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Editor's Note

This issue, the first one since the COVID-19 pandemic, provides a needed moment of reflection on the history of the *Association for Communication Administration*, by Christopher Lynch. Remembering our roots strengthens us to continue to grow and flourish, orienting toward a hopeful future. Ronald C. Arnett offers a consideration of how to secure that future, considering the work of communication administration as taking place against a background of a tri-voiced sustainable community, considering those who have come before, those present now, and those who will come after us. The final article , by Robert J. Sidelinger and Leeanne M. Bell McManus, reports a study with implications for communication administrators, whose responsibility for mentoring faculty members sustains departments. Understanding how students' perceptions of instructors shape their understanding of communicative interaction in the classroom provides valuable insights for administrators seeking to foster excellent teaching in communication departments. This issue, then, captures key considerations for communication administrators. Our history shapes our present, our commitment to a sustainable community strengthens our future, and the research we pursue answers questions to guide excellent present and future practices. Many thanks to the reviewers who provided their insights to shape the quality of work in this journal, and special thanks to Matt Mancino, whose valuable work sustains this journal.

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Just Showing Up Can Make A Difference: A History of the Association for Communication Administration

Christopher Lynch[1]

The Association for Communication Administration (ACA), founded in Chicago in 1972, claimed a membership of one hundred and two departments. It was an independent organization but shared resources with what is now the National Communication Association. Initial membership included theatre and broadcast programs under the umbrella of communication. These programs would create their own independent associations. ACA's mission was to promote the role of communication administrators, chairpersons to university presidents, in academia. It has weathered the ebbs and flows of any organization as it moves towards its fiftieth anniversary. A newsletter to the membership led to the creation of JACA (Journal of the Association for Communication Administration), The organization has evolved with and led the evolution of the wider academic discipline of communication. This paper traces the history of the organization through its leaders, journal articles and themes claiming that it shows snapshots of the role communication administration has played in the academy.

Keywords: communication administration, ACA, JACA

Through the years the initial founders of the Association for Communication Administration have been forgotten, but issues of the organization's gatherings were recorded in early journals that can be found on EBSCO or in its Communication and Mass Media database. This short history traces the origin and development of the Association for Communication Administration. Our organization began at the Palmer House in Chicago in July 1972 at the summer *Speech Communication Association (SCA*) meeting. (Ironically it would be re-energized at the same place in 2009, by a group of three who showed up for a meeting.) The previous year, in 1971, a group gathered at SCA and discussed organizing a group for administrators and persons in administration with communication backgrounds.

One hundred and two departments joined in the initial year (Ettlich, 1972). Dr. Ernst Ettlich from Washington State University served for three years as the first president. The formal First Seminar, was not without controversy. The American Federation of Teachers' president, John Burton, was scheduled to address the meeting, but after traveling to Chicago realized that there was an Elevator Contractors' Union strike and refused to cross the picket line into the Palmer House (even though the pickets were not against the Palmer House). The same was true for the spokesperson from NEA (Bontemfo, 1973). An English professor, Michael Shugrue (1973) gave the keynote address noting that his discipline had founded such an organization, as ours, ten years earlier. It is not known how members responded to the strike.

At the same time an office was set up at SCA in the Statler Hilton Hotel in New York where SCA was housed. Robert Hall was staff coordinator and publisher of the first *Bulletin* in October 1972. (In the late '80s this position for Dr. Hall would be changed from Executive Secretary to Executive Director and Editor.) Hall stepped down from that job after 17 years (1971-1988). He was replaced by Professor Vernon Gantt from Murray State (Smith, 1989). Robley Rhine, from the University of Colorado, became the second president of what was

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called the Association of Departments and Administrators of Speech Communication. The word *Bulletin* was placed in front of the association's name creating the first journal, the *Bulletin of the Association of Departments and Administrators of Speech Communication* (BADASC). The name became *Association for Communication Association Bulletin* (ACAB) from 1975-1992. The Association wanted our discipline to represent not just speech, but theatre, journalism, radio and TV (McBath, 1975). In 1975 the journal name was changed to JACA, *Journal of the Association for Communication Administration*. *The Bulletin* continued as a newsletter about the organization.

Early journals were informative about the organization and authors began to write about the connection of speech communication and theatre programs. The journals became more scholarly as the organization matured. At one point three to four issues were published a year. There was always a close connection to the theatre discipline in articles. Darlyn Wolvin (1975) wrote an article, one of many about community colleges and small colleges, about "Department Chairperson in a Community College." There were articles in the 1970s on affirmative action and on whether or not our discipline would survive. Much discussion took place regarding funding and identity. In the 1990s there were articles on technology (Sawyer and Behnke, 1998), political correctness and the different styles of leadership between men and women (Hanson, 1996). King (1997), published an article titled, "Surviving an Appointment as Department Chair." Even back in the '90s there was concern for student newspaper readership (Atkin, 1994). Recruitment of minority faculty and students was a key topic in the September issue of JACA (Smith, 1994).

