

## RENEE CHEROW-O'LEARY

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Dr. Renee Cherow-O'Leary grew up in New Jersey. She attended Barnard College with a major in English and a minor in philosophy, worked in journalism and publishing and completed an M.A.T. degree at the University of Chicago in English and Education and a Ph.D. at New York University in Communications and Public Policy. While in graduate school, she continued to work in publishing at the University of Chicago Press and in television and education at the General Learning Corporation in New York City and at the Children's Television Workshop when it was truly a "workshop."

Dr. Cherow-O'Leary was a founding faculty member at Ramapo College of New Jersey and a university professor of English, Education and Communications at City College of New York and New York University. She developed a broad range of courses including "Multicultural Communication," "The Social Impact of New Information Technologies," "The Geopolitics of Information," and "Women and the Press." She was selected as a faculty fellow in Media and Public Policy at the Annenberg Washington Program and has worked for *Time* and *Newsweek* in their education departments. She was a reporter for American newspapers in Nairobi, Kenya for the U.N. Decade for Women Conference in 1985, is the author of a book, The State-By-State Guide to Women's Legal Rights published by McGraw-Hill in 1987 and the writer of many articles on media and education. She is also an editor of a new book published in 1995 by the Advertising Research Foundation called Youth Research.

From 1989-1995, Dr. Cherow-O'Leary returned to the Children's Television Workshop as the Director of Research for the Publishing/Schools Group. In that capacity, she conducted educational, editorial and market research for five magazines—*Sesame Street*, *Sesame Street Parents*, *Kid City*, *3-2-1 Contact* and *Creative Classroom*—with children from preschool through high school and with parents and teachers. Her work at CTW included extensive focus groups, surveys and field research, liaison with and speeches for external educational and market groups and internal collaboration with editors, writers and TV producers. Her goal was to understand the new American family and its educational and informational needs and the changing American school system.

Renee Cherow-O'Leary is the founder of an informal think tank of educators whose goal is to research models of best practice in education from around the world and to communicate a positive vision of effective education as a catalyst for social change. She speaks about education and media to many professional organizations and is currently the President of a consulting group called *Education for the 21st Century* whose work includes qualitative research, creative educational product development, in-depth interviews with leading thinkers and research to identify social trends, strategic planning and communications and community organizing strategies for clients in the for-profit and non-profit sectors. Some current clients are: The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, the Columbia University School of Public Health, the National Parenting Association, the Children's Television Workshop, Meredith Publishing Company, Global Telecommunications Solutions, the Jewish Theological Seminary, and others.

She is married to a psychologist and is the mother of a son and a daughter.

**RENÉE CHEROW-O'LEARY, Ph.D.**  
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**PROFESSIONAL IN COMMUNICATIONS AND EDUCATION:** Expertise in teaching, writing, public speaking, scholarly and market research, curriculum development, the design and creation of multimedia educational programs and products, and the impact of media on social/public policy. Interdisciplinary focus. Experienced educator who has worked at all levels--from the university to the preschool. Consultant to print and broadcast media organizations, non-profits, boards of trustees, with particular reference to those issues that have an impact on children, families, teachers. Developer of lecture series, seminars and workshops, invited speaker on professional panels. Author of two books, many articles and successful grants. Skilled strategic communicator and speech writer. Membership and participation in major professional communications and educational organizations. Founder of *Education for the 21st Century*, a research and consulting consortium, working with clients to identify trends, specify impact, and develop an action strategy for the future especially in the creation of "learning organizations" and educational materials and programs to facilitate learning.

**EDUCATION:**

**Ph.D. New York University Communications and Public Policy**  
*Dissertation: "The Community Organization Strategies of Public Television Stations: Using the Media for the Delivery of Social Services in Five Communities"*  
**M.A.T. University of Chicago English and Education**  
*Thesis: "Rhetoric in A Media-Oriented Culture: Aristotle and Marshall McLuhan On Style"*  
**B.A. Barnard College English and Philosophy**

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

**EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY, New York, New York, President 1995-present:**

Principal in a consulting company doing market research, writing, strategic planning and trend analysis for varied clients including the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, the National Parenting Association, the Children's Television Workshop, Global Telecommunications Solutions, Meredith Publishing Company, Newsweek Education Program, the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Columbia University School of Public Health and others.

