**STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS**

**Karl P. Haase** will present his paper “Rhetorical Community and Crisis: Narrative and Change Through Culture” at the Western States Communication Association 2013 conference in Reno, Nevada.

**Brianna Hackley** is in love with her new job as an accounts manager for education software company Kno.

**Laurina Lanham** has been promoted at Google to Program Manager and is using her expertise in communication to guide her team towards effective dialogic strategies for success in the workplace.

**Jennifer Jackson-Sclafani** graduated in December 2012 after successfully defending her exams.

**Darcy Osheim** presented her paper “World of Commcraft” at the National Communication Association 2012 conference in Orlando, Florida.

**Diana Woodhouse** published her essay “Navigating Crisis and Desire: Pedagogies of Presence in Absence” in *Liminalities* 8.5 (winter 2012), a special issue dedicated to the life and work of John T. Warren.

**Dana L. Morella-Pozzi** and **Mary Anne Sunseri** published their essay “Power, Suspicion, and Oppression: An Exploration into the Connection Between Whiteness and Disability” in *Liminalities* 8.5 (winter 2012).


All three essays are available online: [http://liminalities.net/8-5/](http://liminalities.net/8-5/)

**Michaela Weeks** and **Vicky Arafa** begin in January as editorial assistants to Dr. Rona Halualani, editor-elect of the *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*.

**Stephanie Anderson, Bedilia Ramirez,** and **Robert Gutierrez-Perez** will perform their panel “The Passion of Experience: Transforming the ‘Global’ Classroom” at the Western States Communication Association 2013 conference in Reno, Nevada.

**Will Simons** graduated in December 2012 after successfully defending his project “Transforming Managerial Communication Through Appreciative Inquiry: An Inside Look At Bogard Construction, Inc.”

**Bedilia Ramirez** graduated in December 2012 after successfully defending her exams.
Beyond the Great Wall

How to be a flâneur: Jessica Johnson on her travels in Beijing

“It was in pieces from what we could see. The smog and mist that day made it seem even higher than we expected. Then seeing the stairs, which varied in height from two inches to three feet was intimidating... It was a sight we were all looking forward to and none of us were let down. Especially when we were told how few people in the world have walked on the Great Wall of China.”

Jessica studies STD prevention campaigns and is writing a thesis about the ideographs that govern prevention rhetoric. This past summer she traveled to Beijing for three weeks as a member of SJSU’s Department of Communication Studies student delegation led by Dr. Andy Wood. Her adventures in that city of nineteen million gave her new appreciation for the importance of non-verbal communication, children, and study abroad.

With communication made difficult by language barriers, Jessica and her classmates had to get creative when exploring Beijing’s nightlife. “We knew that since we could not use verbal communication we had to rely on expressing ourselves another way.” After a long, disappointing search for the “Friends” café they decided to go dancing. “We had no way of saying ‘club’ and the petty-cab driver didn’t speak English. So we kind of did the symbols for dancing and stuff and he started to drive to a modest looking club, then we did the gestures for looking nice and really dancing and he took us to Club Chocolate, one of the best clubs. We got there fairly quickly and also negotiated the price using traditional Chinese hand gestures for amounts of money.”

Jessica’s training in ethnography also helped her to engage, observe, and reflect on cultural differences. “I have not really wanted to have children and have always gotten grief from my family and friends. Then when I went to China I saw how everyone acted differently when there was a child around. Strangers would get happy and play with them. People would give up their seats on the subway for a pregnant woman or a woman with a child. Most people stopped what they were doing to look at the child. I don’t know if that was because they are so rare, with the one child law still being in place or it was something else. It was a different sort of affection for children and really got me to look at the policy differently... I think it is expected that people have children here, so family members are excited for new children, but not the rest of society. In China, with so many people choosing not to have children it makes them appreciate the ones that do... It made me wonder what strategies we could push [in America] to ensure that the only people who have children are those who have really thought it out and want to be parents.”

