



## The Seventh Annual Convention of the MEA

# Prologues to Exploration

by Jim Morrison and Don Fishman

We are excited to be hosting the Seventh Annual Convention of the MEA in Boston, the first time the Convention has taken place outside of New York State. We see this as a further step in affirming that media ecology and the MEA are taking their proper place in both national and international arenas. The convention runs from June 8-11 at Boston College, in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. With over 130 participants in the program, we are proud to have an engaging lineup of panels, roundtables, workshops, and multimedia presentations, and a notably exciting roster of featured speakers.

On Friday, June 9, Denise Schmandt-Besserat of the University of Texas, Austin will be delivering our Keynote Address, titled "The Origins of Writing." Many of you will remember her plenary presentation, "The Interface Between Writing and Art," at the 2004 MEA Convention in Rochester, and this year's illustrated talk promises to be equally as engaging.

Elizabeth Eisenstein, author of the landmark study *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, will be receiving this year's Walter J. Ong Award for Career Achievement in Scholarship and speaking on "Revisiting a Media Revolution." Also on Friday, Howard Rheingold, author of such groundbreaking books as *Smart Mobs* and *Tools for Thought*, will present a talk titled "Coevolution of Technology, Media, and Collective Action." Rheingold is this year's winner of the Neil Postman Award for Career Achievement in Public Intellectual Activity.

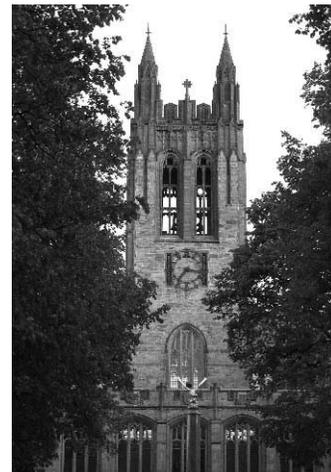
On Saturday, Terry Moran, co-founder of the Program in Media Ecology at New York University, will speak on "Selling War in America." We will also have a plenary presentation by Andrew Rasiej, of Mouse and the Digital Club Network, and former candidate for NYC Public Advocate, winner of this year's

Jacques Ellul Award for Outstanding Media Ecology Activism. Other plenary presentations will be given by Bob Logan, author of *The Alphabet Effect* and *The Sixth Language*, and Gary Gumpert and Sue Drucker of the Urban Communication Foundation, whose illustrated dialogue is titled "The Archaeology of the Communication Landscape."

We will have a Web documentation of the interactive exhibit Laser\Net by Paul Guzzardo of the Geddes Institute of the University of Dundee. There will also be a special screening of *McLuhan Way*, a new television production by Deiren Masterson of Masterworks Productions of Canada, who will receive this year's John Culkin Award for Outstanding Praxis in the Field of Media Ecology. We will be presenting our other annual MEA Awards for excellence in scholarship, publication, and education, as well as our Top Paper Award and the Linda Elson Scholar Award for the Top Student Paper.

Our activities will explore all aspects of media ecology, from primary orality, the development of literacy, the change from script to print, and the electronics revolution, to the possible impacts of continuing technological change. We will discuss how evolving technologies have transformed both the cognitive and physical environments in which we live, work, learn, play, and relate. We will also ask, What are the prospects for the future?

To accom-



**Boston College**

moderate what we expect to be a large number of out-of-town attendees, we have arranged for premium dorm rooms on the Boston College campus, at rates of \$37 double occupancy and \$54 single, both per person per night. For dorm reservations, please contact Don Fishman at donald.fishman.1@bc.edu. No deposit is required, but payment in cash or by check (in U.S. dollars) will be accepted at registration check-in. Deadline for dorm reservations is 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 30, 2006.

For a registration, schedule, and guides, please visit the Convention page on our website at <http://www.media-ecology.org/activities/>.

#### Other MEA Awards

The **Marshall McLuhan Award** for Outstanding Book in the Field of Media Ecology to Thomas de Zengotita for *Mediated: How the Media Shapes Your World and the Way You Live in It*.

The **Walter Benjamin Award** for Outstanding Article in the Field of Media Ecology to Edward Wachtel for "Did Picasso and Da Vinci, Newton and Einstein, The Bushman and the Englishman See the Same Thing When They Faced the East at Dawn? Or, Some Lessons I Learned from Marshall McLuhan About Perception, Time, Space, and the Order of the World."

