

On Disruptive Communication



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We are officially three months away from the 90th Annual Southern States Communication Association’s conference in Frisco, Texas. The conference theme is “Disruptive Communication: A Discipline without Constraints.” I am so honored to serve as the Program Planner and the official “Disruptor-in-Chief” for this exciting conference.

A key disruptive piece of this conference would not have been possible without the support of the association to pilot a new way of planning this convention. I am so grateful to the executive committee and the general membership for approving my proposal to pilot a new electronic submission, review, and programming system for this conference. With this approval, we signed a year contract with our vendor; trained our outstanding division and interest group program planners; accepted, reviewed, and programmed almost 600 submissions—including the Theodore Clevenger Undergraduate Honors Conference; and are currently finalizing the final program for print

and providing digital access to the program through your preferred smart device.

I want to give special shouts out to Executive Director Jerry Hale, President Pamela Bourland-Davis, Immediate Past President Jason Munsell, and 2nd Vice-President Wendy Atkins-Sayre for their support of this disruptive programming modality and their advice, best practices, and encouragement along the way. We held our collective breaths hoping that it worked. I’m pleased to announce that the system seems to have worked out well, with a few lessons learned through the process. I would like to give a particularly hearty thanks and shout out to George Stock, Associate Program Planner and Organizational Science Doctoral Student at UNC Charlotte. This whole programming shift would not have been possible without his assistance, technological acumen, his keen eye and attention to details to the program planning aspect of the conference, his constant contact with program planners, and his good spirit and cheer while we figured out the challenges and opportunities this system provides. I cannot thank him enough for his outstanding work in helping me coordinate this conference. Speaking of support, there is no one better in the business than Janet Fisher with ConferenceDirect. Janet is phenomenal, patient and such an asset to the association. Please give George and Janet a special high five and fist bump when you see them in Frisco.

I am certainly pleased with the electronic system, but I am over the moon excited about the actual conference program. The disruptive theme runs rampant throughout the program, across all the divisions and interests groups. Kudos again to the outstanding program planners for slotting exciting panels and papers that push the boundaries of the way we have traditionally thought about our communication practices, processes, and paradigms.

To be especially provocative, I have scheduled four Vice-President’s Spotlight Panels throughout the conference tied to the theme of disruption: Disrupting Sports (organized by Dr. Dan Grano, UNC Charlotte), Disrupting Death (organized by Dr. Christine Davis, UNC Charlotte), Disrupting Pedagogy (organized by Mr. Lionell Smith, University of Memphis), and Disrupting Religion (organized by Dr. Andre Johnson, University of Memphis). I appreciate the great work of the organizers to bring together scholars and practitioners who will disrupt our sensibilities along these four domains. I hope that we have a full house for each of these spotlights because you are in for a real treat.

I have invited a special guest, Artis Twyman, Senior Director, Communication, Los Angeles Rams of the National Football League, to serve on the Disrupt-

Please see **Disruptive**, page 4

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

ED Reflections
Page 2

Frisco Ready
Page 3

Big Shoes
Page 4

NCA Awards
Page 5

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My Ride's Here

As my term as Executive Director of SSCA winds down it is important to recognize the efforts of many people who helped the association run smoothly for the last five years. It was not a solitary effort. My team at the College of Charleston included Katie Monk and Christine Ragusa, who managed the association's finances and member services respectively. Their work was made more difficult when I moved from Charleston to Chattanooga. I am very appreciative that they hung in with me through that transition and for their outstanding work.

Kevin Bryant worked all five years, and Andrew Pyle for three years of my term as convention staff members. They helped our convention-going members have a positive conference experience.

Janet Fisher of ConferenceDirect has worked with SSCA for 12 years and with three executive directors. Before joining ConferenceDirect Janet worked in nearly every aspect of the hotel industry. Her experiences helped us to select appropriate cities and properties, negotiate the best convention contracts, and saved us money with her careful examination of every daily and final convention invoice. We are the only client she offers onsite service. Her work for SSCA is invaluable and I will miss working closely with her.

Part of the executive director role involves collaborating closely with the Association's administrative committee or leadership team. I



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worked with outstanding presidents, vice presidents, editors, and standing committee chairs. The administrative committee members, and especially Presidents Jean DeHart, Roseann Mandziuk, Victoria Gallagher, Jason Munsell, and Pam Bourland Davis served the association well. I was fortunate to serve with these and other dedicated long-time members.

