

Tennessee COMMUNICATOR

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From the President: Changing Times

"The times, they are a changin'" (ironic coming from a classic icon like Bob Dylan). In my time with TCA, it has been one of the most stable and steady courses I have ever seen in an organization. As I look at the organization today, these lyrics ring very true for me.

When asked to write a letter from the president, I realized that I had never done one in all the time I have been involved in professional and personal organizations. So, as all good students do, I went to the "test files" to see what had been done previously. What should I come upon, but a letter from Linda Lyle. I have always admired her ability to write in such a conversational, humorous and engaging manner. If you are expecting one of those letters, you will be sadly disappointed. This short letter must serve as a recap of the 2012 conference in Knoxville and a look ahead to the 2013 conference in Murfreesboro.

Looking back at "Celebrating 75 years and Counting" in Knoxville, there are more highlights than I can possibly include here. For me, the highlight of the weekend had to be "Looking Back, Looking Forward," a panel about the history and future of our association.

Michael Osborn and Faye Julian, two members we have not seen in a while, joined Dick Ranta and Linda Lyle to talk about the foundations of our field. We have recorded that history and hope to

be able to place it on the website for future generations of TCA. As many of you know, the number of schools represented at TCA has been slowly decreasing. I have made it my objective to spend this year working with Len Assante, Malcolm McAvoy and Debra Jones to increase our community college and student involvement. Should you accept the mission, I would ask that you reach out to one school in your area whose members have not been attending TCA. If you need information about what TCA has

to offer them, please feel free to contact me and I will be happy to provide you with that information. For me, the awards ceremony is an awesome time to pay tribute to our strong membership. Look for more information on this elsewhere in the newsletter. The panels this year were extraordinary. Our interests are growing and we were able to panel concurrent sessions in all of the available slots on Friday. Remember to submit a research brief for one of the upcoming newsletters so everyone can hear about the great



Linda Lyle (left), Dorothea Norton Spirit of Service Award Winner, and Michelle Violanti, TCA President, pose after award presentation.

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Times

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work you are doing. At the 2012 conference, I got to "play" President in Pam Gray's absence. Look for her presidential address this year.

Speaking of this year, there are new and exciting things on the horizon. First, we will be voting to create a community college interest group. The Community College panel with Dr. Nichols, vice chancellor for Community Colleges in Tennessee, was informative and enlightening about how far they have come. Of course, any time you are moving forward, there are growing pains. For those of you who were expecting to go to Vol State in 2013, they are also growing and knew about their construction in time to switch years with MTSU. Additional growing pains for us include how to encourage and support students who want to attend the convention without presenting a paper or being on a panel. Currently, we do not have a mechanism for them to attend unless they are presenting, at which point we waive their convention fee.

I personally experienced another of our growing pains this past year and hope you will work hard to help Janet, this year's program planner, avoid it. TCA has always been an informal organization in my time here and operated on the "contact" system for creating panels. A member contacts the interest group chair and is placed on the panel, sometimes with only a week or two to go before the conference. We now have more people in our state who are used to the regional, national and international submission system where they send a paper/abstract, have it reviewed to be included on the program and wait for an answer as to whether they will be presenting. Please pay particular attention to Janet's call for submissions, follow the directions, and submit in a timely manner.

I am looking forward to seeing all of the people I have come to expect at TCA and those I have yet to meet. Remember to "Accept Your Mission" to help make sure those changin' times become the norm for years to come.

Michelle Violanti, TCA President



Michelle Violanti (left), TCA President, presented Richard R. Ranta (pictured) and Michael Osborn with special recognition awards for their dedication to TCA.



Malcolm McAvoy (left), Communicator of the Year, and Michelle Violanti, TCA President, chatting after award presentation.

2012 TCA Award Winners

Pam Gray

Austin Peay State University
Communication Educator of the Year
Tennessee Communication Association
2012

Malcolm McAvoy

Walters State Community College
Communicator of the Year
Tennessee Communication Association
2012

Lynda Lyle

University of Tennessee
Dorotha Norton Spirit of Service Award
Tennessee Communication Association
2012

Andrea D. Hightower

Austin Peay State University
Outstanding Graduate Paper
Tennessee Communication Association
2012

Christina Hicks-Goldston

Austin Peay State University
Outstanding Graduate Mentor
Tennessee Communication Association
2012

A Womanist Rhetorical Lens

Research Brief

By Dr. Kimberly P. Johnson, Assistant Professor of Communication
University of Tennessee

June of 2001 I began working in ministry part-time as a Children's Ministry Director, which eventually led to full-time employment. So far, I have worked at and consulted with a total of five different churches and from these various experiences I have encountered sexism, ageism, racism, and sexual assault in the workplace of the church (This does not include any of the additional churches where I had a volunteer based leadership position).

