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THE ROAR

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TCNJ's Department of
Communication Studies:
*A National Leader in Student-
Faculty Engagement*

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A PANDEMIC YEAR IN REVIEW

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD



The ROAR has been a staple of TCNJ's Department of Communication Studies since the publication's founding in 2008. The newsletter continues to showcase the very best of our students, faculty, and programs. Over the past year and a half, our department has taken on unprecedented academic and personal endeavors. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a time of reflection for our department to work harder than ever, with the outcome producing new, timely course material as well as groundbreaking research to share with the community.

In this edition, you will find articles on departmental research, faculty excellence, student achievement, professional development, and alumni distinction. On behalf of the editorial board, we would like to thank our readers—whether they be alumni, current students, or prospective students—our advisor Dr. John C. Pollock, and all those individuals who contributed content for the newsletter.

It is an honor to announce the arrival of the 20th volume of The ROAR—the official newsletter of the TCNJ Communication Studies Department.

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Why Experts at a Top NJ College Arts and Communication School Conclude Social Media Use Overcomes Vaccine Hesitancy

Press release from GlobeNewswire

Overcoming vaccine hesitancy is a national emergency, and a team of internationally recognized health communication scholars in the Department of Communication Studies in the School of the Arts and Communication at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) has identified successful initiatives using social media.

TCNJ's Department of Communication Studies currently ranks number one in New Jersey and received the 2013 National Communication Association Rex Mix Program of Excellence Award as the nation's best undergraduate communication studies department. These TCNJ communication studies experts discovered five vital strategies that lead to effective outcomes: mobilize multiple social media platforms; enlist a wide range of cultural influencers; engage social media users with entertaining and interactive campaign messages and activities; communicate scientific facts about COVID-19 to reduce stigma; and showcase both Republicans and Democrats supporting vaccination.

In many countries, social media netizens and content providers are eager to cooperate with national leaders to encourage mask-wearing, social distancing and hand washing. Dr. John C. Pollock, Professor of Communication Studies and Public Health, editor of forthcoming 2021 book "COVID-19 in International Media", says, "New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's appearance on a Facebook app nightly in sweatshirt or pajamas to remind fellow Kiwis to practice safety precautions and 'stay in bubbles' is a powerful lesson for leaders everywhere."



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Pollock's research uncovers comprehensive national polls finding that in order to depoliticize vaccination communication messages, reducing the association of health promotion with political partisanship is essential for saturated vaccination. He also notes many countries distribute widely song and dance videos promoting precautionary COVID-19 practices, suggesting the US should enlarge the number of participating musical leaders, beyond Dolly Parton or Columbia neurosurgeon Dr. Olajide Williams, who founded Hip Hop Public Health and animated features extolling the benefits of 'community immunity'.

"...reducing the association of health promotion with political partisanship is essential for saturated vaccination."

According to Dr. Yifeng Hu, Associate Professor and Chair of Communication Studies at TCNJ, author of a systematic review on health communication research in the digital age, "Health organizations such as WHO and CDC can combat COVID-19 vaccination misinformation by implementing engaging, interactive social media campaigns through a variety of entertaining digital communication strategies."

"My research suggested that in earlier pandemic stages, one in five tweets contained elements of stigma communication," says Assistant Professor of Communication Studies and Public Health, Dr. Yachao Li, author of the article "Constructing and Communicating COVID-19 Stigma on Twitter." Negative attitudes and discrimination toward front line workers can isolate and discourage people from seeking medical care or vaccines. Widespread distribution of engaging, accurate, and up-to-date information is essential to reduce pandemic stigma.

"I'm very proud of the way our school's health communication scholars have employed their expertise to successfully address the most dangerous pandemic in modern memory", says Dr. Maurice Hall, Dean of TCNJ School of the Arts and Communication.

The three health communication scholars on the international COVID-19 team teach in the School of the Arts and Communication, TCNJ's interdisciplinary arts, performance, music, multimedia and communication studies branch. Proud to provide students with a top-tier liberal arts education, the School is an inclusive community of dedicated teaching professionals focused on preparing young minds to flourish as productive citizens in a complex world.

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Communication Studies Virtual Showcase Recap

On 4/19/20, the Communication Studies Department hosted a Virtual Student Showcase for Accepted Students Day on Zoom with 63 participants.

With 12 panels split into three concurrent breakout rooms, accepted students had a chance to hear about current student projects, talk to double majors, and hear about internship experiences.

Each session had a Q&A portion allowing prospective students to interact directly with faculty and current TCNJ students, giving them a chance to ask questions about the program here and offering prospective students a better idea about the multitude of opportunities in our department and also student life here at TCNJ.

Thank you to our students and faculty for devoting their time to contribute to the showcase! Special thanks to the members of the Communication Studies' Student Advisory Board who participated in the showcase planning committee. The event couldn't have happened without you!

Prospective students loved the showcase and felt that it was a great way to host Accepted Students Day

"I just wanted to say I absolutely loved the presentations and felt like all the students and faculty did a great job of helping me understand what TCNJ is all about."

-a prospective TCNJ student



*Missed the Communication Studies
Virtual Showcase?*

*Videos can be found on the
department's [Youtube channel](#)*

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Shifting Perspectives: How Two TCNJ Students Used Films Created During the Pandemic to Open People's Minds

By Carly Nocchi

On October 27th 2020, the Communication Studies Student Advisory Board chose to shake up their typical format of the monthly COMMTuesday events in order to highlight two incredible student films: *Tides* by Katrina Bragat '20 and *Lost Souls* by Jake Leuzzi '21. Both of these films had recently been screened at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Film Festival: Perspectives on COVID-19 and Others. While the Student Advisory Board always appreciates an opportunity to showcase the department's talented students, the driving force behind choosing to have this screening was for the discussion that would follow. These films portray very different issues, but through hearing from the filmmakers themselves and allowing the audience to share their takeaways, similarities were found.

Tides by Katrina Bragat aimed to bring light to the racism Asian Americans face in the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It began as her Senior Capstone for Dr. Susan Ryan's class where she wanted to tell the narratives of Asian Americans. However, when the Pandemic began Katrina's focus shifted to the current narrative of Asian Americans. The title *Tides*, is a beautiful and articulate metaphor for the waves of racism Asian Americans face in this country.

In her own words, she wanted to channel all of the emotions she was feeling about how the Asian American community is being treated into something constructive. *Tides* sparked discussion about racism, privilege, TCNJ as a predominantly white institution, and interactions between different minorities.



*Communication Studies Major,
Katrina Bragat '20*

Lost Souls by Jake Leuzzi challenges viewers perspectives on life and what our purpose is. This film began as a random sound project using the things he learned in Professor Lorna Johnson-Frizell's Intermediate Art of Editing course. Jake then realized that he loved encouraging others to challenge what they believe and question the ways in which our generation is indoctrinated.

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He said his view of the world has always been that you should follow what you love and what you are passionate about. *Lost Souls* sparked discussion on introspective reflection and one's responsibility to themselves.



Interactive Multimedia Major, Jake Leuzzi '21

More than 20 people attended the Zoom screening and discussion. Everyone was in awe of the young filmmakers' talents and ability to make the audience question their own beliefs and the world we live in. The President of TCNJ Asian American Association, Crystal Tran, stated, "This was my first time attending an event like this. I thought the short films were so well made and Katrina's was incredibly relevant."

Many faculty and staff also expressed how moving the films were and encouraged Katrina and Jake to further their reach. Dr. Simona Wright, an Italian professor, eloquently pinpointed the drastic differences between the two films, one being really outward-looking and one being inward-looking.

Dr. Yifeng Hu, Chair of the Communication Studies Department, commented that both approaches were in great need at this moment of history. Dr. Hue-Sun Ahn, a Licensed Psychologist, Assistant Director of TCNJ Mental Health Services, extended the discussion to talk about the importance of taking care of one's mental health during this difficult time.

Dr. Larry Pearlstein, an Engineering professor, put in the Zoom Chat: "Both students did a great job and were very impressive in their responses to comments and questions — congratulations! Both are interesting films, in very different ways."

When asked about her experience at the APHA film festival, Katrina said her film caught the eye of a lot more professionals than it would have otherwise. But she enjoyed the intimate screening offered by TCNJ COMM Tuesday because it allowed her to have more time to express her viewpoint. She said, "I really enjoyed the event today! There were a lot of good questions and comments." Jake said that the APHA film festival "was an awesome experience connecting with other creatives," but he appreciated the opportunity to be showcased at the TCNJ screening: "loved the event and it felt really good to get the recognition from faculty and students." Both Katrina and Jake want to continue to make films that challenge people's perspectives and help make the world a better place.