The **Erving Goffman Award** for Outstanding Scholarship in the Ecology of Social Interaction to David Berreby for *Us and Them: Understanding Your Tribal Mind*.

The **Susanne K. Langer Award** for Outstanding Scholarship in the Ecology of Symbolic Form to Guy Deutscher for *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*.

The **Dorothy Lee Award** for Outstanding Scholarship in the Ecology of Culture to Charlton D. McIlwain for *When Death Goes Pop: Death, Media and the Remaking of Community*.

The **Lewis Mumford Award** for Outstanding Scholarship in the Ecology of Technics to Casey Man Kong Lum for *Perspectives on Culture, Technology and Communication: The Media Ecology Tradition*.

The **Harold A. Innis Award** for Outstanding Thesis or Dissertation in the Field of Media Ecology to Susan Jacobson for *Scrapbook of the Chinese Cultural Revolution: Hypertext and the Representation of History*.

The **Mary Shelley Award** for Outstanding Fictional Work to Rick Moody for *The Diviners*.

The **Louis Forsdale Award** for Outstanding Educator in the Field of Media Ecology to Terence P. Moran.

## IN MEDIAS RES

Volume 7, No. 2

Spring 2006

*In Medias Res*, the newsletter of the Media Ecology Association, appears twice a year (spring and fall). All members of the Association receive a subscription along with their annual membership. For membership details, please see [www.media-ecology.org](http://www.media-ecology.org).

Editor: Paul A. Soukup, S.J.  
Communication Department  
Santa Clara University

#### MEA Board of Directors (term expiration)

Cory Anton (2008) - Grand Valley State University  
Susan B. Barnes (2006) - Rochester Institute of Technology  
Susan Drucker (2008) - Hofstra University  
Thomas F. Gencarelli (2007) - Montclair State University  
Raymond Gozzi, Jr. (2007) - Ithaca College  
Casey Man Kong Lum (2008) - William Paterson University  
James C. Morrison (2006) - Emerson College  
Ellen Rose (2008) - University of New Brunswick  
Douglas Rushkoff (2006) - New York University  
Paul Soukup, S.J. (2007) - Santa Clara University  
Janet Sternberg (2007) - Fordham University  
Lance Strate (2006) - Fordham University

#### Executive Committee

President: Lance Strate  
Vice President: Casey Man Kong Lum  
Treasurer: Thomas F. Gencarelli  
Executive Secretary: Janet Sternberg  
Historian: James C. Morrison

#### Appointed Officers

Director of Communications: Stephanie Bennett, President, ES Creative and Consulting, LLC  
Convention Coordinators (2006): James C. Morrison - Emerson College and Donald Fishman - Boston College  
Editors, *Explorations in Media Ecology*  
Editor: Lance Strate; Review Editor: Thomas F. Gencarelli; Pedagogy Editor: Mary S. Alexander, Marist College; Managing Editor: Cheryl A. Casey, Fordham University; Business Manager: Janet Sternberg  
Editor, *In Medias Res*: Paul Soukup, S.J.  
Editors, Proceedings: Anthony Kelso, Iona College (2005); Steve Reagles (2006); Web Editor and Online Archivist: James C. Morrison  
Electronic Mailing List Manager: Janet Sternberg  
Web Officer: James C. Morrison  
Webmaster: Paul Kelly, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation  
Thomas Harkins, ECA Program Coordinator  
M. J. Robinson, ICA Program Coordinator

## Calls for Nominations:

### Board of Directors and Editor of *{EME}*

The **MEA Board of Directors** consists of 12 members elected by the Association's membership. The Executive Committee (President, Vice-President, Executive Secretary, Treasurer, and the Historian) are elected from and by the 12 Board members. The term of office is three years.

Each year, there are four positions available on the MEA's Board of Directors. To nominate a member, or to volunteer yourself as a nominee, please contact Ellen Rose (contact information below) no later than July 15, 2006.

Nominees must be members in good standing of the MEA and must provide a brief (100-150 word) statement about themselves and their interest in the MEA for inclusion with the ballots.