**CHILDREN'S TELEVISION WORKSHOP, New York, New York, Director of Research, Publishing/Schools Group, 1989-1995:**

Designed and supervised editorial and market research for five magazines, *Sesame Street*, *Sesame Street Parents*, *Kid City*, *3-2-1 Contact*, *Creative Classroom*, for joint television-print projects and for schools-related projects in collaboration with editors, producers, publishers and project leaders throughout CTW. Work included:

- Managing a budget of over \$250,000 and a staff of six
- Conducting and supervising field research with children from ages 2-14 assessing appeal, comprehension and developmental appropriateness of materials
- Designing and leading focus groups, organizing mail and phone polling, databases, advertising-related studies and competitive market analyses
- Developing and overseeing quantitative research from outside suppliers
- Writing grants for special projects
- Liaison with organizations such as McDonald's Children's Charities, the Educational Press Association, Johns Hopkins Medical Center, the Children's Research Council of the Advertising Research Foundation, and many others on special projects
- Collaborating with editors, producers and publisher to develop award-winning articles and programs
- Leading seminars and workshops for inside and outside professional groups including international media representatives

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, New York, New York, Adjunct Associate Professor of Communications, 1987-1991:**

Professor at N.Y.U. before and while working at CTW. Also a consultant to organizations listed below at that time. Work included:

- Teaching and advising adult college students in the School of Continuing Education B.A. Program. Developed new courses in Organizational Communications, Multicultural Communication, News and Society, Research Techniques, Journalistic Writing, and was senior advisor on thesis projects in the humanities and social sciences. Worked closely with Dean on new curricular initiatives in Communications.

**CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK, New York, New York, Associate Professor of English, Communications and Public Policy, 1979-1986:**

Full time faculty member in the Departments of English and Communications teaching a wide range of courses including: Introduction to Mass Media, Book and Magazine Publishing, Interpersonal Communication in a Mass Media World, Women and the Press, The Social Impact of New Communications Technologies, The Geopolitics of Information, Journalistic Writing and others.

- Designed the Rhetoric and Persuasive Arts program. Developed successful grant project for seminar on Ethics in the Professions which resulted in a course called "Public Policy and Human Values." Wrote "A Resource Guide for Minorities in Communications" funded by a Mellon Grant
- Coordinated and moderated a major professional forum for leaders in business and communications at the City University Graduate Center on Business Journalism
- Member of many university committees and Dean's Representative to link Communications with other college majors.

**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY, Tenured Assistant Professor of English, Education and Communications, 1973-1979.**

Founding faculty member at innovative, interdisciplinary undergraduate college pioneering a host of new curricular initiatives. Work included extensive team teaching, development of several successful lecture series open to the public, editing and writing in professional publications produced by Ramapo and others, training and supervising English and Drama student teachers throughout Bergen County, New Jersey high schools and extensive administrative work on committees including being selected as one of seven faculty members to serve on the Long Range Planning Commission of the College. Key projects also included regular teaching in the Ramapo Institute for Future Studies which held colloquia for students and the public and working on regular basis with the college's Women's Center to create programs of interest.

**CHILDREN'S TELEVISION WORKSHOP, New York, New York, 1972-1973.**

Developer of school materials based on *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company* when CTW was still a "workshop."

**GENERAL LEARNING CORPORATION, New York, New York, 1969-1972.**

Full time educational consultant in this new company which was a joint venture of General Electric and Time, Inc. to produce educational hardware and (pre-computer) "software." Worked in Washington, D.C. and New York with a variety of organizations including VISTA, the Peace Corps, the planned community of Columbia, Maryland and many others. Wrote Federal grants for funding, conducted teacher training workshops with videotape feedback, developed bi-lingual program for elementary school students, edited a newsletter, *Instructor Development*, created educational program for new cable television station and designed a K-12 humanities curriculum for an upstate New York city school system.

