

magazine media division newsletter



LETTER FROM THE HEAD CHAIR

Dear MMAG members,

As we head into the summer and prepare for the upcoming AEJMC conference in New Orleans, I would like to share a few updates and extend my sincere appreciation to all members who have been generous with their time and other scarce resources to partake in division activities and help us through membership fees.

As of May 1, our division has 36 members, not counting those who have not renewed their membership. On behalf of the Magazine Media division, I urge everyone to take a minute to [renew their membership](#).

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LETTER FROM THE HEAD CHAIR

This year, we launched an exciting initiative to support officers and members presenting at the conference. In cases of financial hardship, please do not hesitate to fill out [this form](#) by May 20. Furthermore, registered conference attendees will be cordially invited to an evening reception in New Orleans. More details will come soon on our digital platforms.

For the first time, we will join the 2026 AEJMC Annual Conference in New Orleans as a Brass Band Friend thanks to the generosity of our members. Our division name will be recognized across AEJMC platforms as a form of publicity in exchange for sponsoring the conference. Even with the sponsorship, we are still in good financial standing and expect steady growth in our revenue streams from increased membership, journal subscriptions, and contest registration fees. Solid financial resources allow us to host more professional webinars in the future and further enhance our professional and academic awards. With that said, I am once again thankful for your generosity and commitment to supporting our division's growth.

Our officers have been working hard to maintain our presence in many key AEJMC events. For that, I especially thank Lisa Lenoir, our vice head, for co-organizing our pre-conference sessions while coordinating our main programming; our research chair, Lydia Cheng, for spearheading our research competition; and our contest chair, Heather Isherwood, for hosting the student contest. These three events have carved up a significant amount of time from their academic and other professional responsibilities.

Kudos as well to Mackenzie Cato, our teaching chair, for coordinating our teaching award and recognizing excellence in pedagogy within the division. My thanks also go to Adonis Durado, our PF&R chair, for helping us host a webinar featuring Ashley Kirk, the Visuals Editor of the Guardian (UK), on April 27. Division members can rewatch the recording [on YouTube](#). Kirk was the first featured speaker in our Professional Talk series. We expect to host more professionals in the near future. More updates will come as soon as we can confirm the details.

Similarly, I also want to thank our other officers who have worked diligently behind the scenes to deliver news and information to our members: our newsletter editor, Jen Wilson; our social media editor, Alexia Little; and our web editor, Carol Terracina-Hartman. Without your help, we would not be able to promote our activities to such a diverse group of members.

Finally, I am very much looking forward to seeing everyone at the main conference this year. I hope you all finish the spring semester strong and enjoy a fabulous summer. If our officers and I can do anything further to enhance your member benefits, please do not hesitate to let us know. You can always reach me via email.



Huyen Nguyen
Division Head
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Meet Adonis Durado

YOUR NEW PF&R CHAIR

Adonis Durado is an Associate Professor in the School of Visual Communication at Ohio University, where he teaches infographics, editorial design, art direction, and generative AI. With more than 15 years of professional experience in media and advertising, he brings an industry-informed approach to teaching, emphasizing design as a tool for clear and purposeful communication.

Before entering academia, Durado served as Design Director at Muscat Media Group (Oman), where he led award-winning teams across multiple publications, including Times of Oman. Under his leadership, his teams earned more than 500 international design awards from organizations such as the Society for News Design, the Society of Publication Designers, and WAN-IFRA. He is also a recipient of the President's Award from the Society for News Design.

Durado's teaching and research focus on the intersection of design, technology, and pedagogy, with particular emphasis on generative AI as a creative partner. He has developed AI-integrated courses that foreground authorship, ethics, and critical thinking. His course, Generative AI for Visual Communication, has been recognized for its human-centered approach to AI in the classroom.

His recent honors include Runner-up in the 2025 Communication Design Educators Awards by Design Incubation, Finalist for the 2025–2026 Presidential Teacher Award at Ohio University, and recipient of the Learn Pillar Award from the Scripps College of Communication (Fall 2025–2026 and Spring 2024–2025), recognizing excellence in advancing communication, media, and journalism education.

