Utah Journal of Communication

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The Utah Journal of Communication is an open-source, peer-reviewed journal for scholars in the diverse field of communication. While articles by scholars living in Utah, as well as articles covering topics particularly relevant to the state of Utah are especially welcome, all are encouraged to submit their work. Manuscripts from academics, professors, doctoral candidates, and masters candidates always receive full consideration regardless of any Utah connection.

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Communication in Utah: The State of the Discipline in 2024

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This edition of the Utah Journal of Communication consists of five intriguing papers on a variety of topics important to the discipline of communication. Included among them are two fascinating teaching activities about an "end of the world" simulation (Phillips, 2024), and a unit-long professional development activity that utilizes LinkedIn to enhance each student's online image (McGowan-Kirsch & Steidinger, 2024). The wide variety of methods that the journal invites for submission is also on display with an ethnography conducted from a European exchange student immersing themselves in U.S. college sports culture (Hubka, 2024).

Additionally, we are proud to publish two articles from faculty members from Utah institutions. Specifically, Lareina Hingson, an Assistant Professor from Brigham Young University, and Elaine Schnabel, an Assistant Professor from Weber State University, highlight the fascinating scholarship that is taking place right here in the Beehive State (Hingson, 2024; Schnabel, 2024). For me, being exposed to excellent scholarship from faculty members in Utah reminds me of questions I occasionally hear from ambitious graduate students. These questions include, "If I want to teach in higher education, are there opportunities for me?", "If I do pursue this career path, can I stay in Utah?", and "What degrees should I pursue improve my chances of landing a job?" With these questions in mind, I would like to focus the discussion of this forward on the state of the communication discipline in Utah.

I made the attempt of identifying every communication faculty job in the state of Utah, and specifying the degree that is required to hold each position. Before I delve into the findings, I'd like to first acknowledge the limitations. These numbers rely on the accuracy of each department's own reporting on the Faculty and Staff pages of their websites. Turnover and out-of-date pages, for example, can make these numbers marginally incorrect. Also, there is likely some inconsistency in reporting from school to school. For instance, one school may choose to list their adjunct faculty on the website, and others may elect not to do so. There are other departments that aren't distinctly "communication" departments, such as linguistics, that were not included in the data. Finally, professional staff positions, such as tv studio managers, were not included, as the focus is primarily on teaching opportunities. However, I still feel confident that the statistics below give a fairly accurate representation of communication teaching appointments in the state. The sample includes departments from Brigham Young University, Ensign College, Salt Lake Community College, Snow College, Southern Utah University, Utah State University (inclusive of USU Eastern), the University of Utah, Utah Valley University, Weber State University, and Westminster University. The pool of positions includes 57 adjunct or part-time faculty, 12 emeritus professors, 14 graduate teaching assistants, and 169 full-time faculty members.

Of the 57 adjunct/part-time faculty, 37 were listed as either an adjunct instructor or adjunct lecturer. Additionally, two faculty members from the University of Utah were listed as associate adjunct professors. At Utah Tech University, the 18 faculty members had the title of part-time instructor. An attempt was made to identify the degrees obtained by each faculty member. In many cases, the information for highest degree earned was made available on each website. If not, LinkedIn was used as a secondary source. However, there were still some faculty members that I could not obtain this information for, many of which were in this category. With that said, 41 part-time/adjunct faculty did not have a degree listed for the employee. Of the remaining individuals, 13 had received a Master's degree, one a J.D., and two PhDs. Both Brigham Young University (N=8) and Utah State University (N=4) had emeritus professors listed on their website. Three of which had no degree listed with the professor. Of the remaining nine, one had an M.A., and eight had earned a PhD.

For full-time faculty, I wanted the reader to be able to visualize where the opportunities are, and what qualifications are needed to obtain them. Therefore, figure 1 displays full-time opportunities by title, figure 2 displays full-time opportunities by location, and figure 3 displays full-time opportunities by highest degree obtained.
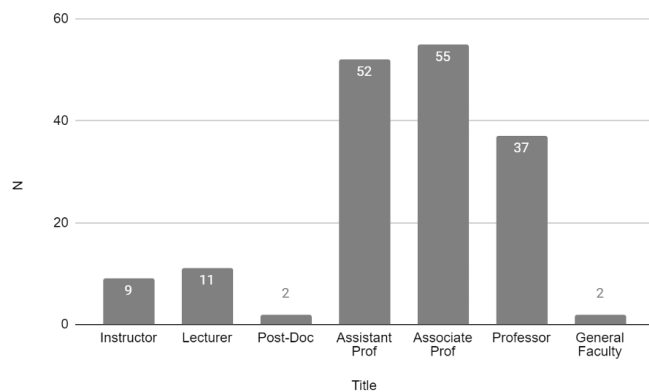
Figure 1. Full-time Opportunities by Job Title
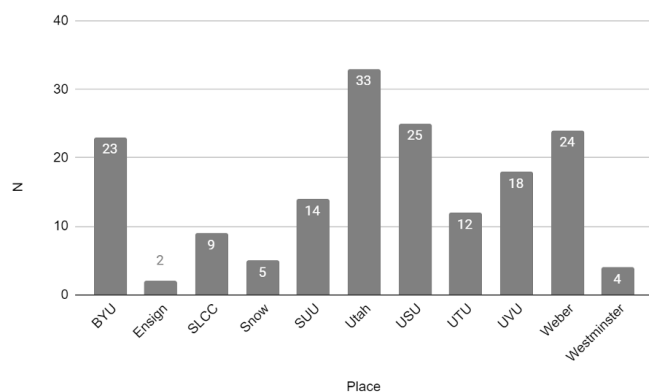
Figure 2. Full-time Opportunities by Institution
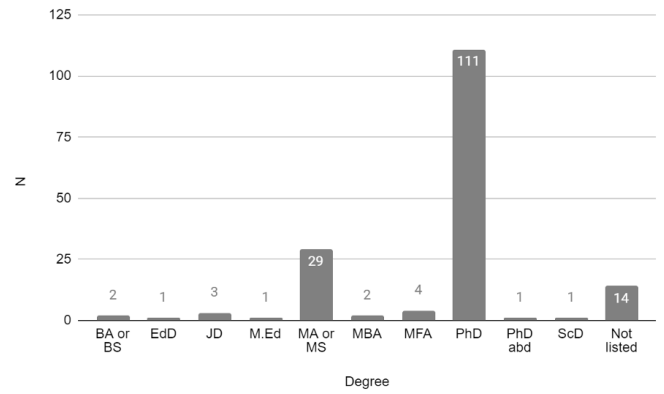
Figure 3. Full-time Opportunities by Degree

This data reflects a healthy and growing field of communication scholars in this great state. We're excited that the Utah Journal of Communication gets to be a part of continually telling the story of the discipline. I hope you will enjoy this issue of the journal, and consider it as an outlet for your own scholarship in the future.

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Font of All Blessings: Constructing Christian Identity through Technologies of the Self

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Abstract
"Thank you Jesus" yard signs offer an invitation for all who pass buy to express gratitude toward the Christian God. This article conceptualizes the signs both as a technology of the self, a practice by which people discipline themselves into becoming a particular kind of person, and a material artifact in the United States culture wars. Using a close reading grounded by a Foucauldian perspective, I show that these signs reshape residential areas into a neighborhood shibboleth, wherein the person interpellated by the sign is forced to confront their faith-status according to the various subject positions offered by the sign. As disciplinary technologies, these signs normalize a Christian faith that is childlike, happy, grateful, and proclamatory. The sign simultaneously renders other faith identities, such as ungrateful Christians or the grateful person of a different faith, aberrant and therefore less welcome in this movement. While their materiality offers a repeated invitation to join a movement predicated on gratitude, the invitation perpetually creates a subject position—the judge—who is unable to answer the proffered invitation to become one of the childlike faithful.
Keywords: Materiality, Technology of the self, Religion, Identity, Christianity

Introduction

I came across my first thank you Jesus yard sign at a low point in my faith journey. The bright yellow and orange coroplast yard sign was perched in front of a dilapidated house alongside dying plants and garden kitsch. It was the same size as more political yard signs that read, "Let's Go Brandon," but this one reminded me of a spiritual practice I had done while in seminary, listing at least three things I was grateful for every day. This practice drew me closer to God. Every time I drove past that sign, I was invited to take that spiritual practice back up again. As a Christian and a critical scholar, I realized that the sign operated as what Foucault described as a technology of the self, a practice by which a person intentionally disciplines themselves into becoming a particular kind of person (Foucault, 1988). Prayer, confession, and listing out gratitudes are practices individuals might choose to do in order to become a better Christian. Some days I would drive past the sign and welcome the chance to thank Jesus for the good things happening in my life, to discipline myself into being a person defined by gratitude. Other days I resented the invitation—and immediately felt the sting of recognizing myself as an ungrateful, suboptimal Christian.

I take the signs to be a technology of the self that disciplines the passerby by offering several options for how that person can identify. Because of their public-facing nature, I also take these signs to be part of the ongoing culture war, in which Christians in American have sought to reassert their primacy in public spaces as the presumption of secular dominance has increased (Taylor, 2004, 2009). Originating in rural Asheboro, North Carolina in 2014 as the project of a local Christian teenager, these signs have become a popular mechanism of self-identification in American Christianity today: 23,000 signs had been sold by 2016 (Wilson 2016) and over 100,000 had been sold and placed in lawns located in all 50 states by December 2017 (Hildyard 2017). These signs purport to be an expression of Christian identity and a public invitation to "join the movement" based not on polarizing opinions but something positive and healthy: gratitude (About the Movement). But by acknowledging that this isn't just a sign – it's also a disciplinary technology—this project provides insight on who is more and less welcome to join that movement. In this case, interrogating which subject positions these signs make possible can provide insight on what kind of identity Christians see as good and which as aberrant.

I argue these signs use the invitation to express gratitude to reshape residential areas into a neighborhood shibboleth, wherein the person interpellated by the sign is forced to confront her faith-status according to the various subject positions offered by the sign. As disciplinary technologies, these signs privilege a Christian faith that is childlike, grateful and happy. The sign simultaneously renders other faith identities, such as ungrateful Christians or the grateful person of a different faith, aberrant and therefore less welcome in this movement. While their materiality offers a repeated invitation to join a movement predicated on gratitude, the invitation perpetually creates a subject position—the judge—who is not only unwelcome but unable to answer the proffered invitation to become one of the childlike faithful.

Disciplinary Technologies of the Self: The Spiritual Labor of Christian Identity

The thank you Jesus lawn sign operates as what Foucault described as a technology of the self. A technology of the self is a practice by which a person comes to label themselves in a particular way and thereby "become[s]… an object [of knowledge] who learns to effect changes to himself" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 2014: 175). Technologies of the self are the means by which people choose to shape themselves in ways that often challenge the status quo (Besley, 2021; McNay, 2009) such as the intentional training of the body in women's sports to resist dominant patriarchal ideologies (Markula, 2003) or techniques by which chess players can master themselves in competition (Aycock, 1995). This phenomenon is also known as subject formation, when individuals are disciplined through verbal and nonverbal communication practices to act a certain way (Foucault, 1980, 2012). At the heart of all disciplinary systems like a technology of the self exists a "penal mechanism" (Foucault, 2012, p. 177) that uses reward and punishment to normalize some subject positions as good and others as aberrant. My feeling of guilt at being unwilling to express gratitude when I passed by the sign indicates that I experienced that mechanism disciplining me to act differently in the future. Repeatedly accessing the penal mechanisms of a technology initiates the "indefinite discipline" Foucault wrote of: "an interrogation without end, an investigation that would be extended without limit" (Foucault 2012: 227) wherein, the subject-made-object-to-themselves disciplines themselves to be a particular kind of person (e.g., the 'right' kind of Christian). Intentional use of this endless interrogation allows religious individuals to discipline themselves into particular kinds of people (Smith, 2006). The thank you Jesus signs offer a repeated opportunity for passersby to engage with the sign's practice of gratitude, an invitation to enact discipline on one's self.

Although this discipline might begin at an individual level, its repetition and widespread use organizes people by creating different subject positions or identities (Mahmood, 2005). By creating both positive and negative subject positions (e.g., grateful or ungrateful), a technology of the self operates like material rhetoric: it persuades people who engage with it which sociocultural roles are appropriate for them to act out without a speaker, speech, audience, occasion seeming to be present (McGee, 1982). The power of these technologies is in their capacity to frame some subject positions as negative and others as positive: outsourcing identity regulation from an organization to an individual who disciplines themselves (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). When individuals manage their emotions at work (Hochschild, 1983) and religious persons manage their spirituality in religious organizations (McGuire, 2010; Schnabel, 2015), they are enacting this discipline on themselves. Doing so intentionally allows someone to identify as a member in good standing of the social group in which they want or need to identify (Alvesson, 2010; McNamee, 2011) or get by at work (Hochschild, 1983). Disciplinary technologies influence which kinds of emotional and spiritual labor individuals want to do by offering up a way for someone to attain a positive identity or subject position. Such discipline therefore troubles the distinction between the performance of identity and the reality of identity: the performances of identity can be the means by which faithful individual use material artifacts or practices to shape their religious identities.

