

RCA NEWSLETTER

A Newsletter of the Religious Communication Association

Fall 2003 (1:2)

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NCA CONVENTION
IN MIAMI

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FROM THE PRESIDENT ...

I am looking forward to seeing you in Miami! This year, I'm personally considering something radical: venturing outside the convention hotel for a stroll on the beach—an experience that, in November, is certain to reduce an Iowan to awe. I'd invite you with me, but going out may make it difficult to come back in! However, I am confident that the draw of RCA's program should serve as a sufficient magnet:

1. A full range of panels of traditional RCA quality
2. The first RCA business meeting, where we will update you on the status of RCA, and vote on new officers and amendments to the bylaws.
3. The second RCA business meeting, where we make plans for the following years convention
4. The Saturday night banquet, where you'll learn the recipients of this year's RCA awards, hear an intriguing speaker, and enjoy good food and fellowship
5. Threading through it all, of course, are the multitude of networking opportunities: as you catch up on the lives, research, and teaching of old friends, and initiate new ones.

As you can see, we're doing all we can to make the time a success, and all we need now is one element: **you!**

BANQUET: Celebrate the 30th anniversary of the RCA with a banquet on **Saturday, November 22 at 7:00 pm** at the Sheraton Four Points. It's only a short walk from the convention headquarter hotel, the Fountainebleau (if you are at the Wyndham or another hotel you may have to "suffer" getting slightly more exercise!) The banquet will be held in the Onassis room on the 4th floor.

Reserve now for this traditional RCA event: with an advance reservation at a cost of \$25.00, you can be certain to get your seat. **Mail your checks, care of "RCA" to Becky Johns by November 12** (only a limited number of tickets will be available "at the door," so reserve now).

The program this year will have three highlights: (1) the announcement of the 2003 RCA Scholarship award, as well as the awards for best article, book, and dissertation; (2) nationally known scholar John Angus Campbell and (3) most importantly, the friendly conversation and networking that always characterizes the RCA banquet, as we catch up on each other's past year, and encourage future endeavors.

Best,
Dave Klope, President Religious Communication Association

**SEND IN YOUR
BANQUET
RESERVATION
NOW! See
enclosed card**

**ABOUT THE
BANQUET
SPEAKER:**

John Angus Campbell is professor of rhetoric at the University of Memphis. He is best known for his award-winning scholarship on the rhetoric of Charles Darwin, careful and detailed work that has influenced scholarship in a number of fields. John's work has also been concerned with the role of religious speech in public life, especially as this concerns the issue of science education on origins. More broadly, he has been a gentle but persistent voice for reason in our field, and a tireless advocate of the time honored and humane traditions of rhetorical education.

REACHING OUT/REACHING IN IN MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA!

With a theme like that, one might assume the NCA/RCA convention will be hosted in part by the pool or on the beach. Perhaps that will be true for you, but be careful that you don't miss the thoughtful presentations of your colleagues.

Enclosed with this newsletter you'll find the list of programs for this November 2003 Convention. Note the diverse interests within our organization and the range of scholarly approaches to this year's theme.

When Isa Engleberg described "Reaching Out/Reaching In," she hoped we'd build connections to those outside of the discipline of Communication and inside across interest divides. I believe the Religious Communication Association has consistently demonstrated this theme in its diverse topics and in working hard to co-sponsor panels. Although I can't discuss all of the papers and panels, allow me to suggest how a few of them illustrate my point.

Last year we began a discussion that brought in leading communication scholars from other areas of NCA to explore how their religious commitments informed their scholarship. This year the Theory division, building on Cliff Christian's banquet address, continues and extends the discussion with a roundtable on Normative/Theistic Pluralism—an obvious engagement with the theme. They also contribute other examples through panels on dialogic philosophy and constitutive rhetoric. Other thematic contributions include intersections with popular culture from the Mass Media division in panels on film, and in particular, on *The Matrix* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Public Address extends the reaching out through examinations of diverse religious traditions from Herzl to contemporary expressions to historically significant preachers. The Interpersonal and Organizational division examines public relations, the internet, concepts of forgiveness, identity, and altruism. Look for an intriguing panel from Performance Studies reflecting the breadth of uses for performance. Gender and Cultural Studies explores the impact of race and gender in leadership.

This year's panels offer something for everyone and challenges for all of us. We were given 27 slots (including our business meetings). We have 31 time slots scheduled! With co-sponsored panels, a little begging, and a little pestering, Isa Engleberg and Donna Porter graciously gave us one more . . . and one more . . . and . . . You get the picture. RCA is one of the largest organizations associated with NCA and NCA has been supportive in giving us a lot of time. Note that approximately 150 people are involved in the presentations. Another addition this year, is the identification of the division within RCA—a function of the electronic submission. Finally, thank you to all who submitted and were not accepted or were accepted in the initial phase but may have been ranked lower. We could not accept everything or schedule all of the submissions and recognize that there were high quality papers that didn't get in—this time.

