

From the President

Memory.

If that word does not call to mind some peculiar technological measurement on one of our devices — if we connect it to the *human* at all — then it probably references our ability to conjure up a bit of data: a cousin's phone number, or (in Convention Season, especially), a colleague's name. If not data recall, the word *memory* will likely mean some glance back toward a sepia past.

But for the Classical World, memory had a different implication. They thought of memory not as casting the mind back to events now gone, but rather of bringing the reality of those events into the present

moment. Memory was an act of magic, conjuring up an essential reality that had slipped away so that it became genuinely real again, in this moment, and could *inform* us, *form* our *inner* life. To remember was to give permission for the past to shape and direct the present. It was, as G. K. Chesterton once observed, the ultimate expression of democracy. Memory makes real what has passed from the present so that this present might become more real, more nuanced. Hence Aristotle's observation that the young were not to be trusted, because they had so few *memories*.

This is a convention of memories. A century of NCA; four decades of RCA. We cheat ourselves if we treat it as

nostalgia. We revel in hubris if we ignore the opportunity. Ideally, we will remember why memory is given to us: it is our best guide toward our best future.

Believe me when I say: I hope Chicago 2014 will be a memorable celebration of our scholarship.

Mark A. E. Williams
California State University, Sacramento

In this Issue

Candidate Statements	2-3
Preconference Registration & Membership Renewal Form	4
Executive Council Information	5

2014 Awards Banquet Sponsored by Spring Arbor University

Be sure to join us for the banquet Friday night in Chicago. The speakers will be introduced by Dr. Wally Metts, director of graduate studies in communication at Spring Arbor University. The graduate program is entirely online and is celebrating its 10th year. Dr. Quentin Schultz will speak briefly about his understanding and appreciation for online learning based on his experience with the program.

Dr. Paul Patton will then provide a dramatic recitation of influential insights through the history of communication and media. The "guests" he will bring to the podium include Plato, Virgil, Origin, Augustine, William James, Boorstin, Postman, and Merton. Dr. Patton, a much sought after speaker, is chair of the department of communication at Spring Arbor. He founded the Trinity House Theater and has authored over 30 produced plays and performance essays. His research interests include the cult of celebrity and religious manipulation of languages. He is the co-author, with Dr. Robert Woods, of *Prophetically Incorrect: A Christian Introduction to Media Criticism*.

Spring Arbor is also hosting a free brunch for alumni and friends on Saturday morning. Please contact Dr. Metts (wmetts@arbor.edu) for details.

2014 RCA Award Winners

Top Student

Paper: **Mark Nagle** (Indiana University)

"Visualizing Darwin: Iconic Portraiture and an Evangelical Optic"

Dissertation of the Year:

Joel Ward (Bethel University):

"Authority and Personality in M.M. Bakhtin's 'Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity.'" Defended 2013, Duquesne University, Dissertation Committee Chair:

Calvin L. Troup.

Article of the Year:

Mark L. Ward, Sr. (University of Houston-Victoria): "Give the winds a mighty voice: Evangelical culture as radio ecology."

Journal of Radio and Audio Media, 21(1), 115-133.

Book of the Year:

Walter Brueggemann (Columbia Theological Seminary): *Reality, Grief, Hope: Three Urgent Prophetic Tasks*

Scholar of the Year:

Thomas Lessl (University of Georgia)

Statements From Candidates for Second Vice President

I am very grateful for the nomination for the post of 2nd Vice President of the Religious Communication Association and for the chance to serve at a new level an organization that has served me in so many ways.

My first interactions with RCA took place about 15 years ago, when I was finishing my graduate work and starting out as a full-time faculty member. Throughout my graduate work I genuinely struggled to figure out how to connect my religious faith with the academic vocation for which I was preparing. I struggled with how to make sense of the academic life as a “calling” in the fullest sense in the academic culture we inhabit, and how to do what George Marsden has called “faith-informed” scholarship in that culture. I found in RCA a “safe space” and a kindred community of scholars. In RCA I was able not only to co-think with others what that kind of scholarship looks like in the field of communication, but also to receive real encouragement that this work could be done, done well, and done to the glory of God. At the risk of sounding overdramatic, RCA was a lifeline for me as a young academic.

Over the years, I’ve felt a large measure of pride and ownership in RCA. I’ve watched the quality and reach of our scholarship increase dramatically, without sacrificing the nurturing community that helped to sustain me as a young academic and continues to contribute to my own flourishing. I’ve also been fortunate over the years to be able to serve RCA as a councilor, as a recurring panel respondent, as a recurring reviewer for submissions and awards, and as a division co-chair. Along the way, I’ve made friends, enjoyed intellectual stimulation, been invited into academic projects and collaborations, been recognized for my scholarly contributions, and been empowered to hone the craft and calling of being a

faith-informed academic—all at a level I scarcely thought possible when I began my journey into the academic world.

