

# Media Democracy Online

Production Editor: Samantha Gina Young

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*Samantha Gina Young and Martha Allen*

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## Repercussions of AT&T and T-mobile Merger

By: Samantha Gina Young, WIFP

On Sunday March 20, 2011, the USA population awoke to the shocking news of the upcoming merger between AT&T and T-mobile. With a whopping total of \$39 Billion, AT&T was able to acquire T-mobile. This news did not sit well with most consumers, other carriers such as Virgin Mobile, Sprint, Verizon and Boost Mobile, as well as the employees of both AT&T and T-mobile.

T-mobile has prided itself on being one of the lowest costing cell phone carriers in the USA. Their Individual Cell Phone Plan of Unlimited Talk and Text costs only \$59.99, while AT&T costs \$69.99. Also, T-mobile currently offers unlimited text, talk and data, a plan that AT&T has yet to offer, even with their new 4G network. For years T-mobile has been the number one cell phone carrier for middle class families, individuals and most especially college students. When college students have bills

Continued on 2

such as tuition, room and board, books, technology fees, etc, discovering a cheap cell phone carrier like T-mobile is a Godsend. T-mobile has expanded its own service over the years by including more towers in the most needed metro system. Joining AT&T and Verizon, T-mobile was able to give their customers cell phone service in the metro, which also increased their customer base.

This merger with AT&T will most likely force the T-mobile customers to switch to AT&T's rates, thus destroying the most important reason for choosing T-mobile in the first place. Although there is no definite proof of this, it is clearly obvious. AT&T works on a 4G network, while T-mobile works on a 3G network. By merging, T-mobile customers will need to switch to the 4G network. Also, since most of the T-mobile's phones do not support 4G networks, their customers will have to upgrade to a 4G cell phone. These days, a cell phone that supports 4G networks costs at least \$100, and that does not include the new plan to support the costs for the 4G networks.

T-mobile's current customers have a two-year contract with T-mobile and some may not be up immediately. However, once this contract is completed, they should be prepared to pay for a more expensive plan and upgrade to a more expensive cell phone. In fact, the way technology is evolving; a 5G network may be introduced by then.

In addition to the customers, this merger will adversely affect other cell phone carriers. AT&T

will now hold over 75% of the market share. Therefore, Verizon and Sprint will fight for the remaining 25%. However, Sprint will have a harder time fighting for the remaining market share because of Verizon's service reputation. Currently, Verizon is still the only cell phone service company that offers their customers service in the tunnels of the metro system, as well as under populated parts of the USA where other phone carriers are still unable to offer service. It is not in the public's interest for AT&T to have so much control over the market.

At the National Council of Women's Organizations Meeting, held on May 17, 2011, Kate Snyder and Debbie Goldman stated, "We support the AT&T and T-mobile Merger." The entire News Conference Room was silent as the two members of the Communications Workers of America stood at the podium and began their presentation about the merger. By using the example of the AOL and Huffington Post merger (in which AOL fired all the female reporters with the exception of one after merging with Huffington Post), the two presenters stated that employees, especially female employees of both AT&T and T-mobile are safe. They explained that although AT&T was taking over T-mobile, AT&T still intended to give T-mobile complete control over their own company.

While we hear and understand their point, it is still unclear as to whether employees of both AT&T and T-mobile will face job losses or not. In every merger, there are repercussions to the employees in terms of job loss, removal of previous benefits, or even lower wages. Furthermore, taking into consideration that the world is still patriarchal, these potential job losses and other implications will impact female workers more than male workers.

There are organizations and individuals that immediately went into action when the news of the merger was released. We encourage you to speak out against the further consolidation of corporations that we rely on for communicating.



## Associate News

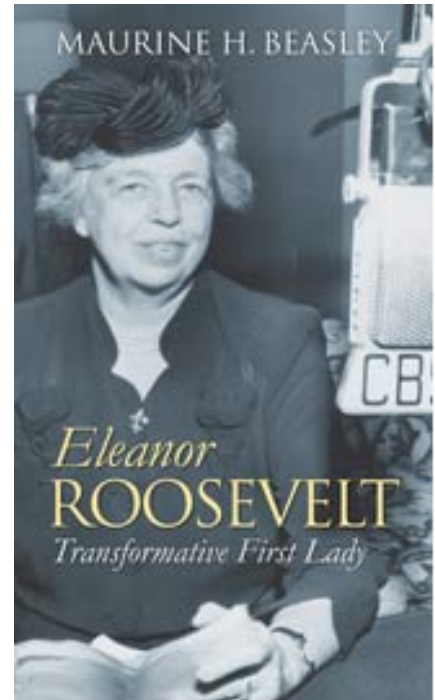
### Dr. Maurine Beasley:

Maurine Beasley has another excellent book out: *Eleanor Roosevelt, Transformative First Lady*

Look for a write-up in our annual print newsletter, *Voices for Media Democracy*. But for now, more on the book can be found on the WIFP Associate Books page:

<http://wifp.org/AssociateBooks.html>

Presiding in the White House longer than any other first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt championed the downtrodden as she traveled the globe, yet she was a maze of contradictions—an idealist who carried on a moneymaking career that depended on her position and a conventional- appearing wife and mother who found emotional succor from intense relationships outside her family. This book cuts through those contradictions to reveal how Eleanor operated, both in and out of public view, to advance the causes in which she believed by participating in the political process.



