



DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

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IN THE CLASSROOM

Connecting Identity and Diversity with Wright

When students enter Dr. Trina Wright's Diversity in Organizations class, many have preconceived notions about the class—they invariably are proven wrong! Although the class has the usual tests and papers, students also create projects that explore their identities in relation to others'. "I developed the class because I see a need for it. I want people to know diversity is a lot more than race," Wright says. "I want them to see multiple situations and identities that they will encounter in their work."

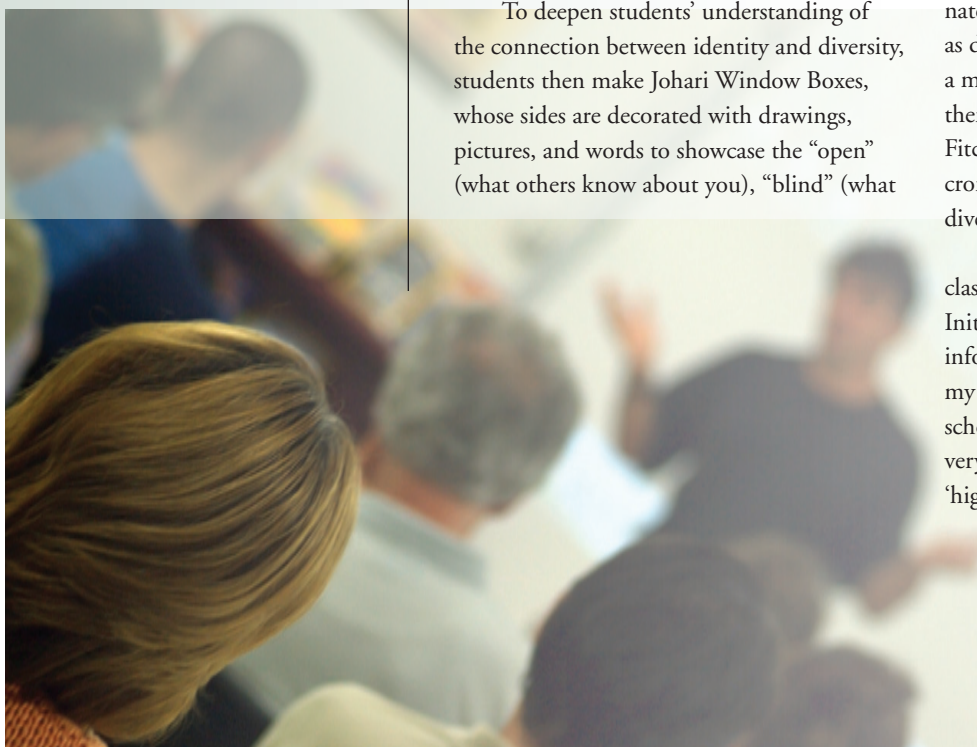
Throughout the semester, students study power, class, race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, and religion, themes each activity develops. The first project requires students to make a pie chart of three words describing their most salient identities. To ease students' inhibitions, Wright shares her own pie chart: wife, multicultural, communication scholar. "I don't ask them to do anything I would not do myself," she says.

To deepen students' understanding of the connection between identity and diversity, students then make Johari Window Boxes, whose sides are decorated with drawings, pictures, and words to showcase the "open" (what others know about you), "blind" (what

others see in you but you may not know), "hidden" (what you know about yourself but others do not), and "unknown" aspects of themselves. Over the years, students have revealed their sexuality, the fact that they are surviving AIDS, and deaths that haunt them. "This activity really bonds the class because students learn we are more similar than we are different," Wright reflects.

Mid-semester, students are greeted with a gift from the preceding class to help them with their journey. Past gifts have included Life Savers, journals, and silly putty, "to teach flexibility," Wright remarks. At the end of the semester, the class creates the next class' gift—this gift-giving ritual ensures continuity and support. The class' final activity culminates with a team project in which groups act as diversity consultants to learn how to create a marketable product that reflects the class' themes. In response to the Abercrombie & Fitch controversy, one group made an "Abercrombie and Fitch can resist anything except diversity" T-shirt.

Troy Pryor, a graduating senior, says the class, "really helped to expand my outlook. Initially, I felt because I am a minority, the information would be innate to me, but, to my surprise, this class enlightened me both scholastically and socially. Classes like this are very important in building a true graduate of 'higher learning.'"



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DEPARTMENT NAME CHANGE UNDERWAY

Barbara J. Wilson, Department Head

The one thing we can count on in large organizations is change. And this year the Department of Speech Communication is experiencing plenty of it.

Many of you have observed, rightly so, that the term “Speech Communication” does not adequately convey the breadth of topics and areas of study represented in the department. The name “Speech Communication” certainly represents our roots, but it does not reflect our present endeavors. In fact, we are one of the last doctoral programs in the country to retain the term “Speech” in our name. Our proposal to drop the “Speech” in our name and become the Department of Communication has now been approved by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Provost’s Office, and the Faculty Senate. On March 26th, it was approved by the Board of Trustees. The last hurdle is approval from the Illinois Board of Higher Education; that should happen very soon. Some of you may be curious about overlap with the College of Communications. That unit too is changing its name, to College of Media, to better reflect how the departments in the college focus primarily on media rather than on the broad array of topics pertaining to communication (e.g., family communication, rhetoric, health communication, and political communication).

These name changes have coincided with some structural changes as well. We are happy

to welcome five new colleagues who requested to transfer from the College of Communications to our department. They include: Professors Susan Davis, Pat Gill, Robert McChesney, Dan Schiller, and Inger Stole. These new colleagues have greatly enhanced our scholarly expertise in the areas of the media, communication technologies, and communication and culture. Our new colleagues also will help us



better serve our growing undergraduate major, which just reached a total of 670 students.