Durado's research uses a design-based approach to examine how emerging technologies shape creative practice and learning.



Adonis Durado
PF&R Chair
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Letter from Research Chair

HI MMAG COMMUNITY!

The call for papers for this year's AEJMC conference – to be held August 5 to 8 in New Orleans – ended on April 1. The Magazine Media Division received 13 submissions in total: seven full papers and six research-in-progress (RiP) papers. The RiP category was introduced this year for the annual paper competition to replace the Extended Abstracts format of years past.

Some more (hopefully interesting) stats about our division's paper submissions:

- We had six student submissions and seven faculty submissions. For full papers, we had two student and five faculty submissions. For RiP papers, we had four student and two faculty submissions.
- Apart from one submission, whose authors are from an institution overseas (China), the rest of the submissions have authors from institutions in the U.S.
- Eight submissions are solo-authored, four submissions have two co-authors, and one submission has three co-authors.
- Unfortunately, as of April 27, we had to disqualify one submission for not following AEJMC's conference submission guidelines (exceeded word limit).

Some of my thoughts looking at these stats:

- The RiP category seems particularly useful for student submitters, who can receive feedback on emerging research ideas, pilot studies, data collection efforts, or early analyses. This suggests that MMAG should keep opting in to have the RiP category to encourage student submissions at the annual AEJMC conference.
- Our submissions still skew heavily towards U.S. based authors. MMAG could increase its efforts to publicize our division to international scholars. For those who have suggestions on how to do this, please get in touch with anyone in the MMAG leadership committee.
- For all potential future submitters: please remember to follow the conference submission guidelines strictly, including word count limits, anonymous instructions, and AEJMC's policy on AI usage. We hate to disqualify papers!

Thank you!

Lydia Cheng



Lydia Cheng, PhD
Research Chair
Assistant Professor
Nanyang Technological
University

Letter from the Webmaster

HELLO FROM THE WEBMASTER!

Hope everyone's semester is ending on a high note. Wishing you the best as we slide into summer and hopefully some fun and a slower pace.

Thank you to everyone who has helped boost MMAG visibility by joining us on LinkedIn. I appreciate the support of our fledgling effort. Our Social Media Manager, Lexie Little, is taking over some of our postings as a co-Admin (now that she is Dr. Little, she has abundant spare time lol! Be sure to send her congratulations). Here's hoping our combined efforts boost our visibility especially with graduate students.

I am off to a travel study this summer in Costa Rica. It's 100% accessible, so it's a beautiful way to expand journalism practices and privileges. The program generally occurs the same year as the Paralympics, so we ride the good will and exposure of that event. Wish us luck and if you see me around, I am generally muttering Spanish poetry in an effort to resurrect my pronunciation. #PuraVida!

Que les vayan bien! Nos vemos en Nuevo Orleans!



Carol Terracina Hartman

Webmaster

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Teaching Tip: Influencers, Magazines, and the Power of Multiplatform Storytelling

Try this teaching activity in your class for examining how influencers appear in magazine content, not just as featured figures, but as extensions of the publication brand across multiple platforms.

Have students follow a single influencer feature from a magazine article to its promotion on social media, video content, and sponsored posts, analyzing how the message evolves in each space. By working in groups to identify persuasive techniques like authenticity, relatability, and aspirational appeal, students can better understand how multiplatform strategies increase impact while blurring the line between editorial content and advertising.

In your class discussion, you can tie this to Social Comparison Theory by showing how influencer content encourages audiences to evaluate themselves against curated, idealized lifestyles, often shaping self-perception through upward comparison.



Mackenzie Cato

Teaching Chair
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Mackenzie Cato

Teaching Tip: The Quest

CONGRATULATIONS, LISA PHILLIPS!

Lisa Phillips from SUNY New Paltz won the Teaching Competition and will be invited to present her teaching idea "The Quest Assignment" at the national conference. We had some great submissions, but hers was especially strong. Join us in celebrating Phillips by reading her victorious tip.