Carl Cates' friendship, advice, and counsel were invaluable, both as I began my term, and throughout its progression. As my term ends, I suppose he and I will have more time to eat bacon together. It was Carl who persistently kept asking me, in the face of repeated my refusals, to serve as executive director. I am glad he didn't give up.

Most of all, I want to thank our membership for trusting me with this responsibility. There is a reason that SSCA is the best of the regional associations. The strength of our organization is rooted in the character and sociability of its members. It has been an honor to serve as your executive director. With John Haas, you are being left in even steadier hands.

My ride's here. Thanks y'all.

CONNECTIONS

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Be It Resolved...

With the new year under way, you might be considering your resolutions. I hope those are progressing well, but I want to talk about another kind of resolution—the ones passed by the legislative assembly.

The SSCA Resolutions Committee drafts and presents the standard and any special resolutions at the annual convention. These resolutions can be about the workings of the association or conference. Also, the assembly uses resolutions to honor individuals and organizations that have served SSCA.

You can find a list of past resolutions on the SSCA website (www.ssca.net) under the Membership area. There you can see resolutions from the last ten years.

If you know a topic or person that needs to be considered in a resolution, please contact me at hickerca@jmu.edu.

- Corey A. Hickerson, James Madison University



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Work to Do in Frisco

As a conference attendee, it's easy to think of the work of the organization focused on paper/panel submissions and the actual conference. For the many volunteers for SSCA, the work to strengthen and maintain the association continues year round.

Jason Munsell, Immediate Past President, worked with the Nominating Committee to offer a strong slate of candidates (don't forget to vote). Wendy Atkins-Sayre, Second Vice President, has lined up interesting student research panels. And, of course, Shawn Long, Vice President, has been busy the entire year, not only coordinating the program as a whole, but also introducing, piloting, and managing our foray into the on-line submission process, which by all counts, helped everyone. He also checked out Frisco and our conference site. Jason, Shawn and I will be on a panel at the Georgia Communication Association to promote SSCA and the opportunities down the road in Norfolk and Greenville.

The Executive Council met during NCA in Baltimore, while the Administrative Committee has had conference calls and any number of e-mail conversations throughout the year. And this doesn't even cover the work Jennifer Samp has done to continue producing a fine and rigorous

journal, the promotions and membership work of Ashli Stokes and her committee, and the budget reviews of Jennifer Mize Smith and her committee. Of course we have a number of committees reviewing awards, managing the search for the next journal editor, and supporting the association in many other ways as well.

In the meantime, Jerry Hale has been working with incoming ED, John Haas, while keeping up with all of the above, and moving to a new job in a new location. He works closely with Janet Fisher who keeps us on point in planning for and during a conference. Both work with the Time and Place Committee, which I have heard just returned from the latest site visit for planning for the future. Our association is infinitely stronger because of these folks.

I especially want to point out the work of two Ad hoc committees. First is the SSCA Ethics Statement Committee, which has worked on a statement which will be presented in Frisco. This committee was comprised of Jim Kuypers, Virginia Tech, Chair; Nina Jo Moore, Appalachian State; Jim Pickett, Flagler; and Jenni Simon, University of North Carolina, Greensboro.

At the same time, the Ad hoc committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, has reviewed our organization as well as other regionals. Their report will be provided at Frisco as well, and will include a recommendation to move the committee to a Standing Committee of SSCA. The committee will also ask members to consider a division or interest group dedicated to the interests of Diversity, Equity and In-

clusion, to parallel the opportunities provided at other regional associations.

Those committee members are Eltra Gilchrist-Petty, University of Alabama, Huntsville, Chair; Michael Arrington, Sam Houston State University; Lisa Corrigan, University of Arkansas; Leland Spencer, Miami University; and Antonio Spikes, Davidson College.

So, yes, we'll have a fair amount of business to cover in Frisco.

All of these volunteers work to uphold traditions and the mission of SSCA, and to provide innovation. And that's part of what makes the SSCA family special – the value of tradition and the openness to something new. The conference is a place to reconnect and to connect; it's small enough to get to know folks and to volunteer, and it's large enough that there are always new folks to meet, new ideas to try.

For the upcoming conference, I hope you'll take advantage of as many opportunities as possible. Shawn has made sure there is no shortage of sessions or topics. Attend a session on a new topic, or with a different division. And because we're busy year round, go ahead and start thinking to 2021—I challenge you to propose a panel with at least one non-current SSCA member, and to invite a colleague or student to submit a paper. And I especially hope you'll thank the many volunteers at the division and interest group level, and at the association level as they represent our discipline and association well. Hope you have a great conference in Frisco – see you there!