Perhaps the most exciting, yet frustrating, change is the status of Lincoln Hall. We have spent considerable time meeting with architects who have helped us plan our new office space, classrooms, and research labs, which are targeted for the 3rd and 4th floors of this mag-

nificent building. That is the exciting part. We also have met with campus personnel and architects to plan our temporary space that will hold us for three years during the renovation. That is the frustrating part because our faculty members are likely to be cramped and separated from our graduate students. Moreover, all of this planning is precarious because it hinges on funding from the state. So...some weeks it seems like we are moving ahead, and other weeks it seems we are on hold. Please stay tuned!

Finally, our Alumni Advisory Board continues to support our department in crucial ways. The board members came back to campus last October to learn more about our current faculty and students. The Board is planning a Chicago alumni event to be announced soon. If you are interested in helping the Board, just let me know. Or if you have ideas or feedback for the department, please feel free to contact me (bjwilson@uiuc.edu).

We feel tremendous pride when we hear from all our accomplished alumni. We hope you take pride in our department and that you find ways to stay connected with us as we prepare the next generation of communication leaders and professionals.

YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN, OR CAN YOU?

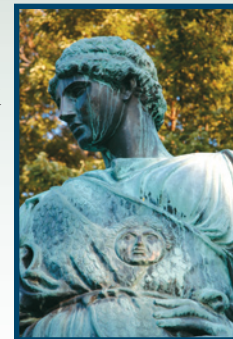
Alumni Scott Jacobs (AB '76, MA '77, PhD '82) and Sally Jackson (AB '74, MA '76, PhD '80) returned to their alma mater this fall, but this time as employees. Jacobs has joined the Department of Speech Communication's faculty and Jackson is the new Chief Information Officer for the Urbana campus. She also holds a faculty appointment in speech communication.

Jacobs and Jackson met as undergraduates on the department's debate team in the mid-1970s. Though it may not have been love at first sight, the two soon formed a personal and professional partnership that would take them to professorships at Michigan State University, the Universities of Nebraska, Oklahoma, and, most recently, Arizona (since 1990).

Jackson has been praised by Provost Katehi as, "an important member of the campus leadership team at a critical time in the history of our campus as we embark on the implementation of our strategic plan. She is focused on all aspects of technology, and is particularly passionate about how technology relates to issues of gender and the underrepresented."

Jacobs will teach undergraduate and graduate courses in the areas of argumentation, message construction, and communication theory.

We are pleased to have them back in the corridors and classrooms of Lincoln Hall!



KNOBLOCH RESEARCHES COMMUNICATION WITH OUR LOVED ONES



At the end of the day, what really matters? Many of us would say that close relationships are the most important things in our lives. Our relationships with parents, partners, children, siblings, and friends are near and dear to us.

For Professor Leanne Knobloch, close relationships are also a fascinating topic of study. "I love studying close relationships because they matter to people and because they affect our health, happiness, and well-being," she says. As an interpersonal communication researcher, Knobloch studies the ways people communicate in their relationships.

Recently, the University of Illinois Campus Research Board funded her study on how spouses communicate when they are unsure about the status of their marriage. Knobloch believes that investigating how couples behave

when they are uncertain provides insight on how to build healthy, committed marriages.

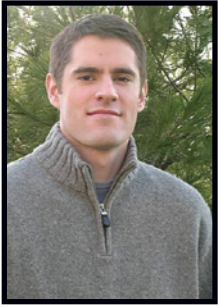
In the study, Knobloch and her research team asked 125 married couples to have videotaped conversations about what they do when they don't know what's going on in their relationship. Knobloch describes a couple reunited after a tour of duty in Iraq: "The wife thought her husband would need her help to re-adjust to civilian life, but he jumped back in as if nothing had changed." One couple experiencing breast cancer feared what the future would bring, while another couple openly debated the possibility of divorce after the husband lost his job. The data showed that some spouses "would rather maintain uncertainty than discover bad news about the marriage," Knobloch says.

For Knobloch's new study, currently being conducted with researchers at the Family Institute at Northwestern University, she is collecting data from 25 distressed couples and 25 distressed and depressed couples. "This study should shed light on how uncertainty, depression, and marital distress affect people's communication," Knobloch notes.

Relationships have always intrigued Knobloch, who started college as a journalism major. Once she realized she could study relationships as a career, she dove into interpersonal communication. "It's really important that we find ways to help people maintain satisfying relationships," she says.

Knobloch brings this knowledge to her classroom in her Communication in Personal Relationships and her Communication and Conflict courses. "I love seeing how much students accomplish," she says, adding: "Teaching students about interpersonal communication has real-life application. It helps students build effective ties with other people."

Knobloch's advice for future researchers involves knowing the many available career options: schools, counseling centers, government-sponsored divorce prevention programs, and corporate wellness divisions offer opportunities for interpersonal communication students. Noting that "personal happiness is integral to our well-being," Knobloch believes studying relationships helps us all.



THE GOD STRATEGY: Examining Religion as a Political Weapon

For many of us, religion and politics should not mix, at least not until recently, according to doctoral candidate Kevin Coe. In a new book, *The God Strategy: How Religion Became a Political Weapon in America* (Oxford Press), Coe and co-author David Domke explain the

God strategy: how the public display of religion now propels political campaigns. This timely exploration of the rise of religion in American politics examines the public messages of political leaders from 1932 election of FDR to the early stages of the 2008 presidential race.

“Our evidence shows a radical God strategy as an outgrowth of the Ronald Reagan era,” Coe says, noting, “JFK did not talk openly about his faith.” Ronald Reagan spoke about his faith possibly to draw in the religious voters who supported evangelical Jimmy Carter in 1976. Since then, politicians have become more willing to publicize their faith or they risk the chance of losing like Howard Dean in 2004. Coe says, “George W. Bush brought it into the mainstream.” In 2006, the Demo-

crats adopted the God strategy and won big, according to Coe. Currently, all of the presidential candidates discuss their faith openly and have religious advisors.

Coe and Domke argue that such developments damage our political process. “The risk you run with such an environment,” Coe says, “ends out excluding religiously private and non-religious candidates.”

