviewers and authors.

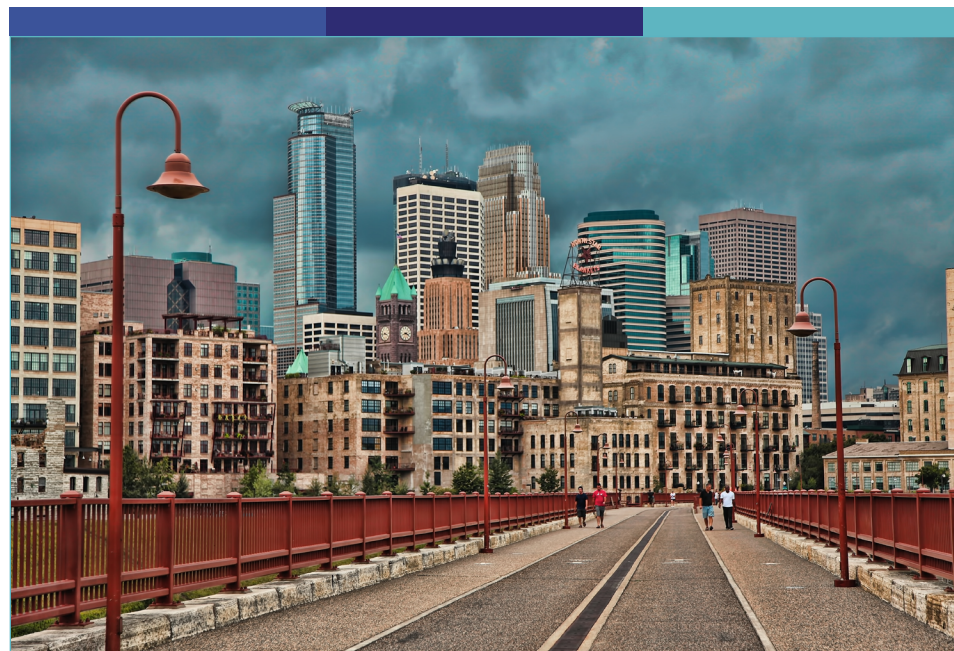
We had an outstanding year in 2015 with more than 271 new studies submitted, as well as 81 revised manuscripts.

Our many reviewers worked on scores of manuscripts and made decisions on roughly 300 works in 2015. I would like to thank each of you for this dedication, as reviewing journal articles is time-consuming but an important part of community service and academic citizenship.



Ran Wei, Journal Editor

CONT. JOURNAL, 8



Joey Lax-Salinas/Flick, Creative Commons

A view of downtown Minneapolis, site of the 2016 AEJMC convention, from the city's Stone Arch Bridge.

Panels for AEJMC 2016 Set

The MCS Division worked with seven other divisions to program a great conference in Minneapolis this summer. We used all of our six chips to provide six panels, one pre-conference session, and 65 slots for research papers (including one high density, two research panels,

and 45 scholar-to-scholar sessions).

Members of MCS should look forward to our programming schedule from AEJMC to see when some of these great panels will be



Jennifer Kowalewski, Vice Head/Programing Chair
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Review of Midwinter Proposals Underway

MCS offering new graduate student travel grants of \$500

The MCS Division received 54 submissions for the Midwinter Conference this year, which likely will yield four or five panels at the conference next month.

For the first time this year, abstracts were submitted online.

Special thanks to Midwinter host Dr. Elanie Steyn and to graduate student Imran Hasnat Palash from the University of Oklahoma for creating the online system and for shepherding us through the process.

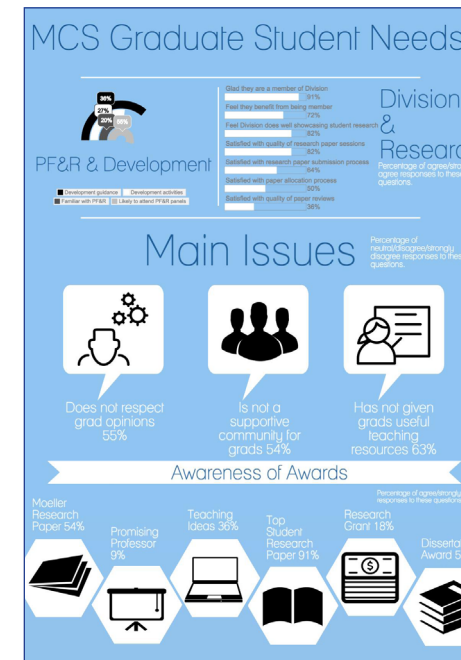
As usual, MCS received the most submissions and had the most reviewers available (22). We received dozens of thoughtful, creative entries in the areas of political communication, health communication, social media, media trust, gender studies—even timely studies on the migration crisis and football injuries. The abstracts are under review now and notifications will go out in mid-January.