I say this because this is the part of ministry that we neglected to discuss when I was in seminary, yet this is the part of ministry that unfortunately silences women into feelings of self-doubt and inferiority. In order to no longer feel inferior or silenced by self-doubt, we sacrifice who we are and what we believe—self and voice—for the sake of being accepted and fitting in.

It is because of my own experiences in the church that I began to question: what happens when the oppressor is the black church? What can be said when the churches where we worship are intoxicated with patriarchal religious traditions? How can we turn to the church for affirmation, guidance, and strength if the messages that we hear from the pulpit only seem to liberate and affirm the humanity of our male counterparts? And, where do we go to get the information on what strategies to use?

I was not the only one questioning the forms of oppression perpetrated in the black church. It is this type of probing that compelled me to do a close textual analysis of womanist preaching because it also questions the role of preaching in the black church.



My current project, "The Traditional Communalism of Womanist Preaching," involves a quest to understand the rhetorical attributes of womanist preaching that effectively reflects the second tenet of Alice Walker's womanist definition. In this exploratory study, I examine the meaning of traditional communalism and the application of it in a sermon.

Traditional communalism is a term Stacey Floyd-Thomas uses to describe the second tenet of the womanist definition. This project seeks to answer the question: How does womanist preaching transform or adapt the second tenet of womanist thought to make it rhetorically viable in the church?

My latest research offers a close reading of a sermon entitled, "Women of the Cloth," that was delivered by, Cheryl Kirk-Duggan, a womanist scholar and preacher who illuminates the meaning of traditional communalism from a vantage point that seeks to liberate self, community, and those outside of the community.

I examine how Kirk-Duggan uses her sermon to privilege knowledge and I uncover what rhetorical strategies are necessary when a preacher needs to protect, nurture, sustain, liberate, reunite or even bring a community back together on a particular issue. Kirk-Duggan is a Professor of Theology & Women's Studies, as well as the Director of Women's Studies at Shaw University Divinity School in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Her sermon demonstrates traditional communalism by addressing the skewed traditions and circumstances that tend to

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

April 30, 2013

Research Briefs submissions due. Send submissions to Sandy Sarkela at ssarkela@memphis.edu.

May 15, 2013

Newsletter items due. Send submissions to Kimberly Rogers at krogers@memphis.edu.

May 15, 2013

Office/interest chair nominations due. Send nominations to Pam Gray at grayp@apsu.edu.

May 15, 2013

Award nominations due. Send nominations to Jennifer Pitts at jennifer.pitts@volstate.edu.

May 30, 2013

Student papers for the 2013 conference due. Send proposals to Linda Lyle at llyle@bellsouth.net.

June 1, 2013

Professional papers/panels for the 2012 conference due. Send proposals to Michelle Violanti at violanti@utk.edu.

June 1, 2013

Registration begins for the 2013 conference. Register online at tennesseecommunicationassociation.org or send registration form to:

Jennifer Pitts
TCA Executive Director
Volunteer State Community College
1480 Nashville Pike
Gallatin, TN 37066.

September 13-14, 2013

TCA Conference at Middle Tennessee State University.

On the Frontier: Speech presented at 2012 TCA

by Michael Osborn

In the late 1970's I returned home from a visiting professorship at the University of North Carolina, to what was then called Memphis State University.

"You must have really enjoyed teaching all those bright students," someone said.

"Oh, they were plenty bright," I answered. "But they know it. At Memphis, we also have bright students. But many of them don't know it yet. No one ever bothered to tell them what they are or what they might be. Those are the ones I want to teach."

In Memphis, I recall, I felt like I was teaching on the frontier of education. And that was truly exciting!

On the frontier. It is such a rich symbol, and it has fascinated me from the time I heard John F. Kennedy invoke his concept of the New Frontier back when he accepted the Democratic nomination for president. Tonight I want to say a few things about this symbol, not just because it is interesting in itself, but because it may have something to tell us about who and what we are as teachers of communication, perhaps even about the meaning of our lives as educators.

The relevance of the frontier to our professional identity became clear to me about twenty years ago when, as I recall, Sam Becker at Iowa called with some unwelcome news. Someone had launched an attack in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* which implied that communication was a johnny-come-lately fad discipline that lacked substance and tradition. Since I was a past president of what was then called the Speech Communication Association, Sam thought I should respond to the criticism and I agreed. So I wrote an indignant letter-to-the-editor, and the next thing I knew the editor called me.

Would I be willing to write a guest editorial in which I would develop the arguments I had sketched in my letter? Of course I would, and did. It was true, I conceded in my response, that great departments of communication had not--for the most part--developed in the Eastern, Ivy league institutions (Cornell was an exception to that rule). Rather, these departments had first flourished in the land-grant colleges of the mid-West, and generally they followed in the wake of the pioneers pushing across the prairies.

