

2008 RMCA Conference Program

Colorado State University, Lory Student Center, Saturday, March 29th, 2008

“Being Practical, Going Public”

8:00 a.m. - Noon: Registration, Room 215

8:30-9:45 a.m.: Session I

1.1 – Room 222 – New Media, Old Media – From Politics to Relationships

Chair: *George F. McHendry, Jr., Colorado State University*

Broadcast Yourself: The Effects of YouTube Political Messages on Citizens, Democratic Participation, and the Agenda Setting Function of the Media

Rachel Stohr, University of New Mexico

Being Digital: A Transactional Theory of Cognitive Processing and Internet Media Use

Matt Willis, University of New Mexico

Mail-Order-Bride Web Sites and Filipino Women

Jessica Crespo, University of New Mexico

Do Advertisements that Elicit Emotion Make People Buy Products? The Effects of Emotional vs. Functional Branding on Purchasing Behavior

Tanna Ruzicka, University of Colorado at Boulder

Regan Ricart, University of Colorado at Boulder

1.2 – Room 220 – The Central Role of Communication Scholarship in Understanding Interfaith and Interideological Discourse: Research at the Center for the Advancement of Pluralistic Dialogue at the University of Northern Colorado

Chair: *James A. Keaten, University of Northern Colorado*

Faith in Numbers: Development of an Instrument to Measure Pluralistic Interfaith Dialogue

James A. Keaten, University of Northern Colorado

An Ethnographic Approach to Interfaith Dialogue

Charles Soukup, University of Northern Colorado

Anti-negotiation in the Era of Terrorism: Examining the Rhetoric of Inevitable Violence

David L. Palmer, University of Northern Colorado

Approaching or Avoiding Interfaith Dialogue: A Correlational Study of Strength of Faith, Quest Orientation toward Religion and Interfaith Dialogue Valence

Ryan McCoy, Front Range Community College

Pluralistic dialogue is essential to the health and well-being of the religiously diverse communities that populate the globe. Indeed, if pluralistic dialogue can be practiced, communication scholars have a tremendous opportunity and moral responsibility to encourage the practice of dialogic engagement across faith traditions within our communities. Dialogue, like so many religious traditions, is ultimately about the discovery of truth and meaning—in both cases, a discovery contingent upon communication practice. Panelists discuss research findings and methodology that examine the challenge and promise of pluralistic dialogue. Multiple methodologies are discussed, including social scientific, ethnographic, and critical perspectives on the study of interfaith and interideological dialogue.

1.3 – Room 226 – Critical Dialogues on Teaching Praxis: Is Teaching an Instrumental Means or a Scholarly Endeavor?

Chair: *Robert Ballard, University of Denver*

Communication Education and the Emerging Scholar: Who Cares about Teaching?

Robert Ballard, University of Denver

Teaching in Multiple Spaces and Places: Exploring the Challenges of the Classroom in Community Colleges, Four-year Institutions and Online Settings

Jenni Simon, University of Denver

Tears, Fears, and Struggles: The Embrace of Critical Pedagogy

Rachel Griffin, University of Denver

Body Knowledge: The Risks and Rewards of Embodied Learning

Richard G. Jones, Jr., University of Denver

Respondent: *Bernadette Calafell, University of Denver*

Why do graduate students teach? Is it a means for having an education paid for? Is it something “we’re supposed to do” in order to conduct research and get hired? Or does teaching deserve more theoretical and scholarly attention? If so, how do we accomplish this? This panel discussion seeks to discuss these and other questions related to the teaching praxis of graduate students and is useful for potential and current graduate students, teaching instructors/assistants, and faculty who mentor, advise, or supervise graduate students. The participants, all advanced doctoral students with a breadth of experience as teaching assistants, instructors, online instructors, and faculty share a concern about the disconnect between theory, research, and teaching praxis, the value of teaching as a scholarly endeavor, and the need for critical reflection of our teaching practices. The participants will offer papers that raise questions, express concerns, and share critical incidents from their own classroom experiences, inviting the audience to join us in a dialogue where we can go public with our concerns and be practical with our suggestions.

