



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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Schwartz elected 38th president

Thomas A. Schwartz, Ohio State University, became the 38th president of the Society following the annual meeting in Toronto of the National Council in August.

Tony Rimmer, California State University-Fullerton, became vice-president and Keith P. Sanders, University of Missouri, continues as executive director. They will serve through the 2006 annual meeting in San Francisco.

Schwartz is the third president to

come from Ohio State, the most of any of the Society's chapters. James E. Pollard, for whom the OSU chapter is named, served from 1939 to 1942 and Paul V. Peterson followed in 1978-1980.

Schwartz is associate professor in the School of Journalism and Communication at OSU, where he has been honors program coordinator and KTA chapter adviser since 1988. He received the W. H. Taft Outstanding Adviser Award in 1999. He teaches reporting and mass communication law and is the author or co-author of more than 50 book chapters, articles and papers on journalism history and law. He is a former editor of the journal *Communication Law and Policy*. He has

held leadership positions in AEJMC, ICA, the American Journalism Historians Association and the Society for Professional Journalists. He was interim Kiplinger Professor of Public Affairs Journalism at OSU in 2002-03. A former newspaper and magazine reporter, photographer and editor, he received a Ph.D. in journalism from Southern Illinois University. He was initiated into KTA at South Dakota State University in 1976.

Rimmer is professor in the Department of Communications at Fullerton, where he teaches courses in communications theory, research methods, media survey and print and broadcast reporting courses. His *turn to Schwartz, page 2*

San Antonio sessions set

The 2005 AEJMC convention will be headquartered at the Marriott Rivercenter on the River Walk

Both the KTA Adviser's Breakfast/annual meeting of the National Council and the KTA/AEJMC Awards Luncheon will be on Aug. 11. The breakfast starts at 7 a.m. and the luncheon at 11:45. Each will be over before the next sessions begin.

Sign up for the sessions on the regular registration form. Breakfast is a real bargain at \$10, because we pick up more than half the actual cost.

We had an excellent turnout of advisers at the awards luncheon last year and hope to improve it this year. The session honors winners of division student paper competitions and major AEJMC awardees.

Chapter advisers who have served for at least 10 years will be recognized and presented with a special certificate.

Also to be honored are recipients of the William H. Taft Adviser of the Year Award and the Frank Luther Mott/Kappa Tau Alpha Research Award. KTA President Tom Schwartz and AEJMC President Mary Alice Shaver will preside.

Compliance review underway

The proliferation of diploma and honor society "mills" is one of the biggest threats facing academic institutions.

It affects Kappa Tau Alpha because it erodes standards and devalues honest achievement. It undermines our credibility and, as any journalism/mass communication student should know, without credibility we have very little. Unless there are high standards rigorously enforced honor society membership is as meaningless as a mail-order degree from a bogus institution. (see "Wanna belong to an honor society?" in the Winter 2004 *KTA Newsletter*).

Accordingly, a major initiative is underway to review chapters and make sure they are in compliance with our constitution regarding qualifications for membership.

Chapters found to be systematically and purposefully in non-compliance

will face penalties ranging from probation, censure or revocation of the charter.

The most common problem areas are: (1) inducting more than just the upper 10 per cent of the senior class by failing to count students inducted in the previous year as juniors; (2) replacing students ranked in the top 10 per cent who decline the invitation with the next highest ranked students; (3) inducting students who have not met the requirement of nine semester hours of professional J/MC courses.

In February advisers were mailed (and later e-mailed) three documents related to assuring compliance: "On Compliance," "Some Questions About Selecting Members" and "Membership Requirements."

Overall, the compliance initiative has been successful. Most chapters were already in compliance. Some have made changes to become compliant. Thus far one chapter has had its charter revoked. Some others face probation.

Reis, Riley earn adviser research grants

Raul Reis (Cal State-Long Beach) and Sam Riley (Virginia Tech) are this year's recipients of Chapter Adviser Research Grants.

Each received a \$1000 check to support their research. KTA has awarded seven grants since the program was approved in 2002.

Reis is studying "Born Again Broadcasters: The Rise of Pentecostalism and its Use of Television in Brazil." He conducted field research in Brazil in January and plans a more extensive stay there in the fall.