A Reminder to Sustaining Members

Sustaining members please do not forget to preregister for the Frisco convention if you plan to attend. It is important to preregister so that we can accurately calculate our catering needs. While your convention registration is included in the sustaining membership there is a \$30 service charge if you do not preregister.



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Filling Big Shoes

explore the discipline and build lifelong relationships. Since that first association meeting, I have viewed SSCA as a central part of my professional life. As I transition to my new role, I am mindful of the traditions that contribute to the SSCA experience.

I am excited about serving as the Executive Director of SSCA. I am deeply committed to the association and welcome the opportunity to continue the work of building a strong association. In that capacity, I will be working with others to provide member services and financial management. Kevin Bryant of Tennessee Tech University will provide member services. Kevin has extensive experience with the operations of SSCA and is a familiar face at conference registration. Sandy Cabbage from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville will be

involved with the day-to-day management of the association's finances. Sandy has extensive experience with department accounting and financial services. I am grateful to Kevin and Sandy for their willingness to serve the association. In addition, I am grateful for the opportunity to work with Janet Fisher from ConferenceDirect.

In this new role, I am mindful that many heads are better than one. Moreover, I am mindful that our association is at its best when we create an environment that promotes inclusiveness and celebrates diversity. I look forward to working with the membership to advance SSCA's mission of promoting scholarship and teaching in the communication discipline.

SSCA has a tradition of strong leadership. That history of strong leadership is exemplified by people such as Susan Siltanen, Richard Ranta, and Carl Cates. That tradition continues with our current Executive Director Jerry Hale. Jerry has guided the association well and continued the tradition of creating positive experiences for SSCA members. Living up to that tradition will be a challenge!

My initial experience with SSCA took place at Houston during the annual association meeting in 1986. Over the next 34 years, the association offered me a welcoming home to

Disruptive

Continued from page 1

ing Sports panel. Artis is a seasoned communication professional, particularly with the NFL. He has led disruptive communication efforts during his long and storied career as a communication professional. I am excited to have him join our community of scholars at SSCA.



Artis Twyman

Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion and Professor of Communication at the University of Colorado Denver and the Anschutz Medical Campus. She has developed a track record for leadership, scholarship, teaching, service, mentorship, and training related to organizational communication, social identity, and power. She has worked tirelessly to promote more inclusive, humane, and equitable communication and professional practices. Among Dr. Allen's numerous publications is a groundbreaking book entitled *Difference Matters: Communicating Social Identity* (Waveland Press). She is working on the third edition of that book.

Dr. Allen's keynote address is titled: Disrupting Leadership through Radical Inclusion

This interactive keynote will incite and inspire participants to reimagine "leadership" and its implications for cultivating radical inclusion in communication scholarship and practice. We will explore ways to enact leadership disruptively within and beyond our roles and institutions, in order to effect change in our discipline and society-at-large. To say that this will be a

fantastic and memorable keynote event is an understatement. I am humbled that Dr. Allen will provide this timely address to our membership.

In closing, I am again honored to serve as the Vice-President and Program Planner for SSCA. I am excited about the upcoming conference and to see the many and varied ways that our members will disrupt traditional communication through their scholarship, pedagogy and activities in Frisco, Texas. I encourage you to visit the ssca.net website to view the interactive, digital conference program. We will have the traditional paper program for all the attendees, but you may also use the digital version to plan your disruptive paths in Frisco.

See you soon in Frisco,

Shawn D. Long

Vice-President, SSCA

Program Planner and Disruptor-in-Chief



Dr. Brenda J. Allen

Finally, but not exhaustively, I am so thrilled to announce the conference keynote speaker, Dr. Brenda J. Allen, Professor Emerita, University of Colorado. Dr. Allen is a former

30th Annual Theodore Clevenger Undergraduate Honors Conference



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The papers have been reviewed, the panels have been set, and now we await the commencement of the 30th annual Theodore Clevenger Undergraduate Honors Conference in Frisco. We were, once again,

fortunate to have so many quality submissions from students across the region. Thanks go to the students who submitted their work as well as the faculty who worked with them in various ways to help them with the submission process. I'd also like to thank our stalwart volunteers who reviewed papers and will chair and respond to panels in April.