The challenges of travel and the surprises of a new place (“the smog was thicker than Los Angeles smog and San Francisco fog combined”) were worth the opportunity to learn how to adjust, Jessica says. “You have to adapt to a lot of things. We learned how to be a flâneur, which is a tourist who wanders the city to make it familiar for him or herself.”
This past fall Vicky Arafa led a roundtable discussion with Margarita Lozano and Stephanie McLoughlin on their shared interest in gender and communication studies. Demonstrating the versatility of academic research, their inspiring conversation touched on a broad range of issues from how to appreciate women’s contributions to managerial culture to how we can apply gender and communication theory in the workplace to how we might use communication studies research methods to project women’s voices.

Vicky: What experiences and interests brought you to the study of gender and communication?

Maggie: Currently I am working on research exploring the gender performed by men and women who are working as servers in restaurants. I noticed there was a lot of gendered work in an office setting... I have two bosses, one female and one male. I noticed that the female kind of took care of the whole staff in an emotional manner, in sending flowers to families who had just lost someone or congratulating families who had a newborn. And [similarly] I always have to be smiling, and if there is a male who is doing the same job as I am he doesn’t have to smile as much I have to smile. And if I’m not smiling then they ask me “Are you mad? What’s going on?” when maybe I am just tired or busy. That is where my research stemmed from and now I’m looking at restaurant work where men and women are paid to perform a type of similar gender performance.

Vicky Arafa is a second year graduate student and a Graduate Teaching Associate. She worked as an events production coordinator for Hewlett-Packard for four years and begins her new job as a producer for Cisco TV in January.

Stephanie: Kind of contrary to what you guys were talking about in needing to embody that hyper-femininity, I found myself having to do the opposite. I became part of the director level of management in my company about a year and a half ago and, talk about a good ‘ol boys club, it was mostly a male environment. And what I started to notice was that power and leadership were pretty highly correlated with masculinity and those kinds of performances of masculinity. The question for me became, how in an environment that was still strongly governed by a patriarchal hierarchy, how I could identify where strategies can be used, to Vicky's point, to make a more inclusive workplace.

Vicky: I work in video production and I was very often one of two women on a crew and there were camera operators and directors and producers who were usually male and much older than me. I also felt like I had to perform this hyper-feminine roll in order to get what I needed done, but at the same time I felt like I was balancing this feminist role who wanted progress and change. But I couldn’t rock the boat too much and so what I’m interested in are the resistance strategies that women employ in male dominated fields that allow them entrance into that boys’ club, but also allow for change.

Margarita Lozano is an undergraduate majoring in communication studies. She is a peer advisor for SJSU’s ASPIRE program, a McNair scholar, and will finish her degree in May 2013.
**Stephanie:** Some of it is, you know, you need to be hard, you need to be firm, you need to be strong, you can’t show weakness. I heard Maggie talk about being able to have people come into your office and trust you and want to talk to you, and how that is feminine. Well, that’s interesting because from my perspective, that would help you succeed, right? It helps your team succeed, it helps your personnel succeed and achieve.

**Vicky:** In order to get to those power positions we unfortunately live in a society where you have to perform more masculine characteristics. I’m worried that you would lose sight of that maybe by the time you got to a position of power. Like, I’m playing these masculine roles because I’m trying to get into those power positions. It’s almost like you have to play by the rules before you can break them.

**Stephanie:** There is an essay I love by Marlene Fine, “Women Leaders’ Discursive Constructions of Leadership.” It speaks to just that point, which is how do women who are already in power perceive their power. And, to bring it back to that practical application of things, what can you do to create almost a counter-culture within the work world to say that feminine characteristics are as valuable if not more in management? What can be done from a practical standpoint to value things like being supportive, listening, and networking? That’s a huge piece that women generally have and is generally associated with being female that contributes to success.

**Vicky:** How does gender and communication theory shape your perception and your experiences of gender in your workplace?

**Maggie:** I think that now I understand that there are gendered expectations, expectations placed on me, and I am able to acknowledge and distinguish these gendered roles and equip myself with strategic forms of resistance. What I really found appalling was the fact that sometimes the people who place those types of gendered expectations on me are other females! I had this job that was so horrible. I worked with three other females and they were just really nasty and they would always talk about, “I hate working with females!” and I’m sitting in my office thinking, what kind of statement is that to make when we are all females here? They are not contributing to the progressive ways of thinking; they are still stuck in this type of self-hatred. I feel we should work together to help each other out and mentor other females. Theories on gender communication have allowed me to see how I can contribute to a more progressive way of thinking rather than to just be stuck and self hate.

