Welcome to the Spring/Summer edition of the CMS Newsletter! We’ve had another semester jam-packed with courses and events, and we’ve seen some terrific student projects. In this issue we’re going to bring you inside another one of our courses. “Multimedia Journalism for the 21st Century” just wrapped its second year. Taught by our own Anthony Everett (A83), this course was introduced last spring in recognition of the fact that today’s journalists need to do more than just write for one platform. We’re also continuing our series of alumni profiles, and continuing the tradition of letting you experience some of our seniors’ amazing work – in their own words.

Send us your alumni updates – we want to hear about your work and achievements, and we want you to stay in touch.

Julie Dobrow, CMS Director

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Send us your news!

Changed jobs? Gone back to school? Moved? We want to hear from you. Email us at cms@tufts.edu.

Do you know someone who might be interested in receiving this newsletter? Feel free to pass it along.

And please remember to visit our website!
Spring semester always seems to go by faster than the fall. Perhaps one reason for that is that CMS’ big events usually occur second semester. And this spring we hosted three very exciting ones.

The semester began with the **Sixth Eliot-Pearson Awards for Excellence in Children’s Media**, cosponsored with the Department of Child Development. CMS was thrilled to welcome to campus actor/director and longtime host of the award-winning *Reading Rainbow*, LeVar Burton. Distler Auditorium was packed to the rafters with fans young and old. Burton thrilled some of our youngest guests from the Eliot-Pearson Children’s School with a dramatic reading of *Enemy Pie*, by Derek Munson. And the hall rocked when the Flannery Brothers band, led by E-P master’s student Dan Flannery (G12), got everyone to their feet singing the “Reading Rainbow” theme song. The Twitterverse was resonating from this event, largely due to the many tweets from Burton’s Trekkie fans. See some excerpts from the event [here](#).

In March, CMS teamed up with the Environmental Studies Program and hosted Lois Gibbs, the woman who blew the whistle on the toxic dumping at Love Canal, NY, and Stephen Lester, science advisor for the Center for Health, Environment and Justice. Gibbs and Lester spoke about media use and environmental activism. That evening we premiered the new documentary *A Fierce Green Fire*, which profiles Gibbs and a number of other environmental activists.

In April, the **Seventh Annual Murrow Forum on Issues in Journalism** featured a lively conversation between Jonathan Tisch (A76) and NBC Nightly News anchor Brian Williams. An overflow crowd listened to Williams discuss his thoughts on covering Campaign 2012.

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Natalie Royal (N13)
Jill Slutzker (F12)
Kacey Taylor (A14)
On June 11 in the Stanley Kaplan Penthouse at Lincoln Center in New York City, four distinguished Tufts alums were honored at the **Eighth Annual P.T. Barnum Awards for Excellence in Entertainment**. Emcee Charles Cermele (A80) hosted, as Tufts honored dancer and artistic director Betsy Gregory (J73), actor Jonathan Hadary, NBC News Producer Marian Porges (J82), and Gregory Maguire (G90), author of *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*, *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister*, *A Lion Among Men*, and numerous other books.
Alumni News

Benjamin Bell (A08) is a digital producer for This Week at ABC News in New York.

Anna Bick (A12) will be interning at Insignia Films beginning in August.

Melissa Burke (A11) works in the Tufts University Advancement Office as an events assistant.

Danielle Carbonneau (A12) is interning at Mullen advertising agency in Boston.

Lily Carey (A12) is teaching elementary school in Baltimore.

Amy Connors (A12) is enrolled in the doctoral program in sociology at Vanderbilt University.

Martin Donovan (A12) is interning in Los Angeles at the Disney program A.N.T. Farm.

Daniel Fowler (A03) is the media relations and public affairs officer for the American Sociological Association in Washington D.C.

Emily Friedman (A12) is an associate at New Venture Communications, a strategic communications firm located in San Mateo, CA.

Chelsea Grayson (A12) is attending graduate film school at New York University.

Travis Grodkiewicz (A12) is interning at the Tufts European Center in Tallories, France.

Chizorom Izeogu (A12) is interning in Los Angeles at the Disney program A.N.T. Farm.

Claire Kemp (A12) is working as a marketing associate in New York City for True Action.

Niki Krieg (A12) is pursuing a master’s degree in modern European studies at Columbia University.

Jane Lee (A04) works in home video production at Sesame Workshop. She also produces outreach content, which includes initiatives like Growing Hope Against Hunger.

Shaye Martin (A12) is in the Accelerated Leadership Program in business, marketing, and sales at Dell, Inc. in Austin, TX.

Kenim Obaigbena (A11) is a video director in New York City. Check out her recent work at www.vimeo.com/kenimo.

Griffin Pepper (A10) is a communications associate at the D.C.-based public affairs firm Dewey Square Group.

Simone Press (A08) is an editorial recruiter at the Huffington Post.

Lizzy Roberts (A12) is interning for the New Media Innovation Team at NASA in California.

Kathryn Robinson (A12) is working in marketing and social media strategy for a music startup company affiliated with Spotify called “PlayMySong” in Helsinki, Finland.

