

Your Letters

“Please know we at Gaylord College and OU are not sending students into the world thinking the mix of news and opinion is OK.”

News and opinion

I am writing in response to the letter regarding journalism education’s role in preventing bias in the mainstream media [*Sooner Magazine, Fall 2016*]. To me, as a longtime journalist and now a journalism dean, any bias in news reporting is troubling. The trend that troubles me the most is the mixing of news with opinion, particularly on television. Please know we at Gaylord College and OU are not sending students into the world thinking the mix of news and opinion is OK.

Bob Dickey is one of my colleagues who as an instructor oversees our daily newscast, called “OU Nightly.” It’s student run and student produced, and Bob leads a small group of instructors who oversee it. Every day after the telecast, Bob goes over what the kids did right, what they did wrong and what they need to do better next time.

So, at the end of a presidential campaign season that hardly was the finest hour for anyone — and that’s true, too, of the media — I want to share part of an email Bob sent in mid-September to the 85 or so students who are part of the “OU Nightly” crew this semester about how journalists must remain impartial in their work:

“I don’t care about your politics ... What I care about is neutrality and an absolute bias-free approach to the content that goes into our newscast.

Do NOT wear political pins, hats, T-shirts, what-have-you while you are working for ‘OU Nightly’ or any of our Gaylord broadcast productions.

If you want to be politically active, fine and wonderful. If you want to be a journalist or work in an organization dedicated to journalism, you have to make a decision.

The rise of advocacy journalism, particularly in the political realm, makes it difficult for young journalism students to know where to draw the line. If you are unclear, come talk to me. We promote ourselves as fair and balanced and we must live up to that and we will.

Presidential races get people revved up. And I know someone’s saying, ‘But I’m not on air today, I’m just an assistant segment producer’ or ‘I’m working studio camera, what difference does it make?’ We have guests who visit, people from the world of journalism, graduates, prospective students and their parents, etc. They are all judging us, they are all walking away with an impression. The impression — with regard to this issue— that



I want them to walk away with is: ‘The students exhibited an understanding that news reporting must be free of any type of prejudice. I saw nothing that would lead me to any other conclusion.’

Like Caesar’s wife, we must be beyond reproach.”

We at Gaylord are working hard to help the journalists of the future adapt to an ever-changing media world, while also instilling old-fashioned virtues that we think stand the test of time.

Ed Kelley

Dean, Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication

*'75 ba, journ
Norman, Okla.*

Amero remembered

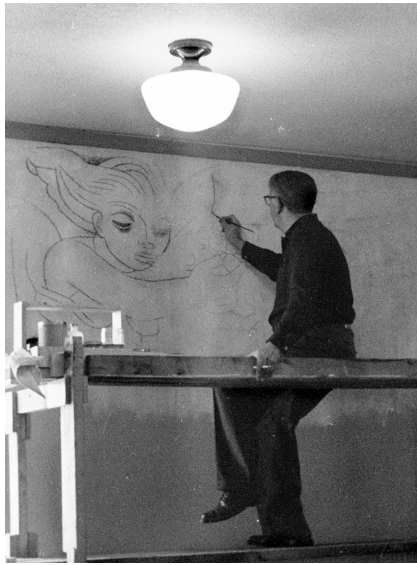
First off, thank you for the article on Emilio Amero in *Sooner Magazine* [Fall 2016].

I am a three-time graduate of OU, first in 1970, 1973 and finally in 1989. As an undergraduate I was a history major and was in Kaufman Hall a lot. I always appreciated the mural when I walked up or down the front stairwell. There was something very special about the painting. I had taken Dr. Kerr’s “World History of Art” class, but I don’t remember making it to the 20th century. Dr. Kerr did teach “appreciation” of art and it stuck with me.

In 1971, I came back to work on a master’s in education in a federally funded program called Teacher Corps. We were assigned to inner-city schools in Oklahoma City and took classes in the afternoon. We were fortunate to have first-class professors like George Henderson. In the second year of that program the school system was desegregated and my school, Lincoln Middle School, was shut down. A very interesting time.

