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1981 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Anita Taylor

Before starting, I want to say something that is particularly relevant in my case. I want to say thanks. Holding this office is a great honor—one I owe to many people, many of you here. It has been a real privilege, one I've very much enjoyed. Thanks to all of you.

An SCA President, as Jane Blankenship said, begins to think about the Presidential address as soon as when you are vice president you've finished planning the convention. As I prepared, I didn't do what Ron Allen did—read all the speeches of my predecessors. I did, however, go back and read the Presidential messages, those statements of goals at the beginning of terms made by Presidents. I chose as the benchmark the adoption of our new constitution in 1970. It seemed to me that would give a better sense of what each President thought ought to be accomplished by the Association.

In reading those messages, I was struck by repetition of themes, and reminded of a great speech by Jeff Auer in a 1978 speech to the Central States Speech Association. He quoted from the proceedings of the 17th convention of the National Speech Arts Association in 1908. He cited five themes as relevant when he spoke as in 1908, concluding that the challenge of yesterday is the same challenge we face today—and probably will be the same challenge faced tomorrow. How true that seemed as I read messages of my recent predecessors. They stated themes as relevant now as then—leaving us with an unfinished agenda. I think it important to address that unfinished agenda because for us the issue is survival, and these items relate to that issue.

One of those items is the concern about our K-12 colleagues. Marguerite Metcalf, in the October 1974 *Bulletin* of the Association for Communication Administration, wrote of the shock of a high school teacher at her first SCA convention. (I understand the feeling—my first SCA convention was as an ABD graduate student—job hunting. Two hours of that in the cold gray of a Chicago Christmas break would depress anyone!) I doubt that Marguerite's shock would be too much less today, though at least now we have a K-12 Section with access to convention programming and the

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SCA JOURNAL MANUSCRIPTS

Escalating postage costs have placed an increasing burden on the Association and on the universities where SCA journal editors are based. To help control these costs the editors of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Communication Monographs*, and *Communication Education*, working with the SCA Publications Board, have adopted a uniform policy with respect to the return of manuscripts. Effective immediately, editors will return manuscripts only to those authors who have provided a self-addressed return envelope bearing sufficient postage. This policy reflects the Board's belief that the cost of returning manuscripts should be borne by authors and the Board's observation that postage costs now sometimes exceed the costs of making an additional photocopy.

Call for Papers

The Speech Communication Association will sponsor a Conference on Communication Apprehension to be held on November 4, 1982, in conjunction with the Louisville convention. The conference will include four sessions: 1) conceptualization and measurement of CA and related constructs; 2) recent research on CA; 3) helping the CA student (with attention to different groups, K-6, 7-12, college, foreign students, etc.); and 4) a potpourri sharing session.

Attendance at the conference will be open to everyone at no charge. Individuals interested in presenting papers in any of the above areas should submit three copies of their paper or abstract to Professor Arden Watson, Department of Communication and Theatre, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42101, by May 1, 1982.

AFA CALL

AFA members with program ideas and/or specific papers for AFA convention programs, contact immediately Jack Rhodes, Communication Department, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.

Louisville, KY, site of the November 4-7, 1982 SCA convention, is served by eight major airlines. Atlanta, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, and Memphis are within an hour's flying time.

RESEARCH EDITORIAL

Editorials are selected by the Research Board for publication. Submissions of 500 words or less should be made to the Board chairperson: R. P. Hart, Dept. of Speech Communication, University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712.

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THE SHAME OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION

Every scholarly profession with a research heritage has a fringe element that exploits the research of the profession and draws upon its substance for self aggrandizement: There are quack doctors, drive-in preachers, pop psychologists, and fraudulent public servants. In speech communication we have the organizational consultant, the public relations program, and the advertising degree. The shame is that the research in these areas does not begin to warrant such a smorgasbord of course offerings that stupefy more than they enlighten. I have been watching the growing numbers of students attracted to these activities and, frankly, I am repulsed. I am repulsed by their motivations and by the boosterism that dominates academic departments who believe that they must pander to nineteen-year olds raised in an era of declining quality rather than allow the extant scholarship and research to dictate pedagogical programs. The typical organizational and advertising degree is fueled by a lust for student credit hours not by a research tradition.