Communication, I argued (borrowing a resonance from the composer, Dvorak), was a New World discipline, explainable more by Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis than by Eastern, old world models of proper education. You may recall that Turner wrote a highly influential essay in 1893, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." In it he argued that the decisive moments in the formation of American character and culture had always happened on the frontier. On that anvil the great American values of individualism, equality, self-reliance, initiative, democracy, and love of freedom--had all been

hammered into shape.

Now, I argued, you could add one more trait to this emerging American character: affirming that effective communication was required to bridge the distances among those who lived perilous lives on the frontier. This New World discipline helped the pioneers establish civilized communities in which their needs and dreams might be articulated. The study and practice of communication helped them give effective words to their aspirations and offered a path to power. Back in the early 60s I went to teach for a few years at the University of Iowa, and Susie and I learned to enjoy going to farm auctions.

It was amazing to me how often the libraries in these old farms, many reaching back over a century, included volumes of oratory with titles such as *Historic American Speeches* or the *World's Great Orations*. Others have noted how these early settlers were lovers of practical rhetoric: how they and their families would fill the long, solitary prairie evenings with oral readings and declamations based on these speeches, how they would debate the issues raised by them,

how they would entertain themselves with the drama and sheer exuberance of the spoken word. These are the people who would support--indeed, demand--the development of great departments of communication at Iowa and Illinois and Minnesota and Wisconsin, indeed throughout those prairie bastions of higher education that would become known as the Big Ten.

This New World discipline then implicates the story of the common man and woman, rising often from these isolated outposts of civilization into power and prominence, into the exhilarating consciousness of freedom. This story suggests that the communication discipline has developed in response to deeply grounded cultural, social, political, and economic needs.

And so, I concluded triumphantly, communication is an authentic, distinctly American discipline with deep historical roots that serves vital cultural needs. It has earned its popularity and assured its continuity in American education.

Bravo! At least that's what a lot of people were nice enough to say at the time. And the matter could rest there, I suppose, except that I now think both Turner and I left the argument incomplete. Turner's case turns on a very literal, material view of the frontier. He even worried over how the closing of the frontier might affect the ongoing trajectory of American culture and character. As a historian who was focused on the interpretation of material events, he may be forgiven, I think, for a rather narrow interpretation of the symbol. But I am less charitable to myself. After all, I had lived and been schooled in a world in which invisible things--like spoken words--are often vital and important. I should have known better.

What we overlooked and underestimated, Turner and I, were the spiritual, imaginative possibilities of the frontier. These lay beyond both time and space, and they required a redefinition of the frontier itself. Turner's frontier was a place, he said, where the forces of savagery contend with civilization. My Creek ancestors



Frontier

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would certainly have argued with him over just who the savages were in this conflict. Perhaps they would have agreed that this older frontier was the site where cultures did clash over issues of dominance and power. But even this redefinition is insufficient.

By this new, more expansive approach, the frontier became the place where decisive moments in the lives of people occur, where the past and the present grapple together over which will control the future, where character is shaped and revealed. This frontier has no geography, and it is constantly renewing itself, as crises arise in the lives of nations and those who live in them. This new frontier remains a risky, dangerous place; but it can also be creative and transformative.

So you need not worry, Professor Turner. The frontier would never complete itself, not even in material ways. Not in the Hill Country of Texas, where the settlers finally defeated the Comanche raiders (as late as 1875!), only to fall into the deepest poverty and into the chains of what for many of them seemed a hopeless lifestyle.

Certainly not in Memphis when I came there in the mid 1960's, where sharecroppers and tenant farmers from the Delta were still pouring into the Big City to escape lives of twentieth century serfdom. Nor even today in urban ghettos and forgotten rural enclaves, where desperate people continue to battle racism, exploitation, and their own demons of ignorance and low self-esteem.

Having mentioned the Hill Country, I can't help dwelling for a moment on the Favorite Son of the Hills, Lyndon Baines Johnson. Lately I have been reading The Path to Power, the first book in Robert Caro's monumental biography about Johnson.

LBJ, it is clear, was very close to his mother, who taught her version of public speaking to hill country children, just for the love of it. Her teaching is instructive for what it reflects about the acute Hill Country need for the New World discipline and about the home environment in which LBJ was reared. About her Caro notes: "She persuaded the school board to start a "literary society," in which she taught poetry and 'elocution,' which to her meant the whole art of public speaking. Teaching

public speaking to these shy country girls and boys--many of whom came to school only occasionally from their isolated farms and ranches--was difficult."