1.4 – Room 224 – Officer’s Meeting

10:00-11:15 a.m.: Session II

2.1 – Room 228 – Language and Social Interaction in Action: A LSI Data Session

Chair: *Mike Zizzi, University of Colorado*

Participants:

Lori Britt, University of Colorado

Robert T. Craig, University of Colorado

Darrin Hicks, University of Denver

Jenifer Martin, University of Colorado, Boulder

Heidi Muller, University of Northern Colorado

Jessica Robles, University of Colorado

Karen Tracy, University of Colorado

A Language and Social Interaction (“LSI”) data session is an informal meeting where researchers present recordings and transcripts of human interaction for group discussion and analysis. The participants in this panel are faculty and graduate students who have experience with discourse analysis; they will publicly analyze a short segment of taped data. The data will be played several times and transcripts will be distributed for the benefit of both panelists’ and audience participation. Audience members will be invited

to make observations, raise questions, and offer commentary, and effectively join panel participants in a collective project of analysis. The focus of the data session will be curriculum-redesign training session. Of special concern will be the available meanings of certain everyday expressions and what these expressions might reveal regarding the tensions between desiring dialogue and actually performing dialogically.

2.2 – Room 222 – Being Practical, Going Public with Communication & Climate Change

Chair: *Christina R. Foust, University of Denver*

Participants:

Jessica Baty, University of Denver

Andy Kai-Chun Chuang, University of Denver

Richard G. Jones, Jr., University of Denver

William O'Shannon Murphy, University of Denver

Brandon D. Stow, University of Denver

Chelsea A. H. Stow, University of Denver

Since the release of Al Gore's award-winning documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*, the American public has been faced with an increasing amount of discourse on climate change. This panel offers several suggestions for how RMCA members and attendees may "Be Practical and Go Public" with communication and climate change. Panelists will share a variety of tips based upon their research, conducted in the Fall of 2007. Topics include: How to initiate and carry out effective interpersonal conversations on global warming—especially with "naysayers" and skeptics; How to approach the 2008 national and local elections considering issues of climate change; How to sort through press coverage on global warming, and frame climate change more effectively for action; and How to integrate communication and climate change into the Communication Major, as well as through exercise in individual classes (such as public speaking).

2.3 – Room 220 – Ethnographic Communication Studies of Framing Body Art, Raising Feminist Consciousness, and Managing Church Transition Tensions

Chair: *Lawrence R. Frey, University of Colorado at Boulder*

Living (Body) Art: Framing the Art and Losing the Body

Christy-Dale L. Sims, University of Colorado at Boulder

Raising Consciousness, Raising Kids: Developing New Rhetorical Strategies for Building Community

Erica Delgadillo, University of Colorado at Boulder

Managing Tension through Transition: Leading a Growing, and Changing, Suburban Church

Ryan Hartwig, Colorado Christian University

These presentations feature ethnographic communication studies recently conducted by graduate students at the University of Colorado at Boulder. The first presentation explores experiences of people with tattoos with strangers who view tattoos as *objets d'art* and, consequently, do not acknowledge the living body on which the body art is placed. The second presentation focuses on a support group for women university faculty and staff members with children, revealing how the rhetorical strategies employed make this a feminist consciousness-raising group. The third presentation uses a dialectical perspective to understand how the team communicative practices of the leadership group of an Evangelical Christian church simultaneously manage and exacerbate tensions associated in the process of transitioning to a multi-site church.

2.4 – Room 226 – Meditations on Media

Chair: TBD

The Day the Earth Women Stood Tall
Charles H. Ingold, University of Northern Colorado

Humor as a Signifier of Racial Hierarchy in *Lethal Weapon 4*
Santhosh Chandrashekar, University of New Mexico

An Analysis of the Social Construction of the Hippie Movement in the 1960s: Toward a Discursive Perspective
Chih-Yun Chiang, University of Denver

Framing the Bird Flu: A Content Analysis of the Chinese Newspapers
Zheng An, University of New Mexico

2.5 – Room 224 – Culture, Relationships, and Rhetorical Understandings

Chair: *Andy Merolla, Colorado State University*

Food as an Extension of Cultural Identity: The Facework Approach to Expectancy Violations in Interpersonal and Intercultural Social Penetration Processes
Darla M. Wiese, University of New Mexico