Serving in the leadership of RCA means doing a lot of hidden and unglamorous—yet very important—work, and this is work I would be honored to do and am emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually invested in doing. Serving in the leadership of RCA also means maintaining and further advancing the multidimensional and in some ways challenging vision for the organization: promoting quality scholarship in communication and religion in its diverse forms while maintaining a distinct academic identity; respecting, honoring, and inviting a diversity of faith traditions while also maintaining a distinct intellectual home for those religious voices not well represented in the academy at large; and adapting our work and scholarship productively to outside communities and the academy at large, while also maintaining a distinct and vibrant “safe space” for faith-informed scholars and scholarship. I’m very thankful for those of you that have been faithful in nurturing and advancing this vision over the years, and I covet the opportunity to work at continuing this tradition of good and faithful service.



Mark Steiner
*Christopher Newport
University*

Thanks so much for this opportunity and for your consideration.



Sean Connable
*Christopher Newport
University*

I am thankful for and humbled by the nomination for 2nd Vice President of the Religious Communication Association.

Many of the memories I have of NCA begin with this organization and the people who have made it a home. I will be forever grateful for the kind and honest feedback and critiques, the insightful conversations, the welcoming community and how it has contributed to my personally, as well as professionally. It is this very spirit of community, and my desire to contribute to it in a meaningful way, that leads me to accept this nomination. I harbor no illusions regarding nature of offices such as these, and freely commit to working to continue to grow this organization in whatever capacity I am able.

There are aspects of this community that I hope to focus on if I am fortunate enough to be chosen for this role. I want to continue growing our community of scholars by fostering a safe environment for faith informed scholarship, while also looking toward creating an even greater sense of inclusivity and acceptance of various religious voices as well as dissenting voices who speak to some of the challenges faced by religious communication. In addition to a place where faith informed scholarship is upheld and protected, I also hope to see this organization become a place where open dialogue is encouraged, fostered, and actively sought.

I have been a member of RCA for several years now, and while I may not have the wealth of experience of some of my colleagues, I hope that my passion for dialogic engagement might aid in continuing to shape this organization into one that explores the intellectual, cultural, and philosophical richness of our field.

RCA is my home, and I relish the opportunity to join you in Chicago. I thank you again for your nomination and the opportunity to serve. I am excited most of all about the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues in continuing to build upon our strong foundation as friends, scholars, and people of faith. Thank you again for this opportunity.

Statements From Candidates for Councilor



Teresa Morales
Cameron University

Being grateful for the nomination of First-year Councilor is no small offering. Attending RCA pre-conferences has been a truly enlightening and gracious annual practice that has supported me both intellectually and, quite honestly, emotionally. Going through the secular process of education can suck the soul out of one's life, and there were times that I felt lonely in my earnest and fervent desire to understand not only religious rhetoric, but also to admittedly practice my faith while doing so. I gladly and proudly offer my time and loyalty to those who desire and feel the same.

I cannot claim to have accomplished so much academic publishing just yet in my career, as it is only in its second year; however, with the continued participation in and support of my fellow RCA members, I am certain this will soon happen. Meanwhile, I have chosen to present my work to RCA and to dedicate my professional efforts toward enhancing the research of religious communication scholars in the Communication Academy.

Having recently graduated in 2013 from Georgia State University, and having my dissertation (*The Last Stone is Just the Beginning: A Rhetorical Biography of Washington National Cathedral*) directed by Dr. James Darsey, I now work in the heartland of America at Cameron University in Lawton, OK as Assistant Professor of Communication. My research is currently dedicated to better understanding how Washington National Cathedral acts as a religious agent in an otherwise secular nation. I am honored and I look forward to serving the organization that has served me so well these past six years.

I am honored to have been invited to place my name in nomination for Councilor to RCA.

As a communication educator at a church-affiliated, liberal arts university, my life work is to provide students with the best education they can acquire in the communication discipline, and more specifically to help them view the world through the critical lens of communication. I would welcome the opportunity to serve RCA in this position to continue the organization's mission of promoting the value of studying religious communication, especially in the highly mediated and rapidly changing communication environment we live in. I believe my leadership experience, scholarly activity, and pedagogical experience qualifies for me this position.

Leadership: I am currently a full professor at Howard Payne University, a Baptist liberal arts institution, in Brownwood, Texas. I hold several significant leadership positions at HPU: I serve as department chair of the Department of Communication. I am in my second year of service as the President of our Faculty Assembly, HPU's governing body for the faculty. I also sit on the President's Development Council and have served on numerous university committees.

Scholarly activity: My scholarly activity has included both panel presentations and paper presentations at NCA. I have specific interests in the intersection of faith and women's roles, family communication, and the role of faith in argumentation. Most recently though, my work has revolved around moving our speech and debate team into the next level of competition and traveling substantially with the team both nationally and internationally. I also serve as treasurer of the

National Christian College Forensics Association.

