

THE BARKING DOG

Department of Rhetoric & Media Studies (formerly Communication)



"The dogs bark, but the caravan moves on."



The Department of Communication is now known as the Department of Rhetoric & Media Studies. We think the new name better expresses what we do. The term "Communication" is not only vague, but often suggests that we teach things like applied communication, public relations, and journalism, which we do not.

As before, the newly named Department of Rhetoric and media studies will examine how verbal and visual messages can be used – and misused – to achieve persuasive or aesthetic goals. Thus, the two areas within the department are closely connected in their focus on how verbal and visual messages work and how they impact individuals, relationships, and social groups.

Peter Christenson specializes in the uses and effects of media in American society with special attention to children and adolescents. **Bryan Sebok** looks at how the structure of the media industry influences what we see and hear on the screen. He also brings a much-needed film studies perspective to the department, emphasizing how features of content, style, and image are used to convey important ideas.

Mitch Reyes examines how messages construct meaning and persuade audiences, with a particular emphasis on racial representations and public memory. **Daena Goldsmith** studies how messages operate in everyday life—how the content, form, and style of our ordinary conversations contribute to our identities and relationships.

FACULTY NEWS (AND PUFFERY)

Peter Christenson

Peter is serving as department chair again this year, and he promises to do no serious harm in this role. He recently received the happy news that two of his recent articles on popular music and youth have been accepted for publication: “Booze, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll” (co-authored with Donald Roberts of Stanford and Nicholas Bjork ’09) will appear this fall in the journal *Substance Use and Misuse*, and “intergenerational continuity of music taste” (co-authored with Tom ter Bogt of Utrecht University in the Netherlands) will come out in *social forces* early in 2012. Currently Peter is writing up some of the results of his ongoing study of trends in music lyrics 1960-present. As some of you may know, LC R&MS students have been heavily involved in this research. Anyhow, with any luck, an article on the findings will come out some time next year.

Daena Goldsmith

Daena continues her research on how couples talk about illness. In a paper that will appear in the *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, Daena and her collaborators identified strategies couples use to talk about making lifestyle changes (e.g., changes in diet and exercise) following one partner’s heart attack or bypass surgery. In another study, Daena and LC student Kelsey Domann have written about what couples mean when they say they communicate openly about one person’s heart disease. Daena and Kelsey will be presenting their research at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association in New Orleans in November. Finally, Daena worked with colleagues at the University of Washington to survey research methods courses in communication at various colleges across the country. Their results will be published in *Communication Education*.

Mitch Reyes

Mitch reports: Over the summer of 2011 I've made a turn in my research from the study of public memory--where I examine how remembrance of past events often serves present needs--to analysis of "built places" of public memory such as the Parthenon in Athens, Greece. I'm especially interested in how ancient Pythagorean notions of mathematical symmetry and proportion have influenced not only the Parthenon but also other prominent memorial sites in Western culture. This work serves as a segue from my research in memory studies to a book project on the rhetoric of mathematics, where I examine the myriad ways mathematics--often thought of as separated from politics and rhetoric--influences public life and persuades us to see the world in particular ways.

Over the summer I've also run a Scholarly Writing Conference that allows faculty from Lewis & Clark to connect and work with faculty from other academic institutions on the elements of scholarly writing. Finally, in late July I will present a paper at an academic conference on Argumentation in Alta, Utah.

Bryan Sebok

Professor Sebok taught his summer course, *Mass Communication Theory: The Films of Martin Scorsese*, during summer session I. Major theoreticians in the field, who throughout history have sought to understand the role and power of media in society, were studied through the lens of Scorsese's films. Subsequently, Bryan has undertaken original research in collaboration with senior Joshua Cohn that seeks to investigate Hollywood technological history through examination of the *Variety* digital archives. This fall, Sebok

Bryan Sebok (cont.)

will continue his research on 3D and theatrical technologies as he prepares two major research articles for publication. He is also developing a proposal for a feature documentary to be shot locally in Portland. This fall Bryan will offer his new senior capstone course, *American Cinema Studies*, as well as a *Mass Communication Theory* course and his *Media Messages* introductory course.

Brad Krupicka

Brad will be coaching Forensics this year, as the Lewis & Clark team gears up for another exciting season of competitive speech and debate. This follows up on a highly successful 2010-2011 season, which saw two teams qualify for the National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence. Only 64 debate teams in the country are invited.

This fall the LC team will again host the Lewis & Clark Steve Hunt Classic, which brings over 20 teams and over 200 competitors to the Lewis & Clark campus. Go Pios!



New Courses on the Horizon!

Daena goldsmith reports that her office and dining room table are covered in books and articles for two new courses she'll offer in the fall. **RHMS 270, Interpersonal Media**, will look at how processes of interpersonal communication developed in face-to-face relationships might operate differently as people communicate in electronically mediated channels such as Facebook or texting. **RHMS 420, Health Narratives**, will examine the stories that patients, partners, health care providers, and mass media tell about health and illness. Students will have a chance to complete an original research project in which they analyze how health or illness narratives are constructed and how they may influence individual decision-making and uncertainty.

Also new this fall is Bryan Sebok's course **RHMS 425, American Cinema Studies**, which will look at major theories from media, film, and cultural studies (e.g., psychoanalysis, genre study, national cinemas).



Where are They Now?

Nicholas Costa '09 lives in Hawaii, and is currently finishing his law degree at the University of Hawaii – William S. Richardson School of Law. When Nic is not at the Honolulu immigration court, he can be found moonlighting as an indie filmmaker at www.lombobardi.com.

Nick Bjork '08 is a reporter covering real estate development and land use planning for the daily journal of commerce in Portland. He spends his spare time freelancing for various publications around town, covering topics ranging from food to sports. Nick is an avid long distance runner and resides in NW Portland.

Joe Braman '09 lives in SE Portland with fellow LC alumni Corey Smith '09, Ashley Allison '09, and Ellie Witwer '10. By day he works as an Account Executive for Fisher Investments, a global Money Management firm. And by night you can find him prowling the streets of Portland.

Stephanie Locke '10 is headed to Honolulu, Hawaii in the fall to begin a master's degree in linguistics at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She just completed a year abroad in Slovakia as a Fulbright teaching assistant, and is looking forward to a sunnier future filled with pineapples and hula dancing.

Bill Bahrenburg '98 lives in SE Portland. By day Bill is director of operations at the sellwood based lifebalance program, which offers a suite of wellness solutions to companies and organizations all over the western half of the United States.