Submit nominations for the MEA Board of Directors to Ellen Rose at: Email (preferred): [erose@unb.ca](mailto:erose@unb.ca), or Mail: University of New Brunswick, PO Box 4400, Fredericton, NB E3B 5A3 Canada

MEA Board Requirements  
(approved, March 2006)

#### **Responsibilities**

MEA Board Members are expected:

1. to promote the interests of the following groups:
  - individual and institutional members of the Association,
  - the global academic community,
  - individuals and institutions wishing to work within a Media Ecological context,
  - donors to the Association.
2. to insure the Association
  - is properly legally organized and operates within the applicable laws
  - maintains sound fiscal policy, keeps accurate records, and provides financial reports as specified in the Association's by-laws.
3. to establish policies and direction and review programs recommended by the executive committee which promote the aims of the Association.
4. to recruit officer candidates and do succession planning.

#### **Requirements**

1. Be an active member in good standing of the Media Ecology Association.

2. Review and understand the MEA Constitution, the annual treasurer's report, and other elements of governance such as minutes of board meetings.

3. Regularly attend all board meetings in person held during each 3 year board member term. A minimum of two formal meetings are held each year.

- Missing more than 2 meetings without an acceptable excuse constitutes a resignation from the board.

4. Participate actively in at least one MEA Committee.

5. Contribute time, resources, and, if possible, funding to the Association during board tenure.

6. Be familiar and current with MEA publications and communication vehicles, including:

- *Explorations in Media Ecology {EME}*: the journal of the Media Ecology Association.
- *In Medias Res*, The Official Newsletter of the Media Ecology Association.
- the MEA website at <http://www.media-ecology.org>
- the MEA listserve (at [MEA@lists.ibiblio.org](mailto:MEA@lists.ibiblio.org)) details at <http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/mea>.

#### **Qualifications**

A candidate for the MEA board must:

1. be an active practitioner in the field of Media Ecology (student, professional, or retired but still active).

2. agree to maintain the requirements of board membership or resign should changed circumstance make that appropriate.

3. understand the function and responsibilities of nonprofit board members. We welcome inexperienced board member candidates and ask that they invest the time to understand their new role fully. As a start, we recommend:

- becoming familiar with the MEA constitution, financial status, and program and publications.
- meeting with at least one current MEA board member to understand MEA's history, status, and where you can most effectively make a contribution.

**Call for Nominations for Editor, {EME}:  
*Explorations in Media Ecology.***

The Media Ecology Association invites applications for the position of Editor-Elect of the {EME}: *Explorations in Media Ecology*. The Editor-Elect will serve as an associate of the Editor for a period of one year beginning in January of 2007 and then assume the editorship of the journal the following year for a three-year term.

Criteria that will be considered in evaluating applicants for this position will include: (1) Scholarly experience in the area of media ecology, (2) Evidence of leadership and experience pertinent to the editorship of an academic journal, especially in promoting the scholarly mission of the journal, (3) Appropriate editing

skills, and (4) Evidence of institutional support.

Those interested in being considered for this position should submit, along with their curriculum vitae, a letter of self-nomination which outlines their qualifications for editing the journal. Those wishing to nominate others should submit a letter of nomination together with a statement of interest from the nominee, which outlines qualifications. The deadline for nominations is October 25, 2006.

All materials should be sent to the chair of the MEA ad hoc Editor Search Committee:

Contact information: Paul A. Soukup, S.J.  
Communication Department  
Santa Clara University  
500 El Camino Real  
Santa Clara, Ca 95050  
psoukup@scu.edu

## Proposed Constitutional Amendments for the Media Ecology Association

The Media Ecology Association Board proposes the following addition and amendments to the Constitution to a vote of the membership. Boldface type indicates new material; strikethrough types indicates material to be removed. The first proposal addresses issues of replacing Board members, should that become necessary outside of the normal election cycle. The second reduces the membership categories, since the Honorary and Emeritus categories overlap in practice.

### ADDITION to Constitutions

#### Article V

**Section 5. In the event of the resignation, incapacity, or dereliction of duty of a member of the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors shall, at its discretion, select a replacement or establish a nomination and election procedure for so doing.**

### AMENDMENTS to Constitutions

#### Article VI

Section 7. In the event of the **resignation**, inca-

~~capacity of an officer, or his/her the~~ dereliction of duty **of an officer**, the Board of Directors shall, at its discretion, select a replacement or establish a nomination and election procedure for so doing.