Hilary Sieber (A12) is a research assistant at WNET/THIRTEEN in New York.

Sarah Ullman (A10) is working in Los Angeles at Radical Media, a commercial/music video company.

Saumya Vaishampayan (A12) is writing for the Wall Street Journal’s SmartMoney magazine this summer and will join Bloomberg News in the fall.

Send us your news!

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Email us at cms@tufts.edu.
Alumni Profile — Kirit Radia (A05)

By Jill Slutzker (F12)

Flying on Air Force One and chatting with the Secretary of State may sound like a dream to most, but for Kirit Radia (A05) it’s just part of the job description. Since graduating from Tufts seven years ago, Radia, an international relations major, has traveled the world as an ABC Correspondent, covering the State Department from more than 23 countries. He currently serves as an ABC Digital News correspondent in Moscow, where he covers Russia and its neighbors in the former Soviet Union.

“There was always a journalism arc in my life,” says Radia.

After fulfilling his humanities requirement with a journalism course, Radia enrolled in the CMS class “Producing Films for Social Change,” in which he and his classmates produced a documentary film on a contentious election in the Haitian community in Boston. “It was my first foray into journalism,” he says. “The class really brought me into the fold.”

With the help of a CMS placement, Radia began a summer internship after graduation with the ABC News Washington Bureau – the beginning of his journalism career. “It was the experience where you walk into a place and within a couple days you know that this is what you want to do with your life. The energy of everyone at ABC in Washington was infectious!”

Working closely with the Washington team, Radia helped cover the appointment of Chief Justice John Roberts in the summer of 2005. Ending his internship on a Friday, Radia started working full-time for ABC the next day. He quickly proved his journalistic skill and dedication, climbing from desk assistant to Nightline production coordinator to State Department correspondent, not to mention garnering an Emmy with his ABC team for its coverage of President Obama’s 2009 inauguration.

“Not too much longer before that I had been studying these things in the abstract,” says Radia. “It was incredible to be up close and personal with decision-makers.”

On transatlantic flights with the Secretaries of Defense and State on Air Force One, Radia explains he has been able to get to know policymakers off the record and discuss issues other than foreign policy. “You get better insight into somebody’s thinking,” he says. “It also demystifies the media process. The Secretary [Secretary of State Hillary Clinton] appreciates the job we do. We are very professional, but we don’t hold any punches when it comes to policy.

“To be able to go ask a State Department spokesperson to defend policy was a tremendous honor and responsibility. I had to try to make the information relevant to the average news consumer and explain how what’s happening on the other side of the world impacts them.”
On the road covering Clinton’s travels, Radia has had a front row seat to history. In January 2011, following Clinton’s Mideast tour, Radia covered a meeting between her and Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh in his compound in Sana’a one month before the start of the national uprisings that ultimately led to Saleh’s downfall. Just a few weeks before protests erupted in Tahrir Square, Radia covered Clinton’s speech in Doha, Qatar, where she told Arab leaders they had better reform, or watch “progress sink into the sand.”

In December 2011, Radia walked alongside Clinton and Burmese democratic opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi during the first visit of American diplomats to the country after more than 50 years of the country’s estrangement from the West.

Radia describes one of his most memorable and harrowing moments when he was reporting from Pakistan, covering the return of Pakistani refugees before heading to India to interview Clinton. “The monsoons kicked in and we were worried we would miss the interview.”

Loading up a hired car with news equipment, Radia and his team took off for the Indian border. “Producing on the fly was a total rush!” says Radia. “We got to see a whole side of Pakistan you otherwise wouldn’t. There were lush rice patties as far as the eye could see.” Getting lost en route and barely finding the Wagah border crossing – the only road border crossing between India and Pakistan – before it closed for the day, Radia and his team had to walk across the border themselves, since their Pakistani driver was prohibited from accompanying them.

Stationed in Moscow since February, Radia is no longer constantly on the move, but says he always has his “go-bag” ready. “If news breaks I am ready to go. I have worldwide availability. The news come first and the news doesn’t wait!”

Despite the impromptu trips, frequent lack of sleep, and busy schedule, Radia loves the work he does. “I am never more happy than when I am out in the field getting a story and starting to report it. One of my favorite things is talking to sources and getting to explain a story to the world.”

Because Radia is a digital correspondent, the Web and social media have a huge impact on his work. “A story can whip around the Internet at lightning speed. You get immediate feedback from viewers and readers.” His April 2012 piece on a seven-year old Russian adoptee sent back to Russia by his American mother achieved great visibility, zipping around the Internet through Facebook and Twitter. Radia says he follows the motto of “write everything because there is always someone who is interested,” a lesson he learned from a former colleague and White House correspondent.

From Medford to Moscow, Radia’s passion and dedication to journalism and international affairs have brought him incredible success. “Hard work and passion do not go unnoticed,” he says. “If you’ve got an issue you care about, make it yours. Cast a wide net and don’t rule anything out. People you’ve never met can be some of the most helpful people you’d ever imagine.”
Alumni Profile — Lara Kitain (A08)

By Jill Slutzker (F12)

With the November 2012 elections just around the corner, CMS alumna Lara Kitain (A08) is hard at work on Capitol Hill as the Mid-Atlantic deputy finance director for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. “I can’t think past November, 2012 right now!” she says.

