



Organization for Research on Women and Communication

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orwac.org

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Did You Know?

The 2016 WSCA Convention is February 27-March 2 in San Diego, CA.

The deadline to submit a paper or panel to ORWAC is September 1, 2015.

From the President

Dear ORWAC members,

Greetings everyone! I hope you are having a wonderful summer. We had a great conference this past February in Spokane. Thank you to everyone who attended our business meeting and offered great ideas for how ORWAC might support additional professional development opportunities for our members. I am pleased to report that ORWAC will sponsor a preconference at the 2016 WSCA conference in San Diego. The preconference will be held on Saturday,



*ORWAC President
Katie L. Gibson*

(continued on page 2)

From the President (contd)

February 27, 2016. Interested participants are invited to write a short position paper about the nature and role of feminist inquiry in our discipline. The preconference will be modeled after the “Gender Conferences” that were held annually in the 1980s and 1990s and will provide a great opportunity for scholars interested in feminist inquiry to connect with one another and share ideas about the state of feminist inquiry in our discipline. See page 10 for submission details and invite your students and colleagues who may not be members of ORWAC to participate. A big thank you to Karen Foss and Sonja Foss for organizing this preconference for us!

On page five of the newsletter, you will also find ORWAC’s call for papers/panels for the 2016 WSCA convention in San Diego, California. The conference will be held from February 27 to March 2 and the theme for 2016 is “Collaboration, Innovation, and Convergence.” I look forward to receiving your submissions by September 1, 2015.

I am also excited to announce that ORWAC will sponsor a writing retreat next year—May 23, 24, and 25—in Denver, Colorado. The retreat will be directed by Sonja Foss and William Waters, coauthors of *Destination Dissertation: A Traveler’s Guide to a Done Dissertation*. Interested scholars—faculty and graduate students—should submit applications by March 15, 2016. ORWAC will select eight scholars to participate and will award each participant with a grant that will cover the cost of the retreat registration and hotel lodging in Denver. Applications will be sent to all ORWAC members in the fall.

Finally, I want to thank you all for your continued support of ORWAC. We are able to offer new opportunities for our members because our organization is strong and our membership continues to grow. Thank you— and I hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Very Best,

Katie L. Gibson



ORWAC Quick Links

Learn More About Us

<http://www.orwac.org/about.html>

Become a Member

<http://www.orwac.org/membership.html>

Submit to *Women’s
Studies in Communication*

<http://www.orwac.org/journal.html>

“Like” Us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/ORWAC>

Submit a Paper or Panel
to ORWAC for the
WSCA Convention

<http://www.westcomm.org>

Ask the Oracle

Senior scholar Diane Blair answers a question from Raisa Alvarado, the Graduate Student Representative for ORWAC. Dr. Blair is Professor in the Department of Communication at California State University, Fresno. She is also a past president of ORWAC.



Q

Specific to conference submissions, what advice do you have for finding the correct division to submit to? What should aspiring scholars consider before selecting a division?

A

Scholarship is a process, and conferences play an important role in that process. Ideally, they provide you with an opportunity to share and test your ideas and arguments with an interested and engaged audience. Finding the right division for your work enables you to make connections and establish relationships with other aspiring as well as accomplished scholars interested in similar topics and issues.

Each division or interest group for our national and regional conferences reflects a general area of study or research focus in our communication discipline. In addition, each division/interest group provides a call for paper submissions that should also identify appropriate research topics and theoretical or methodological approaches for that division. Be sure to carefully review the calls for submission in light of the topics and research.

In some cases, you may have a topic that intersects with different divisions. For example, maybe you have a project that explores the rhetorical performances of feminist environmental activists. In such a case do you send to the rhetoric and public address division? The environmental communication division? ORWAC? The literature review for your paper should give you a sense of which division would be the best fit for your paper. The scholars and research you are referencing in your own work reflect the scholarly conversation of which you are a participant. Ask yourself, what division best reflects the research you are currently citing and discussing in your own project? Of the rhetorical, feminist, and environmental communication scholars you are referencing in your paper, who do you see yourself primarily addressing as an audience for your own work? To which projects do you most want to contribute with your own scholarship? How you answer these questions should help you decide where to submit the paper.