**Vicky:** I think that is awesome. In terms of gender and communication theory shaping my perceptions and experiences at work, it makes it impossible to unsee. So you go to class, you learn these theories, you go to work, and you’re like, “Whoa!” And so I try some of my own resistance strategies. I try really hard with language at work. So instead of ‘cameramen’ I say ‘camera operators.’ And these are little things I feel like if I infuse into the workplace maybe they can catch on. There are things I try my best to throw in there because I do consider myself an educated person at least in the area of gender studies. I know that language can do violence and I know that language can apply meaning and so if I’m at work, I can’t have a ninety-minute conversation about the progression of feminism cause that’s not going to happen at work. The least I can do is try to modify my language or my behavior so that I’m still practicing feminist strategies and feel like I’m making changes.

**Stephanie:** I agree. I think that is all awesome. You all mentioned crying and I’ve had my share of moments when I have just wanted to go ahead and let that happen. But I think there is, I was going to say implicit but I think it’s a pretty explicit message that crying is not appropriate workplace behavior. I think it is an example of bringing the personal into the workplace that’s not always well received and that’s because there is suppose to be a strict division between the personal and the emotional; the family side of life and the work professional side of life.

Stephanie B. McLoughlin is Director of Advertising for the Bay Area News Group. She completed her M.A. in Communication Studies in May 2012.

**Stephanie:**

Communication Studies in May 2012.
**Stephanie:** As we become more integrated with our jobs and our careers—I work on weekends, I work on nights, I work pretty much twenty-four hours a day, and if one of my employees needs to be in touch with me I answer the phone. I think as we become more integrated, some of those walls necessarily need to start coming down. I think what I can do to contribute to what Maggie was saying is demonstrate in myself and in my own career what I hope to see.

**Vicky:** What are your plans for the future, having studied gender and communication?

**Maggie:** I’m really excited about this particular program at UCLA that takes an interdisciplinary approach to education. It has gender, race, class, communication, and it has an equal commitment to research, to policy, and to practice, which is exactly what I want. So when I think about my future plans, I want to be a voice for marginalized groups of people, especially women of color. We struggle so bad. We go to school, but sometimes some of us are mothers, some of us work two to three jobs to help support our families and I feel like there is not enough voices of women, especially Latina women that are heard. We are often criminalized. We are often labeled as delinquents and as parents who don’t care about their children’s education when in reality our parents push in us the values of family, community and education, hard work. Instead of looking at [the ways people make do] in a derogatory way I want to push the concept of community wealth and look at it as the assets you get by being in a marginalized group where you learn to be resilient together. Where you learn to be innovative in the ways you practice cultural resistance.

**Vicky:** I think 1) it would be awesome to teach a course, and then 2) it would be great if I did write something, to create something that did give voice to women. Women in these male dominated fields, I think they don’t really have access to each other and so it would be cool to create a repository for their stories and their narratives that kind of explains what happens.

**Stephanie:** One of the things I loved about my discoveries in this department was my love of oral history. I came to an important conclusion (that I have to remind myself about every so often) and that is, everybody’s voice is valuable and worth hearing. That sounds really simplistic and essential, but you know everybody contributes to who you are, so that aggregate of stories and experiences that you gather along your way are just fascinating to me. I want to be a lifetime student. I want to keep learning. If I could just continue to add to what I’ve been able to glean from all of you wonderful people, I would consider that an achievement, a success.

**Vicky:** What is amazing about learning about gender and learning about communication is that it forcibly peels your eyelids back and then you can never blink again. I can’t stop seeing all of this. I liken it to being part of a secret club, like you’ll be able to see things no one can, and you can go tell people about it.

Ethos was designed and compiled with the help of Richard Bui, a second year undergraduate majoring in Communication Studies and Assistant to the Graduate Program. If you have news for Ethos, contact Richard at: richard.bui@sjsu.edu.