

RCA NEWSLETTER

*A Newsletter of the Religious Communication Association
January, Winter 2007*

From the President . . .

In her 1992 address to the Democratic National Convention, the late ever loquacious Barbara Jordan challenged the DNC with a speech titled “Change: From What to What?” Jordan poignantly noted that whenever there was change it was important to evaluate what that change was all about. In particular, Jordan stated that the DNC needed to focus on changing “from what, to what.” Change for the sake of change is seldom good. But sometimes change is needed not because the past or present is bad or wrong, but because the past and present have been so successful that change is needed to keep moving forward. In fact, sometimes change indicates moving forward in order to maintain the excellence that has already taken place.

RCA has embraced many changes in the past few years. Our association with NCA has required us to change some of the ways we have done things over the years. Jordan’s question remains true for RCA – as we change, we need to ask “from what, to what?”

What are we changing from? We were established in 1973 as interfaith scholarly and professional organization that seeks to promote honest, respectful and profound dialogue which reflects the diversity of religious beliefs, subject matter concerns, methodologies, and professions of its members. We have become a solvent, sound, healthy professional organization.

Through the years we have experienced leadership from a variety of faiths and we have embraced ecumenical religious scholarship at our conventions and in our journal. We have provided a forum for scholars to explore research and engage in the professional convention process.

But as Bob Dylan would say “The times they are a changing.” Some of the changes that RCA has experienced that jump out at us are things such as submissions for our annual book/article/dissertation awards have increased significantly in the past several years making the awards process much more competitive. The NCA convention process has caused us to make some changes in our scholarship submission and selection process. The convention paper submission process has become much more competitive (not to mention *challenging* at times thanks to All Academic! ☺). As our number of panel slots has been reduced we have embraced the pre-convention conferences as a way to foster and cultivate scholarship. Electronic publishing is the wave of the future (for better or worse) and it has been necessary for us to embrace that forum from using EBSCO Host for our journal to electronic newsletters.

So the question remains, what has RCA changed to? Well, today, we are an interfaith scholarly and professional organization that seeks to promote honest, respectful and profound dialogue which reflects the diversity of religious beliefs, subject matter concerns, methodologies, and professions of its members. We engage in alternative forms and mediums that did not exist when we were first founded. We are a solvent, sound,

Special points of interest:

- Presidential Messages
- 2007 RCA Call
- Call for Awards
- San Antonio report

RCA Call

Chicago

Deadline

Feb 14th!

[www.natcom.org/
convention](http://www.natcom.org/convention)

Details on page 2

**RCA
Convention
Chicago
Call Deadline
Feb 14!**

healthy professional organization. We remain a close group of scholars and professionals dedicated to the study of communication in a religious context where someone like me can learn about scholarship and serve the organization in a professional manner. I wandered into RCA in 1984 a clueless graduate student. While I am still pretty clueless about many things today, my professional journey has been made brighter and stronger because of RCA.

In other words, we are still who we have always been.

The 2007 convention will bring a few more changes to “how things have always been done” but our mission will remain the same. Here are a few of the changes to watch for this year in Chicago. The Executive Committee voted in San Antonio to suspend the traditional second business meeting next year in favor of using that panel slot for more papers. Convention Planner Calvin Troup hopes to plan the first business meeting in the late afternoon early in the convention so we can have extended time for business matters.

The EC also voted to move the pre-conference to an every year event to allow more scholarship to be presented. On that note, I am pleased to announce that Dr. Ruth Anna Abigail from Azusa Pacific University has agreed to serve for the next two years as our “official” pre-conference planner. We hope to include the office of pre-conference planner as a regular Executive Committee position. Watch for upcoming information this spring from Ruth Anna regarding the pre-conference in Chicago.

Finally, since banquets have become so expensive, I am hoping to replace the banquet next year with a large president’s reception in the early evening (possibly immediately following the first business meeting) with heavy hors d’oeuvres and a special program.

As you can see, yes, there are changes going on in RCA but not at the expense of who we are. We are and will always remain a fellowship of ecumenical scholars dedicated to the study of religious communication and most importantly – we will always remain dedicated to each other.

Grace and Peace,

Kevin T. Jones

From the First Vice President . . . 2007 RCA CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

RCA Convention Planner: Calvin L. Troup, Department of Communication & Rhetorical Studies, Duquesne University, 600 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15282. (412) 396-6446. troup@duq.edu

The Religious Communication Association invites submissions for the 2007 NCA Convention, November 15-18, 2007, Chicago, Illinois.

Of particular interest are submissions that engage the NCA Convention Theme: “Communicating Worldviews: Faith—Intellect—Ethics.” The following types of submissions will be considered:

Competitive Papers: Individual papers submitted according to the NCA Call guidelines for review. Unless otherwise noted, all competitive papers will also be considered for NCA's "scholar-to-scholar" interactive sessions.

Thematic Panels: A group of panelists with titled presentations centered on a common theme.

Roundtables: A group of panelists who discuss a specific topic in a "seminar conversation" format.