It may also be helpful to look at previous convention program to review topics, paper titles, and scholars who have presented with that division in the past. If you are still unsure, you could also always contact the division program planner directly (usually identified in the call) to check to see if your paper would be a good fit for that interest group.

Additional things to remember when it comes to the professional standards and expectations of conference submissions include:

- Papers submitted should not have been submitted and presented at another conference. The work you are presenting should be original work for this conference.

Ask the Oracle (contd)

- You should submit your paper to only one division or affiliate organization. Even if you believe your paper would work in multiple divisions, you need to limit yourself to one interest group—the one that best reflects the scholarly conversation you are participating in for this particular paper.
- Submitting your work means you are making a commitment to attend the conference. Program slots are limited, and by not following through on your presentation you create a vacancy that could have been filled by another aspiring scholar.
- Generally, you want to submit a completed research project, not something that is still in progress in a significant way. At the same time, you don't want to submit a manuscript that has already been published or accepted for publication. Presenting at a conference is an excellent opportunity for intellectual exchange and a chance to refine and enhance your work.

Thank you, Dr. Blair, for participating in our "Ask the Oracle" Column.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KRISTEN HOERL!

Dr. Kristen Hoerl will begin taking new submissions in January 2016 as Editor-Elect of *Women's Studies in Communication*.

Dr. Hoerl works at Butler University as Associate Professor of Critical Communication and Media Studies.



Coming Soon!

ORWAC's New Website

Fall 2015

2016 ORWAC Call for Papers Western States Communication Association Annual Convention

The Organization for Research on Women and Communication invites submissions for program proposals and competitive papers for the Western States Communication Association conference to be held in San Diego, California (February 27-March 2, 2016). ORWAC seeks submissions that speak to both its emphasis on research regarding women, gender, and diverse feminisms, *and* the convention theme: “Collaboration, Innovation, and Convergence.” Of particular interest are papers and programs that address contemporary issues such as transnational feminism, citizenship, community, globalization, and new media technologies as they relate to women, gender, and feminist activism around the world.

Paper submission guidelines: ORWAC does not accept works in progress nor should papers have been previously presented, published, or be accepted for presentation or publication. Authors who have not previously presented a paper at a conference or published in a journal should mark their papers as “Debut” in the upper right-hand corner of the title page as well as indicate their status (e.g., bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral student). All student submissions should be marked as “Student” for consideration of the “Top Student Paper” award.

Paper submissions should include the following: 1) A separate title page that includes the paper’s title, names of all authors, affiliation(s), email address(es), phone number(s) as well as an abstract of approximately 200 words; 2) A paper that does not exceed 25 pages, including references; 3) No information identifying the author(s) should appear beyond that which appears on the title page; and 4) Each document—title page and paper—should be saved as a separate PDF.

Program Panel submission guidelines: Include the following information: 1) Thematic title of the program; 2) Description and rationale of program; 3) Title and brief description of each presentation or questions to be pursued by panelists; 4) Names, affiliations, email addresses and phone numbers of all participants. Alternative formats are encouraged as are innovative program proposals that provide opportunities for engaged interaction among participants and attendees. Proposals should be saved and submitted as PDFs.

To all submitters, please stipulate any requests for equipment with your initial submission. Requests for equipment submitted after the submission deadline will not be met. For additional details about the WSCA convention, please consult www.westcomm.org.

Finally, all submissions must be received by Katie L. Gibson, Ph.D., President of ORWAC, no later than **September 1, 2015 by 11:59 pm PST in order to be considered**. Forward documents electronically to: katie.gibson@colostate.edu.

ORWAC Grant Recipient Report

Kathleen M. de Onís

During the summer of 2014, I completed two months of participant observation and environmental justice advocacy in Puerto Rico's archipelago, which includes the Big Island, Vieques, and Culebra. While certainly not exhaustive, the following activities offer a glimpse of my interactions with/in the field: I attended numerous government-sponsored public hearings and grassroots meetings; volunteered at a week-long youth camp; participated as an interviewee on *Radio Vieques*; and attended two "community tours" offered by a micro-empresa/-business dedicated to educating the public about flooding, polluted water, and its impacts on human health. To participate in these events, I ventured to numerous municipalities throughout the archipelago and interviewed environmental and feminist activists, professors, historians, filmmakers, federally-employed officials, and natural gas company employees. I completed fifty-seven interviews, all but two of which were conducted face-to-face and during my time in the archipelago. This ethnographic approach required that I engage multiple cultural artifacts, viewpoints, and environments.