Coe began this project as a master’s student at the University of Washington, in 2005, when he wrote a paper exploring religion and politics. In 2006, Domke came on board. Now the two are hitting the book circuit with op-eds in *USA Today* and *The Washington Post*.

Coe reflects, “I hope the speculation that has fueled the debate on religion will come to a rest.” As for his personal thinking about becoming a book author so early in his academic career, Coe says, “This just feels bigger because it’s the campaign season.” And a rather long one at that!

HOW TV MAKES KIDS ANGRY

Martins Studies Social Aggression in Children’s Programming

Graduate student Nicole Martins is no couch potato. She takes her television watching seriously—so seriously that her research on media and children landed her this year’s Fred Rogers Scholarship to study how television affects children’s verbal and non-verbal social aggression. The scholarship, funded by the Academy of Science and Arts Foundation, provides a \$10,000 award to a student researcher and one to a producer of media whose work is improving children’s media.

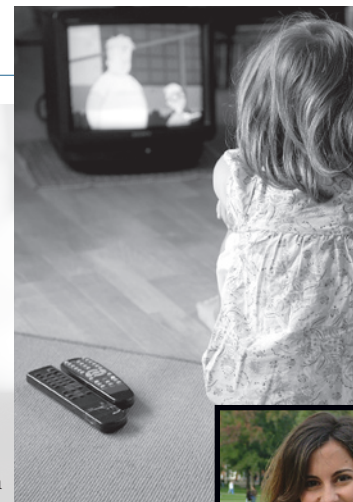
Recognizing that the literature in media mainly focuses on physical aggression, Martins saw the need to study social aggression while working as a nanny and witnessing these behaviors in children. “Social aggression in preschool is common in both genders. As socialization takes place, it becomes more pervasive in girls,” Martins notes.

Martins’ two-fold dissertation offers a content analysis of 50 shows popular with young children and a survey analysis of various types of aggressive behaviors such as rumors, gestures, and manipulation. The content analysis measures the prevalence of social aggression and admonishments for it in television shows. For example, according to Martins, *American Idol* is high in social aggression, yet has some heuristics: “Simon Cowell makes mean comments to those who audition, while Paula Abdul says, ‘Don’t say that; that’s mean.’” Martins adds

that, “when he’s booed, the audience is training for better behavior.” Martins also surveys children to test whether there are links between their exposure to shows high in social aggression and their own behavior.

Martins’ future goals include conducting longitudinal studies of the relationship between television and social aggression, as well as studies of how television’s formal features might enhance these social aggressive cues. For instance, “close-ups indicate extreme emotion,” Martins explains. She will also explore how these behaviors circulate into new forms of technology such as instant and text messaging, where new forms of bullying are growing.

As for her joy of watching television, Martins laughs, “I’m a media person. I watch a lot of TV, and this perfects my craft.”



CAMPAIGNING FOR PUBLIC WELL-BEING

Quick makes the World a Healthier Place through Communication

Imagine this: your Speech Communication 101 speech topics turn into your life's work and play! Hard to believe? For new faculty member Brian Quick, this is the case.

"I loved my first public speaking class where I gave speeches on advocating HIV testing, organ donation, and for college athletes to get paid," Quick says. Quick studies health communication and in his spare time enjoys sports. "A lot of things I was interested in then drive what I do now."

Quick's work examines how to improve health campaigns that have real impact on people's lives.

Quick came to the field of health communication through a personal route. As a child, he watched his father take insulin for his diabetes and remembers the grueling wait for the kidney transplant that saved his father's life. "I was 15 and waiting and watching, wondering if he was going to live or die—that's how I got interested in health communication."



With an undergraduate degree in public relations, Quick brought his interest in persuasion to his graduate studies at Texas A & M. His focus on health communication helped him see the links between persuasive messages and improving Americans' health.

"We all have experiences with these illnesses. What better way to help others than work on encouraging healthy behavior?"

Quick asserts that marketing health messages is similar to marketing other "products"; "instead of trying to get people to come to a show, for instance, now we're trying

to get people not to drink and drive," he says.

Quick's research analyzes health campaigns' messaging effectiveness. Quick believes that health campaigns have come full circle from the days of the "this is your brain on drugs" campaign. "It generated a lot of discussion but, ultimately, was ineffective," Quick notes, "because it did not explicitly

recommend a response." Health ads that "promote communication between parents and kids are more effective because they clearly provide recommendations for the audience: talk to your kids, take a positive course of action," Quick asserts.

His current research examines what message features change attitudes to promote smoking cessation, and Quick has found that "rights talk," appealing to people's right to breathe, might be the most effective for reducing health risks driven by secondhand smoke.

In his class on persuasion and theory, Quick brings the multidisciplinary approach of marketing, persuasion, and health communication to public relations, which University of Illinois students crave. With speech communication students' growing interest in public relations (they just formed a club this year), Quick's take on the field is sure to enhance the department's professional guidance to our undergraduates.

Quick's easy fit at Illinois reaches beyond his research. He is also an avid sports fan, having played baseball at the College of the Ozarks. Whether he revisits the old favorite speech topic of whether athletes should get paid has yet to be seen, but organ donation and HIV prevention are important subjects that have gratefully brought Brian Quick to our department!

A FOND FAREWELL TO PROFESSOR NOSH CONTRACTOR

The Department of Speech Communication bid farewell to Nosh Contractor after 20 years of service to the University. Nosh created and sustained the department's communication technology and organizational networks area. Many undergraduate students will remember his class, Communication Technology in the Workplace, as a foundation for their careers in business and industry. He has mentored several graduate students who went on to establish communication technology as a defined area of study in departments nationwide.

He and spouse Maria Mastronardi (AB '87, MA '92, PhD '97, faculty member '01-'07) have taken positions at Northwestern University. Nosh has joined the Department of Industrial Engineering and Management Science and also holds appointments in the School of Communication and the Kellogg School of Management. Maria has joined the Department of Communication Studies in the School of Communication. We all wish them well as they embark on their new journey at "the other" Big Ten school in the state.