The spread of Pentecostalism and other evangelical denominations in Brazil has radically altered the country's religious makeup. Once an overwhelmingly Catholic country, Brazil has become more religiously diverse. According to Reis, much of that change is due to Rede Record, the very popular and profitable television network owned by the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (UCKG).

From an ailing regional broadcasting network in the early 1990s, Rede Record has become a major player in the profitable Brazilian broadcasting market under the ownership of the UCKG. Today it reaches almost the entire population and ranks third among Brazilian networks in terms of audience.

Schwartz elected president

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more than 50 publications focus on media and religion, media economics, media and politics, new technologies and on conceptualization and measurement of media use.

He was a television producer in New Zealand for nearly 10 years. He is a member of the Academic Senate at Fullerton and has been a member of the AEJMC Finance Committee. The 2001 Taft recipient has been chapter adviser since 1993. His Ph.D. is from the University of Texas-Austin, where he was inducted into KTA in 1978.

Sanders is *professor emeritus* at Missouri, where he was O.O. McIntyre Distinguished Professor. He served as

Reis has been adviser of the Cal State-Long Beach chapter for three years.

Riley is using his grant to prepare a major reference book: *Black Media Figures of the United States: A Biographical Reference Work*. The book will include biographical profiles of about 175 significant African-American media professionals and will include a reprint of an original document by each.

The importance of the project, according to Riley, is derived from the rapid and impressive gains made by African-Americans in newspaper journalism, broadcasting and other media, a recent trend that he dates mainly from 1990.

Persons profiled will include newspaper columnists, both local and syndicated; reporters, editors and publishers of newspapers; broadcast journalists and some show hosts such as Oprah Winfrey and Montel Williams; magazine editors and publishers; and a few new media people.

Riley has been adviser of the Virginia Tech chapter for 20 years and is a recipient of the William H. Taft Adviser of the Year Award.

The recipients were selected by the Executive Committee after review of submitted proposals.

department chair and associate dean for graduate studies/research.

In 2000 he was selected as one of the five most significant leaders in the Society's history. He received the Mass Comm & Society Division's Professor of the Year award in 1987.

He served four years on the AEJMC Standing Committee on Research and has served on editorial boards of *Journalism Monographs*, *Mass Communication & Society*, and *Mass Comm Review*.

He received the MC & S Division's Professor of the Year Award in 1987. Listed in *Who's Who in America*, he received his Ph.D. from Iowa and was inducted by Ohio University in 1962.

Instructions and application forms for the Chapter Adviser Research Grant program can be found on the KTA web site and are in the Chapter Adviser Handbook. Applicants must have served at least two full years as advisers and they and the chapter must be in good standing with the Society. The deadline for applications each year is October 1.

In addition to the research proposal and application form, applicants must include an endorsement letter from her/his program head.

For all grants awarded, credit shall be made to KTA in writing and/or expression for any publications or presentations that result. Awardees must provide a report of the completed research effort that KTA may use for promotional purposes.

2004 Council Highlights

Approval of a program to recognize advisers who have served at least 10 years, welcoming a new president and discussing membership compliance issues highlighted the annual meeting of the National Council held in Toronto.

Long-term advisers will be recognized at the annual KTA-AEJMC Awards Luncheon and will be presented an appropriate certificate. The Society will pay for the honorees luncheon tickets.

President J. William Click (Winthrop) completed his term office and welcomed successor Thomas A. Schwartz (Ohio State). Twenty-eight advisers were present.

Executive Director Keith Sanders emphasized the necessity of following membership selection rules and announced that chapters would be reviewed to determine if they are in compliance.

A proposed budget was approved for fiscal year 2004-2005. Sanders reported that certificates will be printed by Goose Creek Publishing instead of at headquarters.

How to increase acceptance rates was the discussion topic during breakfast.

rewarding. My friend, the writer Roger Kahn, once told me: "No book writes itself," and this is true. But Russell's life story was so rich and full that I found organizing and writing easier than I might have imagined. Fearing that I might never finish the book I made sure to write a long essay for the April 1995 issue of *Journalism and Mass Communication Monographs*, discussing his journalism. I was amazed at how many letters I received after that, asking if more was to be written about this intriguing man from Iowa.