A Political Science major and Mass Communications and Media Studies minor, Kitain traces her political career to her time at Tufts and two formative CMS experiences – her internship and CMS senior project.

During her senior year, Kitain interned in the press office of Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick. “It was a really wonderful opportunity to mix CMS with politics,” she says. Arriving at the Massachusetts State House bright and early at 7:30 a.m., Kitain would collect daily media clips and later watch the 4 p.m., 5 p.m., and 6 p.m. newscasts for important coverage of the governor and the issues. “I was taking a journalism class at the time, so I was already spending time reading all the newspapers,” she says.

Working with the head of communications in the press office, who started his career as an intern in Patrick’s office, Kitain says she was a key part of the press team. “From top down everyone let the interns know what was going on . . . the governor took time and got to meet us all.”

In the fall of 2007, Kitain took a course entitled “Decision ‘08” taught by Alan Solomont (A70), former national finance chairman of the Democratic National Committee, delegate to the 1996, 2000, and 2004 Democratic National Conventions, and a key member of Senator John Kerry’s 2004 presidential campaign.

In Solomont’s course, Kitain discovered the idea for her CMS senior project, a “new media” campaign for Democratic presidential candidate Bill Richardson (A70). “Solomont’s class got me into campaigns and diagnosing problems with campaigns,” she explains. “This was before Iowa, when anyone stood a shot.” While Kitain joked that there is really nothing “new” about a new media campaign today, she explains that since her project was “pre-Twitter,” the idea of sending text messages and other social media messages to potential voters was unexplored territory in political campaigning.

“The best part of my project was working with Simon Rosenberg,” Kitain says. Rosenberg (A85), who served on Kitain’s senior project committee, is the president and founder of the New Democrat Network, a leading progressive think tank and advocacy organization in Washington D.C. Kitain recalls that during one committee meeting on her senior project, Tufts Political Science Professor Michael Goldman asked her a particularly difficult question. As she tried to formulate an answer, Rosenberg chimed in from the conference call line, “If she knows how to answer that one then she should be the head of the DNC!”

Starting on the campaign trail for former Congressman Patrick J. Murphy (D-Pennsylvania) the day after her Tufts graduation, Kitain has been actively involved in Democratic politics ever since. In her current role with the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, Kitain says she is “passionate about maintaining a Democratic majority in the Senate and fortunate to be working with people who have the same values.”
For aspiring campaigners and Tufts students seeking careers in politics and media in Washington, Kitain says there is an incredible Tufts network to take advantage of in D.C. “I am proud to be part of this Tufts contingent,” she says. Kitain has served as a mentor to current Tufts student interns in D.C. through the CASE Network, a program connecting Tufts alumni in mentorships with summer interns in similar fields. “It is amazing the caliber of students that Tufts makes and those that are attracted to Tufts in the first place,” she says. “I know a lot of people who would hire a Tufts kid over a non-Tufts kid.”

Looking forward to 2012 and her future in campaign fundraising, Kitain has a clear passion for and commitment to her work. “It is a myth that you start out as an idealist and lose it in D.C. You can be an idealist as long as you want to, and D.C. is a great place to explore that. It is an amazing place to be idealistic . . . we have an incredible democracy. People forget how young it is and that it can still be changed.”

Alumni Profile — Courtenay Valenti (J85)
By Natalie Royal (N13)

Every day Courtenay Valenti (J85) plays an active role in developing and producing the movies that eventually become the Warner Bros. classics we all watch and fall in love with in theaters. She has worked on many films, including Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1 and 2, Happy Feet, A Very Long Engagement, and Crazy, Stupid, Love.

Throughout her 23 years with Warner Bros., Valenti has risen through the ranks from an unpaid assistant to her current title of executive vice president of production, where her day-to-day duties can hardly be defined as typical. Some are production- and set-focused, while others involve script readings, and pitch and preparatory meetings. Regardless of the variety, they are filled with a mixture of ideas, problem solving, and forward thinking. The work she describes is full of wonders and challenges, but she says her favorite aspect of the job is interacting with creative and extraordinary people.

The variety of challenges her position offers mirrors closely the diversity she was exposed to in her undergraduate experience at Tufts. Tufts’ expansive liberal arts education enabled her to challenge herself intellectually and explore many of her interests. She actively studied a multitude of disciplines, including English, economics, history, and music. Through studying a wide range of topics, she credits Tufts as broadening her mind to different ways of thinking, and strengthening her “editorial muscle.”

“Learning how to write and effectively communicate is paramount to any job,” she says. She adds that she is always interacting with ingenious people, and having an open mind is essential to facilitating the creative process.

Being in the film industry was never Valenti’s main focus as a Tufts student. It was not until she left college that she realized she wanted to pursue her interest in movies. She spent the first few years following graduation in a financial firm on Wall Street, but always maintained a connection to film. After all, her father is Jack Valenti, longtime president of the Motion Picture Association of America, and many of her fondest memories from youth and adolescence revolve around trips to the movies.