Anita Taylor, president of ACA (1977), noted one major accomplishment of the association was the publication of the first brochure on speech communication careers sponsored by our organization. From the first *Bulletin* there was a concern to promote careers among majors (Piersol, 1972). The Association for Communication Administration has always set the pace for the National Communication Association. The name Speech Communication Association did not change until 1996 (A Brief History). Not only was ACA the first to publish a booklet on careers, but recall that the word 'speech' was dropped in 1975 from our organization. ACA President Robert Smith (1988) reported that the organization had kept a better perspective on the breadth and depth of the communication discipline than any other communication organization by being part of the accrediting council for the American Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. ACA was on its accrediting board. Smith (1988), at the time a college dean, mentioned joint meetings with the Broadcast Education Association and the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communications. He went on to note that there was a strong bond with Theatre Departments and ACA. ACA had published a guide for Theatre Department Chairs and a Theatre Directory (Smith, 1988; Minutes, 1990). Smith (1990) went on to speculate about the need to reach out globally to others in the field of communication. Efforts were made at regional conference for ACA members to mentor new administrators and chairs. At one point we were represented at five regional organizations (Minutes, 1990).

At one point EBSCO lists both the *Bulletin* and *JACA* in the late '80s. The *Bulletin* took on a more administrative and informational role for the organization. Sometimes in the EBCSO data bases there is duplication between the journal and the bulletin. Another problem for researchers is that the volume numbers keep changing in an inconsistent way.

A membership directory (ACA, 1988) in the *Association for Communication Administration Bulletin* (ACB) of 1988 that lists membership from Australia and several from Canada. Membership in the Unites States was strong. The organization published, each year in the '90s, a *Directory of Communication Media* and *Theatre Directory* listing programs in the respective

disciplines. It sold copies. In the October *President's Report* Robert M. Smith (1988, Oct.) reported "you are a member of a strong and active association that takes its service mission seriously."

According to the *Official ACA Guidelines*, originally published in 1988, edited by Task Forces of ACA members in 1993, the goal of the Association for Communication Administration was to shape and implement measures to advance the discipline in colleges and universities. Roy Berko, Associate Director of the Speech Communication Association was chair of the committee responsible for the updated formulation. The organization through the years took on the tasks of advising programs through tough economic times, training administrative leaders, providing mentoring, creating evaluations for department heads and tenured faculty, issues of hiring, retention and tenure and supporting academic freedom for guest speakers. The organization ran a advisory program for departments moving through program review.

Through the years the organization had a close affiliation with the National Communication Association and had membership that included deans, provosts and university presidents as well as department chairs and heads. At one point the organization had an Executive Director, a position with a stipend, whose job was to run the day to day operations of the organization. The organization has always been a separate entity from NCA, but meets with NCA at its national convention. This arrangement was formally inaugurated with a joint letter between what was then the Speech Communication Association and ACA. It was signed by James Gaudino on Sept 25, 1991 and sent to ACA officers led by President Erwin Bettinghaus. The agreement agreed that SCA would publish the journal, allocate places for ACA at its conferences, conduct voting for officers and send out all mailings. The executive director position and all fees would be paid for by ACA (Gaudino, 1991).

The organizational membership went through the growing pains of many organizations and nearly died around 2009. (The JACA our journal was not published after 2001 until its revival in 2013.) A leader of ACA, James Benjamin, a dean from the University of Toledo sent a memo out in 2009 at the National Association Convention's Chair's Breakfast for a meeting of any interested party at the Palmer House in Chicago during one of the NCA time sessions. William Harpine from the University of South Carolina at Aiken and Christopher Lynch from Kean University, both chairpersons comprised the group that met. Thus the organization was reborn. Harpine became the president and Lynch the first vice–president. The following year Don Winslow Stacks from the University of Miami signed on as editor of *JACA*, the *Journal of the Association of Communication Administration*. The journal, which was always copyrighted, became totally electronic. When his term ended after a year, Janie Harden Fritz from Duquesne University became the editor and has served in that role from 2014 to the present time.

Harpine in 2011 created the web domain *communicationadministration.org*, our official website, and served as liaison with NCA, and panels were organized for the following year when an official business meeting was held. Two panels were held at NCA and a business meeting. Approximately 20 people attended. Betsy Bach, representing NCA, provided support, even though ACA continued to be an independent organization. Lynch was elected president via an email ballot in 2012. He was tasked with the job of treasurer, creating a reading list for communication administrators, restoring our non-profit status, shaping the new constitutions and by-laws, with the assistance Attorney Sarah Mooney of Webster, Chamberlain and Bean, whose aunt was a member of NCA. Washington, D.C. was chosen as the official site for ACA since NCA was also housed in the city. Members went out for dinner in small groups while at our conference in New Orleans in an effort to boost solidarity. E-

newsletters were sent out and membership, which was free, was increased to about 100 by recruiting at state and regional conferences. Our by-laws were approved in 2012 and we have continued for file tax statements to preserve our non-profit status.

Alfred Mueller became president in 2013 and expanded our program sessions at NCA covering topics from departmental bullies to how to move up the ladder of administration. He brought Robert Smith, former ACA president, who had retired as president of Slippery Rock University, to discuss climbing the administrative ladder. Tom Endres, from University of Northern Colorado, became president in 2014 and updated our website. That was the year NCA celebrated its one hundred year anniversary. He was succeeded by Melissa Chastain from Spalding University. Jeanne Persuit, from the University of North Carolina Wilmington, served the organization from its re-creation as membership director, secretary and currently treasurer. Shawn Long, from the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, was the only person in the room without an official title, so at his very first business meeting became vice-president. He continued as president in 2015 and worked collaboratively with NCA interest groups to shape collaborative panels. He and Helen Sterk, from the Western Kentucky University, who succeeded him as president, met with Jeanne Persuit and her students at the University of North Carolina to further enhance our website. Sterk tightened our bond with the NCA organization as an active member of the Legislative Assembly and established the first "Communication Administrative Excellence" of the year award. It was bestowed on Dawn Braithwaite in 2019, who because of illness missed her first conference ever. An award was also presented for the top journal article in the past year that went to Mark Hickson III, for his article, "Legal Ethical and Appropriate Interaction." Sterk also worked with NCA in running chairperson trainings and gatherings. Sterk, 2019 ACA president Sarah Stone Watt, from Pepperdine University, along with Shawn Long were presenters at the NCA Chairs Forum. ACA was involved with 6 sessions, including the Chair's Forum, at the 2019 convention.

