**Digital Democracy: Online Comments, Big Data, Blogs and Twitter**

**Sponsor: Political Communication Division**

**Sat, 11/23: 8:00 AM  - 9:15 AM**

**Marriott Wardman Park**

**Room: Thurgood Marshall Ballroom East - Mezzanine Level**

This session features papers on commenting in social media, using big data in political activism, citing oppositional viewpoints on blogs and relying on twitter for news.

**Chair**

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**Sponsor/Co-Sponsors**

Political Communication Division

**Presentations**

**Framing Comments in Social Media**

"Like." Not only is it a mainstay of casual sentence structure, the term also governs how we respond to everything from news articles to comments from our closest friends on Facebook. But "Like" doesn't always seem appropriate. Drawing from research on framing theory and motivated reasoning, we propose that it may be challenging to press "Like" in response to a fair-minded, but counter-attitudinal, post in a comment section. Using an online experiment, we analyze how three different buttons – "Like," "Recommend," and "Respect – affect citizens' responses to comments from an online comment section. The results provide strong evidence that these word choices are consequential. The "Respect" button engendered more willingness to cross party lines and support comments from another political perspective in comparison to the "Recommend" or "Like" buttons.

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**How Big Data is Too Small for Political Activism: Is Digital Democracy really Democratic?**

Some scholars argue that the participatory nature of the Internet overturns previous theories of collective action. They contend that online activism enables political groups to do more with less by creating low to no costs for participation, making Olson's free-rider dilemma irrelevant with online movements. Most of this research has focused on episodic events and high levels of digital engagement from individuals, rather than on social movement organizations (SMOs) from different social classes. This paper asks if SMOs with working class members use the Internet at the same rate and extent for member participation as do SMOs with middle or upper class members. If so, how do costs explain any difference? This paper uses a sampling frame that does not privilege the digital nor selects on the dependent variable. Instead, this mixed-method study compares 33 existing SMOs that all target the same political issue in the American South but have variation in their members' social class makeup and political ideology, from rank and file unions to Tea Party groups. Results show a digital activism divide based on social class. Contrary to implications from previous research, the costs of online participation for groups with more working class members are high for both individual members and for the organization, challenging new theories of collective action. With an increasing reliance on Big Data, digital activism research that finds changes in collective action theory needs to consider how the digital age has affected marginalized communities. I argue that Big Data can be too small.

**Author**

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**Using Twitter to bypass traditional news? Intermedia agenda setting during the 2012 presidential primaries**

Current controversy exists concerning the extent to which political candidates are using new online platforms to bypass, follow, or attract the attention of the traditional media. While blog use by politicians has commanded the attention of scholars since the early-2000s, the social networking site was not considered a major factor until the 2008 presidential election. At this time, Twitter had not substantiated its role on the campaign scene. Therefore, no research has examined how presidential candidate Twitter feeds influence election coverage or whether candidates influence one another's Twitter feeds. This study presents an exploratory look at intermedia agenda setting among the Twitter feeds of the 2012 presidential primary candidates, Twitter feeds of the Republican and Democratic parties, and articles published in the nation's top newspapers. Using computer-assisted content analysis, the top-seven issues in Twitter feeds and news articles were identified. Daily issue frequencies within both mediums were then analyzed using time series analysis. Results reveal the relationship between Twitter posts and traditional news is symbiotic, with varying levels of intensity and differential time lags. Overall, results show that while politicians may still rely on traditional media for legitimacy on some issues, in many cases they are using social media to set a unique agenda – an agenda that is then being picked up by traditional news.

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**CONNECTIONS to Political Humor, Satire and Entertainment**

**Sponsor: Political Communication Division**

**Sat, 11/23: 9:30 AM  - 10:45 AM**

**Marriott Wardman Park**

**Room: Thurgood Marshall Ballroom East - Mezzanine Level**

This session features five papers on political humor, satire and entertainment.

**Chair**

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**Sponsor/Co-Sponsors**

Political Communication Division

**Presentations**

**Uncertainty Expression and Reduction in Discussion about Political News, Opinion, and Satire**

Recently, scholars have called for more integration of mass media and conversation research (e.g., Southwell & Yzer, 2009). Moreover, scholars have noted that increased integration of interpersonal communication theory into the political discussion literature is warranted (Eveland, Morey, & Hutchens, 2011). The goals of this study are (1) to examine the extent to which people express uncertainty in conversations about political media messages and (2) to examine the extent to which conversations can reduce uncertainty about political media messages. In addition, a mediation model is proposed, such that political messages can create uncertainty, which can result in uncertainty expression during conversations about political messages. Going a step further, any felt or expressed uncertainty may be reduced through discussion. Uncertainty-based theories are used to guide the study, which sits at the crossroads of political discussion and mass-mediated messages about politics. In doing so, four types of political media messages (traditional news, opinion news, juvenalian satire, and horatian satire) are used in a computer-mediated discussion experiment to answer the study's hypotheses and research question. Results show that uncertainty about mass-mediated political messages was expressed, uncertainty differed across political messages, and uncertainty was not always reduced by discussion.

