



Jan 1st, 12:00 AM

01. Communication

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University of Central Oklahoma, "01. Communication" (2013). *Oklahoma Research Day Abstracts*. 1.
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Abstracts from the 2013 Oklahoma Research Day

Held at the University of Central Oklahoma

04. Liberal Arts

01. Communication

04.01.01 Pretty Feet, Cupcake Dresses and Flippers: Destructive Competition on TLC's "Toddlers & Tiaras"

Amy Aldridge Sanford, Molly Turner,

Northeastern State University

The TLC hit *Toddlers & Tiaras* premiered in 2009 and has featured hundreds of little girls and their families pursuing glitz pageant dreams. Annette Hill, director of the oft-featured Universal Royalty pageants, claimed she wanted her pageants to be a positive learning experience where contestants learned the meaning of competition. We argue that while young glitz contestants do learn about competition, it is often destructive competition. In short, one person must lose for another to win. Destructive competition takes four different forms on *Toddlers & Tiaras*: (a) competition between parents and children; (b) competition between siblings; (c) competition between contestants; and (d) competition between adults and children.

04.01.02 "Pimping Off the People": Designing Lottery Legislation

Kristopher Copeland,

Northeastern State University

Many states have seen major declines in providing financial support for education and have found lottery policies as a means to generate additional funds for education. In this qualitative case study, interviews were conducted with 10 former senators to examine how decision makers socially construct target populations while forming lottery policy. Developed by Helen Ingram and Anne Schneider (1993), the social construction of policy design provides a framework for better understanding how social constructions become embedded into the political discourse from the policy design process. Interviewed persons noted that education became the primary beneficiary, while discussion centered on burdens being placed on those participating in the lottery, which were noted as mostly deriving from low-income households. Additionally, participants noted that burdens related to issues pertaining to gambling addiction and other social costs. These findings suggest that the social constructions derived in the policy design process have a lasting impact on the messages sent to those that are noted as "deserving" and "undeserving".

04.01.03 Shattering the Glass Ceiling into Hillaryland: How Hillary Rodham Clinton Challenged the Double Bind with Transactional Feminist Leadership

Molly Turner,

Northeastern State University

Hillary Rodham Clinton is one of the most notable women in American politics despite some of the controversy surrounding her career. Part of the controversy was due to her non-traditional transactional feminist leadership style in partnership with her husband's blended leadership style that guided their co-political career. Though she faced many barriers due to the double bind, like being judged too masculine because of her leadership style, then later incompetent, she challenged them with her unconventional view on politics and devotion to equality in public service.

04.01.04 A Health Care Campaign for Breast Cancer: An Early Detection Plan for University Students

Callie Carrell,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

In a health campaign project for a communication class, I propose to engage university students in an early detection plan for breast cancer. This campaign will include defining the situation and audience, establishing campaign goals, and selecting channels of communication. The current situation is the large number of women and men who will be diagnosed with breast cancer. For women, this number is one in eight. For men, 410 will die each year. The university targeted in this campaign has an enrollment of 3,805 students, which means 238 of the women from this university will be diagnosed with breast cancer. The projected change in behavior will involve the students conducting self-examination, receiving mammograms, and enrolling in classes. The communication channels will include utilizing mass media such as email to students and announcements in the university newspaper and radio programs. Communication messages in the email will include words in the subject bar such as "Do you have Breast Cancer?" A second channel would include utilizing a guest speaker who is a survivor of breast cancer. She will provide both logical and emotional appeals in her presentations. The final step of the campaign will be to determine the success of the campaign. An evaluation form will be completed by all who participated.

04.01.05 What I Would Do about Abusive, Harassing, and Hateful Speech on College Campuses: A Proposal

Nicole Murphy,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

College campuses are grounds for enlightenment, breeding great thinkers for the future of American civilization. What happens, though, when abusive, harassing, and hateful speech infiltrates this glorious free exchange of thoughts and expression found on college grounds? Does the First Amendment protect this language? The purpose of this research is to survey what campuses are currently doing to face abusive, harassing, and hateful speech; evaluate the methods based on First Amendment interpretation; and discover the most responsible approach to educating students on the matter.