### AMENDMENTS to By-LAWS

#### Article I - Membership

Section 1. There shall be ~~five~~**four** type of membership in the Association: Regular, Student, Institutional, **and** Honorary, ~~and Emeritus~~.

~~Section 6. Emeritus Members shall be those individuals granted Emeritus status by approval of the Board of Directors.~~

#### Article II - Dues and Fees

Section 1. Annual dues in the ~~five~~**four** membership categories shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

## President's Message

# Keeping on Track

*Lance Strate*

This time around, I have invoked a railroad metaphor to apprise you of our progress. And I want to begin by assuring you that our journal, *Explorations in Media Ecology*, remains on track, even if it is behind schedule. By now, everyone who has paid membership dues for the 2005 calendar year should have received the first two issues of Volume Four (and if you have not, please contact me at strate@fordham.edu). There was a long gap between the publication of 4:1 and 4:2 due to a production problem beyond our control, for which I would like to apologize on behalf of *EME* and the MEA. And you might say that we are now back on track, but we were never actually derailed in the first place, just delayed. To make up for lost time, the remainder of Volume Four will be published as an extra-large issue (technically, 4:3-4, but I like to call it *extrEME*); now in page proofs, it should be in the mail to 2005 members in another month. The four issues of Volume Five will then be distributed to 2006 MEA members during the second half of 2006 and into 2007. My goal is to be completely caught up by the end of 2007, which also will mark the end of my term as editor. The call for nominations for the new editor of *EME* can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Keeping on track also means improving the way we handle membership, and this is no easy task for an organization run by volunteers, with no paid staff. We are looking at ways to improve our membership services, and I thank you for your patience and hope you will bear with us while we work these things out. As we grow, our organization's activities become increasingly more complex and difficult to coordinate, but we have been working on timetables (calendars, actually), manuals, and the like, to help us avoid any train wrecks in the future. Moreover, the MEA's constitution is, in some ways, tantamount to the tracks we ride on, and periodic maintenance is required to keep us from going off the rails. To this end, after care-

ful review, we have identified several changes that need to be made to our constitution. The proposals can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, and you will have the opportunity to vote on them when the ballots are sent out for the MEA Board elections in the fall.

When it comes to our annual convention, the MEA has been moving full steam ahead, judging from the outstanding event that Jim Morrison and Don Fishman have organized at Boston College on June 8-11. And if you have not done so already, I urge you to make plans to attend, whether you come by train, plane, or automobile. And it is not too early to make plans to come to Mexico City for our 2007 convention, which will be held on June 6-10 at Monterrey Tech, and which promises to be very exciting. MEA has also sponsored a number of excellent programs at the 2005 National Communication Association conference in Boston and the 2006 Eastern Communication Association conference in Philadelphia, and will be sponsoring sessions at the upcoming International Communication Association meeting in Dresden, Germany, the 2006 National Communication Association conference in San Antonio, Texas, and the 2007 Eastern Communication Association conference in Providence, Rhode Island. We also co-sponsored "Perspectives on Postman: A Symposium," which was held at New York University on April 6th, and featured sixteen insightful papers discussing the life, career, and thought of Neil Postman. And we will be co-sponsoring "The World in Quandaries," a symposium in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the publication of *People in Quandaries* by Wendell Johnson, which will be held at Fordham University on September 8th.

And so, it may be that the MEA doesn't always run on time, but maybe that inefficiency reflects the fact that we are human beings, not a machine, political or otherwise. And the main line is that, late or early or just in time, the important thing is that the MEA gets you where you want to go.

# Treasurer's Report

by Thom Gencarelli

The MEA currently has \$26,579.40 on hand during the run up to this year's annual convention in Boston. This is, of course, before any payments have been made toward the expenses for running the convention, or the costs of production of this year's volume of *Explorations in Media Ecology*. It also comes after three major expenditures so far for this fiscal year.

The first of these is a series of reimbursements paid out to people who traveled to our annual Board meeting, held once again this year at Fordham University's Lincoln Center campus in New York City, and totaling \$1,981.86. This represents a substantial increase over the costs we incurred for last year's and previous meetings. However, the Executive Committee deemed such costs necessary for the following reason: For the first time this year, a total of *four* Board members traveled to New York from a substantial distance away. And as we are always interested in bringing new representatives to the Board—not to mention capable, hard-working people who are willing to help with the business of the MEA—this represents the cost of doing such business and “enlarging the tent.” I always appeal to Board members, in advance of the meeting, and as they make their plans, to take into account the fact that the Association can only do so much to subsidize their travel. And most members have been respectful of our situation. But because we wish to encourage participation in the Association at this level, and cannot expect people to pay all expenses for such participation out of their own pockets, this partial subsidy is the least we can do.