Although she did not experience CMS as a student, she is currently an active member of the CMS Alumni Advisory Board. She believes that, through CMS, she can be a supportive source for students. She also hopes to be a valuable counselor to CMS, acting as an insider on where the film industry is going, job training, and the state of the film industry job market for graduates.
Student News

Senior Projects
The end of spring term is always marked by the big CMS Senior Celebration in early May. The formal Coolidge Room in Ballou Hall comes alive with sights and sounds, as each senior is required to come with a visual representation of his or her project. At this year’s Celebration, CMS Director Julie Dobrow quipped, “This year, for the first time, we have more students needing outlets than easels – and that’s exactly as it should be.”

Two-thirds of all seniors elected to do a project of their own design. To get a small sample of the extraordinarily diverse and simply extraordinary projects, we’ve asked a few of our seniors to tell us, in their own words, about their project and what the experience of doing it meant.

Kristen Barone
My senior project is entitled “Interactive E-books and Learning: The Challenges and Curiosities of Tablet Reading for Early Elementary Readers.” I focused my research on the benefits and drawbacks of the new trend of interactive e-books for children’s reading comprehension. Through my research I found that though there are certainly founded concerns about eyestrain and instant gratification, the interactive e-book also offers many benefits to young readers. Because of its game-like structure and ability to make the child an active participant in storytelling, the interactive e-book can be a great tool for encouraging reluctant readers, such as older boys and children with learning disabilities.

Using my research on what makes a good interactive e-book, I then wrote, designed, and programmed my own interactive e-book for the iPad, with the help of my friend as an illustrator. Titled Kat and Sam’s Backyard Adventures, it will soon be on the iBookstore for free download. Through this experience, I was able to learn so much about two fields I’m very interested in professionally: children’s media and publishing. I see my senior project not only as a capstone to my CMS experience, but also as a jumping-off point for my professional career.

William Carpenter
My project, “Outrage at an Angle,” compared prime time cable news programming on FOX, MSNBC, and CNN to see whether guests and hosts said outrageous things during close-up shots more often on a particular network. I hypothesized that FOX was manipulating camera angles to increase audience attention (and ratings) by broadcasting outrageous discourse at disproportionately close camera angles, but it turned out that there was no meaningful difference between the camera angles used by each network. My project taught me a lot about social science research designs, data analysis, and what to do when research doesn’t turn out as planned. It was truly a capstone experience because I was finally able to integrate my political science major and my CMS minor in a meaningful way.

While I’m not sure if my senior project will get me a job, it did confirm my interest in political communications, and will certainly be helpful when I apply to graduate school.
Chelsea Grayson
My project was a feature length screenplay entitled *I Wanna Be White*. Doing this project was the most creatively and technically informative experience of my Tufts career. I had to take on a massive, complex narrative and present it in a way that expressed all of the things that I had originally said (in last fall’s CMS Senior Colloquium) I wanted to explore. I got to work closely with two people I highly respect, Mindy Nierenberg and Howard Woolf, and they brought new perspectives and insight to my project.

This was a capstone project for me because it was a project that specifically tied to my future career goals. Now that I have a feature script under my belt, I can move forward and try to get producers and other individuals in the film industry to possibly turn this work into a film. This project is also the perfect start for me, since I will be attending film school in the fall and it is an experience that I think will really strengthen me as a film student.

Rhianna Jones
For my senior project I created a fashion magazine entitled *anomaly*. It is a celebration of style, aesthetics, and individuality. It also explores the intertextuality among fashion, literature, and the arts. While I have an innate passion for mode, I have recognized through my MCMS studies how the industry has become more about profit margins and corporate standards rather than artistry. Therefore, I produced this magazine to showcase my personal vision of what a fashion magazine void of advertisements, waifs, and "fantasy" could be. With a digital and print version, I can share this vision with potential employers, because it acts as a glammed-up portfolio of sorts. More importantly, it has given me a tangible project that culminates my four years at Tufts, for which I am incredibly proud.

Cindy Ko
My project was a social media marketing campaign for free, weekly drop-in dance classes open to the Tufts community. The classes, run and mostly taught by myself, served as a mechanism to bring dancers who may have dropped dancing in college, into a college dance community. The classes not only combined two of my passions (marketing and dance), but also allowed me to contribute something back to the dance community at Tufts that I've grown to love so much. Knowing that these series are going to continue after I graduate is actually something I'm most proud of having accomplished during my time here at Tufts.

All the skills I acquired during this capstone experience (web design, video publishing, cross-promoting via different social media platforms) are going to help me in my pursuit of marketing/advertising jobs. If I also decide to pursue anything in the field of dance and arts, I believe that my experiences in organizing and leading these class series will be of great help to me. At least they will serve as some sort of proof of my passion for dance education and movement!
Niki Krieg
I learned through a community health class at Tufts-in-Talloires (France) that with the U.S. obesity rate currently 33 percent, it seems that people have lost sight of the true meaning behind food. On-the-go Americans disregard mealtimes, rush through dinner, and have become obsessed with the drive-thru – and I’ve realized that college students are no exception. Living away from home for the first time, college students realize that they don’t know how to cook, and only continue practicing these bad eating habits. With my "Queen of Cibo" website, therefore, I sought to not only give students easy recipes that they could replicate in their own kitchens, but also give them the ultimate know-how when it comes to spices and herbs, as well as nutritional updates.