Unlike more typical forms of discipline, however, these signs are posted publicly and interpellate passersby who have not elected to subject themselves to this technology (Althusser, 1970). The sign can therefore be connected to the broader sociocultural movement to bring the Christian religion back into American public life. As the presumption of secular dominance has increased (Taylor, 2004, 2009), Christians in American have sought to reassert their primacy in public spaces like courthouses (Popp, 2010), popular media (Dreyer, 2023; Lundberg, 2009), education (Baker et al., 2020; Perry et al., 2022), and politics proper (Lee, 2022; Whitehead & Perry, 2022). White Christian nationalism is on the rise (Whitehead & Perry, 2022), and so the conversation about Christian identity is often sensationalized, with references to purity culture, trauma, and Christian groups' political work. While these issues remain highly relevant, the main thing Christians do together—in terms of where they spend the most time and money—is worship (Chaves, 2004). And worship, as James K.A. Smith has written (Smith, 2006, 2009, 2013), is an intentional usage of Foucault's disciplinary mechanism to "enact countermeasures, counter-disciplines that will form [themselves] into the kinds of people that

God calls [them] to be" (p. 106), attempting to be a people defined not by more dominant ideologies but by their faith (Smith, 2009).

The signs' rapid dissemination in the later half of the 2010s (Hildyard 2017) indicates that this particular disciplinary technology is a popular mode of worship among Christians. Examining its disciplinary mechanism therefore provides insight what kind of identity Christians see as normal or good and which as aberrant. This paper thus investigates the following question:

RQ: What subjectivities do these signs suggest are normal and which are aberrant?

Methods

To explore this research question, I performed a close reading of the signs and the website selling them (Brummett, 2018). To do so, I took a "top-down, theory-driven approach" to the text (p. 27), performing the close reading through a Foucauldian lens. This means that I examined the signs to see what kinds of subject positions the signs discipline people in to and through what disciplinary mechanisms. Rather than investigating how people actually interact with the signs, this close reading investigates what subject positions the sign makes possible. I sought to understand what rewards and punishments were offered, to answer the question of what faith identities are regulated as normal and which as aberrant. In doing so, this analysis provides insight on what kind of identity Christians see as good and which as aberrant and therefore who is more and less welcome to join the Christian side of the culture war. I used a close reading of the website to corroborate that analysis, treating it as the cultural context of those for whom the sign is persuasive and positive (DeCloedt Pinçon, 2017). Below, I will first provide a detailed description of the sign before then articulating the four subject positions made possible by the sign.

thank you Jesus

The thank you Jesus signs look much like most yard signs in form and shape: 18x24 inches, made of coroplast, with a double-sided message stuck into the ground at knee-height (see Appendix A). In these signs, the sun is rising in the background—a yellow half-circle dominates the bottom half of the sign with two curved rows of darker yellow and light orange fading into a deeper orange sky. In the foreground, the words "thank you Jesus" lack any punctuation. This profession of faith— "thank you Jesus"—is minimal and simplistic, lacking all complexity that a religious tradition with thousands of years of history and writing has accumulated. The comma between "you" and "Jesus" is dropped.

The "t" of "thank" is a Christian cross, squared off at its edges, more solid-looking than any of the other letters, which are in Comic Sans font. "JESUS" is spelled out in all capital letters, but the edges are softened, friendly. Unlike the cross for the initial "t," it looks as though someone took a paint brush to a piece of paper—a child, perhaps—and swiped through the letters J-E-S-U-S. They are rickety: the J is slightly larger than any other letter; the tips of the U are uneven at the top; and a little tail sticks out of the stem of the E for its middle horizontal line.

The sign signals a certain happiness or joy in the light of the sun—a brand new day, perhaps, brightness, and light being born—and explicitly states gratitude. The sunrise in the background shows signs of inconsistency between the layers; the edges between all four colors are imperfect. Despite having been mass-produced, the backdrop is designed like the letters to appear painted on. The lines aren't clean because the brush is also imperfect, a few of its hairs trailing too far to the right or the left and leaving scratches of "paint" outside of a boundary. It is, perhaps, too neat for a child's painting skills, but the ethos of the child remains in the uneven lines and simple shapes and happy yellows and oranges.

Neighborhood Faith Shibboleth:
An Invitation Designed to be Rejected

As disciplinary technologies, the signs execute a "constantly repeated ritual of power" (Foucault, 2012, p. 186) that reshapes neighborhoods into a shibboleth, wherein the person interpellated by the sign is forced to confront her faith-status according to the various subject positions offered by the sign. An individual's response to this invitation subjects them to the penal mechanism (Foucault, 2012) of the sign and determines the extent of their ability to identify positively as Christian. The sign makes four subjectivities possible: the childlike Christian, the ungrateful Christian, the improperly grateful person, and the judge. The penal mechanism that creates the good Christian as childlike is constituted in part by the gaze of the dismissive judge. Through the production of these subject positions, these signs offer an ongoing invitation for a passerby to join the Christian community but it also recreates a subject position from which an individual will forever be unable to accept the invitation.

Four Subjectivities Produced by Thank You Jesus Signs

The only fully normative subjectivity created by the sign is docile and obedient to its explicit purposes: the childlike Christian who believes in Jesus and wants to self-discipline themselves to grow closer to God through gratitude. Perhaps she buys a sign or tells her pastor about them in order to "join the mission" and more

comprehensively engage in both the disciplinary and evangelistic goals of the sign. Perhaps she, like one verified owner of the signs whose words are quoted on the website, shouts out loud "'Thank You Jesus!!'" every time she sees one (Product, 2024). Like thousands of others who bought the sign, this person experiences their neighborhoods as a space to confess gratitude. This gratitude is directed toward the Christian God, specifically Jesus, and it is an enthusiastic gratitude, full of childlike joy. These Christians are also engaged in proclamation through sign-buying and posting. Although there is no mandate to buy a sign, the final piece of text on the sign is the website address in the bottom right. Once there, an interested party can "become part of the movement" and confess her own faith via her property by "cover[ing] the land in Thank You Jesus signs" (About the Movement, 2024). As the website states, "Our goal is quite simple. To spread the name of Jesus throughout the world and share with others how thankful we are for what he does every day in our lives." The normal form of faith produced by this sign breaks out of the private sphere of individual belief and into the public sphere to challenge secular assumptions about the role of religion in everyday life. This first subject position is the ideal self the sign encourages (Wieland, 2010), an ideal which thereafter organizes people according to the three other subject positions in relation to it.

A second subjectivity made possible by the sign is the ungrateful Christian. This subjectivity is aberrant, a person who believes in Jesus, but fails to perform gratitude appropriately. This person doesn't buy a sign; they ignores them and perhaps even considers changing their route to avoid the invitation to childlike gratitude. The invitation comes every time they pass by the sign—and some days they are just not feeling grateful. Each day, they can choose to accept this statement of gratitude and instead experience strength or joy customers profess to experience when they drive by the sign during difficult circumstances. The ungrateful Christian, however, who resists the call to be grateful, to be happy and childlike must repeatedly give herself the title of "ungrateful," a person of deformed faith or perhaps not even a person of faith. Unlike the grateful, childlike Christian who experiences the joy of having performed her faith correctly (according to the sign), the ungrateful Christian experiences guilt or shame of a substandard faith. This experience of the penal mechanism encourages the individual to regulate herself (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002).

A third and closely related subjectivity made possible by the sign is that of the grateful person who does not seek to attribute that gratitude to Jesus. This person might be religiously

unaffiliated or differently affiliated. Although not affiliated with Jesus per say, they feel gratitude and express it. Like the second subject position, this person is not fully obedient to the sign's purposes, but they might take a moment to consider their blessings or bask in a sense of gratitude toward nature, an unnamed spiritual force, or even gratitude toward their loved ones. The penal mechanism of the sign requires they admit that they are not wholly what the sign and its owner hope them to be. The person who is organized into this subjectivity might be willing to regulate themselves (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002), but might also simply consider themselves forever fully unwelcome.

A fourth and final subjectivity is perpetually made unwelcome in Christianity by the sign: the judge, the passerby who surveils the property, conducting the examination that enables them to dismiss the homeowner as childish. This person does not recognize Jesus as a source of blessing and might not see any particular reason to give thanks. Because there is no particular obligation toward the deity to give thanks nor any inclination toward gratitude in that moment, the invitation is one to surveil and pass judgement on the proclamation of gratitude. The disciplinary mechanism for the judge is thus more subtle: it comes in the form of the satisfaction in a proper categorization, perhaps dismissive of the childish proclamation, disbelieving of the irrationality of the faithful, or annoyed at the homeowner's preference for gratitude, an opiate of the masses. The sign disciplines the judge to be arrogant, to hold a position of power, to be the objective "expert" over and against the childlike faithful (Foucault, 2012). Indeed, the first subject position benefits from this gaze and its judgment. Thus, in this sign and the work that it does on the neighborhood landscape, dismissive judgment from the judge and childlike joy and celebration of gratitude are in definitional tension with one another.

Normalizing a Happy and Proclamatory Christian Identity

These signs organize Christian identity by suggesting that a normal Christian is supposed to be childlike, happy, grateful, and proclamatory. The three other subject positions the sign makes legible—the ungrateful Christian, the grateful non-Christian, and the surveilling judge—experience their identities as aberrant and therefore suboptimal. In this way, the sign normalizes one way of practicing Christianity over other ways. Because of the sign's normalization of a proclamatory faith, the faith of someone who sees faith as a private matter is rendered aberrant or invisible by the sign's mechanism. A faith checkered by doubt or complexity is likewise illegible in the Christian social identity

shaped by this sign. Like the three subject positions the sign makes legible, these other ways of practicing faith are suboptimal ways of identifying as Christian, according to the sign.

Additionally, by recreating a judge surveilling the faith identity of simplistic gratitude, these signs recreate the logic of the culture wars in which some persons are perpetually dismissive of Christianity's beliefs. This sign which proclaims gratitude and invites others to do likewise is, in religious terms, spiritually formative: it creates particular identities, ways of being in the world (Mahmood, 2005). Through an emphasis on Jesus and childlike simplicity, the signs create a subject position—the judge—that is not just unwelcome but unable to answer the proffered invitation because they are shaped into inspecting, knowledgeable judges over and against the childlike faithful. Such a formation recreates the culture war, actively discouraging some people from becoming Christian.

Conclusion

These signs are just one example of a technology of the self used by religious persons in the United States to perform their faith. Prayer, clothing, tattoos or lack thereof, and other physical practices like fasting or avoiding certain foods or drink are all religious technologies of the self with material presence in everyday American culture. Visible church buildings and temples likewise reshape the material landscape in which they sit. Although these practices are intended primarily for the spiritual formation of religious insiders, their materiality makes them proclamatory in a way that is similar to the thank you Jesus signs. As explored in this paper, such practices can create unintended effects. Therefore, people of all religious faiths need to take seriously the productive power of such material religious technologies for spiritual formation, asking what unintended and counterproductive subject formations their public practices of religious identity are creating. Who, in other words, do certain material artifacts or practices of faith both perpetually invite and reject?