The Midwinter Conference will again be held at the beautiful Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Oklahoma. Concurrent panel sessions will begin at midday Friday, Febru-

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Kelly Kaufhold, Midwinter Chair



Jensen Moore with Piktochart

out what is a “normal” baseline for the Division. As you can see from Wunderlich’s report, normal has ranges. Also, if we look at body temperatures first thing in the morning (before you get moving) your body temperature is likely lower than at the end of the day. So, the measurement provides a snapshot of your body’s internal temperature at a given moment.



Jensen Moore, Division Head

Our surveys also provide snapshots of the Division at any given moment. As our membership changes, our goals change, our mission changes, so too do the “temperatures” that are recorded on our surveys. The MCS Division gathered information from members in 2008 and 2011, both of these surveys were relatively brief and included the most basic questions regarding the benefits to belonging to the Division and how the Division defines itself. Open-ended question

CONT. SURVEY, 1

responses from the surveys, particularly the 2011 survey, were used to write Likert-scale questions for the 2015 survey. In addition, many yes/no questions were changed to Likert-scales to allow for a range of attitudes.

Thus, the 2015 survey was quite a bit more detailed and included 66 questions that addressed professional freedom and responsibility (PF&R – which if you look at the survey qualitative findings indicate we need to do a better job of defining for our members), teaching, programming, communications, Division awards, annual conference research submission and review processes, and the direction of the Division journal, *Mass Communication and Society*. While I can’t possibly summarize all the findings for you I have taken the liberty of pointing out some of the most important from both the member survey and the graduate survey in the infographics included in this newsletter.

I’d also like to point out how our temperature has changed. In comparison to previous years, the 2015 survey revealed members believed the *Journal* (60% in 2011, 63% in 2015) and research paper sessions (20% in 2011, 15% in 2015) are the most valuable benefits of being a member. The decrease in the latter is concerning as research papers sessions are the cornerstone of conference programming. However, the Division has improved in perceptions regarding acceptance of different methodologies (56% in 2011, 70% in 2015), theoretical frameworks (12% in 2011, 78% in 2015) and our focus, acceptance of research directly aimed at understanding social phenomena (19% in

CONT. SURVEY, 4

A Practical Focus on Teaching Diversity

The media landscape in the United States is continuing to experience profound and transformative challenges, notably a troubling decline in public trust and credibility, often resulting in a very real distance between journalists and the public. Indeed, citizens' negative reactions to mainstream media coverage of unrest in cities such as Ferguson and Baltimore exposed a significant disconnect between marginalized communities and the news media.



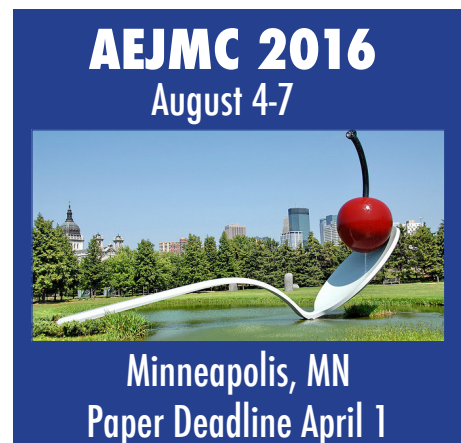
Kalyani Chadha,
PF&R Chair

As journalism educators we can play a significant role in bridging this gap by helping students develop a nuanced understanding of diverse communities, people and perspectives. Indeed an awareness of what the Maynard Institute terms the "fault lines," of race/ethnicity, gender/sexual orientation and class as well as their implications for news production, has to be an integral part of the repertoire of the "professional skills" that students are encouraged to develop. We need to consider developing pedagogical approaches, which encourage students to consider an emphasis on diversity as a crucial aspect of journalistic practice, no different

than accuracy or balance. One way to do this is to offer students hands on activities that potentially enable them to learn to implement diversity in a practical sense. These activities can include:

