

Ecologue

NEWSLETTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY

Fall 1992 Volume 3, No. 2

1993 Conference Planning Meeting at SCA

Jim Cantrill has arranged with SCA organizers to hold a planning meeting for the 1993 Conference on Communication and Our Environment on Friday, October 30th, between 7:30 and 9:50 AM in Conference Room 5D of the Chicago Hilton. The meeting will also be announced in the convention supplement available at the SCA registration desk. Yes, this is an early hour, but it's the best we could do, and, after all, it will only be an informal gathering (i.e., you don't have to be there at the start). It will be an opportunity to discuss the state of conference preparations, funding decisions, and expectations, as well as chart out the shape of next year's conference. Please consider grabbing a cup of espresso and a croissant and joining us. If you won't be in Chicago (or anticipate not being awake), you may call or write Jim at Northern Michigan University (Department of Speech, Marquette, MI 49855-5362; 906-227-2045) to pass along your comments.

Belles Lettres

Literature



BOOK REVIEW

The Idea of Wilderness, by Max Oelschlaeger (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.)

Oelschlaeger, an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of North Texas, has undertaken an immense task in his third book dealing with the environment. Oelschlaeger

attempts to account for current views about the environment by tracing significant events in human history. Starting with hunter-gather societies, the author incorporates changes in climate, religion, philosophy, science, and literature to account for changing views on the environment. Oelschlaeger's account of modern views begins with the Paleolithic era and proceeds through Neolithic, ancient Mediterranean, medieval, and Renaissance periods. Significant time is spent discussing the scientific revolution and its critics. Finally, Oelschlaeger leads us into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with a discussion of Thoreau, Muir, Leopold, Jeffers, and Snyder. The book concludes with a chapter on contemporary wilderness philosophy (including resourceism, biocentrism, deep ecology, and ecofeminism) and a chapter on postmodernism.

The strength of Oelschlaeger's book is clearly its breadth. The breadth is also, admittedly, the book's greatest weakness. Attempting to cover so much history in one book requires the author to rely on generalizations that cannot always be supported adequately. However, with the flaws of such an approach in mind, I feel that Oelschlaeger has succeeded in accounting for the progression of events and ideas that form the foundation for today's environmental views and arguments.

I would recommend Oelschlaeger's book for the shelf of all who are interested in environmental discourse. The Idea of Wilderness, regardless of whether one agrees with his divergent views on Thoreau, is worth having just for the extensive bibliography. In addition, it provides a nice complement to Nash's Wilderness and the American Mind, which takes a more limited approach to the topic.

--Michael A. Netzley

BOOK REVIEW

Forests: The Shadow of Civilization, by Robert Pogue Harrison. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992).

Forests is for me the most insightful book I have read about the relationship humans have with nature and the role of language in that relationship. Harrison does a close examination of a variety of texts, mostly literary, to reinterpret those texts as they act to construct our relationship to the forest. He traces the sylvan origin of human laws and social customs when the forest was our home. From there he follows the portrayal of the forest in western culture and literature as the home for "the outcasts, the mad, the lovers, brigands, hermits, saints, lepers, the maquis, fugitives, misfits, the persecuted, the wild men"--in short, the place for those existing outside the confines of civilization.

He examines the Enlightenment and Humanist approaches to the forest and relates Rene Descartes's admonition for travelers lost in the woods to "always walk as straight a line as they can in one direction and not change course for feeble reasons." From the application of Descartes's "method," Harrison spins a tale that leads to the straight rows of trees in an arboretum and the "rational, geometric planning of cities." Eventually Harrison considers the "Forests of Nostalgia" and the role of forests as "Dwelling" or domus in western thought.

Harrison's book is not only an intellectual feast, it also is so beautifully written that it captivated me as a good novel would. It seems to me that Harrison is leading us on the windy forest path that much of our scholarship should follow--digging into the roots of our conceptions of nature, leafing through literature and lore, and letting our imaginations soar above the treetops. I highly recommend this read.

--Carol Corbin

SCA PANELS**The Language of Environmental Advocacy: Empirical Studies.**

Thursday, October 29, 11:30 a.m. to 12:50 p.m.
Conf. Room 4H, Level 4.

Sponsor: Language and Social Interaction Division

Chair: Thomas Baglan, Arkansas State University

"Constructions of Human/Nature Relationships: The Languages of Hunting."

Connie Bullis, University of Utah

"'Dominant Social' and 'New Environmental' Constraints on the Processing of Environmental Terms."