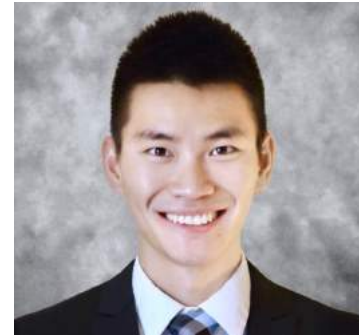
DEPARTMENT NEWS



TCNJ Team Works to Understand the Twitter Stigma of COVID-19

By Sara Petrozziello

The widespread impact of the coronavirus pandemic can be seen virtually everywhere, including social media. Assistant Professor of Communication Studies and Public Health Yachao Li and a team of four TCNJ students analyzed how COVID-19 stigma was created and communicated on Twitter.



Dr. Yachao Li

The team recently collected their findings in an article that was published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. The article explores the content and dissemination of COVID-19 stigma on Twitter, such as people referring to SARS-COV2 as the Chinese or Wuhan virus, or using the ChineseVirus hashtag, explains Li.

“I saw many hate crimes surrounding Asian people, as the pandemic went on,” says Li, who studies the intersection of message production and health disparities. “I wanted to look at how people communicate and create stigma on online social platforms.”

Li and Assistant Professor of Public Health Sylvia Twersky used content analysis to examine the data.

“We retrieved 155,000 unique COVID-19 related Tweets published from Dec. 31, 2019 until March 13, 2020,” says Li. “This was during the first stage when we had limited knowledge and information about COVID-19.”

Out of the 155,000 Tweets, 7,000 were then randomly selected for human coding. The research team found that about one in four tweets posted during the early stage of the COVID-19 crisis included at least one element of the stigma communication content. Stigma message content was also more likely to appear in tweets that contained misinformation and conspiracy theories.

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The research team included two communication studies undergraduate students Breeda Bennett-Jones '21 and Radhika Purandare '21, and two Master of Public Health students, Mei Zhao and Kelsey Ignase.

Bennett-Jones, a communication studies major with a specialization in public & mass communication and a minor in art history, says that although coding was tricky at times, having the support of the team and a reliable codebook kept her on track throughout the research process. She added that many of the posts portrayed how widespread ignorance, racism and discrimination can be on social media.

“Some of the Tweets we coded were very disturbing,” says Bennett-Jones. “This study gave me a better understanding of how the COVID stigma was developed against Asian-Americans and how harmful it can truly be.”

Purandare, a public health and communication studies major with a specialization in public & mass communication and minor in law, politics, and philosophy, says “It is not just that one group is seen as inferior. It’s that one group is discriminated against because of their physical appearance, their label, or because others view them as a threat or as responsible for the pandemic.”

Li says the global pandemic has changed the trajectory of the content he teaches.

“Our content is now much more relatable to our students,” Li says. “They have now had firsthand experience on how to create a public health message and how we can use public health to change people’s lives.”



Yachao Li, Ph.D.



Breeda Bennett-Jones '21



Radhika Purandare '21



Kelsey Ignase, MPH candidate



Mei Zhao, MPH candidate

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Fulbright Scholar, Radhika Purandare '21, is Dedicated to Giving Women's Health a Bright Future

By Patricia Alex

Radhika Purandare '21 said her undergraduate experience — including research and a series of public health internships — set her up well as she heads to Sweden on a prestigious Fulbright scholarship to study maternal health among immigrant populations.

"I'm excited to take what I learn in Sweden and bring it back here," says Purandare, who graduated summa cum laude with degrees in public health and communication studies. Sweden's maternal mortality rate is one of the lowest in the world and is less than a third of that in the United States.



Radhika Purandare '21

In her time at TCNJ, Purandare studied maternal health in the office of New Jersey's First Lady Tammy Murphy, whose Nurture NJ initiative seeks to reduce racial disparities that contribute to high rates of maternal and infant mortality. She also interned at the state Department of Health, researching maternal and infant COVID-19 outcomes; in the office of Trenton Mayor (and TCNJ adjunct professor) Reed Gusciora, working on efforts to reduce gun violence and underage e-cigarette use in the city; and as a policy/communications intern at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia where she worked on COVID-19 forecasting.

TCNJ's proximity to policy makers in the state capital is invaluable, Purandare says.

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The U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board will fund Purandare's research at the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, which she says will be a "natural progression" of the research she did as an undergraduate. She'll also work part-time with a non-profit group that provides multilingual doulas and interpreters who speak 23 languages, serving as a cultural bridge to immigrant communities.

"As a daughter of immigrants, I have decades of experience navigating cultural barriers," she noted in her Fulbright application. She looks forward to being a "respectful, curious, and engaged ambassador" during her year in Sweden.

Afterward, Purandare is looking at post-graduate JD-MPH programs that offer a joint degree in law and public health.

"I would love to be a health policy advocate; I'm really passionate about it. It's important for everybody to have access to health care and for it to be equitable," she says. "The maternal morbidity and mortality crisis in the U.S. is heartbreaking, and I am committed to helping end it."



Radhika Purandare & Dr. John C. Pollock

DEPARTMENT NEWS



TCNJ's Department of Communication Studies Bids Farewell to Dean Maurice Hall

By Carly Nocchi

Since joining the TCNJ community in 2017 as the dean of the School of Arts and Communication, Maurice Hall has implemented many successful changes and bettered the school in numerous ways. We are saddened at his departure but wish him all the best as he embarks on his new position of provost at Bennington College in Bennington, Vermont.

One of Dean Hall's major accomplishments during his time here was his commitment to working with the faculty to strengthen the school's core identity as a media and an arts school, in part by updating and modernizing the overall curriculum, clarifying core competencies, and supporting the development of new minors. Part of shaping the identity of the arts school was working with an alumni group to establish a resident Shakespeare theater company on campus and re-imagined the department's theater minor. He worked closely with the faculty to begin the process of reworking the multimedia and design curriculum. This resulted in the development of a newly redesigned Interactive Multimedia Department.

During Dean Hall's time at TCNJ, he put a great deal of focus on strengthening the engagement and bonds with alumni. Planned and estate giving to the school increased by 42%, more than \$1 million during his tenure. He also put a great deal of focus on redesigning the first-year experience to put more emphasis on internships/career preparation, cultural competence, and intellectual rigor in both curricular and co-curricular offerings.



Dean Maurice Hall

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Dean Hall led the school through the changes of the pandemic smoothly. Most notably, he worked to launch a digital platform called ARTSCOMM DIGITAL, to make sure the student and faculty's work could still be viewed.

Dr. Hu, the former chairperson of the department, had this to say about her time working with Dean Hall: "Dean Hall is a forward thinker. He was pivotal in steering the school in the cutting-edge direction. His support in developing new areas in the department, emerging communication technology and health and wellness communication, was unequivocal."

We thank Dean Hall for his exemplary leadership and unwavering dedication to TCNJ and wish him well in his new position. The students and faculty also excitedly welcome Lorna Johnson-Frizell, Professor of Communication Studies, as the interim dean of the School of Arts and Communication.



Professor Lorna Johnson-Frizell, Interim Dean of the School of Arts and Communication

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Dr. Yifeng Hu Presents a Competitive Panel on Video Games for Alcohol Education at the Prestigious Kentucky Health Communication Conference

On April 2, 2020, Chair of the Department of Communication Studies, Associate Professor Yifeng Hu and Assistant Professor of the Department of Interactive Multimedia Josh Fishburn, together with public health and communication studies double major students senior Katie La Capria and junior Deanna Amarosa, presented their innovative video game for alcohol education project, “Fresh Start: Creating an Interactive Video Game with Narrative Immersion to Educate College Freshmen about Mindful Drinking,” at the Kentucky Conference on Health Communication, one of the two major national conferences focusing solely on health communication.

The project was accepted as a competitive panel, and was scheduled to be presented at the pre-conference on Cutting Edge Communication and Information Technology in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, due to the perfect fit of the content with the theme. While the conference was set to take place as an in-person event in Lexington, Kentucky, the conference organizers managed to seamlessly transition the event online due to COVID-19. About 50 attendees tuned-in to the virtual event via Zoom to learn about Fresh Start.

