



# K A P P A T A U A L P H A NEWSLETTER

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## 'Obama Effect' wins Mott Award

A rigorous and innovative analysis of the Obama 2008 Presidential campaign coverage and its effects on stereotyping and prejudice is the winner of the Frank Luther Mott / Kappa Tau Alpha Research Award for the best book on journalism and mass communication based on original research published in 2014.

In *The Obama Effect: How the 2008 Campaign Changed White Racial Attitudes* Seth K. Goldman and Diana C. Mutz show how Barack Obama and his family served as "positive exemplars" and how ubiquitous mediated exposure countered negative stereotypes and changed white racial attitudes.

"Goldman and Mutz have produced something that not only pushes the envelope of scholarly inquiry but also provides an intriguing framework for further research" (Jeff Fruit, finalist judge and Kappa Tau Alpha vice-president).

The study is noteworthy, in addition to its findings, for its innovative

analytical techniques. "By positioning racial attitudes as a malleable dependent variable, rather than a stable trait, the authors were able to demonstrate unexpected effects, especially for voters least likely to vote for Obama" (Andrew Mendelson, finalist judge and KTA president).

Goldman is assistant professor of communication at the University of Massachusetts. Mutz is professor of political science and communication at the University of Pennsylvania. The Russell Sage Foundation is the publisher.

Matthew Cecil's *Hoover's FBI and the Fourth Estate: The campaign to Control the Press and the Bureau's Image* was runner-up. In meticulous detail Cecil shows how a government agency, in his words, "essentially manufactures consent by manipulating public opinion." This is a cautionary tale, as contest judge Tim England (Texas State University) notes: "We rely heavily on government agencies

to collect intelligence, fight crime and thwart terrorism and this makes an important contribution because it illustrates the need to keep these agencies accountable." Cecil is director of the School of Communication at Wichita State University. The book is published by the University of Kansas Press.

The Mott Award is named in honor of Mott, Pulitzer-Prize winner, educator and long-time leader of Kappa Tau Alpha, the national college honor society for journalism and mass communication. The competition has been held annually beginning in 1944. The \$1000 prize will be presented during the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication convention Aug. 7 in San Francisco.

Judges are KTA chapter advisers and officers. The deadline for books with a 2015 copyright is Dec. 9, 2015. For information and a list of previous winners go to [KappaTauAlpha.org](http://KappaTauAlpha.org) and click on Awards.

## England named Adviser of Year

Tim England, Texas State University, is the 2015 William H. Taft Outstanding Adviser.

The award, named after the late executive director who served the Society for 30 years before retiring in 1991, will be presented at the KTA/AEJMC Awards Luncheon Aug. 7 in San Francisco.

"Dr. England is an excellent teacher and colleague," writes Judy Oskam, director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. "People do make a difference and Dr. England is one of the best. Because of his strong involvement and leadership, the School now pays KTA membership dues for our eligible students." England, associate professor and head of the Electronic Media Sequence, had an award-winning 18 year career in broadcast news prior to joining the faculty at San Marcos in 1993. He has been adviser of the Texas State chapter for 14 years. He has served as a judge for the Frank Luther Mott Research Award. He earned degrees from Western Kentucky University (B.A.), Indiana University (M.A.) and the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (Ph.D.). He was inducted into KTA by the Willis C. Tucker Chapter at Tennessee in 1992.

England is the 31st recipient of the award. Previous winners, most recent first, include: Jeanni Atkins (Mississippi), Jeff Fruit (Kent State), Judy VanSlyke Turk (Virginia Commonwealth), Andrew Mendelson (Temple), Peter Gade (Oklahoma), W. Joseph Campbell (American), Margaret Patterson (Duquesne), Al Stavitsky (Oregon), Mark Popovich (Ball State), Jane Singer (Iowa), William Click (Winthrop), Karen List (Massachusetts), James Whitfield (LA-Monroe), Tony Rimmer (Cal State-Fullerton), Sam Riley (Virginia Tech), Thomas Schwartz (Ohio State), Emmanuel Onyedike (Hampton), Gil Fowler (Arkansas State), Milt Hollstein (Utah), Luther Sanders (Arkansas at Little Rock), George Abney (Georgia) and Marion Marzolf (Michigan).