Some chapters I wrote as I was still completing research. And some of the material was so good that I could not wait to write certain segments. I rehearsed the words in my mind. The chapter about his coverage of the great Johnstown flood in 1889 allowed me to become storyteller and capture the excitement of the journalistic chase. My retelling of his attack on the slums of Trinity Church, a climatic moment in his life, filled me with anger, as it did Russell. After he was criticized for the anger of his attack, Russell's words kept coming back to me: "I am glad to be called 'a muck-raker,'" he said. "The only thing I object to is living in a world full of needless horrors and suffering without uttering one word of protest, however feeble and unheard."

Russell was one of the three founding members of the NAACP. In this chapter I had to make the reader feel Russell's bitterness as well as his optimism that lynchings could be stopped. Russell's years as a socialist allowed me to debate my

Taft honored

Executive Director *Emeritus*

William Howard Taft was presented with the Distinguished Service in Journalism honor medal from the University of Missouri in October.

The citation reads: "In recognition of his lifelong commitment to journalism as an academician and teacher; his contributions to the field as the author of numerous books; his guidance of future journalism scholars and practitioners in their pursuits and his preservation of the history of Missouri newspapers."

The medal is awarded on the basis of lifetime achievement. Past recipients represent a Who's Who of U.S. journalism

own lifelong struggle over whether communal solutions were better than progressive or incremental reforms of capitalism. Russell debated this question his whole life. He decided America could do both – and the journalist should encourage both.

I knew I would complete the book when I came to a chapter that I had long rehearsed in my mind, ever since I had encountered this scene in a Russell diary. Near the end of World War I, as Russell and others observed the carnage of the war and de-

"I was haunted for years that lurking somewhere in some distant basement was a cache of letters...."

spaired at what men had done to men, he was in Paris, his favorite city. He saw only widows in black and men without limbs. No one was smiling. He fell to a curb, sobbing, unable to carry on. This was Charles Edward Russell; he bled with the victims his whole life, as any good journalist should.

In 2001, with the help of an agent, St. Martin's Press agreed to publish the book. I worked harder now than ever to meet my deadline. The choice of the title



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was almost accidental. My editor, Deborah Gershenowitz, introduced me to a fellow editor in New York City. "Oh yes, Russell," he said. "Great manuscript. The pen IS mightier, isn't it?" We chuckled and that soon became the book's title. I like it. For Russell it was indeed true. He slew some giants with his words.

One last recollection about the writing of this book. I was nearing completion of the epilogue, a short segment summing up his final years when he continued to write books and speak out against injustice. I knew how I wanted to end the book: with Russell's eloquent words at the funeral of his friend, William English Walling, who helped found the NAACP. About Walling he wrote: "He lived with unswerving loyalty; he fought the good fight; he loved his fellow man and served him. Greater achievement is not allowed to any upon this earth." As I put the words to the screen before, tears rolled down my cheeks--perhaps at the joy of completion. But it was more than that. I wanted my readers to cry too at the end of a life of commitment and passion. And I want my students to read about Russell's life so they can understand that one committed journalist can make life better. Russell's life was filled with lessons for us today.

Robert Miraldi
October, 2004

Robert Miraldi is professor of journalism at SUNY New Paltz. The book is published by palgrave/macmillan.

Annually since 1944, the Frank Luther Mott / Kappa Tau Alpha Research Award has honored the best book about journalism/mass communication based on original research.

For information about the contest, go to www.KappaTauAlpha.org and click on Mott Award.

The deadline for books published with a 2005 copyright is Dec. 8, 2005.

Honor Cord Ordering

The popularity of KTA honor cords continues to grow. If you plan to order purchase cords for the first time this year or anticipate a significant increase in the number you ordered this year, please let us know.

We'll be placing with the vendor our annual order for honor cords in October.

Researching a muckraker's life

Robert Miraldi won the Frank Luther Mott / Kappa Tau Alpha Research Award for the best research book on journalism and mass communication published in 2004. His essay below describes how he researched and wrote *The Pen is Mightier: The Muckraking Life of Charles Edward Russell*.

I was sitting in front of a microfilm screen at the Tamiment Library at New York University in the summer of 2001. I had been living with microfilms for nearly a decade as I researched the life of Charles Edward Russell (1860-1941), the once-famous muckraking journalist. I had viewed via microfilm endless newspapers that revealed his years in New York, at the *Herald*, the *World* and the *Journal*. I had looked at two years of the *Chicago American*, the daily newspaper he published for William Randolph Hearst in 1900-01. I read numerous speeches he had given that were preserved on microfilm.