While my findings are complex and too numerous to fully develop here, I am moved by several Puerto Rican feminists who have created their own micro-empresas to advance environmental and reproductive justice in their communities. With few exceptions, the local leaders I interviewed did not use the social movement terms of environmental and reproductive justice explicitly; however, they alluded to these frameworks when discussing their struggles and successes during personal interviews and during their interactions with community members. I contend that attending to how these frameworks are mobilized on the ground offers fruitful examples for how particular discourses and performances may or may not employ particular terminology while still being guided by, enacting, and embodying the intersection of reproductive and environmental justice. Furthermore, my ORWAC grant application discussed the ways in which Puerto Rican female bodies historically have been (ab)/used as laboratories for U.S. empire building and the pharmaceutical industry. These findings suggest that the trope of experimentation might also carry a positive valence, as Puerto Rican women embrace leadership roles and experiment with local business opportunities to advance rather than erode social justice and human dignity.

ORWAC's generous financial support has been immensely helpful for my fieldwork. I used the funds to defray costs for books and photocopies of archival documents, transcription equipment, and travel to two different conferences. In May 2015, I returned to Puerto Rico to conduct additional fieldwork. I followed up with some of the lingering questions I had from my previous visit, especially regarding gender, identity, and cross-movement coalition-building concerns. Muchas gracias / many thanks to ORWAC for making this ongoing project possible.

Forthcoming Publications

- "Es una lucha doble': Articulating Environmentalism and Nationalism in Puerto Rico's Archipelago." Book chapter for *Racial Ecologies Collection*. Eds. Kim Hester-Williams and Leilani Nishime.
- "Pa' Que Tú Lo Sepas': Experiences with Co-presence in Puerto Rico." Book chapter for *Text + Field* anthology. Eds. Robert Asen, Karma Chávez, Robert Howard, and Sara McKinnon.

ORWAC Grant Recipient Report

Ariadne A. Gonzalez

I appreciate ORWAC's continuous commitment to feminist scholarship in Communication. I would also like to thank ORWAC for the grant I received this year. This dissertation has been a journey. Because data collection and coding took longer than I expected, I am in the final stages of the analysis. I plan to submit the final draft of my dissertation at the end of July.

My dissertation sought to examine how Mexican immigrant women domestic workers construct and negotiate their occupational identity when they face certain occupational constraints. The data revealed that women enact certain job protection practices at job sites and on the border since their occupation is their livelihood. Secondly, my participants push through and find dignity in the work they accomplish, regardless of the occupational forces they face in and outside of work.

Last month, I presented a paper at ICA in San Juan, Puerto Rico titled: "Tenemos que salir adelante: An examination of Mexican immigrant domestic workers' occupational identity on the Texas-Mexico border" and received positive feedback from several organizational communication scholars. I will also be part of two paper and panel sessions this fall at NCA that relate to women and work (Feminist/Women Division) and occupational identity (Organizational Communication Division), and I will discuss my analysis in length at both panel sessions. Lastly, as I finish these last analysis chapters, I am simultaneously preparing to submit a manuscript to *Management Communication Quarterly* by the end of November.

ORWAC Grant Recipient Report

Erin L. McCutcheon

The funding I received from the ORWAC enabled me to begin an incredibly fruitful eight months of dissertation research. In October 2014, I used the funding to travel to New York, Monterrey, and Mexico City. During this time, I was able to investigate archives by the curators of important exhibitions of feminist art from Mexico. This initial work provided better insight into the curatorial strategies that have been used to frame these artists for the public, and a jumping off point for my own research. After arriving in Mexico City, I met with artists, activists, and curators at the center of my project. I have compiled a rich archive of both recorded oral histories and never before seen artworks of the women at the center of the feminist movement in the 1970s and 80s in Mexico City. I have been given access to both institutional and personal archives, which contain a vast amount of inaccessible documentation associated with the feminist art movement in Mexico.

