

## Award-winning journalist becomes UNLV professor

By Laura Sambol  
Contributing Features Writer

Well on his way up the corporate ladder in 1985 with one of the most powerful players in the television broadcasting industry, ABC-TV, producer-director-writer Dennis Mazzocco resigned.

His father's tragic death a year earlier forced him on a journey of self-discovery. Mazzocco, 43, could no longer work in an industry that promoted the corporate mentality of "profit-making, conformity and control of thought for profit that distinguishes any individualism."

He would no longer be exploited in the corporate world, chasing "elusive corporate dreams," just like his father.

Nearly 12 years, six Emmy Awards (13 nominations), a marriage and a Ph.D. later, he is teaching at UNLV.

An only child, Mazzocco was born in Uniontown, Penn. and grew up in Clifton, N.J., "a bedroom community of Manhattan." He spent his summers in Pennsylvania.

"It was the rural/urban mix that I had," Mazzocco said.

He entered Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J. with his life-long dream of becoming a physician. That dream quickly ended with his first chemistry and physics classes.

Soon, Mazzocco discovered

the Seton Hall radio station, and the desire to pursue broadcasting was ignited. During his time as station manager, Mazzocco received the first George Foster Peabody Award ever given to a college student.

The recognition led to a job as a clerk-typist at ABC-TV in 1976. An error that cost ABC \$30,000 was the first time that he "had been threatened by the commercial realities of the broadcasting world."

After 18 months in ABC's commercial scheduling department, Mazzocco was promoted to a position as operations manager with ABC Sports, at the time "recognized around the world as the leader in sports television."

The short stay led to a promotion as associate director, and he spent most of his long hours choosing audio and visual clips required by the producer to tell the perfect story. It wasn't long before Mazzocco became the producer.

He was staff and worked as a broadcast journalist with ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox for over 16 weeks. He worked on eight Olympic Games telecasts which sent him to Lillehammer, Barcelona, Seoul and Sarajevo, among other cities.

Seasoned in sports journalism, Mazzocco's credits include "The NFL on Fox," "ABC's Wide

World of Sports," "The World Series" and college football to name a few.

News credits include "Good Morning America," "Nightline," "ABC's World News Tonight with Peter Jennings" and "ABC News This Morning."

Mazzocco received an Emmy for "ABC Notebook," a video magazine program for young people, covering diverse topics such as teen suicide, literacy and other top teen concerns.

"The series was canceled largely because its original purpose, to persuade government officials and the public to oppose reregulation of network television, had been served," Mazzocco explained.

The work Mazzocco is most proud of is the four-minute, Emmy-Award winning montage from the 1988 Seoul Olympics, which he created for NBC. The piece was set to Mussorgsky's "Gates of Kiev" and closed the Olympic coverage, airing right before the closing credits.

"It was my form of protest against the Olympic coverage," Mazzocco said.

Highlighting women's sports, obscure athletes and Russians at the time of the Cold War, his piece "was about human struggles, coverage and triumph. It was humanistic," Mazzocco

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by Darryl Richardson / The Rebel Yell  
Emmy Award winning Professor Dennis Mazzocco in the television studio in FDH.

### PRIMAL SQUAT



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