

From the President

Janie Harden Fritz,
President,
Duquesne
University



The Religious Communication Association Pre-conference takes place Wednesday, Nov. 11 at the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies located directly across the street from Grant Park with beautiful views overlooking Lake Michigan at 610 S. Michigan, Chicago. Onsite registration is from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

First Vice President Robert Woods has planned exceptional programs for us at the

pre-conference and during the NCA conference that follows.

If you've not pre-registered for the pre-conference, you may register onsite. Executive Secretary Ken Danielson will also accept final Awards Banquet reservations at the pre-conference and as late as Friday at the RCA business meeting.

You may renew your membership or become a member at the pre-conference or RCA business meeting. Let us respect the kosher needs of the

Spertus Institute by not bringing in food from the outside. Food and beverage will be available in the center, and an RCA lunch is provided as part of your registration fee. Mid-afternoon snacks (around 3:30-4:30) and a reception/light supper (7:30-9:30) are also provided at the Spertus Institute as part of the pre-conference.

A tour of the Spertus Institute's museum collection has been arranged for RCA members on from 8:30-9:30 p.m.

Let's enjoy Chicago together!

RCA Gathers At Chicago's Spertus Institute for Jewish Studies

Robert Woods,
First Vice
President,
Spring Arbor
University



There are several exciting events happening for RCA at this year's convention.

First, our pre-conference takes place at the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies in downtown Chicago. By the time most of you read this, the pre-conference will be well under way. We have an excellent line-up of papers and panel discussions (you'll find them listed in the pre-conference program).

After our light supper is served, a tour of the Holocaust Museum/Galleries will be available for anyone who is interested. Please consider taking the tour. As the pre-conference schedule indicates, two of our sessions this year deal with Holocaust studies.

Also, our slate of RCA panels at the main convention (starting tomorrow, Thursday, Nov. 12, 8-a.m. in the Palmer House), includes

19 panels. Two panels are co-sponsored with the Organizational Communication Division.

This year RCA was awarded an additional NCA Spotlight Panel. This panel affords us an opportunity to highlight our scholarship and discuss the past, present, and future contributions of RCA to the field. RCA is represented on this panel by a distinguished line-up, including Clifford G. Christians, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; Quentin Schultze, Calvin College; Paul Soukup, Santa Clara University; Helen Sterk, Calvin College; and Ronald C. Arnett, Duquesne University.

You will find the schedule of all the RCA-sponsored panels on page three of this newsletter.

A special thanks to our program reviewers—more than 60 total!—who helped get this year's program ready for submission. You willingly accepted the call, and your reviews were prompt and thorough.

Finally, as I assume the

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Recognizing Scholarship

— RCA's Annual Awards Banquet —

Rodney A. Reynolds,
Second Vice President,
Azusa Pacific University



RCA's Annual Awards Banquet is scheduled in for Friday, Nov. 13 at 6:30 p.m. The banquet will take place at University Center, 525 South State Street (three and one-half blocks from the Hilton Chicago). Cost is \$25.00 for members (and student members) and \$45.00 for guests (nonmembers).

Book of the Year: Paul Marshall, Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute, Washington, D.C., Lela Gilbert, Associate Fellow, Hudson Institute, Washington, D.C., and Roberta Green-Ahmanson, Journalist, for *Blind Spot: When Journalists Don't Get Religion* (2009, Oxford University Press).
Article of the Year: James M. Farrell, Department of Communication,

University of New Hampshire, for "The Rhetoric(s) of St. Augustine's Confessions." *Augustinian Studies* 39:2 (2008) 265-291.

Dissertation of the Year: Brian T. Kaylor, James Madison University, for "I'm a Believer: Presidential Campaign Rhetoric in an Age of Confessional Politics," chaired by Mitchell S. McKinney, Department of Communication, University of Missouri-Columbia.

Student Paper of the Year: Pavica Sheldon, Louisiana State University, for "'Jesus' matters: Gender and Religiosity Impact on Forgiveness Behavior and Conflict Avoidance."

Scholar of the Year: Charles Taylor, Emeritus Professor, McGill University.

Walking Directions to Awards Banquet

From the Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave., to University Center, 525 S. State St.
 Approx. 0.4 mi – about 7 mins.

Head north on S. Michigan Ave. toward E. Balbo Ave.
 Turn left at E. Congress Pkwy. Take a slight left to stay on E. Congress Pkwy.
 University Center will be on the left.

From the Palmer House, 17 E. Monroe St., to University Center, 525 S. State St.
 Approx. 0.4 mi – about 8 mins.

Head west on E. Monroe St. toward S. State St.
 Turn left at S. State St.
 Turn left at E. Congress Pkwy. University Center will be on the right.

Statements

From Candidates for Second Vice President and for Councilor

I am honored to be a candidate for the Second Vice President of RCA. I am a life member of RCA and have been involved with the organization since the early 1990s. My participation began as an attendee and a panel participant, then expanded to chair, respondent, and reviewer. In recent years, I have sought out ways to become much more actively involved in the organization and have been able to serve the organization as the program planner for the Communication Studies Division (2008) and as a reviewer for the "Article of the Year" award (2009).