Description

Traditional journalism asks reporters to be objective, using an omniscient, third-person point of view. In magazine media, though, it's common for journalists not only to use the first-person point of view, but also to pursue reporting stemming from lived experience, personal or community concerns, or other situations in which their lives and the issue at hand are inextricably entwined. Examples include several of the most high-impact magazine stories of the past decade, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning articles "A Most American Terrorist" by Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah (GQ) and "What Bobby McIlvane Left Behind" by Jennifer Senior (The Atlantic). The Quest assignment asks undergraduates in an upper-level magazine writing class called "Telling True Stories" to embark on a first-person reporting project.

Assignment

Choose an issue, problem or a mystery/question that affects you. Embark on a quest to investigate it. Write about it. Take your inquiry beyond the material of your own experience with research and interviewing. We'll use the assigned readings as models for the variety of ways you can use reporting in your quest. Word length: 1,500–2,500 words. You will need to include material from at least two interviews and two pieces of research: books, articles, and other material that sheds light on your quest.



Lisa Phillips
Associate Professor
New Paltz State
University of New York



Interview Possibilities

- Participants-witnesses
 - People in your life who were involved.
 - People coping with the same issue.
- Experts
 - People whose research and/or professional life give them credentialed insight into the subject of your quest

Research Possibilities

- Documentation: journals, medical records, school records
- The work of writers and thinkers exploring, analyzing, researching, and theorizing about the issue you've chosen
- Tangents and comparisons that shed light
- Relevant history

Learning Objectives

1. Conduct original inquiry: Students will investigate a personally meaningful issue by moving beyond their own experience through primary research (interviews) and secondary research (published sources), practicing the methods of reported essays and narrative journalism.

2. Synthesize personal and reported material: Students will integrate firsthand perspective with outside evidence to construct a cohesive written argument or exploration, using assigned readings as models for how reporting can serve a range of essay forms.
3. Develop a researched written work: Students will produce a polished piece of writing that demonstrates purposeful use of sources, a clear investigative focus, and an authorial voice that connects lived experience to a broader context.

Evidence of Effectiveness

Students produced brave, important work for this assignment. Topics included perfectionism, social ostracization, growing up under pressure to "act white," and being a college student who doesn't drink. The assignment cultivated individual voice and style in student writing, which are otherwise challenging to encourage in more traditional reporting assignments.

Letter from the Contest Chair

ENTER YOUR STUDENTS' WORK!

We are nearing the end of another busy school year (hoorah!) and nearing the deadline for the annual Magazine Media Division Student Magazine Contest. Two changes this year are a lower entry fee and an increased award for student winners. Please reach out to me if you have any questions at all. I look forward to seeing all the wonderful magazine journalism your students have been producing this past year.

Deadline is 11:59 p.m. CDT June 1, 2026.

BASIC RULES

- Entries must be class projects or student-run magazines with a faculty advisor.
- Work must have been published between June 6, 2025, and June 1, 2026.
- \$20 entry fee per entry.
- Each school is limited to two entries per category.
- AEJMC membership is not required for entry.
- Entry fees must be paid before June 30, 2026, to be eligible for prizes.

CATEGORIES

- Single issue of an ongoing magazine, print or digital
 - General excellence – includes editorial and design
 - Design
- Consumer magazine articles (First-place winners in each category receive \$200.)
 - Culture – arts, fashion, etc.
 - DEI – focus on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion
 - Essay – reported or personal essays
 - Feature – reported human interest stories in a specific topic area – food, health, sports, etc.
 - Profile – reported pieces focused on an individual or organization

- Reporting – news driven
- Service – providing actionable, reader service information
- Online (First-place winners in each category receive \$200)
 - Multimedia, single work – uses multiple techniques to tell a story, integrating text, images, video, audio and/or social media
 - Social storytelling – tells a compelling story on a publication's social media platform. Both editorial content and visuals are considered. An entry is one story or topic.

ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS

Submit entry information via this [Google form](#). All entries to be submitted as URLs (preferred) or PDFs.

Contact me with questions!



Heather Isherwood

Contest Chair

Missouri School of Journalism

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