- Embedding student journalists with a group or organization with a significant presence or involvement in a community in order to gain a deeper understanding of varied perspectives.
- Establishing forums whereby student journalists engage with communities and groups to gain a deeper understanding of the concerns/issues of marginalized groups and use the insights gained to develop stories.
- Encouraging students to develop ways to identify under-covered issues and quote non-conventional sources and develop networks and lists of such sources.
- Introducing students to readings focusing on diversity as well as specific examples of news coverage that reflect meaningful engagement with issues of diversity

Journalism programs are the sites where professional socialization for journalists begins and should serve as spaces where students develop an understanding of their ethical responsibilities as they relate to questions of diversity.



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CONT. SURVEY, 3
2011, 27% in 2015).

In contrast, our graduate student perceptions of Division benefits have declined (95% in 2011, 72% in 2015) as well perceptions regarding how well the Division showcases graduate research (86% in 2011, 82% in 2015). As shown in the second infographic, 55% of graduate members feel their opinions are not respected, 54% feel the Division does not provide a supportive community, and 63% feel the Division does not provide useful teaching resources. We hope to address these issues with our new graduate student mentorship program (for more information see newsletter article by Vice Head-Elect, Melanie Sarge).

Based on survey results, other changes the Division has already begun implementing are the graduate student travel awards for the AEJMC national conference (supported by 58% of the members) and the Midwinter Conference (supported by 55% of the members). Additionally, this year we are offering five \$1,000 service-learning awards as 64% of the membership supported breaking the \$5,000 into several pieces instead of one large award (for more information see newsletter article by Awards Chair, Michel Haigh).

An item requiring future consideration is the creation of a second MCS journal. Support for a second journal is 38%. This will be debated in the coming months and likely voted on at the Division business meeting in Minneapolis. Your input in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Please feel free to read the full survey results on the MCS site: <http://aejmc.us/mcs/about/reports-and-newsletters/>.

Spotting Predatory Journals

Predatory journals are publications that adopt an exploitative business model. They typically charge authors excessive publication fees with questionable editorial and publishing practices, and no true interest in advancing scientific knowledge.

Predatory journals have become a part of today's academic landscape. A recent study showed a significant increase in the number of predatory journals and the number of articles published in such journals. For example, [Shen and Björk \(2015\)](#) found an increase of around 1,800 predatory journals in 2010 to 8,000 in 2015. Similarly, they found that the number of articles published in predatory journals increased approximately from 53,000 in 2010 to 420,000 in 2015. Shen and Björk (2015) reported that around 38,000 articles came from the social sciences.

Predatory journals take advantage of the pressure academics face to produce competitive publication records so they can get a job, tenured, and promoted. Given the prominent stature of publications in academia, these journals



Jay Hmielowski,
Research Chair

are not likely to go away anytime soon. In the end, it is up to each individual regarding whether they want to publish in these types of outlets. That being said, we wanted to provide some information about how to identify predatory journals so you know the type of journal you are dealing with and can make an informed decision about whether you want to publish in or review for these types of outlets.

One easy way to do so is take a look at lists available over the Internet. One of the more credible lists comes from [Jeffrey Beall \(<http://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/>\)](#). He has developed a rigorous set of criteria for determining whether a journal or publisher should be considered predatory. Indeed, his list is comprehensive and would likely be the first place to go if you want to determine whether a publisher or journal could be deemed questionable.

If the journal does not appear on the list, there are other things you should be on the lookout for to determine the quality of the journal. For instance, you could check to see whether the publisher is a member of a reputable organization that employs high quality publishing practices ([Clark, 2015](#)). You could also check to see if the journal is indexed on a database such as Web of Science (Clark, 2015).

Another red flag is if the editorial board is very small or will be announced in the future (Prater, 2014). Another warning sign is tied to the quality of information presented on the website, emails, etc. For example, you should be weary of a website that contains advertisements or more than a couple of typos ([Prater, 2014](#)).

As stated already, predatory journals are likely here to stay. Each

scholar should decide whether they want to review or publish in these outlets. We hope that we provided you with information to identify these types of journals.

