



Scuttlebutt

Saturday, February 27, 2021

Sergeant-at-Arms ♦ Joe Jenkins

Joe Jenkins served as SAA and shared a prayer that was given at our ECHR SECU House night on 2/20/20, almost exactly 1 year to the day. Although written for those undergoing treatments that led to their SECU presence, the words turned prophetic for us all in the pandemic year that followed that night.

He then launched into a Jeopardy type presentation to test the mettle of the ♦smartest Rotary club in the world. ♦ Members were challenged to identify the book from which 6 quotes emanated. Diane Smith got kudos for identifying ♦A Gentleman in Moscow ♦ before all quotes and clues were given. Not surprisingly, the SAA noted that the ♦brilliance ♦ of the men was dimmed by the intellectual firepower of the smarter sex!

February 19, 2021 Speaker - Ferrel Guillory

By Will Bunch



Ferrel Guillory, a member of the North Carolina Media and Journalism Hall of Fame, became a household name during his 25 years at the Raleigh News and Observer, then for the next 25 years became a legend in the classroom at UNC. He has shared with us what we need to know about the changes in Journalism and what we should do about it.

Ferrel began with a quote Soren Kierkegaard: "If the daily press were to hang out a sign like every other trade, it would have to read: 'Here men are demoralized in the shortest possible time on the largest possible scale for the lowest possible price.' "

Ferrel describes journalism in the 20th century starting with discussing Walter Lippmann. Lippmann wrote in an age of newspapers and magazines and his thinking was influenced by his concern for propaganda during World War I. He became known as the father of ♦Objective Journalism. ♦ a hot topic today. Ferrel quotes from Lippmann ♦s work ♦Liberty and the News ♦ who said, ♦In so far as those who purvey the news make of their own beliefs a higher law than truth, they are attacking the foundations of our constitutional system. There can be no higher law in journalism than to tell the truth and shame the devil. ♦

Ferrel makes some important observations, Media are plural. Ferrel showed a graphic illustrating a pyramid shape for news organizations on a chart with one

measure being political bias, left or right and the other being accuracy of information being presented and the extent to which analysis, opinion, persuasion, misleading information/propaganda, or inaccurate/fabricated information is being included in the reporting. Rather than focusing on which organizations are more or less accurate the point is to be illustrative. The media are very plural with far-right bias and far-left bias. Organizations can be scaled in terms of how fact finding they are and how speculative they are.

Ferrel moves on to describe his work in 1970 with ♦The States Item ♦ and how there ♦s a lack of the personal touch in news reporting now, compared to at this time as he was reporting right out of his time in college. ♦The States Item. ♦ ♦The Raleigh Times. ♦ ♦The Greensboro Record ♦ and other afternoon papers no longer exist and that service to a community is no longer present. Ferrel discussed how he spent about 6 months in the sports department of ♦the States Item ♦ and an important job was to get the results of the final horse race into the newspaper. Gamblers would gather around to get that information, and one man in particular, who was a frequent visitor would come talk to the sports department reporters so that he could better set the betting line. On another note, 3 reporters would go to a town hall meeting to capture everything that was discussed. The point being, the newspaper, was very devoted to the local community and the community was actively seeking the reporting.

Moving on to NC in 1972, Ferrel was hired from out of state to move to Raleigh working for the News and Observer. The N&O was in a stage of wanting to show its readers and political community that it could provide responsible reporting and wasn't devoted to old democratic leanings. N&O allowed Ferrel to take on an audacious project of having 3 reporters, Ferrel, Pat Smith and Leslie Wayne to go to the homes of North Carolinians all over NC to listen to the opinions of many different voters. To take on this project Ferrel was even loaned the car of his boss, Frank Daniels Jr. the editor, so he could work on this project. It was a time when local and metropolitan news organizations were incredibly devoted to their community.

In contrast, with technological, lifestyle and generational change, local community-based reporting has diminished. Nevertheless, national level news has grown. New York Times reports it now has more than 6.5 million subscribers with 5.5 million being digital only. In the last year, Washington Post has jumped in subscriptions from 2 to 3 million at a price of

Speakers

March 05, 2021

David Gessner
 Environmentalism, Teddy Roosevelt, &
 Ultimate Frisbee?

March 12, 2021

Aaron Nelson
 Growth & Development in a time of
 COVID-19

March 19, 2021

Gary Crunkleton
 Scotch Whiskey for Lunch, Anyone?