My pedagogical experience includes 17 years of teaching at colleges of all sizes. I have been on the faculty at HPU for 15 years. I personally love teaching at the small, private, liberal arts institution, where the university is proud of its Christian heritage and practice. I have taught a range of courses, including: Fundamentals of Human Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Nonverbal Communication, Rhetorical Criticism, Argumentation and Debate, Communication Theories, Intercultural Communication, Public Relations Strategies, Public Relations Campaigns, Gender Communication, Leadership Communication, Sport Communication, Business and Professional Communication, and other special studies courses. I am currently planning a study abroad trip for communication majors to Italy and Greece.

I hold degrees from Howard Payne University (B.S. 1994), Texas State University (M.A. 1996) and Regent University (Ph.D. 2006).

I have been affiliated with RCA since 1998 during my time as a student at Regent University. I am grateful for the nomination and would be honored to serve as a Councilor.



Julie Welker
Howard Payne U.

2014 Preconference & Banquet Registration Form

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name _____
Institutional Affiliation _____
Mailing Address _____
Cell Phone _____ Other Phone _____
Email _____

1. RCA Preconference: RCA Turns 40!

Date and Time: **Wednesday November 19th, 10:00am until 9:00pm** (Registration is from 8:30am – 4:30pm)
Location: **University of Illinois at Chicago**, 1200 W Harrison St, Chicago, IL 60607. Our conference is located in the Student Center West.
Included: Lunch, light refreshments throughout the day, and an evening reception from 7:00pm-9:00pm with heavy refreshments. Dinner will be on your own with dining options available in the building.
Payment (circle or highlight): Student \$50 RCA Member \$60 Non-member \$75

2. RCA Awards Banquet: RCA Turns 40! Including award winners, special guests, and the RCA Scholar of the Year

Date and Time: **Friday November 21, 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm**
Location: The Gage, 24 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603
Buffet dinner to include mixed greens salad, classic Caesar salad, roast turkey and beef tenderloin carving stations, grilled market vegetables, mashed potatoes, chef's selection of small bites desserts, soda, coffee, and tea.
Payment (circle or highlight): Student \$40 RCA Member \$60 Non-member \$75

3. RCA Membership

Please renew your membership at this time. Membership benefits include voting privileges, reduced prices to RCA events, including the preconference and banquet, and a subscription to the *Journal of Communication and Religion*. Email Janie Harden Fritz, RCA Executive Director, at harden@duq.edu for further information about membership.

Payment (circle or highlight): Student \$25 RCA Member \$50 Life \$500

Total amounts from sections 1, 2, and 3 and choose a payment method. Thank you!

Print completed form and mail with check payable to:

Religious Communication Association
c/o Kristen Lynn Majocha, PhD
RCA Vice President
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
450 Schoolhouse Road
Johnstown, PA 15904

Email completed form to Kristen Majocha at klynn@pitt.edu and remit payment to the Religious Communication Association by

- Visit <http://www.relcomm.org/> and click on the "DONATE" button.
- Enter your total due on PayPal.
- Note in the "Special Remarks/Note to Seller" each item that you are paying for (preconference, banquet, membership)

Send your story ideas, announcements, and tips for the next newsletter to:

Celeste Grayson Seymour, Ph.D.
Western Governors University
celeste.seymour@wgu.edu



ONLINE. ACCELERATED. AFFORDABLE. ACCREDITED.

Executive Council of the Religious Communication Association

President:
Mark A. E. Williams
California State University
Sacramento
Sacramento, CA
MWilliams@csus.edu

Immediate Past President:
J. Matthew Melton
Lee University
Cleveland, TN
mmelton@leeuniversity.edu

1st Vice President:
Kristen Lynn Majocha
University of Pittsburgh at

Johnstown
Johnstown, PA
klynn@pitt.edu

2nd Vice President:
Denise P. Ferguson
Pepperdine University
Malibu, CA
denise.ferguson@pepperdine.edu

Councilors:
Daniel S. Brown
(Term expires '14)
Grove City College
Grove City, PA
dsbrown@gcc.edu

Sara A. Mehltretter Drury
(Term expires '15)
Wabash University
Crawfordsville, IN
drurys@wabash.edu

Adrienne Hacker Daniels
(Term expires '16)
Illinois College
Jacksonville, IL
ahacker@mail.ic.edu

Executive Director:
Janie Harden Fritz
Duquesne University
Pittsburgh, PA

harden@duq.edu
Electronic Communication-Website Curator:
Mark L. Ward, Sr.
University of Houston-Victoria
Victoria, TX
wardm@uhv.edu

Journal of Communication and Religion Editors:
Ronald C. Arnett
Editor, JCR
Duquesne University

Pittsburgh, PA
jcr@duq.edu
David Frank
Book Review Editor, JCR
University of Oregon
Eugene, OR
dfrank@uoregon.edu

Newsletter Editor:
Celeste Grayson Seymour
Western Governors University
Pittsburgh, PA
celeste.seymour@wgu.edu