One of her students, in fact her niece, Ava, reflects what her instruction could accomplish. Again, Caro: "When Mrs. Johnson began assigning speech topics, Ava recalls, 'I said I just can't do it, Aunt Rebekah.' And she said, 'Oh, yes, you can. There's nothing impossible if you put the mind to it. I know you have the ability to deliver a speech.' And I cried, and I said, 'I just can't do it!' Aunt Rebekah said, 'Oh, yes, you can. And she never let up, never let up. Never. Boosting me along, telling me I could do it. She taught me speaking and elocution, and I went to the state championships with it, and I won a medal, a gold medal, in competitions involving the whole state. I owe her a debt that I can never repay. She made me know that I could do what I never thought I could do."

In that family that lived so much for the spoken word, Lyndon also engaged in mock debates, spurred on by his father. He brought this rich family background in oral communication to San Marcos when he entered Texas State University.

During his career at what was then called the Southwest Texas State Normal School, he must have taken the available courses in the fledgling communication department, because he went on from there to teach in the speech department at Sam Houston High School. He was an incredibly demanding and popular teacher there, and coached the debate team from a nonentity to runner-up in the state championship in his first year. (Incidentally, his approach to teaching public speaking is both amusing and impressive--Caro gives a full description of his method and I recommend it to you).

I spend this time with LBJ because he illustrates the personal meaningfulness of the New World discipline, first inculcated in the home, later powerfully reinforced in higher educational experience. The communication discipline teaches us first how to develop and then how to live with our freedom. And whenever a college or university finds itself serving a belated frontier population--whether it be the impoverished residents of the Hill Country or the desperate migrants who poured into Memphis in search of a better life--then the institution becomes a natural setting for the vital work of the New World discipline.

This is what I had missed in North Carolina, this sense of the classroom as a dangerous and creative place, as a place of transformational possibilities.

We all have our war stories, and I would love to hear yours. I remember a young woman who walked into a night course in public speaking that Susie and I were teaching some years ago. She worked as a dispatcher for a local trucking firm, and while she was a good student, she was also a victim of acute speech anxiety. "Why do I have to take this course?" she fumed to us privately. Sound familiar?

The first time she stood to speak, she got out about a minute's worth, and stopped abruptly, looking stricken. She raced from the classroom while we all sat, looking at each other. "Do you think she will come back?" I asked Susie. "Of course she will," Susie said, "she left her purse."

Several more times this pattern repeated itself. All of us were suffering, she, us, and the other members of the class. And then there came a magical day. The assignment was a persuasive speech, and she found a topic she could be passionate about: the need for more government regulation of long-distance trucking. Somehow she made this a very engaging subject, and she forgot to panic.

Instead, she suddenly became eloquent, her entire body an instrument of her communicative will. Thank the Lord, she had gotten the message! At the end of the speech, the class broke out into enthusiastic applause, sensing the transformative moment, while she beamed and accepted congratulations. At the end of the class she came up to us, her face alive with victory: "Are there more classes in public speaking that I can take?" she asked.

Now it is clear where I am driving. You and I are on the frontier, and we have important work to do. Each semester when we step into a classroom for the first time, we are on the frontier. Especially in the communication classroom, we are on the frontier.

There we encounter new populations of students and their own rising hopes, many of them still the first members of their families to attend college. At moments like this it becomes clear: as teachers of communication, we are the agents of change and the instruments of culture. So let us rededicate ourselves as we continue our work--on the frontier.

Tennessee Communication Association Fall 2013 Conference
September 13th and 14th
Embassy Suites Convention Center, Murfreesboro, TN

CALL for POSTERS!

CALL for PAPERS!

CALL for WORKSHOPS!



Theme: STUDENT CENTERED IDEAS!

- Teaching techniques
- Assignments
- Presentations
- Projects
- Group work
- Service Learning
- Internships
- Mentoring
- Community partnerships
- Using technology
- Organizing events
- Improving memberships
- Networking
- Before
- During
- After

CELEBRATE
The PROCESS!

POSTERS—Whether you and/or your students can personally attend the Fall 2013 TCA conference or not, please feel free to submit posters that celebrate the process of Communication education, performance and success!

All posters will be considered “Award Winning” and on display during the 2-day conference.

Posters should be of the tri-fold variety so they can stand freely on display tables. Please send a brief description including a title, institution represented, and brief abstract/summary of each poster to: Janet McCormick (janet.mccormick@mtsu.edu)

PAPERS—please submit your paper topics/abstracts to area chairs:

Argumentation and Forensics—Patrick Richey (patrick.richey@mtsu.edu)

Corporate and Organizational Communication— Frank.Parcells (parcells@apsu.edu)

Curriculum and Instruction— Ruth Livingston (rclivingston@northeaststate.edu)

Interpersonal and Small Group Communication—Teresa Collard (tcollard@utm.edu)

Mass Communication—Matthew Lawson (matthew.lawson@ws.edu)

Rhetoric and Public Address—Leroy Dorsey (lgdorsey@memphis.edu)

Student Papers (graduate and undergraduate) – Pam Gray (grayp@apsu.edu)

WORKSHOPS—Would you or a team of presenters like to offer a “Student Centered” Workshop? Please send a brief description including topic, names/institutions of workshop leaders and brief summary to: Janet McCormick (janet.mccormick@mtsu.edu)

DEADLINE—June 1st, 2013

For additional information contact:

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Middle Tennessee State University
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cripple women in ministry and the need for discernment in recognizing the crippling spirits.