Fresh Start contributed valuable ideas to the theme of Cutting Edge Communication and Information Technology in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. During the presentation, the team invited conference attendees to play a short portion of the game where players tried to pour standard drinks of different types of alcohol. Even though it was only a few minutes, this added interactive session fully utilized the nature of the virtual conference and offered audiences a hands-on opportunity to get a flavor of the video game. People felt the session was fun and loved the mini-game they played.



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At the conclusion of the presentation, the Fresh Start team received positive feedback about the entire game from those in attendance. One audience member, Kate Ksobiech, Associate Professor of Health Communication at University of Wisconsin – Whitewater, especially showed interest in Fresh Start by asking if the game could be customized to a given campus, such as use of college-specific clothing for the characters in the game. This is something that the Fresh Start team is working toward for the future. As of now, this innovative educational video game is being piloted with TCNJ athletic teams and Greek life organizations in a current study assessing user learning outcomes and gathering feedback.



Dr. Yifeng Hu



Dr. Hu's team also published in proceedings of Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA) 2020 Conference, Tampere, Finland. DiGRA is the premiere international association for academics and professionals who research digital games and associated phenomena. It is the most established conference in the field of Game Studies.

Presenting at the Kentucky Conference on Health Communication was an especially valuable and rewarding experience for La Capria and Amarosa. The students have been very devoted to the project and are excited about how far along it has come, so they are grateful to have had the opportunity to present it to professors and scholars in the field at the national level. Listening to other presentations on Cutting Edge Communication was inspiring for the students and it gave them a glance at other ways in which information technology can be applied to health promotion and disease prevention.

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TCNJ Research Team Organized by Dr. John C. Pollock Publishes Article on Coronavirus Coverage in Prestigious Spanish Journal

Six communication studies students and a professor recently published an article on nationwide coverage of federal government responses to the coronavirus crisis, finding that media manifest clear disappointment that the national government has not robustly protected the public.

As part of a double-volume issue published in Spanish journal *Trípodos*, the article was co-authored by TCNJ students Suchir Govindarajan '21, an English major with minors in public health and Russian Studies; Alexis Marta '21, a communication studies major with a public and mass communication specialization and a minor in public health with a pre-health track; James N. Sparano '21, a communication studies major; Miranda Crowley '21, a communication studies major with a public and mass communications specialization and a women's, gender, and sexuality studies minor; Abigail Lewis '21, a public health major in the behavioral sciences track with a secondary major in women's, gender, and sexuality studies and a minor in Arabic; and Radhika Purandare '21, with double majors in public health and communication studies with public and mass communication specialization and a law, politics, and philosophy minor; and Professor of Communication Studies and Public Health John C. Pollock.



James N. Sparano



Miranda Crowley



Abigail Lewis



Suchir Govindarajan



Alexis Marta



Radhika Purandare

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Based on a content analysis project in a class on Global Health Communication and Social Change taught by Pollock in spring 2020, the students compared city demographics in 18 major cities throughout the U.S. from Jan. 28, 2020 through April 3, 2020, with variations in favorable or unfavorable coverage of federal government response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The team found that the higher the proportion of ‘privileged’ measures -- representing groups ‘buffered’ from economic uncertainty -- in a community -- for example, physicians/100,000, hospital beds/100,000, or percent population in economically privileged age groups 45-64, 65+ -- the “less” favorable the coverage of the federal coronavirus response,” Pollock explained. “This finding has been identified by my community structure theory -- comparing different community demographics with varied coverage of critical issues -- as a ‘violated buffer’ pattern, in which negative coverage of ‘biological threats or threats to a cherished way of life’ is linked proportionately to levels of community privilege.

Crowley said the students were originally tasked with designing a global health campaign to combat COVID-19 exposure in airports, but Pollock approached the students with the opportunity halfway through the semester.



Dr. John C. Pollock

“After having read numerous international reports on the virus, our team jumped at the chance to study domestic media coverage of the pandemic,” she said. “We began data collection the week after spring break and were forced to adapt our normal teamwork dynamic to accommodate remote learning barriers and lockdown mandates.”

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Crowley said the students not only learned more about the virus and its representation in U.S. media, but also how to conduct a research study via Zoom. “In the end, we learned not only how to perform content analysis but also how to conduct a research study that requires immense collaboration without the benefit of in-person meetings,” she added.

In the future, Crowley plans to pursue a Master of Public Administration and a J.D. in civil rights law. She hopes to use both degrees to influence the future of social and health policy on either the state or national level.

“This study alone has afforded me a more complete understanding of not only COVID-19 but also the underlying issues within our nation’s healthcare, social welfare, and economic systems,” she said. “As someone who hopes to one day influence policy, opportunities to holistically analyze a social, political, or economic issue such as COVID-19 are invaluable.”

The student co-authors join a large group of several hundred former students who have co-authored refereed papers, articles, chapters, even a book over the 28 years Pollock has taught at TCNJ.

“Student-generated papers often produce invitations to scholarly conferences, especially in health communication, a special strength of the departments of communication studies and public health,” Pollock said. “Both departments are honored to teach students with the intelligence and motivation that led to a paper on coronavirus coverage of such obvious quality that it was immediately accepted for publication in a distinguished Spanish communication journal.”



"Tripodos is an academic journal of international scope published by the Blanquerna School of Communication and International Relations, Ramon Llull University."

DEPARTMENT NEWS



#StopAsianHate Listening Session Organized by COMM Department Supported TCNJ Students from All Departments and Diversities

By Gabriella Son '22 Elementary Education/English Double Major

On the morning I learned of the Atlanta spa hate crimes, I lay in bed tied down by an anchor of emotions: grief over the loss of my Asian American sisters, fear for the safety of my family and friends, but underneath it all, hopelessness as to whether my country would ever acknowledge me as a fellow American. Admittedly, this was not the first time I encountered such emotions: my own racialized experiences as a Korean-born-American, combined with my awareness of AAPI's (Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders) otherization from the 1850s to the present-day pandemic, fostered these ideas within me from a young age.

On the first day of TCNJ classes since the Atlanta spa hate crimes, I wondered if any of my professors or peers were still shaken by Tuesday night like I was. During my morning class, I inadvertently spent the eighty minutes composing myself behind the camera, rehearsing what I would say if our professor put these issues on the table at the start of class—I realized it was all in vain once the message: “meeting has been ended by host” appeared on my screen.

Later in a separate class that afternoon, we discussed events that had taken place the previous week—lectures, deadlines, side conversations—but not what happened in our own country. It wasn't until my third class on this day that a professor finally addressed the anti-AAPI sentiment



The Youth Council of Fort Lee hosts a peaceful march against Asian hate in Fort Lee on Saturday, March 27, 2021. Gabriella Son '22, a co-founder of YCLF, leads the group with a megaphone. . (picture courtesy: Anne-Marie Caruso/NorthJersey.com - USA Today Network)

in our country leading up to Atlanta, stressing that bias on any basis was not tolerated in our classroom—but I didn't know if this was prioritized in the rest of my classes.

Perhaps this is why I wandered into the Communications Studies Student Advisory Board's Listening Session on Tuesday night (“COMMTuesday”), despite belonging to a different department as an English-elementary education major. Advertised in a flyer I received from a club email as “a safe space for students impacted by and who want to combat anti-Asian rhetoric and violence”, I was curious to know what a TCNJ event amplifying the voices of Asian American students such as myself would be.

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Yet most importantly, I didn't want to believe that like my own country, TCNJ had abandoned its AAPI community, at a time when we needed our school most.

I was not disappointed. Dr. Yifeng Hu, Associate Professor and Chair of the Communication Studies Department, served as moderator of the discussion, which she commenced by first addressing why it was necessary to adapt tonight's COMMTuesday to support AAPI students.

After outlining the rising anti-AAPI sentiment behind the killings in Atlanta, Dr. Hu showcased the NowThis video "Daniel Dae Kim Speaks to Congress About Anti-Asian Hate" to demonstrate that what happened in Georgia was not an isolated incident. Although I like to think that I keep myself updated with the news of AAPI hate crimes, from Kim's speech I was horrified to learn about victims such as Tadataka Unno: "a professional jazz pianist beaten so badly he can no longer play piano." Because he survived unlike Vicha Ratanapakdee and Pak Ho, some consider Unno to be one of the "lucky" ones.

In his testimony before Congress, Kim also advocated systemic issues faced by the AAPI community, such as the model minority myth that "AAPI do not face racial barriers to success."