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**Appreciation for Consonant Political Humor: A Cognitive Consistency Approach to the Study of Political Entertainment**

This study points to Cognitive Dissonance Theory as a promising framework for political entertainment research. The concepts of consonant and dissonant political humor are conceptualized and analyzed via one statewide (N = 304) and two national surveys (N = 1008, N = 786, respectively). Consonant humor relates to humor that targets political figures, issues, and organizations that an individual opposes, while dissonant humor represents content that targets political objects that a person supports. These data reveal a clear individual-level preference for consonant over dissonant political humor. In addition, an appreciation for superiority-based humor and political humor's ability to forge stronger connections with likeminded others are strong, positive predictors of consonant political humor appreciation. These relationships replicate fully across the three data sets. Additional analysis reveals that biological sex (i.e., Male-other), political party identification (i.e., Democrat-other), and education are positive predictors of this study's triad of endogenous variables (consonant humor appreciation, appreciation of superiority-based humor, and appreciation of political humor's social function). Implications of the findings are discussed and future lines of cognitive dissonance-based political entertainment research are detailed. Ultimately, it is argued that the Cognitive Dissonance approach introduced in this work represents a theoretical foundation grounded in the natural human desire for consistency-an explanatory principle that is distinct from much extant work on the study of political entertainment and offers strong potential.

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**From Funny Features to Entertaining Effects: Connecting Approaches to Communication Research on Political Comedy**

This article offers a recognition of potential points of intersection and difference across communication research lines on political comedy. Based on our findings, we argue that political comedy scholarship can be usefully divided into two areas: (1) features and (2) effects. Under features, we find three overlapping but distinct areas of emphasis: political comedy's rhetorical devices and conventions, its ideological and ethical functions, and how it may serve as a model for public culture. Under effects, we construct another three areas, including knowledge and learning, attitudes and effects, and processing, understanding, and affinity. We construct an overview of studies working on political comedy's features and effects, before finally drawing five implications from this project for future work.

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**Citizenship is a Joke: Jon Stewart’s Rally to Restore Sanity and Ironic Civic Engagement**

As more viewers look to The Daily Show and The Colbert Report for their political news fix it becomes difficult to gauge both what level of civic participation viewers may employ and what civic participation means. Specifically in the academic literature on political communication there remains much debate as to what effects these television shows have had on civic participation in viewers, particularly in relation to cynicism, voting behaviors, and information seeking. What has been underexplored is how these shows may contribute to alternative modes of civic participation, most notably attendance at political rallies and other large-scale events. This essay explores the role political rallies play as a mode of civic participation by investigating underlying motives of attendees to "The Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear" held as a "mock" political event by Comedy Central pundits Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert before the November 2010 midterm elections. I argue that this rally indicates not only a heightened level of civic participation by viewers, running counter to much academic literature about political satire, but also signifies a need to revisit what is meant by civic participation in the political sphere. The role of humor and irony in engendering a rehabilitated form of civic participation in an increasingly fragmented and ironic media environment is discussed.

**Author**

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**“Cliffpocalypsemageddonacaust”: Analysis of the Fiscal Cliff Metaphor on The Daily Show and The Colbert Report**

This paper explores how The Daily Show and The Colbert Report responded to the "fiscal cliff," a number of tax increases and federal spending cuts that were slated to occur on December 31, 2012 unless Congress acted to avert them. It begins by looking behind the "fiscal cliff" metaphor to the actual legislation at issue. Then it examines Ben Bernake's popularization of the fiscal cliff metaphor in Congressional testimony. To lay the groundwork for an examination of parody news programming, the paper examines both empirical research on its viewers and critical/rhetorical analyses of its content, finding a consensus among researchers that the programs aspire to offer more than simple comedy. Finally the paper examines in detail two segments from each program, showing that each segment critiques the "fiscal cliff" metaphor and plays with other possible metaphors to describe the same legislative impasse. It concludes that in satirizing and parodying new coverage of the "fiscal cliff," parody news aspired to a critique of the overreliance on a single metaphor to explain a complex legislative process.

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**Political Communication in the United States and Middle East**

**Sponsor: Political Communication Division**

**Sat, 11/23: 9:30 AM  - 10:45 AM**

**Marriott Wardman Park**

**Room: Delaware A - Lobby Level**

This session features papers that address President Obama's statements on Libya, how Egyptians use the Internet, the role of humorous activism in the Egyptian revolution, storytelling in Iran, and the rhetoric of American Muslims.

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Political Communication Division

**Presentations**

**The Polysemy of Hope: Peace, Change, and the U.S. Intervention in Libya**

The 2011 Libyan Civil War presented President Barack Obama with a set of unique foreign policy challenges. As an insurgent presidential candidate, Obama had successfully emerged from a difficult Democratic Party primary campaign by defining himself in contrast to the unpopular administration of President George W. Bush-and, to an extent, to the record of Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton. While critics would object to President Obama's decision to intervene in Libya on a variety of grounds, the administration's rhetorical and legal justifications for the mission are of particular interest to communication scholars given popular perception of Obama as a "peace candidate" and his campaign's forceful constitutional critique of Bush-era abuses of executive power. In this essay, I argue that Obama's 2008 presidential campaign successfully and strategically employed a polysemic rhetoric of peace, strategically projecting two distinguishable foreign policy personae: a stylized image that emphasized peace and change, and a substantive, nuanced persona embracing a moderate foreign policy of liberal internationalism that embraced humanitarian intervention. The relationship between these personae-and their influence on President Obama's foreign policy decisions-compel us to reexamine how candidates discuss foreign policy, how campaigns impact governing decisions, and how we evaluate victorious politicians' fidelity to their often-idealistic campaign platforms.