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The Circuit of Culture and American Collegiate Athletics from a European Perspective

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Abstract
This ethnographic study, conducted from a European exchange student's perspective, delves into the distinct cultural fabric of U.S. college sports. The research, based on interactions with 20 international students and athletes, uncovers a rich tapestry of customs and community bonds integral to American collegiate sports. These activities, deeply embedded in the U.S. system of higher education, go beyond mere competition, playing a crucial role in personal development, community building, and economic endeavors. Central to the study is the application of Stuart Hall's Circuit of Culture framework, dissecting how collegiate sports in America are represented, consumed, produced, regulated, and identified. The research sheds light on the symbolic representation of team spirit, the communal experience of sports consumption, and the NCAA's pivotal role in sports production and regulation. It also addresses the social norms shaping fan behavior, contributing to the distinctive experience of collegiate sports events. A significant finding of the study is the profound sense of identification with collegiate sports teams among students, staff, alumni, and fans. This identification is a key part of individual and community identity, with shared experiences fostering a strong sense of belonging and pride. This aspect is particularly resonant for international students, who find a sense of connection and community in this unique cultural landscape. This ethnography presents an insightful view into the integral role of sports in shaping the educational and cultural landscape of American universities, offering a deeper understanding of their significance from a global perspective.
Keywords: Ethnography, Amateur athletics, NCAA, Sports communication, Athletic administration

In the United States, collegiate athletics are vastly different in comparison to the European amateur sport structure. Woven into the US system of higher education, collegiate athletics are said to serve as the "front door" of institutions of high education (Benedict & Keteyian, 2014). In a 2008 interview, former President of Washington State University Elson Floyd said, so much of the reputation of a university is determined based on basketball and football, the only notable exceptions are the Ivy League institutions. That's an unfortunate circumstance, but it's indeed a reality" (Withers, 2008). In Europe, it is an accepted fact that the vast majority of American universities are popular because of the sports teams that are part of the university athletic departments (Hubka, & Coombs, 2023). American institutions of higher education frequently assign substantial value to their athletic programs, recognizing that a successful sports team can confer several advantages to the school. Among these advantages is the euphoria associated with triumphs in sporting events. Such victories

enhance the morale not only of the athletes themselves but also of the broader school community, often fostering a unified sense of school spirit and solidarity. Furthermore, there are potential economic gains to be realized; athletic success frequently serves as a catalyst for the institution's branding as a premier competitor within the national landscape. This heightened profile can significantly increase the visibility of the school's academic offerings and, in an ideal scenario, enlarge the pool of prospective students. Specifically, increased student engagement in sports associations, both in terms of higher participation rates and improved participation quality, leads to greater student development (Watson et al., 2019). Astin (1999) underscored that a student's level of engagement in college directly correlates with the extent of their learning and personal growth. This heightened development is believed to result in increased satisfaction and a stronger sense of connection to the school (Kim, 2017).

Since university-sponsored collegiate athletics in Europe do not exist in this context, the purpose of this ethnographic research study is aimed to observe and learn about American collegiate athletics. As a European student studying abroad at an American university of higher education, I am uniquely situated to experience this new world of sports through first-hand observation of and fan participation in collegiate athletics. Over the course of several months, I attended eleven athletic events, including men's American football, men's basketball, women's basketball, women's soccer, women's volleyball, and women's gymnastics. Data is observed from my unique first-person point of view, with my perspective as a European at the forefront of this article's analysis.

Literature review

American College Sports
The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is a significant governing body for college sports in the United States, established in 1906 to address concerns over the well-being of young athletes. It has evolved from a minimal role to a powerful entity influencing college athletics (Clotfelter, 2019; Fleisher, 1988). The NCAA's mission is to integrate collegiate sports into the educational experience, advocating for student-athletes to balance their academic, social, and athletic lives, and to embody values such as integrity, excellence, and diversity (NCAA, 2021). College sports programs in the U.S. are often lauded for the unity and morale they bring to schools, and although successful programs like those at the University of Texas and the University of Michigan attract attention and potentially increase revenue, most do not turn a profit, with many reporting deficits (Clotfelter,

2019; Benedict & Keteyian, 2014).

The NCAA, while influential, faces criticism over issues like athlete compensation, the commercialization of college sports, and its enforcement policies. The term "student-athlete" was coined by the NCAA to distinguish these individuals from employees, a stance that has shielded the organization from various liability issues (Byers & Hammer, 2010; Posteher, 2021). These athletes are expected to maintain academic progress and amateur status, without professional involvement or financial rewards for their sports participation, despite the significant income they may generate for their institutions and the NCAA (Posteher, 2021).

Student-athletes face a unique set of challenges balancing the demands of academics and sports, often experiencing a conflict of roles and expectations from various stakeholders. The transition to college life is complicated by the additional pressures of team competition and the responsibilities associated with their sport, which can be quite challenging (Coombs, 2024; Posteher, 2021). Moreover, transitioning out of college sports can present identity challenges, particularly for those who have intertwined their self-concept with their athletic prowess. Despite the critiques aimed at the NCAA's treatment of student-athletes, many argue that the benefits and experiences of collegiate sports can outweigh the sacrifices (Gerdy, 1997; Posteher, 2021).

Culture
The cultural landscape of sports, a multifarious and evolving domain, is anchored in a set of shared behaviors, beliefs, and values that coalesce to give meaning and expression within societies, as noted by Stensland (2021). This is embodied in the distinctive culture of sports, which is not static but is continually being constructed and reimagined through interactions and experiences of individuals within this sphere. The production, circulation, consumption, and resistance of cultural products in sports can be effectively examined through Hall's (1997) Circuit of Culture framework. This model underscores the interconnectedness of representation, consumption, production, regulation, and identification, each playing a pivotal role in how sports culture is experienced and interpreted by society.

Sports culture has historically been shaped by local and regional practices; however, the rise of globalization and mass media has propelled it onto a global stage, transcending national boundaries and fostering a shared identity among diverse populations (Coombs et al., 2023). The collegiate sports culture in the United States exemplifies this transition, with college football and basketball evolving from

simple extracurricular activities into complex commercial enterprises. These sports now emulate professional leagues in management and revenue generation, reflecting broader societal shifts and the influence of technological advancements (Clotfelter, 2019; Stensland, 2021).

The commercialization and professionalization of college sports highlight the dynamic nature of sports culture, as it adapts to the changing social, economic, and political landscapes. Collegiate athletics in America particularly illustrates the substantial influence of sport culture, where significant revenue and media attention pivot around the success of football and basketball programs. These changes underscore how collegiate sports culture has morphed into a major business, with its own set of norms, values, and commercial drivers (Clotfelter, 2019).

Method

Ethnography

Ethnography is a central qualitative methodology in social science, offering a deep dive into group life and culture through the observation and engagement within natural settings. This approach involves a layered process of capturing and interpreting the dynamics, languages, and behaviors of a group, and it stretches beyond mere observation to the complex task of culturally translating and representing life forms (Charmaz, 2006; Geertz, 1988). The method requires extensive fieldwork and a reflective stance on the part of the researcher to ethically translate observations into detailed written accounts, with consideration of the nuances and subtleties inherent in human interactions (Ballestero & Winthereik, 2021). Ethnography's power lies in its detailed and nuanced portrayal of people's lives and cultural practices, offering a rich perspective on social phenomena that might elude other research methods. Ethnographers are tasked with the continuous cycle of observation, documentation, and interpretation, striving to present a faithful depiction of a group's culture and interactions. Despite its strengths in capturing the intricacies of social life, ethnographers face challenges such as time investment, potential biases, and the complexity of interpreting cultural contexts, making the process both rigorous and demanding (Ballestero & Winthereik, 2021; Pearson, 2015).

Sample

As a European student studying American college sports, I possess a unique vantage point that makes me particularly well-suited to conduct an ethnography about American college sports from a fan perspective. Coming from a different cultural and sporting background, I bring an outsider's perspective that allows me to see and question aspects of the culture that may be taken for granted or overlooked by those who have grown up within it. This fresh perspective enables me to approach the subject with a sense of curiosity and objectivity that might be less accessible to someone deeply ingrained in the culture. Additionally, my experience with European sports culture provides me with a comparative framework to understand and analyze the unique characteristics of American college sports fandom. My position as both an outsider and a student enables me to navigate this cultural space with a blend of detachment and immersive engagement, making me uniquely equipped to explore and articulate the nuances of this particular sports culture.

As part of this study, I attended eleven sporting events on college campuses from August 2023–December 2023. These events included men's American football, men's basketball, women's basketball, women's soccer, women's volleyball, and women's gymnastics. During these events, I participated in fan-related activities and cultural traditions, of which I took field notes.

I also interviewed several European international students and international student-athletes about their involvement and understanding of American college sports. An international student-athlete (ISA) is a student who qualifies as both an international student living abroad in the United States and a student-athlete competing in a sport at a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)-member institution (Coombs, 2022). In total, I interviewed 20 different students, all of who were undergraduate or graduate students. The international students I interviewed had no previous experience with American college sports.

Findings

Initially, my research involved extensive reading of articles and books, coupled with conducting interviews, to deepen my understanding of American collegiate sports culture. The role of a student-athlete is multifaceted and extends beyond mere participation in sports. Eligibility to play on a team is governed by the Academic Progress Rate (APR), a system developed by the NCAA. Student-athletes can accumulate up to four points annually, divided between the fall and spring semesters. Points are awarded based on academic eligibility and retention at the institution. A team must maintain a minimum four-year score of 930 points to avoid penalties such as scholarship reduction, decreased practice time, and loss of financial aid (Stokowski, 2017). Thus, student-athletes shoulder significant responsibilities and adhere to stringent rules to

maintain their team standing and scholarships.

The NCAA's role extends to financing scholarships, housing, and travel expenses. Although these expenditures are substantial for institutions, they are relatively modest compared to the generated revenue. Significantly, this financial support enables many students to access education that would otherwise be unaffordable. The life of a student-athlete is akin to a full-time job, involving early mornings, training, classes, more practice, and study sessions, cumulatively occupying 8-10 hours daily.

The popularity of sports events among students intrigued me, leading to an exploration of the behaviors and motivations underlying this phenomenon. A standout aspect is the vibrant atmosphere created by participants. Each event begins with the American national anthem, a ritual observed with reverence by the audience. The entry of players to the accompaniment of motivational music, the enthusiastic fan response, and the distinct team introductions contribute to an electric atmosphere, eliciting strong emotional responses.

The involvement and interest of students, fans, and staff in college sports are remarkable. The roles of cheerleaders and dance teams are critical in energizing the atmosphere. Their performances, differing in focus between gymnastic feats and dance routines, are pivotal in reviving the spirit of the game. International students I interviewed concurred, highlighting the atmosphere, team spirit, and enjoyment. The college sports culture in America is taken seriously, with teams holding significant importance for their universities.

The mascot, a symbol of school spirit, is a ubiquitous presence at games, engaging in entertaining antics and interactions with fans. Similarly, the university's music band enhances the atmosphere, playing a mix of popular and classic tunes, often supported by the cheerleaders and dance teams. The band's presence, unusual in my experience at sports events, adds a unique auditory dimension to the games.

During game interruptions, the distribution of complimentary items like snacks, clothing, and vouchers by cheerleaders and staff generates palpable excitement among the audience. This practice, initially puzzling to me, became a source of fun and anticipation as I immersed myself in the games. Mini-games involving audience participation for prizes further contribute to the engaging and interactive environment.

A critical observation is the intense fandom that characterizes these events. Fans exhibit unwavering enthusiasm and support for their teams, regardless of the game's outcome. Their actions, ranging from cheerleading to opponent taunting, significantly influence the game's atmosphere. While some behaviors may border on unsportsmanlike conduct, they underscore the deep emotional investment of the fans. The number of spectators varies by sport, with football and men's basketball typically drawing the largest crowds.

Behind the scenes, numerous university employees and an athletic department work diligently to ensure seamless event execution. Their roles encompass planning, scheduling, and game management. This team includes referees, scorekeepers, announcers, photographers, cameramen, and others responsible for live streaming and post-game reporting.

Analysis

Following a four-month immersive experience in North America, I have developed a profound understanding of the prominence of collegiate sports within this cultural context. Contrary to the perception that college life revolves solely around academic pursuits, I observed that sports play a crucial role in providing a necessary respite from the rigors of academic life. This phenomenon is not merely about leisure; it's an integral part of the student experience, facilitating social interactions and collective enjoyment of sporting events. Such gatherings often feature enjoyable snacks and beverages, creating a convivial atmosphere around the games. In my analysis, I apply Stuart Hall's (1997) Circuit of Culture framework to this ethnographic study, offering a detailed and layered understanding of the cultural significance of American collegiate athletics. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of the complex interplay between various cultural elements within the realm of collegiate sports.

Representation

In my observations, I noted how collegiate sports in America generate meaning through various symbols and rituals. The representation of team spirit and institutional pride is vividly expressed through logos, team colors, and mascots. These symbols are not just visual; they are imbued with history and meaning, resonating deeply with the community. The ritual of playing the national anthem before games, for instance, stood out as a powerful moment of national identity and unity. This act, along with the visual representations of the teams, constructs a narrative that is central to the identity of collegiate sports.

Consumption

My experience revealed the intense ways in which students, faculty, and the community consume collegiate sports. This consumption goes beyond merely watching games; it includes participating in game-day rituals, donning team merchandise, and engaging in spirited discussions about the teams. The excitement and energy at the games, particularly during key moments like player introductions or during halftime shows, underscored the deep emotional connection the audience has with these events. The enthusiasm for free merchandise and participation in interactive games also highlighted the active role of fans in this cultural phenomenon.