This was supported by real-world facts such as "the wealth disparity between the richest Asian Americans and the poorest is the largest of any ethnic group in America."

Dr. Hu's selection of resources helped me realize why people in my classes may not have been vocal about the Atlanta spa hate crimes, because false American narratives such as these downplay the existence of AAPI racism in the first place.

In a second video Dr. Hu displayed of this same Congressional hearing ("We are in pain": Asian American lawmaker Grace Meng makes powerful speech"), COMMTuesday attendants listened as Congresswoman Grace Meng passionately spoke out against Republican Representative Chip Roy, who invokes that Meng's proposed COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act will "police" free speech. Meng responds to Roy: "This hearing was to address the hurt and pain of our community and to find solutions, and we will not let you take our voice away from us."

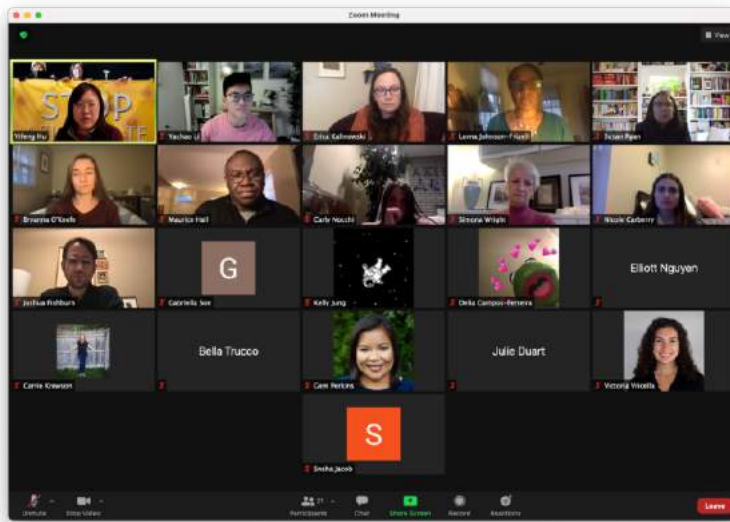


We are in pain': Asian American lawmaker Grace Meng makes powerful speech

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After laying down the necessary educational groundwork, Dr. Hu then opened the discussion for participant sharing, starting with herself. As a Chinese American approaching the twentieth anniversary of her setting foot in the U.S. and a New Jersey mom, Dr. Hu recalled an incident where a family member faced discrimination from passersby in their own backyard, and questioned her decision to immigrate to the U.S. after seeing the recent surge of anti-Asian hate crimes in the country. Attendants such as Italian Professor Dr. Simona Wright responded that she was disheartened to learn of Dr. Hu's experiences, having seen how enthusiastic she appeared at meetings in light of these hardships.



Dr. Yifeng Hu shared her experiences

At this point, Dr. Hu invited me to share why I had come to this COMMTuesday session: perhaps she sensed I had something to say from the glassiness of my pupils, or the deep furrows between my eyebrows.

This had completely taken me aback—I was still processing Dr. Hu's experiences, let alone my own from the past few days. However, moved by the vulnerability and strength of Dr. Hu, I realized if I remained silent, there was no point of me coming to this event in the first place—right here and now, TCNJ was ready to listen to students like me, and there was no assurance that I would get this chance a second time.

Thus, I spoke about what it was like for me as an Asian American student at TCNJ to only have one professor advocate against the Atlanta spa hate crimes, championed by law enforcement and the media as side effects of a “sex addiction.”

I expressed how although my professors may not have had intended this, I internalized the silence to mean that my community and I were not American enough to warrant a “class conversation”—especially since in these same classes, we had been discussing present-day events in our country that were reinforcing our American values: the police brutality surrounding Black Lives Matter, the atrocities of the Capitol Hill Riot...

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When I finally muted my microphone, I was unsure if I had said the right words. Had I come off as too exasperated? What if people were offended by the way I felt? Yet the responses from TCNJ students and faculty that followed consoled me that I was not alone.

Sophomore Communication Studies major Kelly Jung opened up about her own frustration with others telling her how she was “supposed to feel” in response to Atlanta, as well as performative posts she frequently encountered on social media, for example. However, Jung also shared how empowering her recent experience of attending a “Stop Asian Hate” rally in New York City was, and that in addition to this frustration, she was no longer going to allow the fear produced by the current attacks on AAPI dictate her life.

Testimonies from members of TCNJ’s AAPI community proved to be powerful. Bryanna O’Keefe, a Communications Studies major, commended Dr. Hu, Jung, and myself for our vulnerability, because it was this risk that allowed her to learn more about Asian American individuals’ experiences.

Communications Department faculty, undergoing similar learning transformations, could also not withstand silence at this point:

Film Professor Lorna Johnson-Frizell described how she brings her awareness of anti-Asian rhetoric into her own curriculum, through practices such as asking her students to note stereotypical portrayals of Asian characters in the films they analyze.

Dr. Maurice Hall, Dean of the School of the Arts and Communication, even invited students such as Kelly and myself to meet with him in order to discuss ways more AAPI perspectives and students could be included in his school’s curriculum.

After these audience testimonies, Dr. Hu concluded COMMTuesday’s #StopAsianHate listening session not through momentary words, but with permanent action: first, she invited attendants to sign a petition to the U.S. Department of Education that would encompass Asian American historical events in current public school curriculum, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and Japanese Internment. In addition, Dr. Hu endorsed the PBS docuseries “Asian Americans,” an exploration on the history of Asian Americans, so tonight’s discussion would extend beyond the hour into our everyday lives.

DEPARTMENT NEWS



Attendants agreed that the listening session Dr. Hu moderated was a “very important dialogue,” as commended by Communications Studies professor Dr. Susan Ryan. Assistant Dean Erica Kalinowski shared that “there were several occasions that I was brought to tears by the words said or videos played,” highlighting the importance of revising the COMMTuesday session to serve the needs of TCNJ’s AAPI community and allies.

Sneha Jacob, a Criminology major, recognized that “without discussion, we are not able to understand different perspectives of the issue at hand. Last night’s event was truly eye-opening.” Echoing Dr. Ryan and Jacobs’ mutual understanding, Carly Nocchi, leader of the Communications Studies Student Advisory Board, remarked that “I feel as though I walked away with a better understanding of what the Asian American community faces.”

If COMMTuesday’s #StopAsianHate listening session was to “support students,” then it was successful in doing so. Jung reflected that although there are obstacles with being an Asian American student during this time of heightened AAPI racism and violence: “Love trumps hate. There is so much more love and support than there is hate. And last night was a powerful symbol of that.”

Professor Johnson-Frizell acknowledged this powerful student presence at COMMTuesday, expressing “the students are powerhouses and I was [so] glad to have met them.” As I lay in bed later that night, I realized the anchor that had been weighing me down since last week no longer harbored heavy emotions such as grief, fear, and hopelessness—after speaking out at COMMTuesday’s session and listening to others, it was now a symbol of hope, signifying a new wave of AAPI consciousness at TCNJ.



The Youth Council of Fort Lee hosts a peaceful march against Asian hate in Fort Lee on Saturday, March 27, 2021. (picture courtesy: Anne-Marie Caruso/NorthJersey.com – USA Today Network)



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Judi Puritz Cook Leads TCNJ Into Digital Learning Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic

For years TCNJ's Office of Instructional Design has been an integral part of guiding faculty and staff into the digital age. This department has been responsible for helping the college's professors integrate the latest and greatest technology into their teaching practices. Leading the Instructional Design team is none other than Dr. Judi Puritz Cook. While her official title resides in the Office of Instructional Design, Dr. Cook is known to many students as a beloved professor in the Department of Communication Studies.

When the COVID-19 pandemic put college courses as we know them at a crossroads, Dr. Cook and her team were here to ensure that TCNJ could face these unprecedented digital challenges and come out successful. The Office of Instructional Design provided support for faculty during their transition to remote learning. Dr. Cook employed a range of solutions during the emergency transition to remote instruction beginning in the Spring of 2020.

The "Faculty Helping Faculty" program created by Dr. Cook gave faculty the ability to network and find peer support in topic-specific areas. In addition, Dr. Cook utilized a self-paced faculty training program via Canvas with different levels of technological experiences taken into consideration.