Madame Marie Curie: Her Nobel Rhetoric Viewed Through PRISM
Betty Burdorff Brown, University of Northern Colorado

Perceptions of Social Support Between Secular and Religious Friends
Sonia L. Gomez, University of New Mexico

Predicting Satisfaction in Dating Relationships from Four Communication Variables: Openness, Reciprocity, Trust, and Touch
Laura Friesell, University of Wyoming

11:30-12:15: Keynote Address

Room 230

Communication, Social Justice, and the Question of Commitment
Stephen John Hartnett, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Stephen John Hartnett is an Associate Professor of Speech Communication at the University of Illinois, a co-founder of PCARE, the Prison Communication, Activism, Research, and Education collective, a group of NCA-affiliated scholars who began meeting in 2003, an Advisor to the Center on Democracy in a Multiracial Society and the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities, and the editor of *Captured Words/Free Thoughts*, a quarterly magazine of poems by imprisoned writers. His books include *Globalization and Empire: The U.S. Invasion of Iraq, Free Markets, and The Twilight of Democracy*; *Incarceration Nation: Investigative Prison Poems of Hope and Terror*; *Democratic Dissent & The Cultural Fictions of Antebellum America*; and *Sweet Freedom's Song: "My Country 'Tis of Thee" and Democracy in America*.

12:30-1:45 p.m.: Luncheon, Ballroom North

2:00-3:15 p.m.: Session III

3.1 – Room 222 – Exploring Educators

Chair: TBD

Should Teachers Be Seen *and* Heard? An Examination of Students' Perceptions of Teacher Self-Disclosure in Communication Classrooms

Athena M. Kennedy, University of Wyoming

Cindy J. Price, University of Wyoming

Willingness of Chinese Students to Communicate: A Participant Observer Study by an American Teacher in China

Aren Moore, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Exploring Help-Seeking Among Elementary School Teachers

Laura L. Burton, University of New Mexico

3.2 – Room 220 – “Going Public” with the Process of Rhetorical Criticism

Chair: *Christina R. Foust, University of Denver*

“Dynamic Rhetorics of Race: California’s Racial Privacy Initiative and the Shifting Grounds of Racial Politics,” (with Dreama Moon and Tom Nakayama) from *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*

Lisa Flores, Colorado University at Boulder

“Fighting the Prison-Industrial Complex: A Call to Communication and Cultural Studies Scholars to Change the World,” from *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*

Stephen John Hartnett, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

“Lost Convictions: Debating Both Sides and the Ethical Self-Fashioning of Liberal Citizens” (with Ron Greene), from *Cultural Studies*

Darrin Hicks, University of Denver

“This one time, at band camp”: Fond(ling) Memories of Past Research: A Commentary on “Television as Lover, Part II: Doing Auto[Erotic]Ethnography,” from *Cultural Studies* ↔ *Critical Methodologies*

Brian L. Ott, Colorado State University

Rhetoric in general, and scholarship on rhetorical criticism and theory more particularly, have been conceived as practical arts. However, critics rarely “go public” with the major interpretive and writing choices which shaped their essays. This panel brings together rhetorical critics and scholars, in the spirit of “being practical and going public” with the intentional choices that formed a published essay of their choice. Panelists will reveal, for instance, their initial encounters with rhetorical texts or communication artifacts; the grounds for deciding to write about a given text, artifact, place, experience, or situation; the interpretive and evaluative choices they made in probing the text’s possibilities; and the joys and frustrations of their writing process. Panelists’ commentaries will conclude with an interactive discussion between the moderator, participants, and audience, concerning criticism as an intentional process.

3.3 – Room 224 – Tales from the Field: Qualitative Researchers’ Ethical and Methodological Decision-Making

Chair: *Charles Soukup, University of Northern Colorado*

Participants:

Betty Brown, University of Northern Colorado

Jordan Callier, University of Northern Colorado

Darrell Blair, University of Northern Colorado

Mathew Gale, University of Northern Colorado

Respondent: *Charles Soukup, University of Northern Colorado*

Qualitative research requires highly contextualized ethical and methodological decision making. In this panel discussion, several qualitative researchers will present their unique experiences with fieldwork over the last year summarizing their findings. With a common set of objectives, we share the concerns of Carbaugh (1996, p. 11) who sought to “see—speak, listen, sense, or feel—the ‘micro’ and ‘macro’ concerns of identity, from the vantage point of situated communication practices” The qualitative researchers on this panel explored four distinct research contexts: an international volunteer organization, an individual coping with AIDS, a social networking Website, and a banking organization. The diverse fieldwork contexts provide compelling examples of the complex issues raised in qualitative data collection. Further, each example of fieldwork is from a particular approach to qualitative research methods (e.g., narrative, case study, ethnography, etc.) (Creswell, 2007). After presenting their unique experiences, the researchers will then compare their decision making processes with one another.