Our second major expense was the cost of Executive Secretary Janet Sternberg's plane ticket to Mexico City, where we held preliminary meetings about the 2007 convention with Fernando Gutiérrez and the staff of Tecnológico de Monterrey this past February. Tecnológico de Monterrey graciously picked

up the cost for all travel, hotel, and meals for Lance and myself. They also paid for Janet's hotel and meals. However, one reason we requested that Janet accompany us is that she is the only member of the Executive Committee who speaks fluent Spanish. And since this was our request, we came to an agreement that the MEA would cover at least this part of her expenses (cost: \$1,315.57).

Our third and final expenditure of note was the MEA's \$500 co-sponsorship of the Neil Postman Symposium at New York University this past April 6. As a reminder to our members, NYU's Dept. of Culture and Communication has co-sponsored our convention every year—with the exception of the convention they hosted for us in 2001.

Finally, I must note that I still have a few small bundles of membership checks, forwarded to me by Janet, which I have not yet deposited at this time. I mention this because we received, this Spring, a number of inquiries about payment from people who were wondering why their bank statements did not show their checks having been returned to them after two months or more.

Please understand that while we do our best to provide our members with the *utmost* in customer service, it is just Janet and myself who do the work of maintaining the MEA's membership rolls. Janet forwards your checks to me only when she has received enough “apps” to bundle them together, rather than send a few at a time. And while I am probably telling you more than you want or need to know at this point, I also try to stagger deposits because of charges we incur when we process more than 50 transactions in a month. (The only time of the year I cannot avoid these charges is during convention time.)

We thus ask for your patience with this process in the future. Trust us: We want nothing more than to complete the work that is the processing of your applications and payments, and, more importantly, to have you onboard as continuing and satisfied members.

# Prologues to Exploration Thursday Schedule

Due to space limitations, *In Medias Res* is publishing only the first day's schedule; please see <http://www.media-ecology.org/activities> for the full schedule.

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## 10:45-12:00

### 1.1A *Sounding the Spaces of Women's Lives*

Unbridling the Female Tongue: Reading Gossip in Olive Senior's Fiction, Carol Bailey, Smith College

Voices and Doors: What Workshops Allow, Simone Davis, Mount Holyoke College

Confession and Authority: Writing Back to Literacy as Privilege, Marie Lovrod, University of Saskatchewan

### 1.1B *Democracy in the Era of New Media*

Reconfiguring the Global Organisms' Operating System Through "Mobile Democracy," Jason Liszkiewicz, Re-Configure.org Project

New Media and Visual Democracy: CNN.com and Public Response to 9/11, Ekaterina V. Haskins, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Democracy in the Digital Era, Catherine W. Phelan, Hamilton College

Beyond the Internet: Alternative Radio and Television and the Anti-War Movement, DeeDee Halleck, University of California, San Diego

### 1.1C *Ecologies of the Workplace*

The Secret Life of Spam: Spam in the Inner World of Work, Susan Cody, Ryerson University; Wendy Cukier, Ryerson University; Eva Nesselrot, York University

A Pyramid Interactive of Communication in the Service of an Institutional Mission, Conceição Lopes, University of Aveiro

From Wooton to Workstation: Mechanisms of the Visible in Office Spaces, Dale A. Bradley, Brock University

### 1.1D *Why Radio Still Matters: Media Ecology*

Perspectives on Broadcasting Roundtable

Donna Halper, Emerson College; Leo Fahey, Rockaway College Project; Jane Turk, Columbia University

## 1:45-3:00 Sessions

### 1.2A *Historical Studies in Media Environments and Historiography Panel*

An Eye on the War: Vietnam War Images in the Mainstream and Dissident Press, Jeffrey Bowen, University of Maine

Historians and Media Ecology, Paul Grosswiler, University of Maine

Radio's Transition from Interpersonal to Mass Medium: War of the Worlds' Broadcast as