ACA has had many ebbs and flows through the years but it continues to grow and increase in viability through its membership and panels. Our history is rooted in many people showing up and getting involved. Through the years theatre became less involved in our organization. However, many individuals have added their part and contributed to helping us grow. ECA and SSCA have regional divisions of our organization. Amy Koeber, from Texas Technical University, was president in 2020 and chaired our first virtual meetings. As we move toward our fiftieth year our organization is strong. Christina McDowell serves as president in 2021 and Laurie Diles in 2022. Further research will provide a wealth of information on the role of chairs and departments through the years as well as the changing identity of our discipline and in our journal over time.

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Communication Administration as a Tri-Voiced Sustainable Community

Ronald C. Arnett[1]

Books and authors have challenged the focus on "me" alone, rejecting "individualism" that seeks to stand above social context and constraints (Tocqueville, 1955; Arnett, 2019; Arnett, 2020), "narcissism" that falls in love with one's own image (Lasch, 1985), and "emotivism" that limits decision making to personal preferences (MacIntyre, 1984). Contrary to a focus on an individual abstracted from a social context, one finds an emphasis on community (Arnett, 1986). When, however, a conception of community embraces only those empirically present, it becomes an abstraction oblivious of the phenomenological considerations of persons before and after the present moment. This essay textures the notion of community with an emphasis on sustainability as a background for communication administration decision-making. A sustainable community finds definition through the following practices: 1) walking between the extremes of the openness of relativism and the closure of ideology; 2) acknowledging locality as a love of place respectful of other localities, unlike provinciality, which dismisses the importance of another's sense of home; and 3) attending to tri-voiced contributions inclusive of those who came before us, those "not yet" here, and those immediately present. Listening to these three voices permits one to do communication administration guided by a vision of sustainable community.

Keywords: communication administration, sustainable community, individualism, tri-voiced community

It is difficult to envision how the world will evaluate the leadership within higher education during an era defined by a pandemic, limited resources, and manic change. However, without dispute, our current decisions will unfold an identity apparent to future generations. Perhaps this moment in higher education is an enactment of Robert Frost's (1992/2001) famous poem, "The Road Not Taken." Within individual lives and institutions there are clear moments of choice between and among paths with the one followed making all the difference. The path that institutions of higher education follow will shape the intellectual, social, and moral terrain of higher education for the remainder of this century (Marcus, 2017).

This essay outlines the coordinates and the importance of a tri-voiced sustainable community, which moves decision-making from an empirical "me" to "us" inclusive of the before, the "not yet," and the now, through the following sections. "Limited Resources: A Rhetorical Interruption" announces the challenges for higher education in this historical moment. "Ethical Warnings and Hope for this Hour" stresses the danger of individualism and the importance of a tri-voiced understanding of community for communication administration decision-making. "Existential Trust: Ground Under Our Feet" outlines a sustainable community, emphasizing narrative and the multi-voiced nature of sustainability, through an analysis of three works tied to Buber: Maurice Friedman's *Touchstones of Reality: Existential Trust and the Community of Peace* (1972), Ronald C. Arnett's *Communication and Community: Implications of Martin Buber's Dialogue* (1986), and Buber's *Paths in Utopia* (1949/1996). Finally, "Implications for Communication Administration" reinforces a basic existential fact: communication administration decision-making touches and shapes the future.

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Following the insights of three works devoted to community, this essay outlines some of the coordinates of a sustainable community. Such a view of community does not permit the present to dominate or bully the conversation. A "sustainable community" consists of three voices: past, future, and present constituents. The ethical responsibility of a tri-voiced sustainable community necessitates listening to and learning from three co-present constituents and standpoints. This essay frames the obligation of communication administration in an era of limited resources, fragmentation, and pressing immediate problems as necessitating attentive response to past, future, and present demands.

Limited Resources: A Rhetorical Interruption

The choices made by communication administrators will become paradigms that situate standpoint, vision, and outcomes. This essay does not purport how to make the right decisions but how to counter a neo-liberal obsession fueled by individualism. Sustainable communities do not prosper on numbers and arithmetic about the distribution of resources alone. Sustainable communities are more akin to the field of mathematics, attending to multi-voiced coordinates and complex theorems.[1] A sustainable community embraces a mathematical hope that one might discover textured answers beyond the reach of mere addition and subtraction.

Communication administration in an era of abundance relies on a willingness to say yes repeatedly. In such moments, one learns little about the identity and mission of a university. The heart, the good, that an institution seeks to protect and promote (Arnett et al., 2018) emerges publicly in eras of limited resources. Declining birth rates (Kearney & Levine, 2021) and the pandemic have placed a number of institutions in financial peril as they lose revenue from students no longer living on campus (Nadworny, 2020). The future direction of higher education depends on the manner in which the reality of declining resources is met.

Such moments of crisis display identity and mission. Clarity about what a person or an institution actually stands for emerges more from response than from the immediate circumstances alone. The heart of a person or an institution finds identity in the stand, reaction, and response to events beyond our control (Frankl, 1946/1984). The question for numerous higher education administrations across this country is no longer "who we are" but "what we will be," with an understanding of sustainable community augmenting the voices of decision-making, inclusive of past, future, and present members. Limited resources require a comprehensive view of identity, guided by the before, the later, and the now.

