



FEEDBACK

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Feedback is an electronic journal scheduled for posting six times a year at www.beaweb.org by the Broadcast Education Association. As an electronic journal, Feedback publishes (1) articles or essays—especially those of pedagogical value—on any aspect of electronic media; (2) responsive essays—especially industry analysis and those reacting to issues and concerns raised by previous Feedback articles and essays; (3) scholarly papers; (4) reviews of books, video, audio, film and web resources and other instructional materials; and (5) official announcements of the BEA and news from BEA Districts and Interest Divisions. Feedback is editor-reviewed journal.

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1. Submit an electronic version of the complete manuscript with references and charts in Microsoft Word along with graphs, audio/video and other graphic attachments to the editor. Retain a hard copy for reference.
2. Please double-space the manuscript. Use the 5th edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style manual.
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5. If editorial suggestions are made and the author(s) agree to the changes, such changes should be submitted by email as a Microsoft Word document to the editor.
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THE IMPACT OF TV LAND FIRST-RUN PROGRAMMING ON NETWORK IMAGE AND VIEWER SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

The past three years has witnessed a shift in programming and promotion of TV Land from exclusive exhibition of “classic” repurposed programming to the incorporation of first-run programming reflecting experiences of an older-skewing audience (e.g., *The Big 40* and *High School Reunion*). This study will analyze TV Land promotional collateral to determine the level of priority the network is placing on their new programming, and ascertain viewer reception of this change in the network image through examination of the network’s web-based fan bulletin boards.

INTRODUCTION AND GROUNDING:

When it comes to rebranding and repackaging a network, nobody has more experience than Viacom. Sometimes these changes take place primarily at one time, such as the TNN/Spike TV transformation or the birthing of the CW Network, which was cobbled together from the UPN and WB networks. Other times the media giant phases in changes are phased in gradually over several years, as with the shifting of VH1 from a pop music video channel to their current focus of Celebriality.

This year’s target for a makeover is TV Land. Since its launch in 1996, TV Land has acted as a haven for classic TV programs from the 1950s to the 1990s. However, with this makeover the New York-based network has worked to shift its focus from a network that serves repurposed programming that its desired 40-54 year old baby-boomer target audience experienced or remembers fondly to providing new programming ostensibly of interest to them.

This paper will examine how the network is doing this through an examination of their promotion aired during programming. In order to do this, I examined the most frequently occurring examples of promotional collateral contained within three programs aired during primetime:

I Love Lucy: Arguably the first true sitcom, due to its three-

camera production style and studio audience, this classic 1950's black and white sitcom traces the domestic adventures of Lucille Ball and her husband Desi Arnaz.

*M*A*S*H*: A 1970's social analogy for the Vietnam War, this sitcom revolves around the day-to-day lives of battlefield surgeons during the Korean War.

She's Got the Look (sneak peek): A reality series that pits a group of ten women over the age of thirty five in competition for a modeling contract.

FINDINGS

Station Image Promotion: Examining my taped collateral, I only found one example of station image promotion, in a thirty second piece focusing on the network's original series. This piece, which was placed right after the conclusion of the *She's Got the Look (sneak peek)*, filled the screen with bright colors and Champaign bubble effects prominently feature the chorus of Seal's "Amazing," (as an aside, I only learned this after a quick examination of you tube under the term Amazing) while a female voice over asked "What's new in TV Land?" This question was answered by the appearance of the TV Land logo, under which was written "Original Series."

The promo then shows clips and titles from four of their original series: *Family Forman*, *High School Reunion*, *The Big 4-0* and *She's Got the Look*. One segment for each is dedicated to giving a quick overview of the respective show. I found these to be hit or miss. "Hi. I'm George Forman and I have achieved the American dream," "We were all back together again" "Then when it hits you, it's so very young," and "A search for the next great model over the age of thirty five."

In the thirty seconds that this promo ran, it was effective in communicating the general premise of the four shows, although their ability to pique and activate viewer interest was minimal.

Acquisitional Promotion: By far, the most prevalent promotion appearing in my captured collateral was a thirty second acquisitional promotion for the network's new reality series *She's Got the Look*. This promo appeared in a primacy position during pods both more often than not during show credits. The promotion begins by showing a young woman on a catwalk surrounded by photographers. A discordant non-diatonic rumble much akin to a guitar whammy bar dive bomb sounds while an announcer intones "the average modeling career is over by age twenty one..." The music then segues to the sprightly opening intro of Roxette's *The Look* (again, my thanks go out to the kind folks at Youtube for helping identify this song) while the announcer states "but these women are far from average." The video then changes to quick clips of the selected contestants telling their ages and in various modeling poses and situations.

The promotion concludes with a TV Land title screen and the imperative information, which is reiterated aurally to reinforce the show's airing date and time.

Effectiveness: In assessing the effectiveness of this promotion, two things come to note: first, the brightly saturated colors of the promo seem all the more vibrant given the transition from having watched black and white. Secondly, the overall tone of the promotion is markedly positive, and portrays all the contestants in a positive light. Indeed, the only questionably negative voice over is that of one of the judges commenting "who told them to put swimsuits on models over (with drawn out revulsion) thirty five?" However, the video counters her disgust by showing the contestants in an attractive light.

Maintenance and Retention Promotion: Very little attention was paid to maintenance and retention promotions. No freestanding promotions for classic shows were present in my taped sample of collateral. Rather, the most common one was a seven second animated snype that slid into the lower left-hand corner of the screen announcing “*X*” program/Now followed by “*Y*” program/Next and featuring a five second generic video clip of the upcoming show. These synpes did not feature any audio. Furthermore, it was only through close frame-by-frame examination was it revealed that the snype’s transition from “Now” to “Next” flashed the titles of five other TV Land classic series.

These promotions were minimally effective at best. While it can be argued that the lack of audio was a contentious decision to limit their disruptiveness to the program that was currently airing, their design and application clashed with the assumed passive viewing style these programs will impart. Furthermore, given the older-skewing nature of TV Land’s courted audience, the micro fonts used in the rapid transitional titles would be difficult, if not impossible for viewers to note.

Recycling Promotion: The most frequently occurring recycling promotion was a twenty second plug for the week’s *TV Land Movie Land* offering *Working Girl*. The promo started out quickly listing titles in the series (e.g., *The Blues Brothers*, *ET*, *A Fish Called Wanda*, etc.) followed by a male announcer voiceover stating “Tomorrow night in *Movie Land*. . . a movie with serious hair!” An unknown (to me) Gospel choir tune sounds in the background while a procession of short clips consisting of women with bad hair, a hairy (and ostensibly naked) man beckoning someone to come back to bed, and Harrison Ford. The announcer VO then concludes the promo with “Escape to *Movie Land* with *Working Girl*. Tomorrow night at 10” while a title screen reiterates the program title, day and time.

Although I believe I saw this movie once during the 80s, the flow of the promo was lost on me other than establishing that Melanie Griffith was the protagonist, she may or may not have been intimately involved with a hairy ostensibly naked man, and that somewhere along the way, she falls for Harrison Ford. Moreover, I am troubled by the possibility that the entire focus around hair could be a cheap payoff for the fact the movie features *Harrison Ford*. Needless to say, I did not find this to be an effective promotion.

Website Promotion: Although I have seen many promotions plugging TV Land’s website prior to launching this study, analysis of my taped collateral revealed that they were very rare, consisting of two instances of “tvland.com” placed in leftover frame space during promo squeezes placed during credits at the end of shows, and a single five second promo stating “Watch full episodes of the *Andy Griffith* [emphasis mine] show online at tvland.com.” Minimal attention was paid to the production aesthetic of this promo, consisting of a translucent gray background featuring the show’s title in black, and the rest of the writing in blue.

This promo was not effective. Indeed, I had missed it on my initial logging of my tapes and only noticed it when I was tracking down another promo example.

Website Analysis: There might be good reason that TV Land is downplaying attempts to encourage viewers to visit their website. This is not to say that the site is bad – it’s rich with layers and layers of detail about classic programs, as well as their current crop of original shows. The site is colorful, and congruent with the image and fonts that TV Land uses in its on-air promotions. There are many clickable sections,

and the site holds a wealth of details about famous programs, regardless if they are on TV Land or not.

In my analysis of the site, two things come to my attention. My biggest annoyance with the site is the fact that it automatically starts audio when a person gets to the site. Furthermore, a survey of their bulletin boards reveals a constituency that is markedly unhappy about the network's transformation. This is especially evident in the programming section, in which one poor moderator is charged with addressing dozens of angry comments about the new format.

CONCLUSIONS:

I was fortunate to catch TV Land during a time of flux. Although I have seen many promotions for classic shows done on the past for this network, this survey revealed that except for a few five second maintenance/retention snypes the vast majority of promos (indeed all of the acquisition and recycling ones) were positioned to with the goal of acquainting viewers with the network's new program or movie offerings.

While the network may claim on the surface to be refocusing their target audience from those who enjoyed the classic programs of the past to experiences relevant to them at this point in their respective lives, I feel that the network's focus is even more selective, as I feel that their promotions, movies and original offerings are more targeted to women than men. In the past, I don't think this was the agenda for this network. However, I do now. And they can count on one less viewer.

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MOTOROLA, INC.: RADIO TECHNOLOGY FROM EARTH TO OUTER SPACE

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Motorola has been one of America's leaders in exploring and promoting new uses of radio technology. The Chicago-based company initially focused on radio as a mass medium. Later, Motorola developed applications of the technology for government, military, and private use, helping radio to realize its potential as a two-way communication tool. In so doing, Motorola became a haven for engineering and high quality technological innovation, building a reputation by the late 20th Century as one of America's most desirable employers.

The Motorola story starts in the 1920s with a business-savvy young man from north central Illinois. Paul Galvin quickly saw the potential of radio as the medium developed. Galvin and partners formed two companies to produce storage batteries and power converters for radios. Both were closed by 1928 but Galvin continued to believe in the potential of the business. After borrowing \$1,000, Paul Galvin and his brother Joseph formed the Galvin Manufacturing Corporation in September of 1928.

Galvin Manufacturing quickly moved into production of private label radios for wholesalers and retailers and experienced some moderate growth. But smaller firms like Galvin's were hard hit by the economic downturn that followed the stock market crash in late 1929. If Galvin Manufacturing was to remain in business, the company needed to develop a landmark product that would mark it as a vital player in radio. Paul Galvin found the cornerstone for his company with the automobile radio.

While auto radios were available in the 1920s, they were expensive, difficult to install, and sounded terrible due to static interference from electric devices within the car. Galvin and his associates developed a prototype that solved these problems and installed it in his car in time for the 1930 Radio Manufacturer's Association convention. Galvin drove to Atlantic City for the show and demonstrated his new product to conventioners who marveled at the innovation.

Galvin Manufacturing's *5T71* was the first commercial radio designed to fit most automobiles and sold for about \$120 including installation. In order to create a name that would associate sound with motion, Galvin coined the name Motorola

for his radio by combining the word *motor* with *ola* from *Victrola*. While Galvin Manufacturing retained its original moniker for years, it was the trademarked Motorola name that became famous. By 1936, Motorola was an industry leader and among the first brands of car radio to include push buttons, fine-tuning, and tone controls.

That same year, the Federal Communications Commission took action that facilitated Galvin's move into other radio products. After the FCC allocated permanent spectrum space for police communications, Galvin introduced its first AM mobile receiver, the *Police Cruiser*, and the following year accompanying transmission equipment. Soon, the need for two-way communications became apparent so Galvin developed mobile AM transmitters for officers in the field. The cost of a complete system including one base station and three mobile radios was about \$4,000.

Motorola introduced the first line of improved, two-way FM equipment in 1941. This innovation marked the start of a 30-year period in which Motorola engineer Daniel Noble and the company became internationally known for research and development. Motorola later adapted this same FM technology for use in larger commercial and industrial markets as two-way radio communication became commonplace in the 1950s.

During this same era, Motorola became an important partner with the American military. When World War II broke out in Europe in 1940, Paul Galvin assembled an engineering team to develop a lightweight, portable, two-way radio that could be used on the battlefield. Eventually, the United States Army awarded Galvin Manufacturing a contract for the *Handie-Talkie*, a five-pound AM radio with a range of about one mile. Galvin manufactured more than 100,000 of the radios before the end of the War. The company also developed a 35-pound FM two-way radio in a backpack with a range of 10 miles. The Galvin *SCR-300* became better known as the *Walkie-Talkie* and was hailed by military leaders as a pivotal communication device. Galvin produced 45,000 of the Walkie-Talkies along with jeep and tank radios to aid the war effort.

Galvin Manufacturing became a public-traded stock in 1943. In 1947, the company formally changed its name to Motorola, Inc. and prepared to reap the dividends of a booming post-war economy. It did so by continuing to expand on its radio business but also by continued research and development efforts and what company officials call "continuous self-renewal" into other areas of electronics. In the 1950s, Motorola became an important supplier of automobile radios to Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler. Almost one-third of the car radios on American highways had been made by Motorola as the decade concluded. It was also during this period that Motorola started to manufacture television sets, developed some of the first radio paging systems, and became involved in the semiconductor business. Motorola initially used transistors to miniaturize its own products, leading to a line of pocket-sized radios. Transistors were also crucial in the development of its advanced, two-way *Motrac* system that ultimately boasted a 50% global market share for mobile radios.

Over the years Motorola maintained a partnership with the American government on various project including the space program. Motorola systems have played a vital role in tracking and communications between earth and outer space since the company developed a system for an early satellite mission in 1958. The company's efforts culminated when the first immortal words were uttered from the surface of the moon in 1969; Neil Armstrong was heard on earth via radio systems that included components

from Motorola.

Today, Motorola endures as an important, diversified, global corporation in electronic communications. Despite some business problems in the 1990s, Motorola has moved forward and has become a major manufacturer and marketer of cell phones and various wireless handset accessories, digital entertainment devices, voice and data communication systems, a variety of analog and digital two-way radios, and more. The company has long been known as the “American Samurai” for its international business acumen and for good reason: while about half of its \$30 billion-plus in annual business revenue is generated in the United States, the other portion comes from doing business in scattered locations around the globe from Europe to Latin America and China.

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PLAGIARISM, INFLUENCE, HOMAGE AND ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

The question of plagiarism, influence, homage, and originality is explored from a screenwriter's perspective. While clear-cut copying exists, there also exist large grey areas that may be called influence and homage, rather than plagiarism.

Obstacles to clear originality in screenwriting may be unconscious or conscious. The former include the reliance of the medium upon adaptations, the collaborative nature of filmmaking, the concept of the monomyth, and the phenomenon of simultaneous creation. The latter include the desire and necessity of the writer to fit her or his work within existing genres, and the diet of film watching recommended by most books on screenwriting.

While the question may be one of a solution in search of a problem, one possible approach is to encourage adaptations from antiquity, including mythology and Scripture. Such an approach would be working from purer sources that are also in the public domain.

PLAGIARISM, INFLUENCE, HOMAGE, AND ORIGINALITY

Black and White or Shades of Gray?

Plagiarism as an academic issue is a serious and growing concern. Any serious review of the articles about plagiarized research would fully occupy the rest of this essay. Plagiarism in the creative field of screenwriting, however, has not received quite the same attention, other than the plethora of screenwriting syllabi that warn our students not to do it. This is not to say plagiarism never occurs. At a previous institution, a student in the author's screenwriting class downloaded an episode of *The Simpsons* from a website, reformatted it to match the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' Nicholl Fellowship recommended format, and submitted it as his original work. Most screenwriting instructors would agree this is unadulterated plagiarism, and, sadly, most could probably relate similar tales.

The conduct of our students, and the lack of literature addressing screen plagiarism specifically, perhaps becomes understandable when one surveys the professional field. More than a decade ago, a front-page article in *The Christian Science Monitor* revealed to the world the thriving industry in script vetting and entertainment insurance, including insurance against plagiarism

charges. Further, the article connected the biggest name in the field, Steven Spielberg, to the p-word through the (ultimately dropped) *Amistad* lawsuit (Wood, 1997, p. 1). Several years later, the British journal *The New Statesman* reminded the world of Art Buchwald's successful suit against Paramount in the *Coming to America* case; while quoting an anonymous producer as having been "ripped off by Hollywood aristocracy not once, but several times," the journal savaged *FearDotCom* for ripping off *Ringu's* plot, *Se7en's* style, and *The Crow's* makeup (Kerr & Allardyce, 2003, p.46). None of the allegedly ripped off filmmakers bothered to file a suit. At the turn of the millennium, the Australian journal *Metro* was calling Quentin Tarantino "the video geek as cultural plagiarist" (Grimshaw, 2001, p. 48). Most recently, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* may have been sabotaged at the Academy Awards by a viral video accusing writer Eric Roth of self-plagiarism from *Forrest Gump* (Wasserman, 2009, p. 48).

If there are clear cases of plagiarism, then there are apparently many other cases where the lines are not nearly so clear. What are students to make of plagiarism when it can demonstrably get you successfully sued, unsuccessfully sued, or not even sued? What are we instructors to make of it? And is there a distinction to be made between plagiarism, influence, homage, and originality?

OBSTACLES TO ORIGINALITY—CONSCIOUS & UNCONSCIOUS

A first step may be acknowledging the lines between plagiarism, rip-off, homage, and simple influence are indeed not clear. Researcher Linda Hutcheon, discussing her work *A Theory of Adaptation*, notes a general climate of moral disapproval of most works derived from other works (Bucknell, 2006, p. 159). An excellent example of this comes from author/screenwriter/critic Harlan Ellison:

One tries to be even-handed when crediting the influences on Lucas and Spielberg. One credits a lot to homage—until the moment comes with DePalma films, for instance, when one chokes on the phrase "homage to Hitchcock" and simply shouts "Thief!" (1989, p. 195).