Originally, I wanted "Queen of Cibo" to take the form of a traditional cookbook, with recipes and an index of ingredients. With the digital age, however, this is unrealistic, as college students depend increasingly on tablets and laptops. The Internet reigns supreme this decade, and I needed to create a website with continual blog updates and a Twitter feed to generate traffic and better educate my intended audience. Interestingly, rather than the recipes, I learned to fall in love with my "Food in the News!" section, where I became fiery about McDonald's ads and mad cow disease, and I also had to learn through experimentation which tweets and hashtags are most effective. These combined – where I can blog about goings-on in the nutrition world and tease my opinions on Twitter — could potentially make for a dream career.

Kathryn Robinson
My project, entitled "Was That Really . . . ?" was a comprehensive look at the gray areas of sexual harassment and assault, as approached using new media. The term "gray areas" is typically used in a legislative sense to discredit the claims of someone reporting sexual assault, but through this context I sought to reclaim the term as a jumping off point for college-aged students to speak about those experiences that do not seem to fit into any categories – the less clearly defined instances of harassment and assault that occur among the nuanced "hook up cultures" at colleges.

For this project, I created a website and launched a subsequent social media campaign to publicize it. As my capstone, it was a perfect combination of all that I’ve been doing with my education at Tufts that has been shaped by women’s studies courses focusing on gender and sexuality, and my background in new media (as enhanced by recent internships). This was an exciting topic for me because it is inspiring to see how new media is being to be used more and more for cause, and it contributes research to a field where there has perhaps been a void. After graduation I plan to continue the website, as well as continue working in the field of new media as related to cause, so this project has directly expanded my experience in this area.
Internships

An important component of the CMS program is our focus on experiential learning. This takes many forms, one of which is our vibrant internship program.

In a week in January between semesters, we run our Winternship program, in which we partner with alums in Boston, New York, and Los Angeles who work in all media industries to give students an intensive week of “this is what life in this industry would be.” It is enormously popular; this year we read 200 applications for 28 slots. Students from across Tufts representing all years and majors applied. Winternships ranged from opportunities in the news industry (The Boston Globe, WBUR) to advertising/PR (Young & Rubicam, Arnold Worldwide, Berman/Singer PR) to film (Seftel Productions, Bona Fide Productions) to talent agencies (Schachter Entertainment, ICM) to publishing (HarperCollins) and more. Arguably the coolest winternship of 2012 was on the set of Mad Men, where Alyssa Skiba (A12), who shadowed art director Chris Brown (A91), had to sign a non-disclosure agreement since she was there during the filming of the final week of this season! Thanks to all alums who participated in this program. If you are interested in sponsoring a 2013 wintern, please contact CMS Director Julie Dobrow (julie.dobrow@tufts.edu).

This summer one freshly-minted graduate is our 2012 David Burke Media and Public Service intern. Named for David Burke (A57), former vice president of ABC News and president of CBS News, the Burke Internship provides promising journalism students with invaluable professional and networking experiences. This summer’s Burke intern, Joshua Berlinger (A12), is working at WBUR with John Davidow (A77) on web and multiplatform news work.

Our regular internship program, directed by CMS Associate Director Susan Eisenhauer, runs both semesters and over the summer. Students work in a large variety of media organizations. Sixty students received academic credit for their internships this past year, and more than 30 are doing so this summer in internships across the country. Many students find the internship experience so important that they do more than one. We’ve asked a couple of students to talk about what their internship experiences have meant to them.

Saanya Gulati (A12)

There are few people for whom a productive day at work involves hours of sitting on Facebook and Twitter. As a social media intern at PBS FRONTLINE at WGBH in Boston this past semester, I can proudly say that this was a large part of my job.

Having worked in broadcast and online news journalism before, I had been exposed to various web-based and social media tools, but I had never used them as extensively in the workplace as I did at FRONTLINE. While social media is something most of my generation is familiar with today, its role in the professional world is extremely different from the one that it plays in our daily lives. Something that my supervisor said to me in the first few weeks that stuck out was that it really comes down to the basics of networking or “being social.” You can’t just tweet what you like. You have to find other people out there that are interested in what you’re saying. As simple and straightforward as that may seem, I think it attests to this difference.
Over the past four months, I have written content for social media platforms, mainly Facebook and Twitter, and assisted my supervisor, the online engagement coordinator for *FRONTLINE*, in various projects. Among these were evaluating the success of our social media strategy, preparing Twitter scripts for live-tweeting sessions during the program’s broadcast, and moderating special interactive screenings for some of our films. These tasks have challenged me to think creatively and constantly devise new ways to engage and build our audience, which is important to any successful social media strategy.