James Cantrill, Northern Michigan University

"Environmental Attitudes and the Perception of Environmentalists."

James Lalumia, Youngstown State University

"The Aesthetic Sublime and the Apocalyptic Sublime: Empirical Fact vs. Enduring Rhetorical Form."

Christine Oravec, University of Utah

Respondent: Robin Zeff, Director, Environmental Research Foundation

Much of the recent surge in the study of environmental advocacy has been grounded in a historical or conceptual framework divorced from current social practices. This panel complements that scholarship by showcasing a number of ethnographic, sociolinguistic, descriptive studies which examine how language, culture, and cognition function in the context of contemporary environmentalism. Particular attention is given to combining quantitative and qualitative methods in an attempt to more fully understand persons' constructions of environmental discourse.

Man or Beast: Balancing Needs in Environmental Advocacy

Friday, October 30, 4 p.m.-5:20 p.m., Boulevard B, Level 2.

Sponsor: Dimension Series
Chair: Albion College

"Towards a Topology of Environmental Rhetoric: Routes to Public Support and Involvement in Resolving Environmental Conflict."

Susan L. Senecah, State University of New York, Albany

"New Perspectives on Collaboration: Environmentalists, Timber Industry Representatives, and the U.S Forest Service."

Jonathan I. Lange, Southern Oregon State University

"Judeo-Christian Faith and the Environment: An Examination of Rhetorical Strategies in the Debate over Timber Wolf Reintroduction."

Michael A. Netzley, Albion College

"Tri-Country Today: (Re)Defining the Terms of the Debate."

Jean P. Retzinger, University of Iowa

"Mountaineers vs. Mountains: The Darker Side of the Successful Campaign to Establish the Great Smoky Mountains National Park."

Bruce J. Weaver, Albion College

Respondent: James G. Cantrill, Northern Michigan University

Environmental Commitment and the Political Process

Thursday, October 9, 4 p.m.-5:20 p.m., Conf. Room 4G, Level 4.

Chair: J. Robert Cox, University of North Carolina

at Chapel Hill

Papers:

"Sustaining Environmental Awareness: Public Empowerment in the Political Arena."

Star A. Muir, George Mason University

"Voices from the Grass Roots: Working for the Long Haul."

Robbin Lee Zeff, Environmental Research Foundation

Panelists/Respondents:

Jane Blankenship, University of Massachusetts, "Campaign 1992."

Carol Corbin, University College of Cape Breton, "Metaphors for the Environment."

Robert J. Cox, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Environmental Advocacy."

Tarla Rai Peterson, Texas A & M University, "Stories About the Environment."

A notable feature of American environmental consciousness is its evolving cyclical nature. Many thought that the 1990s would be the decade of environmentalism, of resurging awareness and interest in ecological issues. In difficult economic times, however, when other problems confront the populace, social consciousness and political will about the environment wanes. The 1980s, for example, were relatively bereft of environmental action after the surge of interest in the early 1970s. In the 1992 campaign for the presidency, following a similar expansion of environmental appeals, virtually none of the candidates are highlighting environmental issues. This forum is aimed at exploring exigencies and strategies that shape this cycle of awareness, and at discussing the future of political discourse on the environment. Discussion will be grounded in, but not limited to, a series of relevant questions:

1) Can rhetoric play a significant part in closing the gap between knowledge of serious environmental problems and sufficient consensus for national political action? How is current

political discourse restrictive of alternative environmental efforts?

2) How can environmental advocacy overcome a "short-term" consciousness and a "quick fix" attitude toward the environment?

3) What part do political priorities, economic circumstances, and media framing play in shaping environmental awareness?

4) Is consumerism an adequate basis to sustain interest in environmental action?

Two short papers will serve to focus discussion, addressing the difficulties of sustaining environmental action from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The remainder of the program will be devoted to an open dialogue on the issues.

CALL FOR PAPERS

1993 Eastern Communication Association Convention

April 29-May 2, 1993 * Park Plaza Hotel
New Haven, Connecticut

"EARTHTALK: Saving Our Planet and Our Selves Through Communication Empowerment" is the theme for the 1993 Eastern Communication Association convention. This 84th annual convention will seek to investigate our connection with our planet and our selves through the way we communicate.

