
Call for Articles:

A special edition of *Agriculture and Human Values* requests your journal articles on Ethics/Communication/Agriculture

Surprisingly little attention has been given to the power and the problems connected with information about and for the agricultural community. This special edition of *Agriculture and Human Values* is an attempt to start a dialogue about the ethical concerns connected with communications technologies, communications products (fact and fiction), and communications professionals. What follows is a sketch of some of the concerns we feel need to be addressed in talking about communication-related ethical issues in agriculture. It is not meant as an exhaustive list, but as a way to prompt discussion and research in this area.

Communications technologies:

The growth of agricultural communications has not been a simple process of adding more and more information using more and more technologies. The high cost and complex nature of management skills necessary to make full use of such technologies as computers could intensify a division of the agricultural community into information-rich and information-poor farmers, raising serious questions about information access. Additionally, it is possible to look at the increase of private agricultural consultants as a move to viewing information as a private commodity, rather than a public good. At the same time, decreased federal funding of the Cooperative Extension Service is weakening a major agricultural information system charged with distributing information and redefin-

ing the government's traditional responsibility to provide this good. Reconceptualizing information as private product would be a profound reordering of agricultural information systems, but one which has received surprisingly little attention: both in terms of documenting how information access is changing in the agricultural community and the implications of that change.

Communication as product:

Since most Americans no longer either live on a farm or come from a farming background, their knowledge of farming and agriculture is no longer closely tied to personal experience. Hence, what they know about farming will primarily come from mass media outlets. News articles and television shows are increasingly challenging the value systems connected with mainstream farming: according to some, farmers and agribusiness are poisoning the water and the soil, abusing animals, and risking human health by injecting hormones into meat and dairy animals, and dusting fruits with preservatives.

However, researchers have not systematically examined the mainstream or the agricultural press's coverage of agricultural issues, leaving unanswered several important sets of questions. What issues concerning agriculture are being covered and in what ways? How are farmers and other agriculturalists portrayed? Are these portrayals consistent with the image of farmers as nurturers portrayed in the accounts of the agrarian ideal? Or

are farmers portrayed as pursuing an ethic of profit? How are groups which challenge current agricultural practices portrayed? What is the common ground between different groups? That is, how are various discourses about agriculture juxtaposed? What values do they share?

Ethics of communication as a profession:

Finally, communications technologies and communication stories are not enough; professional communicators also have their own set of concerns and values and are important gatekeepers in their own right. What are the ethical concerns, standards and codes of agricultural and mainstream communicators and how do they (or should they) affect the coverage of agricultural issues? For example, editors of most newspapers generally consider reporters with a history of personal activity or background in an area less well-qualified to cover topics related to that area — except for agricultural reporters. Most editors (both mainstream and agricultural trade press) indicate that having a farm background helps, not hurts, reporters' ability to understand and report agriculture-related issues. But should agricultural communicators have this privileged position and what are the dangers associated with specialized coverage? Could agricultural reporters' sympathy with agriculture lead them to ignore stories which are critical of current agricultural practices?

Technologies, Systems and Implications:

New communications technologies in agriculture.

Agricultural information systems, including the Cooperative Extension Service.

Privatization of agricultural information.

Commercialization of agricultural information.

Communication as profession:

Standards, problems and concerns of agricultural communicators.
Issues of trade journalism practice.

Communication as product:

Mass media's portrayal of issues affecting agriculture and the environment.
The trade press's portrayals of agriculture-related issues.

Communication and world-views:

Ideologies of agrarianism and other world-views in fact and fiction.
Mass media and social movements.
Rural/urban communication

Other:

If you have a paper idea which fits into the general topic area of agriculture, communication and ethics, but which you feel is not captured in the above list, please feel free to send an abstract and general outline of your idea to:

Ann Reisner or Bob Hays
Agricultural Communications
64 Mumford Hall
1301 Gregory Ave.
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign
Urbana, IL 61801

Deadline April 1, 1991

Call for Papers

For the 1991 International ACE Conference Rapid City, South Dakota

The ACE Research Special Interest Group is issuing its call for papers for presentation at this year's International Meeting of the Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE) in Rapid City, South Dakota, June 29 - July 3, 1991.

Submit a two-page abstract/proposal of the paper for use in a competitive process to determine final paper selection.

All abstracts or proposals must be received by Friday, March 29. Those whose abstracts are selected for presentation will be required to submit completed papers by Wednesday, May 1.

There is no limit to paper length, however, each presenter will be allowed only 15 minutes to present.

Submit abstracts/proposals to: Robert Agunga/Sherrie Whaley, Research SIG Co-Chairs, Department of Agricultural Education, 2120 Fyffe Road, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 432101099.



Publishing Policy and Instructions for Contributors

The *Journal of Applied Communications* welcomes original contributions from any author, although priority may be given to ACE members, should multiple quality manuscripts be available.

First consideration will be given to theoretical and applied articles of direct value to ACE members. Such articles might include opinion pieces, how-to articles, original research, reviews, survey or trend pieces, and analyses.

All submitted manuscripts are considered for publication. However, prospective contributors are encouraged to be aware of the focus of this journal and manuscript requirements. A manuscript is accepted with the understanding that the *Journal of Applied Communications* has exclusive publication rights, which means that the manuscript has not been concurrently submitted, accepted for publication, or published elsewhere. All manuscripts will be peer-reviewed.

Manuscript Preparation

Authors must submit four manuscript copies and a computer disk, in Macintosh® or MS-DOS® format, to the journal editor at the address shown on the inside front cover. Include a self-addressed, stamped postcard or envelope if verification of manuscript receipt is desired. Photocopies of artwork, tables, or figures should be submitted, rather than the originals. If the article is accepted for publication, original graphic material will be requested.

All articles should be typed double-spaced. Include a title page containing authors' names and addresses. At the bottom of the title page, include a one-paragraph biographical note, listing institutional affiliation, job title, acknowledgment of funding, and ACE membership information. If your article has been presented orally, this fact should be mentioned in the note.

Do not include any author identification on inside text pages. The title page will be removed before the article is submitted for anonymous review to three members of the manuscript review board.

Articles should not exceed 15 double-spaced typed pages, not including literature citations, and a maximum of six tables or figures. Shorter articles are strongly encouraged.

Organization

Every article (except for reviews) must contain a 100-word informative abstract. Briefly list the purpose, methodology, significant findings, and conclusion.

Begin the manuscript text as page 1. Use appropriate subheadings to break up the body of the text. List footnotes and literature citations, on separate pages, at the end of the text, along with tables or figures, if used. (Indicate in margins of the text, approximately, where tables or figures should appear.)

For literature citations, use the "author-date" method; that is, insert the surname of the author and the year of publication in the text at the appropriate point: "Smith (1989) found that. . ." or "In a recent study (Smith, 1989), . . ." Within a paragraph, you need not include the year in subsequent references to a study as long as the study cannot be confused with other studies cited in your article.

Style

Follow the style guidelines in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (3rd edition).

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204 Agricultural Administration
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The Ohio State University
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