DEADLINE: Wednesday, February 14, 2007

SUBMISSION PROCESS: All papers/panels must be submitted to RCA on-line via NCA's All Academic site. *Please note if your paper is a student paper (undergraduate or graduate) or a debut paper (first NCA submission) by checking the appropriate box on the All Academic submission form.*

NCA SUBMISSION LIMITS: Only one first-author paper/panel may be submitted per NCA unit (division or affiliated organization). No author may submit more than three papers/panels total.

RCA SCHOLARSHIP DIVISIONS: Clearly label all submitted documents with the division under which you would like the submission to be reviewed.

Mediated Communication: All forms of mediated communication (film, television, radio, etc.), public relations, advertising, and mass communication theory.*

Communication Studies: Interpersonal and organizational communication, communication theory, gender and cultural studies.*

Rhetorical Studies: Rhetorical theory and criticism, public address, and performance.*

**Submit curriculum and instruction papers or panels to the appropriate RCA division or directly to NCA as a GIFTS (Great Ideas For Teaching Speech) proposal. GIFTS is listed as an NCA division under the general NCA convention call for submissions.*

A/V EQUIPMENT: Requests must be made at the time of paper or panel submission and should be kept to a minimum—essential equipment only.

PROGRAM PLANNER: Calvin L. Troup, Department of Communication & Rhetorical Studies, Duquesne University, 600 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15282. (412) 396-6446 troupe@duq.edu

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From the Second Vice President . . .

2007 CALL FOR BOOK, ARTICLE & DISSERTATION AWARDS

The Religious Communication Association (RCA) is accepting nominations for its annual outstanding Book, Article, & Dissertation awards.

RCA Book Award: This award is granted for the outstanding scholarly book on religious communication published between 2005 and 2007. Nominators should send four copies of the book and a letter of nomination outlining the value of the book in its area of study. For consideration, please include a short synopsis of the book (3-5 pages).

RCA Article Award: This award is granted for an outstanding article on religious communication published during the previous (2006-2007) academic year. Nominators should send four copies of the article along with a 1-2 page letter of nomination outlining the significance of the article.

RCA Dissertation Award: This award is granted for an outstanding dissertation in religious communication completed during the two prior academic years. Eligible dissertations will have been completed during the period from May 1, 2005 to May 1, 2007.

1-2 page nominations may be made by the dissertation advisor or department chair. Nominees are asked to forward an electronic version (pdf or MS Word format) of the completed dissertation.

DEADLINE: Nominations and materials for all awards must be submitted by June 1, 2007.

Self nominations for all three awards will be accepted.

RECOGNITION: Winners will be recognized at the annual RCA meeting occurring in conjunction with NCA in San Antonio. Cash awards are presented in each category.

Send nominations and materials to:

Janie Harden Fritz, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Communication & Rhetorical Studies

Duquesne University

600 Forbes Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15282

412-396-6558

harden@duq.edu

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2006 CONVENTION IN SAN ANTONIO

RCA is pleased to announce the following leadership additions who were elected at the business meeting:

- Janie Harden Fritz of Duquesne University was elected 2nd Vice President
- Matt Althouse, State University of New York (SUNY) at Brockport, Councilor
- Ken Danielson, Executive Secretary, Kutztown University.

Congratulations to these leaders for their willingness to serve RCA!

2007 RCA CHICAGO PRE-CONFERENCE

Plan now to submit papers later this year for the RCA 2007 Pre-conference in Chicago. Dr. Ruth Anna Abigail from Azusa Pacific University will be serving as our pre-conference director and has some wonderful plans in the works. Watch for details and submission information which will be announced later this spring in the RCA listserve.

THE JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION AND RELIGION

welcomes your submissions. We publish high quality communication research that takes the intersection of religion and communication seriously. Please check out the RCA website for submission guidelines: www.americanrhetoric.com/rca/rcajournals/html

John Pauley, Saint Mary's College
108 Moreau Center for the Arts, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556-5001

Editor, *The Journal of Communication and Religion*, jpauley@saintmarys.edu

Also, be sure to encourage your institution's library to subscribe to our journal! It's a great deal at only \$50.00 per year for U.S. mailing and a great way to support RCA and the quality scholarship of its members and contributors. Make a point right now to contact your institution's library to check if they subscribe and if not, encourage them to do so. Have the library personnel contact Ken Danielson directly for more information.
danielso@kutztown.edu

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RCA MEMBERSHIPS: NEW AND RENEWALS

If you believe that *"insight into the communicative process is vital in understanding and practicing of religion (RCA Constitution),"* then RCA is the place for you.

You may access membership information at

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/rca/rcamembershipinfo.html>.

or please fill out this form and mail to

Ken Danielson,
RCA Executive Secretary,
Department of Speech Communication,
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania ,
Kutztown, Pennsylvania 19530
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danielso@kutztown.edu

JOIN THE LISTSERV ...

You may join the e-mail based listserv by sending a message to majordomo@calvin.edu with no subject line and the words "subscribe rca" in the message body text. (Don't include the quotation marks in the address or the message). You can unsubscribe by sending a message to majordomo@calvin.edu with the text unsubscribe rca in the message body. To post a message, simply address it to rca@calvin.edu.

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