

2004—International Symposium on Online Journalism

Friday—Opening Session

ROSENAL ALVES: Good morning! Is that working? Good morning, I am happy to, to welcome everybody here for the symposium on online journalism everybody's here from around the world, and I'm gonna ask my dear director to, to welcome you also and then I'm gonna talk a little – a little bit about the logistics and how this symposium is organized. Lorraine is, is the director if the School of Journalism; she is a journalist herself that has just, uh, about a year ago done the, this kind of a transition from the newsroom to the classroom and, and we are delighted to have her, uh, here as, as our leader in the School of Journalism.

LORRAINE BRANHAM: Thank you, Professor Rosental. And welcome to all of you and please, uh, allow me to extend a, actually, a *hearty* Texas welcome; we say "howdy" here, so howdy! (laughter) I know many of you traveled a great distance to be here for our fifth International Symposium on Online Journalism and we really appreciate you making a trip to Austin. This actually my second year as, uh, director and my second year participating in this exciting event which I believe offers a wonderful opportunity for all of us to explore the latest research, trends, and emerging technology in online journalism. Professor Rosental has planned what I think is an interesting and informative two days of panel discussions and I hope that by the time we all leave here, we'll all be a little bit more knowledgeable about the state of online journalism and it's future.

You know even now, and it's hard for me to believe that, uh, how far we've come in the last decade. I confess that I'm old enough to remember when we first got computers in the newsroom and I remember thinking, uh, I guess it was a – eleven, twelve years ago about getting my first AOL account and wondering if I really needed e-mail [light laughter] and now I wonder how we ever lived without e-mail. And I can also remember all the angst and trepidation in, in the newsroom as we worried about the Internet and news websites and how they would affect newspapers and traditional journalism. And of course, we continue to worry about some of those things. But now we have AOL and Google starting their own news sites, consumers accessing news via their own PDAs and cellphones. We've got Howard Stern broadcasting on his own website all the things that the four letter words that he can't say via the airwaves. So we've come a long way. And we've experienced the highs and lows of online journalism – the booms and the bust of the high-tech industry, and ongoing efforts to figure out the appropriate business models for this new medium. We've gone from the early days of simply throwing all the news that we had from the newspaper right online to websites that now stand alone, websites with their own staffs, to weblogging, to mobile news to moblogging, which is the, you know, the latest exciting thing. And we've barely had time to catch our breath with all this.

Sometimes it seems that technology has dragged us kicking and screaming into this brave, new world as we struggle to figure out the implications for journalism. How best to serve our readers and viewers and how to make some money on this darn thing. And to find the new innovations so we can stay one step ahead of the competition. And in higher education we have our own struggles as we try to keep up with the latest technology on limited budgets, and at the same time try to figure out how to train our students to work in the newsrooms of tomorrow – which is why I think conferences like this are so important. This symposium provides practitioners, publishers, educators, researchers and students an opportunity to come together to collectively explore what we're doing in online journalism and how we can do it better. It reminds us that for all the bells and whistles in exciting, new technology for those of us involved in the practice of journalism, our fundamental mission remains unchanged. What has changed is how we pursue that mission and our customers' expectations, and of course, the bottom line. Whether or not a

2004—International Symposium on Online Journalism

news organization has a website is no longer even a question. The question now is how much of its resources it will devote to it, how good it will be, and how it will compete – not just with old competitors, but with new competitors emerging everyday. And at the same time, we worry about the ethical implications presented by online journalism and how best to address them as news becomes increasingly commoditized. And the issue of who is a journalist and what is news continues to evolve online. Blogging and cellphones with cameras and other technology have made it easier for everyone to call him or herself a journalist. And to bring new voices into the media mix, we must continue to slog through some of these ethical issues.

I was talking a few months ago with a friend of mine in China about the cellphone news which is really big over there and some other places in Asia, and I imagine that by the time we have this conference next year, it'll be old news here in the U.S. and everybody here will be moblogging away on their cellphones and other devices. I've just... (inaudible). The pace of the change is just incredible to me. Everyday it's something new and for some of us, it's actually a bit frightening. Clearly, the web has changed the way we operate as journalists and we're gonna continue to grapple with how it has changed journalism, and how we can take the best of what it has to offer and continue to do what we believe journalists in a democratic society must do to best serve the public. That's both the challenge and the opportunity for all of us. And we're finally figuring out how to make some money online. More and more news operations are reporting that they're making more money. I read – I think it was Adweek or somebody – who was reporting a couple weeks ago about The New York Times and how it had posted even higher revenues this quarter than last quarter. So, we're starting to get the business model right. And I hope that we will eventually, as we start to make money, figure out how to get the journalistic model right, and how to figure out how to do better journalism online.

So thank you all again for coming to Austin. I hope you enjoy this symposium and I also hope that you get an opportunity to enjoy some of Austin while you are here. Thank you.