04.01.06 Real Men Don't Cry?: Public Apologies and Its Symbolic Meanings in Taiwan

Hsin-I Sydney Yueh,

Northeastern State University

Taiwan is the island of *sajiao*. This metaphor serves to highlight the prevalent culture of “passive persuasion” in Taiwan. This specific persuasive form discussed in this paper refers to a set of actions that involve the imitation of a child’s gesture, pronunciation, and movements. The emphasis of the childish behavior and the expression of one’s weakness to persuade others are contrast to many other cultures in terms of the conceptualization of personhood (e.g. the persuader should be trustworthy, responsible, and reliable). The prevalence of *sajiao* phenomenon is supported by previous ethnographic research on language practice in Taiwan. The fact that the native term for talk, *sajiao*, can be heard in countless conversation, referring to the set of childish persuasive action conducted not only by women, urges researchers to adopt a more critical framework in examining the cultural practice. For example, male public figures in Taiwan are often caught in tears when they apologize in the press conference. However, it does not mean that crying in public is encouraged in this culture. Thus, the frequent use of crying in front of a camera while giving a public speech signals a culturally situated value about personhood and communication. Examination of the sequential organization of such speech would enable a closer view of the culture and the symbolic meaning derived from the specific scene.

04.01.07 Channel One: Assessing the Quality of Adolescent News

David Scott, Mike Chanslor,

Northeastern State University

Over the past thirty years private for-profit corporations have played an increasingly significant role in common education (Ford, 2010). School districts facing budgetary constraints have entered into a variety of agreements that allow corporations to disseminate commercial-based messages to their students in return for equipment or other compensation. Since many schools are unable to afford the cost of new equipment, technology, and instructional materials, they have been receptive to corporate partners (Alper, 2003). One of the more notable examples of the increased corporate presence in the classroom is “Channel One News.” However, a key issue is the overall journalistic quality of the program. The cumulative data seems to suggest that Channel One’s “captive audience” model of news production does not result in higher quality journalism as measured in traditional social responsibility terms. It would also appear the potential of Channel One News to address deficiencies in current event knowledge and civics has been compromised to some degree by the overall commercial emphasis of the program. Arguably the data produced from this study makes a strong case that CNN Student News could be a better choice for students. However, in terms of overall news story types, there does not appear to be a large substantive difference between the two programs, but Student News has considerably less commercially related content embedded within the newscast itself.

04.01.08 Exploring News Media Contributions to Political Attitudes

Ashton Faries, Aubrey Tarantine, Paige Throneberry,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

Using the 2008 National Annenberg Election Survey, this research examines the relationship between different news media and people's perceptions of political efficacy. Using multiple regression analysis, it was found that accessing online information and watching television for information about the 2008 presidential campaign were strongly associated with "feeling that politics is too complicated." This research also found a significant relationship between access to the Internet and "feeling that politics is too complicated" and "people like me have no say over government."

04.01.09 Exploring News Media Contributions to Political Participation

Tyler Slawson,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

In examining the 2008 National Annenberg Election Survey, this research explored the relationship between media consumption and discussing politics, and voting in the last general election. After conducting a multiple regression analysis, it was found that watching television for political information and watching the Daily Show or Saturday Night Live were strongly associated with political discussions, while reading a newspaper was strongly associated with voting in the last general election.

04.01.10 Argument Quality: An Examination of The Washington Post's Pulitzer Prize Winning Journalism on The Democracy Exportation Project in Yemen

Melissa Haworth-Cox, Brittani Young,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

This analysis focuses on David Finkel's articles on the Democracy Exportation Project in Yemen, which were written for the Washington Post in 2006. These three articles won a Pulitzer Prize in Explanatory Reporting. This analysis finds the author focused on emotional elements in the story to elevate traditional forms of evidence, such as authority, example, and analogy. In doing so, the reader has a stronger attachment to the Sheiks who desire to end tribal violence in Yemen.

04.01.11 1980s: A Timeline of Better Home and Gardens Advertisements featuring Cigarettes

Hope Zachary, Clint Byley, Katie Rings,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

In this collection of ten cigarette advertisements collected from the May editions of Better Homes and Gardens magazine, we argue, in a beginner's "infographic," that cigarette brands reached out to men and women, while suggesting "sexuality" and "ruggedness."

04.01.12 1970s: A Timeline of Better Home and Gardens Advertisements featuring Lysol

Haley Ellison, Paige Adams, Paige Throneberry,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

In this collection of nine Lysol advertisements from the April editions of Better Homes and Gardens magazine, we show these advertisements focus exclusively on Caucasian women, and their responsibilities in a family household. Noticeably absent from these advertisements are men, and minorities.