Convention program ideas related to the convention theme but not directly related to one of the individual interest groups listed below should be sent directly to Thomas L. Veenendall, ECA First Vice-President, Department of BSCDT, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043, (201) 893-5193. Of special interest for theme programs are (1) programs that address an all-convention session applicable to a number of interest groups or of general interest to our organization, (2) application of communication theories and principles to environmental issues, (3) forum sessions that promote the convention theme and excite active discussion of academic and professional principles, and (4) information sessions or debates that encourage interaction between all facets of human communication theory, methodology, and application. **Deadline for submission of program ideas to the First Vice-President is OCTOBER 15, 1992.**

Interest Group program ideas and papers should be sent directly to the **Interest Group Planner** listed below no later than **OCTOBER 30, 1992.**

Program ideas for all submissions may fall into one of several types. Creativity is encouraged when designing program ideas. Please label all submissions with a title from one of the following categories:

Individual Paper--individuals are welcome to submit completed papers to Interest Group Planners for appropriate grouping into focused panels at the discretion of the Planner.

Traditional Panel--a program presenting three to five papers designed and introduced by a Chair and critiqued by a respondent usually followed by a question and answer session,

Workshop Session--a program lead by two or three experts on a particular topic with audience involvement and participation.

Round Table Discussion--a program featuring 8-10 presenters who briefly share a position paper or summary of recent research on a focused topic moderated by a Chair with "on-the-spot" interaction and discussion by participants and audience.

Symposium--a program where three to five invited speakers present a predetermined section of a specific topic introduced by a Chair who initiates audience participation through questions and answers or an open forum.

Debate--a traditional debate on an announced topic with pro and con statements and rebuttals.

Open Forum--an unstructured public discussion on a topic of interest introduced and moderated by a Chair; the goal is to share information, ideas, concerns, and special interests.

Special Programs--a series of unique special programs is being planned to include audio-visual programs; teachers on teaching series; outreach theme programs; the basic course conference; undergraduate research conference; presidential series; AIDStalk.

1993 INTEREST GROUP PLANNERS

Applied Communication. Paul Scovell, Communication Arts, Salisbury State University, Salisbury, MD 21801, (301) 543-6240.

Communication and Law. Diane O. Casagrande, 382 Pheasant Hill Lane, Malvern, PA 19355, (215) 436-2283.

Community College. Cyril J. Carrol, Speech and Theater, Prince George's Community College, 301 Largo Road, Largo, MD 20772-2199, (301) 322-0932.

Forensics. Brenda Logue, Speech/MCOM Towson State University, Towson, MD 21204, (301) 830-2888.

Health Communication. Nancy Wyatt, Delaware County Campus, Penn State University, 5 Yearsley Mill Road, Ledia, PA 19063, (215) 565-3300.

Human Information Technologies. Dale A. Bertelsen, Communication Studies, Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, PA 17815, (717) 389-4630.

Instructional Practices. Robert E. Mild, Jr., Fine Arts Division, Fairmont State College, Fairmont, WV 26554, (304) 367-4167.

Intercultural Communication. Norma C. Goodlett, Human Communications, Howard University, 525 Bryant Street, NW, Washington, DC 20059, (202) 806-6711.

Interpersonal/Organizational. Jerry L. Allen, Communication and Marketing, University of New Haven, 300 Orange Avenue, West Haven, CT 06516, (203) 932-7209.

Interpretation/Performance. Marlene Vallin, 1017 Wayne Ave., Wyomissing, PA 19610-2255 (215) 320-4842.

Mass Communication. George Bohrer, Communications/Media, Fitchburg State College, Fitchburg, MA 01420, (508) 345-2151 x3260.

Minority Voices. Aprele Elliott, Humanities Division, St. John's University, Staten Island, NY 10301, (718) 390-4545.

Nonverbal Communication. Mark Hickson, 1612

10th Ave., S., University of Alabama, Birmingham, AL 35294, (205) 934-3877.

Political Communication. Janette Kenner Muir, Communication, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030-4444, (703) 330-6918.

Rhetoric/Public Address. Molly Meijer Wetheimer, Speech Communication, Penn State University, Hazelton, PA 18201, (717) 450-3051.

Theory/Methodology. Charles J. Wigley, III, Canisius College, 2001 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14208, (716) 888-2117.

Kenneth Burke Society. Edward C. Appel, Conestoga Valley High School, 2110 Horseshoe Road, Lancaster, PA 17601, (717) 397-531.

International Society for the History of Rhetoric-American Branch. Lawrence J. Prelli, Communication, Horton Social Science Building, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824, (603) 862-3034.

Basic Course Conference. Judith Pier, Communication, 213 Eisenberg Bldg., Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, PA 16057, (412) 783-2032.

Ecologue

Carol Corbin
P.O. Box 5300
Sydney, Nova Scotia
B1P 6L2 Canada