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The American Research Institute for Policy Development, publisher of *Review of Journalism & Mass Communication*, pictured above, is on Jeffrey Beall's list of predatory journal publishers.

ary 26, and will continue all day Saturday, February 27. There will be an opening night reception Friday and lunch will be provided on Saturday. In previous years, Sooner Legends on 24th Avenue SW has been the official conference hotel.

Once you learn your paper status, visit the conference website to see the schedule, register for the conference and book your travel http://www.ou.edu/gaylord/outreach/aejmc_mid_winter.html.

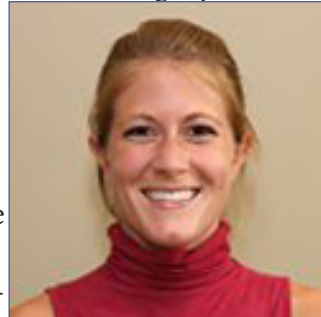
Remember, Midwinter papers may be submitted to the national conference paper call April 1. Also, for the first time, graduate students whose papers are accepted to present for MCS at Midwinter are eligible to apply for travel awards. The MCS Division will award two \$500 travel awards to students who are presenting at the conference. Applications for Midwinter travel awards are due January 30, just a couple of weeks after you learn your paper status, and will require a letter of application and a recommendation from an advisor. You can learn more about the travel awards, including how to apply, here <http://aejmc.us/mcs/awards/travel-awards/graduate-travel-award-program/>.

We are still looking for volunteers for two tasks: 1) To serve as moderators on-site at OU for the conference in February, and; 2) To serve as discussants, reviewing the final papers in late February and offering feedback to the authors and moderator. Discussants do not need to attend the conference. Please contact the MCS Midwinter Chair, kellykaufhold@txstate.edu, if you can help and we hope to see you there!

CONT. MIDWINTER, 3

MCS Graduate Student Mentoring Program

The MCS Division is developing a Graduate Mentorship Program for the academic year of 2016/2017. We are currently looking for professors willing to serve as MCS Mentors (faculty members from any rank or category are welcome to apply). Mentors will be expected to provide insight and direction to a graduate student mentee



Melanie Sarge,
Vice-Head Elect/
Membership Chair

at various points throughout the academic year. We also strongly encourage in-person meetings at the beginning and end of the mentorship year during the annual AEJMC conferences.

A strong mentor is crucial for the wellbeing of young professionals in any career. Our graduate students are the future of this field and their success depends on our willingness to provide continuous opportunities for learning and growth. Passing on information about your own experiences takes little time and effort but gives mentees invaluable education on all aspects of their future profession and the feedback they crave to feel prepared and confident. Such confidence builds career satisfaction and productivity.

Tips for being a good mentor:

- Take the time to learn about your mentee.
- Listen carefully to any questions or concerns.
- Be genuine and provide constructive feedback.

- Remember they are not the same as you; what worked best for you may not always be best for them/their situation.
- Even a minute is enough time to make a difference or to inspire when mentoring.
- Mentor about all aspects of your position to foster a comprehensive picture of the profession.
- As their exemplar, be mindful of your own choices and actions.
- Stay positive and friendly.

Caring mentors inspire their mentees to pass along the kindness they have been shown, preserving our academic culture for years to come. If you are an MCS member willing to support this cause by sharing your experiences with a graduate student mentee please contact Melanie Sarge at m.sarge@ttu.edu.

Tips on Seeking a Faculty Mentor

A good mentor can help you avoid the many pitfalls on your journey through graduate school, some of which you may not see coming. They can help you develop specific projects or skills, or give broader career advice. Best of all, mentorship can improve your professional satisfaction along with productivity. But not all the work of the relationship should fall on the mentor. There are several steps mentees can take to make the experience more fruitful for

CONT. MENTORING, 8

Teaching Repoliticizing the First Amendment

About 25 years ago, Pease and Smith (1991) commented on the coverage of race and racial diversity in the US newspapers. Their data suggested that 71% of minority journalists thought that their newspapers covered minority issues and concerns marginally, and a majority of journalists belonging to ethnic minorities (63 %) believed that race played a role in newsroom assignments, promotion, and career advancement, as news media managers and owners doubted the professional capacity of minority staffers.