The theme of limited resources and polarized communication is not new; one finds this theme during war-time rationing, economic depressions, and disruptions to normality announced by pandemics.[2] This essay underscores an existential fact: identity and mission gather meaning in times of challenge. In an era of challenge, one must imagine future possibilities. Immanuel Kant (1790/1914) stressed that imagination pushes off something real, with higher education pushing of individual missions that represent historical and future objectives of a sustainable community. The mission and identity of a sustainable community includes past, future, and current members of a given place. In order to underscore this conception of community, this essay revisits historical works on dialogically constituted communities. Dialogue between and among the three voices within a sustainable community (persons before, not yet, and now) compose a standpoint for communication administration response to more than the immediate now. Dialogue among the three voices in a community constitutes a common center that resists a single vision imposed upon the future. Limited resources challenge communities and require them to address the unwanted. The path chosen

by a communication administration meets this reality by listening to three voices, who in dialogue work to sustain a community.

Ethical Warnings and Hope for this Hour

Administrators have more than a career at stake in this era. Their decisions will shape the soul and the direction of higher education. This is a moment for leaders to choose Frost's path followed by few. This historical moment announces an ethical warning: the human community must resist increasing fragmentation propelled by individualism and find ways to augment concern for the Other, inclusive of the past and not yet in conversation with the now. This tri-voiced position contrasts with hyper-individualism, which acts in conspicuous disregard of the Other (Arnett, 2005; Bellah et al., 1985; Tocqueville, 1856/1955). The existential hope of this moment is that a sustainable community can counter the power of individualism. The contention of this essay is that a sustainable sense of community often dwells in saturated silence, just waiting to burst forth into active dialogue. Sustainable communities violate conventions of individualism and the temptation to reify the present. Sustainable communities include those before us, those not yet here, and those immediately present. The interpretive task of a sustainable community is to attend to a communicative common center (Buber, 1992) as a tri-voiced community of sustainability.

A sustainable community with a dialogic common center inclusive of multiply voices is a pragmatic call for "hope for this hour" (Buber, 1957/1990, p. 220). Communication administration in higher education has an opportunity to model how the dialogic means are ends in the making (Kant, 1785/1916). Higher education has a chance to address wicked problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973) with a vision bigger than "me" and "you" alone. Sustainable communities house the health and the welfare of the human condition, offering a tri-voiced dialogic challenge to individualism composed of immediate and short-sighted decisions. Three voices within a community invite an ongoing dialogue, disrupting the power of temporal concerns, emergencies, and crises.

A signature address delivered by Buber at Carnegie Hall in 1952 titled "Hope for This Hour" and his speech "Genuine Dialogue and the Possibilities of Peace," an acceptance speech for the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in 1953, challenged a global understanding of a sustainable community (1957/1990). Buber's address, given less than 10 years after the conclusion of the Second World War, was a pragmatic act of communal grace; he refused to equate all German citizens with the monstrous actions of the Nazis (Buber, 1957/1990). During his address, Buber reminisced about times when another needed help and he failed to respond as well as when a wrong required correction and he remained silent. Buber stated that human beings repeatedly fall short of ethically required responses. Buber stated that our common plight necessitates forgiveness, even as we do not forget. Forgiveness, without forgetting, is a pragmatic dialogic key to a sustainable community. Buber does not forget the past. He forgives in the present. Such action permitted him to imagine a future world of dialogic meeting and communal concern.

Buber lamented a lack of regard for the human community; one can only wonder what he would think of this historical moment. In light of the wars and struggles since the Second World War, the hope for this hour dwells with the notion of "the absurd" (Camus, 2012). How do human beings continue to move forward when all seems lost? How do humans muster the courage to forge onward when hope seems vanquished? Existentially, the absurd is the backdrop of a commitment to a sustainable community, defined by more than "me"

alone. Such resistance and a commitment to a sustainable community gives rise to existential trust.

Existential Trust: Ground Under Our Feet

Existential trust, unlike personal trust, renders confidence in the narrative ground of community that can sustain persons. Buber (1957/1990) contended that we have lost assurance in existence: "[M]istrust is indeed basically no longer, like the old kind, a mistrust of my fellow-man. It is rather the destruction of confidence in existence in general" (p. 224). The hope for this hour resides in reclaiming trust for and within the human community. Human beings stand upon and within narrative ground that matters, composed of empirical and phenomenological senses that yield meaning and direction. One can differentiate between the empirical and the phenomenological by reflecting upon the dissimilarity between a house and a home. One can walk into a house and assess the quality of the architecture and the building materials. However, no matter how glorious the construction design, only phenomenological meaning can transform a physical structure into a home. A phenomenological sense of meaning infuses existential trust. A sustainable community composed of three voices functions as narrative ground that invites existential trust.

Existential trust from the standpoint of a sustainable community permits members to find the strength to stand upright in the midst of disappointment and toil. Existential trust announces a fundamental distinction between liking and loving, with the former generating personal trust alone and the latter nurturing narrative ground that unites persons of difference. Liking demands reciprocal personal interest while loving abides in a phenomenological space of existential trust. Unlike the reciprocal limits of personal trust, existential trust forges responsible action when liking and personal benefit are unlikely.