**Kathleen M. Edelmayer,
Ph.D. (Wayne State)**

Candidate for 2nd Vice President

Associate Professor of
Communication
Madonna University
Livonia, Michigan

Since receiving my Ph.D. from Wayne State University and my M.A. from Central Michigan University, I served as Director of Debate at Illinois State University, Assistant Director of Forensics at St. Olaf College, and I taught at Albion College. I am an Associate Professor of Communication at Madonna University in suburban Detroit, where I direct the undergraduate program in Interdisciplinary Studies and the Master's program in Liberal Studies. Madonna is a Catholic, Franciscan university, founded and operated by the Felician Sisters. One of our principles at Madonna is to provide "education for truth and service." This phrase reflects well on what we do as a university and what RCA does as an organization.

First, "education for truth." Not only does RCA provide a scholarly home for those of us interested in examining and

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There is increasing interest and openness within academic institutions and organizations, as well as in larger society, in religion, witnessed by this year's RCA book award winner, *Blind Spot*, as well as current multi-volume works in progress such as the *Oxford Handbook of Religion and the News*, and *Evangelicals and Popular Culture*, and numerous articles in news magazines and other publications.

**Denise P. Ferguson,
Ph.D. (Purdue)**

Candidate for 2nd Vice President

Associate Professor of
Communication/Division Chair
Indiana Wesleyan University
Marion, Indiana

RCA's mission is the study of public religious communication in all forms and through changing media formats. Guided by the mission, I would like to extend our study and "honest, respectful, and profound dialogue" (per the RCA mission statement) to broad audiences nationally and abroad, engaging in issues related to religion (construed broadly and diversely) and its relevance to and impact on society and world events.

Based on my experience on NCA's Legislative Assembly when Chair of the Public Relations Division 2008-2009, NCA seems to be grappling with the issue of its identity, e.g., whether it is within the organization's mission to take positions on social and legislative issues, and if so, which issues and positions. As this has direct relevance to RCA and its members, I would like to engage these types of discussions and how the RCA mission informs them.

My association with RCA began while a graduate student at Purdue University, and has continued while a faculty member at Pepperdine University and, for the past five years, at Indiana Wesleyan University. My research has been presented through RCA competitive paper sessions and

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I am motivated to serve the Religious Communication Association because of the kind of support it offers to scholars like me, and because of the kind of scholarship it supports—both of which are very important and, unfortunately, fairly rare. I have benefited greatly from the Association and want to give back.

I first discovered RCA right as I was finishing my Ph.D. and looking for ways to publish my work and build my research program. All through graduate

school I labored under a cloud of perceived disapproval for my faith and for my interest in pursuing faith-informed scholarship, and I as-

sumed that pursuing my research program would be walking a lonely road. In RCA I found a

**Mark Allan Steiner,
Ph.D. (Indiana)**
Candidate for Councilor

Assistant Professor of
Communication Studies
Christopher Newport University
Newport News, Virginia.

kindred spirit of folks who are not only walking this road with me, but are also interested in building and maintaining a vibrant community so that we walk this road together.

I am also thankful for RCA because it takes seriously

George Marsden's call to engage in faith-informed scholarship that not only does justice to the faith traditions it represents, but also offers unique contributions to the academic "conversations" that are broadly appealing, provocative, and heuristic.

RCA has helped me to develop my own craft of scholarship, and by serving the Association I hope to help other scholars studying religious discourse in all its forms to develop theirs.

Religious Communication Sessions at NCA 2009

Titles of papers and names of participants are in the print edition of the NCA Program.
Participants who are not listed in the NCA Program are noted below by an asterisk.

Thursday, November 12

8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

New Questions, New Vistas in

International Communications Research"

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Salon 1

* Add Hala Guta as co-presenter, with Haydar Sadig, "Peace communication in Sudan."

* Add Clifford Christians, "The Tao and Peace Communications in Asia and Beyond."

* Add Robert Fortner, "Doing impact research among the world's rural poor."

* Add Levi Obonyo and Mitchell Terpstra as co-presenters with Mark Fackler, "Post-Election Violence."

12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

C. S. Lewis's Rhetorical Depictions of Scientism

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Salon 7

2:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Exploring the Confluences of Religion and Contemporary American Politics

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Salon 7

3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Theological Stability and Social Change: Examining Catholic Alternatives to Secular Social Discourse

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Kimball Room

Friday, November 13

8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

Let "Us" Pray: Rhetoric, Religion, and the 2009 Presidential Inauguration (Panel Discussion)

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Logan Room

The Religious Communication Association Five Years Out Panel: Contributions to Scholarship and Human Community

Unit: Five Years Out Programs

Place: Hilton Chicago, Continental Ballroom B

9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

That's the Spirit: Motivation and Spirituality in the Workplace (co-sponsored by RCA and Organizational Communication Division)

Place: Hilton Chicago, Meeting Room 4C

2:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Religious Communication Association