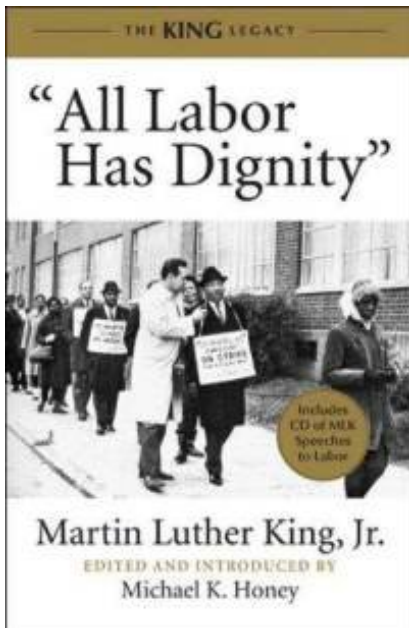
### About the Author:



Maurine Beasley, Professor Emerita of Journalism at the University of Maryland, has been an education editor for the *Kansas City Star* and staff writer for the *Washington Post*. She is the author of *First Ladies and the Press* and coeditor of the *Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*.

## Dr. Michael Honey:

Michael Honey's new book *All Labor Has Dignity* is now available from Beacon Press.



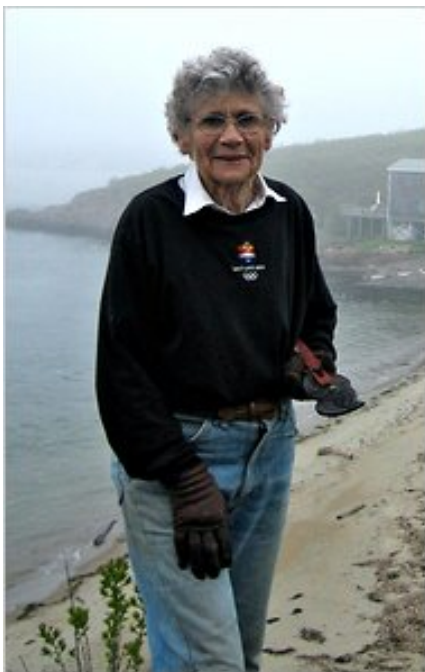
The book brings together 16 of King's speeches on economic justice, many of them buried in the King archives until now. Mike edited the speeches and wrote an introductory essay for the book. The CD that comes with the book contains King's speech to the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union District 65 in 1962, when he talked of racism, poverty and war; it also contains his March 1968 speech in Memphis.

Look for a write-up in our annual print newsletter, *Voices for Media Democracy*. But for now, more on the book can be found on the WIFP Associate Books page: <http://wifp.org/AssociateBooks.html>

Mike's other books are *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights: Organizing Memphis Workers* (1993); *Black Workers Remember: An Oral History of Segregation, Unionism, and the Freedom Struggle* (1999); and *Going Down Jericho Road: The Memphis Strike, Martin Luther King's Last Campaign* (2007).

## Kate Swift:

On May 7<sup>th</sup> we lost an early pioneer in the women's movement, author and editor, photographer and friend, Kate Swift



Kate Swift brought attention to the sexual discrimination embedded in ordinary English usage in two groundbreaking books — *Words and Women* and *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing*.

See the New York Times article on Barbara "Kate" Swift: "Kate Swift, Writer Who Rooted Out Sexism in Language, Dies at 87"  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/10/education/10swift.html>

## NO SWIFT JOURNEY

To Kate, with love from Gina Walsh (granddaughter)

*Two weeks ago  
today  
we brought you in to  
die.  
Definite, unwavering,  
non-apologetic,  
you wanted what you  
wanted  
and didn't take 'no'  
for an answer.*

*You had a time-frame  
in your mind,  
a reason for your  
all of*

*decision -  
it was so much like  
the previous ones  
in your life: the decisions  
of who you were,  
what was right and fair,  
whom you believed in and  
championed,  
the people you loved, and  
those you didn't.*

*This time you're fighting  
for what you want and  
deserve,*

*but the battle is bigger  
and longer  
than you  
had imagined.*

*Two weeks ago  
today  
we brought you in  
and have watched  
as you've slowly slipped  
away  
in your uninterrupted  
journey  
toward forever.*

## Dana Densmore:

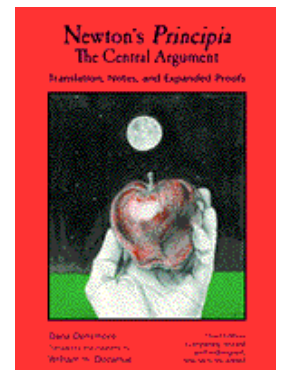
WIFP Vice President is here from Santa Fe!



Dana Densmore has been a board member and officer of WIFP since its founding in 1972. She worked closely with the founder, Dr. Donna Allen, and continues to support and guide WIFP in its undertakings. Dana is co-director and chief editor of Green Lion Press, and an independent scholar with extensive experience in teaching, publishing, and computer technology.

She is the author of *Newton's Principia: The Central Argument*.

<http://greenlion.com/principi.html>



## Upcoming Media Events

**May 29 – June 1, 2011 Montreal, Quebec Canada**

**International Conference on Violence Against Women: Complex Realities and New Issues in a Changing World**

**June 2 - 5, 2011 Greensboro, NC USA**

**Journalism That Matters**

**June 5 - 18, 2011 New York, NY USA**

**Feminist Summer Camp**

**June 10 - 12, 2011 San Francisco, CA USA**

**7th Annual Queer Women of Color Film Festival**

**June 16 - 19, 2011 Washington, DC USA**

**American Association of University Women Convention: Breaking Through Barriers -- Advocating for Change**

**June 25 - 26, 2011 Boston, MA USA**

**Radical Feminist Seminar**

For more information on these and other media events, go to: <http://wifp.org/mediaeventsinternational.html>

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## Directory of Women's Media:

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