Birthdays

Ronald C. Link
 February 27th
 William H. Bunch
 March 4th
 Donald J. Heineman
 March 5th
 Patrick Phelan
 March 8th
 William E. Bolen
 March 9th
 John Akin
 March 10th
 Clifford Roosevelt Butler
 March 11th
 Robert Harper Slater
 March 11th
 Vannie Kay Hodges
 March 13th
 Bruce Todd Granger
 March 15th
 Jon K. Jester
 March 20th
 R. David Kimball
 March 21st
 Chislaine Duhamel
 March 27th

Club Leaders



Gavin Christopher Heymann
 President



Patrick Phelan
 President-Elect



Omar Zinn
 Secretary



Courtney H Knoll
 Treasurer



Christine Diane Jones
 Club Director



Laurie Paolicelli
 Public Image Chair

\$100/year. New York Times digital Revenue has surpassed its print revenue. Washington Post now has 1,000 newsroom employees compared to 550 6-7 years ago. Stories which had one byline, will now have 2-4 reporter names.

Alternatively, in cities and towns across the country, Pugh reports that in 2008-2019 overall newsroom employment has dropped 23%, a loss of 27,000 jobs. Digital newsroom employment rose from 7,500 to about 16,000. A UNC Journalism school colleague Penny Abernathy did research on ♦News Deserts and Ghost Newspapers♦ who recently reported 300 newspapers have closed since 2018 and print news circulation has declined by 5 million.

Ownership of media is shifting to being owned by billionaires and large conglomerates. In summary, big media is thriving and local and metro media is struggling.

Additionally, Ferral discusses how the rise of social media and Trump Administration has led to the rise of incendiary bias and sorting of cable news. Ferral♦s stance is we should regularly follow at least 5-6 different organizations which are diverse so we can have a more diverse set of information being presented.

Roger Jennings presented the question of the following. With Journalism having shifted to have reporters moving away from he said/she said reporting and to have increased interpretations included in the reporting, what is Ferral♦s take on how this is being taught in Journalism schools today. Ferral starts off stating Journalism schools are plural and not in lockstep in regard to education methodology. But, in general, the notion of objective Journalism style being he said/she said, doesn♦t always bring about an objective report. Ferral refers back to Lippmann in the definition of objectivity, ♦Objectivity is a process, and you begin with a disinterested, independent framework. You pursue the truth and all sides of the story, there♦s more than just two sides generally. That the outcome doesn♦t need to be balanced but should be responsible.♦

Ferral admits there can be a blurring of the line with objectivity and opinion when this is done. The challenge for Journalism, using Trump specifically as an example, was you can quote someone accurately, but what do you do when the quote itself is inaccurate? Ferral believes that when a quote is demonstrably inaccurate, the reporter has a responsibility to state facts of what is being discussed. That simply finding another person with an opposing opinion to convey, doesn♦t carry the weight needed to report accurately in this regard.

Roger brings up how straying away from he said/she said process, however, therefore lacks impartiality and the partisan nature and professionalism of the reporter is then questioned. That having a reporter take a stance on what is fact in this manner, is to have the reporter discredit one of their sources. That when a reporter inserts their stance on an argument as a fact checker, this creates a filter of information being delivered.

Ferral admits many reporters bring their partisanship into reporting and that it is the challenge journalism faces today. Ferral believes there is a responsibility for a journalist to reach the truth of a story and to set the facts straight and that process may include the journalist to take a stance on what is fact or not. The professionalism of a journalist becomes a critical issue in these circumstances as they pursue what the truth is. The sense of confidence in professional journalism, as an industry, is being questioned.

To view the recording, click below.

<https://youtu.be/fDg2zN9d32E>

	William B. Aycock II Service Projects Chair
	David Baddour Club Fellowship Chair
	Gregory E. Bradbury Membership Chair
	Will Bunch CCO-Club Comm. Offcr
	Mike Clayton Rotary Foundation Chair
	Timothy Dalton Club Fundraising Chair
	David Grier Martin Sergeant-at-Arms
	John A Perry Club Admin Chair
	Nicholas Matthew Vaughn Club Programs Chair
	Lorenzo Mejia Youth Services Chair
	Matthew Arnold iPast President
	Carol J. Rives Asst Governor

East Chapel Hill
Meets at Chapel Hill Country Club

Time: Friday at 12:45 PM