Production

The NCAA plays a pivotal role in the production of collegiate sports culture. My research indicated that the NCAA's rules and regulations, particularly concerning athlete eligibility and academic performance, significantly influence the student-athlete experience. This production is not limited to sports alone; it extends to media portrayals, live streams, and post-game discussions, all of which contribute to the narrative of collegiate sports. The efforts of the athletic department in organizing and managing events also play a crucial part in this production process, shaping the way these sports are presented and experienced.

Regulation

Regulation within collegiate sports was evident in the policies and standards set by the NCAA, especially the Academic Progress Rate (APR). These regulations not only govern the eligibility of student-athletes but also shape their academic and athletic commitments. Additionally, there are social regulations, such as the norms and expectations for fan behavior during games. These unwritten rules contribute to the overall atmosphere and experience of collegiate sports, emphasizing sportsmanship and community engagement.

Identification

Throughout my study, I observed a strong sense of identification among students, staff, alumni, and fans with their collegiate sports teams. This identification goes beyond mere support for the sports teams; it is a critical aspect of individual and community identity. The shared experiences of cheering for a team, celebrating victories, and even enduring losses together foster a strong sense of belonging and pride. This was particularly evident in the way international students, like myself, engaged with these sports, finding a sense of connection and community in a new cultural setting.

Conclusion

In concluding my ethnographic study on American collegiate athletics, it's imperative to reflect on the multifaceted impact these sports have on the cultural and educational landscape of the United States. Through the lens of Stuart Hall's Circuit of Culture, this study has dissected the complex layers of representation, consumption, production, regulation, and identification inherent in the realm of collegiate sports. This analytical framework has not only illuminated the significance of these sports as mere games but also underscored their role as a vital component of American cultural identity, deeply woven into the social fabric and educational system.

The dichotomy of universities in America, as observed in this study, reveals two distinct foci: high-level education and sports-centric institutions. This distinction is exemplified by entities like the University of Texas, whose Darrel K. Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium, with its vast capacity for over 100,000 spectators, stands as a testament to the monumental scale of collegiate sports. Such large-scale sports facilities are not just physical structures; they are emblematic of the profound impact that sports have on the reputation and identity of American colleges and universities (Clotfelter, 2019). The prominence of commercial sports in the university setting is not merely a feature of the American educational system; it's a cornerstone of the cultural and social experience for many students and faculty members.

This study has demonstrated that the influence of collegiate sports extends far beyond the athletes and teams themselves. It encompasses everyone connected to the institution, whether they are actively watching, discussing, or reading about the sporting events (Kim, 2017). The role of sports in American universities is thus twofold: it is a means of building and developing the university's brand, and it is also a platform for community engagement and identity formation. The fervor with which students and alumni associate themselves with their university teams speaks volumes about the deep-seated sense of belonging and pride fostered by these sports.

The Circuit of Culture framework has been instrumental in dissecting the nuanced ways in which collegiate sports are represented, consumed, produced, regulated, and identified within the American context. Representation through symbols and rituals, consumption as a shared community experience, production overseen by governing bodies like the NCAA, regulation through policies and social norms, and identification as a form of communal

bonding and pride – all these elements coalesce to create a rich tapestry of cultural significance.

In essence, collegiate sports in America are much more than competitions; they are cultural phenomena that encapsulate the values, aspirations, and identities of the institutions and communities they represent. As a European observer, this study has afforded me a unique vantage point to appreciate the integral role that sports play in shaping the educational and cultural landscape of American universities. This experience has not only enriched my understanding of American culture but has also provided a broader perspective on the interplay between sports, education, and community in a global context.

Being a collegiate sports fan in America involves more than just watching the game. It encompasses everything happening around it. Students wear university merchandise with pride and honor, participating in activities ranging from supporting their team to playing games and booing the opposing team. These enthusiasts make every event fun and entertaining. According to interviews with international students, collegiate sports events are special, enabling them to enjoy every minute, even though some were not generally sports fans and didn't watch or care about sports previously. Those who attend these events often have a connection to the school, whether as students, alumni, or financial supporters and donors. This connection is one reason collegiate sports are so popular in North America. The emotional attachment is strong, yet fans don't seem overly upset if their favorite team loses. Ultimately, collegiate sports events offer amazing experiences for all. They provide students a break from constant studying, while other fans simply enjoy the game and support their team. Even at a smaller college, the experience can be magical, clearly illustrating why watching and supporting collegiate sports is a cherished aspect of American culture.

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Broadcasting Scripture: Bush's authority in light of the 171st LDS General Conference

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Abstract
Presidents must attend to religious messages as part of their presidential rhetoric. This civic religion is conveyed through the mass medium of broadcast, via television and internet, as was George W. Bush's 2001 October 7th broadcast announcing war against the Taliban in retribution of 9/11. But broadcast media conveys its own message of emotion, entertainment, and moralization of religious messages. For LDS audiences, broadcast goes even further than moralization, by being the medium through which modern-day scripture can be received through General Conference sessions. Thus, when Bush broadcast his announcement of war during the Sunday morning General Conference session (as it aired on Utah's local KSL), his pre-emption of the session bore a continuity with religious leaders that reinforced his legitimacy as a civilly ordained 'prophet, priest, and king'.
Keywords: Media ecology, Mormon, Presidential rhetoric, Isaiah

When politico-religious extremists attacked United States airspace and soil on 2001, September 11, President George W. Bush defined his presidency in response. Following the rhetorical tradition of civil religion (Hart, 1977; Chapp, 2012), Bush established his authority as a civilly ordained 'prophet and priest' (Novak, 1974) early on in his presidency, and continued it throughout his time in office (Medhurst, 2014). For example, in Bush's 2001 speech to Congress, he painted those who opposed his actions as "blasphemers" opposed to his religious justice (Monbiot, 2003). Bush "skillfully equates God's and Bush's definitions of freedom and justice, and thus grants the U.S. the status of an instrument in the implementation of God's plans"; "suggests a divine sanction of the presidential powers" and calls the captives to

repentance (van Noppen, 2006, p. 62). While many of his speeches post-9/11 have received scholarly attention, his first announcement declaring war on Sunday, 2001, October 7, has not. As one of the first to the American public post-9/11, it is significant in its role as a foundational message coloring his presidential leadership as one of civil prophet. It has added significance, however, when the medium of broadcast is taken into account, because his broadcast pre-empted (i.e. took priority in the broadcast medium over) the religious messages of the General Conference session of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter "Church"). Here, Bush's political discourse, by virtue of its medium, was inadvertently placed for Utah KSL viewers in the religious setting of prophets speaking to their people. The potential

continuity of religious messages offered by an American President civilly 'ordained', and Church leaders religiously ordained, is housed in the continuity of the broadcast medium.

Media Ecology

"Little effort has been made to explore whether exposure to religious programming may influence" perception and interpretation of a political message (Hollander, 1998, p. 69). Yet media choices both produce and influence the reception of the message. Media produces an environment within which messages are not only viewed, but altered and shaped by the medium in a 'media ecology' (Pihlaja, B., 2021; Fuller, 2007; Postman, 1974; Edbauer-Rice, 2005). This ecology is 'an environment of relations' that are 'less a matter of communication between humans than a milieu of engagement or relationality for the objects, vectors, agencies, and processes that enter into its sphere' (Parikka, 2011). It indicates "the massive and dynamic interrelation of…patterns and matter" (Fuller, 2007, p.2). From this "medium is the message" approach (McLuhan, 1964, p. 7), it is less a matter of Bush or Church leaders communicating directly with audience members than it is with audiences engaging with the broadcast format.

Broadcast is one of the most pervasive forms of mass communication. According to Postman (2006), it is primarily entertainment-driven and irrevocably emotional in nature. The emotional aspect of broadcast media is accomplished largely through the audiovisual aspects it highlights as it conveys the message (van Eemeren & Henkemans, 2016; Baxter, 2010). Emotion is perceived primarily in the predominantly paralinguistic and visual cues portrayed (e.g. Ekman, 1965), but can also show up in the style of the text itself. Emotion at 'different levels of [text] have at least some relevance to stylistic analysis' and the form in which material is presented can produce an 'artefact emotion' of the delivery itself (Hogan, 2014). Measuring the effect of the broadcast medium on Bush's message includes measuring the emotional conveyance his message visually and stylistically portrays.

Because broadcast television is designed toward consumerism and the most-inclusive audience, it seemingly interferes with the production of religious messages. As Zabell notes, "Whereas television shares a self-driven message, God's Word shares a gospel-driven message" (2022, p. 11). Pihlaja calls us to "explore not only how technological infrastructure transmit religious discourse but how it is setting the conditions for the ways we experience" it (2021, p.106; see Banks, 2011). Zabell argues that religious groups must use television as 'rituals for orthodoxy' rather than 'rituals for escapism' but "since emotionalism bypasses reason, it also discourages careful study of Scripture in favor of raw emotional experience" (p. 33). Hence the emotional and entertaining visual nature of broadcast television has the power to overwhelm rhetorical substance of the message of a Church leader or an American President in favor of the presentation of each (Hatcher, 2018). Because emotionalism trumps message or source, religious groups that use broadcast-based messaging are subject to followers which attend to non-religious broadcasts in a religious way.

Broadcast Presentation

When two authorities are in potential conflict with one another (such as two laws), one authority is said to pre-empt another when it supercedes the other in priority of application. In U.S. law, for example, federal law pre-empts local laws on commerce regulation. Here, the authority of a top political leader (Bush) with the authority of top religious leaders (General Authorities of the Church) were simultaneously broadcasting their messages. The media station made the decision (based on regulations) to pre-empt the religious authority with the political one. In doing so, the visual and stylistic continuity of Bush's pre-empting broadcast provokes audiences with the question of attending to the interpretation of the event. Governments maintain rights in control of media distribution as a function of their purpose in seeking to maintain social environments. In a national event, the United States' President has authority to pre-empt media to ensure that citizens get national information at the same time. While he pre-empted several local programs across the country, the pre-emption of a religion's broadcast necessitated affected audiences to interpret this new Presidential message of the same medium in relation to their religious program. Like being presented with sushi during a multi-course meal, audience members would have sought to find the meaning behind the presence of this unexpected dish. Bush's broadcast was a part either of or from the religious broadcast of life-altering messages. And while Church audiences have a variety of responses in relation to their religion and political leaders (Callahan, et al., 2019), that the question of interpretation is raised at all is the result of the similarities in the inherent nature of the audio-visual format of broadcast.

Format of General Conference

Within each two-hour session, an opening and closing prayer is given, and five to six sermons (called talks), ranging typically from twelve to twenty-five minutes, are alternated with musical

numbers. Talks are given by male and female general Church leadership as well as, at rare times, other approved speakers from the Church membership. Uniquely in the 1985 sessions, Olympic medalist Peter Vidmar and astronaut Don L. Lind were invited to speak even though neither was a general Church leader. Separate from press conferences, talks cover a range of religious topics on doctrines and practices, as well as serve as a platform for general Church business, announcements, changes, and musical worship. Speaking in the 1976 October Conference, N. Eldon Tanner described "the main purpose of general conferences, the main purpose of this conference, is to sound the voice of warning." This speaks to the Church's efforts to treat General Conference as a 'ritual of orthodoxy' over one of escapism, and yet the 'sound of warning' conveys a consistency with the emotional nature of broadcast television. Although primarily watched and oriented toward current members of the Church, General Conference is intended as a world-wide broadcast for all audiences. Audiences, especially Church members, are encouraged to watch and participate in sessions of Conference (Ideas to Prepare (churchofjesuschrist.org)).

Recently, talks have included more multi-media presentations, with images and video as part of the live presentation, indicating that the Church is not immune from the reality that broadcast television is oriented toward entertainment as its primary outcome (Postman, 2006). However, in the early 2000s when Bush's message pre-empted General Conference, multi-media talks were not part of the practice or expectation of talks in Conference.

The Visual Emotional Continuity of Bush's Pre-Emption

Broadcast television is emotional in nature because of its focus on the audiovisual elements of conveyance. American religious audiences are directed, through broadcast, "away from doctrine …and toward visible sources such as emotions and …behavior" (Zabell, 2022, p. 33). The visuals of Bush's emotional state and behaviors, then, are key to understanding the impact of his pre-emption on a media-sensitive religious audience used to a particular visual format in General Conference.