This denunciation, and especially the derisive quotation of "influence," illustrates the loathing of the rip-off, while ignoring the fact the screenwriter works in a medium in which influence is ubiquitous. Every feature filmmaker since 1915 owes a debt to D.W. Griffith, whether the Directors Guild of America chooses to acknowledge it or not. Of course, in an ironic and influential twist, *The Birth of a Nation* was itself an adaptation from another creative work, as are roughly half of the top 100 U.S. adjusted-for-inflation box office champs (Dirks, 2009) and roughly half of the American Film Institute's *100 Years... 100 movies—10th Anniversary* list (2009).

The adaptive nature of the medium combines with the collaborative nature of the filmmaking process to make the determination of authorship challenging under the best of circumstances. Hutcheon states, "One critic put it nicely when he said that what we see in the cinema is really the studio's adaptation of the editor's adaptation of the director's adaptation of the actors' adaptation of the screenwriter's adaptation" (Bucknell, 2006, p. 164).

The original point from which adaptation departs also is open to question. As of this writing, Vogler is on the third edition of *The Writer's Journey*; a modern St. Paul interpreting Joseph Campbell's gospel of the monomyth to the Gentiles of the film and tele-

vision world (2007). Straczynsky holds similar views, and outlines a specific example of the universal story: “Male meets female. Male falls in love with female. Pursues female against all odds. Finally dies for the sake of his love for the female.’ Is this *Romeo & Juliet* or *King Kong*? Answer: yes” (1996, p. 336). Flinn adds to the list of the Bard’s cinematic progeny: “Let’s trace a few classic stories: *Love Story*, *West Side Story*, *Goodbye Columbus* and *Titanic* are all *Romeo & Juliet*” (1999, p. 142). This common concept would seem to argue against originality in any meaningful sense.

To this Straczynsky added the idea of simultaneous creation—the overwhelming odds that in an industry with approximately ten thousand professional writers, thousands more aspiring writers, and millions of media consumers, more than one person will get an idea at the same time (1997, p. 337). In an unrelated interview of about the same time, writer/director Harold Ramis concurred, saying, “Two or more people coming up with the same or similar ideas simultaneously happens all the time” (Wood, 1997, p. 1). Based on this phenomenon, Straczynsky also observed suits were routinely dismissed despite the fact the films sued over tended to be successful. He dryly notes, “Curious how they almost never sue over flops” (1996, p. 337).

As if the unconscious hurdles of influence, monomyth, and simultaneous creation were not enough for the would-be original screenwriter to clear, she must also deal with two daunting conscious obstacles. First of these is the genre system. Universally acknowledged, of late genres have also been explicitly endorsed by those who write about writing. In *Story*, McKee states, “To anticipate the anticipations of the audience, you must master your genre and its conventions” (1997, p. 89). A decade later, Snyder claims to have identified the ten genres “... that have proven to be the ones movie makers find most popular with audiences” (2007, p. xiv), and promises to guide the reader through the creation of a film that fits one of those genres. While innovation in a well-established tradition is certainly not impossible, for the student especially it must seem daunting.

But perhaps the most daunting hurdle to overcome is the most ubiquitous advice from screenwriters to aspiring screenwriters. A quarter-century ago, William Goldman wrote that one of the defining rules of the comic-book movie is, “The movie turns in on itself: Its reference points tend to be other movies” (1983, p. 153). In the years since, other writers about writing have told students to do little else than refer to movies. Snyder dissects fifty movies in *Save the Cat!*’s ten chapters (2007). McGee’s filmography covers thirty-two pages, as compared to his reading list of a page and a half (1997, 421 – 455). Seger wrote, “If you simply study these films [*Witness*, *The African Queen*, *Tootsie*] you will learn a lot about the craft of screenwriting” (1994, p. xviii). Pope posited that “...as much could be learned from failure as from success, or that bad films should be studies in juxtaposition with good ones” (1998, p. xii), in his book subtitled *Learning the Craft of Screenwriting Through 25 of the Best and Worst Films in History*. Keane lists fourteen films for the reader to view before continuing with his book (1998, p. 10). Field, author of the influential *Screenplay*, insists, “These filmmakers [Peckinpah & Antonioni] taught me everything” (1998, p. 273); Flinn insists, “... there is no substitute for reading screenplays” (1999, p. 213).

Even writers attempting to offer an alternative cannot escape the circle of cinematic self-referentiality. Dancyger and Rush entitled their work *Alternative Scriptwriting*, but devote an entire chapter to comparing Steven Spielberg and Steven Soderbergh (2002,

50-68). And in an American Film Institute-sponsored work, Cooper flatly states “The formulaic approach doesn’t work” (1997, p. xv) but then goes on to refer to fifteen films in the first chapter alone (1997, 1-11).

In sum, with aspiring writers’ need to fit their visions within established genres, and with their published pedagogues urging ever more consumption of previous movies, plagiarism ought not to surprise us: originality should.

A SOLUTION IN SEARCH OF A PROBLEM?

It may be that the question of originality versus influence versus homage versus plagiarism is the 21st Century screenwriter-instructor’s version of “How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?” It is true critics outside the academy have noticed something amiss, including possibly the two most popular of popular critics. In *USA Today*, Leonard Maltin lamented, “People are drawing ideas from other movies instead of going out and living life” (Wloszczyna, 2004, D1) and Roger Ebert grumbled, “Mainstream producers are essentially in the recycling business. Part of the blame goes to the screenplay workshops they’ve all taken, which train them to reassemble the successful parts of old hits” (Wloszczyna, 2004, D1).

On the other hand one cannot point to a precipitous drop in box office or a precipitous rise of copyright suits to suggest it is a problem in the industry. Also, some screenwriters-on-screenwriting seem certain it is not. Straczynsky states, “What you have thought up has almost certainly been thought of by others; what matters is execution, the specifics of characterization and dialogue and plot turns” (1996, p. 336). Flinn concurs:

So if there are a finite number of stories, there is an infinite number of ways to tell them.... It’s all in the writing. Just ask Shakespeare, who took a lot of other people’s stories and made them his own” (1999, p. 143).

If that is the case, then perhaps our approach should be not to point our students toward originality, at least not at first, but rather to point them toward other sources of inspiration. Before *Romeo & Juliet* could inspire *West Side Story*, or *King Kong*, the Bard had himself to be inspired by *Pyramus & Thisbe*. If we begin to gently lead our students back to earlier tellers of tales than even Melies and Porter, two advantages will accrue. For one, Ovid, Homer, Moses, and Luke the Physician would seem to be closer in time to the origin of the monomyth—whatever that might be—thus, we would be steering our students back to the source of Story. For another, it would seem Ovid, Homer, Moses, and Luke the Physician, or their estates, have been lax in copyright renewals; so the odds of a lawsuit are comfortingly remote.

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ONLINE FILM FESTIVALS AND DIVERSITY: ARE WE THERE YET?”

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Abridged Version
A New Unpublished
Study

ABSTRACT

In 2000, film makers and theorists viewed the internet and new digital video technology with awe. It now seemed possible to create online film festivals, in which video makers sent in digital video entries online, to be viewed and judged by audiences online, with the winners announced online. The websites would be automated, and self-run. A global community of special interest filmmakers, geographically distant but linked by the internet, would thrive in these festivals. They would exclude no video's content, genre, or format, no matter how tiny, obscure, or controversial. Well, in 2009, "Are we there yet?" If so, what advantages do online festivals have over the real world "bricks and mortar" festivals? And which communities do they best serve?

HISTORY: WHAT WAS THE FIRST ONLINE FILM FESTIVAL?

The answer is unclear. Most of the online festivals in this study have been functioning for five years or less. Not one claims to be the first online film or video festival. Anecdotal evidence is unreliable, but this researcher remembers an English-language American online website in the Fall of 2000, which advertised itself as the world's first online competitive film festival. Films were shown in a small, postcard-sized window, and took time (30 to 60 seconds of "buffering") to load. The videos were short, homegrown productions, and an eventual competition winner was promised. (I clearly remember asking my college classes if they would watch such a festival. The majority said yes.) The site disappeared months later. Any further data on the "first online festival" issue is welcomed.

As for the oldest continuously-running online English – language film festival, I would pick the HaydenFilms Online Film Festival, started in 2004.

HOW THE DATA WAS COLLECTED

This study was started in March, 2008, and finished in May, 2009. The online film festival websites were found by entering

the words, “Online Film Festival” into the “Search” function of the website, “Without A Box,” a website in which video and filmmakers may enter their work into hundreds of contests with a single written application. A second search was made through the Internet’s “Google” search engine, by typing the words, “Online Film Festival,” and also “Online, Film, Festival.” The ensuing first 20 pages of results, for each search, were sifted for appropriate and functional websites.

The first data, compiled in March 2008, seemed to return as few as 5 functional online festivals, with about 5 others in their first “Call for Entries” mode. Some sites and contests seemed poorly focused or organized. It seemed possible that many of these sites would not complete their first contest, or last a year. At that point, it was not clear whether the online film / video festival phenomenon had developed enough, to be worthy of study. One online film festival, the LYM, or Lumberyard Media Festival, a festival of horror films at <http://www.lumberyardmedia.com/fest2007.html>, had already folded after one year, in 2007. (From my previous film festival study, published in the January 2007 *Feedback*, it was learned that half of the “bricks and mortar” film festivals started in the last ten years had failed, so there is a high mortality rate for video festivals, especially new ones.)

Further searches, a year later, produced a larger number of functional sites, better organized, with many past the bumpy “Year One” stage.

SOME TERMINOLOGY, RULES, AND LIMITS FOR THIS STUDY

For brevity’s sake, we will refer to all films, videos, podcasts, or other moving image pieces created by filmmakers, videomakers, or podcasters as videos. We will also refer to “bricks and mortar” festivals as “b&m” festivals or “b&m’s.”

Alas, for accuracy’s sake, we can only include online video festivals which offer a web page in English, since this researcher reads and writes only English proficiently, and I would hate to misinterpret any festival websites’ purposes, features, or instructions due to my linguistic limitations. (Author: I can speak and write German, but not proficiently.) Nevertheless, I have included multi-lingual sites from other countries (Canada’s RCI “Migrations” contest was conducted in English and French), and I have examined a few non-English online video fest sites, such as AOL’s “Festival de Cine Corto” (“Festival of Short Films”), which after being absorbed into a New York Latin Film festival, appears to have folded. This researcher welcomes any useful information about online video fest sites in other languages, which can be used for further research.

Is it possible that there are dozens of online film festivals in other languages? Certainly, and if they’d had a “Call for Entries” or “Submit” page in English with the words, “Online Film / Video Festival,” they’d be included here. One such example is the DiBa (Digital Barcelona) Online Film Festival, which features pages in Spanish, French and English. (Bravo!) While some may feel uncomfortable with the exclusionary practices of mono-linguistic festivals (as I do), the real reason for this practice may be the judging process. It may be hard to find people who can perfectly speak, read and write more than one language, who are video industry professionals, and who want to judge an online contest. Also, judges may need to confer with each other online about films, in case of scoring ties. This again makes a mono-linguistic festival a more viable process.

Again, I realize that many “bricks and mortar” festivals, especially European ones

such as Cannes, have successfully used judges from many countries, speaking many different languages, for years. But these judges can meet face to face in a room to communicate, with interpreters, for hours. Most online festival judges are limited to email exchanges in one common language. Perhaps this mono-linguistic factor will change in the future. Ethnologue.com, a language institute's website, lists English (at 309 million) as the third most popular language spoken in the world, after Mandarin Chinese (1.2 billion), and Spanish (322 million). It makes sense that other online video festivals in other languages exist. By no means do I see my list as forming the world's only online film festivals data.

Regarding the international issue, I have listed the country of origin for the websites here, which for video makers in cyberspace is almost irrelevant. However, I do this to see if online festivals are a growing worldwide phenomenon, or just a regional (E.g., A North American) one.

Also, we will only include competitive online video festivals in this study, which are festivals in which videos vie for awards, honors, cash, or material prizes. We will not include online video "showcases," which are non-competitive. While many of these sites are professional, popular, and admirable, such as StudentFilms.com, there is also an issue of quality, as many non-curated showcase sites offer video makers little incentive to create high-quality work. An opinionated film festival manager once emailed to me, "A film festival is not about throwing a lot of films on the wall." There is some truth to that opinion. Perhaps someone else can study online video showcases in the future. To keep this sprawling study in focus, I am forced to limit it.

I also cannot include an excellent scholarly website covering Asian and Pacific films, called Asianfilms.org, which sponsors the Asia and Pacific Film Festival Online, a curated selection of "neglected" Asian feature and short films reflecting "contemporary issues in the cultures of Asia and the Pacific." This ambitious site offers a wealth of information about Asian films, and features critiques and essays from journals and publications by academic scholars. Reading it is like taking a Film Studies class, with film viewings included. Sites like this might even form the basis for future online film history classes. Still, it remains a showcase, not a competition, and therefore cannot be included.

I hope no one is insulted or offended by the limits of this study. It is intended as a starting point for further research, measuring an online phenomenon which is also "just starting."

CHALLENGES OF THIS STUDY

The challenges of this study arise from three factors: 1. The changeable nature of the film festival landscape, 2. The changeable nature of individual film festivals, and 3. The changeable (and sometimes disorganized) nature of online film festivals websites.

My last film festival study revealed that half of the American film festivals founded in the last ten years had folded. Hence, any survey of the landscape would always be a snapshot of a constantly - changing picture. Film festivals bloom, stall, grow, or die. New festivals take their place. Some festivals in this study may not even exist next year. (E.g., What is the status of the Insight Youth Methodist festival for young church groups, which this researcher thinks is a great idea? Are they "on sabbatical" for 2009? Who knows?) If a website disappears, I can only apologize, and say that they existed

online for March, April or May, 2009.

Similarly, some festivals formats' change from year to year. Usually they are expanding, and some even run 2 or 3 contests simultaneously (E.g., HaydenFilms). Obviously, this affects the information listed on their websites, which also changes. Sometimes it's even hard to tell which video contest they're referring to. Some contests drop some or all video entrants online, after picking their winners. Again, the information here was accurate for March, April, or May, 2009.

Sometimes the festivals' websites lack organization. From my analysis of these 20 or so websites, I would guess that most of them are designed by software engineers who will not be entering the video contest at hand. Some sites are simple and user-friendly, while others are congested and aggravating. Some are easy to navigate for viewers, but hard for entrants, and some display the converse situation. In different sites, important information is placed in different places under different titles, in various tabs and drop-down boxes, or excluded entirely. Some sites have helpful "Contact Us" or "FAQ = Frequently Asked Questions" features, and some do not. And sometimes one finds that the desired information is just not there, anywhere. It is with regret that I sometimes had to list answers to basic data questions as "Unclear" or "Not Included." I can only report the data I find, or do not find, on these websites.

THE ONLINE FILM FESTIVAL DATA

This is an abbreviated listing of the data for the 22 online English – speaking video festivals, functioning in the March / April / May, 2009 time period. Originally, I recorded information on each festival regarding 14 data points. These points were: "A. Web address, B. Displays entries online, C. Displays winners online, D. Competitive fest for cash / prizes / honors, E. Judged online by viewers or others, F. Themes / Categories / Topics accepted, G. Longest Time Length accepted, H. Forum / Comments / Chat Room Provided, I. Year Established, J. Contest Open To, K. Contest Fee, L. Contest "Cycle," M. Community Best Served, and N. (My Own Verbal) Analysis." I have summarized any important or notable details and trends about the fests in the Final Data Summary.

With most or of this information online (though often where you'd least expect it!) to interested entrants and viewers, it seemed redundant to include all of it in this publication. Therefore, I've included the basics, so video makers and viewers can select the fests which best suit their needs. The data points now included below are: "A. Country, B. Web address, C. Open To, D. Categories, E. Community Best Served, and F. Analysis."

The 22 online festivals split neatly into two categories of 11 festivals each: 1. Those Associated with a "Bricks and Mortar" festival in some way, and 2. The "Stand Alone" festivals.

THE 11 ONLINE FESTIVALS ASSOCIATED WITH "B&M" FESTIVALS:

These are New England, NXT Stage / Tampa Bay, Independent Lens, Media That Matters, Machinima, South by Southwest, A.T.A.S., Shorts Non Stop, RCI Migration, NSI, and DiBa.

THE 11 ONLINE FESTIVALS WHICH "STAND ALONE" (and are not associated with a "b&cm" festival): These are Babelgum, FilmClick, HaydenFilms, Insight Youth (Methodist), GreenTeam, FilmFights, Green Unplugged, Filmaka, Callifornia,

Trigger Street, and MTVU's "BFOC" contest.

ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE VIDEO FESTIVALS OVER "B&M'S"

By their unique digital cyberspace nature, online festivals have some built-in advantages over "b&m" festivals.

1. **They are not bound by geography.** "B&m" festivals are available only to those who can physically travel to a specific "b&m" geographical location, and / or whose travel and lodging costs are affordable for each audience member. (E.g., How many of us can afford to attend the Sundance festival every year?) Online festivals are accessible to all those with a computer and internet access. Online festivals therefore may be more "democratic," serving a wider and less well-heeled audience. And while many people in poor or undeveloped areas of the world may not yet have internet access, public computers at schools, libraries, and government facilities may become viable places in the future for budding video makers and viewers to enjoy online festivals.

2. **They are not bound by time.** Unlike "b&m" festivals, with strict screening times, most online festival videos are available to viewers 24 hours per day / 7 days a week. Most sites keep the videos online from that year's competition cycle in place, and then highlight or label the winners. Videos can be seen all day, all week, all month, and all year long.

3. **They provide greater individual "portability / accessibility."** "B&M" film festivals take place in screening rooms of various types, but in fixed specific locations. With expanded wireless zones, and more powerful laptops, viewers can watch online film fest videos on their computers, but also wherever they please: in a car, a park, a field, a restaurant, on a mountain, a plane, or a boat. If they wish, they can sit, stand, walk, jog, run, or climb a tree as they watch. It's a "Have laptop, watch festival" phenomenon.