Explore the offerings, support your colleagues, enjoy the opportunities. See you in Miami Beach!

Annalee Ward, RCA 1st Vice President

JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION AND RELIGION: TRANSITIONS

As outgoing editor, I would like to thank those who made this job the most rewarding scholarly experience of my life. The list is too long for individual names, but includes associate editors, editorial assistants, readers, RCA executive board members, the membership/readership and of course, especially, the authors who make the journal, well, the journal. I must also ask the forgiveness of those for whom my work was overly harsh or unaccountably slow. To adapt a recent book title: Journal editing is not a game of perfect.

Events in our world continue to make clear the importance of understanding the various ways that religion and communication intersect. I very much doubt that speech and communication scholars could pick a subject area with greater importance for our culture, our world, and our lives. I am intensely grateful for the opportunity to witness and facilitate the development of significant scholarly research in these areas.

I offer strong thoughts, prayers, best wishes, and silent meditations to my RCA friends and colleagues. Thank you for your help and for causing me to have good reasons to feel wanted, needed, appreciated, and loved. I am humbled by your contributions to my being.

Peace

Ed Lamoureux, Out-going Editor, Journal of Communication and Religion

Helen Sterk, Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences at Calvin College, begins a three year term as the editor of The Journal of Communication and Religion on January 1, 2004. New submissions are to be sent to her.

I would like to thank Edward Lamoureux for his fine leadership as editor of *JCR*. Under his guidance, *JCR* published a variety of solid articles on communication and religion, took on a more professional look, was listed in more indexes, and was made available on-line. These significant accomplishments have increased the visibility of the Religious Communication Association, as well as the journal. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Professor Lamoureux.

Scholars, new and established, are encouraged to submit articles to *The Journal of Communication and Religion*. Here are the guidelines: *The Journal of Communication and Religion* publishes original articles that advance theory and research about communication in religious contexts. Outstanding articles will use rigorous theory and methodology to develop insightful arguments that will further knowledge, understanding, and care about the intersections of communication and religion. The journal accepts articles dealing with communication within the purview of any religion.

Manuscripts should show strong scholarship, exemplary in its research type (either quantitative or qualitative). Writing should be clear, aesthetically pleasing, and effective. Its style should be gender sensitive. At best, articles will contribute to the stock of knowledge in communication and religion, offering insights that can lead to positive religious, social, and cultural change. Any suggestions for revision will keep issues of argument, style, and contribution to the area of communication and religion in mind.

Please submit articles as Word attachments to an email addressed to hsterk@calvin.edu. Two files should be sent. One should be a cover letter to the editor, with all of the author's contact information. The second should be the abstract and the manuscript itself, with nothing on it that identifies the author. Article formatting and citation should conform to the most current MLA standards.

If you have ideas for book reviews, please send them to Dr. Ronald Arnett, *The Journal of Communication and Religion's* book editor. His email address is: arnett@duq.edu.

Thank you, Helen Sterk
Editor of *The Journal of Communication and Religion*

SLATE OF CANDIDATES

I am pleased to announce the slate of candidates to be voted on by the membership at the 2003 Miami convention. Each of these individuals brings distinctive ability, a strong academic record, and a commitment to our organization. Below find a brief bio of each nominee.

Ron Arnett
Immediate Past President

2nd Vice President (2 nominees; vote for one)

Sr. Mary Ann Flannery, VSC, Ph.D. Associate Professor in the Department of Communications at John Carroll University, researches and teaches rhetorical theory and journalism. In July of 1999, she was appointed department chair. She earned her B.A. from Siena Heights College in Michigan, and both her M.A. and Ph.D. from Kent State University. Sister Flannery has taught all levels of education, from elementary school through university. She is also a freelance journalist whose articles have been published in magazines and newspapers. Her interests are in Critical Theory of Communication, and in advocacy, especially for the oppressed of the Third World. She has made several fact-finding trips to El Salvador in order to write and speak on behalf of conditions there. She is also a consultant for parishes and religious organizations in the Cleveland Catholic Diocese.