General Conference speakers are filmed from the torso up, standing at a podium which often has greenery decorating it or the area behind the speaker. Typically, the speaker is the only person who can be seen during the broadcast (see Image 1). Bush's declaration was broadcast live from an office in the White House with his upper body in a seated position, sitting at a desk directly facing the camera, and portions of the window

behind him showing the view of the President's Park behind him. Emblems of the United States were visible on either side of the President, the national flag of the United States on the left and the presidential flag on the right of the screen. Thus, the centralized image of President Bush from the torso up, without background persons, and with a view of the trees behind the White House would have visually recalled the background greenery, centralized speaker image, and minimal background cues of General Conference speakers.
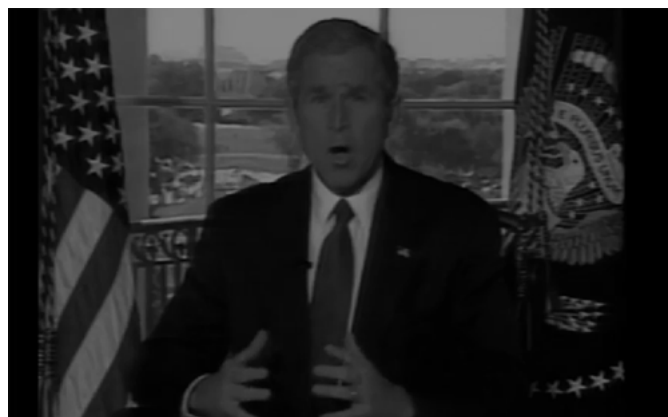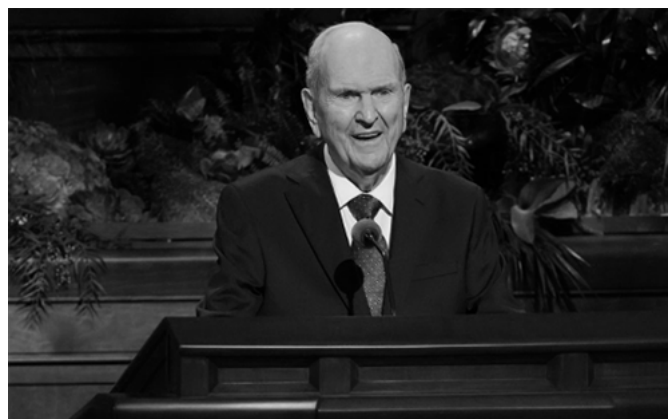
In addition to the film angle, Bush reinforced this visual continuity with 2001 conference speakers with his dress. General Conference male speakers dress in dark business suits, and women in light-colored suit dresses. The three morning speakers prior to Bush's broadcast, pictured here in Image 2, were all men wearing red ties in black suits and white shirts. Wearing a black suit, white shirt, and red tie not only visually matched the image of Church leaders that morning, but served to emotionally reinforce the ways in which these dress pieces indicated his authority, high social status, and official capacity in conveying his broadcast (Mupfumira, 2017; Rosenfield & Plax, 1977).

General Conference speakers that morning were Caucasian, male figures with gray or white hair. In the United States, these racial, gender, and age identifiers traditionally convey authority and perceptions of dominance and competence (Knapp & Hall, 2013). They stood

tall with straight backs and stiff frames, further conveying dominance (Schwartz, Tesser, & Powell, 1982; Tiedens & Fragale, 2003). Bush himself is a Caucasian, male figure with a full head of gray and white hair sitting straight and stiff, reinforcing whatever authority and perceptions of dominance and competence the speakers already had. While Bush's broadcast lasted six minutes and twenty-eight seconds, noticeably shorter than the General Conference addresses, it was similar in nature to the invocation or benediction remarks made by the president of the Church prior to the end of a session. The timing of Bush's broadcast was not to one of the regular General Conference speakers, but to the dominance displayed by the most authoritative General Conference speaker, the head of the Church and divinely ordained prophet for the people.

As Bush delivered his message, the camera angle remained constantly focused on his face. This served to draw further attention to the emotional aspects of his message. Bush's demeanor reflected direct frontal facing, raised inner brows, and straight lips (Ekman & Friesen, 1978; Cohn, et al., 2007); elements Ekman & Friesen (1978) found to be perceived as displaying the emotion of sadness. Bush's manner of speaking portrayed low pitch with moderate variation and a slow speech rate, elements associated with the emotional displays of anger, disgust, and primarily resigned sadness (Pittam & Scherer, 1993; Scherer, et al., 1991; Knapp & Hall, 2013). Taken together, Bush's paralinguistic cues and facial expression displayed a sad, reluctant need to bear the responsibility of declaring war. This emotional conveyance by a visually similar authority figure was consistent with General Conference speakers who warn, choke up, and bear the responsibility of declaring repentance to the world. While the shift from General Conference to a commercial or cartoon would present enough discontinuity in visuals to suggest a different audience interpretation, Bush's visual continuity with religious programming encouraged an interpretation of his broadcast messaging in line with the previous talks. If an audience member had been

receiving the emotional responsibility of white, male speakers in suits for the last hour with an interpretation of the messages as ones with religious authority and weight, the inclusion of Bush's broadcast as a white, male speaker in a suit delivering a message of emotional responsibility presents the opportunity for his message to receive similar interpretation and weight.

Broadcasting Text

Because the emotional and entertaining nature of broadcast television is the most salient, it often causes audiences to think they listen to the verbal message more than they do. It is more accurate to say audiences listen for verbal cues consistent with what they expect emotionally and entertainingly. While the visual emotional continuity gives the LDS audience reason to interpret Bush's message through a religious lens, the textual choices by Bush serve to either reinforce or negate this interpretive tendency. An audience member expecting a religious message based on the visual continuity is, further, more likely to seek evidence of religious stylings in the message, whether they are intended or not. To study Bush's message for religious language, then, serves two purposes: to present the intentional as well as the inferred religious messaging that was present for General Conference audiences that day.

So, while Hart's The Political Pulpit has been critiqued for its focus on textual analysis and word choice over ideological religious narrative's impact on American politics (Lee, 2002; Reed, 2019), there is still a place for such analysis. Here, as in those of the Hart tradition (e.g. Friedenberg, 2002), the focus is not on how (Christian) religion interacts substantively with the American presidency, but rather how the president claims and contributes to a religious authority all his own—one of a prophet in a civic religion. American civic religion, having no Sunday worship services or organized membership, is only attended to by political discourse. It is the word choices which keep it alive and separate from the discourse of religion in politics.

The role of stylistic analysis is particularly apt in the study of the 'theolinguistics' of political speech, and in the language of Bush's presidency (van Noppen, 2006; Monbiot, 2003). Focusing on the shape of the audio as a behavior, more so than the underlying statements, is consistent with what gets attended to in the audiovisual medium of broadcast. Both political speeches and religious sermons are written with language designed to evoke emotion (Brooks & Warren, 1970) as the primary motivator of the message, and Bush, with his religiously-themed

presidency, was both. The choice of language is carefully laid out to present himself with the behavior of a religious president.

To stylistically review Bush's broadcast for its continuity with a Church audience watching General Conference is to linguistically orient one's self to the language of the text (Fowler, 1981; Leech & Short, 1981; Widdowson, 1996; Wodak, 2011; Hassan, 2018). Here, Bush's use of moralized religious themes, and scriptural structures of parallelism and chiasmus, are highlighted for their continuity with General Conference.

Moralized Themes

American civic religion requires the president to speak as a moral voice for the people. "This moral dimension," Ofulue (2002, p. 52) wrote, "grounds the role of the Presidency in the tradition of American civil religion." Without it, the president cannot lead his people. Public addresses, including broadcast, become an important medium through which presidents 'embody this religio-symbolic office' of 'prophet, priest, and king' (Ofulue, 2002) and invoke this moral dimension of the office (Medhurst, 2014, p. 5). Broadcast evangelism similarly directs audiences to the moral dimension of religious practice (Zabell, 2022). Although there has been no systematic study of what people identify as the style of a Church speaker, the talks during the 171st General Conference included messages of moralized themes and poetic content. For example, Burton's talk just prior to Bush's broadcast was oriented around 'standing tall' by doing 'right' behaviors in multiple circumstances. Thematically, the moralization explicitly included the recent 9/11 attacks as his opening example stated, "Out of the deep anguish and turmoil of September 11 have come many instances of men, women, and nations standing tall. Foes and friends have come together against a common enemy." Themes of victimization, aid, and unity and words like 'enemy' and 'determination' serve to rhetorically support the morality of taking a stand in response to 9/11. Bush followed this talk shortly after with a message about his ability to do 'the right thing' in response to 9/11. Themes of peace, destroying enemies, active pursuit, success, and victimization were packed into his short 969-word message. Words like 'fear', 'worry', 'sacrifice', and family labels of 'daughters' all invoked the victimization the audience as individuals of this nation felt first in the attacks of 9/11 and in the ongoing victimization of the sacrifice of family members to the war effort. At the same time, this continuing sacrifice is ensured in his message with the theme of success, summarized at the end of his speech:

We will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter; and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail.

Throughout his presidency Bush frequently called upon the moral dimension (illustrated by Van Dijk's (1995) ideological square) of an 'us' and 'them' paired with 'good' and 'evil', 'freedom' and 'fear', and the righteous call of the country as under God's protection and guidance. Bush went further than civil religion (e.g., Uslaner, 2002) at times, by also making use of specific Christian language and scriptural references that, as van Noppen argues, was "invested with new meanings or otherwise reconfigured to serve secular purposes. [And] the original meaning of the text was distorted and alienated from its original communicative intent" (2006, p. 62). Bush's moral themes of friend and enemy, peace and destruction of the wicked Taliban, and pro-religious presentation only colored his main message of war. "What is disturbing, indeed, is how this discourse with its religious resonances is made to tie in with, or put to the service of strategic, corporate and electoral interests" (van Noppen, 2006, p. 58).

Isaiah's Poetry

More nuanced than some presidential uses of the Bible (Medhurst, 2014, p. 4), it nonetheless cannot be missed that Bush's message is laden with biblical-sounding language. van Noppen (2006, p. 62) remarks that his speech is "invested with a divine mission to tell 'the captives 'come out' and to those in darkness 'be free' (cf. Isaiah 49:9)", specifically noting its evocation of Isaiah. Isaiah is the third-most quoted book in the bible among recent American presidents, after Psalms and Matthew (Medhurst, 2014, pp. 17–18). In the Church, Isaiah also plays a prominent scriptural role. It is the most quoted Old Testament book of scripture at General Conference, and one that, while LDS audiences may not always claim great familiarity with, is touted in the Book of Mormon as one of the commandments of Christ: "Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah" (3 Nephi 23:1). The relationship between the Church's founding book, the Book of Mormon (Avance, 2018), and Isaiah reaches even deeper; 478 verses of Isaiah are quoted in the Book of Mormon, several as whole chapters near the beginning of the book. Of these, several are recorded with variations from the King James Version that have been the subject of religious inquiry (Tvedtnes, 1984; Parry, 2001) and at times, evidences of prophetic inspiration in the process of receiving the Book of Mormon text. A deeper analysis of Bush's message shows the similarity of the structure between his text and

Isaiah's go far beyond thematic use and extend to the very form of his message.

Parallel Poetry Structures

The chapters in Isaiah are written not simply thematically or poetically, but in poetic form. This poetry style, called parallelism, is a form of rhyming meanings rather than sounds, and therefore the poetic style survives translation (Watson, 1984; Kugel, 1981; Parry, Parry, & Peterson, 1998; Parry, 2001). Parry (2001) identifies sixteen different types of parallelism in the poetry of Isaiah, illustrating the complexity with which parallelism is used in poetic styles. Thus, the mere presence of a single parallelism or two within a text need not evoke scriptural resonance on its own; indubitably this is a device that endures beyond religious language and is quite widespread. This grammatical presence of parallelism must be co-present with additional parallelist types to be sufficient as a poem. The presence of intricate parallelisms with supported subtypes and brought together in a biblically poetic format would be required to make a strong claim of religious evocation in any analyzed text. In Isaiah, each chapter often consists of multiple poems, separated in the King James Version of the bible usually by paragraph markers. A poem need not be long or comprise the whole chapter or speech for it to mimic the Isaiah features.

For example, at the end of one of Burton's moralized examples, he offers the moralized theme in a resultative parallelism format:

- 1.0 Parallelism (from Burton's talk)
- 1.1 If you find yourself entrapped in the pursuit of material things, now is the time to courageously stand tall.
- 1.2 If you worship the items that money can buy more than you cherish the love of God, now is the time to stand tall.
- 1.3 If you have been blessed with abundance beyond your needs, now is the time to stand tall in sharing with those whose needs remain unfulfilled.