Evidence of Change, Diana McElwain, University of Maine

### 1.2B *Varieties of Mediated Experience*

How the Shift from an Oral to a Literate Society Affected the Christian Religion During the Middle Ages, Juliann DeMeo, Fordham University

Interface Technologies: A Common Sense Approach, Aaron DeNu, Fordham University

How Do Systems Establish Persistence in a Cyclorama of Entropy? Brendon J. Ellington, Fordham University

Does the Visual and Interactive Nature of Video Games Establish Them as a Potentially Unique and Valuable Learning Tool? Anne Forziat-Halligan, Fordham University

The Construction of Identity: Presentation and Interpretation, Julia Tier, Fordham University

### 1.2C *Situation Comedies: Critical Views of Television Panel*

'Who's In Charge Here?': Views of Media Ownership in Situation Comedies, Paul Kohl, Loras College

I Love Lucy: Television and Gender in Postwar Domestic Ideology, Lori Landay, Berklee College of Music

Cybill: Integrating Women's Liberation into Everyday [Sitcom] Life, Laura Linder, Marist College

Origins of the Genre: In Search of the Radio Sitcom, David Marc, Syracuse University

Sex and the Sitcom: Gender and Genre in Millennial Television, Christine Scodari, Florida Atlantic University

Negotiating Boundaries: Production Practices and the Making of Representation in Julia, Demetria Shabazz, University of Oklahoma

### 1.2D *Orality and Literacy in Communication*

Pedagogy: Getting the Baby Out of the Bathwater Roundtable: Frank E. X. Dance, University of Denver; Richard Doettkott, Chapman University; W. Lance Haynes, University of Missouri-Rolla; Lance R. Lockwood, Santa Ana College; Brett Lunceford, The Pennsylvania State University; Anne Pym, California State University, East Bay

## 3:15 4:30 Sessions

### 1.3A *Ecologies of Brain and Mind*

The Ecological Brain: Symmetry and Aesthetics of

the Image, Ann Marie Barry, Boston College  
This Is Your Brain on Television, Amy Hornblas,  
AWARE

Media and the Aesthetic of Self: Ecological  
Perspectives in the Century of the Mind,  
Julianne Newton, University of Oregon

Lab and Life: What's the Connection? David  
Berreby, Author

*1.3B Media History and Memory, Objectivity, and  
Technology*

Commemoration and Its Role in Community:  
Bridging the Past, Jessica Brophy, University  
of Maine

Power and Credibility: Media Sources and the  
Politics of Objectivity, Joshua Sammer,  
University of Maine

Cutting Edge or Bleeding Edge: Technological  
Changes in Broadcasting, Helen York,  
University of Maine

Time as Continuity and Time as Changes, Xiaoyan  
Xiang, York University

*1.3C Aural Ecologies: Sounds of Global  
Technological Drift*

Building a Lonesome Sound: Emotion, Technology,  
and Globalization in the History of the Steel  
Guitar, Brent Malin, San Francisco State  
University

Podcasting, Publicity, and Secondary Orality: Mobile  
Noise as Glocalization, Robert MacDougall,  
Emerson College

Audio Tours in Art Museums: Are We Sacrificing  
Wonder for Resonance When We Plug In?  
Jennifer Skinnon, Heath Properties

High Resolution Sound: Forward Into the Past,  
James C. Morrison, Emerson College

*1.3D Journal Editors Speak About Their Medium  
and Its Message Roundtable*

Lance Strate, Fordham University *Explorations in  
Media Ecology {EME}*; Karen van Meenen,  
Rochester Institute of Technology *afterimage*;  
Susan Drucker, Hofstra University *Qualitative  
Research Reports in Communication*; Paul  
Soukup, S.J., Santa Clara University  
*Communication Research Trends*; Dan Stout,  
University of South Carolina *Journal of Media  
and Religion*

#### **4:45–6:00 Plenary Session**

Walter J. Ong: Oralities Past, Present, and  
Future–Roundtable: John Miles Foley,  
University of Missouri; C. Jan Swearingen,  
Texas A&M University

#### **6:15–8:00 Welcoming Reception**

“Why? Words” – Activity, Fred Cheyunski,  
IBM Business Consulting Services

**Media  
Ecology  
Association**



[www.media-ecology.org](http://www.media-ecology.org)

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