In understanding the role that social media plays in journalism during my time here, I have also come to appreciate how social media is in its own way a kind of journalism itself. This is not to say that anyone who uses social media is a journalist, nor that social media is the next journalism, but speaks for the way *FRONTLINE* uses its social media. Writing tweets and Facebook posts for an upcoming film for instance, still requires me to tell the story like a journalist, in a way that is interesting to my audience, or from an angle that I feel is important for people to know. The only difference is that I often have to do this in 140 characters!

I find the research and writing skills I have learned through this internship valuable at a time in which social media and online engagement are being used by most organizations, whether it is journalism or in other industries. Moreover, social media is changing so rapidly that organizations’ strategies are also constantly evolving as new tools continue to develop. It’s an exciting time to be in this field.

**Amber Jackson (A12)**

This spring I interned for Charles River Media Group, a production company in Newton Center, MA. It is made up of three individuals and freelancers who film, direct, and produce television commercials, music videos, and web videos. CRMG also tries to focus on its own creative pursuits, and is currently in the process of making a feature film.

The company was conceived and created by Don Schechter (A01, G03), an active Tufts alumnus. Even after receiving his bachelor’s degree in a self-created major and his master’s in music composition, he continues his Tufts connection through teaching the Ex-College course “Making Movies.” In addition to also sponsoring internships and speaking at CMS events, he collaborates on and films events such as the P.T. Barnum Awards and various ceremonies.
This internship has been more hands-on than my previous experiences. One of my first days on the job was at the Hasty Pudding Awards in Cambridge, MA, an event that encompasses a parade, a celebrity roast, and a press conference. This was my first taste of live event shooting. Though my duties started out small, carrying a few things here and there, by our next shoot at the Boloco headquarters in Boston, I was allowed to set up and break down equipment. Since then I’ve assisted on shoots for Adobe in Waltham, MA, health professionals in Harvard Square, and interviews here at Tufts. Aside from some manual labor, I’ve gotten to work with teleprompters, learn about equipment, and even practice some photography (not that I was any good at it!).

Regardless of the task, it was exciting to have the opportunity to practically apply so many of the things I’ve learned throughout the years as a Mass Communications minor, especially in regard to the “Intro to Film Studies” course. I spent so many hours pouring over pictures of cameras and set design, that it was nice to get to see a shoot in action!

On days when I stayed at the Newton Center office, I was assigned various editing and writing tasks. I’ve written voice-over scripts, done research, edited live footage of multi-camera shows for DVDs, and created my own clip sequences for various projects. These responsibilities were most closely related to my liberal arts education because, as I’ve learned in all three of my internships thus far, a good writer is a great commodity. I’ve gained the ability to write and research effectively, another skill that is integral.

I hope to go into television development in the near future, so interning at CRMG has provided a valuable view of both sides of the production coin. I have seen projects from conception to completion, helping each step of the way. I also could not have asked for a more understanding and nurturing staff. Each one of them took the time to explain anything and everything to me as we did it. Though I’m sure my next boss won’t be as nice or accommodating, I feel ready to face whatever comes next.

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**CMS on the Web**

Please take a moment to visit our multimedia website, which features photos, useful links, and audio and video files of many events.

CMS Staff Assistant John Ciampa is the site’s webmaster; send him your news and updates at john.ciampa@tufts.edu.

And be sure to look for our Twitter feed this fall!

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**Are you our Facebook friend?**

We’ve consolidated our Facebook information since the last issue, so if you haven’t been there in a while, or have yet to join up with us, please take a moment to check us out by clicking here!

The CMS Facebook group is the place to go if you want to connect with alumni, discuss internships and classes with other students, and make sure you don’t miss exciting events.
Inside the classroom of a television insider

By John Ciampa

In our continuing efforts to bring you inside CMS classes, CMS Staff Assistant John Ciampa spent an afternoon at one of our newer classes.

You’ve seen him on TV, hosting WCVB-TV Channel 5’s long-running newsmagazine *Chronicle*, the show that traverses the “main streets and back roads of New England” in search of the region’s most interesting curiosities. Anthony Everett (A83) has enjoyed a long, successful career at WCVB that stretches back more than 20 years, first as a general assignment reporter and later as an anchor.

But on occasional evenings, before Everett hits the airwaves, you may find him teaching back at the Hill, educating tomorrow’s crop of would-be journalists through the CMS course “Multimedia Journalism for the 21st Century.” In addition to his classroom duties at Tufts, Everett also serves on the CMS Alumni Executive Board, and has helped students by participating on a number of CMS Senior Project committees.

“Multimedia Journalism for the 21st Century” is an intimate, discussion-based seminar that leads students on a hands-on journey exploring the many ways news is presented in the digital age. It also challenges students to stay true to journalism’s basic values and tenets as they strive to bring flexibility, creativity, and innovation to their semester-long projects, which consist of comprehensive news reports relayed in either print, broadcast, or Web related formats. With these projects, the course becomes an important vehicle to not only teach students new practical skills, but to advise them on how to apply those skills with ethics and accountability.

As the course title implies, Everett’s class moves quickly, bouncing from topic to topic and platform to platform as he skillfully points out contemporary media trends to his students. As multimedia journalists in training, they have to be quick, sharp, and on-point, with the ability to tease out what’s important and valid amid the vast clutter of today’s information age.