Other early experience includes working as a reporter for *The Jersey Journal* newspaper, as an editorial assistant for Doubleday and Company Publishers in New York in children's books and for the University of Chicago Press on the scholarly journal *Child Development*, and student teaching in the English Department at the University of Chicago Lab School and at New Trier High School in Winnetka, Illinois.

**RENÉE CHEROW-O'LEARY, Ph.D.**  
**CONSULTANCIES 1985-1996**

Throughout my academic and media careers, I have served in a consulting capacity to many organizations. Both the recent clients from *Education for the 21st Century* and earlier clients are listed here for reference:

**National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, New York, New York, January, 1996-present:** National Coordinator of the *Creating Critical Viewers* project developing media literacy programs from within the broadcast industry and working with producers and educators in seventeen cities around the country. Includes linkage with White House and other key organizations.

**National Parenting Organization, New York, New York, 1996:** Director of Research for national organization of parents under a strategic planning grant to identify and implement a "parents to the polls" initiative. Led ten focus groups and developed a prototype to be used across the country by other focus group leaders. Presented findings to board of trustees.

**Children's Television Workshop, New York, New York, 1995-1996:** A range of projects including conducting working with NYNEX and Pacific Bell on an ISDN classroom initiative in New York and California, leading focus groups of teachers for *Creative Classroom* magazine, doing research with early childhood reading specialists for *Kid City* and others.

**Jewish Theological Seminary, New York, New York, 1996:** Leading focus groups with 21-35 year olds for information about their participation in specialized education programs.

**Columbia University School of Public Health, New York, New York, 1996:** Consultant to Columbia and Center for Disease Control Office of Smoking and Health on a media marketing campaign to prevent smoking behavior in children of 10-14. An ongoing consultancy with a panel of marketing experts.

**Meredith Publishing Company, Des Moines, Iowa, 1996:** Research analysis of *Crayola Kids*, a children's magazine.

**Newsweek Education Program, New York, New York, 1989-present:** Writer of educational materials for high schools and colleges on a variety of social topics.

**Beth Israel Medical Center, New York City, 1987-1988:** Developed specialized training and education programs for the hospital's Board of Trustees during their centennial year. Reported directly to the Chairman of the Board of the Medical Center.

**Louis Harris and Associates, New York City, 1987:** Worked personally with noted pollster, Lou Harris, on a variety of research projects related to governmental and educational issues.

**Agence France Presse, New York, New York, 1987:** Developed a writing course for students from Paris on a communications internship.

**The 92nd Street YMHA, New York, New York, 1987-88:** Leader of courses in the liberal arts for adult students.

**Time Education Programs, Yardley, Pennsylvania, 1986:** Writer of curriculum guides for high school and college students based on *Time* and *Sports Illustrated* magazines.

**Corporation for Entertainment and Learning, New York, New York, 1986:** Educational consultant for "The Video Encyclopedia of the Twentieth Century" and for two television series, "A Guide to the 21st Century" and "Leadership."

**Women's International Press Service, Nairobi, Kenya, 1985:** Reporter during the U.N. Decade for Women Conference.

**RECENT GRANTS:**

**Coolidge Research Grant from the Association for Religion in Intellectual Life at Brown University, 1992** to study "Rites of Passage of Children in Interfaith Families."

**Faculty Fellow in the Annenberg Washington Public Policy Program, Washington, D.C., 1986-present:** Selected to participate in extensive legislative and political seminar on media and public policy issues. Continue to be associated as a consultant on special projects.