I have established a solid presence in the feminist art community there, allowing me to form close relationships with these artists. As a result, I have been invited to lecture at the Museo de la Mujer on the topic of feminist art, and also join the curatorial team for the first retrospective of feminist artist Mónica Mayer, which will be held at the Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo in 2016. I am on track to complete my dissertation on time, and have also been accepted to present a portion of my findings in a talk entitled, "Reading Between the Lines: Women, Art and Identity in Post-1968 Mexico City," at the College Art Association's Annual Conference in 2016. None of these successes would have been possible without the grant I received from the ORWAC, and I would like to extend my most heartfelt thanks to the organization for its generous support.

ORWAC Grant Recipient Report

Kendra Dyanne Rivera

The primary goals of my ongoing qualitative research with pregnant Mexican and Mexican American women are: 1) to better understand how Mexican/Mexican-American women experience stress during pregnancy; 2) to gain understanding about the role that acculturation and social support play in either heightening or lessening stress in this population; 3) to gather information about how the women experience health care at the partnering clinic; and 4) to provide suggestions for how clinics might improve their communication and practices to be more culturally competent and thus to reduce stress for their patients. In this report, I will highlight the progress of this research, which was graciously funded by the 2014 ORWAC Research Development Grant.

At the time of my proposal to ORWAC, I had gathered 23 interviews, and hoped to collect an additional 22 interviews for a total of 45 participants. To date, I have a total of 56 interviews. Therefore, I have exceeded my initial goal, and at this time I am no longer collecting data. With the funding from ORWAC as well as internal grants from my own institution, to date I have been able to transcribe 27 interviews, and have translated 19 interviews. Although I had anticipated slightly more Spanish than English interviews, we had approximately 50% more Spanish language interviews, which changed the total funding I had anticipated. However, I am optimistic that with additional funding, I will have transcribed and translated all interviews by the end of Summer, 2015. In addition, I have received funding to hire a student research assistant who is fluent in Spanish and who helped conduct many of the interviews. She will assist in fact-checking the Spanish transcriptions/translations prior to final analysis.

From the preliminary analysis of this research, I presented a paper at the 2014 annual conference of the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender (OSCLG), entitled “The Way it Is: Pregnant Mexican American Women and Narratives of Place, Support, and Stress.” In addition, I have submitted an additional conference paper to the 2015 annual conference of the National Communication Association entitled, “This is Just Life: Pregnant Mexican-American Women Negotiate Boundaries and Borders between Work, Life, and Cultures.” I plan to combine these preliminary papers into a publication for the interdisciplinary journal, *Women’s Health Issues*.

It is also my hope and plan to continue with the analysis so that it is mutually beneficial for the health clinic and for me as a researcher, as well as the students who work with me on this research project. I have also been fortunate to receive additional grant funding. I plan to disseminate the ongoing research not only in academic venues, but also health care provider publications, as well as other popular outlets. It is my hope that the research findings will reach a broad audience, expanding our ideas about Mexican and Mexican American women, acculturation, and stress in order to improve health care experiences and health care outcomes for a variety of cultures.

I would like to express my gratitude to ORWAC for support of this research. With your help, I was able to exceed my own plans. ORWAC is instrumental in assisting research such as mine, and I look forward to continuing to work with ORWAC into the future.

ORWAC Grant Recipient Report

Brooke Erin Duffy

I am writing to report on the research activities made possible by a grant award from the Organization for Research on Women in Communication during the 2014-2015 academic year. Thanks to the organization's generosity, I was able to successfully advance my scholarship on gender, cultural production, and social media technologies. More specifically, the grant provided funding for fieldwork, interview transcriptions, and research materials that were essential to the collection and analysis of data for my project, "Labor of Love: Gender and Creative Work in the Age of Social Media."