Kirk-Duggan's sermon, "Women of the Cloth," was delivered on March 23, 2006, at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary's Shelton Chapel in Austin, TX, for their Women of the Cloth Conference—Celebrating 50 years of the Ordination of Women to Word and Sacrament, in the Presbyterian Church. Those in attendance were administrators, faculty, staff, students, ministers, and other people from the Austin metropolitan area. Kirk-Duggan is also an alumna of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

"Women of the Cloth" is a sermon that boldly addresses the attitudinal and behavioral practices that seem to cripple many of us who are in ministry. The sermon is based on the Luke 13:10-13, NIV text:

Now Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And just then, there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God.

In this sermon, Kirk-Duggan employs a womanist hermeneutical lens that allows her to name the oppressive forces that confront women. Her goal is to shift her audience from being people who are bent over to actually being people who can embrace God's anointing. Furthermore, she discusses the crippling effects of each "ism" in such a way that the sermon becomes applicable to everyone. This type of preaching has a universal message that transcends the African American female gender. The universality of the sermon identifies it as a sermon that is committed to the survival and wholeness of all people in ministry—male, female, black, white, Hispanic, Native American, Asian, Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, or Presbyterian. What helps to make the message universal is the relevant subject matter, the line of questioning that Kirk-Duggan uses, the narratives she employs, the pronouns she uses, and the inclusive language that she uses in her line of questioning.

I argue that Kirk-Duggan's sermon is aimed toward healing those who are wounded or crippled, and it requires audience members to act as agents of their own healing. Agency, which is the ability to work or act on behalf of self or community, has a strong role in womanist preaching. The sermon constantly probes the listeners by asking them to assess themselves, asking them are they willing to be set free so that they can help set others free, asking them what are they doing for other people, and asking them to transform their behavior. She holds the people accountable by making it very clear that we must participate in our own healing, and that we have to heal ourselves before we can heal others.

What I find unique about traditional communalism sermons is that the focus is simultaneously on self and community. In looking at the element of agency, traditional communalism has a "both/and" vantage point that pushes people toward improving self and improving their relationship with others (community), so that communities or groups of people can and will continue to thrive. Traditional communalism has a broad reach because it not only affirms "self," it affirms the relational bonds with other people. Traditional communalism sermons lend themselves toward some form of communal healing and communal remembrance to live out the Christian faith. In rhetorical terms, this is called a Jeremiad because this type of sermon calls people back to the values of their community after they have broken the covenant of their community.

References:

Kirk-Duggan, Cheryl. "Women of the Cloth." Sermon Delivered at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, Texas, 2006. Transcribed by Kimberly P. Johnson.

Walker, Alice. *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens: Womanist Prose*. Orlando: Harcourt Inc, 1983.

News & Notes

University of Memphis Professor **Mandy Young**, alumni **Elizabeth Stephens** (Ph.D.'10) and **Tesfa Alexander** (Ph.D.'10), and current Ph.D. students **Brian Duffy**, **Melissa Thompson**, and **Tracy Manning Hood** participated in the Tennessee Board of Regents Qualitative Research Conference at Austin Peay this past October. Professor Young put together this panel for a seminar on methodology.

Christine Moss was hired as a new professor for the University of Memphis Lambuth campus. She received her Ph.D. from Louisiana State University in Communication studies, MA in Communication Studies from the University of Western Florida, and a BA in Speech and Communication from the University of Alabama.

University of Memphis professor **Tony de Velasco** recently appeared on an Australian Broadcasting Company story speaking about the election. Professor de Velasco was interviewed as a political analyst concerning voting trends in the South and other parts of the United States.

University of Memphis Film and Video Production faculty—professors **David Appleby** and **Steve Ross**, and associate professors **Roxie Gee** and **Craig Leake**—were honored for their "reputation, achievements and impact" on the Movie & Film Industry during the 2012 Business and Industry Salute Luncheon sponsored by Carnival Memphis.

University of Memphis Professor **Allison Graham** co-edited *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture, Volume 18-Media* for The University of North Carolina Press. The 2011 publication examined how mass media influences ideas about the South.

Sarah Haley (BA '04, University of Memphis) was recently hired as the new press secretary for Ann Romney, wife of former presidential candidate Mitt Romney.

Merci M. Decker, U of Memphis doctoral student, is the chair of the National Communication Association's Peace and Conflict Communication Division.

The Daily Helmsman at the University of Memphis received the 2012 College Press Freedom Award given by the Student Press Law Center this past November. The award is given to a publication that promotes free-press rights for college journalists.

