

Speaker: Reporters, scientists don't mix

By Jackie Blair

Staff writer

A Newsweek editor talked Monday about bridging the communication gap between journalism and science — two disciplines that often clash.

Sharon Begley, a senior editor at Newsweek, gave a speech in the Nebraska Union Auditorium titled "Why Journalism is not Science."

The lecture focused on how scientists and journalists frequently don't see eye-to-eye.

Begley said most scientists believe the important news is the interval discoveries that are continually being made, and journalists look for news in major blockbuster breakthroughs.

"Scientists believe that journalists are alarmists and that they (journalists) care more about sales than informing the public," Begley said.

Journalists think that scientists use jargon that makes portraying facts and findings nearly impossible, she said.

The major theme that Begley tried to get across Monday was that journalists are not scientists.

According to a book about scientific journalism, "Worlds Apart," scientists only have 11 percent confidence in the press. That is even less than their confidence in politicians.

This fact is humorous considering the book also said that 75 percent of scientists want people to know about their work, Begley said.

"How are scientists going to get

their discoveries across if they don't even want to talk to the press?" she said.

Edgar Pearlstein, a retired professor of physics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said he thought scientists had a fear of being misquoted or misinterpreted, and that's why they often don't want to talk with journalists.

Begley said scientists should ask to have all quotes read back to them if they are so worried about being misquoted.

"Scientists tend to get a little upset if we're off by even a power of ten or something," Begley said, laughing.

Even though scientists and journalists do not see eye-to-eye on a lot of things, Begley said she believes they do have a lot in common.

She said they both are often accused of interpreting data, they both have a

"How are scientists going to get their discoveries across if they don't even want to talk to the press?"

Sharon Begley
Newsweek senior editor

competitive streak, and they both have very strong egos.

Science writing is more difficult than any other type of writing, she said.

"Science education in the United States stinks, and it turns people off to it," Begley said.

She said she believes most science papers will put people to sleep, and her

job is to make it interesting.

Some of the ways Newsweek has made science writing more interesting is by having larger pictures, fancier graphics and less text.

Begley said the typical Newsweek story used to be about 4,000 words long, and now they are only around 2,000 words long.

Two scholars join department

ENGLISH from page 1

accounting professor.

Along with being an expert on Whitman, Price is co-director of an extensive Walt Whitman Web site.

His skills in the electronic medium will be of benefit to the English department, Hilliard said.

"It's an added benefit that Kenneth has a real interest in electronic scholarship," he said. "We feel this is some-

thing students at all levels need exposure to."

Price said he was excited to collaborate with other UNL English faculty developing literature Web sites.

"There are several big projects underway parallel to what I am doing," he said.

Hilliard said the recent hirings will help the department maintain its size after retirements and faculty departures have shrunk the department.

Hiring Agee and Price also will increase the educational quality of the department for those majoring in English, he said.

"They aren't as important for someone in a general education course," Hilliard said. "But they will be of benefit to the majors and graduate students."

He said there may be one more faculty search to complete in the near future.

Boy recovers from heart puncture

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — A 12-year-old boy whose heart was pierced by a pencil as he lunged toward his bed to catch a football is recuperating after 2 1/2 harrowing hours of the pencil throbbing at every beat in his chest.

"I kind of felt it go in, but it didn't hurt," Nathan King said from his home in Helena. "So I looked down. Then I started yelling for Mom. I was yelling 'Mom, Mom, Mom, I'm gonna die.'"

Crying and struggling to breathe, Nathan stumbled into the kitchen with the eraser end protruding 2 to 3

inches from his chest. He collapsed in front of his mother, Lorri Earley, with the pencil throbbing like a metronome. It was Nathan's birthday, Feb. 23.

Earley, a nurse, called 911 and held her son to keep him from pulling at the pencil.

He was rushed to St. Peter's Community Hospital in Helena, then flown to Benefis Healthcare in Great Falls for open-heart surgery.

The pencil had penetrated his right heart chamber, ripped a valve and was embedded in the septum, near the back wall of the heart.

"It was a time bomb," said Dr. Brett Williams. "If blood had started leaking into the sack around the heart, this could have had a completely different outcome."

Had anyone removed the pencil during the 2 1/2 hours before he reached Benefis, he would have died within minutes, Williams said.

Nathan arrived home last week, but he will miss school for awhile.

To welcome him home, neighbors gave him a sweatshirt that shows a heart pierced by a wooden pencil. The words read "Tougher than Dracula."

Mother faces charges in child's death in fire

MOTHER from page 1

clothes the two men were wearing at the time of the robbery.

Archie and Good never entered Brewsky's Food and Spirits during the robbery, Lincoln Police Ofc. Katherine Finnell said.

On Feb. 12, two men entered the bar at 10:30 a.m., 30 minutes after the restaurant opened, carrying a handgun and a rifle and demanding

money, Finnell said.

According to court documents, the two got about \$10,500 in cash from the safe.

Finnell said police arrested Robert Sanford, 19, 4300 Normal Blvd., on Feb. 17 for allegedly committing the robbery. He was charged with robbery and use of a deadly weapon to commit a felony.

The other man has not been arrested, Finnell said.

Council works to unite campus organizations

SERVICE from page 1

These projects include building a bike trail linking City and East campuses and getting involved in Ventures in Partnership.

Ventures in Partnership is a program established for organizations to support Lincoln Public Schools.

Hampton also said the council hopes to establish a campuswide service event to foster community pride.

Elaine Hammer, a member of the

fund-raising committee of the Great Plains Trails Network, will speak about building the bike trail at today's meeting. Three other committee members also will attend the council's meeting.

Podolske said she is happy with the success the Service Council has had so far.

"It's been this underground thing that's just exploded on us," Podolske said.



Celebrating Diversity

Join us on a journey around the world:



Enjoy unique performances and Feast on gourmet cuisine.

International Student Organization Banquet

Date: March 26, 2000 (Sunday)
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Venue: Centennial Ballroom
Attire: Semi-formal
Cost: \$10 - student
 \$12 - non-student

Contact: International Affairs (472-5358)
 kcagley2@unl.edu
 or
 Augustina (436-8977)
 augustina78mim@yahoo.com

Sponsored by International Student Org.

UNL Sample Ballot

ASUN Student Government Run-off Election

March 8, 2000

1. To vote, blacken the square (☐) to the left of each name you select.
2. DO NOT CROSS OUT-if you change your mind, exchange your ballot for a new one.

President / Vice President
 Select one (1) by marking the square (☐) to the left of the name.

<input type="checkbox"/> Joel Schafer / Riley Peterson <input type="checkbox"/> Heath Mello / Cecily Rometo	A-TEAM EMPOWER
--	---------------------------------

2nd Vice President

<input type="checkbox"/> Amy R. Ellis <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Butterfield	IMPACT EMPOWER
---	---------------------------------

dailyneb.com