# Why Kappa Tau Alpha matters

*This column is excerpted from Peter Gade's final President's Column in the Summer 13 newsletter.*

There is a lot higher education can learn from the experience of legacy media over the past 15 years.

Like media, we in higher education suddenly have a lot of competition. We no longer control the creation and delivery of educational materials. Degree programs are no longer geographically defined, entry barriers into our profession are not as clear, and the business model that defined higher education for more than a century is on life-support.

## *Honor societies recognize, promote excellence in scholarship*

Honor societies have existed in the United States since the founding of Phi Beta Kappa in 1776. They exist primarily to recognize the attainment of scholarship and leadership of a superior quality. To the degree that they make such recognition a thing to be coveted, they encourage students to strive toward meeting high standards.

Kappa Tau Alpha, founded in 1910 at the University of Missouri, is the seventh oldest national college honor society.

Membership is by invitation only by one of the Society's 96 campus chapters and is based solely on scholarship and character.

Journalism/mass communication juniors, seniors and graduate students must rank in the upper 10 percent of their class (based on overall GPA). Outstanding doctoral students also may be eligible. Chapters may set higher standards for membership.

Chapters are located at four-year degree-granting institutions accredited by the appropriate regional agency (e.g., New England Association of Colleges) that offer a major in journalism or mass communication.

The Association of College Honor Societies (ACHS) is the coordinating agency for collegiate honor societies. Membership in the ACHS is a certification that an honor society has met high standards. On its web site, ACHS ([www.achsnatl.org](http://www.achsnatl.org)) provides a list of criteria on "How to Judge the Credibility of an Honor Society." ACHS was founded in 1925 and has 67 member societies.



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It is a time for assessing what we do, how and why we do it, and how we can do it better. Values that guide work can easily become pressured; traditions are questioned. A look at the news industry makes a good case study of the challenges of adapting to factors that redefine your environment.

I hope we in education do better than media in shaping our future. A good start is identifying our core values.

Honor societies are important because they embody the most revered value of higher education: superior schol-

arly achievement. Consider the types of students our programs induct into Kappa Tau Alpha: they are intellectually curious, driven, capable, disciplined and consistent. They are the students we all want to teach.

To induct these students into our honor society is important. We teach them that academic curiosity, effort, and achievement are rewarded – even celebrated – in our programs. Visibly rewarding their achievement provides an incentive to all our students to aspire.

Celebrating our top students by inducting them into Kappa Tau Alpha is also a way our programs make a statement to university administrators and stakeholders about what we – professional educators – believe is important.

## **Click, Fruit, Lorenz chapters named for top leaders**

The list of "named" chapters grew during the year with the addition of the J. William Click Chapter at Winthrop University, the Jeff Fruit Chapter at Kent State University and the Alfred Lawrence Lorenz Chapter at Loyola University New Orleans.

Click, long-time chair of the Department of Mass Communication, founded the Winthrop chapter in 1990 and served as its adviser until his retirement in 2014. He was national KTA president 2002-2004 and received the William H. Taft Chapter Adviser of the Year award in 2004.

Fruit, former director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and interim dean, revitalized the Kent State chapter and served as its adviser for 10 years. He was honored with the Taft Adviser Award in 2013. He was elected national KTA vice-president in 2014.

Lorenz, former department chair and interim dean of the College of Social Sciences, was instrumental in the founding of the Loyola chapter in 1990 and served as its only adviser through 2011. He was the A. Louis Reed Distinguished Professor of Mass Communication until his retirement in 2011.

There are now 42 named chapters.