4. **They can offer multiple viewings.** At most "b&m" festivals, a single film or video is played in a single time slot, in a single location, for one showing. In online film festivals, a video can be played over and over until the viewer is satisfied, and has absorbed each piece's subtle pleasures, meanings, and storylines. Conceivably, if a film video lasted two minutes, fifty-nine seconds (2:59), a viewer could play the same piece twenty times per hour, or 480 times per day, in a video marathon. Certainly, with repeat showings always available during the viewers' most convenient time of day (E.g., They might be a "morning person," or else a lunchtime viewer at their desk), each video viewer can better enjoy a piece, than by watching a single showing at a certain time of day.

5. **They offer random access of videos at all times, and more.** With online festivals, if a viewer grows bored with a video entry, they can simply stop it, and start another film at any time. On most sites, they can even "fast-forward," "pause," and "re-start" a video if they are interrupted. Many sites also offer viewer ratings, so watchers can avoid low-scoring and possibly uninteresting videos. Some, such as the California Online Film Festival, offer 1-minute previews of short films, so viewers can select favorites, and not waste time. By contrast, a "b&m" viewer can't pause or re-start a video. They may pay for an evening of videos of poor or uneven quality, or of little interest, and have no recourse. With viewer ratings, online fests are structured to find and promote "crowd-pleasing" videos, to increase viewer satisfaction. (Of course,

whether viewer popularity is an accurate measure of an online video's artistic quality is debatable.)

6. **They save money on staff.** After the initial costs of setting up a video-maker-friendly website, an automated online festival can run the contest by itself. Videomakers follow online directions for uploading, saving each festival a "tecchie." The cyber festivals also save money on people usually hired for "b&m" fests such as administrators, ushers, projectionists, sound technicians, box office managers, food service vendors, accountants, publicity people, program writers, and managers, etc. Remember, not all film festival workers are unpaid volunteers. Some are well-paid specialists.

7. **They save money on facilities.** In my previous film festival study, the data showed that most festivals rented local movie theatres for their screenings. Online festivals save the cost of renting a theatre. They save the costs of renting offices, information booths, food kiosks, tents, and other habitats. They also save the secondary costs that might go with these habitats: insurance, heating, cooling, lighting, parking, etc.

8. **They save money on publicity / advertising / programs / copying costs.** Most "b&m" festivals provide or sell paper programs, to educate and inform viewers about that day's videos, video makers, and panels. Festivals may also spend money in newspapers, magazines, and on fliers and inserts, to advertise their existence. By contrast, most online fests have little need to advertise their existence to the online video community. They can be easily found by videomakers, who use simple internet search engines like Google, by entering phrases such as "Online Film Festival." Some online fests even gain free advertising from their parent organization's website, just as the Canadian online fest "RCI Migrations" is mentioned on the Radio Canada International site. While this researcher admits that a festival's paper program can be a moneymaker through ad revenue, conversely, these paper programs might also just break even or even lose money. Also, they cannot accommodate last-minute scheduling changes.

9. **They save resources; they are more energy-efficient or "green."** "B&m" fests, by existing in the physical world, naturally use up more resources than online festivals. They may require video makers to mail in their entries (which requires spending on delivery trucks and personnel). They use physical dwellings (such as offices, auditoriums, bathrooms, and food kiosks) which require office equipment, lighting, water, plumbing, heating and air conditioning, rest room facilities, and parking. These festivals also require food, transportation, gasoline, and lodging costs for staff and audience. All these costs disappear with online fests, as video makers send in their work through email, using up only some electrons and electricity.

10. **Many are free for video makers.** Because they lack the high overhead of most "b&m" festivals, many online fests can pass along this savings to video makers, and accept entries for free. This may be a temporary phenomenon, since online fests are new and eager to build up their number of entries. Their goal is to develop a strong yearly videomaker "return business," and to gain "legitimacy" as a valid festival to viewers. After all, a contest with 100 entries feels more prestigious, important, and legitimate than one with 10 entries.

11. **Most are free for viewers.** Again, because they lack the overhead costs of "b&m" fests, online fests can pass along the savings to viewers. Many make up their costs with sponsorships from government (E.g. Kentucky's environmental video contest and the

Canadian fests), political (E.g., Culture Unlugged), educational (E.g. The PBS fests) and corporate (E.g. Filmaka) organizations, and some use online ads. These ads are usually from audio and video equipment companies like Canon or iPod, who may also provide prizes. Online fests can also offset costs through selling viewer's personal email addresses, which many consider the "Holy Grail of advertising," since they reveal a buying pattern and "psychographic" for the consumer, which can be re-sold and even updated.

12. For viewers, they can provide a more selective focus of videos than "b&m" fests. Let's imagine that a viewer is only interested in nature videos, and only of raccoons. A "b&m" fest may offer only one night of nature films, or maybe only one nature film at all, in their whole program. And that piece may not include any raccoons, because there may not be a wide audience (or a good raccoon film that year!) for it. Online fests can offer a whole program of films on a highly selective or obscure topic, better than "b&m" fests can, because of their worldwide audience, scattered globally. They can better serve a devoted minority, or a tiny, focused target audience. Viewers don't have to settle for "One size fits all" programming, but instead can "have it their way."

13. For video makers, they can link a global community. Let's imagine that a person decides that their passion in life is to create green lime-flavored coffee, and they try to promote that cause. They might not find many like-minded people, even in their own country. Through an online political site with an online video festival, they may be able to form a global community of filmmakers passionate for that obscure cause, with members in 20 different countries, creating 20 online videos. This could not happen in a "b&m" fest, as travel costs might be prohibitive for all members to attend a proper "b&m" meeting and festival. Online fests, therefore, foster more of a "To Each His Own Festival" attitude, and perhaps even a chance to change the world through that online community, and their passionate dream. The online fests foster diversity and activism, and "bring people together."

14. They may provide an even more effective forum for film discussion through online forums. While the "b&m" festivals' panels, forums, and "q&a's" provide a place in which to meet and greet video makers, most of their time frames and opportunities are limited to one space (E.g., An auditorium) at one time (E.g., 3 p.m. – Meet the Filmmaker and Cast!). An audience member may only get one question or comment to interact with a video maker, and constructive criticism may be impossible or unwelcome. With online festivals, the situation changes. Since online viewing can be done many times, it can create a stronger understanding of a particular piece. And an online forum can become a more fruitful opportunity to engage in a long, detailed discussion with a video maker, since written comments require more time, and perhaps can provide more depth, than hastily spoken, off-the-cuff comments. Also, viewers can interact with each other better online, and discuss the video they have both just watched.

15. They may provide a more scholarly understanding of film through online links. The previously mentioned "Asia and Pacific Island" online film site features links to various journals, critiques, and comments from distinguished university film scholars, in addition to showing those very films they review. If one wished for a greater understanding of Asian and Pacific Island film, this might be a good place to start. While

many “b&m” festivals offer forums to further film understanding, these panels may be brief, and their viewpoints may be hard to remember or digest. Websites, by contrast, can offer unlimited curated material on selected topics, and this researcher thinks this feature will become a growing trend on many sites.

16. They provide a showcase for quality “also-ran” videos, when many “b&m” festivals can not. Many quality video entrants do not “make the cut” for festival showing, not because of their low quality, but because there are too many quality films in the same category. And unfortunately, some videos are ahead of their time, or are an acquired taste. By showing every entry, online fests give these films a showing, when “b&m” festivals, bound by time, space and budget constraints, cannot. Also, sometimes it’s a festival’s “runner-up” videomakers who improve, and become next year’s festival winners. Online viewer scoring can show how close these people came to winning, and give them encouragement for next year. This also encourages “repeat entrant business” for online festivals.

17. They provide “instant validation” to the young video maker (the “YouTube” Generation), and may encourage them to improve their skills, and outlook. This researcher thinks that the instantaneous, informal, friendly aspects of many online film fests perfectly suit the sensibilities of creative young people. The immediate gratification provided by online film festivals, in which posted films quickly appear online, but in a competitive context, may make young people raise their own standards and expectations from their work. It might make them view their video making as an artistic statement, or even a future career, not just as a high school “giggle” to show their buddies. To grab that young, online audience, some festivals feature links to My Space, and Facebook, online social networking sites and even Twitter. (Interestingly, preliminary data from another film festival survey from this author, reveals that few “b&m” festival managers see the “YouTube” showcase website as a threat to their festivals.)

18. They may provide a more fair and open scoring system. Some festivals use their viewers’ online scoring system to create their “first cut” or “short list” or “Film of the Week” (MTVU’s terminology) winner, to narrow their entrants for the next round of judging. A paneled jury takes those audience favorites, and votes on winners. This may prevent some first-round “smoke-filled backroom” machinations, in which judges’ politics, prejudices, biases, and connections play a part in determining the eventual contest winners. (Of course, this “short list by viewers” scoring system does nothing to negate the audience’s own politics, prejudices, biases, and connections!)

DISADVANTAGES OF ONLINE FESTIVALS VERSUS “B&M” FESTIVALS

There are some disadvantages to the online festivals, compared to the traditional “Bricks & Mortar” version.

1. They negate the festivals’ aura of “exclusivity.” Film festivals, since their creation in the late 1920s and early 1930s, have aspired to recognize and promote the cinema as an art form, not just as mere entertainment. For decades, many film festivals implied that the curated films shown within the festival were of a higher standard. These pre-approved films were promoted as aesthetic gems not found in most mainstream theatres, and appreciated only by the most sensitive connoisseurs. (E.g., The well-respected Telluride Film Festival in Colorado plays only pieces which “haven’t been shown around the North American block before,” according to their website.) This

type of appeal drew large audiences. For them, film festivals offered a special gathering by which they and other cinephiles could sample the subtle, the underrated, the offbeat, or the ignored films of their day on a large screen in select company.

In the process, film festivals also served the film makers, by adding the luster of critical and elite approval to their pieces. Festivals even helped “outsiders.” They were the only way that many Independent and offbeat films of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, made outside of the Hollywood studio system, could gain publicity, acclaim, and a distributor. This allure of “exclusivity” - the feeling that only at film festivals could certain films be seen and appreciated before moving to VHS and DVD - is permanently lost with online film festivals. With online contests, there is no longer an “exclusive club” for film makers and film lovers to join, but an open and free screen on the internet, available to all. A new paradigm has come into being.

2. Many people don't enjoy watching videos on that small, online computer screen with desktop speakers. There are still many people who prefer the high resolution, sweeping grandeur, and overwhelming impact of physically large video screens, along with the high-fidelity sound quality offered by large speakers. They prefer their films and videos shown in movie theatres, or on wide-screen television sets. These people are less receptive to small-format material shown on laptops or desk computers, and therefore they may reject online videos altogether. They're “Rejecting the message, because they don't like the messenger.” And even with today's technology, switching to “full screen mode” does not always substantially improve the quality of most online contest videos. Perhaps that will change with the better-quality “HDTV,” high-definition TV videos.

3. Online videos, with their short time lengths, low budgets, and informality, may promote amateurism and low quality. Does it take talent to create a 3-minute film or a music video? If so, how much, and what kind of talent? And can that talent work in other longer formats, such as a feature film or feature documentary? Is it even possible to tell? These questions are asked by any producer gazing at an online video fest, and looking for gifted visual storytellers. Some traditionalists would say that short films, by their nature, are structurally compromised, in that they have so little time to display a quality story. In three minutes they may only have time to display a conflict, a resolution, and a revelation. Perhaps they have an amusing “twist ending.” But they are essentially, miniatures. For these people, these short films are a cute amusement or novelty, rather than a unique and valid art form.

This researcher has great respect for short video makers, because the required brevity of the form necessitates greater focus, intensity and meaning for every line, actor, and scene in their storytelling scheme. Unlike a feature film, which has more time to examine issues and resolve tangled storylines, there can be no waste in short films. They require a strong hand from writer and director, and their low budgets foster creative solutions.

And yet, for some, short videos will always wear the badge of amateurism, because shorts don't have the time to develop depth or nuance in a character, conflict, or story. Therefore, these people feel that short video makers can never gain the experience to work in longer, traditional feature film or documentary formats. To them, these are the only benchmarks of serious, memorable storytelling. And they'll avoid online video fests, because so many cater to short films.

4. The Quality of Judges: Having viewers create an online video contest's "first cut" is a bad idea. The traditional judging system used by many "b&m" festivals has been, for viewers to vote for an "Audience Favorite" Award for each category, and for a paneled jury of industry professionals, critics, or scholars to vote for the formal winners for each category. Both camps, the public and the elite, get their champions. Still, does the average online video viewer have the acumen, sensitivity and experience to judge a moving image contest? Will that viewer really take the time to dutifully watch and score a piece? How about 10 or 100 pieces? Or will they just vote for their own video, or that of their buddy, who asked them to? And what of the video maker who comes from a large family, school, or organization, and who has many friends to vote online for his or her piece? Does he or she always win out over the rest? Who knows? We can't tell if the average online scorer is a worthy judge. But if you're the video maker, do you want a faceless person of unknown intellect and sophistication judging your year's, or your life's work?

These are important questions, since so many online festivals use the viewers to create the "short list" for their contests. Admittedly, with hundreds of videos entered into the contest, it may difficult for unpaid judges running the website to watch every piece. And yet this researcher finds the possibility of judging abuse and incompetence (especially if the numbers of viewers is small) in these online contests to be very real. If we design a contest scoring system without proper standards or safeguards, then why should we be surprised if the winning entries are capricious, mediocre, or sub-standard? And then, why be surprised if the contest then loses legitimacy and future entries?

5. Online festivals might not promote a career as well as the more established "b&m" festivals. Most online video festivals are in their infancy, and growing. Many well-heeled Hollywood producers may not think of looking at online festivals to find talent. This is why many serious film and video makers may only enter "b&m" festivals, because they are older, more established, and draw prosperous producers (and networks, production companies, directors, and actors) who might fund current and future projects. Also, since both the video maker and the moneyed few are both physically present, they may have a better chance of getting together and working together. While online bios of video makers may promote talent, for many old-fashioned film industry folk, their appeal may pale next to an in-person "meet and greet."

6. If online festivals give away the product (the videos) for free, then they can't make any money. For many online festivals, this is a central question, not easily answered, and the festivals take different approaches to their finances. Some, like the California Online Film Fest, charge viewers for content. Others, such as DiBa, charge entrants a small fee to enter certain contests. Many sell advertising on the website. Some sites, by asking for viewers' and makers' email addresses in their "free membership" approach, may hope to slowly grow a selective email list that they can sell to advertisers. Others hope that as subscribers grow, they can someday charge the eventual masses for content. And the California festival has a "Pay for Play" setup. Still, no one seems to have definitively found the most profitable and enduring setup. Of course, there are many sites who don't expect to turn a profit, such as Green Unplugged, or Kentucky's Green Team, who may just hope to reach their target audience of video makers and viewers who support and share their specific political cause.

An important question for the online festivals' financial future is: Are video makers and

viewers a desirable demographic for advertisers? This researcher guesses that these online people are probably young, creative, educated, professional, and artsy. They may be what advertisers call “early adopters” of the latest music, fashion, and technology trends. (E.g., MTVU.com’s online subscribers are all currently enrolled in college, and will probably graduate.) Some one will want to sell to them.

7. Giving the videos away for free online hurts the video makers. Some theorize that by giving away free content, online fests are exploiting, or at least, not substantially rewarding the video makers who supply them. Others say that the fests provide free publicity, and an upscale curated “buzz” of excitement for video makers and their work. (Many sites, such as MTVU’s “BFOC” even feature profiles of the video makers themselves.) But is this view too simplistic? The business model for some websites, such as the PBS site, is to give the video away for free, in the hopes that someone will enjoy the video so much, that they will pay real money for the DVD version. Other fests such as DiBa have experimented with playing their winners online in a “once-only, one day” time slot, ensuring a “sneak peak” of availability, but retaining exclusivity for the video maker. This researcher thinks the DiBa approach is a wise and acceptable compromise, especially for feature-length dramas and documentaries. Which leads us to the question, “Is there really a sales market for short videos and docs, under 10 minutes each?” While festivals like the defunct Resfest and others used to sell compilation DVDs of their festival winners, this market may still be too small and select to be profitable. Only time will tell.

8. Giving videos away for free complicates the copyright situation. Almost all online fests ask the video maker to certify that he or she owns the rights to the video and soundtrack of their piece, but numerous complications arise with the free online display. Some sites also ask the video maker to also give up the promotional rights to their piece, so the site may display the piece in a form such as an edited preview or clip. Further complications arise if some online festivals pay video makers for their work, while others don’t. A future issue for online video makers may be: Should I display my work on one exclusive online contest channel which pays me a small fee, or display my work on many non-paying contest sites for the greater collective publicity? This researcher even wonders if in the future, some of these websites won’t insert an “exclusivity” clause into the agreement, as they become the sole purveyor of that video maker’s work online.

9. Video Piracy (unauthorized duplication of copyrighted online video pieces) could become a problem. Contest sites can create safeguards to prevent this. But then, no system is foolproof.

10. Most online fests can’t play feature-length (80 minutes or more) films or documentaries in their entirety. Many online festivals at this time lack the capacity to play feature-length pieces without interruption. Instead, they advise the entrant to download their piece in 10-minute “Sections,” or in numbered “Series,” as YouTube does. For some viewers, these “Find the next video, and Press Play” interruptions may ruin their viewing pleasure.

THE DATA SUMMARY

This information is compiled from data included in this publication, and also from additional expanded data not included, for brevity’s sake. Some percentages may not

total 100%, because of the “rounding off” of numbers.

Online vs. B&M: 50% (11/22) or half, of the online festivals are associated or affiliated with a “bricks and mortar” festival.

A Regional Phenomenon: 73% (16/22) of the online English language festivals are based in the U.S.A. 14% (3/22) are based in Canada. 5% (1/22) are based in Spain. 9% are based in the borderless cyberspace world of multi-national media corporations, with one festival based in U.S.A. / India / New Zealand (Green Unplugged’s “Culture Unplugged”), and the other based in Italy / U.K. / Ireland / France / U.S.A. (Babelgum).