3.4 – Room 226 – Communicative Challenges Surrounding “Resilience” in the Classroom and Community

Chair: *Kelly Scott, University of Northern Colorado*

Emotional Expressiveness in the Family: How Crisis-Affected Families are Bouncing Back with “TalkShareCare,” an Innovative Program Advocating Positive Talk
Sherilyn Marrow, University of Northern Colorado

Appropriate Grieving Following a Student’s Untimely Death
Kelly C. Scott, University of Northern Colorado

Healthy Living: The Role of Support Groups and Communication in Weight Management
Jarae Fulton, AIMS Community College

Words of Encouragement Used to Help Students’ Academic Performance from an University Advisor’s Perspective
Gina Lichte, University of Northern Colorado

The members of this panel will discuss how various facets of encouraging and positive dialogue can produce profound effects within the classroom and community. Each panelist will discuss their personal experiences and accompanying research tied to the very ideals of communication leading to resilience.

3.5 – Room 228 – Title TDB

Presenters:

Michael Monsour, University of Colorado at Denver
Jennifer Anne Blair, University of Colorado at Denver

Friendships between adult females and males, commonly referred to as cross-sex friendships, have received a growing amount of attention since the first study on those friendships was conducted (Booth & Hess, 1974). Communication scholars have made notable contributions to that literature (e.g., Rawlins, 1992; Werking, 1997). Despite the growing research attention given to cross-sex friendships, there are still exciting and unexplored areas that warrant attention. As noted by Monsour (2006), one of those unexplored areas is cross-sex friendships between individuals in which one participating member is postoperative transsexual. Because postoperative transsexuals might constitute a third gender or at least one that transcends the traditional masculine and feminine categories (Bolin, 1994), researchers and theoreticians should devote more time and energy investigating a community that could possibly serve as a catalyst for a paradigm shift in how gender and biological sex are conceptualized. Studying communication within cross-sex friendships in which one or more individuals are postoperative transsexuals is problematic due to the

partial invisibility of that community. Because of prejudice and a general lack of acceptance from the larger social community, locating a representative sample of transsexuals is complicated by the fact that some postoperative transsexuals, no one really knows how many, go stealth, which often means moving, changing one's name, and staying in the closet in order to protect one's former identity. Not all transsexuals use their new physical attributes as camouflage to conceal their former self. Some, the co-author of this piece being one of them, refuse to deny who they once were, and more importantly, who they have now become. This brings us to the theme of this convention, *Being Practical, Going Public*. We intend to go public with the research we are jointly conducting, partly as an attempt to educate and break down the walls of stereotyping and social injustice. As a point of departure for accomplishing our goals, we will analyze our friendship (one of us is a gender normative 54-year-old heterosexual male, the other a gender variant 56-year-old male to female (MtF) postoperative transsexual who had her surgery five years ago) and attempt to generalize that analysis to other such friendships. In particular, we will analyze two of the standard unique advantages that cross-sex friendships typically supply, i.e., an insider's perspective and opposite-sex companionship (Monsour, 2001).

3:30-4:45 p.m.: Session IV

4.1 – Room 226 – Transcending the Traditional Classroom: Practical Actions to Increase Insight About Communication and Theory – An Interactive Workshop

Facilitators:

Karen Loller, Metropolitan State College of Denver
David Kottenstette, Metropolitan State College of Denver

This session came out of our collegial discussions of traditional pedagogy and the potential to enhance it by implementing techniques from theatre and interactive games. We want students to go beyond understanding or citing theory and apply concepts to their lives. At the end of this workshop participants will: (1) Experience the implementation of games and theatre techniques, (2) describe at least five games or exercises to teach theory, (3) identify the teaching situation that is most appropriate for a new technique, and (4) create a plan to implement a new idea into this semester's course.