From left to right: Suzanne Miller, Judi Cook, and Valerian Anderson of TCNJ's Office of Instructional Design

Supplementing the Canvas trainings were Zoom workshops with relevant experts and the ability for faculty to engage in 1-on-1 coaching sessions with members of Dr. Cook's team. Whatever the professors needed help with, they could count on the Office of Instructional Design to walk them through it either through live chat or the recorded workshops.

The work of this department has not gone unnoticed. The team was awarded a 2020 Helen Shaw award for their excellent and crucial efforts. This award recognizes staff as an essential part of the College's educational instruction and addresses their dedication to contributing to the College.

Thank you, Dr. Cook and the Instructional Design team for your hard work!

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



Congratulations to Kevin Potucek, TCNJ Staff Senate's Unsung Hero 2021!

This award was presented on April 28th, 2021 for an individual staff member whose valuable work for TCNJ goes under-appreciated and/or under-recognized. His students say “There is no problem that’s too big for KP. If anything seems unachievable, he knows how to break it down into its most basic parts to make it happen.”



Dr. Kate Foster with Kevin Potucek

As the General Manager and advisor of TCNJ radio station WTSR since 2002, he has dedicated much of his time to the program. “Aside from all the work he did to bring us back and improve us during COVID, he has always been a fantastic advisor for WTSR, truly working with the students to achieve whatever project or idea they can dream up.”

WTSR and his students here at TCNJ would not be where they are today without Kevin Potucek.



Student Nominators Nina Navazio '21 (WTSR outgoing Station Manager) and Bess Jones '22 (newly elected WTSR Station Manager) with Kevin Potucek, winner of 2021 TCNJ Staff Senate's Unsung Hero



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Paul D'Angelo Recognized as an International Scholar

With today's constant news cycle and political polarization, mass media and communication continues to become a much discussed topic across the country. At TCNJ, one Communication Studies professor in particular has had a busy year analyzing various topics within the discipline.

Professor of Communication Studies Paul D'Angelo has become an internationally recognized scholar, in part from his work in advancing news framing analysis.

A major thrust of news framing deals with how journalists cover — and contextualize — policy issues as they develop in political discourses, such as legislation and campaigns. When covering politics, journalists circulate the words, catchphrases, and themes legislators, activists, and other sources use to frame issues,” explains D'Angelo, who has published two landmark edited volumes on news framing since 2009.

“In order to tell compelling stories — and maintain professional autonomy from their sources — journalists also add their own frames of reference, which oftentimes reflect the structural orientations of news values, such as highlighting conflict and deciphering political strategy. These frames create the platforms that people use to understand issues.”

This year, D'Angelo became a book review editor for *Journalism and Mass Communications Quarterly*, a widely read academic journal that has been publishing since 1924. As a book review editor, D'Angelo says his job mostly deals with gatekeeping and selecting a number of books for commissioned reviews.



Dr. Paul D'Angelo



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

“I try to get about 20 reviewers every quarter, which turns out to be 60 reviews in a year,” says D’Angelo. “It sounds like a lot, but it really isn’t that many when you consider how many books are published in the areas of journalism and mass communications.”

The esteemed professor was also invited to speak during the 2020 International Journal of Press and Politics Conference held in September. The fifth annual conference was held virtually this year and ran out of the University of Loughborough, England.

D’Angelo’s presentation centered around the joint project he has been working on for several years with Erik Bucy, a colleague from Texas Tech. The idea for this project was to take a closer look at how journalists cover scandals that occur within newsrooms—that is, within journalism itself, explains D’Angelo.

“Our question was, what happens when the scandal originates from inside journalism?” says D’Angelo. “When there is an issue of plagiarism or an issue of sexual impropriety within a news organization, how do journalists hold themselves accountable?”

D’Angelo and Bucy analyzed eight different journalism scandals in the U.S. and U.K. within the last five to six years.

“We took a small slice of each scandal and had to open it up in a couple of different ways in order to answer the question of accountability,” says D’Angelo. “We looked at the focusing event, the immediate aftermath and we tried to figure out how news organizations hold themselves and other news organizations accountable.”

D’Angelo says the concept of how news organizations frame themselves as being accountable for when crises occur is known as accountability framing.

In addition to his busy research schedule, D’Angelo is a passionate professor whose mission is to help students find relevance and applicability within the field of communication. This past semester, D’Angelo taught the Introduction to Communication course, where he created discussions and assignments that would enable students to relate the theories they learned outside of the classroom.

“I want my students to be able to apply what they have learned in class to real life,” says D’Angelo.



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Professor Johnson-Frizell sheds light on the Trenton community in her documentary, *Seven Square Miles*

In 2020 Professor Lorna Johnson-Frizell completed the feature documentary *Seven Square Miles* which profiles an effort between Trenton residents and the police department to reduce crime in the city.

Seven Square Miles focuses on the local Trenton community and follows the police and people living there. The documentary discusses crime, the justice system, and work to help improve their home.



Photo credit: The Signal

When describing her process in creating documentaries, Professor Johnson-Frizell emphasizes the focus on the people. The role of a filmmaker is to create stories, she claims, and that films should bring your into the everyday lives of characters, to make the audience care about them and their struggles. The challenge of the filmmaker is building a world the audience wants to be in.

Seven Square Miles has around 25-30 characters, but the main characters are Alexis, a police officer, and Abdul, an ex-convict. The two are close friends, and the film hints at how they met without explicitly stating how their relationship first formed. Their different backgrounds add an extra layer of interest into the film, drawing the audience in further.

Professor Johnson-Frizell describes the filmmaking process — from collecting footage to organizing and then putting it all together



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Editing the film fell under the responsibility of Genevieve Faust, an alumni from TCNJ and the Communication Studies department who has worked on several projects, many of which have been featured at the Sundance Film Festival and Toronto Film Festival.

Faust had the responsibility of watching through all the footage with the understanding of the vision that Professor Johnson-Frizell had for the film. She spoke on her process — viewing the clips in the eyes of the audience and screening based on the characters and their dynamics. She said specifically she wanted to focus on the love these characters had for Trenton and its people.

Following the screening of the clips, Faust described her day to day. She and Professor Johnson-Frizell would talk each week, making sure the film was progressing smoothly. Faust began organizing the footage and putting it together. She said she treated the film like a puzzle, and needed to look at each scene, break it down, and see where it would fit in the grand scheme.

By July 2018, the rough cut was completed and the team screened, critiqued, and went back to editing.

Aaron Wilson Watson, RTF student here, joined the team and helped collect footage. He talked about his experience being in the field and what that meant to him. He spoke on how meaningful the experience was to enter people's homes and get a peek into the intimate aspects of their lives, all the good and the bad moments. To him, the experience of working on this documentary taught him how films could evoke such strong empathy and feelings in others.

All in all, *Seven Square Miles* is a story about love — a love for the people of Trenton and Trenton itself. All members of the team creating this documentary trace the heart of the film back to the characters, and it is through the characters they hope to shine a light on Trenton and its people.

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



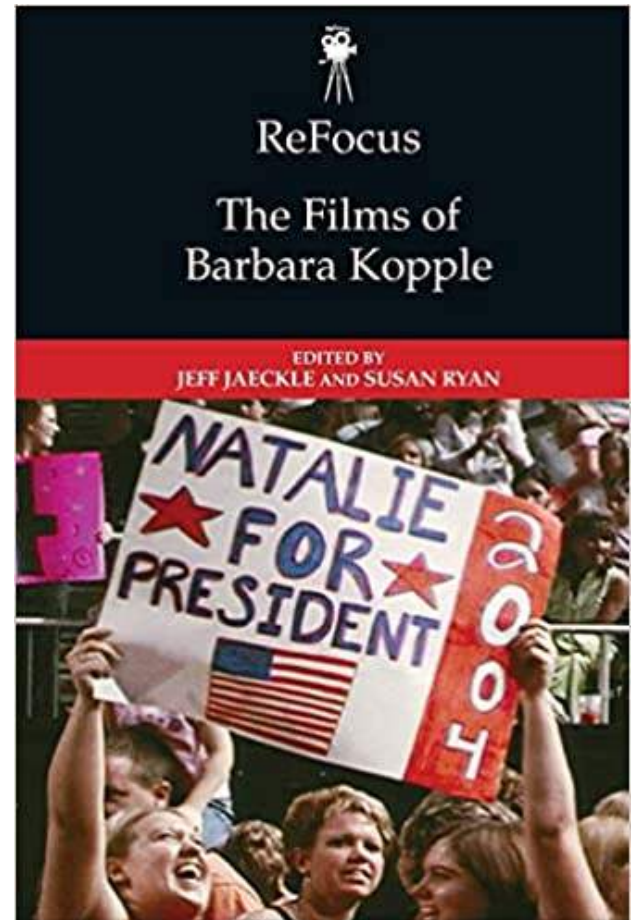
Dr. Susan Ryan Co-Edits Book, *ReFocus: The Films of Barbara Kopple*

Dr. Susan Ryan worked with co-editor, Jeff Jaeckle, to create a book on Barbara Kopple's films. Through considering Kopple's culturally significant career in filmmaking, the book aims to ignite an interest in her films and analyze the various cultural themes she tackles in them.