Sponsors: Of the 22 online fests, 5% (1/22) are sponsored by a religious organization (The United Methodist church runs the Insight Youth festival). 23% (5/22) are run by a government, regional, or civic organizations (Kentucky Green Team, Shorts Non Stop / CFC, RCI Migrations, NSI, and DiBa). 9% (2/22) are run by a multi-national corporation (Babelgum and Culture Unplugged). 5% (1/22) are run by a “Pay Per View” company (California Online F.F.). The remaining 59% (13/22) of the online fests are run by non-profit corporations and organizations, and by private organizations. (*Note: My best guess is that the most of the “b&m” festivals, associated with an online festival, receive some kind of local or civic funding, so perhaps the “government – sponsored” numbers should be larger.)

Display of all entries: 86% (19/22) of the online fests show all entries online at some point (sometimes in a “sections” or “series” form), and the other 14% (3/22) show clips or previews of entries. (Some wipe the slate clean after the contest, and leave only the winners. Some have archives, which include past winners and entrants.)

Cash Prizes: 59% (13/22) of the online fests award cash prizes to winners. 23% (5/22) award only Honors and / or material prizes to winners. 18% (4/22) were unclear on this issue. (Some of these contests are in their first year, and still getting organized.)

Judging: 23% (5/22) of the online fests are judged by the viewers only. 27% (6/22) of the fests are judged by a selected jury, panel, or staff only. 45% (10/22) are judged by a combination of both. 5% (1/22) of the fests were deemed “Unclear” on the issue.

Number of Categories (or Topics) accepted: 14% (3/22) of the online fests list that “All” videos are accepted. Of the remaining 19 fests, the average number of “Categories” accepted was 7.1, implying a wide variety of programming. For these 19 fests, the Median number of Categories accepted was 6, again implying a decent variety of programming. [*Note: I realize that using the words “Category” or “Topic” interchangeably, creates an imprecise measure of film festival diversity. Some fests accept only one topic (E.G. Kentucky’s Green Team promotes environmental causes) but allow three different video categories (E.g., The Green Team’s 30-second PSAs, Short Films, and Introductory Films Explaining New Inventions & Devices “categories”). For that fest, I would count three different “categories” or “topics,” since a PSA is not a Short Film, and neither of them is a Training Film for New Devices. Here, I am looking for a general measure of programming diversity, in that each festival accepts more than one type of video, either by dramatic content (western vs. horror film) or genre (music video vs. documentary) or other factors.]

Category Breakdown: 73% of the online fests accept documentaries or short documentaries, though some accept only one topic (E.g. RCI Migrations). 86% (19/22) of

the fests accept short films (comedy or drama). Of those 19 online fests that do, five are devoted mainly to short (under 10 minutes) films. These five are HaydenFilms, Shorts NonStop, Film Fights, DiBa, and Filmaka. And not surprisingly, most of the new “Mobile” phone device online video contests, or “Mobi-film” contests, are devoted to short films.

Accepted Time Length: 45% (10/22) of the online fests listed no limits regarding a video entrant’s Accepted Time Length. 9% (2/22) listed “200 MB” as the time length, measuring the video’s online capacity rather its length. For 9% (2/22) the Accepted Time Length varied by the category of video (E.g., music video, doc, comedy, etc.). Of the 9 online fests that listed a Time Length Cutoff, the Average Length was 17.7 minutes. Of those 9 fests, the Median Time Length Cutoff was either 10 or 30 minutes (Take your pick!).

Forums / Comments / Chat Rooms Provided: 82% (18/22) of the online fests provide a Forum, Comment Section, or Chat Room to discuss online videos, or various topics. The Film Click site offers almost 700 different forums, with viewers encouraged to create their own. 9% (2/22) of the fests have no online forum feature. For 9% (2/22) of the fests, the best answer I can list is “Unclear.”

Year established: The numbers here may be an imprecise measure, since many online festivals don’t list this data, and I had to do some detective work to find any numbers at all. Worse, some fests list this year of establishment by their “Call for Entries,” and some by the year of announcement of “Contest Winners.” Given a choice, I used each fest’s year of announcement of their “Contest Winners,” since the contest’s conclusion signified the success of their contest. My efforts reveal that 27% (6/22) of the fests list “No Year” for when they were established. Of the remaining 16 fests (or 73% of all online fests), the Average Year Established was 2007 (2007.3, actually), which means that the average contest was in their second year, which matches what I found in my initial 2008 research. However, the Median Average Year Established of these 16 fests was 2008, which implies that most are in their first year of operation, but the new data is not far off. Ultimately, I’ll conclude that the majority of the online fests are in their first or second year of operation.

Contest Fee: Of the 22 online festivals, 86% (19/22) charge no fee, or else it is “Not Listed.” This is great news for young and independent video makers with no or low budgets.

Contest “Cycle:” Of the 22 online festivals, 82% (18/22) operate on a “Yearly” cycle to judge entries and pick a winner. 9% (2/22) operate on a “Quarterly” cycle, those being the two Canadian fests, NSI and Shorts Non Stop. 5% (1/22) operate on a “Varied” cycle, the one fest being the FilmFight contest, which seems to start the contest whenever enough videos arrive, and pick a winner when enough people vote. 5% (1/22) of the fests I’ll list as having an “Unclear” contest cycle.

Community (or Communities) Best Served: The quickest, best answer to this question is that most of the 22 online fests serve the young and independent short video maker. A closer look, however, at each online fest’s “identity” (that which makes it unique or different from the others) reveals a wide variety of contests in theme, format or genre. We have an emerging “mixed bag” with: 4 contests we can label as Regional (New England, Tampa Bay, South By Southwest, DiBa), with 1 other Regional contest for “Canadians Only” (NSI), 3 contests with a “Special Focus” on Politics

(Independent Lens, Media That Matters, RCI Migrations), 2 with a “Special Focus” on “Students Only” (A.T.A.S., MTVU), 2 with a “Special Focus” on the Environment (Kentucky Green Team, Green Unplugged), 1 with a “Special Focus” on Computer Animation (Machinima), 1 with a “Special Focus” on Religion (Insight Youth United Methodist Church), 1 with a “Special Focus” on Short Films (Shorts Non Stop), 1 “Pay for Play” contest (California Online F.F.), 1 “Make That Film!” challenge (FilmFights), and 5 with a “General Artistic” focus (Babelgum, FilmClick, HaydenFilms, Filmaka, Trigger Street, with varying degrees of corporate involvement). A quick summary totals 5 regional fests, 5 “General Artistic” fests, and 12 “Special Focus” fests. And this list does not even consider the fact that many of these websites run secondary contests (E.G., Trigger, Filmaka, HaydenFilms, etc.), which are often corporate sponsor-oriented. Therefore, we probably really have close to 30 online video contests.

CONCLUSIONS

Our Average Online Film Festival: From the data, our typical English language online video festival is associated with a “b&m” fest, or else it is not. (There is a 50% chance for either status.) It is based in the U.S.A., is sponsored or run by a private or non-profit organization, displays entries online, offers cash prizes to winners, and is judged by both online viewers and a panel or jury. It accepts 7 different categories of video, including documentary and short films (comedy or dramatic), has no time length cutoff for entries, has a forum or chat room, and is in its second year of the contest. It charges no fee, and runs on a yearly cycle to run and pick winners.

So, “Are We There Yet?:” Yes, we are “there.” Since 2000, the internet, website, video production, and editing software technologies have advanced to the point where we now have numerous viable, annual, online video contests, that are popular with video makers and viewers. In the last year, the number of online festivals has increased, in both the “Stand Alone” and “B&M Associated” categories. It seems unlikely that all 22 of the online festivals listed here will disappear overnight, and so I will conclude that this phenomenon is here to stay. As newer technology arrives, the process of entering and viewing contest videos will become even easier and more convenient, helping the festivals’ popularity. And finally, the festivals seem to be gaining notice from advertisers, who seek to market to the young artsy online crowd.

Online Festival Diversity: My previous study of American film festivals revealed a stunning amount of diversity in 350 festivals, with 91 festivals participating in the study. We had “special focus” festivals celebrating racial, gender, religious, ethnic, regional, and lifestyle identities. Other “special focus” festivals celebrated the content in moving image pieces - including politics, comedy, family-oriented, music videos, horror, sci-fi, and environmental / nature films. Others celebrated particular moving image genres such as documentary, animation, computer animation, short films, non-narrative, and experimental films. The engaging storytelling ability of film seemed to make almost every identifiable group in America want to hold its own festival, in order to record and tell its own unique, personal experience. There seems to be no other art form which inspires this type of passion and universality.

Do we see something similar in our first 22 Online English – language festivals? Well, mathematically, the diversity of 22 (online) festivals can’t possibly match that of 350 (b&m) festivals, but the short answer is “Yes.” We have the 5 useful “General

Artistic” fests (Babelgun, FilmClick, HaydenFilms, Filmaka, and Trigger Street) which accept multiple genres, formats, and contents. These are our “Big Tent” festivals. But more importantly, we have the 5 regional fests celebrating their particular identities in 5 separate parts of the world (Boston / New England, SXSW in Austin / Texas, NSI’s Canada, NXT Stage in Tampa Bay / Florida, and DiBa in Barcelona / Spain). Even more importantly, we have the 12 “Special Focus” festivals. These are serving and reflecting the different needs and cultures of students (A.T.A.S. and MTVU), immigrants (RCI “Migrations”), environmentalists (Green Team, Culture Unplugged), computer animators (Machinima), “Challenge” filmmakers (Film Fights), religious people (Insight Youth Methodist), short film makers (ShortsNonStop), socially conscious people (Independent Lens, Media That Matters), and the “TV online” crowd (California Online).

55% (12/22) of the new English – language online fests are niche-oriented. With a more culturally diverse English - speaking world, the online festivals are reflecting that diversity. They are matching that demographic, in their variety of content, genre, and formats. And in that diversity, both video makers and viewers can perhaps find a happier, more fulfilling and inspiring personal and public niche for themselves, in cyberspace.

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APPENDIX

A list of the English – language Online Video Festivals and the website of each. (Compiled by Dennis Conway, current for May, 2009. Filminute Festival added by Joe Misiewicz of Ball State)

New England

<http://www.newenglandfilm.com/festival>

NXT Stage / Tampa Bay

<http://www.tampaonlinefilmfestival.com/>

Independent Lens

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/insideindies/shortsfest/>

Media That Matters

<http://www.mediathatmattersfest.org/>

Machinima

<http://www.mprem.com/omf/news.php>

South by Southwest

<http://sxsw.com/films/screenings/winners/>

A.T.A.S.

<http://cdn.emmys.tv/foundation/colleget-vawards.php>

Shorts Non Stop

<http://www.shortsnonstop.com/index.php>

* RCI

http://www.rciviva.ca/rci/migrations/flash.asp?lg=en&id_concours=8

National Screen Inst. (NSI)

http://www.nsi-canada.ca/about_the_festival.aspx

DiBa

<http://www.dibafestival.com/dibaexpress>

Babelgum

<http://www.babelgum.com/online-film-festival/>

Film Click

<http://www.filmclick.com/index.php?section=pages.index>

Hayden Films

<http://www.haydenfilms.com/Festivals/Fest2008/film/27>

* Insight Youth (Methodist)

<http://insightfilmfest.org/>

Green Team

<http://greenteam.ky.gov/filmfestival/>

Film Fights

<http://filmfights.com/>

Green Unplugged

<http://www.cultureunplugged.com/>

Filmaka

<http://www.filmaka.com/>

California

<http://www.crushedplanet.com/channel/the-california-online-film-festival>

Trigger Street

<http://www.triggerstreet.com/gyrobase/index>

MTVU's "BFOC"

<http://www.bestfilmoncampus.com/>

Filminute: International One Minute Film Festival

<http://www.filminute.com/2009/index.php>

*Note: The RCI and Insight Youth festival websites seem dormant. It is possible these contests have been discontinued.

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THE 11 ONLINE FESTIVALS ASSOCIATED WITH “B&M” FESTIVALS:

These are New England, NXT Stage / Tampa Bay, Independent Lens, Media That Matters, Machinima, South by Southwest, A.T.A.S., Shorts Non Stop, RCI Migration, NSI, and DiBa.

Online New England Film Festival

Country: USA

Website: <http://www.newenglandfilm.com/festival>

Open To: All, except for the Women’s category, whose entrants must be female and based in New England

Categories: animation, children/family, comedy, documentary, drama, and women’s
Community Best Served: New England video makers

Analysis: This well-organized community-oriented website is sponsored by the 30-year-old “b&m” New England Film Festival, and its website, NewEnglandFilm.com. The winners of the online festival get their films played at the festival’s “b&m” theatre showing in October. The site features Classified ad sections for “Jobs,” “Buy / Rent / Sell,” “Screenplays Wanted & Available,” and even for “Adult” film jobs. Helpful forums cover almost 50 topics, ranging from “Acting Schools – Help!” to “Onstage/ screen kissing.” A directory lists pre-, production, and post-production services and staff. Their email newsletter boasts over “15,000 subscribers,” and their Advertising section claims it offers “Targeted Ads,” but also “Ad Tracking” (listing who clicked on your ads and when, a useful service). This site is indispensable for the New England video maker.

NXT Stage / Tampa Bay Online Film Festival

Country: USA

Website: <http://www.tampaonlinefilmfestival.com/>

Open To: All

Categories: Drama, Comedy, Romance, Horror, Sci-Fi, Action, Music Videos, Documentaries, Experimental, Interviews, Tutorials, others.

Community Best Served: Tampa Bay video makers

Analysis: This still-developing website and its online contest are part of the older Tampa Bay Film Festival, and the “NXT Stage” prefix listed by the “Without A Box” website may be defunct. Films playing online are rated by viewers, with scores ranging from 1 (lowest) to 100 (highest). The site explains that online “Films that have over 120 votes, and average a score of over 50 will be added to [their] Online Film Festival Showcase, and their score ranking will be shown.” Plans are underway to rate films by “specific categories (story, acting, editing, sound, effects, etc).” Ads are listed on the website for Film Production schools, and local talent. This site views itself as the “voice of Tampa Indy Film,” and it is off to a good start. (*Note: This fest is not to be confused with the Tampa International Film Festival, which seems to have folded after its last fest in 2006.)

Independent Lens Online Film Festival (PBS)

Country: USA

Website: <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/insideindies/shortsfest/>

Open To: All

Categories: Animation, comedy, drama and documentary

Community Best Served: Issue – oriented independent documentarians and film-makers

Analysis: This site is sponsored by the PBS-TV documentary program of the same name, and appears on their host website. The site says that films for the program must be “compelling television,” “fair and balanced,” and “timely.” It displayed eleven finalists and three winners in the most recent online contest. Some of the shorts may appear on PBS, but nothing is guaranteed. The “Indie Resources” tab offers a huge list of helpful organizations for video makers, and the “Inside Filmmaking” tab features numerous interviews with video makers featured on the PBS program. The site also lists “Classroom” tie-ins, and a “Community Cinema” section, in which *Independent Lens* films play in over 50 cities, followed by panel discussions. There is also a “Your Lens” tab, in which video makers are encouraged to tape and send in their viewpoints, to be shown online. This is a worthwhile site for the documentary crowd, chock full of useful reference data and information.

Media That Matters Online Film Festival

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://www.mediathatmattersfest.org/>

Open To: All

Categories: Fifteen different social issues, themes, and topics

Community Best Served: Video makers with liberal or progressive leanings

Analysis: The motto is “Short Films That Inspire Action.” This festival serves fifteen different social topics, including “[criminal justice](#), [economic justice](#), [environment](#), [family & society](#), [gay / lesbian](#), [gender / women](#), [health / health advocacy](#), [human rights](#), [immigration](#), [international](#), [media](#), [politics / government](#), [racial justice](#), [religious freedom](#), and youth.” The 2009 winners displayed a wide range, from worldwide bee colony deaths, to worker rights in Argentina, to the vanishing Tibetan nomad lifestyle. There is a “Tools” tab offering a discussion guide, advice on screening the yearly winners in local communities, and setting up discussion panels. Their yearly World Premiere is held at the IFC Center in New York City, with an Awards Ceremony at HBO TV hosted by Hollywood talent such as Tim Robbins or Woody Harrelson. (*Note: This online film festival is not sponsored by a similarly-titled organization, Media Matters, which was founded later.)

Machinima Online Film Festival (in association with the Ivy Film Festival of Brown University)

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://www.mprem.com/omf/news.php>

Open To: All

Categories: 10 different categories of computer & gaming animation

Community Best Served: Computer and gaming animators

Analysis: Machinima, or “machine cinema,” according to Wikipedia, is “the use of real-time [three-dimensional](#) (3-D) graphics [rendering](#) engines to generate [computer](#)

[animation.](#)” This contest accepts categories of “Film, Series, Drama, Comedy, First Film, Music Video, Custom Content, Original Sound Design, Technical Achievement, and Outstanding Contribution.” It is judged by seven animation industry professionals, who choose from a “Short List” of pieces in each category, chosen by viewers, and winners receive a “b&m” showing at both the Machinima and the “b&m” Ivy Film Festival. Many pieces are colorful, otherworldly, and gorgeous. The “Events” tab features conferences of interest to the animation crowd, and the “Wiki” tab even lists computer animation definitions. There is even a “Facebook” page, and a “mprem” tab for legal issues regarding computer animation. Is computer animation the “art form of the 21st century?” Watch and decide. (*Note: some older computers may be unable to download the newer software viewing programs.)