The next eight years I taught school at an open school in Goshen, Kentucky. I had always stayed in touch with one of my professors, Chipman Stuart, my mentor. Somewhere in the early ’80s he contacted me about a new Ph.D. program in Educational Technology. He helped me get a graduate assistantship position, which brings me to Emilio Amero. I taught lab classes to undergraduates and took classes in the evening. It was during this time that I met Barbara Amero. I used to swim at lunchtime and Barbara swam in the lane next to me. We became friends. She used to tell me stories about Emilio and the life they lived.

Every now and then I would be invited over to lunch at her home and she would rummage through the house bringing out all kinds of art. She gave me several lithographs, including the proof for the "Flower Vendor." One story she told was about when Emilio was living in New York City working on the mural at Bellevue and how he and Garcia Lorca wrote



a script for a movie that she could never find.

I left Norman in 1985 and went to Central Michigan University, but we stayed in touch. The Garcia Lorca Museum had contacted her about the script which she eventually found and sent to them.

The funny thing about Barbara was that occasionally, she would raise the "ghost" of Emilio and prints or copies

of his lithographs would suddenly appear signed. She would just smile.

OU was lucky to have such a great artist/educator as Emilio, and it was also lucky to have such a wonderful woman as Barbara. A long story, but I just wanted to thank you for remembering someone who, like OU, was, and is first class.

*Steve Zlotolow, Ph.D.
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'73 ma, ed
'89 ph.d, ed tech
San Jose State University, Emeritus
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Dissent on diversity article

Thank you for the article "Come Together" [*Sooner Magazine*, Fall 2016]. The Office of University Community has an important role of enhancing diversity and inclusion on the OU campus.

However, the lead sentence for the article on the table of contents page sounds amazingly like language I have seen on

various racist/supremacist/identity websites: "Whether by shape, size or color, political opinions, religious beliefs or sexual preferences, we find comfort in identifying and associating with those most like us."

I do not agree with that sentence, and I think it directly contradicts the work of Jabar Shumate and the larger community of the City of Norman, which proudly proclaims on road signs, official letterhead and its website that we are an "Inclusive Community." I do not think you could have written a worse lead for an otherwise good article.

*Michael Ridgeway
'91 ba, public admin
'94 juris doctorate
Norman, Okla.*

"Boomer! Sooner!" cheer origin

One thing that immediately identifies an OU fan is the "Boomer! Sooner!" cheer. Yet, it appears that almost no one knows how that cheer came to be.

My wife, Krista Jones, was head cheerleader for the National Championship team in 1975. She was in a walking cast for the Orange Bowl game, and the TV commentators made note of the crazy young woman in the cast who was doing tumbling and cheers throughout the night.

Krista was an instructor of the National Cheerleaders Association in the summer of 1976. Traveling across the country she observed a new trend emerging in which opposite sides of a stadium were exhorted to echo a cheer across the field to one another ... usually the school color and the word, "Power!" Krista suggested that "Boomer! Sooner!" would be a much more interesting call and response. At a football game forty years ago this past fall that iconic antiphon first echoed across our field, and it was Krista's voice that uttered it first.

Krista now owns a private dental practice in Edmond. She is a member of the Sooner Club and is a generous donor to the Oklahoma College of Dentistry. She was honored in 2011 with the Regents' Award. On that day, someone told President Boren that Krista was the originator of the cheer, which he mentioned briefly in his remarks.

The other members of that cheerleading squad deserved credit as well. Tim Brassfield, CeCe Farha, Tim Stenson, Roxanne Goeke, Jim Burdette, Pam Binicker and others.

I'm not writing to ask for any recognition on her part, but I thought that those who keep up with OU's traditions from the past might like to know the real story.

*Craig Stinson
Jones, OK*