Dr. Ryan worked with Barbara Kopple for several years as a producer and archival researcher leading up to her editing of the book, *ReFocus: The Films of Barbara Kopple*.



Dr. Susan Ryan



Link to Dr. Ryan's new book!

<https://www.amazon.com/ReFocus-Barbara-Kopple-Jeff-Jaeckle/dp/1474439950>



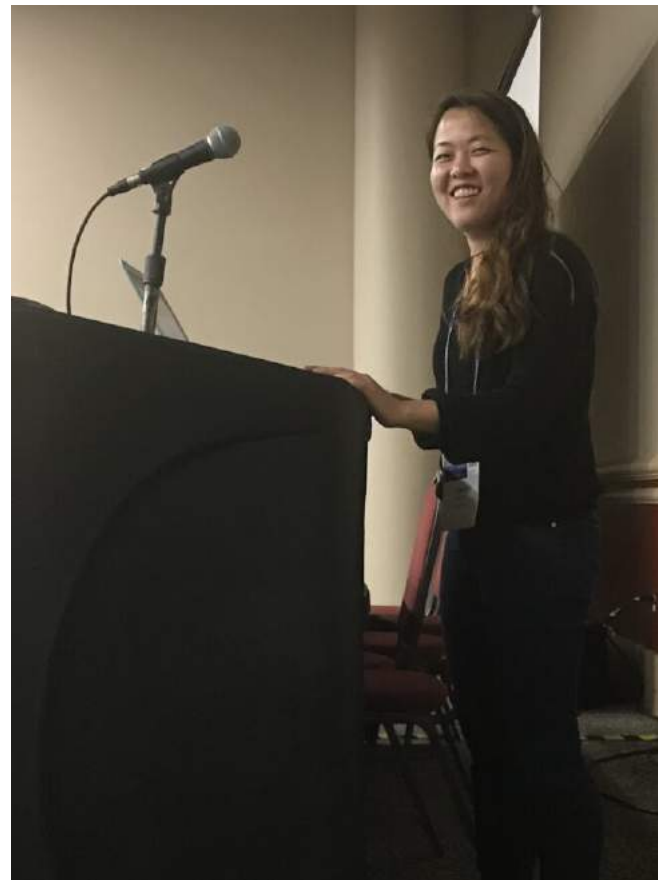
FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Welcome New COM Assistant Professor, Dr. Eugene Cho

TCNJ's Department of Communication Studies would like to extend a warm welcome to new Assistant Professor, Dr. Eugene Cho. Dr. Cho will join the department in Fall 2021 and teach COM 390: Research Methods & COM 270 Special Topics: Emerging Communication Technologies.

Former Department Chair and Associate Professor, Dr. Yifeng Hu shared the following about Dr. Cho:

Dr. Cho's significant expertise and multi-methodological approach greatly complement the strengths of our existing faculty. Her research is focused on the user experience (UX) and psychology in new media technology, with a recent emphasis on voice interaction with smart speakers. Her latest study, presented at the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI'20), won the honorable mention paper award. The study explored if customizing content and privacy settings affects user experience of smart speakers, and revealed counter-intuitive findings of how deleting voice interaction history to ensure data security can in fact make Alexa less trustworthy by evoking privacy concerns among users.



Eugene Cho, Ph.D.

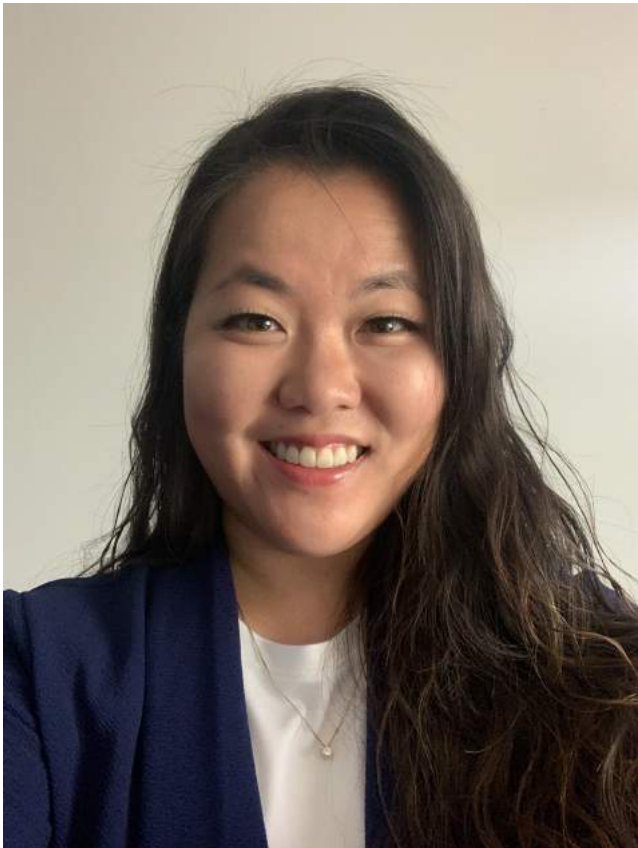
"Dr. Cho's significant expertise and multi-methodological approach greatly complement the strengths of our existing faculty."

-Dr. Yifeng Hu



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Prior to TCNJ, Dr. Cho received a University Fellowship in 2016 and Ph.D. in 2021 from Penn State University. At Penn State, she served as a coordinator for the Conversational Agent Study Group in collaboration with the College of Information Sciences and Technology, and the Facebook big-data project team under the Social Media and Democracy Research Grant Program in collaboration with computational data scientists.



Before relocating to the U.S., Dr. Cho received her M.A. in Communications from Seoul National University in 2014, and B.A. in Finance from Korea University in 2009. She also worked in the advertising and e-Commerce industry as a business analyst for several years back in her home country, South Korea. As the most recent industry position, she participated in an internship at Wayfair as a UX researcher in 2020.

We expect Dr. Cho to keep creating innovative, interdisciplinary research and to offer courses that bridge academia and practice.



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Gary Woodward Retires after 47 Years in Academia

Dr. Gary Woodward retired at the end of the 2020 Spring semester after 47 years at The College of New Jersey. He attended Colorado State University and what is now Cal State at Sacramento before finishing his P.h.D. at the University of Pittsburgh in 1972. Teaching at TCNJ was his first job after completing his studies. Besides a year he spent as an exchange professor at what is now the University College of Worcester in England's midlands, he would stay at TCNJ for the remainder of his career. He began his tenure in the Communication Studies Department teaching a wide variety of courses. The courses included radio production, debate, philosophy of communication, public speaking, and several seminars on the work of the rhetorical theorist, Kenneth Burke.



Gary Woodward, Ph.D.

In the last half of his career, he focused on teaching rhetoric and persuasion. Among the titles he taught from, he authored three; *The Rhetoric of Intention in Human Affairs*, *The Rhetorical Personality*, and *Persuasion and Influence in American Life*. In addition to being a dedicated professor within the classroom, Dr. Woodward was also known for advising WTSR and coaching the debate team.

A project that he had been working on during his last year teaching at TCNJ was recently published and focuses on sound, which was a lifelong interest of Dr. Woodward. The book is entitled *The Sonic Imperative: Sound in the Age of Screens*. Some of the ideas presented in the book were worked out in the TCNJ seminar in Philosophy of Communication. Dr. Woodward acknowledges all of his students from that seminar in the first pages of this book. This book is a good capstone to Dr. Woodward's career, since as he puts it "it took me full circle back to the radio courses I taught when I started at what was then TSC (Trenton State College)."



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout his 47 years at the college, Dr. Woodward has mentored and inspired many students, along with forming strong connections with colleagues in the department. Long-time colleague Dr. John C. Pollock had nothing but positive things to say about his time working with Dr. Gary Woodward. Pollock said that "Dr. Woodward is one of our department's heroes. He played a critical role in establishing our department as a place where serious communication studies scholarship is celebrated."

