

Preface

Volume 2, Social Justice within a Communication Sphere (2005)

I am honoured and pleased to present the second volume of the McMaster Journal of Communication, (MJC) the official, student run, anonymously peer reviewed journal of the Department of Communication Studies and Multimedia at McMaster University. Submissions underwent student peer review and those chosen were also reviewed by an editorial board composed of tenure-stream and contractual faculty members from across and outside McMaster. MJC is an interdisciplinary journal whose purpose is to encourage undergraduate and Master's-level students to publish their work. The journal accepts submissions in either French or English, from either quantitative or qualitative perspectives as well as works of art, and/or multimedia projects. A secondary purpose of the journal is to provide a great problem-based learning scenario for the student editor, a position awarded to a different student each academic year. The editorship affords the student the opportunity to learn about the business of putting together an annual academic journal under the guidance of a faculty advisor.

Each year, the editor chooses a theme for the journal; this year's theme is Social Justice within a Communication Sphere. This theme was chosen because it was deemed to be globally significant at this moment in time – a moment when it is important to consider the American invasion of Iraq, the AIDS crisis in Africa, the changing health care system in Canada, the digital revolution and what it means politically, economically and culturally. A secondary reason for choosing this theme was because it was deemed broad enough to attract submissions from many different disciplines and methodological perspectives.

This year the journal received thirty submissions of which five were chosen for publication, representing a variety of disciplines. One of the essays came from linguistics, one from history and three from communications.

Matthew Clarke's essay on Protecting Information Rights in the Liberal- Democratic State argues that there is a need for the enshrinement of information rights into democratic states' constitutions for the sake of protecting the public sphere. This has become necessary due to the prevalence of digital technology which has revolutionized our society moving it from an industrialized culture towards becoming a culture that is based on the value of information.

Carmen Gayoso, in her article, Technology-centred Discourses in European Audiovisual Policy: Will Euro-Techno out Fox the US Assembly Line, examines the European broadcasting system in relation to European cultural policymaking. She suggests that due to the technological-centred discourse of the European stage, the European Union has failed in its desire to create a unified European market that can compete with the American broadcasting system which has thus far dominated the European market.

The (Step)motherly Ideal: The Role of Sex, Gender and Stereotype in the Aurore Gagnon Murder Trial, by Matthew Nash, examines the early twentieth century murder trial of Anne-

Marie Houde and her treatment during that trial by the media and the criminal justice system. He argues that due to the patriarchal views of the time, Houde was treated more harshly than other murderers.

Sonja Weaver's article, *From Bracelets to Blowjobs: The Ideological Representation of Childhood Sexuality in the Media*, examines how moral panics within the public domain are created by the media. This is accomplished through an investigation of the sex bracelet phenomenon that captured public attention in 2004 and its relation to the issue of childhood sexuality.

Millee Yu Qing Zhou's paper, *A McMaster Undergraduate Study of the Social Origins and Implications of Slang and Gendered Language*, investigates how slang, specifically gendered words, are used in a Canadian university context, specifically at McMaster University. She takes her findings and compares them to past studies done on university slang.

Finally, I would like to say a great big "thank you" to all five of the above mentioned authors for their commitment to scholarship and ideas. I would also like to thank the Editorial Board: all the professors and instructors who committed their time and energy to the journal. Thanks to my Peer Review Committee which was composed of volunteer student reviewers: I appreciate the commitment that they made to the journal and the hard work that they freely gave to assist me in the reviewing process. A personal thank you to Dr. Geoffrey Rockwell who was responsible for introducing me to Heather Easlick, the student who volunteered to be the journal's web designer, and thanks to Heather for her commitment to the journal. She has done an excellent job – one for which I am most grateful. Thank you to Dr. William Martin who contributed above and beyond the call of duty as a member of the editorial board of the journal. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Alexandre Sevigny, my faculty advisor. He was a pleasure to work with, always positive and encouraging, willing to spend long hours working with me, providing constructive criticism and valued instruction. Thank you Dr. Sevigny for granting me this unique opportunity, I found it to be challenging and rewarding, an invaluable educational experience.