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Jeffrey Cole—Biography

Jeffrey Cole has been at the forefront of media and communication technology issues both in the United States and internationally for the past 25 years. An expert in the field of technology and emerging media, Cole serves as an adviser to governments and leading companies around the world as they craft digital strategies.

In July 2004 Dr. Cole joined the USC Annenberg School for Communication as Director of the newly formed Center for the Digital Future and as a Research Professor. The Center is a research and policy institute committed to work that has a real and beneficial effect on people's lives, while seeking to maximize the positive potential of the mass media and our rapidly evolving communication technologies.

Prior to joining USC, Dr. Cole was a longtime member of the UCLA faculty and served as Director of the UCLA Center for Communication Policy, based in the Anderson Graduate School of Management. At UCLA and now at USC Annenberg, Cole founded and directs the World Internet Project, a long-term longitudinal look at the effects of computer and Internet technology, which is conducted in over 25 countries. At the announcement of the project in June 1999, Vice President Al Gore praised Cole as a "true visionary providing the public with information on how to understand the impact of media." Ten years into the project, the World Internet Project, through its unique data on Internet users around the world, is the leading international project examining the ways in which our social, economic and media lives are changing. Cole regularly presents trends and insights of the project to the White House, FCC, Congress, Department of Defense and to governments around the world. On the corporate side, Cole advises Microsoft, WPP (Group M), Ericsson, Sony, Time-Warner, AT&T, AARP and others in their traditional and digital media strategies.

In the 1990s, Cole worked closely with the four broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox) under an anti-trust waiver that allowed the networks to work together for the first time dealing with television programming issues. Meeting regularly with the CEOs, general counsels, heads of programming and others at the networks, he issued annual reports to the television industry, Congress and the nation. Upon the release of the 1996 report, Cole held a joint press conference with President Bill Clinton, who referred to the Center for Communication Policy as "the premier educational institution setting trends in entertainment." Nationwide there was unanimous praise for the quality of the reports and their contribution to the television content debate.

Cole has testified before Congress on television issues and has spoken as a keynote and panel member at more than 500 conferences on media and technology. He has worked with both the Clinton and George W. Bush White House on media and telecommunications issues, including detailed briefings on the Center's work. He regularly makes presentations across the U.S. and in Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa.

In 1994 the Center co-sponsored "The Superhighway Summit" in UCLA's Royce Hall with the leaders of most of the nation's major media companies. For the annual Family Reunion Conferences in Nashville, Tennessee, Cole has worked with Vice President Gore to produce films opening the 1995 through 2002 conferences. The annual films were screened before an audience of 1,400 including the Vice President and President Clinton.

Cole was a member of the Executive Committee of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (ATAS) from 1997 to 2001 and was the founding governor of the ATAS Interactive Media Peer Group.

At UCLA, Cole taught over 35,000 students. In 1987 he received UCLA's Distinguished Teaching Award.