

Communicating Science Workshop
April 9, 2010
Brookhaven National Laboratory, Berkner Hall

Sponsored by the Stony Brook Center for Communicating Science and Brookhaven National Laboratory

Workshop registration form is available here: <https://www.bnl.gov/csw/reg/>

NOTE: Registration is not required to attend the Alda talk or panel discussion. Registration is required to attend workshops.

Schedule

8:30-9:00 a.m.: Sign-in, coffee/tea

9:00-9:10 a.m.: Welcome by Sam Aronson, Director of Brookhaven National Laboratory, and Howard Schneider, Dean of the Stony Brook School of Journalism

9:10-9:30 a.m.: Opening remarks by Alan Alda

9:30-10:45 a.m.: Panel discussion, Q&A: “Who Cares What the Public Thinks about Science?”

- David Conover, Dean of the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences at Stony Brook, fellow of the Aldo Leopold Leadership Institute, which provides communications training for scientists.
- Cornelia Dean, former science editor of *The New York Times*, author of the new book for scientists, *Am I Making Myself Clear*, seminar leader in science communication at Harvard University.
- Joanna Fowler, Director of Radiotracer Chemistry, Instrumentation and Biological Imaging Program at Brookhaven Lab, and 2009 recipient of the National Medal of Science.
- Earl Lane, senior communications officer for the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and former science reporter for *Newsday*.
- Christie Nicholson, contributing editor to Scientific American online, specialist in new media, faculty member of the Banff Centre Science Communications program.

Following the panel discussion a synopsis of the remainder of the workshops will be given.

10:45-11:00 a.m.: Break

11:00 – 12:00 p.m.: **Distilling Your Message:** An important session for anyone who speaks with the public.

Meeting in small groups, with a facilitator, you’ll craft a short, clear statement, intelligible to a non-scientist, about what you do and why it matters. These messages will provide a foundation for the later workshops.

12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch (provided for registered workshop participants)

NOTE: For the afternoon sessions you can take either Improvisation *or* two of the other three workshops listed below.

1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Improvisation Workshop (three hours, with a break)

Improvisation: This innovative program, pioneered by Alan Alda at Brookhaven Lab and Stony Brook University, uses improvisational theater games to help you speak more spontaneously and connect more directly with your audience and each other. This is *not* about acting; it's about helping you communicate more effectively. A video preview can be seen at the Center for Communicating Science web page: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/journalism/science/>

1:00-2:30 pm.: Workshop (Select one of the sessions listed below)

1. Writing for the Public: Basics of how to write clearly for the public, with an emphasis on op-ed articles, letters to the editor, and letters to public officials.

2. Interacting with the Media: How to be interviewed, especially on television, with taping of practice mock interviews.

3. Using Newer Media: How to use blogs, podcasts, and social media sites as a way of communicating about science.

2:30-2:45 p.m.: Break

2:45-4:15p.m.: Workshop (Select one of the sessions below)

1. Writing for the Public: Basics of how to write clearly for the public, with an emphasis on op-ed articles, letters to the editor, and letters to public officials.

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4:15-4:45: Wrap-up and evaluation

Workshop Leaders

Improvisation: Deborah Mayo, Steve Marsh, and Valeri Lantz-Grefroh are Stony Brook Theatre Arts faculty members trained by Alan Alda in using improvisational theater games to improve scientists' communication skills. Deborah Mayo is director of undergraduate studies in Theatre Arts, Steve Marsh is an actor and literary manager of the John Gassner New Play Festival, and Val Lantz-Gefroh is artist in residence and undergraduate acting advisor.

Writing for the Public: Cornelia Dean, a former science editor of *The New York Times*, teaches seminars in communicating science at Harvard University. She is the author of the new book, *Am I Making Myself Clear*, a guide for scientists on communicating more clearly. Her previous book, *Against the Tide: The Battle for America's Beaches*, was named one of AAAS' best books of 1999.

Interacting with the Media: Steven Reiner, an associate professor of journalism at Stony Brook, spent two decades as a senior producer, producer and director at CBS News covering major news, events and producing stories for *60 Minutes*. Earlier, he was senior editor of National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*. At NPR, he established and was chief editor of the NPR science reporting unit, which remains one of the most respected in U.S. journalism.

Using Newer Media: Christie Nicholson is a contributing editor at *Scientific American* online, where she developed and launched an online community, helped launch two video series, *Instant Egghead* and *The Monitor*, and produces and hosts the weekly podcast, *60-Second Psych*. She is a faculty member in the Banff Centre's intensive two-week summer program in Science Communications.