We have a great conference planned, including 14 paper panels. Papers will cover everything from political rhetoric to communication about identity, online communication to communication in education, relationships to culture. Special recognition goes to the top 10%

of the presenters, as determined by reviewers, recognized as our 2020 Clevenger Scholars: Rhea Carter (Berea College), Kortney Halliburton (Berea College), Annabelle Klein (Transylvania University), Jada Petrus (Berea College), Jacob Stenson (Berea College), and Ashley Windom (Texas A&M University). Top paper awards will be announced at the conference.

Also on the schedule is a Thursday afternoon preview panel featuring UHC alums with advice for the presenters and an opportunity to ask questions about the conference. We will also have a Thursday afternoon spotlight panel on regional state champions in speech and debate. The UHC breakfast will take place on Saturday morning. UHC participants will receive their tickets to the breakfast when they arrive at registration. Others (faculty advisors, guests) will be able to purchase tickets. We have also planned another graduate school fair that will occur Saturday afternoon. We hope to see UHC participants at all of these events and panels.

Please show support for these talented students by welcoming them and attending their panels. SSCA is known for its friendliness and this is a perfect place to show it. See you in Frisco!

Points of Pride

Greetings from Charlotte, where January feels like April. The (likely brief) spring-like weather helps me gear up for our Frisco Conference, coming soon. Be on the lookout for another episode of SSCA's Podcast, *The Medium is the Message*, produced and hosted by member David Nelson. Thanks to Dave for his hard work on this project where he'll spotlight some exciting events that are happening at the Conference, share with us conversations with SSCA leadership, and take us on an audio tour of Richard Norman/Norman Film Studios in Jacksonville. Thanks also to all of our new and steadfast supporters of SSCA who help support the Conference and the membership through their investment in the Association—we will once again have a great program and graduate program open house/networking event due to their efforts. While you're at the conference, consider stopping by our exhibitors' tables as well to flip through new titles, find resources for your classes, and maybe get a few goodies to take home. We'll also



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be selling our popular SSCA t-shirts ahead of the conference—have you ordered yours? Look for the link on our official Facebook page. As always, please send me the good news about your programs and our members—this month, I'd like to highlight our members for their achievements at the recent NCA Annual Convention in Baltimore, Maryland. We're proud of our great members for their hard work and their institutions for their dedication to SSCA! See you soon in Frisco!

Teaching Awards

*Wallace A. Bacon Lifetime Teaching
Excellence Award*

Stephen A. Smith, University of Arkansas

Scholarship Awards

*Franklyn S. Haiman Award for
Distinguished Scholarship in Freedom of
Expression*

Stephen A. Smith, University of Arkansas

Service Awards

Robert J. Kibler Memorial Award
Tina Maria Harris, Louisiana State
University

Division Awards

Communication Ethics Division

Top Journal Article of the Year Award
Andrew Tinker, Middle Tennessee State
University
Communication Ethics and the Rejection
of Paternalism in John Stuart Mill's *On
Liberty*. *Communication Quarterly*
67, 3 (2019): 312-332.

Public Relations Division

PRIDE Book Award
Brigitta R. Brunner, Auburn University
& Corey A. Hickerson, James Madison
University
*Cases in Public Relations: Translating
Ethics into Action*.
Oxford University Press

The Rise of Frisco Kid 2020: A Movie Review ★★★★★ 5/5 Stars



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There have been two movies called *Frisco Kid*, a 1935 film starring James Cagney, and 1979 Western satire starring Gene Wilder as a Polish Rabbi. Both movies are situated in or characters are traveling to San Francisco. This new movie (out now in limited release, but will have wide release on April 1), is not set in San Francisco, but rather it is a quest to find Frisco, Texas, north of Dallas, on the fringe of the galaxy. Written, directed and starring Shawn Long, produced by Jerry Hale, and released by SSCA, the story follows the Frisco Kid (played by Long) as he discovers a new technology (something called a wayfinder) that he believes will guide him to Frisco. (Spoilers Ahead!) This wayfinder was created by evil Sith Lord Jerry Jones to guide members of the evil First Cowboy Order to Frisco. The movie starts with the Frisco Kid having a dream or a vision or something like that. The Frisco Kid is standing on top of Kennesaw Mountain in Georgia and hears an aged voice say, "Find the wayfinder and that wayfinder will help you find the way to Frisco because that's what wayfinders do." But where is this Wayfinder? The Frisco Kid hears the voice again (played by Golden Corral nominee, Jason Munsell), "Oh, that wayfinder is online. Google 'Conference Management Software by X-CD Technologies Inc.'"