04.01.13 Argument Quality: An Examination of the Boston Globe's Pulitzer Prize Winning Journalism on Stem Cell Research

Jordan Hedrick, Chelsea Neal,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

In this series of Pulitzer Prize winning articles, Gareth Cook introduces the reader to the controversial issue of stem cell research. These stories were written during 2004 when stem cell research was a particularly heated, and contested issue. Cook presents his arguments affirming stem cell research by connecting with the audience emotionally, and by using logical evidence. The central argument is while there are ethical questions surrounding this issue, there is potential for stem cell research to bring healing and prevention of human disease.

04.01.14 Argument Quality: An Examination of The New York Times' Pulitzer Prize Winning Journalism on Food Safety

Evan Wakefield, Callie Carrell,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

In these ten articles, Michael Moss explores the issues of tainted meat, the meat industry, and government regulation of the food industry. Combining statistical evidence with the introduction of people (characters) harmed by tainted meat, Moss presents an effective narrative to offer explanation of the industry and creating reader engagement. This analysis explores this narrative and concludes that storytelling, and not quantitative evidence, is central to these articles' explanatory power.

04.01.15 Managing Change: Faculty Perceptions of a Transformative Learning Initiative

Danielle Hernandez, Christy Vincent,

University of Central Oklahoma

While many theories address the topic of change management, an organization's ability to integrate changes effectively still presents a significant challenge. The myriad of perceptions of the organizational members contribute to their responses when they learn of planned changes in the organization. Using Everett Rogers's (1983, 1995) Diffusion of Innovations theory as the foundation, this research sheds light on the integration of initiatives into organizations. Specifically, this paper describes faculty members' responses to a major change initiative—Transformative Learning (TL)—at a local university. The research questions concern faculty members' 1) understanding of the TL initiative; 2) level of adoption of the TL initiative; 3) implementation of transformative learning; and 4) perceptions of benefits and barriers of the TL initiative. A series of in-depth interviews with several faculty members provided answers to the research questions. There was neither consensus among the participants on the purpose of transformative learning nor on best practices for its application. Responses ranged from positive—willingness to embrace TL but uncertainty regarding incorporating it into the classroom—to negative—complete rejection of the idea of transformative learning. Results of this study provide information that may help university leaders focus their change management efforts and address the issues that hinder the im

04.01.16 Analysis of Barack Obama's 2013 Inaugural Address (Through the Lens of Dramatism)

Troy Ward,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

The purpose of this rhetorical analysis is to apply the concepts of the dramatic pentad created by Kenneth Burke to uncover the motives of persuasive speakers. In my analysis of Obama's 2013 Inauguration speech, I argue he uses the pentads to motivate the audience. I argue his philosophy and intentions are that a collectivistic American culture can face today's challenges. I also argue that the most obvious pentad used by President Obama is "agent." This pentad is described as the person or people who performed the act. Throughout the speech, he referred to "we" many times creating a sense of unity as American people. He used "we" as a "God Term," in which all other positive terms are subservient to it and promote America as a collectivistic culture. Another dominant pentad is Obama's references to the "agency" pentad, which is the method to accomplish a deed. When he recited "we will defend our people and uphold our values through strength of arms and rule of law," he revealed a method of achieving unity through our constitution. A third dominant pentad used by Obama is "scene." For Obama, the scenes are the historical context and the realities of our time. His references to these revealed his argument that all men and women are created equal both in the eyes of God and the law. I conclude his motives are to heal the bitter divisions created during the election campaign and

04.01.17 A Health Care Campaign: Preventing the Spread of Disease in the Workplace

Kristi Ryan,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

The purpose of this project conducted in a health communication class was to motivate employees to use hand sanitizers to prevent the spread of disease in their workplace. The organization used for this campaign was an outsourcing provider to help businesses manage customer relationships. The health care problem and target audience were identified through observations of workers' behavior, interviews with workers, and other studies conducted in this workplace. These research steps identified a problem that stems from a time constraint that prevents employees from keeping their hands clean after utilizing the outside break area. Based on this research, the first activity of the campaign was gaining approval from management to install hand sanitizer dispenser outside employee break areas. A communication message used in the campaign became the label for this area: The AHS station for antibacterial hand sanitizer station. Campaign messages on posters were placed by doors for re-entering the building. The employee newsletter was also used to promote the use of the AHS stations. Another activity of the campaign involved having maintenance personnel to clean door handles twice daily. The final activity of the campaign was receiving information from the managers about the percentage of employees who are absent to illness. The result of the campaign is that absences decreased.