South by Southwest Online Film Festival (In association with “Film in North Carolina”)

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://sxsw.com/films/screenings/winners/>

Open To: All

Categories: 9 listed, and 5 categories for the Click (mobile device) festival

Community Best Served: Young and independent video makers

Analysis: This online contest is part of the “b&m” film festival, South by Southwest, which also features a music and interactive festival, and a film trade show. The online festival includes 9 categories, including “Reel Shorts, Animated Shorts, Experimental Shorts, “Wholphin” Award, Music Videos, Texas High School, Emerging Visions, Feature Film Narrative, and Feature Film Documentary.” Clips / previews are shown online of the winners. The SXSW Click Festival is a new competition, and a “completely separate event with an entirely different selection process.” It describes itself as “a year-round initiative created to showcase short-form storytelling via mobile devices and the web.” The 5 categories include “Old School Shorts,” “Really Short Shorts,” “Animate It,” “Sound Checks (Music Videos)” and “What the F*#!?” (Author: This is not a typo.) “The finalists will be available online as Quicktime files formatted for computers and portable devices.” Interestingly, this event is being sponsored by Boston University and its Department of Communication, along with a half-dozen high-tech, production, software, and media companies.

The Academy of Television Arts & Sciences’ (A.T.A.S.) “College TV Awards,” partnered with MTVU.com

Country: USA

Website: <http://cdn.emmys.tv/foundation/collegetvawards.php>

Open to: All registered college students

Categories: Twelve different categories

Community Best Served: Undergrad and Graduate Students currently enrolled in a college, university or community college

Analysis: This is a long-running “b&m” student video festival, which is now morphing into an online video festival. The A.T.A.S. college video contest features 12 different categories, including “Animation, Children’s, Comedy, Comedy Series, Commercial, Documentary, Drama, Drama Series, Magazine, Music (best compo-

sition), Music (best use of music), and Newscast.” Entrants must also submit a 45-second promo of their work, except for the commercial category. The Gala Awards Ceremony takes place in Los Angeles every March. For this contest, A.T.A.S. has partnered with MTVU, and entrants are displayed on the MTVU.com website.

Shorts NonStop Online Film Festival, partnered with the “B&m” Telus (Mobile TV) CFC Worldwide Short Film Festival

Country: Canada

Website: <http://www.shortcutsnonstop.com/index.php>

Open To: All, but films must be use English language or Non-Dialogue

Categories: All, but “no porn, no extreme violence”

Community Best Served: Short Film or Video makers

Analysis: ShortsNonstop is a year-round competition, sponsored by the Canadian Film Centre (CFC). Based in Toronto, the CFC was founded by film maker Norman Jewison in 1988, and it also serves as a training center and nexus for film, TV and interactive media makers, and actors. For the online fest, the site says that fifteen days “After each prize deadline, 10 finalists will be selected by our programmers for promotion and distribution... Our esteemed Jury of industry professionals will select one filmmaker in each prize period to be awarded a cash prize of \$1500.” The four yearly Grand Prize winners also receive a showing at the yearly “b&m” World Wide Short F.F. There are links to video makers’ websites, and this site accepts advertising. There are also tabs for “News,” “Events,” “Jobs” and “Donate.” This is a friendly, uncluttered, attractive, easy-to-navigate site for online short video makers. Few are better.

RCI (Radio Canada International) Migrations Online Film Festival

Country: Canada

Website: http://www.rciviva.ca/rci/migrations/flash.asp?lg=en&id_concours=8

Open To: Those with short films or podcasts on immigration from across the world. This festival was conducted in two separate contests, one in English and one in French.

Categories: Videos on Migration only

Community Best Served: Video makers exploring themes of migration & immigration

Analysis: This is a unique and focused online festival on a particular topic, immigration, sponsored by the RCI, Radio Canadian International, which has been broadcasting around the world since 1945. It is a division of the CBC, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The weekly “elimination – style” competition culminates in a year-end juried panel picking winners, with an Audience Favorite winner also selected. The contest theme is further augmented by the informational resources of the website, which includes information pages listing Canadian websites serving immigrants, and language courses for children. For those political organizations looking to publicize their cause with a video contest, this is a fine model. And they accommodate two languages, English and French! (*Note: From March to April, 2009, the contest site had been “cleared.” This researcher is unsure whether the contest will continue, but he hopes it does.)

NSI (National Screen Institute) Online Short Film Festival / A&E (Cable TV

channel) Short Filmmakers Award

Country: Canada

Website: http://www.nsi-canada.ca/about_the_festival.aspx

Open To: Canadians Only

Categories: 7 different ones

Community Best Served: Canadian short video makers

Analysis: This “Canadians-only” festival calls for entries four times a year, and is sponsored by the NSI in Winnipeg, which bills itself as the national training school for writers, directors, and producers for film and TV. The seven categories accepted are: “drama, comedy, experimental, animation, sci-fi / horror, music video, or a short documentary.” There is a weekly online newsletter. Tabs include “News,” “Interviews” (mostly audio), and under “Industry Centre.” a wider selection of news, interviews (video), and training programs. This is a professional, comprehensive, and beneficial site for amateurs and professionals alike, seeking info on the Canadian media production scene. There are few ads, perhaps because the site and contest receive public funding.

DiBa (Digital Barcelona) Online Film festival

Country: Spain

Website: <http://www.dibafestival.com/dibaexpress>

Open To: All who can be in Barcelona for the “b&m” festival

Categories accepted: The “keyword” one-word theme is announced online in May, and Barcelona filmmaker teams have 72 hours to complete a short film for screening

Community Best Served: Fast-working young and independent Barcelona video makers

Analysis: This festival offers the fun and unique challenge of small pre-established video crews having to create a 3-minute short, on a theme announced online, on the spot. The crews then have 72 hours to write, act, shoot and edit their pieces, which are presented online, and if they wish, onscreen at the larger “bricks and mortar” festival. The website is in English, Spanish, and French. (*Note: These quicky “Make That Film!” challenges are becoming more popular worldwide, as this researcher stumbled into one in New York City.) There are also Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and Flickr page links to DiBa. This is a well-done site, which also serves its “b&m” festival.

THE 11 ONLINE FESTIVALS WHICH “STAND ALONE” (AND ARE NOT ASSOCIATED WITH A “B&M” FESTIVAL):

These are Babelgum, FilmClick, HaydenFilms, Insight Youth (Methodist), GreenTeam, FilmFights, Green Unplugged, Filmaka, Callifornia, Trigger Street, and MTVU’s “BFOC” contest.

Babelgum Online Film Festival

Country: Italy / U.K. / Ireland / France / USA

Website: <http://www.babelgum.com/online-film-festival/>

Open To: Short Film & Music Video Makers

Categories: 4 for the short film fest, and 3 for the music video contest

Community Best Served: Short Film and Music Video makers

Analysis: Is this the future of film festivals? This sleek, professional site from an Italian media company with Hollywood connections claims to be a “global approach to web-video with content curated by our publishers,” and a “free, revolutionary Internet and Mobile TV platform supported by advertising.” Contest categories for the online festival include “Short Film, Animation, Mini-Masterpiece, and Documentary.” Categories for the Music Video contest include “Grand Prize, Performance Video, and ‘Mobile’ Phone Video.” Babelgum’s company website claims it hopes to act as an “international social glue” and their advertising office boasts that its audience is “slightly affluent and highly engaged.” According to the company’s website, Babelgum has offices in five countries. (Do we categorize an online fest by its company’s origin, or its target market, or its video makers’ first language? Who knows?) The site’s five themed “channels” include Film, Music, Comedy, Our Earth (A “Nature and Eco-Action” Channel), and Metropolis (“Reports from the urban front line”). They take the contest seriously, giving substantial prize money, and juries featuring luminaries such as Spike Lee (for film) and Michel Gondry (for music videos). Interestingly, the contest also requires that winners take part in “reasonable Festival publicity (during the Festival period and thereafter).” The site features a product tie-in / ad with iPhone and iTunes. Babelgum’s online video themed “multi-channel” approach can be found in other sites, such as the California Online F.F.

FilmClick Online Film Festival

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://www.filmclick.com/index.php?section=pages.index>

Open To: All

Categories: 8 different ones

Community Best Served: Young video makers in search of communities

Community Best Served: Student and Independent Video Makers

Analysis: This is a friendly grassroots- and community-oriented website, featuring eight different video categories, including “Comedy, Drama, Documentary, Animation, Action, Cult Film, Art Film, and Music Video.” According to the site, “FilmClick was created to connect filmmakers, crew members, actors, and film enthusiasts to encourage true filmmaking, whether it be independent, amateur or commercial film.” Online viewers are encouraged to “register,” rate their favorites online, and join (over 700 listed) groups and online forums for “Film School,” “Production Company,” and make-your-own “User Groups.” Other helpful forums include topical groups entitled “Crew Call,” “For Sale / Trade,” “Film Talk,” and “Ideas, Comments, Suggestions, Need Help?” Whatever your station, style or status, this site definitely wants to help. It’s got the “Human Touch.”

HaydenFilms Online Film Festival

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://www.haydenfilms.com/Festivals/Fest2008/film/27>

Open To: All student and independent filmmakers

Categories: 3 contests with various categories are currently running: the HaydenFilms 4.0 Online contest, the 4500 Digital Video Competition / People’s Choice , and the

HollyShorts Film Festival

Community Best Served: Student and independent filmmakers

Analysis: The HaydenFilms Online contest is one of the oldest continuously-running online festivals, started in October 2004. Categories include “Shorts (under 10 minutes), animation, experimental and documentary films with a maximum length of 35 minutes.” Haydenfilms’ founder and president Hayden Craddolph started the website as a master’s thesis project at Kutztown State University in Kutztown, Pa. He claims his company’s mission is to “create and foster an online network of independent and student film producers, and to provide the support and resources necessary for those filmmakers to succeed in the film industry.” The Advertising section boasts a young demographic, in that “The Haydenfilms.com® audience is 60% male / 40% female, and over 62% of that audience is between the ages of 18 and 34.” This is a very stylish but occasionally confusing site, as the company runs / sponsors at least 3 different festivals, and it’s hard to separate their respective info. Interestingly, to enhance viewer judging quality, viewers’ ratings for Winner Selection only count if they watch 80% of the video, and then only if they watch ten of them. With a nationwide “Connections” section featuring a “Crew Database,” “Production Board,” and a “Resource Database,” this site is another fine info option for young video makers.

Insight Youth Online (United Methodist Church) Film Festival

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://insightfilmfest.org/>

Open To: Ages 12-18, “All United Methodist youth groups, anywhere in the world,” which are “sponsored by a church and have an adult leader,” with the writer or director being in junior high or high school

Categories: 30- to 60-second “faith-based” commercials only , on the topic of “faith or spirituality”

Community Best Served: Teenage Methodist video makers

Analysis: This is an uncluttered, easy-to-navigate site, lacking ads (due to its religious sponsor?), all of which are rare in the online festival genre. Viewers get to vote and comment on each video (and many displayed do not seem to fit the 30 or 60 second formats). The site is tailored to its young, amateur audience, offering tabs on useful topics such as “Finding A Camera,” “Getting Your Ideas Down on Paper,” and “Putting it all Together (Editing).” A contest timetable is not listed, and this contest may even have folded, since it only lists the 2007 winners. If so, this researcher thinks that’s a shame, as a film festival for young church groups seems to be a fun, exciting, and engaging way for young people examine, promote, and “perform” their religious spirit.

Green Team (Kentucky Sustainable Environmental Practices) Online Film Festival, in association with the Louisville Film Society

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://greenteam.ky.gov/filmfestival/>

Open To: All

Categories: 4 environmentally – themed categories

Community Best Served: Kentucky video makers with environmental interests

Analysis: This is a fun concept and contest, sponsored by Kentucky’s First Lady

Jane Beshear, and championed by Kentucky's own Hollywood actress, Ashley Judd, who participates in a humorous online "Rules" video made by children. All entrants are displayed on the website YouTube.com, with the Top Ten Finalists also listed on the GreenTeamKentucky.Gov site. Still in its first year, the contest encourages video makers to promote environmental themes in three different categories, including "30 second PSAs, Short Films, Introductory Films Explaining New Devices." The final judging panel includes celebrities such as Judd, environmental activist Robert Kennedy, Jr., and film director Gus Van Sant. This is an excellent video exercise for school groups, and it perfectly dovetails with the built-in energy-saving aspects of online film fests. This researcher feels every state should promote an online contest like this, and commends Kentucky for being the first.

FilmFights Online Film Festival

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://filmfights.com/>

Open To: All

Categories: A theme is suggested, and entrants create their own story on that theme

Community Best Served: Young and informal short video makers

Analysis: Like a challenge? In this site, video makers are given a theme to execute, and the results are judged online. There is a "Due Date" listed, and apparently when enough films arrive, the "fight" is on. When we looked, 6 short films were in competition on the theme of "Writer's Block." This site's style is informal, grassroots and low-budget, with entrants also displayed on YouTube.com. The next "Film Fight" story Idea is that a main character receives a package, which is "unexpected." While some videos' quality here is just a step above YouTube, at least the pieces are energetic and fun. This is a "Make That Film!" challenge online, and it's a useful exercise for young filmmakers. Ultimately, this contest and site have the playful charm of a backyard family wrestling match.

Green Unplugged Online Film Festival (Sponsored by CultureUnplugged.com)

Country: U.S.A. / India / New Zealand

Website: <http://www.cultureunplugged.com/>

Open To: All

Categories: "Films on Social / Cultural / Environmental Issues," with 12 genres listed

Community Best Served: Young video makers, especially those covering multi-cultural or spiritual topics

Analysis: Culture Unplugged Studios describes itself as a "production / distribution company," "committed to contemplate and contribute to our personal as well as collective spiritual need of the time. Our focus is on the inner + inter- cultural expression." They have just concluded their first contest. The 12 genres accepted include "[Action](#), [Animation](#), [Comedy](#), [Documentary](#), [Drama](#), [Experimental](#), [Family](#), [Fitness](#), [Horror](#), [Musical](#), [Sci-Fi](#), TV." There are site tabs for "Storytellers" and "Truth Seekers," and the contest winners certainly seem varied in content, and multi-cultural in scope. The "Culture Unplugged" people also have a Facebook page, to gain new viewers, and like other online fests, they have a "Mobi-Film" contest. Interestingly, the site asks entrants

to mail their videos to offices in India, San Francisco, or New Zealand. (This author again wonders if this is an Indian, American, or New Zealand site, and concludes that it doesn't matter.) Their next contest theme is "Humanity Explored."

Filmaka Online Short Film Festival

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://www.filmaka.com/>

Open To: All

Categories: There are three contests here – for short film, documentary, and "Hard Times" (Explain your current personal "Hard Times" story).

Community Best Served: Young and independent video makers, especially those who seek to work in Hollywood

Analysis: The Filmaka multi-media company is the brainchild of Deepak Nayar, who started in India working with Merchant / Ivory Productions, and Thomas Augsburg, who hails from Germany. They are both now based in Los Angeles. This contest features a sleek and beautiful website, and seeks to find talent whose properties can be expanded into longer versions, for various media windows. The site offers short profiles of contest winners, and includes "heavy hitters" on the various juries, including filmmakers Werner Herzog and Wim Wenders. (Personal interviews and comments by these people are included on the site.) While there are product tie-ins with contests, there is little advertising. Video makers must survive more than one round of competition, to advance in the contests and make longer videos. Winners of the three contests receive awards ranging from cash to development deals. The site also mentions a recent Music Video competition, sponsored by Lincoln automobiles, and a recent screenwriting contest ("Mustang Stories") sponsored by Mustang. This site seems to be well-connected with Hollywood people, and it might perhaps be in a better position than others to advance video makers into big-budget feature and documentary careers.

California Online Film Festival

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://www.crushedplanet.com/channel/the-california-online-film-festival>

Open To: All Registered Members

Categories: 6 different ones, by content

Community Best Served: Good question. It's trying to please many different audiences.

Analysis: This contest website is sponsored by CrushedPlanet.com, a website started by the Gantz brothers, the "award-winning filmmakers" who made the TV reality show, "Taxicab Confessions." The site shows trailers of contest entries, then charges viewers to see them in full length. Registered members may download entries for the contest for free, but the site offers only a "pay to view" option to viewers. The six viewing "channels" match the six categories of the contest, including "The War On Comedy" for comedy, "Turn Back Now" for "animation and grownups," "Joke Love" for humorous dating (site not yet active), "Environmaniacs" for environmental films, "Sex and the Psyche" for "relationship" films, and "Tell A Vision" for fiction and non-fiction films. There are plans for ten more "channels." This is not the only website using a multi-channel video setup (Babelgum is another). The concept appeals to the "It's like watch-

ing TV!” audience. But will this site’s version work? Will viewers really pay one dollar to watch a 5 minute short film online, when cable TV offers hundreds of channels 24/7 for \$50 per month? And is this a short film site, a comedy site, or a soft-core porn site? Ultimately, the scope of this site seems too broad. By trying to please too many audiences, it may please none.

Trigger Street Online Short Film Festival

Country: U.S.A.

Website: <http://www.triggerstreet.com/gyrobase/index>

Open To: All registered members (registration is free) for short film contest, but only U.S. citizens for Stella Artois contest

Categories: 16 different categories in the short film contest, and themes of “sacrifice” and “perfection” in the Stella Artois-sponsored contest

Community Best Served: Young and independent short video makers

Comments: According to the website, “TriggerStreet.com was founded in 2002 by two - time Academy Award winner Kevin Spacey and producer Dana Brunetti as an interactive mechanism, to discover and showcase emerging filmmaking and writing talent.” It was named after Spacey’s production company, Trigger Street, in Los Angeles. The online short film fest accepts sixteen different categories, including: “Action, Adventure, Animated, Children / Family, Comedy, Crime, Doc, Drama, Foreign, Historical, Horror, Mystery / Suspense, Political, Romance, Sci-Fi / Fantasy, and Western.” Only registered members can enter and watch videos. The current jury includes rock music stars such as Roger Waters, and film actors like Robin Williams. The site also promotes a “Screenplay of the Month” contest, and offers tabs to promote video maker “Profiles,” and “Screenplays, Short Stories, Books, and Comics.” There is also a separate short film contest sponsored by Belgian beer company, Stella Artois, with a \$50,000 first prize, open to U.S. citizens only, on the topics of “sacrifice,” and “perfection.”