News & Notes

University of Memphis Associate Professor **Craig Leake** received the Award of Merit for Documentary Filmmaking at the 2011 University Film and Video Association Conference, Boston, MA.

Associate Professor **Craig Leake** and Professor **David Appleby** won a regional Emmy (2011) for their film "Beyond Babyland," which examines high infant mortality rates in Memphis.

University of Memphis Professor **Katherine Hendrix** received 2012, she received the 2012 Southern States Communication Association Michael Osborn Teacher-Scholar Award.

University of Memphis Associate Professor **Sandra Sarkela** guest lectured as the 2012 Visiting Distinguished Professor of Communication and Ethics at the School of Communication and Multimedia Studies, Florida Atlantic University.

Andre E. Johnson (PhD '08, University of Memphis) is the Dr. James L. Netters Assistant Professor of Rhetoric & Religion and African American Studies at Memphis Theological Seminary, and is editor of the "Rhetoric Race and Religion" blog. His journal article, "The Prophetic Persona of James Cone and the Rhetorical Theology of Black Theology," won the 2011 Religious Communication Association's Best Article Award at the National Communication Association Conference.

Kristen Hungerford, University of Memphis doctoral student, received the Top Student Paper award in Media Studies at the 2012 Central States Communication Association Conference for her paper, "Laughing at Comedies of Difference on Saturday Night Live: A Case Study of Betty White's Mother's Day Episode."

Kimberly Johnson (PhD '10, University of Memphis) has accepted a tenure track position as an Assistant Professor of Speech Communication at Tennessee State University.

Erin Willis (PhD '11, University of Missouri) was hired this fall as an Assistant Professor at U of Memphis. She is working to finish her MPH at the U of Memphis School of Public Health.

Brandon Goldsmith, U of Memphis doctoral student, presented "A 12 Step Program for Recovering White Caucasians" on the Top Student Performances Panel at the 2012 Southern States Communication Association Conference.

Looking Back, Looking Forward Panel Discussion



(From left) Linda Lyle, Richard Ranta, Michael Osborn and Faye Julian during a panel discussion about the history and future of TCA.

Tennessee's Two Year Colleges: Then and Now



Warren R. Nichols, Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges, Tennessee Board of Regents, was a guest panelist discussing "Tennessee's Two Year Colleges, Then and Now" at the TCA fall conference. The panel discussed the beginnings, development and current challenges of our state's Community College System. Currently half of all students in public higher ed in Tennessee are enrolled in 2-year institutions. Other panel members included Debra Jones, Len Assante, and Chair, Malcolm McAvoy.

Conference Tackles Communication Trends

The Department of Communication hosted the Thirteenth Biennial Public Address Conference, Sept. 27-29, on the University of Memphis campus. The theme, "On Civic Learning: Rhetoric, Public Address, Political Division," revolved around questions such as: What makes for productive, civically useful knowledge of political controversy? How can we tap this knowledge in order to approach differences more wisely and argue with each other more eloquently?

More than 30 nationally-acclaimed scholars in the study of rhetoric and public address tackled those questions and discussed how we might chart ways to improve the quality of our shared civic life.

Topics ranged from the rhetoric of political resistance to women's suffrage to the future of public speaking in American democracy.

Highlights included two public lectures. The first, given by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, focused on foreign policy rhetoric and the 2012 presidential race. Co-hosted by the Department of Journalism, the second featured Jacqueline Jones Royster, African-American rhetoric expert, who delivered a lecture on the anti-lynching campaign

of Ida B. Wells.

Both sessions were promoted to local high school teachers, colleges and community leaders who attended to learn more about rhetoric and communication at the University of Memphis. This year's conference director was Dr. Antonio de Velasco, associate professor in Communication.

"The conference succeeded in two major ways. First, it treated our students and faculty to an intellectual gathering of the highest caliber," Dr. de Velasco said. "Over three days, we were treated to scholarship that challenged us, that motivated us, and that set the mark high for our own academic work. Second, for the Department of Communication, it afforded us the chance to partner with constituencies both across the University – other departments, centers, and concentrations – and across our local community. It was truly a landmark moment."

For nearly 25 years, the Public Address Conference has met biennially at the nation's premier sites of rhetoric study.

A multi-day event, it assembles national leaders in the study of rhetoric and public address and provides a series

of lectures, followed by formal responses from a select group of scholars and question and answer periods for attendees.

Past themes have included: "Discourse of Violence, Discourses of Community" (2002, University of Georgia), "Constituting Political Culture" (2004, University of Maryland), "Arts of Praise and Blame" (2006, Vanderbilt University), "Representing the Republic" (2008, University of Wisconsin), and "Human Rights Rhetoric" (2010, University of Pittsburgh).