Microfilms machines I understood. But the young man next to me was befuddled in trying to get his machine to work. He asked for help. Over I went to tinker, to thread the film in, and then begin to focus. And as I focused I was shocked. Up in the middle of the screen – almost magically — appeared Charles Edward Russell, the man I was studying.

As it turned out, the young man was reading the *Forward*, the Yiddish newspaper that often carried stories about Progressive and Socialist issues. The photograph was of Russell as he ran for governor of New York in 1910. I could not escape Russell – nor did I want to. I had long ago decided that his was a life worth recalling, that he was an American who we should admire, and that he had for too long been forgotten for reasons I still cannot understand.

And I should not have been surprised really that he turned up on that microfilm screen. In the first two decades of the twentieth century Russell was everywhere: headlining the mass-circulation magazines; tilting at windmills as he gored the meatpacking monopolists and the world's richest church; running for political office four times; lecturing to large audiences in rural America on the Chautauqua lecture circuit; haranguing public officials

for ignoring the needs of the poor; and helping to found the NAACP, the nation's first advocacy group to defend the rights of black Americans.

As a reviewer in the *Journal of American History* recently wrote of Russell: "He combined the work of the journalist with that of the social reformer as few did before or have since." His "long life...almost boggles the imagination of those who do not know of him." And yet Russell has remained largely unknown. For a man who wrote 30 books, hundreds of magazine articles, and won the Pulitzer Prize in 1927, this is indeed perplexing.

I first discovered Russell as a graduate student at New York University in the late 1980s, but my interest in muckrak-

"Up in the middle of the screen--almost magically--appeared Charles Edward Russell, the man I was studying...."

ing dates back to my years in journalism in the 1970s when I was an investigative reporter at a daily newspaper in New York City. As a graduate student at Boston University in 1974 I read C.C. Regier's 1932 history of the muckraking era in the years before World War I and my interest was piqued by the band of journalists who historian Louis Filler called "crusaders for American liberalism."

I returned to daily journalism after graduate school, compelled by the lessons of the muckrakers. In 1980 I entered NYU to complete a Ph.D. In a yearlong seminar on American civilization I studied the journalism of David Graham Phillips, another muckraker who also was a famous novelist. Philip's best friend was Charles Edward Russell — and that is how I first met Russell up close. No biography of Russell existed.

In my 1991 book, *Muckraking and Objectivity: Journalism's Colliding Traditions*, I used Russell to display the fire-and-brimstone style of journalism that he represented. I read some of his muckraking articles and I was impressed with his logic, his passion, and his anger at social

conditions. Sometime in 1992 I set my sights on writing his life story. Why? First, I liked him and what he stood for, although at the time I had no idea how much he had produced. Second, only a 1971 Ph.D. dissertation existed on his life. Third, his papers – nearly 40 volumes consisting of articles, diaries, letters, memorabilia – were stored in the Library of Congress. The primary-source material was indeed rich.

The National Endowment for the Humanities funded my first trip to Washington to view his papers; the NEH then supported me with a second grant to begin work. The New York State library had almost all of Russell's books and as a state employee I could take them home with me to pore over. I plunged into the primary sources. Eventually, with the aid of the Internet, which hardly existed when I began, I found more and more material about Russell. Librarians from Vermont to Iowa to California helped me piece together the picture of his life.

Research is always uncertain. For example, I was always stumped in tracing Russell's family from Davenport, Iowa. His lone son died in 1956 in Santa Monica, Ca., but the trail ended there when I could not find Russell's lone granddaughter. Once I thought I found her in Baltimore – but it was a distant relative who only vaguely knew "Uncle Charley."

I was haunted for years by the fear that lurking somewhere, in some distant basement, was a cache of letters that would reveal the personal side of Russell that I never got to know. Eventually I became convinced that Russell's personal life and his public life were one and the same. He lived to muckrake and crusade. He once commented in 1905, "I hope to keep on muck-raking. I like to muck-rake."

Some research finds excited me: for example, a letter from Upton Sinclair to Russell just before Sinclair published *The Jungle* in 1906, whispering to Russell that they were both chasing the same "monster." A sheaf of letters turned up late in my research, written by Russell right before he died in 1941, and pasted in a scrapbook by a cousin. He was nostalgic, worried about war in Europe, but still optimistic about mankind. And still angry.

Writing the book was most