It's All in the Family!

The Department of Speech Communication has been the academic home for many majors whose relatives have also majored in speech communication.

Here, a few of our speech communication family members share memories and advice.



Doug Hurst (AB '83 economics, '85 speech communication), father to Brooke

Currently: "I am an associate professor in the Communications Department at St. Louis Community College-Meramec where I am the Lead

Faculty of the Interpersonal Division. I was close to finishing my degree in Econ when I took my first SPC class, and I quickly realized that I had made a mistake, so I got a second degree. I liked speech communication for two reasons: first, for the rich history and modern research perspective and, second, for its real-world application and impact on relationship management—we all need the skills!"

Advice you gave to daughter, Brooke: "I never forced speech communication on her, but she obviously knew what I did and how important it was for me. I thought it was important for her to have a broad liberal arts background and speech communication was a great place to start for the reasons I stated above. I told her how distinguished the department was in the 1980s and how it had continued to be a top program in the country."

Memories of Illinois: "There are many great memories of school. The music scene was great, sports okay. I do remember being in the Assembly Hall when Mike White was introduced as the new football coach, and the crowd starting to chant, 'Rose Bowl, Rose Bowl,' and in three years we were playing in the game."

Memories of the department: "I was being an intern for Paul Lisnek. As a PhD student, he taught Legal Communication. He had such a dynamic approach to teaching that rubbed off on me. He was my inspiration to go into the profession. As an intern, he allowed me to get in front of the class and work with students one-on-one. I also had

great experiences with many of the faculty, from Ruth Anne Clark to Bob Husband. I learned a lot from their teaching and scholarship."

Brooke Hurst (AB expected '09)

Future plans: Law School

Advice your dad gave you about the major: "I will always remember visiting the University with my dad when I was younger, and he would always take me to Lincoln Hall and show me the speech communication offices, and say, 'These were some of the best teachers I had.' I didn't know then that I would feel the same way about my own college experience 10 years later. When I decided freshman year I wanted to major in speech communication, my dad said it would be a major you could literally do anything with. Now I realize it was so true, and that speech communication has taught me valuable skills that I utilize daily. In every speech communication class I have taken here, I have obtained useful information that has helped me in later situations. Looking back, it is hard to believe that what my dad had said so many years back is what I believe today, that through this department, I have had the best teachers in my college years."



Kim Samuel Powers (BAT, '80), mom to Betsy

Currently: Former middle school speech communication and drama teacher
Reason for choosing speech communication: "I had been involved in speech and

drama in high school and wanted to encourage others to reap the benefits of developing strong public speaking skills."

Advice you gave to daughter, Betsy: "I have always encouraged Betsy to develop her talents and interests, and one of them turned out to be performing and public speaking."

Memories of Illinois: "I met so many different people, had so many wonderful facilities at my fingertips, such as

Krannert, IMPE, and Assembly Hall; I learned from so many talented professors."

Memories of the department: "In one of my classes, I remember watching tape of a 60 Minutes interview, including the parts that were not in the 'on the air' segment. I watched television 'news magazine shows' with a different perspective from that day forward."

Betsy Powers (AB expected '10)

Future plans: "After graduation, I would like to work at a public relations firm in Chicago or in another large city. I am also thinking about attending law school to study trial law."

Advice your mom gave you about the major: "My mom told me that there were many different career paths you could take with a speech communication major. This major works for different people in different ways. Also, she told me that the ideas and practices you learn with a speech communication's degree are pivotal tools that aid in many different situations. The knowledge of communication and expression of ideas that one acquires with this major leads to success in many aspects of life."



Ingrid Peternel (BAT '69, AM '70 general speech), mom to Mary

Currently: Faculty member at College of DuPage
Reason for choosing speech communication: "I started

out as a French major with speech communication classes as my supporting coursework. At the end of sophomore year, I realized that I enjoyed the speech communication courses more than the French ones, so I flip-flopped my major and minor."

Advice you gave to daughter, Mary: "The major in 2000 was vastly different than that of the '60s, but I told Mary that she could never go wrong taking speech communication courses. I knew that they would serve a practical value in any career and throughout her life."

Memories of Illinois: "As an undergraduate, I enjoyed walking on the Quad with the Altgeld Hall chimes, having 'hours' in the dorm whereby all females came home from dates at the same time, and enjoying the University once again with Mary, especially her role as an Illinette!"

Memories of the department: "In my day, many speech communication courses were cross-referenced as both 'speech' and 'theatre' and the major allowed or even called

faculty news

for courses from both disciplines. Imagine that flying today? I remember courses with Joe Wenzel (summer school course in debate), Thomas Scheidel for my first course in persuasion, and Ken Burns as advisor and student teaching supervisor. And, I still own the textbooks assigned! My first semester in grad school included having Marie Hochmuth Nichols as an instructor; everything about that class intimidated me. It was thrilling when Mary took her first course from Ruth Anne Clark, as Ruth Anne had been my instructor as well. (And in that class, I don't recall feeling intimidated!)"

Mary Peternel (AB '03)

Currently: Product manager for Specialty Pharmaceuticals
Advice your mom gave you about the major: "My mother's advice about the major was that speech communication is a degree, not a vocation. She emphasized that I would take classes that interested me and challenged me but would not necessarily be a straight path towards any specific career."

Memories of Illinois: "Being a 4-year member of the Illiniettes always brought forth an exciting range of experiences. From performing at the home football and basketball games to attending two bowl championship games, the excitement was constant. What was also valuable from this experience was the lessons in time and self-management. With an intense and demanding practice schedule on top of other academic activities, I was forced to discipline myself to make the best use of any free time."