Existential trust acts as narrative ground under our feet, refusing to be confused with comfort. Existential trust calls forth responsibility in and for a human community, offering direction. Dietrich Bonhoeffer stated that the vilest thing one can do is destroy the narrative ground under another (Arnett, 2005; Bonhoeffer, 1981). A sustainable community renders existential trust, offering narrative ground that houses the responsibility to protect and promote a tri-voiced common center that yields direction when personal trust languishes.

Existential trust of narrative ground within community finds explication in three works, each tied to Buber: Maurice Friedman's *Touchstones of Reality: Existential Trust and the Community of Peace* (1972), Ronald C. Arnett's *Communication and Community: Implications of Martin Buber's Dialogue* (1986), and Buber's *Paths in Utopia* (1949/1996). The first two books frame Buber's insight on community, and the last outlines Buber's most extensive examination of community. Each work points to a sustainable community acting as an ongoing echo, which beckons us to recover a common center of narrative existential trust.

Friedman is arguably the premier interpreter of Buber's work. His three-volume set of the personal/historical life of Buber is an extraordinary contribution (Friedman, 1983), and his dissertation, published as *Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue* (1955/2002), is a dialogic classic. No other scholar devoted the majority of his professional career exclusively to the explication of Buber's insights. Friedman's (1972) *Touchstones of Reality: Existential Trust and the Community of Peace* outlines the temporal ground of existential trust. Second, Arnett's 1986 work, *Communication and Community: Implications of Martin Buber's Dialogue*, centers on Buber's theme of polarized discourse in an era of limited resources. Polarized communication continues in this historical moment, functioning as a driving force within the human condition and corroding existential trust. The final work is by Buber (1949/1996) himself, *Paths in Utopia***,** which

outlines the danger of constructing community with either personal trust or an imposed communal structure. Buber reminds us that the existence of constructive relations between persons is a fortunate byproduct of communal existential trust propelled by a common center of narrative ground. Something more fundamental than relational contact must gather people together. Buber points to community as a phenomenological home of responsibility that bequeaths relationships with meaning. Personal relationships do not establish an enduring sense of community; a mutual commitment must situate persons together in attentive action that protects and promotes a communal common center (Buber, 1992), which invites existential trust and social responsibility. Buber explores the evolution of free associations from utopian to artificial and manufactured relationships enacted by a centralized state. Reviewing these monographs underscores the importance of a sustainable community that invites existential trust in the doing of communication administration. The following works offer a theoretical grounding for understanding community based on coordinates other than relational connections. The contention of this essay is that doing communication administration from a sustainable community perspective requires reflection in order to counter the banality of individualism in the culture.

Touchstones of Reality: Existential Trust and the Community of Peace (1972)

Friedman's metaphor of a touchstone suggests the importance and vitality of temporal narrative ground. Dialogue among voices in a sustainable community lends insight that belies reification of a single undisputed direction. A sustainable community does not remain planted on a given touchstone of narrative ground forever; touchstones of reality change when necessary and appropriate. Friedman provides an autobiographical understanding of community under the rubric of touchstone of reality. His framework outlines three basic characteristics of what this essay describes as a sustainable community. First, such an orientation is counter to a culture of individualism. Second, community attends to Otherness, meeting and learning from difference. This conception of community is temporal and requires support from its members in order to counter a relational view of community based on consumer demand.

In Friedman's (1972) terms, "to communicate a touchstone is to witness" (p. 27) to the interplay of the past, the not yet, and the now. Touchstones of reality offer a temporal sense of narrative ground, permitting one to stand upright in a world of uncertainty. In order to illustrate touchstones of reality in action, Friedman recounts autobiographical fragments, beginning with his early years as a Second World War conscientious objector in the United States.[3] Friedman discusses major authors, persons of faith, great literature, and insights from theologians that shaped his three and a half years of civilian public service composed of manual labor (Friedman, 2011). Friedman's commitment to pacifism moved him to mysticism in his search for an alternative to the strident ego that drives the West.

Friedman's touchstones took him closer to Eastern philosophy; he followed a path that undercuts a Western demarcation between action and inaction, recognizing value in both. Such an orientation requires one to find direction in non-movement and faith in the face of nothingness. Taoism functions within a unity of contraries of dark and light, masculine and feminine, and receptivity and action. Such a touchstone of reality necessitates meeting the present existence on its own terms.

With an emphasis on the mystical in everyday life, Friedman discovered Buber's writings on Hasidism, specifically "The Life of the Hasidim" in *The Legend of the Baal-Shem* (Buber, 1905/1995). This religious mysticism aligned the practical and the holy, framing the

why and how of "hallowing the everyday" (Buber, 1958, p. 49). Uncertainty opens the door for an I–Thou relationship that yields revelatory insight. This pragmatic mysticism provides existential trust and narrative ground for meeting the unexpected and the unwanted. Hasidism, as a popular mystical movement in the 18th and 19th centuries, originated with the word "asid," meaning pious. Members of Hasidism founded communities, each with a Rebbe as the leader of the community. Hasidism is a form of mysticism deeply attentive to communal life, marriage, and relationships of active love and devotion. Hasidism unites God, people, and community. It calls forth a response with one's full being, with each response announcing personal uniqueness, propelling Friedman's discussion of Hasidism and the notion of evil. "The person who succeeds in being 'good' by repressing the 'evil' urge is not serving God with all his heart, mind, and might. The 'evil' urge is the passion, the power which is given us to serve God" (Friedman, 1972, pp. 156–157). Existential trust, in this case, dwells within a unity of contraries, inclusive of both good and evil.