At the risk of offending many, I will offer my assessment directly by saying that most programs in organizational communication, public relations, and advertising are narrow, theoretically vacuous, without a research base, and, just as an aside, morally degenerate and politically naive. In the absence of a long-standing research tradition or even the rudiments of a theory, these programs resort to reproducing themselves by convincing students (usually the weakest of the weak who are attracted to communication) that they can gain instant envy (not respectability) by donning three-piece suits and appearing to actually know something. It is beyond me why some well-intentioned and capable university professors use George Babbitt, P.T. Barnum, and Dale Carnegie as scholarly role models for their

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Taylor, cont. from page 1

formal structure of the organization. Things have to be somewhat better now. Still, as we all know, it's the informal structure that conveys satisfaction, and how many of our K-12 people find themselves in that structure? Yet it *shouldn't* be this way. As Ron Allen wisely pointed out in 1975, "Hardly anyone was ever born a college junior."¹ Nonetheless, it's true that those we hold in highest repute at the moment (not our patriarchs and matriarchs of the past—yes there were some, matriarchs that is—but those we honor today) those folks seldom talk to anyone younger than that unless she/he happens to be related to one.

Worse, most of us seldom talk to anyone who *teaches* people younger than college freshmen. And worst of all, most of us don't want to. The fact that K-12 people aren't welcome in the SCA is an issue still very much alive. Consistently, for example, one hears complaints about the Legislative Council and the Nominating Committee—it's said they're too big to function effectively. (Of course, I can't imagine that anyone would find the Nominating Committee's results unacceptable!) Notably, we've opened up these groups to many persons "outside" the SCA mainstream.

Well, frankly, I just don't buy that the current problems of this Association have anything to do with adding non-university teachers to our governing bodies. Where, in any way, has this limited what we do for our "mainstream?" What have we *not* done as a result of the presence of K-12 colleagues? Fewer convention programs for public address, rhetoric and communication theory, interpersonal and small group interaction? Less access to high office? Later journals? Fewer pages for journal publication? Controversy over our "political" actions? None of these are due to presence of high school and elementary teachers in our midst.

And without strong speech programs in the public schools at the K-12 level, where would the rest of us be? What would happen to our Instructional Development Division? Our large graduate programs staffed by teaching assistants? Believe me, speech communication WILL be taught at the K-12 level. It's too vital not to be taught. And if not by speech teachers, it will be taught by English teachers, in English classes, in English departments. Debate, theatre, mass communication, interpersonal communication—they will all be taught in secondary schools. The only questions are: Whether by our people or others? Whether the teachers' allegiance is to NCTE or to us?

Another item appears on that unfinished agenda laid out by my predecessors. It, too may be more relevant today than ever before. This is our need to build links with other, like-minded organizations. This was one of the four major goals Lloyd Bitzer set out for 1976. In this respect, I have always liked a suggestion Gerald Miller in-

troduced at the Airlie conference on long-range goals in 1972. He suggested that the SCA should work "toward its own demise."

Well, by the time we rhetoricians got through with his idea, it sounded quite different. Preceded by two long paragraphs of prose about the evolution of the SCA and the fractionalization of the discipline since 1914, the resolution read: we, the conferees at Airlie, "recommend that the SCA plan for its own structural and constitutional demise through the creation of a new organizational configuration that will draw membership from a number of scholarly associations and disciplines presently concerned with the scientific and humanistic study of human communication processes and with ways to learn to improve one's skills at communication . . ."² And it went on with some very divisive language about abandoning orality as the central focus of the "association's concerns" and was to be implemented by a committee to define the central focus of the SCA. Can you imagine that—a committee? To define what we are about?

Most of you out there remember the next few years in which we argued about a central focus, established goals and priorities through various and sundry efforts, examined how we might implement participatory decision-making in this large and unwieldy organization, and found various images to describe ourselves—ranging from an umbrella, to a constellation, to my more mundane (and borrowed) vegetable soup.

I certainly don't wish to reawaken all those self-examination orgies. I do, however, wish very much to unearth the words Gerry suggested—regardless of what may have been his motivation, and quite divorced from any nonsense about a committee to decide what we are all about. This Association, this discipline, has not been benefited by fractionalization. Some individuals—able to get papers on several different programs—or elected to high office in more than one association—these individuals may have benefited. Our discipline has not. Instead of talking to each other, we have separated and talk about each other.

We are in a state that an evaluation team at the University of Virginia can observe accurately, as it did recently, that the field of speech communication is not "coherent," and laud University of Virginia's department for limited emphasis because, "it provides a force for coherence in the department that the field of Speech Communication lacks on a national scale."³ Many outsiders see us that way, and at least part of the perceived incoherence *has* to be due to the fractionated nature of our associations. Certainly, psychology is no more coherent in subject matter scope or method than are we, but the APA has found a way to keep most of the faithless in the fold. We have not. And we should.