In Bush's speech there are several examples of parallelism, some even stronger than Burton's. If Isaiah was being intentionally evoked, that parallel poetic structures should exist either throughout or in one of the three bodies of the speech. The three bodies of his speech were marked by two transitions: "At the same time", marking a transition to the moral dichotomy of the 'us' and 'them' worded as 'friend' and 'enemy'; and "I know many Americans feel fear today", marking a transition into the third part of the speech in which the audience becomes the main focus of the remarks. Applying the strict criteria that parallel poetry is characterized as the presence of multiple types of parallelism in at least two separate sets that a) immediately accompany each other, and b) share a topic from which a title could be given, parallel poetry was found in several areas of his speech, exemplified here:

- 2.0 Parallelism (from the 'At the same time' middle topic of duality)
- 2.1 The United States of America is a friend to the Afghan people.
  And we are the friends of almost a billion worldwide who practice the Islamic faith.
- 2.2 The United States of America is an enemy of those who aid terrorists,
  And of the barbaric criminals who profane a great religion by committing murder in its name.

These stanzas, which are represented as their own paragraphs in the transcript of Bush's speech, are separated out here to discuss the parallelist structures. In 2.1 we see a synonymous and grammatical structure: the 'US of A' and 'we' both occupy the subject position of the sentence, the predicate is FRIEND, and the object in both is complementary in identifying a similar group of people: practitioners of Islam and the Afghan people, many of whom are a subset of worldwide Muslims. Compare with Isaiah 9:3;

> *You have increased the rejoicing,*
> *You have magnified the joy.*

In 2.2 the complementary parallelism groups together the enemy as a) 'those who aid terrorists' in the first line, and b) 'barbaric criminals….[who] murder' in the second. By placing it in a parallelist structure, similar to Isaiah 5:28, Bush completes his description of the enemy by implying that aiders and criminals go hand-in-hand.

Finally the presence of 2.1 and 2.2 together represent an additional layer of parallelism; the antithetical parallel. Whereas 2.1 classifies the scope of the U.S.'s friends, 2.2 defines its enemies. As relational antonyms, the predicates FRIEND and ENEMY share similar situational features and their main contrasting sense feature is that of the moral sidedness prevalent in the second section of Bush's speech.

In the third section of his speech, one paragraph (represented here as 2.3 and 2.4) also is constructed consistent with two sets of parallelism;

- 2.3 Your mission is defined
  Your objectives are clear
  Your goal is just.
- 2.4 You have my full confidence,

And you will have every tool you need to carry out your duty

The complementary structure of 2.3 not only holds grammatical and identical wording of the 2p pronoun and matrix verb 'is', but unites the mission, objectives, and goal under clarity of justice. The next set in 2.4 is resultative (e.g. Isaiah 7:14); the confidence Bush has leads to the support he pledges to give.

Other lines of Bush's speech also use parallelism poetically, the final exemplar here being the synonymous and grammatical last lines before his closing, where we see the poetry extends into some rhyme as well:

- 2.5   We will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter; and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail.

Chiasmus Poetry Structures

Isaiah's poetry also includes a type of Hebraic poetry called a chiasmus (cf. Parry, 2001), a larger inverted parallelism that covers the prose of a text. In a chiasmus, the points of a message are listed out: A, B, C, and so on, until the main point of the message is reached (D), and then the message repeats in reverse order: C', B', A'. Not only is this found in Isaiah, but in other passages of the Book of Mormon (Welch, 1969). Thus, Church audiences more familiar with the Book of Mormon than the Old Testament would still recognize a similarity in Bush's language to other scriptural texts.

The first section of Bush's speech displays a clear chiastic structure. This is notable since, with his broadcast already visually cueing similarities with General Conference, starting off this message with a Hebraic poetry structure would cue familiar audience members to the verbal similarities inherent in his speech.

In the six paragraphs that start his message, Bush speaks of the following;

- Para. 1:   salutation and 'strikes' against groups in Afghanistan
- Para. 2:   these actions are 'designed' for a purpose against the Taliban
- Para. 3–4: we are 'joined' by many other countries
- Para. 5:   the Taliban failed to meet demands and 'will pay'
- Para. 6:   we 'destroy camps and disrupt communication'

Here, paragraphs 1 and 6 focus on the destruction of areas in Afghanistan as both an act and its effect. Chiasmi are merely topical poetry, so it is normal and acceptable to have additional or slightly different information to say about the same subpoint between the A and A' as is done here. Paragraphs 2 and 6 also share the topic of the purpose explaining why this destruction is necessary. Finally, Paragraphs 3–4 highlight what is arguably Bush's main takeaway from this first section of his speech, that the United States (and Bush) are supported worldwide in this decision to commence operations against the Taliban. In a post-Vietnam War era, displaying the support of troops and solidarity of this decision as not rash or without awareness of the greater worldwide consideration, this support is necessary if it is to be effective in rallying the troops and social acceptance Bush needs in his broadcast and as a new President. The purpose of the war in this construction is less important than the mere announcement of it in 1 and 6 and the support for it in 3–4. That there is a clear transition marker after this chiasmus further supports the familiarity Church members might feel in a clear chiasmus construction, followed by several parallelisms in his later sections of the speech. That Bush's message sounds religious in nature is unsurprising when it is discovered that he makes use of parallelism and chiasmus both in his short speech. As Medhurst stated of Bush—"Scripture supports policy—his policy" (2014, p. 4).

Bush's use of religious language and style were unlikely to be identified so explicitly by Church audiences, and yet the evocation, direct or indirect, of Isaiah's style would be felt. In the 171st General Conference, Isaiah was explicitly mentioned by the second speaker of the Sunday morning session while he discussed the importance of the Book of Mormon. As such, his comment would have queued the immediate relevance of Isaiah to this General Conference broadcast. Audiences primed for religious interpretation would be looking for religious continuity in the text to support their visual and interpretive continuity of their Church service. Its presence in parallelistic structures, moralized themes, and other religious language is sufficient to support the emotional continuity of religious authority.

Media and the Church

Bush's pre-emption was not only consistent with General Conference, but significant due to its medium and timing. Christianity's relationship with media is characterized by Peters (2012) as inherent to the discipleship—Jesus' message was one of inclusive broadcast, rejecting the intimate necessity of communication that Cicero had championed. Whereas the Church of Jesus Christ has taken a conservative approach to many social trends, media technology has a history of being actively

embraced and utilized. From requests for printing presses in Nauvoo in September 1846, to the Latter-day Saints University in Salt Lake City becoming the first educational institution to receive a broadcast license in 1921, to the embraced use of social media in the 21st century (Baker, 2008; Cheong, 2014), the Church has had a consistent interest in media platform and the use of technology in religious messaging. The Church's active interest in family history promotes the recovery and concern with preserving old media (Allred, 2018). The Church is reported to be among the first of Christian groups to extensively utilize media technologies for religious purposes (Zabell, 2022, p. 33). The primacy of the print media of the Book of Mormon over any artifact, ritual, or oral tradition as the foundation of the Church's history and focus places the Church as a media institution. The Church's focus on continuing revelation belies a concern with the medium of that revelation. The Church's practice of an open scriptural canon (of which General Conference is a part) means there are multiple media formats from which God authoritatively speaks. The Church, "more than any other faith, is a media religion" (Avance, 2018, p. 1).

With only a worldwide membership of 0.2% of the world's population, it is nonetheless no surprise then that the Church's media outlets rival those of the largest religious groups (Avance, 2018). This is easily evident in the General Conferences of the Church in which the entire membership (and later, the entire world) are invited to listen to Church leaders and their messages. This long-standing tradition of General Conference extends back uninterrupted to the early years of the Church. Changes to the format and distribution of General Conference have necessarily occurred with the technological and media growth in the last nearly 200 years of the Church's existence.

Broadcasting General Conference
The first General Conference took place in June 1830 with twenty-seven members. In 1867, Temple Square in Salt Lake City was completed, and the fall semi-annual General Conference had begun (and is still) being held at that location. By April 1899 regular reports of the General Conference began for those not in attendance.

In 1916 motion pictures were taken of the Conference and speakers and shown in the American Theater. The first full General Conference radio broadcast occurred on NBC radio in 1924 and by 1936 portions of Conference were being broadcast in Europe. From 1946–1953 General Conference was filmed for record and viewing. During this time closed-circuit television made it possible to broadcast within the buildings on Temple Square for proximate audiences.

In the Fall of 1949, KSL began broadcasting General Conference over television and between 1953-54 televised sessions expand out of Utah to most Western United States, and by 1957 videotape technology allowed the Church to rebroadcast sessions of Conference. Changes in the 20th century allowing mass communication would fundamentally alter the Church's identity as a religion (Grant, et al., 2019). Avance notes, "Mormonism as a nineteenth century alternative narrative developed into a bureaucratic institution that reorganized religious power, standardized the faith, and disseminated it broadly" (2018, p. 62).

By the 1960s General Conference was broadcast coast-to-coast, first heard live in Europe, and broadcast to Mexico and South America. By 1977 General Conference was broadcasting to parts of all six populated continents. In 1980 the first satellite broadcast of Conference was viewed by millions, and in 1997 the first internet-based broadcasting of Conference started. Simultaneously, in-person presence on Temple Square was maintained with the building of the then-largest conference center for religious purposes, and in 2000 the LDS Conference Center, seating over 20,000, was completed. (Baker, 2008). Even with COVID restrictions preventing in-person attendance in 2020 and 2021, the speakers broadcast their talks from Temple Square (April 2020 General Conference – Church News and Events (churchofjesuschrist.org). With a total virtual audience during the pandemic coupled with an increase in broadcast resources, "more people than ever before", indeed in the millions, are able and watching General Conference sessions live (April 2021 General Conference set to broadcast in 70+ countries (kslnewsradio.com). "The norms of the audiovisual era are key to understanding correlation… through a strict process of monitoring Church-related media for content cohesion," Avance (2018, p. 63) explained. Without taking into account the Church's media fixation as rooted in its identity as a religion, as well as broadcast as a medium of scripture, the interruption to Church media presentations loses its significance. In 2001, during the 171st General Conference, the Conference Center on Temple Square was being used for a small audience portion, and internet broadcasting of General Conference was only about three years old, making broadcast by stations such as KSL the predominant medium with which audiences interacted in receiving modern scripture from an open canon.

Conclusions

Pre-empting a religious broadcast is significant in part because the circumstances of any deviation create the need for a timely response (Pihlaja, 2021). Here, then-President of the Church Gordon B. Hinkley immediately responded to the United States' declaration of war in the opening of the Sunday afternoon session. There, he summarized Bush's announcement and announced that he had prayed and was certain it was not the 'end of times' prophesied in the scripture. Hinckley countered the emotional evocation of Bush's broadcast by saying we need not worry about the 'end of times' just yet.

Bush did not just pre-empt a religious broadcast, but a media religion's scriptural broadcast. If 'scripture supports policy', in this case policy became scripture. After all, he commanded the medium of scripture that day. Whereas Bush's substance included themes of religious interest such as war, death, and freedom, it is the way in which his message was given, not just through television but through patterns of style consistent with LDS religious talk that encouraged an emotional interpretation over 'a careful study' of the source, motive, or even message. Bush's broadcast shows that the effects of having a media-based religion create opportunities for any message on a religiously-accepted medium to gain religious interpretation and significance. Where emotions are conjured and attended to in broadcast space, the greater the visual and stylistic continuity of that space, the greater the need to differentiate the source, as Hinckley did, or risk audiences treating the media itself as the source. And in a media religion such as the Church, where media is not only a technological happenstance of the times but an integral part of divine communication with the individual (Avance, 2018), mistaking the media as the source of scripture opens anyone with media access to hold themselves up as a prophet to be embraced. Without a reassertion of President Hinckley's authority in the broadcast space, Bush was more authoritative than a prophet. Hinckley's response to Bush's pre-emption reasserted the Church's authority in conveying scripture via broadcast by tying it to scripture in books (the 'end times') and revelation via prayer.

The need for the highest Church official to verbally recognize and respond to Bush's broadcast reflects the place media has in the Church. It evoked emotion-based questions of what prophets know and are entitled to receive, and what authority, religious or otherwise, they may justifiably assert. In a religion that preaches prophetic access to the ongoing mind of God (Crosby, 2011), prophet and President of the Church Gordon B. Hinckley positioned himself, as do Ali Dawah and Musa in the Muslim community, and as did Bush, as a "leader in their community and the audience as needing guidance in how to respond" (Pihlaja, 2021, p. 155). In such a context, control of the medium becomes just as important as the people giving the message.

