



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

*National Society Honoring Scholarship in Journalism and Mass Communication*

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## Singer becomes 40th president

Jane B. Singer became the 40th president of Kappa Tau Alpha following the AEJMC convention in Chicago.

W. Joseph Campbell became vice-president and Keith P. Sanders continues as executive director/treasurer. The officers will serve through the 2010 business meeting in Denver.

Singer is Johnson Press Chair in Digital Journalism at the University of Central Lancashire in the UK and is on leave from the University of Iowa, where she is associate professor of journalism/mass communication. At Iowa, Singer served as the School's honors adviser and Leslie G. Moeller Chapter adviser and was president of the Alpha of Iowa Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. Before joining the Iowa faculty she was the founder and adviser of the KTA chapter at Colorado State University. She received the Taft Outstanding Adviser Award in 2005.

Singer is the author of more than 70 articles, book chapters and academic papers, most of them related to online journalism. She is former head of the Communications Technology Division of AEJMC and is a charter member of the Journalism Studies Interest Group of ICA. A former newspaper and on-line journalist,

Singer received her Ph.D. from the University of Missouri. She was initiated into KTA at the University of Georgia in 1977.

Campbell, associate professor at American University's School of Communication, entered journalism education after more than 20 years as a professional journalist in an award-winning career that took him across North America and to Africa, Asia and Europe. He is a consultant to the Newseum, the interactive museum of news in Washington, D.C. He has lectured at the National Press Club, the Library of Congress and overseas at the University College of Oslo in Norway. He is the author of four books and numerous other publications and papers. He has

served as chapter adviser since 1999. He received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he was initiated in 1997.

Sanders has been executive director since 1991. He is professor emeritus at the University of Missouri, where he served stints as Editorial Department chair and associate dean for graduate studies and research. He was on the editorial board of *Mass Comm Review* (now *Mass Communication & Society*) for 34 years, 11 as associate editor. He served four years on the AEJMC Standing Committee on Research. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Iowa and was inducted into KTA at Ohio in 1962.

## *Centennial celebration nears*

Plans for the celebration of Kappa Tau Alpha 100th anniversary in 2010 are underway.

Although the founding date is March 10, the biggest celebration will be at the 2010 AEJMC convention in Denver. The annual KTA/AEJMC Awards Luncheon will be the main focus. We have received tentative approval for KTA members to have special ribbons attached to their convention badges.

New members inducted in 2010 will receive special certificates denoting the birthday.

As a run-up to the big year, KTA is joining with the History Division and the Council of Affiliates to host a panel tentatively entitled "KTA at 99: Promoting Scholarship from 1910 into the 21st Century." The panel is scheduled for 5 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 6, the same day as the Advisers' Breakfast and Awards Luncheon.

Chapters are expected to participate in the celebration. We will redistribute

the Anniversary Planning Committee's report of 2006 suggesting ways chapters can be involved.

The chapter aim should be to generate publicity to make others on your campus and in your community aware of KTA--not just your students and professors in mass communication but the campus and community in general. We will provide a basic news story about KTA and its history that you can tie in with local promotions.

Among suggested activities: a centennial lecture; a reception for students and faculty in your program; a student essay contest regarding academic achievement, ethics, honor, etc.; creating a KTA Hall of Fame recognizing a small number of outstanding alumni of your chapter; present the university president with a plaque commemorating the founding of your chapter; present a bench, marker, light post or similar gift to the campus recognizing the search for "Knowledge, Truth and Accuracy," KTA's guiding principles.

### Sanders receives AEJMC Presidential Award

Keith Sanders received the 2008 AEJMC Presidential Award for Distinguished Service to Journalism and Mass Communication at the convention in Chicago. President Charles Self cited Sanders' role with KTA, his service on AEJMC committees and publications and his graduate student mentoring in 36 years at the University of Missouri.

# Sloan bids farewell after 35 years as adviser

Today's ceremony marks the 35th induction of members of our University of Alabama chapter of Kappa Tau Alpha. It was chartered in 1974 and inducted its first 10 members that spring: 8 students and 2 professors. Today, we have one of the largest KTA chapters in the nation. With today's ceremony, we will have inducted a total of 1,621 members.

Since this is my final induction ceremony as KTA advisor, I hope you will indulge me for a few minutes as I reminisce.