Memories of the department: "Working as the assistant to Barbara Hall afforded me the opportunity to really get to know both the faculty and my other peers in the department, outside of those I interacted with in classes. Discovering in Ruth Anne's honor's seminar how even the slightest communication techniques and patterns with small children have tremendous effects later in life. Learning from Heather Downs how to critique other speech communication students as an undergrad TA for speech communication 101. Understanding the 'business' side of speech communication in Bob Husband's organizational communication courses. Learning about the effects of non-verbal communication in John Caughlin's interpersonal communication courses (like the fact that studies show how taller men are perceived and actually are more successful in life!)"

Scott Althaus has been on sabbatical to work on two book projects. The first traces the historical development of presidential campaign tactics from 1952 to the present. This project has taken Althaus to presidential libraries and National Archive locations all around the country, and he has discovered just how much fun archival research can be. The second book project addresses how news coverage of war influences public support for war, beginning in World War II and continuing through the current conflict in Iraq. This is the very first research project to systematically compare news coverage across all major U.S. wars of the last 100 years, and it will help to dispel several myths about news coverage of war. Stay tuned for the books!

Dale Brashers' research on communication in chronic illness includes an ongoing study of uncertainty and organ transplantation (with graduate students Allison Scott, Summer Carnett, and Ann Stone), and a meta-analysis of the HIV and social support literature (with former Illinois faculty members Daena Goldsmith and Daniel O'Keefe). Brashers is also the department's associate head.

John Caughlin studies how people talk about topics that are difficult to discuss (e.g., health problems). His recent research examines avoidance and secrets in close relationships and has found that almost all college students keep secrets from their friends and families. (Unless YOUR children are in college—then they probably do not keep secrets from you.) Caughlin says that when people find out about his research, they want to tell him all about the secrets in their own families!

Tom Conley spent the better part of his summer in Europe, lecturing on Protagoras in Leiden and on Erasmus in Strasbourg. His research also brought him to several good restaurants, where he dined on such delicacies as suckling pig, cassoulet, and kangaroo, and sampled a wide selection of Belgianaes and Alsatian brandies.

Tom Costello has been with our department for nearly 35 years and teaches the Discovery section of SPCM 101 as well as SPCM 211 Business and Professional Speaking. Costello is a board member and serves as secretary of the Illini Media Corporation, the parent company of the *Daily Illini*, and WPGU. He is also a past chair and board member of the Champaign County Economic Development Corporation. Costello has been the assistant managing director of the award-winning Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District for the past 32 years and was recently elected to the national Board of Directors of the American Public Transportation Association as the vice-chair of Marketing and Communications.

Susan Davis was honored to be the Bruce Buckley visiting scholar in American Folklife at the Cooperstown graduate program, Cooperstown, N.Y., in April 2007. She gave a lecture on jokes and humor in memory of Buckley, who trained several generations of museum professionals in the techniques of oral history and folklore study. At the American Folklore Society's annual meetings in Québec, she participated in a panel on folklorists and the FBI during the red scare. Her paper "Ben Botkin's FBI File" shows the FBI harassment of a pioneering folk music scholar, Federal Writers Project organizer, and archivist of the Library of Congress. Her work is part of a larger effort by a group of scholars to evaluate the effects of surveillance and political pressure on American cultural scholarship. Davis will be on sabbatical in the spring to continue writing a book on the life and work of Gershon Legman, another Cold War-era folklorist.

Travis Dixon continues to investigate the portrayal and effects of racial representations in the news. Most recently, he has begun to analyze data from a massive study of network news broadcasts about Hurricane Katrina. Early results suggest that the news contained both sympathetic and stereotypical coverage. For example, many of the stories associated the "looting" and lawbreaking with African Americans. However, many of the news reports also blamed the federal and state government for the weak Katrina response, while largely absolving the local officials of any responsibility. Dixon has also recently been elected vice-chair of the Mass Communication Division of the National Communication Association.

Cara Finnegan spent 2006-07 as a visiting fellow at the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities at Vanderbilt University, where she worked on a book project and collaborated with Vanderbilt colleagues to co-curate an exhibit at the Vanderbilt University Fine Arts Gallery. In the summer of 2007, Finnegan returned to campus and got back into the swing of teaching, advising, directing the SPCM 111-112 courses, and writing. This year she is working on three research projects: a book called *Speaking of Photography: Imagining Visual Politics in American Public Culture, 1890-1940*; an article on documentary photography after Hurricane Katrina; and a co-edited book called *Visual Rhetoric: A Reader in Communication and Culture*.

Pat Gill joined the department in August, transferring from the Institute of Communications Research where, for the past year, she was the interim director of the Institute, the director of Media Studies, and the director of the Internship Program. She spent her summer recovering and

faculty news (continued)

reacquainting herself with her research. She now knows everything there is to know about masculinity, theoretically speaking. She plans to spend the year getting to know the ins and outs of her new department and working on her book, *Men Behaving Sadly: Anguished Male Cinema*.

Grace Giorgio is glad to be back teaching and continues to enjoy undergraduate advising in her new office-digs. This past year, Giorgio embarked on a new ethnographic project on rural voters in a red part of a blue state and has recently published two articles in *Qualitative Inquiry*. She has settled into her new, old home (originally built in the 1840s), and her four cats and dog are enjoying their own new mansion on the farm.

Kristen Harrison spent the past year completing her longitudinal research on the media's role in the development of eating disorders among elementary school children in east central Illinois. She is now conducting experimental research investigating the effects of exposure to digitally retouched photos on adolescents' willingness to accept physical flaws in themselves and others. She spent the summer of 2007 starting a multidisciplinary research initiative called the STRONG Kids Project (STRONG stands for the Synergistic Theory and Research on Nutrition Group) to study media effects on childhood obesity and disordered eating within family and community contexts; she plans to spend the upcoming year generating funding for this project.

