

Call For Papers – Submission Deadline: June 1, 2006

Conscientious Objections: Communicating Dissent

64th Annual Conference + October 20–22, 2006

Hudson Valley Resort & Spa, Kerhonkson, New York

In a communication environment characterized by overt propaganda, increased emphasis on FCC regulations, the PATRIOT Act, and constant cries of bias in journalism, the role of Communication scholars as a counterweight to the “tyranny of the majority” is paramount. Inspired by Postman’s many essays on the tyranny of language and technology and in an effort to encourage productive and bold research, the 2006 NYSCA conference will focus on dissent in all its forms.

Papers addressing alternative media (for adults and children), the chilling effect in journalism, the spiral of silence in group communication, protest movements, the discourse surrounding contested cultural issues such as the war in Iraq, gay marriage, Supreme Court nominees, etc., are all of particular interest. Papers addressing persuasion or propaganda in all contexts are also important to the conference theme.

We seek papers in all formats, formal & informal speeches, roundtables, demonstrations, participatory panels, media screenings, or other innovative ideas. Submissions unrelated to the conference theme, as well as submissions from a variety of theoretical traditions, are also welcome. Undergraduate and graduate student submissions are welcome, and will be considered for student paper awards.

Keynote Speakers:

Jeff Cohen ([www.jeffcohen.org](http://www.jeffcohen.org)) is a writer, lecturer and media critic who founded the media watch group FAIR in 1986 ([www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org)). He has appeared regularly on national TV and radio, and his columns have been published in dozens of dailies. In 2003, he was the communications director of the Kucinich for President campaign. Cohen is the co-author of four books: *Wizards of Media Oz: Behind the Curtain of Mainstream News* (1997), *The Way Things Aren’t: Rush Limbaugh’s Reign of Error* (1995), *Through the Media Looking Glass: Decoding Bias and Blather in the News* (1995), and *Adventures in Medialand: Behind the News, Beyond the Pundits* (1993). His new book, *Cable News Confidential: My Misadventures in Corporate Media*, will be released this summer.

William Hoynes is William Hoynes is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Media Studies Program at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York, where he teaches courses on media, culture, and social theory. He is the author of *Public Television for Sale: Media, the Market, and the Public Sphere*, and co-author (with David Croteau) of *By Invitation Only: How the Media Limit Political Debate, Media/Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences*, and most recently, *The Business of Media: Corporate Media and the Public Interest*.

Submission Guidelines for Completed Papers (or extended abstracts—in which case, the complete paper is due by 8/1/06)

1. Cover page with the title of the paper, author’s affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.
2. A running head with an abbreviated title and “undergraduate research,” “graduate research,” or “debut” where applicable.
3. A one page abstract on the second page.
4. Please include the statement of professional responsibility below on the second page below the abstract. “In submitting the attached paper, I/We agree to present the paper at the 2006 NYSCA Conference if it is accepted.
5. Papers should be emailed to Dr. Margaret Cassidy, [Cassidy@adelphi.edu](mailto:Cassidy@adelphi.edu) by June 1, 2006. (Microsoft Word or Wordperfect formats only)

Submission guidelines for Panel Proposals and all other formats

1. Cover page with the title of the panel or presentation, authors’ affiliations, mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
2. A description of the topic of the panel or presentation not to exceed 150 words.
3. Title, author(s) and abstracts of 50-75 words for individual papers, where applicable.
4. A statement of professional responsibility should be submitted with the proposal. “In submitting the attached paper, I/We agree to present the paper at the 2006 NYSCA Conference if it is accepted.”
5. Proposals should be emailed to Dr. Margaret Cassidy, [Cassidy@adelphi.edu](mailto:Cassidy@adelphi.edu) by June 1, 2006. (Microsoft Word or Wordperfect formats only)

Spring 2006

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# NYSCA REPORTS

Newsletter of the New York State Communication Association

## 2006 Conference Highlights by Peggy Cassidy

Plans are well underway for the 64th annual NYSCA conference, to be held October 20-22, 2006 at the Hudson Valley Resort and Spa. We hope that this year’s conference theme, *Conscientious Objections: Communicating Dissent*, will give participants a weekend full of thought provoking experiences and ideas to bring home.

We will have two keynote speakers this year: Jeff Cohen on Friday night, and William Hoynes on Saturday night. Both are accomplished scholars whose work is well in keeping with our theme, and whose ideas will resonate well with one another. Jeff Cohen is a writer, lecturer and media critic who founded the media watch group FAIR in 1986 ([www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org)). He was an on-air commentator (and “Donahue” senior producer) at MSNBC in 2003; a weekly “News Watch” panelist on Fox News Channel from 1997 to 2002; and a co-host of CNN’s “Crossfire” in 1996. Cohen is the co-author of four books, including *Wizards of Media Ox: Behind the Curtain of Mainstream News* and *Through the Media Looking Glass: Decoding Bias and Blather in the News*. His new book, *Cable News Confidential: My Misadventures in Corporate Media*, is slated for release later this summer.