**Author**

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**Egypt, Islamists, and the Internet: A Rhetoric of Dialectics**

This paper is an analysis of the cyber rhetoric of the Islamist (political Islam) Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in its official English language website, Ikhwanweb.com, from 2005-2010, years preceding the Arab Revolution of January 2011 in Egypt. Through rhetorical analysis this essay (a) interprets the ideology manifest in the Egyptian MB's cyber rhetoric and (b) uncovers the instrumental function the cyber rhetoric serves. The analysis unearths rhetorical dialectics that point to four core elements: (a) distrust towards the Hosni Mubarak regime, and Western governments that aid and support authoritarian governments (b) need to be valued-to be respected, considered equals, understood without prejudices, and acknowledged despite differences-by Western societies (c) significance of caution in online communications and (d) flux resulting from the Egyptian MB's efforts to transition into an organization that has an Islamic essence and nurtures democratic aspirations. Based on these findings it can be stated that in post-Mubarak Egypt the Egyptian MB-already at the helm of Egyptian politics-will be in a state of flux till it can: (a) define and establish a form of democracy that will be unique to the Egyptian context and (b) resolve the dilemma surrounding the relationship that religion and politics should share. The instrumental function of Ikhwanweb is evident in that it enables the Egyptian MB to reach out to the Western world-to apprise Western societies that Islamic organizations are not inherently extremist entities and to disapprove Western governments' support for authoritarian regimes.

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**Mubarak Framed! Humor Activism in the Egyptian Revolution**

The Egyptian revolution captured the attention of the world for its innovative ways in ending the dictatorial regime of President Hosni Mubarak. However, criticism of Mubarak's regime predates the protests of the Arab Spring. The people of Egypt, historically known for their sense of humor, have expressed their dissent and dissatisfaction against all political regimes, including Mubarak's, through their jokes about the rulers and their regimes. This study, through textual analysis, analyzed the narrative jokes about Mubarak that resurfaced during the Egyptian revolution to uncover how the people of Egypt had, over the years, provided opposition to Mubarak's regime. The jokes framed his image ranging from dim-witted to ruthless over the span of his thirty years in power and served as a scathing critique of Mubarak's regime and policies, a critique that was only possible because it was couched between layers of humor. The functional advantages of humor in expressing political dissent in dictatorial regimes and the implications for future research are discussed.

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**Interpreting Iranian Leaders’ Conflict Framing by Combining Latent Semantic Analysis and Pragmatist Storytelling Theory**

The purpose of this paper is to report the results of a longitudinal analysis of the speeches of two Iranian leaders: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and The Supreme Leader Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei. The objective is to offer details about temporal shifts in Iran's communication about nuclear technology and to effect improvements of predictions of what political violent actions may occur in the future. The study combines a quantitative analysis using Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA), which allow quantifying relationship between terms, phrases and documents and a qualitative analysis using Boje's Pragmatist Storytelling Theory (PST). PST defines storytelling as dynamically comprised of narratives of the past, living stories of the immediate present, and connective antenarratives. An antenarrative is defined as a before narrative coherence and bet on the future course of action, which relates to lived stories that are unfolding. The contribution of this study to political communication research is an integration of LSA patterns with PST interpretative shifts as a two-step way to analyze political discourse in a strong international conflict situation. The LSA findings include successful tracing for the quantity of violent phrases. The PST findings include a shift from mainly linear- to spiral-antenarratives. Implications for future studies are addressed.

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**Rules for Radicalization: Congress, Community, and American Muslims**

On March 10, 2011, Representative Peter King opened the first of what became a series of six hearings, over the next fifteen months, on the problem of "radicalization" among Muslim American youth and its relationship to homegrown terrorism. This essay explores the grammatical and rhetorical features of radicalization with particular reference to the 2011-2012 congressional hearings.

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**Feminist Foreign Policy: The Case of Hillary Rodham Clinton as the Secretary of State**

**Sponsor: Political Communication Division**

**Sat, 11/23: 11:00 AM  - 12:15 PM**

**Marriott Wardman Park**

**Room: Delaware A - Lobby Level**

Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton has advanced an explicitly feminist agenda in American foreign policy that has emphasized empowering women and that their participation in political processes is vital to international security and advocated for so-called "soft issues," such as economic development and energy diplomacy, as well as the "hard issues" that are part of a more patriarchal-leaning tradition. Clinton's feminist turn represents a distinctive change and provides evidence for the argument that women of high feminist-consciousness can reshape key global concerns.