Stephen Hartnett spent the 2007-08 school year publishing articles on the death penalty, the war in Iraq, and social justice activism. He also worked toward finishing his sixth book, *Executing Democracy: Capital Punishment & The Making of America*, which seeks to re-write American history by studying how we have argued about managing different forms of violence, building peaceful communities, and balancing the needs of the state and the rights of the individual. Hartnett continued hosting a poetry workshop at the Champaign County Jail, editing *Captured Words/Free Thoughts*, a quarterly journal of poetry authored by imprisoned writers, and helped organize and host the Second Annual Champaign-Urbana Prison Arts Festival. But the big news is that his oldest daughter, Anya, now five, learned to climb to the top of the monkey bars, while Melia, now 3 1/2, decided that braking while biking was frivolous—*faster, daddy, faster!*

Debra Hawhee spent the past year working on her second book, which examines the bodily-rhetorical theories of Kenneth Burke, the 20th-century rhetorician/polymath. She is due for a sabbatical in the spring, at which point she'll begin the research for her next book about animals in the history of rhetoric. During her sabbatical, she will also travel to London to complete some library and museum research for an article about the curious intersection of rhetoric and chemistry in the 18th century.

Kay Holley teaches SPCM 101 full-time, including two sections for students in the LAS Bridge/Transition Program. In addition to her teaching, she directed *Iron Kisses* in September and appeared in John Patrick Shanley's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Doubt* in January.

Leanne Knobloch recently completed a study of conversation among married couples that contributed to articles published in *Communication Monographs*, *Communication Research*, and the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. In addition to spending hours watching spouses argue on videotape, she led a day-long retreat for couples in the community who wanted to work on their communication skills.

Michele Koven is doing well. Her book, *Selves in Two Languages: Bilingual's Verbal Enactments of Identity in Two Languages*, came out in September. She and her husband are both relieved and happy to be on the other side of the tenure process. Michele always enjoys hearing from former students.

John Lammers' research bridges his interests in organizational communication and health communication. He studies institutional forces on communication among health professions and organizations, including hospital teams, managed care practices, and surgical teams. Recently he and Joshua Barbour, a 2006 PhD graduate, published "Health Care Institutions, Communication, and Physicians' Experience of Managed Care: A Multi-Level Analysis" in *Management Communication Quarterly*.

Robert McChesney wrote a new book, *Communication Revolution: Critical Junctures and the Future of Media*, which was published in October 2007. McChesney also gave around 40 guest lectures and conference presentations. This past year, he was active with the media reform group he co-founded and of which he is president, Free Press (www.freepress.net). He also hosts "Media Matters," a weekly program on WILL-AM radio.

Ned O'Gorman studies the relationship between people's political and ethical convictions and how they address audiences in various media. He has written on a range of figures, from Aristotle to Dietrich Bonhoeffer to Eisenhower. His current research focuses on the ethical, rhetorical, and aesthetic dimensions of national security strategies in the Cold War. He was named a faculty fellow of the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities in 2006-07, and winner of the Religious Communication Association's top prize for a journal article in 2006. At home, he and his wife Linda have three kids. When time allows, he likes to build things—walls, beds, shelves, what have you—and hike wooded mountains.

Scott Poole was awarded the first Lifetime Achievement Award by the Group Communication Division of the National Communication Association (NCA) in November 2006. A program honoring him was presented at the 2007 NCA Conference in Chicago. Along with several other faculty, Poole received \$300,000 by the U of I's Campuswide Interdisciplinary Research Initiative for the project, "GroupScope: Instrumenting Research on Interaction Networks in Complex Social Contexts." Among Poole's publications last year was "Generalization in Process Theories of Communication," which appeared in *Communication Methods and Measures*.

Brian Quick spent the past year examining how persuasive advertisements and public service announcements are cognitively and affectively processed. His work also looks at how the media portray organ donation, in news media and on *Grey's Anatomy*. In his spare time, Quick is becoming more acclimated to fatherhood and life in central Illinois.

Christian Sandvig received a Humanities Release time fellowship this year, which will allow him to finish a study about how governments decide to organize the radio frequencies that are required for new wireless communication systems. His research on wireless also took him to San Diego during the wildfires of October 2007. He was there to study how an advanced wireless communication system called the "Tribal Digital Village" connects rural Indian Reservations without telephones or (in some cases) electrical power, but his research team was evacuated in the face of the blaze. (He vows he will return!) This research project is funded by the Social Science Research Council and the Internet Society, the international coordinating body for the Internet. Sandvig also recently gave a campuswide presentation sponsored by the Center for Advanced Study about critically using video games (such as *Civilization IV* and *SimCity Societies*) as simulations in undergraduate courses about social science.

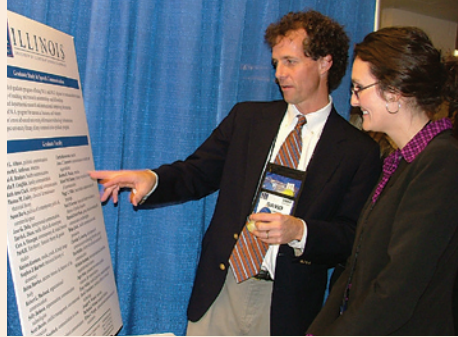
Dan Schiller is a historian of communication. After obtaining his PhD at the University of Pennsylvania, he became a faculty member at Temple University, UCLA, and UCSD prior to joining the U of I faculty in 2001. He was a Fellow at the Gannett Center for Media Studies at Columbia University in 1986-87, and, before that, a Research Scholar at the University of Leicester's Centre for Mass Communication Research in 1978-79. His books include *Objectivity and the News* (1981), *Theorizing Communication* (1996), and *How to Think about Information* (2007). He is presently completing research for an archive-based history of U.S. telecommunications.

Michelle Shumate is beginning her second year in the department. She was awarded a Center for Advanced Study fellowship to study non-governmental, nonprofit organizations' responses to HIV/AIDS, infectious disease, and Third World development issues over the past 50 years. Shumate has spent the past year getting involved in the Champaign-Urbana community by volunteering at Junior League and the Independent Media Center.

