

Houston, We Have Elocution—*And* Deeper Space Solutions:

The Impact of Scientific Imagination

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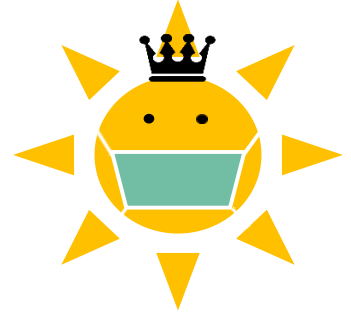
University of Northern Colorado

VIRTUAL SASSI 2020

Abstract

“Science does not know its debt to imagination.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson



Science’s debt to imagination borrows generously from the art of communication. Our panel will explore this collaborative impact via a review of course design and assignments constructed for Scientific Communication: COMM 461/561 & BIO 495/595 Spring semesters 2019-2020.

Lin Allen, Professor in the School of Communication, will present a rhetorical perspective aligned with impact potential for conveying scientific data to varying constituencies. The misconstrual of elocution as an art solely or primarily comprising Communication will be refuted.

Scott Franklin, Professor in the School of Biological Sciences, will present a biologist’s perspective aligned with learning objectives and challenges impacting Scientific Communication Spring 2019 & 2020.

Katie-Leigh V. Corder, UNC Creative Content Producer, will discuss her role in coaching SCI COMM students to maximize their project presentation impact at Campus Commons, April 2019.

To invest in our “debt” to scientific imagination in the current Communication Corona Virus aka “COVID-19” condition, we offer a newly-developed Capstone Project for our students enrolled in Scientific Communication: CORONA COVERED: MASK MEDIA

We solicit *your* ideas on ways to enrich this assignment, converting FTF instruction to online delivery. We are especially interested in any tweaks you would make to the assignment as well as adding to our debriefing questions and/or proposing a rubric for assessment. And, if you’re “remotely” interested in being on the Judging Panel, just let us know!

Thank you for e-mailing us with your ideas:

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## **CORONA COVERED: MASK MEDIA**

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“The soul never thinks without  
a mental picture.”  
Aristotle

This capstone assignment detects the **media framing** of the Corona Virus—COVID-19. It reveals the ways in which Science is communicated, demonstrating the epistemic function of rhetoric.

Just as a photograph’s frame encloses and cues the meaning and memory of the picture, a discourse frame cues meaning through resonance: The resonance principle is defined as

using messages or message elements that almost unconsciously cue out meanings that receivers already have stored in their conscious or unconscious minds and which combine with the source’s cues to create emotional and/or logical meaning. This recollection of past memories connects with present-day events and circumstances, resulting in a harmony or a ‘resonance’ between source, message, and receiver. The basic idea is that it is better to get ‘messages out of receivers’ that will motivate them to action than to try to put, plant, or teach information into their memories. . . In other words, the resonance principle relies on the sets of experiences and memories that people already have stored inside their heads. Larson, C.U. (2013). *Persuasion*. (13<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cengage, p. 376.

Implications of framing: “exploring the differences between the (media) platforms can unearth different versions of reality.” Mercy, E. (2018). “Rival visions of reality’: An analysis of the framing of Boko Haram in Nigerian newspapers and Twitter.” *Media war & conflict*. V. 11 Issue 4, pp. 392-406.

This capstone assignment reinforces and builds upon completed course readings and assignments, including the Alda and Olson texts, Press Article, and Science You Can Use Bulletin.

Participants work in their teams of 4. Each team member selects a comparative media coverage database of the Corona Virus. This may be (a) an international comparison (for example: how does the *London Times* cover the topic v. how does the *New York Times* cover the topic? Or (b) a political spectrum comparison: how does a conservative affiliate cover the virus v. how does a liberal affiliate cover the virus?

Within options (a) or (b) above, select a specific type of coverage your media framing analysis will be based on: print news articles, opinion editorials, editorial cartoons, etc.

<b>Skill sets</b>	<b>Time to implement</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>
Comparative Analysis Identification and Appraisal of Rhetorical Variables	Weeks 10-16 (March 26- May7)	4-person teams

### **Assignment flow**

1. Divide your group media coverage according to individual interest.

2. Each team member will focus on a different type of coverage.
3. The assignment is designed according to stages of development, which will be posted on CANVAS weekly beginning Week 10.  
For example, framing of the issue and frame statements/explanations (e.g., Morality, Economic, Impact, Action).
4. The final presentation (scheduled Thursday, May 7, 4:15-6:45) will be in the form of a panel discussion comprised of your team members. Each participant will focus on their individual findings, followed by a “so what?” kind of discussion identifying significant similarities and differences in the coverage and what these implications portend for science communication.

*Be prepared for debriefing questions at the conclusion of your panel!*

### **Debrief question examples**

1. What surprised you in terms of the coverage?
2. How will you use your new-found knowledge from this project in your future Scientific Communication activities?
3. What recommendations would you give to scientists for effective message creation and exchange? Dos and Don'ts
4. What is a future topic you would consider analyzing using media framing analysis?

### **Tips**

### **Variations**

### **Rubric**