**Chair**

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Political Communication Division

**Presentations**

**Promoting a ‘Decade of Delivery’: The Anti-Human Trafficking Rhetoric of Hillary Rodham Clinton**

2010 was the first year in which the US State Department's annual Trafficking in Person's Report included the United States as a "source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor, debt bondage, and forced prostitution." That designation accompanied Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's increased focus on the problem of human trafficking domestically and internationally. This paper examines Clinton's anti-human trafficking rhetoric, considering the ways in which it contributes to the modern abolition movement and positions her as a potential presidential nominee.

**Author**

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**Reflections on Feminism and Diplomacy**

One rationale frequently offered for bringing more women into positions of political power is that they will bring a more feminist perspective. A major Cabinet /agency such as the State Department is one possible site for examining feminized politics. Aspects featured in women's leadership styles potentially form a centerpiece in revising American diplomacy. This position paper mines Kim Ghattas's memoir about her travels with Secretary Clinton to discover how Clinton's motives and accomplishments might be defined by feminist standards.

**Author**

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**Security Feminism, Counter-terrorism and Equal Rights: Clinton's Rhetoric of Apostrophe as Burkean Mystification.**

Hillary Clinton was a key figure behind the scenes during the Good Friday Peace Agreements, which brought a permanent ceasefire to Northern Ireland. Though underdeveloped in 1997, these tactics would later form the rhetorical style known as "security feminism," which she employed as Secretary of State and in a six-minute video she released with the Human Rights Campaign in support of LGBT marriage equality. I argue Clinton uses apostrophe as a form of Burkean mystification in her "security feminism" rhetoric to articulate a salient equal rights agenda to patriarchal structures focused on short term securitization.

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**The Paradox of Feminist Foreign Policy**

This essay explores the paradoxes Hillary Rodham Clinton faces as she offers an explicitly feminist agenda in American foreign policy that emphasizes the advancement of women, economic development, and energy diplomacy while also maintaining a traditionally perceived masculine stance on hard issues such as nuclear proliferation, drone policy, and military intervention. This paper focuses on Hillary Rodham Clinton's address to the Council of Foreign Relations and how she feels compelled to appease multiple constituencies to position herself potentially as a 2016 presidential candidate.

**Author**

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**Transformative Gender Power Politics: The Case of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.**

This paper explores manifestations of Hillary Clinton as depicted in TIME to explore how women in power are represented in popular media. Clinton's appearances in TIME embody the strategic and representational choices that women in power must overcome to participate in foreign policy. This essay argues Clinton transcends patriarchal representational modes and creates a transformative strategy that demonstrates how women can navigate masculine public policies and how this can position her as a 2016 presidential candidate.

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**Political Debates: Social Watching, Candidate Strategies and Negative Effects**

**Sponsor: Political Communication Division**

**Sat, 11/23: 11:00 AM  - 12:15 PM**

**Marriott Wardman Park**

**Room: Thurgood Marshall Ballroom East - Mezzanine Level**

This session features four papers on political debates. The analyses examine the social watching of a primary debate, candidate strategies in primary debates, centrist appeals in Senate debates and the negative effects of debate messages on polarized individuals.

**Chair**

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**Sponsor/Co-Sponsors**

Political Communication Division

**Presentations**

**Social Watching a 2012 Republican Presidential Primary Debate**

This study examines the "Twitter Election of 2012," and specifically young citizens' "social watching" behaviors while live-tweeting a 2012 nationally televised Republican primary debate. We find several important relationships between key demographic, social and political engagement variables and participants' social watching activity (frequency of tweeting while watching the debate). We also find important links between tweet content (frequency of candidate mentions in tweets) and debate viewers' candidate evaluations.   
Key Words: presidential campaign, primary debate, social media, Twitter, social watching

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**The Rise and Fall of Newt Gingrich: How Long Shot Candidates Can Use Debates to Compete in Presidential Primaries**

Newt Gingrich became a frontrunner for the Republican nomination for president in 2012 through his almost exclusive focus on debate performance. While Gingrich's campaign was ultimately unsuccessful, his debate performances made him a frontrunner and future candidates should appropriate his tactics. As American media outlets have become more partisan, many partisans have begun rejecting contrary messages and become more partisan themselves. Gingrich attempted to capitalize on this fact, as well as the increase in debates held by networks, and nearly won the nomination despite a skeletal campaign organization due to his debate prowess. By portraying himself as a unifying figure and attacking journalists to create an "us vs. them" dynamic, by complimenting his opponents and even borrowing some of their ideas, by familiarizing himself with local issues in the states where the debates were held, and by offering bold solutions to relevant problems, Gingrich made himself the front runner before retreating from such tactics and making additional errors. Gingrich's treatment of Michele Bachmann was quite different from his treatment of many male rivals, leaving the candidate open to charges of sexism. Gingrich also hurt his campaign by presenting a number of policy prescriptions that were either inconsistent with his overall message or irrelevant to the majority of primary voters. Future candidates in both parties, especially long short candidates, could use Gingrich's successful tactics while avoiding his missteps to raise their stature almost exclusively through debates and potentially win the nomination of their party.