Conceived by the late Dr. Michael Leff, former chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Memphis, and Dr. David Zarefsky, professor emeritus in the Department of Communication Studies at Northwestern University's School of Communication, the conference first convened at the University of Wisconsin in 1988.



Intercollegiate Debate Alive and Well in Tennessee

Intercollegiate debate is thriving in Tennessee, which has seen an increase in the number of institutions fielding teams and the number of tournaments offered.

Colleges and universities participating in debate and forensics, include Belmont University, Bryan College, Carson-Newman College, East Tennessee State University, Northeast State Community College, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee Technological University and Walters State Community College. Most of them host one or two-day tournaments each year.

While Parliamentary Debate is the primary debate form alive in the state, International Public Debate Association (IPDA) format is gaining ground. Both allow short preparation times and do not allow prepared evidence to be used in the round, therefore making them accessible to beginning speakers.



For more information, contact:

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Jason Stahl
Program Director
Speech & Debate
Belmont University
615.460.6155

TCA Minutes: Oct. 5, 2012

Welcome	Michelle Violanti, incoming 2012-13 TCA President, called the meeting to order at 7:17 pm on October, 5, 2012 at the Haslam Business Building on the University of Tennessee, Knoxville campus. Twenty-five people were in attendance.																
Approval of Minutes	Minutes from the 2011 meeting were approved as corrected.																
Financial Report	<p>Jennifer Pitts, Executive Director, presented the 2012 financial report, noting that the final expenses for the 2012 conference were not finalized.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">Beginning Balance</td> <td style="width: 40%;">\$5,406.49 (as of 08/30/2010)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deposits (pre-paid membership/conference fees)</td> <td>\$1,455.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenses</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td> Conference supplies 2010/11</td> <td>\$116.15</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Montgomery Bell Deposit</td> <td>\$225.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Domain name purchase</td> <td>\$18.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Total Expenses</td> <td>\$374.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ending Balance</td> <td>\$6,487.49 (as of 10/5/2012)</td> </tr> </table> <p>The 2012 financial report was accepted.</p>	Beginning Balance	\$5,406.49 (as of 08/30/2010)	Deposits (pre-paid membership/conference fees)	\$1,455.00	Expenses		Conference supplies 2010/11	\$116.15	Montgomery Bell Deposit	\$225.00	Domain name purchase	\$18.00	Total Expenses	\$374.00	Ending Balance	\$6,487.49 (as of 10/5/2012)
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Memberships Conference Attendance Schools Represented	<p>Total in Attendance: 46 9 new members 8 students 1 TBR Vice-Chancellor</p> <p>Schools represented: 13 Middle Tennessee State University; Volunteer State Community College; Walters State Community College; University of Memphis; Tennessee Tech University; Chattanooga State Community College; Austin Peay State University; University of Tennessee at Knoxville; Northeast State University; East Tennessee State University; Southwest Tennessee Community College; Mississippi Community College; Delta State</p>																
President's Remarks	President's remarks were not available. Pam Gray, 2011-12 TCA President, was not present.																
Election of New Officers	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">President</td> <td>Michelle Violanti</td> </tr> <tr> <td>President Elect</td> <td>Janet McCormick</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Executive Director</td> <td>Jennifer Pitts</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Past President</td> <td>Pam Gray</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newsletter Editor</td> <td>Richard Ranta</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Webmaster:</td> <td>Melissa Tyndall Fox</td> </tr> </table>	President	Michelle Violanti	President Elect	Janet McCormick	Executive Director	Jennifer Pitts	Past President	Pam Gray	Newsletter Editor	Richard Ranta	Webmaster:	Melissa Tyndall Fox				
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Election of New Interest Group Chairs for 2012/13	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Argumentation/Forensics</td> <td>Patrick Richey</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Corporate/Organizational</td> <td>Frank E. Parcells</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Curriculum/Instruction</td> <td>Ruth Livingston</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Interpersonal/Small Group</td> <td>Teresa Collard</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mass Communication</td> <td>Matthew Lawson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rhetoric/Public Address</td> <td>Leroy Dorsey</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Research Briefs</td> <td>Sandra Sarkela</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Proceedings</td> <td>Jeff Hoyer</td> </tr> </table> <p>Conference call process: Send to the interest group chair. The chair will forward accepted papers to the President.</p>	Argumentation/Forensics	Patrick Richey	Corporate/Organizational	Frank E. Parcells	Curriculum/Instruction	Ruth Livingston	Interpersonal/Small Group	Teresa Collard	Mass Communication	Matthew Lawson	Rhetoric/Public Address	Leroy Dorsey	Research Briefs	Sandra Sarkela	Proceedings	Jeff Hoyer
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2012 Awards	<p>Outgoing President and Communication Educator of the Year: Pam Gray, presented by Yunying Zhang Communicator of the Year: Malcolm McAvoy, presented by Michelle Violanti Dorothy Norton Spirit of Service Award: Linda Lyle, presented by Michelle Violanti Graduate Paper: Andrea D. Hightower Student Mentor: Christina Hicks-Goldston</p> <p>Special recognition awards were presented to Richard R. Ranta and Michael Osborn by Michelle Violanti for their dedication to the TCA organization.</p>																
Old Business	The upcoming conference schedule was changed from the scheduled proposed at the 2011 business meeting. Len Assante asked that the 2013 conference not be held at Volunteer State Community College because of ongoing construction.																
Research Briefs	Research Briefs will continue to be included in the newsletter.																
Conferences	<p>The following conference schedule changes were proposed and approved by all present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 MTSU • 2014 joint conference with KCA at Montgomery Bell State Park • 2015 Volunteer State • 2016 Fall Creek Falls State Park 																