Business Meeting

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Wabash Room

Secular and Sacred: Communication and Organizing in Religious Organizations (co-sponsored by RCA and Organizational Communication Division)

Place: Hilton Chicago, Meeting Room 4C

3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Religious Politics in an Age of Consumerism and Commercial Media: Competing Discourses

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Wabash Room

5:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Redefining Religious Theology and Practice in a Sea of Social Change: Strategies of Inclusion and Exclusion (Panel Discussion)

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Indiana Room

Saturday, November 14

8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

Possibility and Permanency: The Resources of Ritual for Liturgy and Mission

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Salon 7

9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

Professional Christian Communication: Implications for Pedagogy and Practice (Panel Discussion)

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Kimball Room

11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Religion, Politics, and Tolerance in the Public Square: Diverse Approaches to a Critical Issue

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Kimball Room

2:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

"Divided by Faith... Race & Gender": Roundtable Panel on Underdeveloped Areas of Religious Communication Studies (Panel Discussion)

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Kimball Room

3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Discourses of Stability and Change for the Religiously Dedicated

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Kimball Room

Sunday, November 15

8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

A Discourse on the Upcoming Handbook of Communication and Religion (Panel Discussion)

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Indiana Room

The More Things Change: Negotiating Conflict and Change in American Evangelical Rhetoric

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Salon 7

11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

De-stabilizing perspectives: Exploring discourses with the power to change religious narratives

Place: Palmer House Hilton, Salon 7

Has Your RCA Membership Expired?

Ken Danielson,
Executive Secretary,
Kutztown University

Be sure to renew your membership. The fee structure is posted below and explained at our website <http://americanrhetoric.com/rca>.

If you are in doubt about your membership's expiration date, take a look at the mailing label

on the latest copy of the *Journal of Communication and Religion*. Your membership expiration date (month/year) appears next to your name.

Still in doubt? Send me an email at danielso@kutztown.edu. Or see me at the convention.

The Current Membership Fee Structure (International Memberships add \$10.00 per

category) follows:

- Regular (\$25)
- Institutional (\$50)
- Emeritus
- Student (\$12.50)
- Sustaining (\$45)
- Life (\$250 once – a great deal!)

Membership forms will be available at the pre-conference, awards banquet, and business meeting.

Note to the Membership

The Executive Council has nominated Ken Danielson for approval as Executive Secretary by the RCA membership. The Executive Secretary normally serves for a three-year term. In this case, however, Ken has agreed to serve for one additional year beyond his current term. This has the advantage of staggering the terms for Executive Secretary and JCR Editor so that both are not new to their jobs in the same year, and can thus lean upon one another's wisdom. Ken plans to resign his post at the end of next year, at which time the Executive Council would be responsible to present a nominee of Executive Secretary who will serve a three year term. The Executive Council is grateful to Ken for this good idea and his continuing willingness to serve RCA.

Kathleen M. Edelmayer, Continued from Page 2

understanding religious communication, it also seeks to develop and sustain vibrancy within our academic community. Personally, as one who teaches at a smaller college with very few opportunities to interact with colleagues in my field, our conferences serve as an opportunity to connect, recharge, and collaborate. Yet whether our institutions are small college or R-1, private or public; whether we are newly appointed assistant professors or emeriti professors; undergraduate or graduate students; RCA provides opportunities and support to interact and collaborate in ways that truly embody a "community of scholars." This community of scholars educates us for truth as we strive to improve our scholarship, engage the broader community, and enhance understanding and effectiveness of religious communication.

Second, "education for service." I believe that giving back to community is fundamental. I have gained so much from those who have served before me, I would like to have this opportunity to serve the RCA community in return. I would like to see RCA embrace the various gifts its members have to offer and continue to identify ways in which more members can serve the organization.

I am thrilled to be part of RCA and I am excited to have this opportunity to serve the RCA community and continue its rich tradition of providing community for scholars.

Denise P. Ferguson, Continued from Page 2

panel discussions, and this year I served on the Book of the Year Award Committee. Other academic leadership experience includes serving as Chair, Vice Chair and Program Planner, Secretary, and PRIDE Book and Article of the Year Award Committee for the Public Relations Division, paper reviewer of the Organizational Communication Division, and appointed member of the Commission on Public Relations Education, comprised of leaders in international academic and professional public relations organizations.

My leadership responsibilities for the Public Relations Division will cease with this fall's conference, and both my research and academic service are concentrated in explicitly faith-related domains. I would be pleased to employ my experience in RCA and NCA and my ongoing faith-related research and involvement in broad religious works (book chapters in the *Oxford Handbook of Religion and the News* and *Evangelicals and Popular Culture*) in support of RCA's mission.

Robert Woods, Welcome to RCA Continued from Page 1

Presidency this year, I am humbly aware of our faithful membership and dedicated officers—both present and past—who represent RCA with such grace and passion. I'm excited to carry forward RCA's mission and an exciting agenda which includes, as Janie mentions, promoting RCA's scholarship and increasing its visibility within the National Communication Association and the wider academic community. I'm thankful for the opportunity to serve you.

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