ETHICS and ELECTIONS

Media, Money and Power in 2012

the fourth annual ethics conference

conference program
notes ...
This conference is only possible because of the generous support of our sponsors, who share our commitment to encouraging high ethical standards in journalism.

CJE is grateful to the board of the Evjue Foundation for making this conference possible.

Special thanks to UW Alumna Peppy O’Neill (Class of 1965) for individual sponsorship.
The Center for Journalism Ethics welcomes you to the fourth annual conference!

It is our privilege to stage this event once again. Your participation today -- as panelists, students, faculty, journalists, sponsors and citizens -- will help us continue to encourage high ethical standards in journalism, here and abroad. Your support is vital to the CJE mission:

To advance the ethical standards and practices of democratic journalism through discussion, research, teaching, professional outreach, and newsroom partnerships. The center is a voice for journalistic integrity, a forum for informed debate, and an incubator for new ideas and practices.

Stephen J.A. Ward
Director, Center for Journalism Ethics
FACT-CHECKING IN AN ELECTION YEAR
Implications for politicians, journalists, and the public

The last decade has seen the emergence of a new journalistic organism in the American media ecology: “factchecking” organizations dedicated to evaluating the veracity of statements made by public figures -- especially politicians and candidates. These organizations have worked hard to establish a niche, coexisting in interesting ways alongside the other news media.

As one of the newer entries in the American journalism scene, the practice of factchecking raises important questions both about the practice itself, and what its emergence says about the larger field of news media:

- Why have factchecking organizations arisen at our particular moment in history?
- What is the relationship between factcheckers and journalists? How do the ethics of the two types of practice compare?
- What will be the role of factchecking as the digital media ecology evolves into the future?

Bill Adair
Editor, PolitiFact

Lisa Graves
Executive Director
Center for Media & Democracy

Lucas Graves
Columbia University

MODERATOR:
Christopher Wells
Assistant Professor
UW-Madison SJMC
POLITICAL ADVERTISING:
The Perils and Promise of the Modern Campaign

Few topics generate the widespread interest or strong opinions that are reserved for political advertising. This may be because the amount spent on modern elections has exploded, especially in the wake of campaign finance reform. Citizens and academics fret about the resources required to fund political campaigns, the rise of political attacks at the state and national level, and the impact of advertising, in general, and negative appeals, in particular, on voters.

The assembled experts will discuss the scope and impact of political ads in recent elections and the role of journalists in making their perils and promise more visible. The panelists will also explore related questions:

- Does exposure to campaign ads facilitate or hinder participation?
- Do people learn from political ads, and, if so, do they still need the news?
- What role do emergent news formats, whether news satire programs or digital media outlets, play in this dynamic?

MODERATOR:

Dhavan V. Shah
Maier-Bascom Professor
Director, Mass Communication Research Center
UW-Madison SJMC
Luncheon and Keynote speech:

Can Journalists Be Ethical at the Warp Speed of the 2012 Campaign?

The accelerating speed and fragmentation of media are continually affecting what the public is hearing.

If elections are essentially national job interviews, are we learning what we need to about the candidates, and about ourselves?

What are the responsibilities of the press in elections, and how well they are being met in the 2012 campaign?

Tom Rosenstiel
Director, The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism
**Workshop #1 Tweets & Votes: Elections in a social media age • H.F. deLuca Forum**

This workshop will focus on the impact social media will have on election 2012 at the local, state and national levels. We'll examine the promise and pitfalls of tools like Facebook and Twitter for informing and engaging citizens in a democracy.

The session will highlight ethical practices by both journalists and campaigns, as well as the potential for manipulation and misinformation.

*Katy Culver, UW-Madison SJMC • Ryan Gallentine, Midwest Regional Director, Obama for America • Thomas Keeley, online strategy consultant, Keeley Company • Marc Smith, Connected Action Consulting*

**Workshop #2 Following the Money: Tools for reporters & editors • Room 1260**

This workshop will explore resources for reporting on the intersection of money and politics, looking at public databases on campaign fundraising, spending, and lobbying activity in Wisconsin.

It will consider the ethical uses of information about spending meant to influence the political process — e.g. the need to draw distinctions between spending by candidates vs. special interests. It will challenge simplistic analyses that suggest the political process is like a vending machine, in which people put money in, and get policy out. And it will suggest ways that public data can be used as a starting point for further inquiry.

*Bill Lueders, money & policy director, Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism*

**Workshop #3 Blting the Hand that Feeds You: Practical advice for covering political advertising as news • Room 1170**

This breakout workshop will explore several ways of reporting on political advertising. It will discuss the ethical imperative to hold the claims in political ads up to the same sort of scrutiny that journalists bring to other sorts of political statements.

Specific examples of how to approach this process will be included — for example, how to challenge political ads in an interview setting, how to report and then broadcast or print an ad watch, and some possible ways that citizen journalists — in cooperation with the regular reporting staff — can help to monitor everything from robo calls and push polls to direct mail advertising.

*Lee Wilkins, Curator’s Teaching Professor, Missouri School of Journalism*
In February 2012, Anthony Shadid, a UW-Madison alumnus and foreign correspondent for The New York Times, died from health complications while reporting in Syria.

In his honor and memory, the CJE will devote the final session of its conference to Mr. Shadid's outstanding journalism and enduring humanity. The session will pay tribute to his life and work by focusing on the values that informed his journalism.

Anthony Shadid honored the central ethical values of journalism at home and abroad. Through his courageous commitment to accuracy, fairness and depth in reporting, Anthony Shadid defined, through his work, what we mean by responsible journalism in the public interest.

Reflections on a life in journalism:
Friends and colleagues

Stephen Ward
Director
Center for Journalism Ethics

Katy Culver
Professor
UW-Madison SJMC

Kayla Johnson
Editor-in-Chief
The Daily Cardinal

David Hoffman
Contributing Editor
The Washington Post
Anthony Shadid Award for Journalism Ethics

presented to

STEVEN T. LOVEJOY
The Journal Times
Racine, Wisconsin

This award honors journalists in Wisconsin who have exhibited unwavering commitment to responsible journalism in the public interest through their editorial decisions, their journalistic practice, and their stories.

Conferred by the
Center for Journalism Ethics
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of Wisconsin-Madison
13 April 2012

Award presented by

Dan Flannery
Executive Editor, The Post-Crescent
Winner of the 2011 Wisconsin Commitment to Journalism Ethics Award
Thank you for joining us...
Center for Journalism Ethics mission:

To advance the ethical standards and practices of democratic journalism through discussion, research, teaching, professional outreach and newsroom partnerships. The center is a voice for journalistic integrity, a forum for informed debate and an incubator for new ideas and practices.

ethics.journalism.wisc.edu