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Gaining Twenty-First Century Employment Skills: Using LinkedIn to Teach Online Presentation of Self

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Abstract
This original teaching activity is conducted throughout an online class unit on maintaining a professional image online. The activity provides online students with authentic experiential assessments that offer them insight into how others view their LinkedIn profiles as presentations of self and how students can use impression management strategies to adjust their public image. This learning activity has students apply Higgins's (1987) three domains of self, including the actual self, ideal self, and ought self, to their LinkedIn profiles, during the peer assessment process, and while conducting a self-analysis. This unit activity is a useful tool for teaching students about their presentation of self and sharpening 21st-century employment skills.
Keywords: LinkedIn, Online learning, Peer assessment, Presentation of self, Self-assessment

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Courses: Business and Professional Communication, Corporate Communication, Communication for Professionals, Organizational Communication, Social Media for Professional Use

Objectives: In this unit activity, students in an online class consider Higgin's (1987) actual self, ideal self, and ought self while constructing a LinkedIn profile. Students use peer and self-assessment techniques to demonstrate their abilities to differentiate between the three domains of self and strengthen their 21st-century employment skills.

Introduction and Rationale

With the increased demand for online asynchronous college courses, there is an influx of instructors who are asked to deliver formal education via the Internet (Lederman, 2018). As more online courses are offered, instructors

seek ways to develop transferable knowledge and 21st century employment skills, such as they would, in a face-to-face classroom. Hart Research Associates (2015) reported that of 400 employers surveyed, 81 percent rated analytical and critical thinking skills as the fifth most important learning outcome to employers. In this unit learning activity, students develop their online presentation of self and hone their critical thinking and evaluative skills through the use of self and peer assessment.

During a unit on maintaining a professional image, online students complete a unit activity that asks them to use LinkedIn to create a professional profile. LinkedIn offers a means to positively affect students' learning outcomes (Crook, & Pastorek, 2015; Chiang & Suen, 2015; Engstrom, 2019; Peterson & Dover, 2014; Slone & Gaffney, 2016; Tifferet & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2018). Students' awareness of their own and others' presentations of selves online in salient because the National Research Council of the National Academies (2012) classified self-presentation as an interpersonal competency that employers view as a valuable 21st-century skill. Despite the importance of maintaining a professional profile, class discussion indicates that students are often unaware of how to create and evaluate their online image. Not only is LinkedIn an online leader in virtual networking but is free for users and provides students with an authentic experiential experience outside the brick-and-mortar boundaries of a university.

This activity uses Higgins's (1987) three domains of self, including the actual self, ideal self, and ought self, as a foundation for teaching students about their presentation of self online. Higgins proposes that people have three domains of self: (a) our actual self is the representation that we or someone else believes we actually possess; (b) the ideal self is the one that we or someone else would like us to possess; and (c) the ought self is our representation of the attributes that we or another person believes we should possess. By completing this activity, students gain insight into how others view their online presentations of self and how they can adjust their public image to appear more professional.

Peer assessment between students in higher education can improve the learning process (Falchikov, 1995); therefore, peer assessment is one method that instructors can use to teach students how to process content and make judgments using established standards. Flachikov and Goldfinch (2000) describe peer assessment as students "engaging with criteria and standards and applying them to make judgments" (p. 287). Peer assessment contributes positively to the development of employability skills, namely critical thinking (Cassidy, 2006). Since adequate feedback is correlated with effective learning (Crooks, 1988; Kulik & Kulik, 1998), it is essential for instructors to find ways to incorporate peer assessment.

The reflective method of self-assessment urges students to compare and evaluate their actual, ideal, and ought selves based on peer assessments. Students engage in self-assessment when they "make judgments about aspects of their own performance, particularly about their achievements and the outcomes of their learning" (Boud & Falchikov, 1989, p. 529). Dochy, Segers, and Sluijsmans (1999) found that the accuracy of self-assessment improves over time, thus, incorporating self-assessment at all levels of education is warranted. By having students engage in a self-assessment exercise, this activity seeks to improve students' communication, critical observation, and reflection skills before entering the workforce.

The Unit Activity

Purpose
By completing this online unit activity, students consider Higgin's (1987) actual self, ideal self, and ought self as they create their LinkedIn profiles. Students strengthen their abilities to differentiate between the three domains of self and obtain the skills needed to succeed in today's workforce when completing the unit's assessments.

Process
This activity consists of four phases that occur during four, seven-day online learning plans in an upper-level undergraduate Business Communication course. Before completing this activity, students should spend time getting to know one another by engaging in community-building activities. These interactions enable students to have a point of reference when it comes to determining if a peer's LinkedIn profile is accurate in terms of education, experience, and interests.

Week 1. Instructors should use a Learning Management System (LMS) tool to explain the three domains of self and assign readings such as Higgins (1987) and Whitty (2008). It is also important to clarify the goals of the peer assessment project while also training students on how to evaluate a peer's LinkedIn profile, give constructive feedback, and implement the assessment tool accurately. An instructor should locate or construct training videos and practice exercises that teach students how to provide non-judgmental feedback and build a trusting collaborative environment (Topping, 1998). Instructors can read van Zundert, Sluijsmans, & Merrienboer's (2010) review of peer assessment

literature, for example, to find resources for helping students develop their peer assessment skills.

Week 2. As students build their LinkedIn profiles, they should incorporate a professional profile photo and background along with a tagline that uses keywords, skills, or interests that people in their chosen industry recognize. Students are asked to present their actual selves in that they use information that accurately represents the attributes that they believe they actually possess (Higgins, 1987). Students accomplish this by completing the education section and describing all post-high school employment and volunteer experiences, honors, and awards. Students should build their professional networks by connecting with the professor and at least five other people. Students must also identify a minimum of five interests and skills.

After their profile is complete, students create an initial discussion forum post that includes a catchy subject line, first and last name, and a hyperlink to their LinkedIn profile. Students then use content from their LinkedIn profile to write a 75-125 word summary that portrays their actual selves.

Week 3. After students' LinkedIn profiles and initial forum posting are completed, the activity then moves into the peer assessment phase. Similar to Crook and Pastorek's (2015) activity, learners assume the role of a potential employer and assess peers' profiles. Using knowledge gained in the peer assessment training and from previous interactions with the person, students should anonymously, yet publicly, comment on at least two peers' LinkedIn profiles. Providing feedback anonymously is useful because, as Lin et al. (2001) and Tsai (2009) found, students may be more willing to communicate with peers and engage in peer assessment if the grade and feedback are anonymous. To ensure anonymity, instructors can have the LMS match students randomly. The peer assessment feedback should be specific rather than holistic. Also, students should identify and provide examples of when the person's representation of self has consonance or dissonance with characteristics they believe that individual possesses.

Week 4. With Higgin's (1987) research in mind, the self-assessment phase asks students to reflect on their computer-mediated depiction of self and also explain whether their peers' assessments of their profiles confirmed or diverged from their intended representation of self. For instance, if a peer said the person presented more of an ideal self versus an actual self, the student would need to reflect on this finding in their self-assessment.

Additionally, students should also reveal their feelings about their peer assessment abilities, such as whether they had confidence in assessing their peers' profiles, identifying and describing their own feedback styles, and explaining their overall attitudes towards being the assessors and the assessed. This requirement helps the instructor gauge whether students are improving on skills they need to succeed in today's workforce such as being able to regulate emotions and being professional when responding to feedback.

Debriefing

Some online instructors may find it challenging to use an online platform to teach students about the three domains of self while also encouraging student engagement in the peer assessment process and evaluating comprehension of material. Informal feedback from students and their self-assessment posts indicate that this online activity, especially the profile construction and peer and self-assessments, is a useful tool for teaching students about their presentation of self and employment skills. Numerous students wrote that assessing their own and peers' domains of self increased their understanding of how a potential employer may interpret their online profile.

A few students shared their anxiety about the peer assessment process. This is often discussed in research on peer assessment (Topping, 2009). Other students, however, said that they were less anxious about the peer assessment requirement because the feedback was posted anonymously and they received adequate evaluative training. Some students also wrote they would be interested to see how their perception of self was portrayed in other online platforms such as an electronic employment portfolio.

Appraisal, Limitations, and Variations

Instructors implementing this assignment need to closely monitor the peer assessment process to motivate students to provide peer feedback civilly. By evaluating peers' profiles, students gain a point of comparison for what information leads to a more accurate portrayal of self and an understanding of how a potential employer may interpret their online image. The self-assessment phase also served as a means for refuting a peer's misperception of the person's actual self.

A potential limitation is that personal relationships may cause a lack of fairness in peer assessment. Although research indicates that relationships have a negligible effect on peer assessment (Magin, 2001), an instructor

seeking to avoid this obstacle could ask students to complete a form that identifies others in the class with whom they have a personal relationship. The instructor could then opt to have the LMS not pair these students.

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A Panel for the End of the World: An Original Teaching Activity for a Public Speaking Course

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Abstract
This original teaching activity was designed for students in the basic public speaking course. Students must serve on a four-person panel acting as leading scientists telling unique audiences that the world will be ending in two weeks from an asteroid strike. Students are challenged to use audience adaption and analysis skills, extemporaneous speaking methods, and the three major rhetorical proofs to guide their delivery. Students must provide an introductory statement, participate in a question-and-answer segment, and provide a concluding statement. The audience changes for each panel presentation, and students must adapt their speeches to best suit the needs of their audience. This activity provides students with an opportunity to apply course content through an absurd, yet realistic scenario which highlights the importance of audience adaptation and analysis.
Keywords: Public speaking, Audience analysis, Rhetorical proofs, Active learning, Social learning

Courses: Introduction to Communication, Public Speaking, Professional Presentations, Educational Communication

Objectives: This exercise emphasizes audience adaptation and analysis, requiring students to tailor their presentations to varied audiences under the intense scenario of global catastrophe. It incorporates extemporaneous speaking to improve spontaneity and adaptability, essential for effective communication in unpredictable contexts. Collaborative skills are also developed as students work in panels, mirroring professional public speaking environments. Furthermore, the activity serves as a practical application of the rhetorical proofs—ethos, logos, and pathos—enabling students to practice establishing credibility, logical reasoning, and emotional engagement.

Rationale

Reflecting on my experience as a student in the basic course, I felt anxious about my capabilities to exercise adaptability within a public speaking context. Now, in my role as an instructor for the course, I recognize this as a common fear among my students and one I aim to address through this activity. A Panel for the End of the World was designed to aid students with analyzing and adapting to diverse audiences, exercising flexibility, and collaborating with peers to present information. Students are placed in a situation where they have no formal experience to rely on and must make quick decisions about their delivery style to connect with unique audiences. This activity emphasizes social learning, in which students learn new behaviors through direct experience and observing the behaviors of others (Bandura,

1971). The collaborative nature of this exercise allows them to discuss rhetorical strategies with their peers and form connections between their social environment and the work they produce.

This activity also incorporates elements of active learning theory. Machemer and Crawford (2007) define active learning as a process that "provides opportunities for students to reflect, analyze, synthesize, and communicate on or about the information presented" (pg. 10). This activity requires students to incorporate the three major artistic proofs and impromptu delivery strategies and provides the opportunity to actively apply it. Through application, students can create a connection between course content and the application of that content within an informal, yet realistic setting. Building connections between in-class content and real-world applications allows them to understand the greater value of the learning objectives and recognize the practical impacts these skills can provide in their professional and personal lives.

Activity Description

The students will lead a mock panel presentation in which they are leading scientists presenting to an audience newly discovered information that reveals the world will be ending in two weeks from an asteroid strike. The students will be divided into groups of four and will lead a panel-style discussion with the class in which they must present this news to unique audiences. For a class size of 24 students, there will be six groups presenting for this activity. The students will determine their group members and roles. Each group will be given a unique audience and approximately five minutes to discuss and prepare for their panel. As the first group enters the stage, the instructor will ask four volunteers from the class to ask predetermined questions specific to their audience during the panel. The questions are listed below and will be provided on notecards for the students. After the initial presentation from each panelist, there will be a question-and-answer portion in which the volunteers will ask the panelists their questions. Following the question-and-answer portion of the panel, each panelist will deliver a closing statement and return to their seat.

Each of the four students on the panel will have unique roles that guide their expectations for delivering the news. There will be one leader, who breaks the news to the audience and provides a brief overview of the situation, the implications, and sets expectations for what the audience should do with the information provided to them. This student will focus on creating a cohesive narrative that is relevant to the time and place of the speech. One student will employ the principles of logos, in which

they will present to the audience data, statistics, and scientific reasoning for how their team is confident this event will occur. Students in this role are challenged to use oral citation skills and on-the-fly thinking to create false sources that confirm this scientific event. One student will employ the principles of ethos, in which they add to the credibility of the team and build trust with the audience surrounding the event, building upon the argument presented by the logos student. The last student will employ the principles of pathos, in which they connect to and guide the emotions of the audience. This student is challenged to meet the emotional needs of their specific audience, calm their nerves, and guide their actions after receiving this information.