MTVU.com’s “Best Film on Campus” (BFOC) Online Film Contest

Country: USA

Website: <http://www.bestfilmoncampus.com/>

Open To: All currently enrolled students, who register their “profile”

Categories: All

Community Best Served: Student Video makers

Analysis: This contest is sponsored by the cable music network MTV, and MTVU.com, a college music television channel broadcasting to more than 750 campuses. (MTVU programs include shows such as “Sex Cred with Dr. Ruth,” and “Does This Look Infected?”) Viewers rate videos and “assist” MTV judges, but the “Film of the Week,” which advances in the contest, is chosen by MTV staffers. In the process, the clever MTV network gains the email addresses of video – oriented college students, who must register their “profile” (including age) to enter the contest, for future use. The site features ads for musical acts, their CDs, current films, household products, and a Facebook link. MTVU.com also displays musicians, who ask campus video makers to create music videos for them, and a “Breaking the Video” feature, which shows these videos online. The “BFOC” winner receives their award live at the televised “MTV Movie Awards Live” Show in Los Angeles, which includes a development deal for them



Jane B. Singer
University of Central
Lancashire/University
of Iowa

BEA Thanks
AEJMC for
permission to use
this award winning
article.

JANE SINGER WINS FUTURE OF JOURNALISM CONTEST

2009 is a year of change. And nowhere is that more evident than on our campuses and in our media professions. This August, journalism and mass communication educators from across the globe will gather in Boston to share tips on how to survive and thrive in today's evolving world. To kick off our summer convention, AEJMC asked [everyone] to imagine what the future of journalism and mass communication might look like.

17 innovative submissions were entered overall, ranging from 140-character tweets to unpublished book chapters to graphic designs and even poetry. 12 judges from advertising, education and new media and others, narrowed entries down to three. And after a membership-wide vote, Jane Singer, University of Central Lancashire and University of Iowa, was selected as the winner for her entry, "Bird's-eye View."

Singer wins complementary registration to the 2009 AEJMC Boston convention and will work with editors to produce her article with United Press International.

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Journalism will survive because it fills an important social need. But the shape of the industry and the jobs of industry workers obviously already are changing dramatically, and that change will continue. Here is one blue-sky scenario of how the not-too-distant future might look for our graduates.

THE JOURNALIST: For full-time employees, career progression is from entry-level work primarily focused on maintaining the free version of the website; through a newsroom apprenticeship, potentially in combination with an advanced university degree, to develop and refine skills of investigation, analysis, comment and/or management; to a senior role in those (or other emerging) areas, with primary focus on maintaining and enhancing the fee-based legacy and online products – the "value added" components.

THE PLATFORM: The website houses all content. Basic information, including routine coverage (local and wire), is free and continually updated; it is supplemented by user contributions of various types and in various forms. Original niche content and labor-intensive information (results of investigative

reporting, multimedia packages, databases, etc.), are available online for those who pay for them in one way or another; newly developed products (for instance, unique content delivered to mobile phones) also may be available only to fee-paying users.

Advertising continues to generate revenue but makes a lesser overall contribution than in the past. In general, it contributes toward maintenance of the basic, free online product while users underwrite a greater share of the cost of the more expensive – but also unique and more valuable – journalistic material. Savvy companies can be profitable, but with much smaller margins than in the recent past.

The legacy print product likely decreases in both frequency and volume but increases in cost, with an emphasis on quality, primarily from depth of coverage and commentary; in essence, it becomes a local “news and views” magazine, with a smaller circulation than in the past. It also carries advertising. The legacy television/radio news product ceases to exist apart from the internet, which is accessible on a variety of non-computer platforms; all “broadcast” content is carried online, some for free and some for a fee; it too has some advertising support.

... And PUBLIC RELATIONS: The media organization’s website also houses press releases, clearly labeled but not re-edited by journalists. Public relations practitioners gain direct access to, and interaction with, readers.

Going even further out on a limb, I offer some speculative details on the following pages.

* THE INCUBATING JOURNALIST: Undergraduate journalism education

This includes, in addition to the overall value of a university education that ideally develops abilities to learn, think, experiment, focus, socialize and grow:

- Preparation for entry-level job that includes training and practice in multi-platform content creation and maintenance, basic updates, routine reporting, editing and self-editing, blogging and working with users. Basic contextual information about journalists and journalism – law, ethics, history, social/cultural roles – also is part of this education.
- Preparation for career advancement that builds on the basics through training and practice in such areas as investigative reporting, analyzing information (in multiple formats), producing commentary, developing a personal voice, planning and creating multimedia information packages, and so on. Given accreditation limitations, any given student can gain familiarity through coursework with only a subset of these.
- Preparation for specialization that focuses more attention on / advising about content and structure of courses outside journalism than is currently provided, with an eye toward development of a marketable area of expertise for the student.

Although oriented toward journalism, this structure also serves students who plan (or stumble into) other careers. It emphasizes communication skills, self-presentation, and relationships with others outside the occupation, as well as “reporting and writing.”

* THE FLEDGLING JOURNALIST: Entry-level employment

The entry-level journalist is a basic multi-platform storyteller, with primary emphasis on maintaining the media organization’s website. The job includes:

- Information gathering (online, by phone, in person), using words, images and sound.
- Creating and updating primarily short text/visual/audio items based on info obtained; writing accompanying text (headlines, captions, explainers, etc.); incorporat-

ing links

- Blogging, either through contributions to a group blog or through individual blog in area of expertise

- Developing and incorporating options for user contributions to the journalistic product and engaging with users in various ways (comment threads, social networking, etc.), as well as promoting opportunities for user participation. (User announcements and other similar contributions are handled by PR practitioners; see below.)

- Adapting selected content for legacy products such as the printed newspaper.

The additional time needed to do these multi-faceted tasks comes at least in part from the elimination of time now spent reconfiguring press releases. Material from press releases is housed, unedited but clearly labeled, on the website, likely both in a separate section containing all press releases and another section with content organized by subject area. Users also can contribute their own press releases, announcements, etc.

* **LEARNING TO FLY: The newsroom apprenticeship**

Entry-level work expands over time to accommodate input into more sophisticated journalistic products. At some point within the journalist's first year or two in the newsroom, time is allocated for an in-house apprenticeship with a more senior staffer, in conjunction with ongoing duties; for instance, the journalist might work with a mentor one day a week for some period. Depending on the journalist's personal interests and talents, options might include working with an experienced reporter on an investigation; developing a new information database; creating a visual feature; planning coverage of an ongoing event (such as a political campaign) or issue; and so on.

This in-house training may be combined with a focused master's degree program or other outside professional development work (for instance, through institutions such as Poynter or the American Press Institute). This ongoing education should particularly encourage expansion of knowledge in a niche area (politics, sports, economics, etc.), as well as extension and refinement of skills suiting the journalist's interests and talents. Eventually, the journalist is ready for promotion to a senior newsroom position.

* **TAKING WING: Senior journalists**

More experienced journalists produce the "value-added" content, including most of the material that requires payment to access, either online or in the legacy product or both. This includes the results of more in-depth reporting and writing (which there is time to do because the entry-level colleagues are handling the routine coverage and PR practitioners are responsible for disseminating their own content). It also includes, among other things, provision of analysis and commentary; development of large-scale collaborative projects, including user-journalist collaborations; and creation of multi-media packages around a particular topic or issue. In short, these journalists produce the content that others – including others outside the newsroom, such as bloggers or other "citizen journalists" -- have neither the time nor the skills to create.

Senior journalists also move into supervisory jobs as editors, producers and managers. They plan and develop new content areas and applications. They establish and maintain open channels of communication with users – for idea generation, for content creation or contribution, and for feedback. And they serve as mentors to junior colleagues, particularly through the in-house apprenticeship programs outlined above.

* **AND IN A NEARBY NEST: Public relations practitioners**

PR practitioners follow a similar career path. Essentially, they do the same work as jour-

nalists in this scenario; the core difference is (as now) in their loyalty to a particular client or company rather than to the overall public. Press releases, clearly labeled as such, run unaltered on media organization websites, which essentially act as information hubs or local/regional/national portals. They serve as “tip sheets” for journalists but are kept distinct from the journalistic product. Users also contribute their own news releases, announcements, photos, etc. PR practitioners handle the job of processing these.

Jane B. Singer is the Johnston Press Chair in Digital Journalism at the University of Central Lancashire and an associate professor in the University of Iowa School of Journalism and Mass Communication. Her research explores digital journalism, including changing roles, perceptions, norms and practices. Before earning her Ph.D. in journalism from the University of Missouri, she was the first news manager of Prodigy Interactive Services. She also has worked as a newspaper reporter and editor. She currently is president of Kappa Tau Alpha, the national journalism honor society.

Read Singer’s winning entry: Bird’s-eye View online:

<http://aejmc.org/topics/2009/05/bird%E2%80%99s-eye-view/>

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DEFINING “ADJUNCT” AREN’T WE ALL JUST “FACULTY?”

Lynn Disbrow, Ph.D., Director, Educational Policies Board

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www.natcom.org

While the term “adjunct” has a relatively consistent definition among users, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the National Education Association (NEA) use the term “contingent” faculty as opposed to “adjunct.” The key to defining the terminology is the temporary nature of employment. The Integrated Postsecondary Data System defines adjunct faculty as temporary, or auxiliary, non-tenure track faculty. No clear path to permanent employment is what separates these positions from their tenure-track counterparts.

The irony in the use of “contingent” to describe non-tenure track faculty is that these faculty positions are anything but unplanned, although the professionals who fill them may change on a regular basis. Adjunct faculty members comprised 47.6% of instructional faculty in degree-granting institutions in the most recent data available from the National Center for Education Statistics. Enrollments demand departments offer more course sections than may be taught by their tenure-track faculty and must rely on adjuncts to cover the gap. The use of the term “adjunct” implies that these faculty members are auxiliary and not necessarily a part of the traditional faculty. Yet, most departments could not operate without them.

Budget constraints, fluctuating enrollments, and available expertise all create a dynamic personnel milieu that requires the presence of adjunct faculty positions. This growing adjunct population has received warranted attention from unions and professional associations. The pushback to replace adjunct positions with tenure-track lines, as suggested by accrediting organizations, is shifting to properly defining the adjunct role. The AAUP argues that institutions should limit the amount of time one can work as an adjunct before job protection would come into play. Our National Communication Association states that the ratio of adjuncts and part-time faculty to full-time faculty should be appropriate to each institutional mission and comparable to similar programs across the country. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) argues that adjuncts should teach less than 25% of courses in any department. With 20% of its membership comprised of adjunct faculty, the NEA hopes to encourage planning and create an environment that supports contingents as opposed to “contingency.” This shift seeks to preserve the livelihoods of those who depend upon adjunct

teaching, by improving the pay and working conditions for adjuncts.

The adjunct faculty member is a vital and honored member of many departmental faculties. They are an afterthought in others. Clearly, this “temporary,” “auxiliary” academic workforce is not disappearing from view. Logic and respect demand we continue the adjunct discussion toward an acceptable and realistic outcome for all.

VOICES FROM THE MARGINS

In this month’s column on voices from the margins we hear from Jennifer Babcock, a full-time adjunct at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. As she adeptly notes, adjunct faculty are an important and essential part of our discipline. I’d appreciate your thoughts via a posting on CRTnet about how we can provide more attention to the adjunct voice in our larger disciplinary discussion.

THE MARGINALIZED ADJUNCT: FINDING A VOICE WITHIN THE DISCIPLINE

Jennifer Babcock, West Chester University

“Why are you going to NCA?” This is a question I was asked last fall by both tenured faculty and fellow adjuncts at my institution. The query was not intended to question my right to attend NCA, rather, my colleagues were asking “what is available to you as an adjunct at an NCA conference?” And that is an excellent question. How does NCA serve the adjunct?

Before I directly address the issue of how NCA serves the adjunct, let me pose another question: I wonder how many of my fellow adjuncts will read this article? Not many, I would guess, because a subscription to *Spectra* requires membership in NCA. For most adjuncts, that expense would not be reimbursed by their employer, nor would the costs associated with registration and travel for the NCA conference. For most of us, participation in this organization reflects a personal belief in the importance of maintaining ties to the traditional academy, and we are willing to bear the financial burden in order to stay connected. As one of my colleagues framed it, “I continue to be active in NCA, because participating makes me feel like a part of something larger than myself, broader in scope than the minutia of activities and assignments (which threaten to overwhelm the adjunct if s/he’s not careful to take a breather or two).” The engagement we have with our students is important, and participation in NCA enriches that engagement.

But let me digress briefly, and consider the adjunct who is not a member of NCA. Are they any less a member of the communication discipline? I recently asked fellow adjuncts at several institutions, whom I know are not NCA members, whether or not they thought of themselves as members of the discipline. The answer was a resounding “yes!” People spoke passionately about their dedication to good classroom teaching, the publications they read to stay on top of new teaching ideas, and their efforts to apply “real world” experiences to the communication concepts and theories they share with students. These are people who consciously seek connections between their non-academic lives and their work as communication instructors, and all of them do that without the institutional support of a professional organization like NCA.

This is all anecdotal evidence of adjunct commitment to the communication discipline, I understand. But I feel compelled to share these stories as a way to counteract headlines, which I fear will only confirm the view of some that adjuncts are less capable

of, less committed to, or less energized by excellent teaching than our tenured and tenure-track colleagues who are unquestionably members of the communication discipline. In November, 2008 the following headline fairly screamed from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*: “Use of Part-Time Instructors Tied to Lower Student Success.” For those of us who see ourselves as a vital piece of the pedagogical pie, this is a devastating indictment.

I have no reason to doubt the soundness of the studies cited in this article. If it's true that lower student success is partially tied to the use of part-time faculty, then we as a discipline have a big problem on our hands. That same Chronicle article cites the following Department of Education statistics: 46 percent of the nation's four year college faculty members are part-time, and 67 percent of the faculty at community colleges are part-time. So what are we to do?

Part of the problem lies in the lack of resources available to many adjuncts. It's hard to be as accessible as our students need us to be without offices, phones, easy access to photocopiers, and all the other utilitarian resources that tenured and tenure-track faculty take for granted. If adjuncts are forced by their part-time status to take on jobs at other schools or jobs outside academia, the time spent travelling between home and two or more places of work eats into the time we could be developing new assignments and activities, or providing quality feedback on the homework we hand back. Departments should anticipate these barriers to excellent teaching, and mitigate them wherever possible.

Back to the original question: how does NCA serve the adjunct? Well, I think, and I detect a commitment to even stronger support from NCA for the adjunct community. The NCA conference has always had a substantial number of panels dedicated to pedagogical topics. Of course, the G.I.F.T.S. sessions are a valuable way for adjuncts to collect new and interesting activities for their teaching toolbox. And at the most recent NCA conference in San Diego, I was pleased to note panel sessions and a focus group session dedicated solely to the challenges faced by adjunct instructors. One suggestion for ongoing support is to create a new affiliate group for adjuncts. Although many of us are members of the community college affiliate, not all adjuncts teach at community colleges. The adjunct faces unique challenges to their instructional objectives that may be well-served by a discrete affiliation group. A second suggestion is to create a less expensive membership level and conference fee for adjuncts. This would go a long way toward addressing the suspicion I voiced at the beginning of this article: there are few adjuncts who are members of NCA. NCA would benefit financially from the increased membership, and adjuncts would obviously benefit from active participation in the most prominent professional association in their field.

One of the difficulties in addressing the challenges faced by adjuncts is that we are a varied group (part-time, full-time, teaching-is-what-I-am-meant-to-do, just-stopping-here-on-the-way-to-a-terminal-degree-and-a-tenured-position) working in states with different labor laws, and served by a variety of unions who provide differing levels of job security. It is not the mission of NCA to become involved in the (important) minutia of department budget allocations and collective bargaining agreements. But NCA can continue to be a site where adjuncts have the opportunity to gather, exchange ideas, and find a stronger voice within the discipline.

Let me pose the original question one last time. How does NCA serve the adjunct?

Well. But we can do better.

Jennifer Babcock is a full-time adjunct at West Chester University who looks forward to a long relationship with NCA.

FINDING QUALIFIED ADJUNCTS: ONE PROBLEM, ONE SOLUTION

Nancy Willets, Cape Cod Community College

It seems to be the curse of Communication studies, the perception that “anyone can teach the Basic Course.” What we know is that the Basic Course is the most crucial time for us to introduce students to the field, and “just anyone” is a dangerous road to go down. Whether you are at a large university, or a small community college, finding qualified adjuncts to teach the basic course is becoming more challenging each semester. As our enrollments increased, it fell to me as department chair to find more adjuncts. Committed to only hiring those with a degree in communication, as opposed to all of those who applied because they “just knew they could do a good job”, I knew I had to get creative.

Along came an “older” student, who was completing her master’s degree while working at the local hospital as an interpreter. She had done some teaching in her native country, and was anxious to find work as a college instructor. But with no college teaching experience, I was reluctant to turn a class over to her. That’s when creativity paid off.

I enlisted the aid of one of our most experienced adjuncts who taught a section of the Basic Course at night. I asked her if she would allow this “newbie” to shadow her, much the same way I did as a graduate student. Since our new person was so committed to reaching her goal of teaching, she was more than happy to dedicate a semester similar to student teaching experiences. While she completed her master’s degree, she was able to learn the course curriculum, grading techniques, student exercises, and the culture of our college under the guidance of one of our best instructors. She was thrilled to be given the opportunity.

The adjunct mentor had a wonderful experience as well. She found this to be a rejuvenating experience, finding new meaning in her own teaching with the fresh eyes of one who was brand new to teaching and to the course.

I was relieved to know that both instructors and students were in good hands, having each other for support.

The end result, our department has gained an outstanding new adjunct. Students have raved about our new instructor, finding her knowledgeable, challenging, interesting, enthusiastic about teaching, and connected to students. She is now enjoying her third semester as a respected member of our faculty.