I was inducted into Kappa Tau Alpha at the University of Texas in 1972. Ever since then, KTA has had a special place in my heart - and I consider myself fortunate that I've been given the privilege to serve as an advisor for these many years.

When I began teaching at the ripe old age of 26, at the University of Arkansas, I was replacing a retiring professor who had served as the school's KTA advisor. The department chairman asked me, almost apologetically, if I would mind taking over that duty. Mind!!!!??? I was elated!

Then when I came to the University of Alabama in 1983, I found myself in a similar situation. The Journalism Department chairman, Dr. Charles Self, was serving as KTA advisor. Dr. Charles Arrendell, his predecessor as chairman of

*W. David Sloan served 35 years as a KTA chapter adviser, first at Arkansas and then at Alabama. His stint is a record for KTA and ranks among the top 10 tenures of any national honor society, according to a survey of Association of College Honor Societies members. He also served as KTA national president. Below are comments from his final induction ceremony, presented May 2, 2008.*

the Journalism Department, had been the spearhead in getting a chapter approved for Alabama, and he served as advisor until he left the University in the summer of 1981. Charles Self then replaced him as advisor in the fall of that year. When I arrived two years later, Charles told me that the Department needed me to serve as an advisor of a student organization and that he would give me my choice: either SPJ (The Society of Professional Journalists) or Kappa Tau Alpha.

I replied (trying to appear apologetic) that "I know you're the KTA advisor, and I would hate to ask you to give it up--but if you don't mind, I really would prefer KTA." Fortunately, Charles was not strongly attached to KTA, and he gave it over without a fight. Thus, I found myself

in exactly the position I most preferred.

Why, one might ask, have I enjoyed working with Kappa Tau Alpha so much? One reason is that it is important in upholding high standards of academic achievement. I am tempted to give an entire, day-long speech on why KTA is particularly needed in our professional field of mass communication. But I will resist the temptation and get to the real heart of the matter:

The most important reason I've loved serving as advisor is the students. KTA has wonderful members. Year after year it has allowed me to come into contact with the very best students one could ask for. I think it is no exaggeration to say that the greatest joy in teaching is working with good students. I believe you could ask the faculty members here this morning, and the satisfaction they have when they distribute KTA invitations to students in their classes.

And through KTA I've had the honor to meet hundreds of those students. Thumbing through the list of all the students who have been inducted in Alabama's chapter of KTA, I was struck with how many, many students I remember who have gone on and done extremely well. I only wish I had gotten to know all our KTA members as well as them.

The ones with whom I've become most familiar have been, for the most part, the officers. And--perhaps to no one's surprise, considering the nature of KTA--the officers have been exceptional. So this morning as one of my final acts, I want to give my special thanks to this year's officers: Abby Barton, Christine Palma, and Laurel Kamper - and especially to Kristen Kimmick, the president. She has followed in a long line of wonderful, exceptional students who have served KTA as president.

I thank her - and the other officers; the students who are being inducted this year, and all those who preceded them; the secretaries in our College who have been so helpful every year as we've sent out invitations to students; and the faculty members who have been so supportive of KTA. I thank all for having made my years with KTA so satisfying and enjoyable.

## Minutes of annual National Council meeting

The annual meeting of the National Council was held Aug. 9 in Chicago during the AEJMC convention. Eighteen advisers were on hand for the business meeting and breakfast.

KTA President Tony Rimmer (Cal State-Fullerton) congratulated Maggie Patterson (Duquesne) on her selection as the 2008 Taft Outstanding Adviser recipient and gave a brief report.

Executive Director Keith Sanders presented a financial report and a proposed budget for 2008-2009. He noted that the price of keypins increased by 23 per cent, but only modest increases in certificates, honor cords and medallions were expected. He projected that when all the bills were in for 2008-2009, the Society would record a modest net gain. However, the proposed budget, which was approved unanimously, projected a net loss of about \$3000 for next

year.

Rimmer reminded advisers that the 100th anniversary of the Society will occur in 2010. A special program will be developed for the KTA/AEJMC Awards Luncheon at the 2010 convention in Denver.

Sanders presented his annual Executive Director's Report. He reported that charters were withdrawn from Southern Illinois and Southeast Missouri State for failure to initiate for two years. He noted that his predecessor, William H. (Bill) Taft, would be 93 in October. It was suggested that advisers send Bill birthday greetings either by card or e-mail.