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**The Negative Effects of Presidential Debate Messages on Polarized Individuals**

Research on the effects of televised political debate exposure consistently shows that watching debates causes increased political polarization (McKinney and Warner, 2012). This project explores a consequence of that effect. If political polarization or intense party identification are conceptualized as a culture worldview, or extreme identification with a social group, terror management theory predicts that individuals will react to those that oppose their political views in a negative manner including increased dislike and aggression towards the opposing group. Using an experimental design these potential reactions to a debate message are explored within a convenience sample (N = 459). The sample was divided into two groups, the high and low politically polarized, and effects were explored within the highly polarized group and between the two groups. The results show that within the highly polarized group dislike for the opposing political group increased following debate exposure and that increased dislike was statistically related with increased political aggression. However, the change in liking the opposing political group and levels of aggression were not different between the high and low polarization groups. The implications of these results on the political system as well as on the theoretical understanding of presidential debates will be discussed, specifically highlighting the ways that these findings illustrate how the American electorate may become disconnected and/or connected based on their political party affiliation.  
Keywords: Presidential Debates, 2012 Election, Aggression, Terror Management Theory

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**Survival Strategies in Solidly Partisan States: An Analysis of Centrist Appeals in 2012 U.S. Senate Debates**

With the growing number of centrist senators diminishing on Capitol Hill, the next few election cycles will be crucial to the survival of this moderate group of lawmakers. Campaign debate scholars should investigate how vulnerable incumbents construct a centrist issue agenda and image to connect with voters in states ideologically incongruent with the incumbents' parties. In doing so, debate scholars will also fill the lack of lower-level debate research. Utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods, this analysis examined the debate appeals of Sens. Claire McCaskill (D-MO) and Scott Brown (R-MA). Findings suggest McCaskill's issue agenda was congruent with a centrist image in contrast to Brown's contradictory issue and image messaging. Additionally, centrist incumbents were more likely to acclaim a centrist image than attack their opponents' partisanship.

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**Political Parties: Partisan Media, Addresses and Advertisements**

**Sponsor: Political Communication Division**

**Sat, 11/23: 12:30 PM  - 1:45 PM**

**Marriott Wardman Park**

**Room: Thurgood Marshall Ballroom East - Mezzanine Level**

This session features four papers connected to political partisanship. The analyses examine the decline of partisan media and an increase in split-ticket voting, John McCain's address to CPAC in 2008, the emerging genre of party "cross over" addresses, and Republican rhetorical strategies in 2008 campaign advertisements targeted to Clinton voters.

**Chair**

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**Respondent**

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**Sponsor/Co-Sponsors**

Political Communication Division

**Presentations**

**Who Cleans Up When the Party’s Over? The Decline of Partisan Media and Rise of Split-Ticket Voting in the 20th Century**

While scholars have studied the composition and impact of the partisan press during their 19th-century height, the political impact of the gradual decline of these partisan papers remains relatively under-examined. The unnoted vitality and endurance of partisan newspapers (which continued to constitute a majority of American newspapers until the 1960s) represents a huge hole in our understanding of partisan communication in the post-war era. As a consequence of this omission, scholars have ignored a potentially vital contributing factor to changing patterns of partisan voting. This paper sets out to examine this relationship by constructing a quadrennial database of newspaper party self-identification from 1932 to the 2004 for 66 key counties across the country. We then match these data to county-level presidential and congressional vote totals. Based on these data, we describe the decline of explicitly partisan newspapers over time and find evidence that the rise of non-partisan news helps explain the rise of ticket-splitting and decline of consistent partisan voting.

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**Straying from a Broken Path: John McCain at CPAC, February 7, 2008**

John McCain's 2008 presidential bid drew criticism from prominent Republicans representing multiple strands of conservative thought. As the nominee of a fragmenting party, McCain needed both to address past divergences from Republicans and account for his own "maverick" reputation. To this end, McCain's Conservative Political Action Conference speech depicts his identity as the culmination of a redemption drama in which he occasionally strayed from, but ultimately returned to, the path of a "true" conservative. Simultaneously, the speech both explicitly and implicitly demonstrates the fragmentation of that path through the articulation of tensions inherent to conservatism. Following an account of the conservative movement that addresses its tensions over time, we turn to McCain's speech to examine the mutual exchange of intrinsic and extrinsic substance within his constructed identity.

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**The Emerging Genre of the National Convention Party Cross Over Address: An Analysis of Zell Miller, Joe Lieberman, and James Leach**

In this paper, I argue that speeches given at national party conventions by politicians who have crossed party lines to support their (former) party's opponent are representative of an emerging genre known as national convention party cross over addresses. Furthermore, I assert that these speeches suffer from nearly impossible rhetorical binds, and thus, become the ultimate act of political sacrifice. I will develop this argument in three areas of analysis. First, in describing the existing literature on the purpose of conventions and the basic characteristics of convention rhetoric, I will demonstrate that cross-over convention speeches exhibit somewhat different functions and formal characteristics that make them an emerging genre all on their own. Second, I will analyze three case studies (Zell Miller, Joe Lieberman, and Jim Leach) to demonstrate how the speeches are executed. In so doing, I will contend that each speaker may have succeeded in one goal of rallying voters sympathetic to the party they endorsed but at the same time, they demonstrate the potential long-term risks of open-minded political endorsements. In other words, despite their best efforts to navigate the constraints of being perceived as a traitor, most cross over convention speakers will ultimately fail in completely escaping this stigma. Finally, I will conclude the paper by discussing the implications that this essay has for our understanding of this emerging genre, convention rhetoric, and political rhetoric in general.