Friedman also underscored the difference between an evil image and an evil urge. For instance, on one hand, labeling oneself as evil permits such an urge to overwhelm the good; on the other hand, embracing an evil urge as part of being human permits one to find an energetic direction for the good. The demonic image dwells in lust that seeks to overrun reality and existence, seeking to possess, not meet, the Other. As Abraham Heschel warned, living within community and enacting responsibility for others is quite different than living for belonging and using the community for one's own benefit (Friedman, 1972). Meeting others requires a genuine fervor to care for, not use, others.

Friedman shifts from the touchstone of Judaism to that of Jesus with the connecting link of Rebbe. The touchstone of reality of the kingdom of heaven rests within and among people. Freidman describes Jesus as a bearer of a covenant that unites the Old and New Testaments, using once again the image of a unity of contraries: God as imageless and God as particular. This touchstone made Friedman repudiate any Christian assertion that Jesus is the exclusive way to the kingdom of heaven. Friedman's (1972) rejection of singular conviction propelled his aversion to a "community of affinity" based on likeness, which refuses to meet and encounter otherness (p. 211). In contrast, a "community of otherness" (Friedman, 1972, p. 213) requires meeting ideas and persons dissimilar to the self that challenge accustomed comfort. Fellowship finds definition in the confirmation of uniqueness and difference rather than in the affirmation of similarity of conviction tied to association alone.

Friedman then discusses religious symbolism and universal religion with a reminder that Jesus on the cross is more of a symbol of antisemitism to the Jews than an act of sacrifice to Christians. Religion often finds itself connected to particular and local cultures with differing conceptions of God capable of missing the universal importance of concern for the Other. Friedman asserted that when six million people died in the concentration camps, one of them was Christ himself. The universal symbol of God is that of suffering—the dwelling of God. Friedman contended that religion both points to and obscures the universal essence of God as suffering. A crisis of religious values happens when faith goes rejected or engaged in a totalistic fashion that excludes all but a limited few. The task of each generation includes discovery of touchstones of reality that undergird meaning without embracing a constricted arrogance of provincial exclusion. Touchstones of reality, existential trust, and narrative ground offer a temporal foundation for moral direction that ceases when psychologism—imposed attribution about the real meaning of another's behavior—reigns. A life of dialogue requires meeting, not having an internal possession of truth imposed upon another. Psychologism is a self-possessed moralism that resides within the beholder, attributing

personal and subjective reasons to another's actions. Psychologism inflicts "my perspective" upon the Other, with a refusal to understand narrative ground that sustains another.

Friedman recognized the danger of psychologizing reality, where perception attends only to "my" assessment and misses the revelatory that emerges between persons and the world. The revelatory does not arise from the depths of the psyche; dialogue manifests meaning in engagement with the world and others. A life of dialogue contrasts with self-possessed internal meaning that isolates one from difference and seeks comfort within a "community of affinity" (Friedman, 1972, p. 210). Uniqueness is not in us but discovered between and among us. Difference generates Friedman's (1972) discussion of a "community of otherness," which contrasts with a "community of affinity," exclusive of diverse perspectives (p. 210).

An individual situated within a community of affinity functions like an isolated monad, unresponsive to others and simultaneously demanding that the world conform to one's own expectations. In contrast to a community of affinity, Friedman stressed a covenant of peace that witnesses to the importance of narrative ground and existential trust for self and other. In a covenant of peace, one collaborates with others and with existence itself. A partnership with existence defies "individualism" by calling forth responsibility between and among persons and context (Friedman, 1972, p. 305). A partnership with existence is a covenant of peace that enhances existential trust, bypassing the normative convention of a solely "centered self" (Friedman, 1972, p. 322). Existential trust is narrative ground that witnesses within a human community of otherness.

Friedman concluded *Touchstones of Reality* in 1972; 14 years later, he wrote the foreword to *Communication and Community* (Arnett, 1986). His foreword is a scholarly reminder of the importance of community and its connection to Otherness and dialogue. Friedman's foreword underscores a major theme within the book: polarized communication, which he highlighted in *The Hidden Human Image* (1974). Community enacts demands, moving one from the psychologizing of internal life to the meeting of persons and existence itself, working to sustain and enhance existential trust. Friedman's contribution to a sustainable community is a reminder that whatever gathers and supports a community is temporal, cautioning against blind allegiance.

Communication and Community: Implications of Martin Buber's Dialogue (1986)

This volume calls into question the notion of optimism, with a discussion of limited resources and polarized communication that disregard a narrow-ridge concern for self and other. *Communication and Community* begins with a chapter on communicative crisis that underscores a critique of looking out for "number one" defined by "me" and unresponsive to the underprivileged, the needy, family, friends, and institutions. Attending only to the self as "number one" propels strategic communication with limited concern for context and others. In an environment of increasingly polarized communication and strategic thought, ideological camps continue to dismiss the concerns of the opposition. As Buber (1957/1990) stated, "[E]ach side has assumed monopoly of the sunlight and has plunged its antagonist into night, and each side demands that you choose between day and night" (p. 221). Buber's (1947/2014) notion of the "narrow ridge" seeks to avoid polarized communication, walking a tightrope between commitment and doubt, and, additionally, one's own position and that of another (p. 218). When the ground under our feet no longer evokes trust, existential mistrust and polarized communication arise.