If we have to give up a name and a structure to bring dozens of communication-related associations together, that may be

a small price to pay for survival. It will probably never happen—but just as I believe in arms control, I still believe its a goal we should work toward.

Another item on our unfinished agenda we may think has been heard only in recent years. But Jeff Auer noted from the history of that earlier association—founded in 1892 (which, of course, predated our immediate forebearer association)—that membership in the National Speech Arts Association was open to "any teacher of the speech arts . . . or any author of works upon these subjects; any public reader, public speaker, or professional actor . . ." (Among the directors of this group, are some names you'll recognize: Thomas Trueblood, James Winans, Robert Fulton.) The National Speech Arts Association disbanded in 1915, after the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking was founded the previous year. Trueblood wanted to continue the first organization, but Winans argued for the new one where the "chief interest would be education rather than entertainment."⁴

Seems to me we've come full circle on this one. We have recently realized, AGAIN, that we must prepare our students for non-academic careers—and we are beginning to do that fairly well. But we haven't talked much about how we prepared them to quit saying they're "no longer professionally active" when they leave the academy. We have made no progress at all in bringing our students to see that they haven't left the profession when they go to work in industry, business or government. And the reason is simple: It is because *we* think they have left the profession. And if we continue to define the profession as *teachers* and *scholars*, they have left the profession. And if they have—well, some interesting bits of data may be instructive:

In Fairfax County—the county where I live—the fifth largest company—considerably larger than the university—only the fifth largest company—employs 2,000 Ph.D.'s.

There is at least one communication association with rapidly rising membership: the IABC, the International Association of Business Communicators. Its membership *doubled* from 1978-80. In February '80, membership was increasing at 150 per month.

Today, all major industries have their own education enterprises. Two percent of the budget of the Bell system is spent for education,⁵ and the budget for education in the armed services and Department of Defense?—no one really knows.

The point is that the total number of persons in the field of communication is increasing. If we don't find a way to include them in our midst, our future is as a smaller and smaller umbrella.

Overall though, what is most striking about those presidential messages of the

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past ten years, are the important items that were never mentioned. We have debated them in the Legislative Council and they were the subject of some rather major actions by this Association, but—never mentioned by our presidents. Let me quickly remedy that deficiency.

My transition to that task is a line from what is surely one of the finest speeches ever given in English, a line appropriate to the issue since its author had much to say about the subject I'm about to address, and was at the same time a skilled practitioner of the art some of us claim to know.

"I have a dream," said Martin Luther King, Jr. on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. He dreamed that "one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'" Well, I share his dream and furthermore hold the radical view that this Association ought to do something about it. Oh sure, I know we aren't all created equal, but I do dream that someday we will live up to the belief that all people should have equal opportunity.

Indeed, I dream that one day *this* Association will live up to its constitution. Let me quote from Article II of our constitution: "The purpose of the Association shall be to promote study, criticism, research, teaching and application of the artistic, humanistic and scientific principles of communication, particularly speech communication." ". . . research, teaching AND application of the principles of communication"—how is it, I wonder, that we have given so little attention to the application? Why have we concentrated on the tools, not the issues of communication? Why is it, when we have concentrated on the issues (as those of you in our Public Address and Rhetorical and Communication Theory Divisions will quickly tell me you do), we have been concerned with the study of how others applied the principles, not with the practice of application?

Let me try to be clear. I have no interest in arousing any of those false dichotomies we seem to be so fond of arguing over. The issue is the AND in that sentence. We have not, by and large, been interested in applying what we know to issues—not even to the obvious issues of the preservation of public education, the freedom of speech and association, and equality under the law. AND when some of us HAVE discussed these concerns, we have always been charged with being political, and abandoning the "true" nature of this Association.

Sadly, in our concern with the principles and tools of communication and the study of what others do with them, we have dealt with the easy part. "Rights," as we all know, are earned only when one applies those principles effectively to an issue. In our society, even those rights "guaranteed" in the constitution are fully enjoyed only by those with the power to insist on them.

And in our society, power comes from legality and from the money to have access to legality—or from applying communication well enough to mobilize the votes of many.

Let's do the easy one first. Power comes from legality. Freedom of speech and association are First Amendment rights, right? Then tell me—in how many of our states is complete freedom of association between any consenting adults legal? Regardless of sex? Clearly, First Amendment rights are abridged for many—and many in this Association don't give what is vividly described down in Kansas where I grew up as "two hoots and a holler." No, more than that. Many in this Association are irate and some are no longer with us because some of us cared about that kind of freedom for our colleagues who study and teach communication as well as for others.

We can study freedom of speech and communication, and we can study the speeches of those who do—but let us seek to apply what we know of the principles of communication to that issue, and we're no longer being scholars and teachers: we're violating what some see as the heart and soul of this organization.