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**Party Unity or Party Defector? The Rhetorical Strategies of 2008 Republican Advertisements to Earn Clinton Voters’ Support**

The Democratic Primaries for the 2008 presidential election were long, hard-fought battles between Senators Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. Lasting over 17 months, the primaries caused major fractions within the Democratic Party. Some hostility between the fractions stemmed from Clinton supporters' belief that the Obama campaign had made numerous sexist statements during the primaries. The media both documented these allegations of sexism and added to them, with Clinton supporters often accusing the media of sexist coverage of Clinton. The disappointment Clinton supporters felt when she finally conceded to Obama, combined with their anger over the believed presence of sexism in the primaries made the voters particularly susceptible to the attempts made by the McCain campaign to gain their support. This essay critically analyzes three political advertisements ("Passed Over," "Lipstick," and "Disrespectful") which illustrate the McCain campaign's strategy to persuade ex-Clinton supporters to shift their support to the Republican Party. These three advertisements are used to appeal to ex-Clinton supporters by playing off of the already present accusation of sexism to portray Obama as sexist and McCain as the defender against these sexist attacks and of female politicians, including Clinton and his eventual running-mate, Governor Sarah Palin.

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**Voters’ Influence of Candidates’ Nonverbal Behavior in Political Campaigns**

**Sponsor: Nonverbal Communication Division**

**Sat, 11/23: 12:30 PM  - 1:45 PM**

**Marriott Wardman Park**

**Room: Jackson - Mezzanine Level**

As a consequence of the 2012 presidential debates, researchers have become interested in the contributions of nonverbal communication in voters' evaluation of candidates and voting decisions. Panelists will draw upon their research to discuss the influence of nonverbal communication on voters' emotional reactions and evaluations of the candidates as a consequence of the debates and political advertising during the 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns. They will also discuss research on the affects of candidates' nonverbal immediacy on voters' participation and evaluation of candidates in a local election. A case will be made for studying the influence that voters' personality traits or temperament has on their political decisions.

**Chair**

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Nonverbal Communication Division

Political Communication Division

Empirical Studies of Political Communication: Learning, Information Seeking and the Third-Person Effect

Sponsor: Political Communication Division

Sat, 11/23: 2:00 PM  - 3:15 PM

Marriott Wardman Park

Room: Thurgood Marshall Ballroom East - Mezzanine Level

This session features papers on political learning, information seeking and the third-person effect.

**Chair**

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**Sponsor/Co-Sponsors**

Political Communication Division

**Presentations**

**Differential gains and communication confusion: Distinguishing two theoretical communication models of political participation and learning**

The differential gains model of communication hypothesizes that individuals who engage in higher levels of interpersonal political discussion derive greater meaning from mass media content, extracting more mobilizing information and facts that relate to increases in political participation and knowledge. In the past, the differential gains model has received consistent empirical support as a theoretical framework for predicting political participation. However, previous research has shown inconsistent evidence for differential gains as a model of political learning, instead finding that high levels of interpersonal political talk relate to more "confusion" about facts drawn from media. Using data from the 2008 National Annenberg Election Study (NAES), this paper theoretically distinguishes between the differential gains and "communication confusion" models, showing that each account for different political outcomes – differential gains for participation and communication confusion for learning. Explanations for these phenomena and implications for future research are explored.

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**Beyond selective exposure? Exploring the role of issue involvement in predicting information seeking about climate change**

In this study we explore two competing perspectives on how people engage with information seeking at a website about a highly controversial issue, climate change. The first perspective, the selective exposure hypothesis, assumes that when people encounter information congruent with their point of view, it will reinforce their beliefs and encourage information seeking. The second perspective, the issue involvement hypothesis, assumes that highly involved people will seek out more information at the site, regardless if it matches their existing attitudes about the issue.  
We study these competing hypotheses using an online survey given to a sample of the general public in the United States (N = 1,510). In the survey, we asked participants a variety of questions and tracked their actions at NASA's climate change website in order to measure their information seeking behaviors in the context of their attitudes and involvement with the issue of climate change. In this experimental setting, we also explore the role of goal-directed information searching by giving half of all participants the goal-oriented task of looking for the answer to their top question about climate change. Results show mixed support for both the selective exposure and involvement perspectives. Implications for theory and practice are discussed.

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**Media’s contribution to the belief gap: Avoiding or discounting counter-attitudinal evidence?**

How does online news media exposure contribute to growing disagreement between Democrats and Republicans about important and unambiguous political facts? Scholars have speculated that these "belief gaps" may be due to partisan echo chambers, which allow citizens to shield themselves from unpleasant truths. Research suggests, however, that this behavior is rare: most partisan news consumers are attracted to likeminded content but do not systematically eschew exposure to other views. We suggest instead that the influence of partisan news on consumers' perceptions of reality often transcends their familiarity with relevant knowledge. Citizens take cues from partisan media outlets about the legitimacy of the available evidence when forming their beliefs, resulting in misperceptions that tend to favor the party advocated by the source. Misperceptions persist because people disproportionately use party-consistent sites, not because they avoid other perspectives. Survey data collected during the 2012 U.S. Presidential election cycle provide support for our argument.