Azmat Rasul,
Teaching Committee

The logical outcome of these unfortunate but enduring dichotomies deeply rooted in the US media and education culture was a widespread sense of “alienation” among less-advantaged racial groups, which was adequately explicated by the critical theorists as a working condition prevalent in capitalist economies that lead to an identity crisis and a sense of being controlled or exploited by the majority group(s). As 2016 dawns, questions pertaining to the coverage of race and communication rights are as relevant as they were a quarter of century ago.

Considering boundaries of the First Amendment discussed by various scholars, it could be argued that media coverage of racial minorities continues to be a significant problem. Beyond doubt, mass media plays a pivotal role in the reproduction of social representation of different races through their discourses. Activists, academics, and writers may produce a plethora of literature highlighting racial discrimination and relevance of the First Amendment rights, yet these discourses will only gain popularity and prominence if “appropriately” covered by the mainstream mass media. Accordingly, media production, distribution, and consumption processes are an important source of prevailing stereotypes and racial biases in multicultural societies.

Perhaps, it is time to seek inspiration from the universal appeal of the First Amendment, as it grants equal communication rights to all segments of the society, and re-

quires a repoliticization of the public life where citizenship rights are enjoyed by all and no group based on sex, economy, or cultural difference is excluded from participation in the public and media spheres.

References

- Pease, E. C., & Smith, F. (1991). The newsroom barometer: Job satisfaction and the impact of racial diversity on US daily newspapers. *Ohio Journalism Monographs*, 1(1), 40.

Division's Social Media Presence Grows

The Social Media Committee's role is to use social media to raise awareness about the MCS Division. Jack Karlis of SUNY Buffalo State and Iveta Imre of Western Carolina are the officers in charge of the committee.

As of September 2015, there were 596 members on Facebook, 7% growth over September, 1,502 followers on Twitter, a 5% increase, and 806 members on LinkedIn, a 6% increase.

We kindly ask that if there is any news to share or MCS members who have not joined, they do so. They would also that members share, retweet, link or repost Division information on their own personal accounts to help diffuse information. The platforms are an excellent tool to disseminate any information about jobs, conference calls, or pertinent information related to the Division. If member sees spam or something inappropriate posted or shared on one of the sites, please email karlisjv@buffalostate.edu immediately for removal.

treats teaching as part of a research agenda. To fit within the concept of SoTL, this award honors projects that pose hypotheses or research questions that aim to probe questions such as: what it means to teach, how learning happens, and how teachers and students can work together to enrich learning. This award is open to a wide range of qualitative and quantitative approaches, but the methods used (and their theoretical grounding) should be made explicit. The awards will range from \$250 to \$75.

The Division's PF&R committee will be presenting a **PF&R award** as well as a **Professional Award**. The PF&R award recognizes excellence in research, teaching or service related to the five PF&R principles: the promotion of free expression; ethics; media criticism and accountability; racial, gender, and cultural inclusiveness; and public service. The \$500

CONT. MENTORING, 6

both parties.

- Reflect on what you want and need. How much guidance are you seeking? In what areas can your mentor best help you? Let your mentor know -- It may best to set some goals or outline your expectations up front to avoid disappointment later on.
- Be respectful of your mentor's time. Be prepared to discuss the issues on which you need guidance. Ask questions, and be sure to listen carefully. Maybe most importantly, good mentees must learn to sift through the suggestions their mentors give. This means taking personal responsibility for figuring out which advice best

award is open to any individual who has made significant contributions to scholarship in any of these five areas or has undertaken professional or service activities that promote excellence in any of the five areas.

The Professional Award is a \$250 award that recognizes professionals for upholding the values of professional freedom and responsibility, diversity and public service. It is open to any individual who has spent a significant portion of her/his career in mass communication industries (broadcast, print, photojournalism, advertising, public relations, social media, etc.).

The Division will also offer four **graduate student travel awards** for the annual meeting. Each award is worth \$1,000. Finally, MCS will sponsor the Best Research Poster award and the Best HD Presentation award at the August meeting. Please visit the MCS website for application information and deadlines.

applies to you.

- Finally, be open minded. While it may be best to come to your mentor with specific questions, the scope of the advice can expand to reach beyond the initial issue. Over time, being open to this tangential guidance can help grow and strengthen the relationship.

The MCS Division is developing a Graduate Mentorship Program for the academic year of 2016/2017. We are seeking graduate students interested MCS faculty mentors. If you are interested in this opportunity to receive mentorship please contact Ben Lyons at benjamin.a.lyons@gmail.com.