Professionals Enter Academia: Deal or No Deal?

No matter how hard I try, I will never forget the financial management class I took my undergraduate senior year. With a student body of 3,000, the faculty and students tend to get to know one another quickly, taking multiple classes together. The first day of this particular class, the professor quietly handed out materials and went straight to business; a telltale sign that she was from beyond the walls of academia. Most of my professors made small talk with their students, having had them several times, usually asking how they spent their break or what type of classes they had lined up for the new

quarter. Not this teacher. She was all about what we were there for- an education, and specifically financial management. As she began the typical first day spiel about herself she told us that this was her first time teaching, but she had years of experience in the field. I don't recall all the specifics, but I do remember that she was still working for the company that she spoke of and was just teaching this one class to help the university. I also remember thinking that this was going to be the easiest "A" that I would ever earn due to the fact that she was not a full-time teacher and would be less harsh with grades. I soon found that I could not be more wrong.

Such part-time professionals run the gamut from brilliantly spectacular to monotonously boring. I just happen to experience the latter which includes several of the disadvantages that I will address in this article. Not all professionals that come to the classroom are horrible. In fact, some are better than those that have been tenured and are still regurgitating the same lecture they did 20 years ago. Let's evaluate some of the pros and cons of inviting the professional to teach.

One negative of hiring a professional to teach a class is the lack of teaching experience. Some professionals really struggle with the delivery of material. When he or she is so closely connected with a specific body of content, it can be difficult for him or her to step back and evaluate what needs to be taught in order to meet the needs of the students. Things that might seem like common knowledge to the professional who has practiced for years in the field may be a new concept that is not understood by the students. Furthermore, the professional may have a deep understanding of the content that is being taught, yet he or she may have no idea how to best convey that material to students.

Availability is yet another downfall to many professionals that enter the academy. When professionals take time out of their days to teach classes in their areas of expertise, most likely they are night or weekend classes in order to continue with their full-time job. Holding an office hour is usually mandatory, yet not all students can make those hours. On the other hand, professionals usually do not have excessive time to meet outside those office hours. Availability of the professional is not only problematic for students, but also for acclimating themselves to the rest of the faculty and staff.

Not all aspects involving professionals teaching are negative. In fact, there are quite a few positive aspects to hiring professionals to teach specialized classes. First off, professionals that come from the field offer a fresh perspective that is different than the institutional ways that often become embedded in university systems. Because these professionals have not been "trained" to teach, they offer a different teaching style. This can be attractive to students as their style can be very different from the traditional methods.

Another pro for professionals is their real-world experience and examples that they are able to share. By maintaining both professional and teaching lives, students benefit from hearing examples that are current, relevant, and sometimes more applicable than those found in textbooks. Take, for example, in the public relations field in which I now teach: crisis situations happen frequently: an example in a book is not nearly as exciting as hearing someone recall that experienced crisis as experienced first-hand, fully able to account for every aspect of the situation with detailed recollection of the event. There is something to be said for engaging students with personal accounts. Somehow it makes it that much more real.

The double life can also have another advantage: connections. It is easy for the professional to maintain connections that can be very advantageous for his or her students. Not only can students use these contacts for networking, but full-time faculty members may be able to capitalize on the professional contacts for their networks as well.

A final advantage worth noting, especially in the current economic state, is the cost of the professional part-timer. Not having to pay near the salary nor offer any type of benefit package is a huge plus for the university that hires these experts to teach. If budgets are cut and purse strings tightened, professionals are a cost-efficient solution.

When it comes down to it, professionals entering academia is a toss-up. Every case needs to be evaluated separately. As for the professional that taught my financial management class- she did not get invited back. I guess she had too many complaints from the students that she was not able to relate the material to them in an understandable manner. Granted she may have been top notch at what she did in the field but unable to relay that information to her class. When it all comes down to the bottom line, is not educating students what we strive to achieve? If it is a professional who teaches the material or a full-time faculty member, we all just want our students to learn and gain a deeper understanding for that in which we are so passionate.

Alisa Agozzino, M.A., is finishing her Ph.D. at Bowling Green State University and working as a Visiting Instructor of Public Relations at Ohio Northern University. Her research interests include public relations and social media.

WHAT CAN COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENTS DO TO SUPPORT ADJUNCT FACULTY?

Phil Backlund, Ph.D., Central Washington University

The opening of a new academic year is usually an exciting time, filled with meetings and plans for the coming term. Following this pattern, the Communication Department of a large university held its opening fall faculty meeting on a Saturday. Attending were thirty tenure track faculty and approximately fifty adjunct faculty who teach both general education and introductory classes for the department's six hundred majors. What made this meeting unusual was the fact that the gathering was attended by the college dean and the university provost. After some opening comments by the department chair, the provost took the floor. His message was remarkable in that he focused his comments on the adjuncts. He spoke of their value to the university and to the department. He told them: "You are the front line of the university, you are the faculty from whom our students take their first classes. You set the tone for the entire university." He went on in this manner for a few more minutes, talking about the importance of making sure all adjuncts have the support and resources they need to do an effective job, and how much the university appreciates their work.

Does this sound typical? How many universities so obviously demonstrate value and support for non-tenure track faculty? Not many. What is more typical is a statement by A. G. Monaco, senior human resources official at the University of Akron who said that "Wal-Mart is a more honest employer of part-time employees adjunct faculty with respect as professionals?"

To begin with, the literature is now referring to non tenure-track faculty as “contingent faculty,” a term that includes both part-and full-time faculty who are appointed off the tenure track. The term calls attention to the usually tenuous relationship between academic institutions and the part-and full-time faculty members who teach in them.

To illustrate part of the problem, contingent faculty now account for about half of all faculty appointments in American higher education. Various groups such as AAUP have commented extensively on the danger of over-reliance on contingent faculty, the potential (and actuality) for abuse, and offered suggestions for improving the working context for these important faculty.

These academic groups have also discussed the problems encountered by contingent faculty. The list includes few (in any) opportunities for professional advancement, an uncertain future, performance that may not be regularly reviewed or rewarded, and exclusion from the governing structures of the departments and institutions that appoint them. Many contingent faculty, especially those who work part time, express uncertainty about what rights and privileges they are due as faculty members. In addition, they are frequently confronted with reminders of their lack of status. The isolation of contingent faculty keeps them from opportunities to interact with their tenure-track colleagues and from scholarly pursuits. Taken together, these inequities can both weaken the profession, diminish its capacity to serve students, and dispirit this faculty.

If an institution truly wants to treat contingent faculty as members of the academic community, and to give them the support they deserve, what might a department do?

1. While not sufficient, like the example above, be vocal about the value of and support for contingent faculty.
2. Develop a clear description of the specific professional duties required. These guidelines should address; a) hiring, reviewing, and teaching assignment with processes comparable to those established for tenure-track faculty; b) adequate introduction to teaching assignments, department, and institution; c) eligibility for incentives for professional development, including merit raises and funds for research and travel d) provisions for, as appropriate, participation in departmental and institutional governance; and e) clear procedures for how the department will respond to downturns in enrollment.
3. Be honest about job prospects with those who are hired. Many new contingent faculty believe that if they work hard, the institution will hire them for full-time jobs. If that is not true, say so.
4. Allow for multiple types of contracts. Compensation and fringe benefits should be equitable with tenure-track faculty, perhaps including prorated compensation and equal access to benefits. Contracts should include provisions for reasonable access to the institution's grievance procedure.
5. Tenure should be an option when the contract extends indefinitely.
6. If tenure is not an option, extended term appointments or seniority-based security should be defined so as to give greater appointment stability. Stability opens the way for the fuller integration of contingent faculty into the institution, thus reducing frequent turnover.
7. Performance should be regularly evaluated with established criteria appropriate to the position.
8. Provide the support conditions necessary to perform assigned duties in a profes-

sional manner, including such things as appropriate office space and supplies, support services, and equipment.

9. Contingent appointments should be structured to involve, at least to some extent, the full range of faculty responsibilities, including teaching activities both in and outside the classroom, scholarly pursuits, and service opportunities that support the institution, the discipline, and the community.

USING ADJUNCTS – A DEAN'S PERSPECTIVE

Jacqueline Taylor, Ph.D., DePaul University

The College of Communication at DePaul University staffs approximately 30% of its courses with adjunct faculty. Because this large private university is situated in the heart of Chicago, with a college that includes communication studies, journalism, media and cinema studies, and public relations and advertising, we are able to draw on a rich and deep pool of communication professionals. This year, our adjunct faculty included a marketing and advertising executive teaching principles of advertising, two Chicago Tribune editors teaching feature writing and online journalism, and a senior co-anchor of one of Chicago's most popular morning drive programs teaching radio news, among others. Faculty like these bring years of experience into our classrooms and offer our students a realistic picture of the demands and challenges of their professions. As well, the city of Chicago attracts a large number of highly educated people, some of whom have completed Ph.D.s at neighboring institutions. Communication studies and media and cinema studies draw on Ph.D.'s and those who are completing their dissertations, to staff an array of undergraduate courses.

As college enrollments rise (especially so in communication) and as resources for higher education become more scarce, universities are under increasing pressure to find ways to reduce the cost of educating our students. Since personnel costs are by a significant margin the most significant part of most university budgets, administrators, if they cannot secure more resources, must find ways to reduce costs.

The possibilities are few. Class size can be increased or personnel costs can be reduced. Research universities frequently do both, offering large lecture classes to undergraduates with 300 students in a class or more, and staffing many classes with graduate students, a ready source of less expensive labor.

Although DePaul offers a few doctorates and is classified as a doctoral granting institution, most DePaul students are either undergraduates or graduate students enrolled in professionally oriented master's programs. This is a teaching institution, one where faculty embrace a teacher/scholar model and where the average class size for undergraduates in communication is about 27. Only one of our undergraduate classes is a large lecture class (Intro to Human Communication), and its enrollment caps at 120. Classrooms that seat more than 200 students do not even exist at our university.

In addition, DePaul has an access mission. More than a quarter of our students are Pell Grant recipients, more than a quarter are underserved minorities, and more than 30% are first generation college students. Keeping our private tuition affordable and funding sufficient financial aid to support those students who cannot afford our tuition are important goals in service of this access mission. The question then becomes, what avenues exist for keeping education affordable without eroding the quality of teaching?

Our college has four fine M.A. programs but no doctoral programs, hence no large

pool of graduate students at the ready to teach our undergraduates. What we have is a wealth of professionals. In our experience, adjuncts contribute in crucial ways to our teaching, bringing us both professional experience and scheduling flexibility. But we believe that the percentage of teaching assigned to adjuncts must be carefully calibrated, with the best interests of the students in mind. With 70% of our teaching done by full-time faculty, the curriculum remains firmly under their guidance, and a strong cadre of fully enfranchised faculty exist to shape the direction of the college and structure of each of our undergraduate and graduate programs.

Besides the advantages of bringing professional skills and experience into the classroom and providing a cost-effective source of teachers, adjunct faculties provide valuable flexibility in the size of the teaching force. Currently, our college is experiencing such rapid growth (a 28% enrollment jump in a single year) that we cannot hire tenure track faculty rapidly enough to demand (this despite hiring eight tenure track faculty in 2008 and five in 2009). Without a strong pool of adjunct faculty, we would not be able to schedule a sufficient number of courses to accommodate our students. By the same token, adjunct faculties provide a cushion in the event of an enrollment downturn, since the institution has not made the kind of ongoing commitment to their employment that exists with tenure track faculty.

Given the resource pressures higher education faces, adjunct teaching is not going away, nor should it. However, adjunct faculty should be used responsibly, with the best interests of the students and the institution at the heart of decision making. With that in mind, I offer some principles by which we seek to guide effective use of adjunct faculty at DePaul.

1. The ratio of full-time faculty to adjunct faculty should ensure that the control of the curriculum and the guidance of academic programs remain firmly in the hands of tenure track faculty.
2. Adjunct faculty should be a source of enriched curricular offerings, bringing professional experience and skills into the classroom and providing a bridge between the world of higher education and the workplace.
3. All adjunct faculties should receive thorough orientation and training at the point of hiring and access to a full-time faculty member who can mentor them as needed. Orientation must include providing them with a sample syllabus, suggested readings, possible assignments, and a clear sense of how their course functions in the curriculum.
4. All adjunct faculties should be evaluated, through both student evaluations and peer review.
5. Remuneration should be on the high end of competitive rates in the local market
6. Every effort should be made to include adjunct faculty as fully as they may wish in the life of the college and to provide

Them with access to support staff and institutional resources comparable to those available to full-time faculty.

With these guidelines in place, we have found adjunct faculty to be a crucial component of the challenging, cutting edge undergraduate and graduate programs our college offers. Used wisely, they complement the strengths of the tenure-track faculty and expand and enrich our curricula in ways that richly serve our students.

Jacqueline Taylor, Ph.D. is the Dean of the College of Communication at DePaul University.

PUTTING THE COMMUNITY INTO COMMUNICATION

Matthew S.Vorell, Ph.D., Ohio Northern University

As you read this article, I ask you to see how you can relate with any of the shared experiences. When I was accepted to my PhD program I did not receive an assistantship right away. In order to make ends meet, I did what so many graduate students before me had done: I adjuncted. I felt optimistic that I could find work since I knew that many colleges and universities required their students to take public speaking. I remember much from my adjuncting experiences. For instance, right after moving to a new state, I recollect questioning how I was going to pay my bills while only teaching one class (I soon picked up other courses or as I so affectionately dubbed them “gigs”.) Nonetheless, a few weeks into any term, I found myself wondering again where my next paycheck would come from next semester. At one university in particular, I recall the loneliness experienced during office hours. This institution placed their adjuncts together in to one large office filled with multiple desks in a separate building from the one that housed the Communication department. During the entire year I worked at this school, I never saw any other adjuncts occupy those desks. Perhaps most poignantly, I remember one student standing up and walking out of class the first day when she found out that the course would be taught by an adjunct and not a “real teacher.” That one stung. Not all of my memories of adjuncting are negative, I recall immense satisfaction and a sense of purpose as I designed my own syllabi and shared with students my own approach to public speaking. Unlike the student mentioned above, I smile when reflecting on the students who I seemed to genuinely reach through my teaching.

My own experiences and those shared with me by countless other adjuncts instilled in me a passion to conduct research aimed at providing a voice to an irreplaceable piece in the system of higher education. Simply stated, colleges and universities would not be able to function without adjunct instructors. Thus, all part timers are worthy of the same admiration and respect afforded to full time faculty, staff, students, administration etc. Please understand that I am fully aware that a great number of departments value their adjuncts and go to great lengths to help them feel “right at home.” Also, I am not asserting that departments who do not go to such lengths do so intentionally or maliciously. Instead, I claim that full time faculty members may become so engrossed in our own affairs that we overlook opportunities to engage these valuable temporary organizational members.

Regardless of their reason for doing so, adjunct instructors exist as a form of temporary labor as they receive contracts on a term-by-term basis. We would do well to understand the connections between the experiences of temporary workers like adjuncts and our own given the recent increase in occupational mobility. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the average job tenure for US employees at their current employer dropped from 10 years in 1983 to just under 4.1 years in January 2008. This drop in job tenure would seem to demonstrate that society is creeping towards the employment environment definitive of temporary laborers like adjuncts.

Adjuncts are appealing to universities and colleges for many reasons. The one which may seem most evident given the current economic situation is the flexibility part-timers provide departments to match the lulls and highs regarding course demands.

Like temps employed by non-academic organizations, adjuncts enter departments

fully aware of the lack of any guarantees. I am, of course, not arguing that every adjunct should be employed as long as he or she desires. Instead, I believe there is something to be gained from understanding how adjuncts make sense of their work related experiences.

Recently, I put out a call for adjuncts instructors to participate in a study that asked them to reflect on their attachment to different aspects of their work life. Simply stated I wanted to know if adjuncts identified most closely with the primary university for which they worked, the primary department for which they taught, the profession of education (constituted by individuals whose purpose serves the continued instruction of students), or the occupation of adjuncting (i.e., this specific line of work). With a sample that included over 100 adjuncts from many different states and a variety of different institutes of higher education, adjuncts indicated a strong preference to their membership in the education profession. In other words, a large portion of part-time instructors prefers to view itself (and in fact desire to be seen) on equal status with full time faculty, administration, and staff. In both cases, we witness a deliberate choice among these populations of temps to be a part of something bigger and more permanent than anything offered by their occupational commitments.

A number of potential reasons could explain why this trend exists. It could be that since they lack the traditional social contract, adjuncts do not feel as strong a connection to a “brick and mortar” organization (i.e., a university) or a work group (i.e., a department). Attachments with targets such as occupations and professions, allow adjuncts to belong to something no matter where they go. Arguably, an adjunct could take a semester off and still feel as if he or she were still part of the larger teaching community. Regardless of the explanation, the desire to attach to the education profession still astounds me due to all of the negative aspects of their position adjuncts endure.

At the beginning of this article I asked you to keep a tally of all of the levels on which you could relate to adjuncts instructors. Did you connect most with worries about finances? How about feelings of isolation? Have you also been stigmatized by certain organizational member (colleagues, students, administration, etc.) as being unfit for your position? Perhaps you related most closely to the almost universal desire to be recognized as an intrinsically valuable member of a dignified profession? I pray for the sake of our discipline and society in general, that the process of shared experiences will lead to continued if not heightened mutual respect and appreciation for all individuals involved.