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**The Roles of Emotions and Individualism in the Third-Person Effect Process of News Coverage of Election Poll Results**

The current study examines the third-person effect process in which the third-person perception is linked with its behavioral consequence and explores possible factors that might influence the linkage in the context of the news coverage of election poll results. We conducted an online survey employing a sample of undergraduate students from a Southwestern university in the United States and two universities in and around Seoul, South Korea before the presidential elections in the two countries. The proposed model of the relationships among the third-person perception of news coverage of election poll results, negative emotions, political campaign participation intention, and collectivism was assessed with a structural equation model (SEM) using Rosseel's (2012) R statistics package, Lavaan. The results of the analysis indicate the model generated excellent fit and the coefficients of the paths were statistically significant. The findings demonstrate the respondents were more likely to feel negative emotions as the third-person perception of news coverage of election poll results increases, and those who experience more negative emotions were more likely to show higher political campaign participation intention. In addition, the respondents of the U.S. showed higher levels of third-person perception and negative emotions than South Korean respondents.

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**First Lady Ethos and Rhetorical Effect**

**Sponsor: Public Address Division**

**Sat, 11/23: 2:00 PM  - 3:15 PM**

**Marriott Wardman Park**

**Room: Taylor - Mezzanine Level**

This panel explores the ethos of First Ladies Eleanor Roosevelt, Nellie Taft, Betty Ford, Michelle Obama, and Patricia Nixon as each negotiated her role in the White House. Through rhetorical analysis of public speaking and other persuasive strategies, the panel will ascertain the way first ladies in general successfully negotiate difficult circumstances. Although there is no magic formula for rhetorical success, each of these first ladies found ways to move America forward on issues as diverse as cancer and American civil rights. Through the study of First Lady Public Address, students and scholars of public speaking can learn how women on the public platform in America use their skills to create change and support the American people.

**Chair**

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**Sponsor/Co-Sponsors**

Political Communication Division

Public Address Division

**Presentations**

**"If I Had It, Others Had It:" Betty Ford and the Ethos of Cancer**

A few weeks after entering the White House in 1975, Betty Ford was diagnosed with breast cancer. Following successful surgery and treatment, Mrs. Ford became the most well-known breast cancer survivor in the country. At a time when this dreaded disease was still whispered about, Betty Ford used her ethos to frame her rhetorical responses as she spoke passionately and often about cancer.

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**Knowing Pat: Personal and Public Expectations of a President's Wife**

By the time Patricia Nixon became First Lady she was arguably better known to the American people than any first lady but Dolley Madison. As the wife of a member of the House of Representatives, the United States Senate and Vice President, one whose husband had run unsuccessfully for governor of California and twice for President, Mrs. Nixon's persona extended beyond American borders and across generations. She was thought to be a known-as in dependable--quantity. Her presence on the public scene coincided with an era in which the changing roles of women generally and expectations of women politically were transforming America's cultural landscape. For Pat Nixon, ethos became a matter of reconciling what Americans were beginning to expect of a first lady with what they counted on in the person they had come to know simply as "Pat." The way Mrs. Nixon responded to and balanced potentially competing image demands informs the study of rhetorical ethos applied to the symbolic and political dimensions of the role of presidential spouse.

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**Michelle Obama and the Garden of Ethos**

Michelle Obama, although popular as First Lady, has not projected consistent ethos in her role. In her three agendas to promote military families, unify Americans through openness at the White House, and engage the Let's Move campaign to reduce childhood obesity, the third has been her priority and her biggest challenge. Mrs. Obama's creation of the White House Garden is a primary strategy for establishing the credibility of the healthy eating campaign (part of Let's Move) and herself as a change agent. Her ethos as "First Mom" is augmented by her physical presence in the garden where she can work with children, promote healthy eating through role modeling with her own family menus, and demonstrate an invitation to health by giving tours of the garden to various audiences.

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**Mother Knows Best: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Ethos of Empathy**

Unlike first ladies before her, Eleanor Roosevelt was charged with the task of being her husband's eyes and ears with regard to foreign affairs, domestic issues and, most importantly, the progression of the allies in World War II. She was required to balance, therefore, the ceremonial role of first lady with the role of stateswoman, something for which she had limited role models. In her attempt to establish an ethos of trustworthiness, sincerity, and good will, she embraced a motherly persona, one that elicited trust from all with whom she interacted. She fostered empathy through her various news columns, her dedication to women's and civil rights, and her focus on America's soldiers abroad. Her maternal ethos thus enabled her to interact with heads of state without threatening their authority while simultaneously establishing herself as protector of all things American.