Continued, page 11

TCA website update:	Melissa Fox shared the changes to the website. The new URL is tennesseecommunicationassociation.org. The old addresses will still work by forwarding to the new URL. The domain change and software platform change will enable us to increase our networking capability, take advantage of social media links, increase our credibility through improved branding, and allow for a more seamless communication with the webmaster.																								
Other new business	Malcolm McAvoy suggested the creation of a two-year college interest group, focus group, or task force designed to develop participation of and increase membership among two-year college faculty. The TCA constitution allows for changes to be made to the constitution with a petition or as an Executive Committee decision. Len Assante suggested approaching TBR to offer a meeting site and time for the TBR communication task force to meet at our next conference.																								
Meeting Adjourned																									
2012 Conference Financial Report	<table> <tr> <td></td> <td>Deposits</td> <td>\$2,600.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Expenses</td> <td>\$3,064.55 (total)</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Trophies</td> <td>\$202.70</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Hotel</td> <td>\$1,590.95</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>UTK caterer</td> <td>\$250.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Student Awards</td> <td>\$100.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Supplies/Parking</td> <td>\$195.90</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Difference:</td> <td>\$464.55 (above expenses)</td> </tr> </table> <p>Update: Balance as of 1/22/13 is \$3531.94*</p> <p>*This balance reflects deposits made to the 2013 and 2014 conference sites</p>		Deposits	\$2,600.00		Expenses	\$3,064.55 (total)		Trophies	\$202.70		Hotel	\$1,590.95		UTK caterer	\$250.00		Student Awards	\$100.00		Supplies/Parking	\$195.90		Difference:	\$464.55 (above expenses)
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2013 TCA Conference: Middle Tennessee State



Student Centered Ideas

**Sept. 13-14, 2013
Middle Tennessee State University**

Plan to join us at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tenn., on Sept. 13-14, 2013, for the Fall 2013 Tennessee Communication Conference themed "Student Centered Ideas." Registration will begin June 1, 2013. Space is limited so register early.

One of the goals for 2013 is to increase student engagement and membership in TCA. In order to facilitate that goal, the plan is to showcase student efforts, highlight their creativity and reward their accomplishments.

In keeping with the interest groups, the theme "Student Centered Ideas" should be woven into each panel. Now is the time to be thinking about how to present what you and your students do in your classes and turn it into a poster to be displayed at the conference.

**For more information contact:
Dr. Janet McCormick, Organizational Communication
Middle Tennessee State University
janet.mccormick@mtsu.edu
615-904-8208**

2012/13 Membership Form & 2013 Conference Registration

Name: _____

Institution Represented: _____

Full-time Faculty Adjunct Faculty Retired Faculty Student Independent

Preferred Mailing Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____

(The TCA newsletter will be sent electronically!)

Phone: (work) _____ (home) _____

Membership:

New Member (first year free)

Student \$5

Regular \$25

Adjunct Faculty \$10

Sustaining \$65 with free conference registration

Emeritus, no fee

Must be retired from active service and have been a regular member for 15 continuous years.

The TCA membership year runs from fall conference to fall conference!

- Yes, I will attend the 2013 TCA conference, and the \$50 conference fee for this year is enclosed.
- Yes, I will attend the 2013 TCA conference. I am a student presenter and don't have to pay a conference fee.
- Yes, I will attend the Friday evening dinner.
- Yes, I will attend the Saturday breakfast.
- Yes, I will attend the Saturday TCA Awards Luncheon.

Total Enclosed: \$ _____ (membership and/or \$50 conference registration fee)

Note: The registration fee will not be reduced if you don't attend meal events.

Please make checks payable to: Tennessee Communication Association

Mail check and completed form(s) to:

Jennifer Pitts, TCA Executive Director
Volunteer State Community College
1480 Nashville Pike
Gallatin, TN 37066

For more information contact:
(615) 452-8600 Ext. 3421
or e-mail jennifer.pitts@volstate.edu