Rimmer turned the meeting over to incoming President Jane B. Singer (Iowa/Central Lancashire). She thanked Tony for his service as president and presented him with a Distinguished Service Plaque. The meeting then adjourned.

Napalm” in an academic journal. The first journal to which we submitted it had a very sympathetic editor who urged sound and sage revisions. We completed them, but by the time the essay was resubmitted the journal had been cancelled by the publisher. We then submitted the essay to another journal. Again the editors were supportive but posed new questions and issues for us to answer and address in revision. The project pushed in new and productive directions, the reviewers for the essay liked what we did and recommended publication, but the editorial board rejected the essay over a matter of “fit.” Following another two rounds of very productive revision the essay was finally published in the third journal to which we submitted it, where it was very well received, being honored with the National Communication Association’s “Golden Anniversary Award,” but the point should not be lost, that what in the end seems to work so well and so easily required years of revision and the hard work of many, many different reviewers and editors who read, commented upon and judged the manuscript in its many iterations

Sometimes, our very method of studying circulation and appropriation became our worst enemy (and our best friend). We completed what we thought would be the final version of the chapter on Joe Rosenthal’s “Raising the Flag on Mt. Suribachi” on September 10, 2001. The next day, of course, produced a photograph that was quickly identified as “An Echo of Iwo Jima,” and it was back to the drawing board.

## Mott's great-granddaughter initiated by UNLV chapter

Audrey Greene, great-granddaughter of Frank Luther Mott, was inducted into KTA by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Chapter in December. Mott was KTA president from 1937 to 1939 and then served as secretary (now executive director) until 1962. He was voted one of the five most influential leaders in the Society’s history.

Greene, a broadcast journalism major, hopes to work a few years in the media and eventually attend graduate school.

It took months for us to revise and extend that chapter, but there can be no question the book is all the better for the effort, however tragic the conditions that enabled it.

**"the point should not be lost, that what worked so well in the end ...required years of revision and hard work."**

As I look back upon what I’ve written here it makes it seem like the project was one bump in the road after another, but each bump was attended by concomitant joys: the job of discovery, of producing a well-honed argument or elegant sentence, or of being contacted by a photographer or someone who appropriated a photograph to tell us that we got it right (or occasionally wrong), or just the kind words of readers who found something in what we have written that sparked their own curiosity or interest to think differently about the role of the visual in our democratic public culture.



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But most important, and throughout it all, has been the joy of friendship. Maybe, in the end, the trick to successful collaboration is as simple (and as complex) as that.

Lucaites is associate professor of communication and culture at Indiana University. Hariman is professor of communication at Northwestern University. Their research on photos is ongoing. For updates, visit their blog at [www.nocaptionneeded.com/](http://www.nocaptionneeded.com/)

The Mott / Kappa Tau Alpha Research Award has been conducted annually beginning in 1944. Entries for books published in 2009 will be received until Dec. 7. For further information see [KappaTauAlpha.org/mott-win/html](http://KappaTauAlpha.org/mott-win/html)

## *Craft, Workman, Rauch receive research grants*

Stephanie Craft (Missouri), Gale Workman (Florida A & M) and Jennifer Rauch (Long Island) are the 2008-2009 recipients of Chapter Adviser Research Grants.

Craft will use her \$750 grant to study how journalists critiqued and reported on the new media coverage of school shootings in the United States. Such “metacoverage” has become increasingly important as public concerns about mainstream news performance have increased.

Workman will videotape oral history interviews with political cartoonists living in Florida. The interviews will become part of an exhibit on political cartooning to be held in Spring 2009 at the university and will become part of a permanent archive. The Association of American Editorial Cartoonists is one of the co-sponsors of the exhibit. Her grant is for \$400.

Rauch will study how people with different political orientations define and value alternative media, thereby contributing to the search for a usable definition of the term “alternative media.” Such a definition has confounded scholars and has become even more confused by technological developments in the 21st century. Her grant is for \$600.

# Iconic photos need no caption

*John Louis Lucaites and Robert Hariman received the Frank Luther Mott / Kappa Tau Alpha Research Award for the best research book on journalism/mass communication published in 2007. Here, Lucaites recounts how No Caption Needed: Iconic Photographs, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy came to fruition.*

Students and colleagues often ask what the trick is to co-authoring a book like *No Caption Needed*? There are many different answers to this question, not least the camaraderie that attends any long term struggle to “get it right,” but typically the answer that each of us gives is that you have to find someone who is smarter than you are.