The panel will begin with each student giving a brief statement addressing the audience using their specific rhetorical goal. After this initial statement, there will be four predetermined questions asked by the audience that are unique to the needs of the audience at that time. The students must use their rhetorical positions, public speaking knowledge, and impromptu skills to appropriately address their audience's concerns while remaining professional and credible as scientists. The students must remain present and engaged during the question-and-answer portion of the panel and use nonverbal indicators and areas of expertise to determine which panel member addresses each question, as well as when a question has been appropriately answered.

Preparation

Before class, the instructor will transfer the following information to a notecard which is handed out to students. First, they receive a notecard that explains their audience, and afterward, they will be handed notecards that hold the predetermined questions.

Audience Types:
1. Kindergarten Class – The students present to a group of young children, simplifying their language to ensure the kids understand the gravity of the situation without causing unnecessary fear.
2. United Nations Assembly: The students address a global audience of diplomats and world leaders, emphasizing international cooperation to address the crisis
3. Conspiracy Theorists Convention: The students present to a group of conspiracy theorists who may not initially believe the scientists. Students must use logic and evidence to convince this skeptical audience.
4. Social Media Influencers: The students present to an audience of young adults with influence on major social media platforms.

They must advise their audience on how to effectively use their platforms to spread awareness without causing mass panic.

5. Superhero Convention: The students present for a global convention of individuals with superpowers. They must focus on encouraging teamwork and collaboration to prevent the impending disaster.
6. Retirement Center: The students present to a retirement center primarily composed of elderly individuals. They must address their concerns and help them find meaning within the disaster and strategies to cope with the tragedy.

Audience Predetermined Questions

The following questions are examples that can be used in this activity, as they were designed to simulate realistic questions that each audience might ask in this context.

Kindergarten Classroom:
1. My Dad is the strongest man on Earth. Can he stop the asteroid?
2. What will happen to our toys and pets when the asteroid comes?
3. Can we build a really big rocket ship and go to space whenever the asteroid comes?
4. I'm scared. How can I be not scared?

United Nations Assembly:
1. What international coordination measures are already in place to address this imminent threat?
2. Are there any existing treaties or agreements that govern the uses of space resources or technologies that might be relevant to this situation?
3. How can we ensure equal access to information and resources for all nations, regardless of their level of technology or scientific capability?
4. What measures can we take to prevent social disruption while communicating about the asteroid threat?

Conspiracy Theorists Convention:
1. Lord Zorp's Divine Manifesto states that the great asteroid won't come for five more years. How are you sure that it's only two weeks away? Do you dare accuse Lord Zorp of lying?
2. Are there any hidden technologies or classified projects that could actually prevent the asteroid impact, and are they being kept from the public?
3. Is there a way to independently verify the size and trajectory of the asteroid, or is all the information made available potentially compromised?
4. Are there any secret bunkers for the elite that have been prepared in advance for the asteroid impact?

Social Media Influencers:
1. Me and my besties are going to Bella Hadid's birthday party next month... can we like... stop the asteroid?
2. How long will I have to take a selfie with the asteroid before the Earth is like... destroyed?
3. Ugh my followers are totally gonna freak out about this, how can we post about the asteroid without it being #depressing?
4. How can I still be a self-care queen while the asteroid is approaching?

Superhero Convention:
1. Do we have any ability to communicate with extraterrestrial civilizations to seek their aid in preventing this disaster?
2. I'm a supervillain and I think this is awesome. How can I make the asteroid come quicker?
3. I have the power to create portals to alternate universes that are nearly the exact same as our own. Should we send the asteroid through the portal and destroy an alternate Earth with all the same people and social realities, or should we accept our fate and allow our planet to be destroyed?
4. How can we ensure our superhero efforts are coordinated with international scientific and military efforts?

Retirement Center:
1. Are there any senior discounts on asteroid insurance? Is it even worth it at this point?
2. How should we best prioritize our time over the next few weeks?
3. How can we help younger generations cope with the knowledge of impending doom?
4. How can we ensure that our stories and experiences can be preserved after the Earth is destroyed?

Debrief

Following the activity, the instructor should ask these questions to their classroom to build connections and understanding of the learning objectives:
• How did your assigned role influence your approach to presenting the information?
• How did you assess and respond to the unique needs of your audience during the presentation?
• Were there any unexpected challenges or surprises during the question-and-answer portion? How did you address them?
• How did this activity challenge your abilities as a public speaker, and what did you learn from the experience?

Appraisal

This activity was led in six different classrooms by three instructors and was met with positive results each time. The absurdity of the situation and encouragement to create false information seemed to resonate with the students and allowed them to step outside of their comfort zones. Providing students with roles to guide their presentation seemed to provide them with explorable boundaries to guide their delivery, reducing uncertainty but still providing space for creativity and individual personality. Students who typically experience speech apprehension seemed more comfortable within the context of a group presentation and were able to rely on their fellow panelists when faced with tough questions. The students felt empowered to create new questions for the panelists and enjoyed asking complicated questions to put their classmates on the spot. The biggest negative reaction was towards the United Nations audience, which students considered more challenging and less enjoyable than the others. In one class, the instructor switched the United Nations audience to a more casual one upon student request and was able to swiftly create new audience predetermined questions. Overall, this activity succeeded in providing students with experience adapting to audiences, speaking impromptu, and applying rhetorical proofs to their delivery, and the students had fun in the process.

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Master of Arts
Professional Communication

The Master of Arts in Professional Communication is an applied, professional degree focusing on the advanced research, writing, and presentation skills required for effectiveness in diverse communication industries. The practice-oriented program is ideal for those working in companies requiring audience messaging capabilities in advertising and public relations campaigns, social media content creation, visual branding, organizational analysis, corporate training, consulting, and media production. The primary mission is to help students to become experts in designing effective messages for different communication industries and evaluating, synthesizing, and interpreting persuasive messages.

Some of the classes we offer are Professional Social Media, Visual Literacy, Advertising and Public Relations, Popular Culture Messaging, Professional Writing & Presentations, Mediated Communication in Relationships, Communication & Digital Culture, Sports Communication, and Qualitative/Quantitative Research Methods. On the horizon, are courses in Health Communication and Digital Activism.

The program is designed to be relevant to academics and working professionals. All students of varying ages, ethnic groups, gender identities, religions, sexual orientations, and other characteristics important to a person's individuality are encouraged to apply.

Affordable Tuition
Pay only $375 per credit hour in tuition, making this program one of the most affordable options in the nation.

Accelerated Classes
Students can go at their own pace, but full-time students can finish the degree in three semesters with 7-week accelerated courses.

Six Entry Points
There are six different admissions entry points throughout the year, allowing students to begin courses quickly.

Call for Manuscripts

The UJOC aims to be a general forum for communication scholarship, and all theoretical approaches and methods of scholarly inquiry are welcome. Submitted manuscripts should make original contributions to academic research in communication studies and address critical, theoretical, and empirical questions in communication relevant to scholars within and across specializations.

The UJOC is an open access journal available to all at no cost. While articles by scholars living in Utah, as well as articles covering topics particularly relevant to Utah are especially welcome, we encourage authors from all places to submit their work to this issue of the UJOC. Every paper receives full consideration regardless of any Utah connection. At least one article of each issue will be reserved for a current masters or doctoral candidate.

Original Research

All submitted manuscripts should include an abstract of 100–200 words and five keywords. The standard article length is 3000–4000 words, including references, tables, figures, and notes. The organization is mainly dependent on the methodological tradition used. However, all submitted manuscripts should include a title page, an introduction, a literature review, a methodological summary, a report of results and findings, a discussion that explains the impact and analysis of the study, and a conclusion that considers the study's limitations and implications for future research. The UJOC adheres strictly to the 7th edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA 7). Submitted manuscripts should include:

- Title page with full article title and each author's complete name and institutional affiliation.
- Abstract of 100–200 words and five keywords at the end of the abstract.
- Text
  » Begin article text with introduction.
  » Headings and subheadings should be completed in accordance to APA 7.
  » Each text citation there have a corresponding citation in the reference list and each reference list citation must have a corresponding text citation. The reference list should also be completed in accordance to APA 7.

Book Reviews

Scholars who are interested in publishing an academic book review in the UJOC should give careful consideration when selecting a book and preparing their submission.

Books under review should have been published within last three years. The subject of book must be relevant to the field of comunication, as well as the the focus and scope of the UJOC. The subject of the book should also be relevant to the expertise and field of study or practice of the reviewer; one must possess adequate knowledge or background in the subject. Reviewers should also avoid books written by an author they know personally, or for which there may exists some real or perceived conflict of interest. Reviewers should also avoid subjects about which you feel strong emotion or that you do not believe you can review fairly and professionally.

Completed book reviews should be only 1,000–2000 words in length and contain the following elements:
- Author, title in full, place, publisher, date, edition statement, number of pages, price.
- Reviewer's name, institution.
- A description of the topic, scope, and purpose of the book.
- Relevant information about the author or editor.
- The author's point of view or frame of reference.
- The thesis or message of the book.
- The school of thought or scholarly current that the book arises from.
- Comment on intended audience or readership.
- Evaluation of the author's success in achieving their purpose.
- Contribution to knowledge in the field.

GIFTs

Occasionally, the UJOC will publish "Great Ideas For Teaching" articles that focus on innovative pedagogy. Articles include original teaching ideas, lesson plans, semester–long activities, and classroom assessments.

Original Teaching Ideas
Communication educators in all contexts are invited to submit original teaching activities for classroom implementation. Activities may address any communication course, including

research methods, technologies, theory, interpersonal, intercultural, instructional, mass, organizational, public relations, media studies, and public speaking, whether introductory or advanced. Single Class submissions should generally contain no more than 1500 words.

Unit Activities

This may entail an original teaching activity that takes place throughout an entire class unit that spans several days or weeks. A unit activity should follow the same format as the single class activity, and should contain no more than 2000 words.

Semester-long Activities

Original teaching activities that outline a semester-long project or approach to an entire course are also welcome. These manuscripts should follow the same format the single class activity and should generally contain no more than 2500 words.

Assessment Articles

Communication educators in all contexts are invited to submit original assessment research. Assessment involves systematic reflection upon and analysis of instructional practices and challenges communication educators to monitor student learning as well as improve the quality of specific courses or overall programs. Assessment articles should be data driven, qualitative or quantitative. Assessment research provides educators an opportunity to modify their instructional practices based on the results of such studies. Submissions should generally contain no more than 3,500 words.

Brief Reports

The UJOC will occasionally accept and publish brief reports. Brief reports are shorter than traditional submissions and often do not meet the typical rigor expectations of more developed papers. However, any brief report should provide obvious value to scholars in the field of communication.

Submission Types

Conceptual Paper: Focuses on developing hypotheses and/or research questions. Often preliminary or incomplete data is used to support concepts the author(s) is developing.

Case Study: Applies communication theory or conceptual frameworks to interventions, experiences, or events that provide new insight and understanding to the field of communication.

Viewpoint: Papers that rely heavily on the author(s)' interpretation of data, artifacts, or events, more so than in traditional research papers.

Literature Review: These papers should only be submitted if the literature review provides a comprehensive update of literature on a specific communication theory or concept that hasn't been previously published by any author.

Technical Report: These reports usually reflect applied work done by the author(s) in practical and professional contexts.

What to Include

- A brief title,
- Submission type,
- Abstract with up to five key words,
- Main text (headings will vary depending on submission type),
- Include any tables and figures in the main text (tables and figures should be used sparingly in brief reports),
- References.

Peer Review Process

Manuscripts considered by the UJOC Managing Board to be of sufficient quality and in line with the UJOC mission will be sent to two members of the UJOC Editorial Board. The editorial board editors will serve as the peer reviewers of the double-blind review for those works deemed ready for external review. All reviewer feedback is then sent to the UJOC Managing Board, which will send a final decision letter to the corresponding author. The UJOC Managing Board retains the right to make changes in accepted manuscripts that do not substantially alter meaning, as well as for grammatical, stylistic, and spatial considerations.

Upcoming Publications

Topic/Issue	Submission Deadline	Publication
Sports 2.2	7/31/24	Nov. 2024
General 3.1	12/18/24	May 2025
Health 3.2	7/31/25	Nov. 2025

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