Another issue of legality—equality under the law—is also easy to discuss. It doesn't take much to see that for more than one half the population in many states it doesn't exist. And for the United States as a whole it doesn't exist. And let's not be fooled. The symbolism of a woman on the Supreme Court (which is important), and the fact that we were spared that woman being Ms. Schlafly or someone like her (which is even more important)—that symbolism and that fact won't put equality into the constitution. That equality will be put into the constitution only when we and thousands like us APPLY what we know about the principles of communication—and especially those of us who live in Virginia, Missouri, Illinois, Georgia, Florida, and a few other states where our chances may not be as good.

I was shocked when I heard Charles Larson speak of preparing for a debate on our ERA boycott. He contacted a number of people in the Association who favored the boycott. You know what he found? *None*, not one, had contacted his or her local representative! And this Association, myself included, did nothing publicly to urge them to do so.

Now, let's turn to the more difficult issue of equality, the money to have equal access to legality. Where, anywhere, do women or minorities have equal access to money? When women do, in rare cases like Mary Cunningham, they dare not use it too rapidly. They dare not be too young or too attractive. In other cases—unfortunately less rare—they have achieved such access by buying into the system so completely they believe that we women ourselves are to blame for our exclusion. Some of the worst offenders in the travesty of belief that

women cannot manage mathematics or men are women, and women of great power and influence in business and industry.

The vast majority of us are neither as beautiful nor as bright as Mary Cunningham. But neither do we play in such a high stakes world, and we are still deserving of our shot at equal opportunity in the market place in which we do play.

But the current political and social climate would assert to me that I'm displaying a hangover from the 60's. After all, with equal employment laws, affirmative action, title nine and all that we've made great progress. Right?

Wrong. Let me show you some figures. If you were the "average" employed female 25 years ago, you made 65c for every \$1.00 earned by the average male. Two years ago, you earned 59c.⁶

Breaking those averages into more detail is even more revealing. In 1966, the average minority male earned 70c for every \$1.00 earned by white men, white women earned 59c and minority women earned only 41c. Ten years later great progress had been made! Minority men earned 79c, white women 59c and minority women 55c for each \$1.00 earned by the average white man.⁷

It's also instructive to see the great income this all translates to. In 1976, the average incomes were as follows:

white men	- \$14,071
minority men	- 10,946
white women	- 8,285
minority women	- 7,825

Sometimes it's asserted that such low-paid women don't need to work—they're only "supplementing" a family income. I think we all know the absurdity of that, but we may not know that in 1977 only 20% of working women lived in a home where a working husband earned more than \$15,000. Try adding those figures. It's easy to see the income is necessity. And we should also note that 43% of those working women were either never married or were widowed, divorced, or separated.⁸ How badly do *they* need that \$8,000 income?

And, lest you think this a problem only of the poor, let me cite you some data reported by the Harvard Office of Institutional Research.⁹ Seven years after earning degrees from Harvard graduate schools, female graduates compared to male graduates in the following way:

	Men	Women
Partners in law firms	25%	1%
	Average Annual Income	
Public Health graduates	\$37,800	\$21,300
Education doctorates	26,000	18,700
All earned doctorates	30,000	23,000

Here's some final data, so we won't think we speech communication professionals have escaped. The April 1981 *ACA Bulletin* reported a survey of SCA members. 69% of the men compared to 49% of the

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women were in tenure track positions, while 7% of the men and 19% of the women were in part-time positions. Nine per cent of the men compared to 24% of the women earned under \$10,000—this probably has something to do with that part-time data. In contrast, 54% of the men earned over \$19,000 while only 31% of the women reached that salary level.¹⁰

There's one final agenda item that—to the best of my knowledge—we've never discussed in this Association. This is the issue of our part-time professionals. More and more of the advanced degree holders in our field, people who want to teach and whom we need to teach, are working only part time. It's quite common for colleges to have as many part-time faculty as full-time. A California law being considered will require that 50% of the sections taught in colleges must be taught by full-time faculty. Even this seems grossly inadequate as a standard, but many community colleges will have trouble meeting it. Lots of community colleges across this country have two or three times as many people working part time as full time. This is a serious issue we should address.

Well, there are other items on this unfinished agenda, but I've already talked too long. It's a long agenda we're facing. Is it possible to complete? In my dream it is.

I dream of an SCA that puts aside parochialism and recognizes that teachers and scholars—at all levels, in and out of academia—and practitioners are all communication professionals, if they are interested in the study and practice of speech communication.