(Applause)

ROSENAL ALVES: Thank you, Lorraine. Well, I think we are in a sort of an evolution in the symposium. We started this symposium in 1999 in the midst of the bubble as a very small gathering and this is the fifth edition and we have passed through different stages of the evolution and creation of this new genre of journalism that was very interesting. I remember that in the first symposium – I think Doug Feaver was here – we were very excited about this new medium. We had testimony here of a New York Times reporter who was, who went to Microsoft in Seattle and run into his editor there by chance. And the reporter said, "What are you doing here?" And the editor said, "I'm doing here what you are doing here. We are looking for the place we all will working in five years from now." Actually, we are five years from 1999 and things changed a lot – you know, Microsoft has its extraordinary MSNBC site, but you know the reporter himself said that five years from now Microsoft would have more journalists than the major newspapers in America all combined and you know, it has not happened. But what we are very happy about is this symposium is not only the opportunity to have some reflection about it, but to keep the records about the evolution, the records of the moods in the creation of this genre of journalism. We have this website now with the archives with all these anecdotes that are showing the evolution of the new medium.

We came from that bubble extraordinary moment to follow in other symposium where we were kind of in the mood of: "Yes, internet is a new medium, for a new kind of journalism. So what? It's normal." And then it was a question of the morals, a question of the ethics, etc. And we are in a stage that is much more mature of online journalism. I think in this symposium we are going to have lots of answers. In the previous symposiums, I always that we would *not* have the

2004—International Symposium on Online Journalism

answers, we would have more intelligent questions after the symposium because it was so kind of blurry – the panorama that we had there. Last year what we did was to kind of amplify it a little bit which was natural coming from someone who moved also from the newsroom to the classroom and also from Brazil to the United States. We went international last year and we are very pleased to do that so this year this we kind of expanded the international aspect of this symposium. We have the webcast that in the previous year we were not very confident about the effectiveness of the video streaming. Now we are more – much more confident and we have people from all around the world following us on the Internet in video streaming.

So this year after the international aspect we were encouraged to go academically more and open this research area of the symposium that we're gonna kind of concentrate on, on Saturday. It also opens up a great opportunity for the connection between academy and the industry. You know this has been a symposium – it was industry earlier intent and now you know, we have this opportunity, we – although sometimes journalists don't believe we work hard here in the academy, too (laughter) to understand, to study to follow this moving target that is so difficult for you and the industry to understand. And also we have this huge challenge that Lorraine has mentioned here on how to teach this, how to prepare the new generations of journalists to go to our journalistic environment that is gonna be very different from the one that we came from. So you know, this symposium is a great opportunity for doing that, for creating the bridge between the industry and the academy.

I'd like to thank you – each of you for believing in this symposium, the project, and coming here. I'd like to give a special thank you for Amy Weiss, Schmitz Weiss. She is our super and completely tireless assistant. Fiorenza is helping with the administration. Amy Zerba and others who are helping to put this symposium together and a special thanks to Mark Tremayne who is my colleague here, who helped to coordinate the academic part of the symposium. So thank you very much and enjoy the symposium. (applause) And we're gonna – thank you – and we're gonna go now to the first panel which is going to be the international panel and Lorraine is going to be the chair.

LORRAINE BRANHAM: ... with online journalism in the United States. We have an interesting and diverse group of panelists who I would like to introduce to you, but I'm afraid that I – I don't wanna butcher their last names so maybe I will ask each of them to stand up and say their full names after I go through the list. We have Manuel Gago of the University of Santiago, Spain. Would stand up so the audience can see you? (applause) and we have Ari Heinonen, professor of New Media Journalism at the University of Tampere in Finland. (applause) Guillermo Franco, editor of ElTiempo, Columbia (applause). And Makoto Ota, Staff Writer for The Yomiuri Shimbun in Japan. (applause).

And we'll start with our first presentation. Before we do, one of the things I'm hoping is they will all talk about the differences; I hope they will also talk about the similarities, and I think it will also be interesting to know – it seems to me that one of the things that we might see, is, we talk about some of these things, is to talk about connectivity and how people get online in different places. And how much, you know, having dial-up versus broadband versus wireless has affected people's ability to access and participate in online journalism and how big a difference that has made in various parts of the world. I think it would also be interesting if you could touch on a bit how have journalists – traditional journalists – embraced and dealt with online journalism in your countries and whether or not you continue to deal with some of the struggles that we face in the United States in terms of ethics and values and concerns about what it's doing with jobs and also how it's taking resources away from traditional media but also

2004—International Symposium on Online Journalism

providing new and exciting opportunities for journalists. And anything else you'd like to tell us about what you're doing in your country.

So we'll start off with Manuel if you could come up. And when they finish – I'm trying to decide – it might be better if we let everybody go through their presentations and then we'll take questions at the end of all the presentations.