I'm pleased to report that my findings have yielded several publications and presentations, the most extensive of which is my forthcoming book, *Aspirational Labor: Women and Creative Work in an Age of Social Media*, which is under contract with Yale University Press. This book draws upon in-depth interviews with female digital media aspirants; participant-observation at fashion, technology, and branding events; and a close examination of professionalization resources to advance debates about female laborers in the digital media economy. I plan to complete this monograph in the fall and look forward to formally acknowledging the support of the ORWAC. In addition, I have a "Commentary and Criticism" contribution forthcoming in *Feminist Media Studies*, titled "Gendering the Labor of Social Media Production." In this piece, I contend that feminist media researchers need to take seriously the experiences and motivations of social media producers by listening to their accounts *in their own voices*. I also show how researchers, media makers, and social activists—as well as those of us responsible for educating the next generation of social media producers—can draw on feminist approaches to push forward policy interventions designed to support women working in social media.

In addition to my forthcoming publications, I have presented my findings at a number of conferences and invited talks, including:

- "Labors of Love: Gender, Creativity, and Aspirational Work in the Digital Economy," National Communication Association, November 2014.
- "For Love and Money: Gendered Social Media Production as Aspirational Labor," Drexel University, February 2015.
- "The Politics of 'Passion Projects': Gendered Labor in the Social Media Era." Columbia University, March 2015.
- "Social Media's Reliance on Aspirational Labor," *Theorizing the Web*, April 2015.
- "Fashioning the Gendered Self through Social Media: Personal Branding and Productive Consumption among Aspiring Creative Professionals," International Communication Association, May 2015.

Finally, I want to share the good news that the paper that I presented at the National Communication Association was recognized with the Critical & Cultural Studies division's "Emerging Scholar Award."

A research grant from ORWAC played an invaluable role in making these various activities possible. I am very grateful for the organization's generous support.

The ORWAC Gender Preconference

Feminist Inquiry in the Communication Discipline

ORWAC invites your participation in a preconference at the Western States Communication Association from 12:00-5:00 on the Saturday that the convention begins. The preconference will be modeled on the “Gender Conferences” that were held annually in the communication discipline in the 1980s and 1990s. At these small conferences, there were no formal paper presentations. Instead, participants wrote short position papers on questions developed around the conference theme and came prepared to discuss that question with others who had written on that question.

The theme for the preconference will concern feminist inquiry in the discipline. Feminism has been part of the academy for 40 years; it seems a good time to reassess its nature and role in our discipline.

The preconference will be organized around the following questions:

1. **Defining Feminism:** How do you define feminism? What does it mean to be a feminist—in the field of communication, in academia, and in general? Are there acts that are feminist and acts that are not? What are feminist principles? Can someone be a feminist simply by being a woman who realizes her full human potential in the world? Must she consistently act politically, and, if so, what does that mean? Do we still need the label *feminist* to describe our orientation to the world?
2. **Assessing Feminism:** What do you see as the current status of feminist research within the communication discipline? Is a feminist perspective on the decline in our discipline? Has a feminist perspective been integrated into the discipline? What evidence is there for whatever view you take on the status of feminism in our discipline? How can feminism be made fun again?
3. **Articulating the Silences:** What are you interested in discussing in terms of feminism that you have felt couldn't be discussed? Are there strictures within the communication discipline or within feminism that make you feel that you can't say certain things? How would a discussion of this “unspoken” topic change our perspective on or research about feminism and communication?
4. **Asking New Questions:** What question about feminism and communication would you like communication scholars to ask? What article from a feminist perspective would you most like to read in our journals?
5. **Living Feminist Lives:** How can our lives as academic feminists be made more satisfying and coherent? What does it mean to live as a feminist?
6. **Teaching as a Feminist:** What constitutes feminist pedagogy? Is it all that different from other kinds of good teaching? Is it contradictory in any ways to good teaching? What are the results of feminist pedagogy in our classrooms? How can we become more feminist in our pedagogy?

To participate in the preconference, write a short position paper (2-4 doubled-spaced pages) on one of the questions, and submit it to Karen A. Foss (KarenFoss4@gmail.com) by January 1, 2016. By writing a position paper, you may be able to secure travel funds from your university for the convention. Your paper will be circulated in advance to other participants who wrote on the same question so that all members of your discussion group will have advanced knowledge of the perspectives of the other group members.

If you have questions about the preconference, please contact Dr. Karen Foss at KarenFoss4@gmail.com or 505-379-0459.

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