This is an organization that doesn't establish a hierarchy with university research professors at the top, and doesn't ignore people because they understand adolescents or spend their time advancing a politician or the company president.

This is an Association that joins with other organizations to achieve important political goals for the support of its membership, one that cares as much about what happens to the K-12 public educational system in this country as it does when a university department is eliminated.

This is an Association that cares about the people who teach or work at IBM, Xerox, and the Pentagon as well as those in the universities. It cares about the girls and boys in our schools, the women in all those unpaid, low paid jobs, the minorities affected by a society's pervasive racism.

Is this a possible dream? Or am I like Don Quixote tilting at windmills? I know that many people whose judgment I respect do not share this vision. And others who'd like to believe it possible assert with resignation that it's impossible. They may be right. For me, I cling to the dream. This Association can be one that finishes its agenda. Whether we collectively possess the will

and wisdom to do so, only you can answer, not your presidents.

Notes

¹*Spectra*, April, 1975.

²*Spectra*, April, 1973.

³John Sullivan, "Quality Assessment: An Insider's View," *Bulletin of the Association for Communication Administration*, April, 1980, p. 38.

⁴Unpublished manuscript, April, 1978.

⁵Bruno O. Weinschel, "R & D and the New National Agenda," remarks to Sixth Annual AAAS Colloquium, June 26, 1981.

⁶Judy Mann, *Washington Post*, July 17, 1981, p. C 7.

⁷U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and Wage and Hour Division, 1978.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹Judy Mann, *Ibid.*

¹⁰Artie Thrash and Keith Jensen, "A Survey Profile of Women in Communication," *Bulletin of the Association for Communication Administration*, April, 1981, pp. 78-81.

NEWS AND NOTES

Robert N. Hall, Editor

Contributors to "News and Notes" are reminded that the copy deadline is six weeks prior to the month of publication. Insofar as possible, contributors are urged to submit copy in keeping with the categories and format below. Information pertaining to any one category should be submitted in double-spaced typing on a separate sheet of paper; brevity and succinctness are encouraged.

CONVENTION CALENDAR

National Forensic Association

April 22-26, Columbus

Central States Speech Association

April 15-17, Milwaukee

Eastern Communication Association

May 6-9, Hartford Parkview Hilton

Southern Speech Communication Association

April 6-9, Hot Springs, AR

Michigan Speech Association

April 3, Kalamazoo

Wisconsin Communication Association

April 30 - May 1, Oshkosh

Broadcast Education Association

April 2-4, Dallas

International Communication Association

May 1-5, Boston Park Plaza Hotel

National Association of Dramatic & Speech Arts

March 31 - April 3, Bowie, MD

Northwest Communication Association

April 15-17, Coeur d'Alene

Phi Kappa Delta

April 13-16, Estes Park, CO

US Institute for Theatre Technology

March 24-28, Denver

APPOINTMENTS

SUNY, Albany

Dudley Cahn, Visiting Assistant Professor

PROMOTIONS

University of Alaska, Juneau

Susan Koester to Assistant Professor

PERSONAL

Keith Erickson has been named Acting Chair of the Department of Speech Communication at the *Texas Tech University*. He replaces Professor William Jordan who returns to full-time teaching.

Donald Cushman, Department of Rhetoric & Communication, *SUNY*, Albany, was named a research fellow for January 1982 at the East-West Communication Institute in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Joseph Woelfel has been named acting chair of the Rhetoric & Communication Department at *SUNY*, Albany, replacing Donald Cushman who returned to full-time teaching.

NECROLOGY

Rupert L. Cortright, Professor Emeritus, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, December 23, 1981. Professor Cortright was President of the SCA in 1948.

Joseph Mersand, Retired Teacher, Jamaica High School, Jamaica, New York, December 21, 1981.

ACA Accepting Consultant Nominations

The ACA is now accepting nominations of persons to be considered for inclusion in its Consultant Service. The ACA Consultant Service reviews a persons credentials and then recommends them when requests arrive for qualified people to review college and university programs.

The ACA Consultant Service has been operating for four years. It receives annually thirty to forty requests for information on persons to review programs. Nominations for the Consultant Service should be sent to: ACA, 5105 Backlick Road #E, Annandale, VA 22003.

Spectra, a publication of the Speech Communication Association, is sent to all members each month except July. Copy deadline is six weeks before the first of the publication month. The deadline for position vacancy listings and other "classified" advertisements is one month before the first of the publication month. Annual subscription rate for nonmembers: \$12.00. Communications should be addressed to the Editor, William Work, Speech Communication Association, 5105 Backlick Road, Annandale, VA 22003.