**REFERENCES FOR  
DR. RENEE CHEROW-O'LEARY**

Dr. Robert Maxwell, Director of Research  
Home Box Office/Time Warner  
1100 Avenue of the Americas  
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Dr. Donald Stoll, Executive Director  
The Educational Press Association  
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Dr. Sylvia Ann Hewlett  
Author and Founder of National Parenting Association  
51 West 74th Street  
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Mr. Ira Wolfman  
Editor-in-Chief, Adult Publications  
Children's Television Workshop  
1 Lincoln Plaza  
New York, New York 10023  
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Annenberg Washington Program  
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202-393-7100

Dr. Patricia Hunt-Perry  
Professor, School of Human Services  
Ramapo College of New Jersey  
Mahwah, New Jersey 07430  
914-561-0995

Dr. James Fratto, Educational Consultant and  
Former Dean, New York University  
500 Fifth Avenue  
Suite 3600  
New York, New York 10110  
212-730-4461

**DR. RENÉE CHEROW-O'LEARY**

**RECENT PUBLICATIONS, SPEECHES AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

**Publications:**

Editor of YOUTH RESEARCH, a publication of the Advertising Research Foundation, New York City, In press, publication Winter 1995.

"Print Research at the Children's Television Workshop," Educational Technology Research and Development, Winter, 1990 issue.

Barnard College Research Reports: "Twenty-Five Years Later," Barnard College, 1989. Co-author of research study on the lives of women and their perception of themselves as students, coping strategies through life changes and visions of the future at 25th reunions.

A STATE BY STATE GUIDE TO WOMEN'S LEGAL RIGHTS (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1987). Author of a book written in conjunction with the 20th anniversary of the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund. Press conference at the National Press Club and on Capitol Hill to present findings. National television and radio tour.

Articles about my research at the Children's Television Workshop have appeared in the New York Times, the Educational Press Association newsletter and regional newspapers.

**Speeches and Workshops:**

Educational Press Association, 100th Anniversary Conference, Washington, D.C., June 1995: Workshop for editors and publishers on "Reader Research in the Development of a Publication"

Barnard College, Alumnae Reunion, New York City, May, 1995: Member of a panel of women in media speaking about "Careers in Media and The Changing Media World."

Bergen County Educational Consortium at Thomas Aquinas College, Sparkill, New York, March 1995. Keynote speaker to over 500 students and faculty members of Bergen County gifted programs on the topic of "Preparing a Publication for the 21st Century: The News of the Future."

World Future Society Conference, "Toward the New Millenium: Living, Learning and Working," Cambridge, Massachusetts, July, 1994. Workshop panel on "Children's Policy in the Next Century."

Marketing to Kids Conference, sponsored by the Marketing to Kids Report, Atlanta, Georgia, March, 1994. Keynote Speaker on the topic "How Corporations Can Better the Lives of Children and Still Accomplish Their Goals."

World Future Society Conference, Washington, D.C., June, 1993. "Meeting the Needs of Children As We Move Toward the Next Century."

American Educational Research Association Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, April, 1992. "The Confluence of Print and Television Research in the Development of Ghostwriter, A Multimedia Literacy Program for Children, at the Children's Television Workshop."

Ramapo College of New Jersey, March, 1992. Guest lecturer in seminar on "Women in Contemporary Society."

Advertising Research Foundation Children's Research Council, New York City, Summer, 1991. "The Synergy Between Print and Television Research."

Rutgers University Literacy Symposium, New Brunswick, New Jersey, June, 1991. "Visual and Verbal Humor in Children's Magazines," report on original research conducted at the Children's Television Workshop in the Publishing/Schools Group.

Kraft General Foods Management Meeting, Orlando, Florida, September, 1990. Speech on "Children's Use of Print Media."

Earlier speeches furnished upon request.

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education  
American Association of Public Opinion Research  
American Educational Research Association  
Advertising Research Foundation  
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development  
Educational Press Association  
International Communication Association  
International Reading Association  
National Association for the Education of Young Children  
National Association for Partnerships in Education  
National Council of the Teachers of English  
Society for Research in Child Development  
World Future Society

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