Matthew S. Vorell, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at Ohio Northern University. He will be joining the faculty of St. Cloud State University in the fall. His research interests include organizational identification, organizational culture, temporary labor, and globalization.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE BELTWAY – LESSON LEARNED FROM LIFE IN THE ADJUNCT POOL

Brad Mello, Ph.D., National Communication Association

As a newly minted Ph.D. back in May of 1993 I found myself, along with many of my colleagues, without a tenure track job. There was a recession in progress and positions available were few and far between – a situation that many new Ph.D.’s certainly

may experience this year. Even one year temporary positions were scarce and so I opted to move with my partner, who had a job offer, to the D.C. area with a guarantee of two courses each semester at a local college. The first thing I learned about the world of the adjunct is that there is no such thing as a guarantee. One of the courses was taken away from me because according to college rules, adjuncts could only teach 3 classes per year. The chair who had promised the classes wasn't aware of the rule but the Dean certainly was. Lesson number one for the adjunct: be sure to know the employment rules where you are looking to teach part time. Many colleges and universities restrict the number and types of classes adjuncts can teach. For example, adjuncts may not be able to teach upper division courses or courses required for the major such as the senior capstone course. Also, full time faculty often bump adjunct faculty if their courses don't reach enrollment goals. I have known a few adjuncts that learned that they were no longer teaching a course as they were heading in to a class on the first day, syllabus and lecture notes in hand.

Luckily for me, D.C. has many schools with communication programs and so I cobbled together enough courses to pay the bills. Over the academic year in the fall of 1993 and the spring of 1994 I taught 12 classes at 5 different locations. The term coined for the University I worked for was the University of the Beltway and I was not the only one in that position, nor has that University ceased to exist. A recent article in the Washington Post indicates that there are many Ph.D.'s in the D.C. area without tenure track jobs trying to stay afloat by teaching at several schools. The problems for a teacher-scholar in that predicament are multiple. First, there are no benefits

– if you want health insurance you are paying out of your own pocket. Second, the traveling from school to school can be brutal. Third, often times once you are seen as an adjunct, a college is unlikely to look at you for a full time position. The college that pulled one course from me last minute didn't even interview me for a full time position despite excellent teaching evaluations and good progress in my scholarship. Finally, there's little time to work on scholarship which would increase the likelihood of landing a tenure track position. Lesson number two for the adjunct: if you are hoping for a full time position you need to keep active scholarly.

My time as a beltway flyer provided many rewarding moments despite the hecticness of it all. I had a chance to teach at a community college, a four year liberal arts college, a local non-profit and at a research one university. No other job would have provided the opportunity for me to experience so many different educational settings, but I am glad that I only had to do it one year before finally landing a tenure track position. I learned a great deal about what type of program where I felt I would best fit and be most satisfied, which turned out to be a liberal arts college where I spent 13 years teaching before joining NCA last summer. I also learned to be very resourceful with few resources, which leads to my third and final lesson for adjuncts.

There often is very little support for adjuncts, which might be more of a lesson for those that hire adjuncts than the adjuncts themselves. Nevertheless, I found it very helpful to learn as much as possible as to what was available to me on campus as an adjunct. Some colleges have a variety of teaching and learning support services. The chairs that hired me to teach a specific course were always accommodating and helpful, gladly reviewing syllabi and providing feedback. Take advantage of whatever resources are available, from simple things such as copying services to more important things

like access to library collections and journal databases so you can continue your scholarly pursuits. Remember though, you often have to seek them out as they are usually not highlighted for adjuncts. If possible, participate in departmental activities and get to know the full time faculty as they can provide helpful mentoring and advice. And finally, get to know the department or faculty administrative assistant(s) well – they will be your front line folks who can trouble shoot any problem you encounter. Teaching part time can provide many rewarding moments and useful experience if managed well by both the adjunct and the department benefiting from the skills and abilities of the adjunct.

BREADTH OF ADJUNCT USE AND ABUSE

Scott Jaschik, InsideHigherEducation.com

The use of adjuncts is well known among academics, but many believe that these instructors are utilized primarily in certain areas (such as community colleges). But a report being released by the American Federation of Teachers suggests that the breadth and depth of adjunct use is greater than many realize— such that they are teaching a majority of public college and university courses, and are a major force in a wide range of disciplines.

The report – “**Reversing Course: The Troubled State of Academic Staffing and a Path Forward**” – is designed to publicize the extent of adjunct use with a mind toward encouraging more colleges to either improve the pay they offer adjunct or shift more of their positions to the tenure track. Along those lines, the AFT is releasing a new tool that allows colleges to calculate the costs of changing staffing policies. The goal is to show that modest changes may be possible – even in tight budget years – and that over time, such changes could have a meaningful impact on the makeup of faculties and the compensation of adjuncts.

It has been too easy for administrators to ignore the issue of adjunct use as something other than widespread, and this study “debunks” that view by focusing not only on numbers of individuals, but courses taught, said Barbara Bowen, president of the Professional Staff Congress, the AFT union at the City University of New York, at a briefing on the report. Part timers are being used nationwide “in all disciplines” and in many cases at “completely non-professional salaries,” Bowen said.

“Most people don’t know the situation,” said Lawrence N. Gold, director of higher education at the AFT. He acknowledged that there will be no immediate shift from relying on adjuncts to creating tenure-track position. But he said that, if more of the public comes to understand what has happened to public higher education, progress can be made. The AFT and other faculty groups have argued that while many adjunct instructors are great classroom teachers, their working conditions – such as lack of office hours, being cut off from curricular decisions, being forced to move from campus to campus – result in a reduced quality of education, and erode the job security vital for academic freedom.

The report was prepared for the AFT by John B. Lee, whose consulting and research business JBL Associates has done previous studies for the union. Lee primarily used data from the Education Department’s National Study of Postsecondary Faculty. In many cases, however, Lee grouped data in new ways.

One key change – which Lee says is important to get a sense of the extent of teaching by non-tenure-track-faculty - was his decision to include graduate students who serve as teaching assistants under the supervision of a professor are not counted, and their courses are not counted as being taught by adjuncts. But courses led entirely by graduate students are.

The focus of the report is on public institutions, including community colleges, where adjunct use is particularly high (although the use of graduate students is not). But the report shows that public four-year colleges and research universities are also making widespread use of adjuncts. Across public research institutions for example, the report finds that full-time, tenured or tenure-track faculty members make up only 41 percent of instructional staff, while full-time non-tenure-track make up 20 percent, part-time faculty members off the tenure track make up 20 percent, and graduate employees are another 19 percent.

The AFT study comes at a time of increased attention among academic groups on the use of non-tenure-track faculty members. At the annual meeting of college human resources leaders in October, one senior member of the field stunned colleagues by **denouncing the way adjuncts are treated** and calling for major reforms. A few colleges – such as **Elon University** – have undertaken campaigns to increase the percentage of their courses taught by tenure-track professors. But in many other cases, long campaigns by adjuncts to improve their pay and benefits have been rejected. Next week, the Modern Language Association will release a report also documenting the accelerating trend of reliance on part-timers for teaching college courses.

Average Salary Per Course, by Job Status, Public Higher Education in 2003-4

Faculty Status	Basic Annual Salary	Other Salary	Salary Per Course
Community College			
-Full time, tenured or tenure track	\$58,645	\$5,814	\$7,722
-Full time, non-tenured track	\$40,117	\$2,625	\$6,098
-Part time	\$8,855	\$727	\$2,486
Public four-year College			
-Full time, tenured or tenure track	\$64,435	\$4,585	\$10,731
-Full time, non-tenure track	\$41,033	\$3,010	\$7,299
-Part time	\$9,550	\$860	\$2,645
Public research university			
-Full time, tenured or tenure track	\$78,409	\$6,765	\$20,253

-Full time, non-tenure track	\$46,974	\$3,475	\$9,776
-Part time	\$14,228	\$1,159	\$4,245

Percentage of Undergraduate Courses at Public colleges and Universities Taught by Contingent Instructors

Discipline	Community Colleges	Four-Year Colleges	Research Universities
Business	50.4%	31.3%	39.4%
Education	77.0%	42.5%	48.9%
Engineering/computer science	49.6%	38.0%	29.6%
Fine arts	56.8%	47.9%	41.6%
Health science	55.4%	32.6%	56.1%
Human services	71.6%	46.3%	54.0%
Humanities	60.2%	41.0%	44.6%
Life sciences	45.0%	26.7%	28.2%
Natural/physical sciences	57.6%	36.6%	34.9%
Social sciences	51.6%	34.7%	38.5%
Vocational education	54.5%	49.6%	53.2%
Total	57.5%	38.4%	41.8%

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THE POYNTER INSTITUTE AND BEA ANNOUNCE A PARTNERSHIP TO PRODUCE SHARE, AN SYLLABUS EXCHANGE CENTER FOR EDUCATORS

Washington, D.C. – The Poynter Institute and the Broadcast Education Association announced a partnership today to develop a syllabus exchange center called SHARE on Poynter’s News University e-learning site, www.newsu.org.

The exchange will be for electronic media, journalism and communications educators to exchange cutting edge syllabi or other teaching materials to be used at the high school, college and/or university level.

The site will allow educators to upload their best teaching practices and in turn, learn what other professionals are using. SHARE will be a place for those looking to develop new syllabi, re-refresh current courses, create new courses or find in-class projects. NewsU users will be able to search a variety of topics and download the most applicable content.

“This project will address an issue that so many educators have in today’s changing media landscape,” said Howard Finberg, Director, Interactive Learning of the Poynter Institute and News University, “SHARE will give teachers an opportunity to prepare relevant and current content for their classes, especially in the areas of electronic media. We are excited to launch this project in partnership with BEA.”

“We are honored to work with Poynter on this interactive project,” said Executive Director of BEA, Heather Birks. “BEA members are at the fore-front of teaching progressive electronic media courses and this e-learning center will not only allow them to share their knowledge with educators in the US, and around the world, but give them insight into new avenues of media education.”

SHARE will be launched in time for faculty to incorporate the site’s content into their 2010 spring semester courses. NewsU and BEA will be announcing a program for beta testers shortly.

NEW BEA JOURNAL “CALL FOR REVIEWERS”

As some of you know Feedback will “fade into the past” after the November 2009 issue. It will be replaced by the Journal of Media Education under the editorship of David Byland. As David begins the transition he has issued a call for reviewers. This is a great opportunity to read current literature and share views.

JoME is now soliciting textbook reviews of the texts listed below. If you currently use this text, or are an expert in the subject of the text and would like to author a review, please send your name, contact information (including mailing address so we can get the textbook to you), and the text you prefer to review. Reviews should be no longer than 1,000 words. Please refer to the guidelines below as you write your review. I will notify you by the end of July if you have been selected to write a review. Please contact me at: David.Byland@okbu.edu

1. Read the whole book and any ancillary materials (CD/DVD, websites, etc)
2. What is the book’s focus?
3. Does the book accomplish the stated purpose?
4. Is the book a contribution to the field or discipline?
5. Does the book relate to a current debate or trend in the field and if so, how?
6. What is the theoretical lineage or school of thought out of which the book rises?
7. Is the book well-written?
8. What are the book’s terms and are they defined?
9. How accurate is the information (e.g., the footnotes, bibliography, dates)?
10. Are the illustrations/ancillary materials helpful? If there are no illustrations/ancillary materials, should there have been?
11. What courses would this book be appropriate for?
12. How does the book compare to other books in the field?

Classic book review structure is as follows:

1. Title including complete bibliographic citation for the work (i.e., title in full, author, place, publisher, date of publication, edition statement, pages, special features [maps, color plates, etc.], price, and ISBN.
2. One paragraph identifying the thesis, and whether the author achieves the stated purpose of the book.
3. One or two paragraphs summarizing the book.
4. One paragraph on the book’s strengths.
5. One paragraph on the book’s weaknesses.
6. One paragraph on your assessment of the book’s strengths and weaknesses.

(These guidelines adapted from Writing the Academic Book Review by Wendy Belcher, www.chicano.ucla.edu/press/siteart/jli_bookreviewguidelines.pdf)

Books available for review:

Head's Broadcasting in America: A Survey of Electronic Media, 10/e
McGregor. ©2010 Allyn & Bacon. Estimated Availability: 2/2009 ISBN-10:
0205608132 ISBN-13: 9780205608133

Broadcast News and Writing Stylebook, 4/E
Papper
©2010 | Allyn & Bacon | Published: 01/27/2009
ISBN-10: 020561258X | ISBN-13: 9780205612581

Broadcast/Broadband Copywriting, 8/E
Orlik
©2010 | Allyn & Bacon | Estimated Availability: 07/24/2009
ISBN-10: 0205674526 | ISBN-13: 9780205674527

Television Field Production and Reporting, 5/E
Shook, Larson & DeTarsio
©2009 | Allyn & Bacon | Published: 05/22/2008
ISBN-10: 0205577679 | ISBN-13: 9780205577675

Reaching Audiences: A Guide to Media Writing, 5/E
Yopp, McAdams & Thornburg
©2010 | Allyn & Bacon | Published: 03/24/2009
ISBN-10: 0205693105 | ISBN-13: 9780205693108

FORMER BEA PRESIDENT HAROLD (HAL) NIVEN DIES

Former BEA President Harold (Hal) Niven, passed away this past July. His daughter Patty forwarded the following obituary to BEA and added that during their cross-country summer vacations she sat in the back seat of the car with a book of radio stations, and a map. As they pulled into a town her dad had her locate and direct to him to the local radio stations so he could go inside to visit. One of his goals was to visit as many stations as he could. She said he had a passion for broadcasters and education.

Harold F. Niven, Jr. Ph.D.

July 2, 1923 - July 23, 2009

Harold F. Niven, Jr. Ph.D. was born in Rocky Ford, Colorado on July 2, 1923. He passed away on July 23, 2009, in Chevy Chase, MD. He was a member of Lamda Chi Alpha Fraternity. Hal received his B.A. from University of Denver, M.A. from Stanford University and Ph.D. from Ohio State.

He spent his professional life as a university professor of radio and television and a vice president for the National Association of Broadcasters. Hal was a member of numerous professional societies and organizations. He served as a national president of the Broadcast Pioneers and the Broadcast Education Association. He was co founder of the National Broadcast Editorial Association and was a member of the Peabody Awards Committee. Dr. Niven received the Washington Broadcasters Pioneers 1995 Distinguished Broadcasters Award. Throughout his career he cemented the relationship between commercial broadcasters and broadcast educators. Through his efforts, college and university professional and educational broadcasting has acquired an unprecedented level of respect and acceptance in the broadcasting profession.

He joined the army in 1943 he served as a tank commander in the 14th Armored Division. In 1946 he married Rosemary Buskirk. They had three children. He was preceded in death by his twin brother Jarold. To Harold travel and education were of great importance, which he savored and instilled in his children.

His final days were spent with the entire family sharing good humor and fond memories.

She has asked that a scholarship fund be established in his honor. If you would like to donate in Hal's name, please send a check to the following:

Broadcast Education Association
1771 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
Attn: Broadcast Communications Scholarship

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Glenda Williams, Vice President for Academic Relations
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Faculty Video Competition

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Student Documentary Competition

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beliveau@ou.edu

Festival Committee

In addition to the Festival Competition Chairs the Festival Committee includes: Steve Anderson, James Madison University; Robert Avery, University of Utah; Louise Benjamin, University of Georgia; Dennis Conway, Marist; Vic Costello, Elon University; Jan Dates, Howard University; Bill Davie, University of Louisiana; Pam D. Tran, University of Alabama; Todd Evans, Drake University; Joe Foote, University of Oklahoma; Don Godfrey, Arizona State University; Rustin Greene, James Madison University; Ken Harwood, University of Houston; Price Hicks, emeritus, ATAS Foundation; Scott Hodgson, University of Oklahoma; Robert Jacobs, Bradley University; Evan Johnson, University of Wisconsin-River Falls; Andy Lapham, United Kingdom; Thomas McHardy, James Madison University; Patricia Phalen, George Washington University; Gary Wade,

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The Review Process

Working with the Festival Chair, Festival Committee and the Competition Chairs, the Review Board serves much like an Editorial Board would for a scholarly, refereed journal. The Review Board constitutes a large group of nationally recognized professionals and professors, who are organized into panels, which assist in judging individual full time faculty entries in specific categories. This blind review focuses on the following criteria: professionalism, the use of aesthetic and/or creative elements, sense of structure and timing, production values, technical merit and overall contributions to the discipline in both form and substance. The Festival Committee targets an acceptance award rate of twenty-percent within full time faculty awards.

Faculty Award Categories

BEA Best of Festival King Foundation Award - this award is given at the discretion of the competition chair to the best overall entry in the following faculty competitions: Audio, Interactive Multimedia, Scriptwriting, Video, News, and Documentary.

BEA Best of Competition Award - this award connotes superior quality work, parallel in idea to research accepted for publication in a refereed journal. This award is generally given to the first-place submission within a faculty competition subcategory.

BEA Award of Excellence - this award connotes superior quality work and is generally given to the second or third place finisher within a faculty competition subcategory.

Student Award Categories

Student award categories are established individually for each competition. They are generally designated as first, second, and third place awards.

BEA Best of Festival King Foundation Award - this award is given at the discretion of the competition chair to the best overall entry in the following student competitions: Audio, Interactive Multimedia, Scriptwriting, Video, Two-Year/Small Colleges, Radio News, Television News, Television News Team, and Documentary.

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Cablevision	http://www.reedtelevision.com/
College Music Journal (CMJ)	http://www.cmj.com/
Editor & Publisher	http://www.editorandpublisher.com/eandp/index.jsp
EQ Magazine	http://www.eqmag.com/
Mix Magazine	http://www.mixonline.com/
Multichannel News	http://www.multichannel.com/
Production Weekly	http://www.productionweekly.com/site.html
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NAB/BEA FUTURE CONFERENCE DATES

<u>Year</u>	<u>NAB Show</u>	<u>BEA Show</u>
2010	April 12-15	April 14-17
2011	April 11-14	April 13-16
2012	April 16-19	April 18- 21
2013	April 8-11	April 10-13
2014	April 7-10	April 9-12
2015	April 13-16	April 15-18
2016	April 18-21	April 20-23
2017	April 24-27	April 26-29
2018	April 9-12	April 11-14
2019	April 15-18	April 17-20
2020	April 20-23	April 22-25

FEEDBACK INDEX AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Feedback's index and bibliography is now in Microsoft Word format. It is available by clicking on the link below:

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