

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 19, 2017 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

SESSION 2A

POWER MADE VISIBLE: IMAGE, IDENTITY, NARRATIVE ACTIVISM

Session Moderator: Juliana Villegas, English
MGH 171

3:30 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Asian American Reflections on Mass Media Representation

Brooke Hannah (Brooke) Byun, Senior, Biochemistry, Communication

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Carmen Gonzalez

Minority actors continue to be under-represented in major Hollywood films, something brought to national light last year through the return of the “OscarsSoWhite” hashtag on Twitter. Though there have been some efforts to increase racial diversity in blockbuster roles, there has been serious backlash from minority actors and viewers who have reacted vehemently to the “white-washing” of minority roles, including characters in *Doctor Strange*, *The Great Wall*, and *Aloha*. This study aims to gauge young (ages 18 - 25), self-identified Asian American adults’ responses to this issue of unequal media representation using an interpretive perspective. Data will be gathered through initial survey “screeners” and in-person semistructured interviews. First and foremost, I will ask Asian Americans if they interact with and/or view forms of media. If so, do they feel (accurately) represented in the media? Do they perceive differences in minority roles in major films versus television? Key terms such as “representation” and “white-washing” will be clarified during the interview, as needed. This research will lay important groundwork for assessing Asian American consumers’ views regarding media representations, especially regarding the intersection of identity and mental health. With this work, we can establish need for future quantitative studies and hopefully address issues associated with unequal representation.

SESSION 2C

USING SPECULATION, POETICS, AND ART TO UNDERSTAND BIOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Session Moderator: Phillip Thurtle, Comparative History of Ideas

MGH 231

3:30 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Rhetoric’s Role in the Rejection of Plant Neurobiology as a New Subdiscipline

Kyra J (Kyra) Kaiser, Junior, Environmental Science & Resource Management

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Leah Ceccarelli, Communication

In 2006, six plant scientists proposed a subdiscipline called plant neurobiology that would examine how plants respond to signals from their environment by comparing the animal nervous system to the plant signaling system via analogy. Their paper, “Plant neurobiology: an integrated view of plant signaling” by Brenner et al., was accepted and published in the peer-reviewed journal *Trends in Plant Science*. Although Brenner et al. were respected scientists from recognized universities, their proposal was rejected by the plant science community. Pivotal to this rejection was the publication of “Plant neurobiology: no brain, no gain?” by Alpi et al., a paper coauthored by 36 scientists that criticized the concept of plant neurobiology. Why was Alpi et al.’s argument against plant neurobiology so successful? Their paper is representative of strategies that scientists use to persuade other scientists to reject a call for the development of a new subfield. This rhetorical analysis focuses on Alpi et al.’s interpretation of the concept of plant neurobiology and their use of scientific topoi, or commonplaces. Their argument effectively undermined plant neurobiology and its proponents by misrepresenting the plant neurobiology analogy as a literal argument and appealing to scientific topoi held by their audience, namely, the topoi of corroboration, explanatory power, observational competence, and parsimony. This analysis of the successful obstruction of a nascent subfield suggests that rhetoric plays a major role in the outcome of scientific de-

bate by influencing the scientific community's perception of a proposed idea.

SESSION 2D

THE HEALTH OF THE PUBLIC

Session Moderator: Clarence Spigner, Health Services
MGH 234

3:30 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Language Shapes the Perception of Beauty in Asymmetrical Breasts

Jayden Requena, Sophomore, Communication, Shoreline Community College

Mentor: Brooke Zimmers, Communication Studies, Shoreline Community College

My research examines the language that ascribes, or labels, the "beauty" of women's breasts. All women live in a paradoxical world where they must constantly strive for what society defines as "normal" rather than natural. Language used to communicate breast health and breast symmetry demonstrates how negative connotations shape a person's perception of their avowed, or self-declared, beauty. By researching different evolutionary theories proposed by anthropologists, I analyze communication concepts such as Social Construction Theory, Sapir Wharf Hypothesis, and Reflected Appraisal to understand how a women's breast identity affects them. The research suggests that women who are born with, or become asymmetrical after a mastectomy, are given few options to embrace their natural self and few words to avow a positive identity. Research shows that the media have a strong influence on how people define beauty standards. Nearly all women have different sized breasts and those with a noticeable difference feel ashamed to talk about it; the language used to describe this situation creates a reality where the only imaginable option to "fix" this "problem" is to undergo reconstructive surgery. This presentation implies that if the language used to describe asymmetry changes, society can create a new climate of acceptance rather than reinforcing an impossible image of natural breasts. Positive language used to discuss asymmetry allows for positive conversation to generate new fashion possibilities where women can transform their wardrobe to fit their natural breasts rather than the other way around.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons East, Easel 44

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

"Beyond Appetite": Examining Identities and Motivations of Foodies through Food Visuals on Instagram