He also makes certain to connect with current events. One class this past semester met just after the conclusion of CMS’ big spring event — the Edward R. Murrow Forum on Issues in Journalism, featuring *NBC Nightly News* host Brian Williams. Everett used the opportunity to talk to his class about the continuing relevance of national evening news broadcasts. He questioned his students not only on their opinion of such newscasts, but also about what ideas they might implement to make broadcasts more relevant for a generation that data suggest is largely disinterested in nationally televised news.
The conversation quickly moved to ratings and the role they play in television programming. Projecting a large report sheet of Nielsen ratings against the classroom wall, Everett pointed out key facts for his students, making sense of the dizzying array of numbers flashing before their eyes. He displayed ratings according to time slots, myriad cable networks, and the days of the week. He also touched on the flaws of the rating system, taking a moment to discuss how websites such as Hulu impact viewership, and what that means for the future of media consumption. Throughout the conversation, there was no shortage of questions, and within minutes a full-blown debate about the ratings’ importance erupted.

Next on the agenda was radio. Everett played excerpts from WBZ NewsRadio 1030 (Boston’s leading commercial news station), contrasting the station’s news reports with those of the local National Public Radio (NPR) stations. He illustrated how the former emphasizes quick and frequent hits on traffic, news, and weather, compared to NPR’s longer cuts. He also talked about potential differences in each station’s targeted audience, including their demographics, and how they affect news content.

Afterwards, the students stopped and pondered these differences through a brief but animated discussion. As a classroom observer, one could almost see the students becoming more discerning media consumers as the conversation unfolded. Everett engaged them on a first-name basis, spurring on the dialogue.

“I really enjoy his teaching style, and his inside experience really gives us a clear picture of what it’s like to work in the industry,” says Tiffany Chan (A12), an international relations major.

Alexa Chryssos (A12), an English major, says she appreciates the way Everett keeps the class current and relevant, and how he finds ways to make connections to what is currently happening in today’s media landscape.

“A lot of what he does is based around that theme,” she says. “When he makes reference to what’s going on in the news and why, you get a better understanding of what kind of skills are needed to one day contribute to the news cycle.”

“It’s really enjoyable for me,” says Everett. “I really get the sense that I’m giving back, and playing some small role in the future of news. I think having CMS offer a course like this is invaluable.”

Writing to no end

By John Ciampa

After 20 years, the fruitful career of writer and journalist Neil Swidey (A91) continues to unveil and enlighten.

Buoyed by curiosity and driven by a desire to keep readers informed, over the course of his 20-plus year career as journalist and writer, Neil Swidey (A91) continues to unearth bold topics. His forte is bringing in-depth stories to readers, most notably at the *Boston Globe Magazine*, where he’s been a staff writer since 2002.

An active member of the CMS family, Swidey participates in program events and also serves on the CMS Alumni Executive Board. He has frequently sponsored one-week “winternships” in January, and continues to be an accessible and popular mentor for students.
Swidey’s love for writing stems from his childhood growing up in the town of Somerset, Massachusetts, when his grandfather would unveil vivid oral narratives that enraptured his impressionable grandson. His journalistic debut took place during his teens, when he launched his high school’s first paper, a learning process that would usher in a lifelong affinity for newsgathering. Later on the Hill, he would find himself wandering into the offices of the *Tufts Observer*, unaware of the many hours he would soon be spending there as the magazine’s editor in chief.

“I met students at the *Observer* who were passionate about journalism and their campus, and I wanted to be a part of that,” he recalls. It was within this tight-knit group of budding journalists that Swidey first connected with fellow alums Matt Bai (A90) (now chief political correspondent for *The New York Times Magazine*) and Peter Chianca (A90) (editor in chief for GateHouse Media New England’s North Unit). A political science major, Swidey says he took more history-related classes than anything else, which helped him forge a desire to explore issues through broader contexts with a keen, empathic eye.

When he was a Tufts undergraduate, he says, the relationship between the staffs of the *Observer* and the *Tufts Daily* was amicable yet competitive, with each publication vying for the most comprehensive coverage on campus. If the *Daily* offered up the scoops, it was the weekly *Observer* that provided readers with depth and analysis, which suited Swidey’s developing narrative style at the time just fine.

After graduating in 1991, Swidey interned at the *Providence Journal* and freelanced at the *Patriot Ledger* and *Cape Cod Times* newspapers. On the lookout for a regular gig, he answered a classified ad seeking an editor willing to get a small newspaper up and running – and one that was good enough to coexist with the city’s longstanding daily. That fledgling publication was the *Woburn Advocate*, a tabloid weekly that’s still active today as a broadsheet and website. For Swidey, his work at the *Advocate* hearkened back to his days at the *Observer*, where the longer news cycle allowed him to re-examine and expand on the deadline-driven stories of the competing daily.