Paul Soukup, S.J has explored the connections between communication and theology since 1982. His publications include *Communication and Theology* (WACC 1983); *Christian Communication: A Bibliographical Survey* (Greenwood 1989), *Mass Media and the Moral Imagination* with Philip J. Rossi (Sheed and Ward 1994), and *Fidelity and Translation* with Robert Hodgson (Sheed and Ward, 1999). In addition, he and Thomas J. Farrell have edited four volumes of the collected works of Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Faith and Contexts* (Scholars Press 1992-1999). This later work has led him to examine more closely how orality-literacy studies can contribute to an understanding of theological expression. A graduate of the University of Texas at Austin (Ph.D., 1985), Soukup teaches in the Communication Department at Santa Clara University and works as an associate pastor at St. Joseph of Cupertino Catholic Church. Paul has been a member of the Religious Communication Association since the mid-1980s, and has served as a reader on the editorial committee for the *Journal of Communication and Religion* with the previous three editors.

Councilor (2 nominees; vote for one)

John Gribas is an Associate Professor of Speech Communication at Idaho State University where he serves as Departmental Academic Internship Coordinator, Program Assessment Coordinator, and web master. He earned his Ph.D. in Organizational and Group Communication from the University of Kansas in 1993. He has been involved with the Religious Communication Association since 1998, having organized a number of conference panels focused on the integration of academic work and religious faith. He also has been along time member of NCA and has served as an interest group officer in both CSCA and WSCA. His research has focused on implications of the team concept as a metaphor for organized action, and he is preparing for an extensive investigation into metaphors of collective action in contemporary Christian church development literature. As an extension of his work as a faculty member, John has served as a consultant and trainer for a variety of organizations including hi-tech production companies, advertising firms, military and educational government agencies, as well as not-for-profit organizations such as mental health clinics, community theatres, and churches.

S. Alyssa Groom is an Instructor in the Department of Communication & Rhetorical Studies at Duquesne University. Her research and teaching focus on connecting the rhetoric and philosophy of integrated marketing communication to practical application in the marketplace, with a secondary emphasis in religious communication. In both areas she seeks to develop the connections and implications related to communication ethics, especially issues of responsibility and accountability in public discourse. Alyssa serves as the Director of the Department of Communication & Rhetorical Studies Graduate Residency Program, the Assistant Director of the Master's Program, and is the Advisor to the American Advertising Federation college chapter at Duquesne. Alyssa is a Ph.D. candidate in the program and is writing her dissertation on marketing communication. She has been an active member of the Religious Communication Association for three years, serving as an assistant to Dr. Ronald C. Arnett since his election as RCA's Second Vice President, as well as participating as a reader and upcoming panel chair for this year's NCA convention.

NCA ENTERS VIRTUALITY

As you're all aware the submission process is changing. NCA is moving to an all-electronic process. This year RCA decided to ask for hard copy of papers as well. We did this to ensure that your division chair would not have to eat the cost and time of printing up each submission as well as to head off any electronic glitches. We'll be evaluating the process in November to determine next year's policy.

The process was full of difficulties and disappointments for your division chairs and for me. Missing information, information incorrectly submitted, and a set-up that left the RCA division structure out in the cold, all contributed to the problems. RCA is the only NCA association organized in a division structure. It's meant All-Academic has had to design new pages just for us. Of course it probably took two months for us to identify that that was half the problem. I believe next year should run more smoothly. Do know that you'll have to submit your whole paper or panel proposal to NCA on-line next year (whether or not we ask for paper submissions) and the division chairs will have access to them through NCA. Tom Lessl will be heading up the program planning and will be answering your questions, but I will also be available.

Thank you Division Chairs and Reviewers!

Your division chairs are the unsung heroes in the submission process. Working with limited or faulty information, they had to process and keep track of multiple submissions, get reviewers, respond to my pleas to use the on-line forms, face the frustrations of the system not working, track down missing information, rank the panels and do it all within the deadline. I could not have pulled this together without them! Please thank them when you see them:

Curriculum and Instruction: Tom Kuster

Gender and Cultural Studies: Maria A Williams-Hawkins

Interpersonal and Organizational: Paul Lakey

Mass Media and Media Forum: Skip Rutledge

Performance Studies: Marcia Berry

Public Address: Matthew T. Althouse

Theory: Benson Fraser

Business Meetings

Don't forget about the importance of attending the business meetings. If you're new to RCA, it's a great time to meet other members and to have a voice in the direction of the organization. In our first meeting we typically hold elections, catch up on issues that have arisen during the previous year, and raise issues for the next year. The second business meeting is a key opportunity to brainstorm ideas for the next convention (in Chicago), to meet your division chair, and to network with others for possible panels.

Annalee Ward, 1st Vice President

**Plan now to attend
the BUSINESS**

MTGS:

Friday, 11/21

3:30 – 4:45 pm and

Saturday, 11/22,

12:30-1:45 pm

Both in Miramar

North, Mezzanine

Level, Wyndham