As such, I wrote an introduction essay on this very topic in the first 2016 issue of *Mass Communication and Society*, Vol. 19 (1). This was published on January 2 and printed copies are on their way to you in the mail. This issue also features a new Milestone scholarly essay on framing by Michael A. Cacciatore, Dietram A. Scheufele and Shanto Iyengar, as well as other new studies. Our publisher changed typesetters, which resulted in thinner issues at the start of 2016, but by issue 3 we will be back to our normal length.

Guest editor Donnalyn Pompper, associate professor, School of Media & Communication at Temple University, is busy making editorial decisions for the many



Donnalyn Pompper,
MCS Head 2009-2010

submissions we received for the forthcoming 2016 special issue on climate change and sustainability communication.

Pompper, noted that manuscripts are among the highest quality she's seen. Submissions are being carefully reviewed for Vol. 19, Issue 5 or 6. A wide variety of formal research methods are represented and theoretical underpinnings are diverse. Research topics range from examinations of mass media's role in defining environmental issues – to civic engagement, policymaking, assignment of responsibility for environment and sustainability efforts, and online attention to

presented.

We are excited to partner with the News & Online News Division to present a pre-conference session "Teaching algorithmic transparency." As mass communication scholars, we understand how algorithms play an increasingly large role in determining the content we find when we search for news and information online. The pre-conference panel will focus on how we can use algorithms in the classroom, so students can learn about how content is filtered and sorted online through sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google.

We also partnered with the Cultural and Critical Studies Division for a panel called "How the reality of the Tianjin explosion was constructed on Chinese social media." When chemical material exploded in the Chinese port city of Tianjin in August 2015, news organizations and common people took to social media WeChat to share articles, photos, and videos. The panel research will explore how social media help share information about the disaster.

MCS also partnered with the Commission on the Status of Women to present a panel "Negotiating temptation: Possible protective and risk factors associated with the effects of sexual media content." The panel will focus on how adolescents and young adults make sense of sexual content, and how that might influence their own romantic relationships.

The Division partnered with the Public Relations Division to present "Beyond products and services: Institutional parasocial engagement with publics and implications for social responsibility." Although most scholarships has aligned the notion of organization-individual relationships to interpersonal communication, more focus needs to be on parasocial engagement. The panel will explore how institutional actors engage in



Sam Englund/Flickr, Creative Commons

Attendees at the 2016 AEJMC convention in Minneapolis can use the city's "Nice Ride," bicycle sharing service to get around the city.

parasocial interaction.

The Electronic News Division partnered with us on a panel "Reporting 'live:' Some safety, security, and ethical considerations." News reporters often cover dangerous breaking news events. The panel will explore how we educate future journalists to not only provide coverage of events, but stay safe in the process.

Our Division asked other divisions, such as Communication Technology Division to partner on a panel "Clashing values: Preserving traditional values and best practices in the digital space." The panel will explore how far we have strayed from traditional values and best practices in order to keep pace with new and emerging technologies. Panelists will discuss the challenges of communicating ethically and effectively in a digital space.

Finally, we partnered with the Communication Science & Health Risk Division to present the panel "Fostering community disaster resilience: The role of journalism and media." The panel will explore how we as professionals foster community resilience to disasters. The panel will build on insight from the University of Missouri's Disaster and Community Crisis Center and Reynolds Journalism Institute.

So as you prepare your research articles for submission to our Division (deadline is April 1), remember to keep these panels in mind. We look forward to seeing you in Minneapolis in August.

CONT. JOURNAL, 8

climate issues. Manuscripts were submitted by scholars the world over, including those in Belgium, China, Denmark, Germany, Korea, and the U.S.

"We're most grateful for the support of our MCS reviewers who are working hard to ensure the highest quality in scholarship," Pompper said. "It's going to be a terrific special issue that enables our journal to further enhance its reputation for excellence."

The *Journal* will be publishing another special issue in 2017 (Volume 20). Dr. Fuyuan Shen, the editor-elect, will be working with the MCS editorial board to solicit proposals on topics related to any aspects of mass communication research. If members of the Division are interested in proposing a special issue topic, please contact him at fshen@psu.edu by January 31, 2016.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you in the new year, and working with Fuyuan to transition to new editorial leadership by the end of 2016. Many thanks, as always, for the support of the MCS members.