Napatsorn (Pam) Thanarugchok, Senior, Communication

Mary Gates Scholar, UW Honors Program

Mentor: Anita Crofts, Communication

Mentor: Valerie Manusov, Communication

Food has long been recognized as the way that people assign identities to themselves and others. We interpret the type of food individuals consume as a factor that constructs their biological, sociological, and psychological images. As social media grows more pervasive, foodie culture and new methods of self-expression through food visuals have been introduced. For example, today there is a trend for social media users to share pictures of food and meals they consume online. The goal of this study is to examine behaviors, identities, and motivations of 18-30 years old foodies through the food visuals they choose to post on Instagram. The study aims to seek answers to the following questions: What motivates young foodies to post different kinds of food visuals; Is there a relationship between identities and food photos; and, Why food has become such a popular subject to share online? Multiple data collection methods, including surveys and direct observation, are used in this research. The study anticipates that young foodies use food visuals as a tool to create emotional connections in their own network and to put forward a visual version of their personalities and values. Food visuals can be many things: demonstrations of social status, reflections of self, replicate togetherness, and create community, to name just a few. The findings of this research are useful for understanding what motivates people to post food photos on social media, and what those photos represent about their sense of self, their values, and their sense of community. The findings can be a stepping stone for future research exploring the relationship between food, humans, and social media in a wider perspective.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons East, Easel 83

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Donald Trump's Presidential Announcement Speech: A Rhetorical Analysis

Caleb T. (Caleb) Huffman, Senior, Political Science, Communication

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Matt McGarrity, Communication

On June 16th, 2015 business mogul Donald J. Trump delivered a presidential announcement speech, announcing his candidacy for president of the United States, launching his ascension to the White House. Through a rhetorical analysis of Donald Trump's Presidential Announcement Speech utilizing Kenneth Burke's framework of dramatism, Trump's

speech is shown to mimic the effective rhetorical strategy of the United States Christian theological prosperity gospel movement. The speech establishes a negative status quo, provides testimony on a successful break from the status quo, and concludes with a plan for redemption, showing listeners how they, too, can break from the status quo utilizing an exemplary model. Trump serves as the exemplary model, claiming to know a path toward greatness, articulated with his campaign's slogan, "Make America Great Again". However, Trump's imperfections, including his relationships with the elite and break from expected niceties in rhetoric, required mortification and scapegoating for justification to legitimately be seen as the exemplary model. The implications of Trump's rhetorical strategy may inform future political candidates' rhetoric and provide insight into President Trump's framing of policy issues.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons East, Easel 45

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

What was the Agenda-Setting and Cultivation of Noticiero Univision Seattle before the Election of 2016?

Nancy Soto, Senior, Communication

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Carmen Gonzalez

The majority of Latinos/Hispanics seek TV news for information and news that reflect their experiences and values. Univision is the largest Spanish television network, in which its audience heavily relies on it for political information that relates to their values. The aim of this study is to understand the relationship between what the Latino/Hispanic viewers said were important issues and the actual content of the media messages used in Noticiero Univision Seattle before the Election of 2016. A content analysis was conducted to discover how agenda-setting plays a role in Noticiero Univision news broadcast. Agenda-setting consists of the amount of attention that is given to an issue in the media, which affects the level of importance assigned to that issue by the public. Within the agenda-setting of Noticiero Univision Seattle, it provided little attention to political issues throughout its news segment, which leads to how it affects the level of importance over political issues of its Latino/Hispanic viewers. Furthermore, a focus group study, a diverse group of people assembled to participate in a guided discussion, was conducted with a survey to understand if Noticiero Univision Seattle is responsible for shaping conceptions of social reality (cultivation theory). I predict that the limited amount of political issues Noticiero Univision Seattle focused on during the Election 2016 does not reflect the important issues that the viewers (focus group) were impacted by. This study will help us explore the importance of providing effective news to viewers, especially during the election season.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons East, Easel 84

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Donald Trump's Twitter and His Influence on the Media: A Study of How Political Social Media Accounts Impact Press Coverage

Annika Kay Larson, Senior, Communication

UW Honors Program

Mentor: LeiLani Nishime, Communication

With the rise of social media, politicians use these platforms as tools to reach out to the public, press, and their constituents. During the 2016 United States presidential election, social media platforms played a significant role in guiding political conversation, particularly with the press. Using Donald Trump's tweets during the Access Hollywood tape scandal as a case study, my research focuses on how political Twitter accounts can impact press coverage. For my research, I analyzed newspaper articles during the first two weeks of the Access Hollywood tape scandal, tracking how the press reacted to Donald Trump's tweets in their coverage. Through understanding Trump's Twitter dynamics and how it influenced his media coverage during the presidential election, my project identified patterns in which the media reacts to Twitter and other political social media accounts.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons East, Easel 46

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

"It Gets Better": Towards a Deeper Analysis of Pan-Queer Identity

Colin Gill, Senior, Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Ralina Joseph, Communication

In this thesis I interrogate the "It Gets Better"(IGB) video project by Dan Savage, using an intersectional analysis to reveal the ways in which it reinforces politics of respectability, neoliberalism, and lacks an intersectional approach to the process of coming out across lines of gender identity, race/ethnicity, class, nationality, religion, and ability. To help frame the research of this paper, I will address the following questions: 1) who is the intended audience of "It Gets Better"? 2) How and in what ways do hierarchies get created within a single group, rather than between two groups? 3) What are the consequences of delivering a message that it will "get better"? 4) How does "It Gets Better" apply to individuals living with multiple, marginalized identities? 5) In what ways do racialized LGBTQ bodies feel torn between their racial/ethnic community and the LGBTQ community? I chose to research this topic because as a genderqueer

and queer person there have been instances that my life has not gotten better since coming out. By the same token, I have several friends who have had particularly difficult experiences because of coming out due to their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES), contending with gender dysphoria, nationality, religion, and inaccessibility to resources (e.g.-healthcare, education, housing) within the capitalist structures of the United States (U.S.). My goal in this thesis is to interrupt neoliberal notions of “getting better” and instead turn our attention to the structures in society that do not allow life to get better for all LGBTQ people after coming out.