This is not as paradoxical as it sounds because, ultimately, being “smarter” is not a zero-sum game but a recognition of difference and emphasis. We were both trained in the traditions of rhetorical theory and practice, but one of us is more grounded in the history of art and aesthetics, the other in U.S. social and political history; one of us reads more closely in cultural theory, the other in political theory; one of us tends to be more analytical, the other more synthetic; one of us is more comfortable rooting around in the historical archive wherever that might be, the other more comfortable mining theoretical texts and concepts, and so on. And finally, it is all leavened by a mutual respect borne of eighteen years of friendship.

*No Caption Needed* had very humble origins. One of us was asked to write an essay for a volume on the relationship between rhetoric and public memory, but had neither a specific topic in mind nor the time to do develop a project from scratch; the other had an essay on rhetoric and photography in progress but no obvious place to publish it. It was a marriage of convenience and it wasn't supposed to take very much time; after all, how long would it take to complete an essay half done? That essay was written and presented at a conference, although (thankfully) never published. But therein too lies a story perhaps worth telling.

Our first effort was a comparative analysis of Dorothea Lange's “Migrant Mother” and Alfred Eisenstaedt's “Time Square Kiss,” photographs, we believed,

that marked the beginning and end of an era. The analysis was formalistic to a fault as we connected Lange's photograph with long standing traditions of portraiture beginning in the renaissance, and Eisenstaedt's photograph with the conventions of ballet and, perhaps, the swoon made famous in 1930s Hollywood musicals. Our audience loved the analysis we gave but then there was this very disquieting question: How do you know anyone else, historically or otherwise, understands these photographs in the same way as the two of you? We were stopped in our tracks as we had no answer.

To be honest, I don't remember who asked that question, but if it had not been asked I don't know if we would have

**“We actually stumbled into the method that would occupy us for the next ten years.”**

had a book. It certainly would not have been the book that we ended up writing. What was clear at the time, however, was that we needed to answer the question and that meant digging into the historical archive to see how these photographs had been treated in the public discourse – newspapers, magazines, textbooks, and the like. What we found was simply astonishing. Not only had a good bit of our own somewhat intuitive analysis been confirmed—though there were plenty of places where we had to correct, revise, and otherwise develop and extend our interpretations—but we began to recognize how truly important these images were to U.S. public culture. What we discovered in particular was that these two photographs had large wide circulation patterns across a variety of media, generations, and demographic categories, but more, that they were being actively appropriated and used to a wide range of purposes, some memorial and/or political, others commercial, and others still in a more playful and carnivalesque. But throughout there seemed to be a deep seeded recognition of the historical significance of the original

photograph as a marker of cultural identity and public memory, whether treated with pious reverence or cynicism.

“Circulation” and “appropriation.” We actually stumbled into the method—and theoretical problematics—that would occupy us over the next ten years. Our first thought was that these two photographs were special—treasures in the American family photo album—and surely their patterns of circulation and appropriation would not be repeated for other images, especially such traumatic photographs as “Accidental Napalm” or the explosion of the Challenger space craft. But of course we soon discovered that there was a class of images for which this pattern of reception was quite common and that therein stood an important story (actually many stories) about America's emergent visual democracy.

As the project unfolded we ran into numerous bumps along the way. Some of those bumps were a function of living our lives as parents and spouses, friends, teachers, academic administrators, and more: close friends died; family matters joyous and sorrowful had to be celebrated or mourned, or otherwise addressed; papers had to be graded, courses developed, committee reports written; civic obligations had to be served. And on top of it all our own aging bodies reminded us that the life of the mind is dependent upon the most radical, material conditions of living as each of us suffered ruptured and compressed discs in our backs along the way. I emphasize all of this because it is too easy for us to forget that scholars have other lives, no more nor less important than their scholarship, but equally relevant to their ability to get their work done. We are no different than others in this respect, but there is no question that our partnership in working on a common project facilitated our ability to negotiate such barriers and to locate the project in its proper context.

Other bumps along the road emerged from the project itself. There are probably many I don't remember, but the ones I do recall most vividly all improved the work. Early on we tried to publish a version of the chapter on “Accidental

*(continued on page 3)*