Prior to launching FAIR, Cohen worked in Los Angeles as a journalist and as a lawyer for the ACLU. His investigative articles and features ran in Rolling Stone, New Times, The Nation, Mother Jones and other publications. He was a board member of several civil rights groups, including the ACLU of Southern California and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference/L.A.

William Hoynes is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Media Studies Program at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York, where he teaches courses on media, culture, and social theory. He is the author of *Public Television for Sale: Media, the Market, and the Public Sphere*, and co-author (with David Croteau) of *By Invitation Only: How the Media Limit Political Debate, Media/Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences*, and most recently, *The Business of Media: Corporate Media and the Public Interest*. He has won numerous awards for his scholarly work, including the Goldsmith Book Prize from the Shorenstein Center on Press, Politics and

Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (1995) and the Robert Picard Book Award from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (2002).

One of the strengths and values of the NYSCA conference, regardless of a particular year’s theme, has always been its collegial atmosphere, which provides so many opportunities for participants to make contacts and advance their educational, professional, and scholarly work. To that end, we are planning a number of sessions that we hope will be very useful to participants. For example, we are planning a Friday pre-dinner cocktail party/networking session, where graduate students and junior faculty members will be able to discuss graduate programs, adjunct and full time positions, and publishing opportunities with more established faculty members and publishing professionals. We will also have a “Publishers’ Forum” session, where publishing representatives, journal editors, and book series editors will discuss the publishing process.

NYSCA is also a particularly appropriate place for undergraduate and graduate students to present their work. Audiences are always supportive of student presenters, at the same time as they take those presenters seriously and help them refine their work. We continue to welcome and encourage student submissions, and we will present awards for best undergraduate and graduate student paper.

As always, the Catskills will provide a beautiful autumn backdrop to our conference activities. The grounds surrounding the hotel are a lovely place to take a break from conference activities and take in a little fall foliage, which should be putting on a great show by our conference dates.

More detailed information about the conference, and about submission guidelines is included in this newsletter. We hope to see you in October!

## in this issue

2006 Conference Highlights .....	1
Small is Beautiful .....	2
Call for Student Research .....	3
James W. Carey (1934–2006) .....	3
Call For Papers, 64 <sup>th</sup> Conference .....	4

Small is Beautiful:  
Conferences as if People Mattered

By Bill Petkanas

As I drove home from this year's conference of the New York State Communication Association, I wondered if I would ever attend the NCA, ICA, or any large conference again. The NYSCA is a small regional organization which, despite the name, attracts members from Western Pennsylvania to New England. The conference attendance is usually somewhere between 90 and 120. The plenary sessions look like the smallest interest group meeting at the NCA or perhaps the tiniest fringe group of the MLA.

I think my experiences of large conferences are typical. I arrive by plane to a attractive city, proceed to an enormous hotel, check in to the conference where I'm given a four pound book containing the schedule, find the panel I'm on and select panels to go to from among the 15 or so each session in two or three venues. I'll see some friends and enjoy their company, perhaps arrange a dinner with some, but the feeling I get is of swimming though legions of academics as a solitary, anonymous, wandering professor surrounded by the same, alone or in small groups, weaving through hotel lobbies with no connection except our name tags. You, around me, look the same. I hear an interesting paper, chat for a while about it with a few colleagues, and then we propel ourselves in several different directions to see other panels, visit the city's attractions, never to meet again. I leave with the feeling that I am part of a huge enterprise, and there is something grand and satisfying about that. But, I feel like a very, very small part, indeed.

After 20 years of conference attendance, large and small, I have finally realized the difference between them. And it's the size. The large conference is about networking, status, hierarchy, and all the corporate elements of academia: jobs, tenure, promotion, and contacts. The small conference is about all that is human: colleagues, encouragement, teaching, comparative department politics (and complaints, of course), friendships, and warmth.

The NYSCA conference was in a medium size hotel in New York's Catskill Mountains, away from any major city and where the local attraction for conference goers was apples, which were in season and delicious. Otherwise, people stayed at the hotel and interacted with each other. This was easy for me, having been to this conference many times since the mid 1980s, I knew perhaps a third of the people there to begin with, and had a chance to meet almost everyone else.

*The great irony is that it's the big conference that matters in promotion, tenure and prestige, but the small conference that makes me a better, more self-aware, scholar and teacher.*

Perhaps the biggest difference between the small and the mega conference is the meals. Instead of dispersing in a large city to dine, the entire conference sits together for meals, with business meetings during lunch and a speaker after dinner in the evening.

When you meet someone, you can be sure that you will see this person again later, at a panel (usually only four or so to choose from at a time), at dinner, at the bar, in the lobby. When we leave on Sunday, we say goodbye to people we have really spent a weekend with, engaging in each other's scholarship, comparing notes on each other's ideas, deans, colleagues and students. It's a shared experience that one doesn't get at a big conference, and it forms a genuine community. Conversations are extended after panels, ideas are pursued at the bar

after hours, career advice is available from experienced people.