Inger Stole joined the speech communication faculty this fall. Her research provides a critical perspective on commercial propaganda. Her present work explores the use of corporate philanthropy for public relations purposes. She is also working on a book about the U.S. advertising industry and its political activities since the Second World War.

Tracy Sulkin has been at work on a new book on campaign promise making and -keeping in the Congress. The findings demonstrate that representatives and senators regularly follow through in office on the appeals they make in their campaigns. However, the extent of responsiveness varies with the nature of their appeals—positive claims that candidates make about themselves on an issue serve as much stronger signals about their later activity than do negative appeals about the opponent, but there is no difference in the signaling power of vague vs. more specific appeals. As a result, by observing the issues that candidates talk about and how they talk about them, citizens can make reliable predictions about how elected officials will behave in office.

David Tewksbury has been working with graduate and undergraduate speech communication students on projects that focus on audiences and news messages. One study includes a content analysis of news stories that immediately follow major disasters (such as the terrorist attack in September 2001). The three core story types identified were stories that describe damage and recovery efforts, stories



about responsibility for the event and future prevention, and personal stories about people affected by the disaster. A follow-up experiment examined how people would evaluate the information quality of these story types following a hypothetical disaster.

Barbara Wilson's research focuses on youth and media. In the past year, she has been working on a project that looks at educational TV programming targeted toward children. The project is funded by a nonprofit organization called Children Now, and its purpose is to provide a systematic assessment of how well broadcasters are complying with the Children's Television Act of 1990, which stipulates that each station provide a minimum of three hours a week of programming that serves children's educational and informational needs. She is also working with graduate students on a variety of other projects dealing with media and youth. Her co-authored book *Children, Adolescents, and the Media* (2nd edition, Sage) is scheduled to come out in spring 2008. In her spare time, she is department head, mother of two growing girls who spend time with media when they are not dancing, and owner of two West Highland white terriers that don't watch TV and don't need transportation to dance rehearsals.

Trina Wright studies the intersections between gender, race, and class in organizations. Her interests include areas of resistance experienced in organizations as well as communication with an emphasis on organizational socialization. She is analyzing and writing up findings from a study funded by the William T. Grant Foundation that explores the communication factors that influence high school students in career decision-making. She is also in the midst of advancing several articles that address the life and work experiences of non-managerial women of color. Currently, she is developing a new course that explores the communication influences on race and gender in the workplace.

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class notes

1950s

Mildred Barnhart Hoelscher (AB '53, MA '57) worked as the drama director at Lake Oswego High School for 27 years. Her current project is serving as the director/choreographer at Lakewood Theatre Company. Mildred is directing Thoroughly Modern Millie and Holiday Magic.

1960s

Merilee Elliott (AB '67) is the CEO of Merilee Elliott Interiors and the Home Editor for Today's Chicago Women. She was awarded the American Resort Development Interior Design Gold honor for Best Interiors for a Resort Suite. The resort of her designing is Hilton Grand Vacations at Waikoloa, Hawaii.

1970s

Kent Melcher (AB '70) served 26 years as a pastoral minister and as a district superintendent. Reverend Melcher is currently the Kansas Area Superintendent for new church development in the United Methodist Church. He and his wife, Julie, have three grown children and one granddaughter. When he retires, Kent wants to get back into acting in community theater productions.

Michael R. McDonald (MA '71, PhD '76) is currently in his seventh term of re-election as a State Representative (44th District) in the Tennessee General Assembly. In 2006, he served as chairman of the consumer and employee affairs committee. Michael was also a professor at Volunteer State Community College and is now retired.

Jeff McCall (MA '77) just recently published his book, *Viewer Discretion Advised: Taking Control of Mass Media Influences*, published by Roman & Littlefield, 2007. He is a professor of communication at Depauw University.

Donna Marie Nudd (AB '79) is a professor in the Department of Communication at Florida State University.

1980s

Denise Lovin (AB '88) is a doctoral level psychologist, working in the university counseling center at Appalachian State University. She is also director of the Master's Training program, coordinator of the Eating Concerns program, and coordinator of outreach programming. Denise lives in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina with her spouse and six-year-old daughter.

Kevin Johnson (AB '88) is a self-employed management adviser. After 21 years, Kevin has continued to stay with the same firm he interned for in Champaign.

Jodi K. Obrecht Plagenz (AB '89) is a senior attorney for John Deere & Company specializing in securities and finance. She also serves as a member of the Board of Fire & Police Commissioners for the City of Moline and is a member of Illinois Supreme Court Committee on Character & Fitness. Along with these roles, Jodi volunteers for a local peer/teen court program.

1990s

John Masner (AB '90) is the senior president and southeast divisional sales manager of Fidelity Investments. He manages a group of 10 sales professionals who position all of Fidelity's institutional products to financial intermediaries. This will be his fifteenth year working in financial services.

Kevin D. Cain (AB '91) works as a vaccine executive immunization professional at Merck & Company, Inc. One of his major accomplishments is winning the award for Advancement of Human Health both in 2005 and 2006. Kevin and his wife, Mindy, have been married for 15 years.

Kimberly Hackett (AB '93) works as a writer for Sarasota magazine.

Michael Pinski (AB '93) lives in Kankakee where he runs a real estate company that he started 11 years ago. MJP Development Corp. has holdings in both Illinois and Florida.

Chris Hemrick (AB '94, MA '95) holds current positions as an associate with Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc.'s strategic communications team, based in McLean, Va., and is a public affairs officer with the Air Force Reserve. He is assigned to the Manta Air Force Press Desk at the Pentagon. Recently, Chris returned from a four-month deployment to Manta, Ecuador where he was the public affairs officer for the Air Force's Forward Operating location.

2000s

Ami Novoryta (AB '01) has been accepted to the master's program at Harvard's JFK School of Government. Additionally, she is a recipient of the Kennedy School's 2007-08 Pforzheimer Fellowship for Nonprofit Management award.

