
Times Facts

Eric Deggans is the TV and media critic. He originally joined the *Times* in 1995 as pop music critic, covering everything from the MTV Music Video Awards in New York City to uncovering a fake gospel singer who lied about winning Grammy awards. In January 1997 Eric assumed the role of TV critic writing reviews, news stories and long-range trend pieces on the state of the TV industry locally and nationally. He joined the Editorial board in 2004, returning to criticism in 2005 covering media and, in 2006, television.

Talking Points

•Television Industry • Media Ethics • Music Industry • Diversity • Minority Affairs

A guest lecturer at Indiana University, the University of South Florida and St. Petersburg College, Eric has served in leadership roles of chapters of the National Association of Black Journalists in New Jersey, Pittsburgh and Tampa Bay. He is a frequent guest on local radio and TV and has appeared nationally on MSNBC, PBS, BET, and National Public Radio.

Education

Eric has a bachelor of arts degree in political science and journalism from Indiana University.

Background

Born in Washington D.C. but raised in Gary, Indiana, Eric came to the *Times* after working as the music critic for the Asbury Park Press newspaper in New Jersey. He also held reporting jobs at the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and *Pittsburgh Press* in Pennsylvania. He is proudest of his work covering Woodstock '94 and a comprehensive package on anti-racist Skinheads. His work has also appeared in the *Village Voice*, *VIBE* magazine, *Chicago Sun Times*, *Seattle Times*, *Rolling Stone Online* and the MusicHound series of album guides. Eric served as 2004 president of the Tampa Bay Association of Black Journalists and is a former board member of the Television Critics Association. He spearheaded the creation of a minority affairs reporting position at the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* in 1993, and developed a training program on racial sensitivity for recruits at the Pennsylvania State Troopers Academy. He has been an adjunct professor at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg and the University of South Florida. He served as the 2003-2004 Ethics Fellow at the Poynter Institute. He and his wife Barbara live in St. Petersburg with their four children.

Awards

Eric has won several awards for his criticism. He was a finalist in 1999 and won 2nd place in 2003 in the criticism category of the Green Eyeshade Awards sponsored by the Atlanta chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. In 2003, he was named top critic by the Florida Society of Newspaper Editors and placed second in the Florida Press Club awards for criticism writing. In 2005, he was awarded the Chuck Stone Award for editorial writing by the National Association of Black Journalists.

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St. Petersburg Times