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**The Shadow First Lady: Nellie Taft's Imprint on the Capitol's Cultural and Political Scene**

Written off by historians as a shrew who pushed her unwilling husband into the presidency, Nellie Taft's actual impact on Washington surpassed this outdated narrative. Her efforts to improve the cultural scene brought a new cultural influence to Washington long before Jacqueline Kennedy, including extensive music and theatrical events in the White House and the creation of the Tidal Basin Park, made famous by its cherry trees. Her political influence on William Taft's presidency resulted in advocacy for higher education and partial suffrage for women, loosening of racial boundaries, and help for the working class. Although kept in the shadows by culture and illness, Nellie Taft was a progressive First Lady whose overt use of power extends well beyond history's limiting perspective.

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**How Politicians CONNECT to Audiences**

**Sponsor: Political Communication Division**

**Sat, 11/23: 3:30 PM  - 4:45 PM**

**Marriott Wardman Park**

**Room: Thurgood Marshall Ballroom East - Mezzanine Level**

This session features papers that examine how politicians employ sports references, iconic associationism, the language of experience, Spanish phrases and their image(s) to connect to audiences.

**Chair**

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**Sponsor/Co-Sponsors**

Political Communication Division

**Presentations**

**The Intersection of Politics and Sports**

Candidates for public office expend a tremendous amount of time, energy, and financial resources in the hopes of making connections with voters and winning election. And because voters differ in their levels of political involvement, candidates need to utilize various methods to make these connections with the electorate. One way that candidates convey their personal values and characteristics is by showcasing themselves as being involved in and knowledgeable about sports. Utilizing an experimental design, we have uncovered a connection between a candidate's sports involvement and how voters perceive that political candidate. Results indicate that voters' levels of political knowledge help predict how they will evaluate a political candidate who is shown to be involved in sports.

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**Hugo Chavez, Iconic Associationism, and the Bolivarian Revolution**

This essay proceeds along four lines. First, the iconicity of Simon Bolivar for Venezuelans is established. Second, using visual rhetorical theory and the semantics of Peirce and Ricoeur, the theoretical construct of iconic associationism is introduced and developed. Third, Hugo Chavez's appropriation of Simon Bolivar's image to justify and advance his Bolivarian Revolution is documented and analyzed. Fourth and last, the chapter summarizes the argument for iconic associationism and draws conclusions regarding this expansion of the repertoire and practice of visual rhetoric for audiences in the 21st century.

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**Politicians, Citizens, and Entertainment Talk Shows: Finding Connections Through the Language of Experience**

Politicians now routinely appear on entertainment talk shows. How do political leaders make connections with talk-show audiences? Through close reading of more than 70 such television interviews that have aired since 1993, I find that politicians tell stories of their leadership experiences in a way that emphasizes their humanity, and in doing so, they satisfy the common need to know what it is like to be someone else. Sharing these narratives via a language of experience, politicians draw on themes of absurdity, isolation, existential freedom, and mortality to demonstrate their struggles with the most fundamental challenges of human existence. In addition, I find that revealing private details or emotional states does not necessarily make for a successful communicative encounter on the chat shows; rather, the most rhetorically able leaders demonstrate shared experiencing between themselves and citizens. In the process, leaders construct for themselves apolitical personae that imply common human bonds that preempt social and political differences. Such a language has troubling implications for democratic citizens, particularly in the United States because American culture holds an open person to be an honest one. In addition, the language of experience bypasses political debate and differences. I close this essay by considering how the language of experience might be further explored and how audiences can gird themselves against the lexicon's subtle influence.

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**Use of Spanish Phrases by Political Candidates and the Effects on Source Credibility**

This paper investigates the effects of candidate usage of Spanish phrases and dialect in political speeches on audience perceptions of source credibility. Participants from three major universities viewed one of two video clips of a Hispanic politician delivering an address – one in which the speaker used a Spanish phrase and another in which she did not. A survey consisting of a source credibility scale, multiple acculturation scales and demographic questions was completed. Results indicate that Spanish politicians should embrace their ethnicity and utilize Spanish phrases and dialect to increase their credibility. Furthermore, the authenticity of the Spanish phrases and dialect significantly moderated the speaker's credibility. Finally, it was discovered that the viewer's level of acculturation did not affect their perceptions of the speaker as credible; however, the viewer's perceptions of the speaker's level of acculturation significantly predicted credibility. This finding leads to the conclusion that Hispanic candidates should embrace their ethnicity based on meeting their audience's expectations, rather than attempting to create identification with the audience based on perceived similarities.

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**An Analysis of Humor and Benoit’s Theory of Political Campaign Discourse, and Their Combined Implications for Candidate Image Boosting.**

Benoit's Functional Theory of Political Campaign Discourse argues that all utterances made by politicians during a political campaign can be coded as an attack, an acclaim, or a defense. While this claim is widely cited in the field of political science, it cannot, and does not, take humorous utterances into account, as it can be argued that humor is, in itself, unable to be coded into a single one of these categories. This paper recognizes the vital role that humor plays in political rhetoric and furthermore, illustrates the ways in which the three leading theories of humor are able to be aligned with Benoit's categories of political discourse, ultimately arguing for the inherent need for humor to be accounted for in his theory.

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