Kimberley Roxanne (Timmons) Siegel (AB '01) is currently vice president in institutional sales for AG Edwards.

Daniel (AB '01) and **Dana (Werth) Teefey** (AB '02) will begin a new ministry at the Riverside Covenant Church in West Lafayette, Ind., beginning in January 2008. Dan will be the senior pastor of a recently renovated church. He and Dana, along with their daughter Adelaide, born 2006, moved to Indiana in late 2007.

Jeff Williams (AB '02) is currently an investor relations specialist at NAVTEQ. The company provides digital maps necessary for applications such as automotive in-dash navigation systems and Internet mapping sites.

Jennifer Herzog (AB '02) just completed a clerkship with the Honorable James E. Shapiro, United States bankruptcy judge for the Eastern District of Wisconsin. This fall she will join the bankruptcy and restructuring group at the Wisconsin-based law firm of Godfrey & Kahn. In the past year, she was published as an assistant editor on the 2007 supplement to the fourth edition of Ginsberg & Martin on Bankruptcy. She is currently working as an assistant editor on the fifth edition of Ginsberg & Martin on Bankruptcy. Despite living in "Badgerland," she still is a loyal Illini fan!

Carly Scheer (AB '04) is working as a recruiter for McKinsey & Company.

Rebecca Knights (AB '04) is a casting associate with Simon Casting and has promoted people such as singer-songwriter Billy Gill. She also volunteers for Rock for Kids, along with freelancing as a producer and account manager for corporate and private events.

Trevor Frederickson (AB '04) accepted the position of digital account executive for NBC 5 Chicago/WMAQ-TV in November 2006. Prior to this, Trevor spent two years as the Web content manager for the Chicago Bears Football Club.

Jason (Kridler) Rockwood (AB '05) is an affiliate researcher part-time for the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School. He explores cyberspace and the need for laws and policies. Since graduation, Jason worked as a freelance media personality/coach/trainer for Luxottica Retail (owners of Sunglass Hut, LensCrafters, and Pearl Vision). He held other positions for the company as a corporate change consultant specifying in "digital natives" and was a copy writer in the educational department. Currently, he is attending MIT for his master's degree in comparative media studies. He also holds a research position with Singapore-MIT video game development lab.

John D. Sandoval (AB '05) is a patrolman for the Chicago Police Department.

Samantha (Fiscella) Miller (AB '05) just recently married and lives in Fayetteville, Ark. Here, she enjoys her jobs as an academic counselor in pre-college programs at the University of Arkansas. As a pre-college academic counselor, Samantha encourages middle and high school students to go to college anywhere in the U.S. She is also working on a master's in higher education at the U of A.

Tracy Kmetz (MA '05) is currently a communications officer for Catholic Archdiocese of Denver.

OBITUARIES

Timothy Walters (PhD '70), who retired from Slippery Rock University, passed away February 11.

Julie Burke (PhD '82) passed away October 31, 2007, after a brief illness. She was the chair of the Department of Interpersonal Communication at Bowling Green University. She was awarded the Faculty Distinguished Service award October 22, prior to her death. She had been at Bowling Green since 1992. She is survived by her husband, Joel LeCaptain, mother, father, two sisters, and brother.

Gina Pelose (PhD '85) passed away February 18 in Durham, N.C.



Susana Vasquez Weigel was the recipient of an Outstanding LAS Staff Award and Chancellor's Distinguished Staff Award this spring. She is pictured here with her nominators, Professors Peggy Miller, Ruth Anne Clark, and Travis Dixon. Susana manages all of the department's media equipment for all of its 100+ classes!

CHANGE = OPPORTUNITIES

It's a dynamic time in the Department of Speech Communication, but amidst the upheaval and change with the planned renovation of our historic home, Lincoln Hall, the department has a new development officer...me! My name is Andra Bez, and I am replacing Joan Volkmann, who has successfully served as the development officer for speech communication for several years—Joan has gotten a much-deserved promotion, and I will attempt to step into her shoes.

Soon department personnel will be moving out into various buildings throughout campus, making the daily routine of teaching and research just that much more challenging. But with challenges and change also come opportunities, and the department has been proactive this year in creating ways for alumni and friends of the department to enhance our research and programs.

One important initiative in 2007 was the establishment of the speech communication Alumni Advisory Board. This group of 14 energetic professional alumni has come up with several exciting ideas to support the department, such as forming subgroups addressing fundraising events, creating a marketing campaign, developing student internships, and enhancing student career guidance. You may be contacted by an advisory board member to help with one of these activities, or perhaps contacted by me, personally, to find ways you might like to give back to the department. With the Lincoln Hall renovation, there will be numerous small and large-scale opportunities and needs. Some of those we have identified include:

- Naming opportunities for a new media research lab, a family interaction lab, and a department conference room.
- Endowing and/or naming opportunities for an audiovisual lab to provide public speaking workshops and training sessions as well as the funding of appropriate classroom equipment to videotape student presentations.
- Endowing a chair or professorship to retain and attract the best faculty in the field.
- Endowing a graduate fellowship that will continue or instigate vital research in the communication field.

These are just a few ideas that currently exist—or will exist once Lincoln Hall is completed. I hope you will want to be a part of the change and excitement here at the University of Illinois. To discuss any areas of interest to you, please contact me any time. You can reach me at andrabez@uiuc.edu.



Homecoming 2007

Top: Greg Jackson (current student and Speech Communication Leader) and Chris Folkens (AB '05)
Middle: Professor Dale Brashers
Bottom: Paul Spilker (MA '07) and Greg Bailey (AB '07)

Speech Communication Alums: Let Us Know What You Are Doing

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Please indicate all U of I degrees:

AB year _____ MA year _____ PhD year _____

Current position and employer (if retired, indicate last position prior to retirement):

List accomplishments/publications/personal news for the past year:

Mail to: Department of Speech Communication
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