Swidey stayed at the *Advocate* for two years, bringing in fellow reporter Chianca (who remains with the paper’s parent company today). Swidey eventually moved up to a mid-sized daily, the *Middlesex News* (now the *MetroWest Daily News*), where he was regional editor, though he produced copy regularly to maintain his writing “chops,” often by keeping some of the more difficult assignments for himself. Around this time Swidey married fellow Jumbo Denise Drower Swidey (A90), and they moved to the Hudson Valley of New York so she could attend the Culinary Institute of America. With his wife immersed in her cooking studies, Swidey took up residence inside the newsroom of the *Times Herald Record* as the paper’s assistant managing editor, his final stepping stone before joining the staff at the *Boston Globe*.

Swidey jumped to the *Globe* in 1999 as editor of the paper’s “New England” section, which covered stories of regional interest outside of the metropolitan Boston area. It was a busy and transformative time for the Swideys, he says, as the couple gave birth to the first of their three daughters and the two were beginning to settle into their careers.

Swidey adds that there was a lot of change also going on at the *Globe* during the ’90s, including new ownership under the New York Times Company and a concerted push to explore its burgeoning Web presence. Swidey was also evolving on a professional level, switching over to the Metro section of the Sunday edition, where he once again found himself tapping into his *Observer* roots by pushing for greater in-depth story coverage. It was a good fit, and it primed him for the switch to the paper’s literary supplement, the *Boston Globe Magazine*, where he began contributing regularly in 2002, eventually being asked to join full-time.

“I wanted to keep writing in a variety of formats, and at the *Globe* there were some great opportunities to do that, which is why I began writing for the Sunday magazine,” he says. “I always loved to be able to delve deeply into a topic and then get out before the topic got stale for me.”

At the *Globe Magazine*, Swidey’s coverage has been ambitious. Topics have been varied and diverse, a blend of his own choosing and suggestions from the publication’s editors, which Swidey says sometimes intersect with his own
background and interests. But even if something doesn’t, he always appears to tease out a myriad of angles in his work, as if to arm the reader with a knowledge and understanding that goes beyond the surface. “I try to focus on the difference between a story and a topic,” he says. “But a lot of what I do is searching for a story that takes people through something, or on some kind of journey.” Swidey notes that having the freedom to bounce from topic to topic has kept his work fresh, while helping him to view the world in a more open-ended manner. He says that although he’s never attended graduate school, he often feels as if he has through the worlds he’s inhabited in his stories.

Some of those worlds have invariably influenced Swidey’s entry into book writing, serving as a natural extension through which he could channel his narrative creativity. Swidey admits that there have been more than a few stories he has written over the years that he “can’t stop thinking about.” One of those was about the Charlestown High School basketball program, which started out as a three-part series in the Globe Magazine that followed the team’s players and coaches over the course of one season. Following the series, Swidey stayed in contact with several of the stories’ protagonists, including the team’s passionate and charismatic head coach, Jack O’Brien, who traveled around Boston’s urban neighborhoods by van to recruit kids – not only to win basketball games, but to succeed in life.

Swidey wrote The Assist, the book that chronicled O’Brien’s coaching experiences and what became of several of his players after basketball, as a side project, largely completing it after he left the newsroom each day. Released in 2008, the book earned rave reviews from critics for its sympathetic, yet balanced portrayal of urban athletes. “The more interesting story is often finding out what happens after the story, or in this case, after high school, which is a large part of what the book was about,” he says. “I wanted to know what put the students into the positions they fell into. I also wanted to find out where things can sometimes go right, and then sometimes go wrong, and how much of that traced back to issues of race and class.”

To Swidey’s credit, he followed up The Assist with the formation of the Alray Taylor Second Chance Scholarship, a program named after one of the success stories of the Charlestown team who was tragically killed in August of 2006 in an act of urban violence days before heading off to college. The program lives on in Taylor’s memory, though, by offering financial assistance, guidance, and mentoring to inner-city high school students hoping to attend college. Fittingly, Swidey continues to steward the program.

Other books have followed, including The Last Lion: The Fall and Rise of Ted Kennedy, which he co-authored with Globe colleagues in 2010. His current project, Trapped Under the Sea, is an extension of a two-part piece he wrote in 2009 for the Globe titled Trapped, about a group of divers sent on a dangerous – and fatal – mission to retrieve safety plugs from a 10-mile sewer tunnel beneath the floor of Boston Harbor. Despite his exhaustive reporting, Swidey still wants to dig deeper into the issue. Like any good writer, he’s still curious, and he still has burning questions.

Swidey is content with his professional work at this juncture, alternating shorter and longer pieces for the Globe Magazine, in addition to the occasional sidesteps into book writing, depending on his own interest and the richness of the material. “I’m very happy with the mix right now. The book writing is more taxing and a little isolating, while the reporting part of my job is intensely social,” he says. “The work I do for the magazine balances those extremes, though.”

With the changing media landscape, Swidey continues to evolve. His latest story on “what it takes to be a Disney star,” for example, blends photos and video to create a multimedia experience for readers. These are aspects of storytelling he’s still learning, and an area in which he believes there’s a demand for younger writers. “I think we all have to be aware of how things are changing, but there are opportunities for people to prove themselves early on, as long as they appreciate the bedrock values of journalism: understanding, empathy, accuracy, and truth-seeking. As long as you’re practicing that, in whatever form it is, that’s a good thing.”