Once the Frisco Kid finds this wayfinder he soon learns that the map to Frisco is in so many freaking different pieces that he has to go on various individual quests just to figure

out what the hell the wayfinder is actually saying about how to find the way to Frisco. He has to write a paper, submit it online through a new fancy system, the paper goes through a review process, he'll have to be notified about acceptance (or not) and then even after that he'll have to find some stupid knife. Though daunted, our hero gets on his robotic horse (named SS20), grabs his laser sword, and the journey begins.

Throughout the film and the various quests, the Frisco Kid and his trusty SS20 offer rich banter. The witty SS20 almost always begins speaking with, "And this is straight from the horse's mouth" and ends each sentence with "doesn't that make a lot of horse sense?" The script is brilliant, funny, and tight. It will likely be nominated for a best unoriginal screenplay award. As the Frisco Kid successfully moves through each little quest, he at last discovers an ancient knife hidden in Stonebriar Centre at Dick's Sporting Goods. The blade, once sharp, was apparently forged from the excrement of Roger Staubach, the handle shaped like a cowboy hat. Holding the knife just right in the parking lot of Dick's, the Frisco Kid discovers it is pointing to the 91 acre campus of the Dallas Cowboys World Headquarters.

Exploring the dark corridors of the headquarters riding atop SS20 with laser sword in hand, the Frisco Kid soon discovers evil Sith Lord Jerry Jones hooked up to some tubes or something like that to keep the villain alive. Also known as Darth Cowboy, Jerry Jones suddenly shoots lightning out of his nasty looking, super evil fingers striking Frisco Kid and jolting him to the ground. As Frisco Kid lays injured, Darth Cowboy declares in a pile of bile, "Young fool. Did you think you'd find Frisco on your own? You must also have an undergraduate honors conference!" Just then, a new character not yet seen in the movie, Memphis Rey (played skillfully by Golden

Arches nominee Wendy Atkins-Sayer), appears behind the Frisco Kid with her own laser sword and robotic horse (SS21). Frisco Kid and Memphis Rey join forces and battle Darth Cowboy. But just then the whole of the wicked First Cowboy Order joins in the combat. All seems lots for our heroes.

The climax of the movie is a stunning, goose pimple inducing cinematic achievement. Just as we think the First Cowboy Order and Darth Cowboy will win the day, random spaceships appear above the Dallas Cowboys World Headquarters. The largest ship, the Southern Crossroads, piloted by Captain Pam, destroys much of the headquarters with the ship's laser cannons. The Applied Communication ship is there. So too the Rhetoric and Public Address ship. The storied Argumentation and Forensic, the famed Comm Theory, the Community College, the Freedom of Speech, the Gender Studies, Instructional Development, Intercultural, Interpersonal, Language and Social Interaction, Mass Comm, Performance Studies, Political, Popular, and PR—all these ships join the attack against the First Cowboy Order. Even the smaller ships known collectively as the interest group fleet join the laser chaos. All ships piloted by passionate and skillful fliers, they together, the alliance of ships working with the Frisco Kid and Memphis Rey, defeat the First Cowboy Order, find Frisco, and celebrate new peace in the galaxy.

The movie ends with a party at a cantina called Embassy Suites in Frisco, Texas. The Communication Alliance toast their victory over evil; and Comm Ghosts are there too, glowing spirits of the past appreciatively watching the merriment. All that being said, the plot is pretty predictable, but the movie is still really fun. The special effects and sound editing are just okay, but that stuff is always really expensive.

Review by Jason B. Munsell

SSCA DIVISIONS AND INTEREST GROUPS

SSCA DIVISIONS

- Applied Communication
- Communication Theory
- Community College
- Freedom of Speech
- Gender Studies
- Instructional Development
- Intercultural Communication
- Interpersonal Communication
- Language and Social Interaction
- Mass Communication
- Performance Studies
- Political Communication
- Popular Communication
- Public Relations
- Rhetoric and Public Address
- Southern Argumentation and Forensics

INTEREST GROUPS

- Association for Communication Administrators (ACA)
- American Society for the History of Rhetoric
- Ethnography
- Kenneth Burke Society
- Philosophy & Ethics of Communication

Don't forget to visit the SSCA website at www.sca.net!

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