When I leave a big conference, I feel a sense that I have contributed in my small way to the scholarship in my field. When I leave the small conference, I feel invigorated; I believe I have contributed to the lives of my colleagues and they have enriched mine. I can't wait to teach again, to return to an article or editorial assignment, to get back to the work I love. The great irony is that it's the big conference that matters in promotion, tenure and prestige, but the small conference that makes me a better, more self-aware, scholar and teacher. Many think the little conference irrelevant, a waste of time, which probably contributes to its staying small. They have no idea what they're missing. But I do.

There is as much good scholarship at a small conference as a large one, maybe even better scholarship in this sense that regional conferences are not intimidating venues – you might bring an idea in progress or take a chance on a speculative roundtable. Ideas are brought to the big conferences to be displayed; they are done. Many ideas are brought to the small conferences to be discussed, worked over, and refined. Ironically, the "little" conference better reflects the ideals of the academy and the tradition of thought, discussion and debate.

My trip home from the NYSCA conference was a pleasant journey through New York's Hudson Valley to my home in Connecticut. It was a sunny, crisp, October day and the drive took less than two hours. I reflected on the conference, the people, and the fact that there were no planes, no monstrous venues, no teaming throngs. The weekend was intellectually stimulating and socially pleasant and I thought, perhaps I'm done with the big conferences. Of course, I have that luxury: as a tenured, full professor and chair I can say that. I only wish all my colleagues could.

*Bill Petkanas is Professor and Chair of the Department of Communication, Western Connecticut State University.*

NYSCA Student Research Awards  
Submission Guidelines

NYSCA has long been an outstanding venue for the presentation of student research at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. The scale of the conference allows for valuable feedback from seasoned scholars in a supportive yet rigorous environment. Often these exchanges go beyond the presentation and into the dining room, where beginning scholars have the opportunity to refine and develop their ideas in an informal setting. In continuation of this tradition we invite submissions for graduate and undergraduate students to be considered for inclusion in the conference and for student research awards.

Graduate and undergraduate students are strongly encouraged to submit their work (or proposals or extended abstracts by July 1, 2006), followed by submission of a completed version for review by August 1, 2006. Submitters should note their student status on the submission. All Student submissions will be considered for top undergraduate and top graduate paper awards, as well as an award for the top student panel.

Student Submission Guidelines for Completed Papers due by 8/1/2006

1. Cover page with the title of the paper, author's affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.
2. A running head with an abbreviated title and "undergraduate research," "graduate research," or "debut" where applicable.
3. A one-page abstract on the second page.
4. Please include a signed statement of professional responsibility on the second page of the paper, below the abstract. The statement should say the following:  
"In submitting the attached paper, I/We agree to present the paper at the 2006 NYSCA Conference if it is accepted."
5. Abstracts and papers should be emailed to Dr. Margaret Cassidy, Cassidy@adelpi.edu. (Microsoft Word or Wordperfect formats only)

Student Submission Guidelines for Panel Proposals and All Other Formats by July 1, 2006.

1. Cover page with the title of the panel or presentation, authors' affiliations, "undergraduate research," "graduate research," or "debut," mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
2. A description of the topic of the panel or presentation not to exceed 150 words.
3. Title, author(s) and abstracts of 50-75 words for individual papers, where applicable.
4. Please include a signed statement of professional responsibility on a separate page, attached to the panel description and abstracts. The statement should say the following: "In submitting the attached paper, I/We agree to present the paper at the 2006 NYSCA Conference if it is accepted."
5. Proposals should be emailed to Dr. Margaret Cassidy, Cassidy@adelpi.edu. (Microsoft Word or Wordperfect formats only)

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If you have any ideas for articles or topics you'd like to see represented, please make them known to akissiloff@ithaca.edu

In Memoriam  
James W. Carey  
(1934 – 2006)

With great sadness, NYSCA marks the passing of James W. Carey, CBS Professor of International Journalism in Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.

The Keynote Speaker at our 1998 conference, Professor Carey was awarded NYSCA's highest honor, the John F. Wilson Fellow Award in 2004, in recognition for his exceptional scholarship, leadership, and dedication to the field of communication and to NYSCA.

Before coming to New York City, Carey had been Director of the Institute of Communications Research at the University of Illinois, George H. Gallup professor of journalism at the University of Iowa, and Dean of the College of Communications at the University of Illinois. He also served as President of the Association for Education in Journalism, and the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism. He was a fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Gannett Center for Media Studies, and a board member of the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, the Public Broadcasting System, and the Peabody Awards for Broadcasting.

The author of *Communication as Culture* and *James Carey: A Critical Reader* (a volume edited by two of his former students), he is widely known as the founder of American cultural studies, and as an outstanding scholar within all of the social sciences, including communication and journalism. But more than this, we at NYSCA remember Jim Carey as a colleague, mentor, and friend.

–Lance Strate