04.01.18 Cultural Strategies of Organizing: Secondary Socialization for Organizations in the 21st Century

Christopher Rudick,

Northeastern State University

Recent developments in the economic condition of world markets have prompted many organizations to overhaul their public image. While many of these recent tactics are public and highly visible, some strategies are ongoing focus internally and hinge more on the creation and maintenance of organizational culture via the employee socialization process. The creation of these cultures generally serves to fulfill a proximal goal in earning the trust of their clients and the public in general via the representations of bank employees and the terminal or ultimate goal of success and profitability. This paper examines the value appeals utilized in the employee handbook of a Midwestern bank by using a rhetorical cluster analysis. It attempts to deconstruct the language used in order to discover more about the creation of this particular organizational culture through the socialization of new employees and image management strategies. Ultimately, this document is highly suggestive of a planned strategy to socialize newcomers into the beliefs of the organization.

04.01.19 A Health Care Campaign: Combating Diabetes in the Native American Community

Troy Ward,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

The goal of this project conducted in a health communication class is to raise awareness about the risks of diabetes among elderly native people and present them with alternate behaviors. Within most Native American communities across the United States, diabetes has become an epidemic. According to Indian Health Services, this number is even higher in the elderly community. The targeted audience for this campaign is the elderly community of Choctaw Indians in Bryan County, Oklahoma. The main objective of this campaign is to inform the target population about types of foods that causes diabetes and provide them with motivation to discontinue consumption of them. One activity of this campaign included a set of oral presentations given in a location where many Choctaw Elders congregate. Messages in the campaign included appeals to their sense of community and respect for leaders. An example of a message is "help keep our community strong and vital by supporting each other in monitoring sugar intake and checking sugar levels." Native Americans have a strong sense of community and appealing to what is good for the community had a strong effect. Other messages about modeling behavior that will teach the children the right way was also effective in adding emotional appeal. Interviews were conducted to ascertain the campaign's effectiveness. Awareness of risks of diabetes to Native Americans was achieved.

04.01.20 She is Not Good Enough: Media Beauty in College Students' Eyes

Ekanem Ekpenyong,

Cameron University

This research focuses on college students' perception of beauty, which in the media is usually associated with certain characteristics including skinny, long hair, and light skinned. In an effort to see beauty through the eyes of students, interviews were conducted with different college students aimed at explaining and understanding what they think beauty is and if it corresponds to what the media defines beauty to be. The findings show: 1) most of the students say that beauty for the most part comes from the inside; 2) most of them agree that the media plays a role as to how the public perceives beauty; 3) students expressed concerns in regards to the media's influence on how people think about beauty; and 4) all students agreed that beauty is flexible and has different meanings.

04.01.21 Problem-Based Learning: The Three Valley Museum as the Public Relations Classroom

Shannon McCraw,

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

Problem-based learning has long been used in teaching professional programs, but limited research exists exploring PBL's success in teaching public relations. Through a partnership with the Three Valley Museum in Durant, public relations students are developing a comprehensive strategic communication plan for an 18-month campaign. This poster discusses the museum's problem-set, while proposing an exploratory study focused on problem-based learning and student self-reports of student engagement, student satisfaction, and student perception of learning.

04.01.22 Deepwater Horizon: A Criticism of BP's Response

Colton Rowe,

Cameron University

The purpose of this paper is to criticize British Petroleum's response to the events of April 20, 2010, and the subsequent oil spill. The main focus of this paper is Tony Hayward's testimony before Congress on the morning of June 17, 2010. Focusing on Hayward's testimony not only provides speeches of accusation and defense to analyze, it simplifies the critical process, as indeed, most of the accusations leveled against BP corporately were addressed before congress, and in Hayward's testimony. I will categorize BP's apology in terms of literature provided by Halford Ryan, Ware and Linkugel, and I will evaluate their response in light of research provided by Millar and Beck.

04.01.23 An Oasis in the Wasteland: An Analysis on Fred Rogers' Appeal to the United States Senate

Colton Rowe,

Cameron University

Fred Rogers, better known as Mr. Rogers, did not seem like a fighter. His television show, Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood was renowned and loved for his insightful, soft spoken ways. But in 1969, Mr. Rogers went before the senate and fought. The stakes were the future of public access television funding, and Mr. Rogers brought the greatest weapon imaginable: rhetoric. Mr. Rogers exemplified what made his show different from the other shows in the television "wasteland." By placing his argument in a larger context, Mr. Rogers not only defended his show and the future mental welfare of children, but by extension, the future of America. He also depicted himself as the kindly guide to that future. This analysis uses the literature of Halford Ryan and Ware and Linkugel to examine Mr. Rogers' speech.