

Welcome to the fourth edition of *The Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture Journal* (*The IJPC Journal*) for an immersion in television advertisements and Broadway musicals, two under-researched areas in the study of the depiction of journalists. These two research articles are accompanied by features discussing Bollywood journalists and how Superman affects our perception of the news media. This issue stretches our understanding of journalism's popular image beyond that of the reporter in Hollywood films, which has received the bulk of scholars' attention.

Ron Bishop's "A Textual Analysis of Ford's 'Drive One' Ad Campaign: Introduction of the Domesticated Journalist" offers insight into eight Ford Motor Company advertisements that ran on television and the Internet in 2011. Noting that the ranks of reporters are thinning as the number of public relations professionals grow, Bishop says the Drive One ads play into changes in the media landscape and in newsgathering. Not only do the ads create meaning for the products (Ford F-150, Ford Focus, Ford Fusion, and Ford Fusion Hybrid), but they also ask us to think about the working relationship between journalists and PR people, the guiding principles of reporters, and the current state of the craft of journalism. In using two key journalism tools for gathering news—the press conference and the "person on the street" interview—as part of the campaign, the ads reveal how journalists are being managed in the development of a company's public image.

Bishop's textual analysis of the TV spots—all revolving around journalism-related themes—concludes with a call for a new category of journalist in the existing typology established by IJPC Director Joe Saltzman. Ford's journalists aren't courageous investigative reporters, nor are they public watchdogs; rather, they are traveling in packs, asking softball questions, and darting from story to story without exploring underlying issues in depth. The

result, argues Bishop, is a “domesticated journalist,” one is who bland, ineffectual, and superficial because of PR’s skillful management of time-honored journalism tactics.

Kate Rooney’s “Do, Re, Media: The Image of the Journalist in the Broadway Musical” shifts the focus to the Great White Way where the “vigorous theatricality” of musicals lends itself naturally to a dramatic depiction of the reporter. Although 15 musicals produced between 1945 and 2012 were identified as having leading or supporting characters who are journalists, Rooney’s analysis covers only the nine with commercially available scripts. Multiple close readings of the book and thorough listening to the soundtracks of each musical yielded investigative reporters, critics, seedy tabloid journalists, television news personalities, and columnists in such hits as *Wonderful Town*, *Damn Yankees*, *Chicago*, and *Woman of the Year* as well as in less lauded productions.

Like their counterparts in movies and on television, Rooney says the male and female journalists in Broadway musicals generally will do almost anything for a story, often are lazy fact checkers, and sometimes possess questionable journalistic ethics. The difference, she observes, comes from the heightened emotion and nuanced expression found while singing and dancing, making musical journalists “the most intriguing characters in each of their productions, and, it could be said, some of the most fascinating to come along in all of musical theater.”

In addition to presenting refereed research articles, *The IJPC Journal* provides a forum for features and commentaries where writers can discuss trends and share critical opinions. “From Romeo to Rambo: Popular Portrayals of Journalists in Bollywood Cinema” by journalists and researchers Ruhi Khan and Danish Khan of London, England, attempts to understand the depiction of journalists in Bollywood films over a 30-year period from 1981 to 2011. Their analysis includes 33 films, ranging from *Mr. India* to *Rockstar*, where the role of the journalist or

media has been important in the film's narrative script or has been entrenched in public memory for its journalistic aspects.

Pointing out that Hindi film tends to be unrealistic and often exaggerated, the Khans also note that popular movies define their audience's aspirations and perceptions. They quote Indian political psychologist and social theorist Ashis Nandy as saying, "Studying popular film is studying Indian modernity at its rawest, its crudities laid bare by the fate of traditions in contemporary life and arts. Above all, it is studying caricatures of ourselves." The Khans identify five popular representations of journalists: romantic companion, glamour chaser, investigative superhero, power magnate, and brainless mouthpiece.

Wrapping up this issue, Matthew C. Ehrlich's essay, "Thinking about Journalism with Superman," is a definitive articulation of the role of Superman and his alter ego Clark Kent in the journalism canon. Using pop culture references and scholarly critiques, Ehrlich synthesizes Superman's myriad incarnations in comics, radio, movies, and television, asking us "to reflect critically upon journalism's complex and contradictory relationship to the things for which Superman has long been said to fight: 'truth, justice, and the American way.'" He tells us not to be satisfied with nostalgic memories, but to use Superman's journalism story as a catalyst for reshaping the press into a more relevant participant in our increasingly complex philosophical and ethical social system.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue of *The IJPC Journal*. As always, we invite your feedback and submissions.

*Matthew C. Ehrlich  
Sammye Johnson  
Joe Saltzman*