In an environment of mistrust of the narrative ground of another, monologue becomes a natural avenue of protection; one seeks comfort in one's own voice, direction, and self-benefit. Aggregates constituted by a collection of monologues become temporal dwellings only if one can turn the group to one's own advantage. The "meism" of singularity of conviction morphs into a collection of individuals forming an aggregate. Such action misses the corrective call of authentic guilt, which reconnects behavior to the guidance of narrative ground. If "my" concern is for me only then narrative ground cannot unite persons through a call of accountability and responsibility for the Other. An ethical community invites self-critical engagement that propels responsibility of action, finding focus in the engagement of a unity-of-contraries conception of freedom: Buber suggested that as one thrusts one's right hand into the air with a gesture of freedom, one must immediately grasp one's right hand with the left, restraining it from acts of individual excess (Arnett, 1986; Buber, 1966). Restrained freedom propels conviction co-present with trembling and doubt. Caution linked with assurance of direction is a unity of contraries that embraces an existential fact: total certainty is a delusional fiction.

Dialogic meaning within a community avoids the impulse of blind faith, which shapes propaganda's adoration of a singular truth. Meaning emerges in tempered surges of a unity of contraries of power and love, with each restraining the other. A unity of contraries makes a confident leader also a self-critic. A concern for others and a willingness to rub shoulders with difference keeps a community from teetering into an abyss of self-righteous assurance. A dialogic community is a pragmatic reminder of the danger of becoming solely concerned about one's own power and position; ultimately, a community eschews rigidity and through *hesed* invites responsible action that is essential without demand. Community is too essential to impose blindly.

Communication and Community adds to Friedman's conception. The work offers three additional coordinates for a sustainable community. First, invitation, not imposed demand, shapes such a community. Second, a common center lessens the dangers of fragmentation from a model of relational liking alone. Third, the dark side of a common center is blind faith and self-righteous imposition of given position, requiring a counter to monologic imposition upon others. *Communication and Community*'s contribution to a sustainable community embraces a unity of contraries of conviction and self-questioning, a central theme in Buber's classic work on community.

Paths in Utopia (1949/1996)

Paths in Utopia is arguably the most important work from Buber on community. The back of the volume has a quote from the *New Republic* that commends Buber for exposing "the ease with which sensitive but not overinformed men espouse simple patterns based on the historical truths which they alone can see" (1996). The quote is powerful in that it announces the danger of associating community with either imposition or reliance on relational connections as a substitute for a common center of a community. Buber begins his analysis with an examination of utopian communities that give way to bureaucratic imposition. He asserted that public imposition of a communal system ultimately fails. Buber's (1996) contention with Marx and Engels centers on an anti-utopian commitment to centralization of authority, with *The Communist Manifesto* challenging the notion of utopianism (p. 2).

Marx sought a scientific foundation, asserting that Proudhon's "best world" was a utopian failure unable to stop the march of industrial development (Buber, 1996, p. 5). Buber contended that Marx's argument framed polarized communication, stressing a battle between

science and utopianism, with the latter being delusion. To be a utopian was to be out of step with material, scientific, and economic conditions. Utopianism was "prehistoric" (Buber, 1996, p. 6); from this perspective, utopians were forerunners and then obstructionists, unable to recognize the material conditions of socialism. Buber (1996) countered with an argument: "[I]f socialism is to emerge from the blind alley to which it has strayed, among other things the catchword 'utopian' must be cracked open and examined for its true content" (p. 6). Buber explored the utopian element in socialism stressing a vision of revelatory social change. He asserted that voluntary socialism is utopian; the term "utopian" propelled the French revolution with use of Old Testament prophetic statements. Utopianism is pre-historic and pre-revolutionary in comparison to Marxism's inevitability of material and post-revolutionary conditions that supposedly lead to the withering away of the state. Buber wanted to recover the power and importance of utopian engagement.

Buber stated that in spite of all opposition from Marxism to the notion of utopianism, one cannot separate Marxism from utopianism. Utopians seek to understand the structure of human society united with economic change and social evolution/revolution. Buber (1996) stated, "Victor Hugo called utopia 'the truth of to-morrow'" (p. 14). A utopian socialism restructures the material conditions within a framework of "communal autonomy" (p. 15). Out of the recalcitrant material conditions before us, utopians work to fashion a new sense of community.

Buber specified that utopians seek to provide constructive and organic ways to restructure society. In the history of utopian socialism, for Buber (1996), there are three pairs of significant thinkers who articulated this perspective in performative action: (1) Henri de Saint-Simon and Joseph Fourier, (2) Robert Owen and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, and (3) Pyotr Alexeyevich Kropotkin and Gustav Landauer (p. 16). Buber indicated two primary ways to identify these thinkers. He first categorized them in three groups and then two: the first tied to historical timeline and the second within a divide between Moscow and Jerusalem.

Buber's second classification, which unites utopian thinkers around the metaphors of Jerusalem and Moscow, is central to this essay. The initial group consists of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen. The second group is composed of Proudhon, Kropotkin, and Landauer (p. 1; p. 2; p. 16). Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen are "the forerunners" to socialist thought (p. 16). The common thread running through the forerunners' work is the connection of socialism with free association. The second group of Proudhon, Kropotkin, and Landauer offers a transition from socialism as a free association to an increasing sense of structure, Marx and Engel's view of synthetic associations controlled by a strong central government.

The majority of *Paths in Utopia* assumes the division of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen as forerunners emphasizing material and social mutuality among small-scale associations, with Proudhon, Kropotkin, and Landauer announcing synthetic theories of how to restructure society. At the end of *Paths in Utopia*, Buber situates this division as a philosophical chasm, with Jerusalem representing free association and Moscow suggesting imposed synthetic associations. Buber underscored the importance of local forms of association and the limits of structured and imposed community commitments. He explicates the theme of existential trust dependent upon free association.