4.2 – Room 222 – Being Practical, Going Public with Criticism

Chair: *Christina R. Foust, University of Denver*

Participants:

John Ackerman, Ph.D., University of Colorado at Boulder
Lisa B. Keranen, Ph.D., University of Colorado at Boulder
Charles Soukup, Ph.D., University of Northern Colorado
Roy V. Wood, Ph.D., University of Denver

Rhetorical and media criticism are time-honored arts and practical skills within the communication studies discipline. As with many other methods for scholarly analysis and writing, though, criticism has faced its share of challenges concerning its relevance within, and outside of, the academy. Positivists often view criticism as speculative and subjective, while students fail to immediately see “the point” of criticism or fear “it’s too critical.” Public figures and ordinary people outside of academe are typically unfamiliar with criticism and its value. And yet, rhetorical and media critics remain invested in their method, for its potential to impact the public. For instance, criticism promotes democracy, through evaluations of ethical speech, engagement with the community, insights into effective media, and the cultivation of critical thinkers and eloquent writers. As the panelists of this session will share, the potential relevance of criticism is being, and may continue to be, felt in the classroom and local communities. Through an interactive roundtable, scholars from across the Front Range will describe current projects and ideas for future projects, which will render criticism more public, practical, and relevant: Contexts include undergraduate and graduate classrooms, health care facilities, architecture, city government, and the Internet. Panelists

will also describe the obstacles and challenges to making their work accessible to a broad audience. The audience will be encouraged to share their thoughts as well on how criticism may become more relevant to a variety of constituents, in and out of the university.

3.3 – Room 224 – New Approaches to Communication Work

Chair: TBD

Visuals of the Ineffable: Vanishing Breed

Jennifer Dunn, University of Wyoming

“Stage of Some Strange Beauty”: A Metaphorical Criticism of Child Abuse Poetry

Jarae L. Fulton, Aims Community College and Front Range Community College

Reflections on Racism: An Autoethnography of One White Man’s Experiences with Racism

Matthew J. Alessio, University of New Mexico

Seamless Interruptions: (Re)Interpreting the Fabrics of Definition

Alicia C. Ernest, Colorado State University

4.4 – Room 230 – RMCA Infusion Session

Facilitator: *Heidi Muller, University of Northern Colorado*

Have an idea about how RMCA as an association can be better and can be more meaningful? Have thoughts about things you would like to see at an RCMA conference? This session is designed to be a place to continue the on-going discussion about what RMCA’s role in our area can and should be. The idea for the term infusion session is that the focus of discussion at this year’s session will be how to better infuse RMCA into the educational institutions that comprise this area. How can RMCA be of most service to graduate and undergraduate students of our area? How can it be of most service to junior, senior, full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty? How can it be of most service to administrators, directors, chairs? How can it be of service to advisors and support staff? This session will be facilitated by Heidi Muller, a member of RMCA’s board of governors, and all conference participants are encouraged to attend and be active voices in the association. The centering question for this session is what are ways that RMCA can continue to become an integral and integrated part of departmental, program, and school life in our area? Come share your thoughts and as well talk about the possibilities of the board of governors as a new piece in the structure for the association.

4.5 – Room 228 – Should You Have Said That? Remembering Why Free Speech is Important in a Climate of Blame, Shame and Fear

Facilitator: *Janna L. Goodwin, Regis University*

This panel is a reading of an in-progress play by Janna Goodwin and Ethan Karson, a fictional re-interpretation of actual events. The play concerns the shaming and de-recognition of a comedy group at a prominent East Coast private college. The group pushed boundaries of politically-correct speech in order to poke fun at what they felt was hypocrisy and posturing, and the resulting outcry consumed the campus for weeks, dividing the faculty and student body into opposed and supporting factions. The play explores many perspectives, and the reading, which includes excerpts from the comedy sketches that infuriated some students and faculty, is meant to elicit a conversation about the role of performance and the necessity of free speech protections for writers and performers in an age where self-righteous, moral outrage threatens critical thinking and dialogue and indulges a kind of enraged, emotional resistance that is potentially explosive.