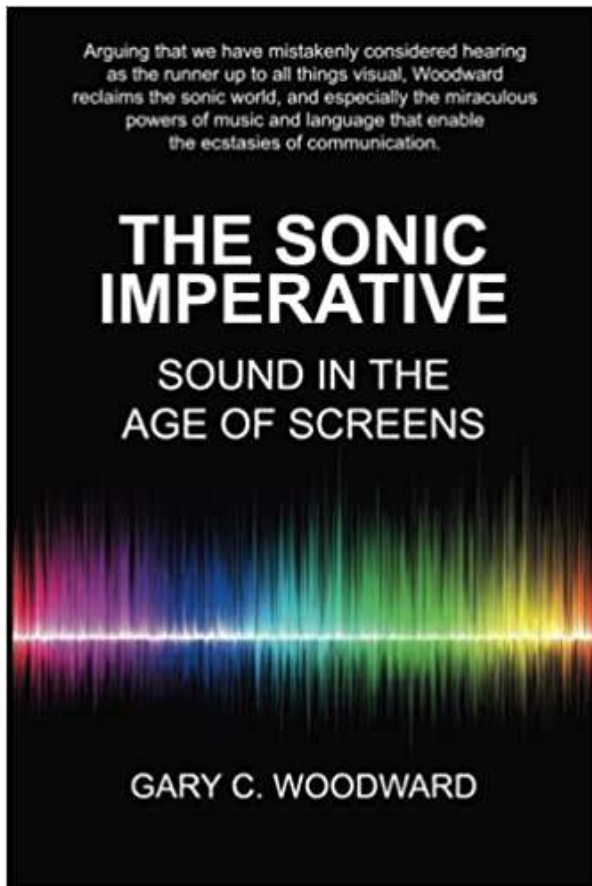
Thank you, Dr. Woodward, for your dedication to TCNJ's Department of Communication Studies. We wish you a healthy and happy retirement!





FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Description of Dr. Woodward's Book, *The Sonic Imperative: Sound in the Age of Screens*



"Even though the organs of hearing are under constant assault from the din of modern life, our ears give us the best chances to find meaning and pleasure in relationships with others. Still in the womb, we begin the long journey through the auditory world represented in language, music, and the countless sounds that help keep us safe. The Sonic Imperative offers a parallel excursion through many of these experiences, with ears tuned to the processes that allow them to happen. This lively study takes readers to familiar and sometimes exotic places: "silent rooms" where blood moving through the body is the loudest sound; a modern ball park with loudspeakers strategically placed every few feet; sound stages built in the 1930s and still used to turn movies into spectacles; the minds of three-year olds acquiring spoken language with stunning speeds; the ravaged Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris that is being rebuilt to regain its voice; a tiny newly energized cochlea near the brain that will help a person reclaim their hearing, the whisper-quiet ambience of monasteries or the plains of Wyoming," and rooms filled with ultrasound that drove office workers out of Havana's American Embassy. A Professor Emeritus of Communication at The College of New Jersey, Woodward notes that sound is the "newest" sense, having been reborn with the invention of recording tape just 100 years ago. Arguing that we have mistakenly considered it the runner up to all things visual, he reclaims the sonic world, and especially the miraculous powers of music and language that enable the ecstasies of communication. The Sonic Imperative explains what it means to say that humans are "receivers of light but producers of sound." As the only human sense that never rests, our capacity to hear—and thus speak—provides the core foundation that gives us social nature."



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Li's New Book Explores Communication Challenges for Sexual Minorities

Press Release

Ewing, NJ: Investigating the unique yet life-changing communication experiences of sexual minorities, “Navigating Remarkable Communication Experiences of Sexual Minorities” explores personal, relational, and cultural factors that affect LGB sexual orientation disclosure. The book is authored by Yachao Li, Assistant Professor in the departments of Communication Studies and Public Health at The College of New Jersey, and Jennifer A. Samp, Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Georgia.

The authors identify three critical elements for success in sexual orientation disclosure. They include: clear goals, relational intimacy, and conquering internalized homophobia. 1) Establishing clear goals involves identifying what people want to achieve through sexual orientation disclosure, such as feeling relief from hiding their true identities and maintaining relationships with others. 2) Developing relational intimacy includes improving emotional closeness with others and building self-confidence. 3) Overcoming internalized homophobia embraces self-acceptance of one's sexual orientation.

The “Navigating” book explores LGB individuals' coming-out experiences in four specific contexts with personal and relational outcomes.

First, initial coming out occurs when people disclose their sexual orientations to others for the first time. Second, for those in heterosexual romantic relationships, coming out to straight partners is challenging. Third, in same-sex relationships, couples need to discuss with each other whether and how to reveal their relationships to third parties. Lastly, using various tactics, some LGB individuals may decide to hide their sexual orientations in their social lives. The authors found that people use a range of communication strategies in each situation, and what they say and how they say it affects personal relationships and health.

Dr. Li's book is available as of November 24, 2020, and can be purchased in a hardcover or Kindle format!



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

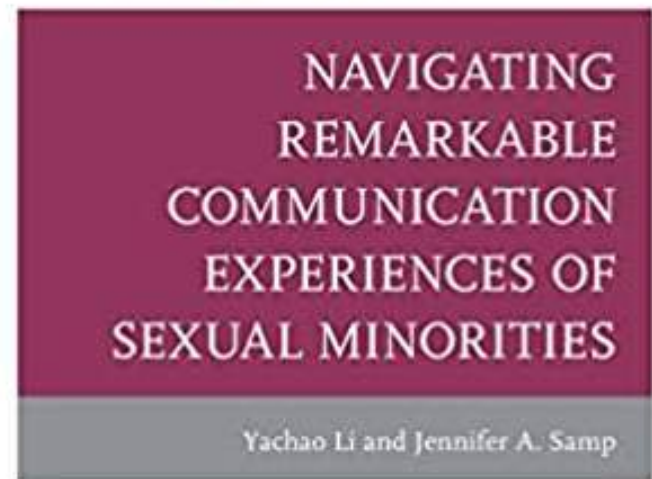
REVIEWS

"Li and Samp offer an ingenious, practical, and comprehensive account of the nuances, processes, and experiences of disclosing same-sex attraction and revealing lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) identities. Throughout, they identify core and often-neglected characteristics of coming out, such as disclosing same-sex relationships and coming out as LGB to heterosexual partners, and use these characteristics to develop the original 'Theory of Coming Out Message Production.' This book will make a necessary and significant contribution to research about disclosure and sexuality.

-- **Tony Adams, Bradley University**

Navigating Remarkable Communication Experiences of Sexual Minorities is an extremely important social scientific work that examines everyday life experiences of sexual minorities such as identity negotiation, coming out process, close friendships, and relationships. Centralizing LGB experiences, this book is conceptually and methodologically meant to build on the historical and current landscape of interpersonal communication studies.

-- **Dr. Shinsuke Eguchi, University of New Mexico**



<https://www.amazon.com/Navigating-Remarkable-Communication-Experiences-Minorities/dp/179362531X>



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

An Interview with New Radio/Television/Film Assistant Professor, Matthew Lawrence

Directing, writing, producing, and editing are all familiar territory for Professor Matthew Lawrence, MFA. Joining our department as an Assistant Professor of Radio/Television/Film (RTF), Professor Lawrence is well versed in the narrative and documentary field, having received numerous awards for his work. Professor Lawrence's film and video endeavors have also been written about in The New York Times, USA Today, and other prominent media outlets. His research interests include film & video production, screenwriting, film history, film theory, transmedia storytelling, media literacy, smartphone filmmaking, New American Cinema, Independent Cinema, Horror Cinema, and Cult Cinema.

The ROAR's editorial board had the opportunity to have a Q&A with Professor Lawrence, allowing students and faculty to get to know him better.

What inspired you to pursue an academic career in the RTF field?

While in college, when I began to pursue a career in film, I had absolutely no connections to the industry and knew absolutely nothing about media production (from a practical standpoint). Through developing relationships with my professors and peers, I learned how to navigate the media landscape and developed many of the skills and knowledge on which I still heavily rely.

Education was paramount to my success so this position affords me the ability to pay it forward and help students thrive in this ever-changing industry.

What drew you to teaching at TCNJ?

I'm an alumnus of TCNJ! Beyond my undergraduate connection to the college, the Department of Communication Studies gave me my first opportunity to teach as an adjunct professor. So while I admit I am a bit biased, TCNJ is a place very near and dear to my heart, and I have been eager to return since I left back in 2012.



Matthew Lawrence, MFA



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

What classes are you teaching in the Fall 2021 semester?

I am teaching two sections of COM-212 Introduction to Television Studio and one section of COM-325 Writing for Film & TV.

What is something students may not know about you that influenced your career?

A lot of the films I've made revolve around bands and music scenes. Long before I got into filmmaking, I had dreams of becoming a professional musician and had been playing in bands since my early teens. When I graduated from TCNJ back in 2005, I released a record and toured consistently with one of those bands. While my music career never panned out, many of those touring experiences made their way into my latest feature film (*Uncle Peckerhead*) which is now available to stream all around the world (including Amazon Prime in the U.S!).



Click on this link to find Matthew Lawrence's *Uncle Peckerhead* on Amazon Prime!

<https://www.amazon.com/Uncle-Peckerhead-David-Littleton/dp/B08DK1M15Y>

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



Congratulations Dr. Fazio – Zippia Feature



Dr. Keli Fazio

Congrats to Department Chair, Dr. Keli Fazio, for a featured response in Zippia's Future of the Job Market Report. With over 3,000 expert responses, Dr. Fazio's response was featured on the main page of the "Job Market for Recent Grads" report.

Zippia is a site for companies who want to recruit top-level staff and job seekers who want to empower their career aspirations. Their data-based approach to connecting job seekers and companies has been featured in USA Today, Forbes, Fortune, CNBC, the New York Times, and more.

The following page includes Dr. Fazio's featured responses on Zippia.



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

What type of skills will young Marketing Consultants need?

Dr. Keli Fazio Ph.D.: The pandemic has changed our "normal" work experience from mostly face-to-face to remote or virtual interactions. The key is still the same -- how can we make interpersonal connections that are genuine and effective? Students who major in communication have the unique opportunity to use communicative and leadership strategies to engage and move employees and workers inefficient ways, while attending to how the medium of communication can impact morale, value, and productivity. Put differently, communication experts are needed now more than ever to help companies maintain their efficiency, foster confidence and teamwork, and ensure that individual feedback and interactions are being offered in helpful ways.

Are there any particularly good places in the United States for Marketing Consultants to find work opportunities?

Dr. Keli Fazio Ph.D.: The shift caused by this pandemic means we are entering a time where we can work from anywhere, increasing the chance to interact nationally and globally.

How do you envision technology impacting Marketing Consultants in the next 5 years?

Dr. Keli Fazio Ph.D.: When it comes to communication and professional relationships, the key will always be to make interactions feel efficient and genuine. If we rely on virtual assistants to answer questions, people likely realize it's a computer and not a live person they are chatting with. That's okay in some contexts, such as questions about product orders or FAQ, as long as they are efficient and work. Recall your frustration when you verbally answer a computerized question on a phone call after being on hold for ten minutes, only for the automated system not to understand you or misconnect you.

Now, recall using a chat feature that hones in on keywords and can answer your question that is specific to your order or account quickly, and you resolve your task in under three minutes. You don't mind that it wasn't overly personal; it was efficient. Some contexts also need that interpersonal element, though, such as a fitness coach on an app, to be effective and stay engaged. Communication experts will always need to figure out ways to keep our human needs paramount in our technological encounters.

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHTS



Name: Rebecca Silverman

Major: Communication Studies

Track: Radio/TV/Film

Graduation Year: 2021



On-Campus Involvement: Game Show Producer for Lions Television, Vice President for Student Film Union

When and where did you intern: February-May 2021, Watt Pictures

Describe your internship and your role:

At Watt, I was a Development Intern. I communicated daily with Senior Producers to assist in maintaining casting campaigns, generating loglines, and finalizing cuts. I also scouted potential talent and conducted Skype interviews with them!

What is one skill that you improved upon while at your internship?

I improved my editing skills while shadowing my supervisor. I have a strong passion for editing, so I really enjoyed learning new techniques.

How did Communication Studies help prepare you for your internship?

Learning how to tell a story through editing was one of the most imperative creative techniques I learned in my time at TCNJ.

INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHTS



Name: Eunice Olugbile

Major: Communication Studies

Track: Public/Mass

Graduation Year: 2021



On-Campus Involvement: i-Tunes A Cappella, EOF, HerCampus TCNJ, Lions Television

When and where did you intern: Summer 2020 at My Social Canvas

Describe your internship and your role:

At My Social Canvas, I was a Social Media Entrepreneur. My team and I were in charge of creating content for our region's Instagram page for the duration of our internship, including hosting an Instagram live which was really great! We were given the opportunity to also use software like Figma, showcase our graphic design skills, and meet mentors from well known businesses. I loved this internship because we got opportunities to plan virtual events, work with people all over the country and the world, and network during a time where internships were really scarce.

How did Communication Studies help prepare you for your internship?

Taking COM 370: Digital Advertising prepared me for my internship!

Do you have any advice for students looking to apply for internships?

I applied to 50 internships before the summer of 2020 and only heard back from 4 of them that summer, and I'm still getting "Sorry to inform you" emails in 2021. Don't be discouraged when they don't answer you! Keep applying because you'll get the opportunity you were meant to get.

STUDENT AWARDS & DISTINCTIONS



Retrieved from the School of Arts and Communication Website

Polansky Fellowship Award

This award was created to celebrate students involved in projects that show leadership and have the potential to make a difference in the communities they serve.

2020 Recipient: Carly Nocchi '22

"One of Nocchi's most notable accomplishments was her research during her year-long community work at a local English school. Another project she worked on helped people from local immigrant communities and the Trenton community by providing a safe platform for people who are socially and economically disadvantaged to share their voices. "



2021 Recipient: Ana Gutiérrez '22

"Gutiérrez recently served as associate producer of "I am TCNJ: A Docu-Story Project. The project, directed by Professor of Communication Studies Lorna Johnson-Frizell, is a web series which creates a space for students at TCNJ to discuss race, diversity and inclusion. In this role, Gutiérrez found students to be interviewed by the project's director and coordinated logistics for the production. "



STUDENT AWARDS & DISTINCTIONS



Departmental Awards

These awards are given based on a number of factors, such as grade point, scholastic excellence, involvement in the department and its specializations, and other criteria. Student award winners were invited to a zoom ceremony, held on Wednesday, May 19, 2021.

- **Faculty Award** — Deanna Amarosa
- **Interpersonal/Organizational Award** — Meghan McQuade, Conor Moran, Jennifer Long
- **Public/Mass Award** — Lexi Crans, Skyla Liiv, Breeda Bennett-Jones
- **Radio/TV/Film Award** — Cassie Sokoloff, Delilah Confoy, Ryan Soldati
- **Health Communication Award** — Radhika Purandare, Alexis Marta, Miranda Crowley
- **Leadership & Advocacy Award** — Bryanna O'Keefe
- **M. Wasser Internship Award** — Taylor Griffith, Eunice Olugbile
- **J. Leustek Scholarship** — Alli Uhl
- **LPH Award** — Tyler Watkins
- **Promise of Achievement Award** — Marcos Ochoa, Carly Nocchi, Ana Gutierrez, Devyn Fatznytz
- **Community Engagement Award** — Carly Nocchi, Jaime Hennig, Nicole Carberry





MEET THE EDITORIAL BOARD

ABBY AUGER, 2022

Abby is a Communication Studies Major in the Public and Mass Communication track with a double minor in Deaf Studies and Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology. On campus, she is a member of Alpha Xi Delta and the former Internal Philanthropy Director of the chapter. Off campus, she is a manager and chocolatier at a handmade chocolate shop in Princeton, NJ.



CARLY NOCCHI, 2022

Carly is a Communication Studies major in the Public and Mass communication track with a second major in Political Science. On campus, she is involved in the Communication Studies Student Advisory Board and Delta Phi Epsilon where she served as Public Relations Chair. She also works on campus as an orientation leader. Off campus, Carly currently has an internship at the International Chamber of Commerce in the external affairs department.



JORDYN SAVA, 2022

Jordyn is a Communication Studies Major in the Public and Mass Communication track with a minor in journalism. On campus, she is the sports editor for the Signal and a member of Alpha Xi Delta. Off campus, she is an assistant for bestselling author, Laura Morelli.