Utopia: Local Associations

Buber recounted that Saint-Simon was born 12 years before Fourier and died 12 years prior to Fourier's death. They were part of a generation born before the French Revolution in 1789 and gone by the next French Revolution of 1848, which led to the creation of the French

Second Republic (Rapport, 2009). Buber contended that Fourier belonged by nature to the 18th century, while Saint-Simon, though older, belonged to the 19th. In *Paths in Utopia*, Buber (1949/1996) describes differences in their "nature" and "outlook" (pp. 16–17). Saint-Simon encouraged workers to make entrepreneurs their leaders, with the intent of welding together active members of capitalism with the proletariat. From Buber's perspective, this was an almost prophetic vision of what was to come in the 19th and 20th centuries, "a future order in which no leadership is required other than that provided by the social functions themselves" (p. 17). The environment was one of "extreme disorder," with the government operating in an "essentially feudal" fashion (p. 18). People divided into two classes: "the exploiters and the exploited" (p. 18). Saint-Simon conceptualized these new social relationships as "industrial associations" (p. 18). Buber argued that although "Saint-Simon divined the significance of the small social unit for the rebuilding of society" without recognizing its ultimate value, Fourier opposed the idea of engineered relationships (p. 18). He was a critic of the legacy of the French Revolution, "which had contested the right of association and prohibited trades-unions" (p. 19). Fourier was an outspoken advocate of free and voluntary associations that hearkened back to a pre-industrialized society. His position stood in contrast to Saint-Simon's view of socially engineered relationships created by a government.

Saint-Simon, considered the founder of sociology, dreamed of a world with minimal government, propelled by production in which proletariat workers and entrepreneurs united to rebuild a society with a union of interests. It was Fourier who discussed free and voluntary associations as part of a divine social order in accordance with God's will. He believed that social structures of his day prohibited people from living in accordance with their God-given passions. He claimed that "passional attraction" was the driving force of social life, shaped through new economic and social "associations" (Guarneri, 2018). Fourier wanted universal harmony and encouraged consumer cooperatives. Owen then offered a response to both the work of Saint-Simon and Fourier, as he pressed for a genuine community in which there is only common ownership and a collective commitment to create and conserve. Buber (1949/1996) stated:

> The line of development [of socialism's founders] leading from Saint-Simon to Fourier and Owen rests on no sequence in time. . .Saint-Simon lays down that society should progress from the dual to the unitary. . .To this Fourier and Owen reply that this is only possible [with] smaller communities aiming at a large measure of self-sufficiency. [O]nly a just ordering of the individual units can establish a just ordering in the totality. This is the foundation of socialism. (p. 23)

The uniting theme of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen was association, with increasing movement away from voluntary community to acts of imposition and mandate.

Proudhon followed with a continuing stress on association. His thought relied upon a unity of contraries, opposing individualism and, at the same time, the state. Proudhon wanted to unite the individual naturally into groups. Buber (1949/1996) argued, "It is obvious that Proudhon's basic thought is not individualistic. Proudhon rejects a State that precludes individual and organic connections with groups of voluntary association" (p. 28). Proudhon disallowed atomization of the human being and contended that genuine universal suffrage requires organizing group life. He outlined the vitality of mutual reciprocity and free association. The individual with others advances social reconstruction structurally and economically. Proudhon encouraged moderately autonomous small groups to unite within a

federation. The goal was to connect as a federation without merging into a central authority, maintaining an oxymoron of decentralized centralization. Proudhon deplored compulsion and uniformity when applied with undue rigor; he feared imposition from distant authorities. The key was to restructure society without relying upon increasing centralization, which clashed with the socialist aspiration.

Revolution and Imposition: The Limits of Optimism

Landauer, on the other hand, pushed for a resistive form of community, in opposition to the state. The state requires challenge from another set of relationships, which Landauer called "people" (Buber, 1949/1996, p. 46). Socialism is possible, only if the people will its possibility. The renewing of society comes from a form of community. For instance, Landauer did not want to abolish marriage. He stated, "We need form, not formlessness. We need tradition" (Buber, 1949/1996, p. 48). A legitimate communal future commences with the present, not an abstract future. To be a socialist is to understand that one must supplant the un-communal. Landauer contended that a political revolution must generate a social revolution between and among persons. Shared property nourishes a "true spirit of community" (Buber, 1949/1996, p. 53). There needs to be a living spirit in revolution that bonds and unites persons. Socialism is not a dream or abstraction but rather a commitment to a community composed of a common spirit that reconstitutes the social order, without falling into the abyss of absolute order, imposed conviction, and enforced demand.

Buber stated that the common spirit of free association suffered from ongoing waves of individualism and optimism within utopian socialist action. There was cooperative movement involving numerous people from England and France from 1830 to 1848. This association was a romantic movement tied to unreality and dreaminess. That cooperative movement sought to alter social reality. People who engaged in these movements suffered the criticism of having too high of an estimation of the human being and too low an understanding of the context and historical events. They constructed an ideal human being, losing sight of organically constructed forms of cooperation through consumer cooperatives, producer cooperatives, and full cooperatives, which combine both production and consumption.

In 1827, the first modern consumer cooperatives emerged, followed in 1848 by a second wave of consumer cooperatives. Buber (1949/1996) stated that by 1830 there were as many as 300 cooperative societies, with many of them failing due to a "spirit of selfishness" (p. 61). The consumer cooperative invited quick organization. The producer cooperative took more time in the selection of buildings and wares. Cooperative settlements that combined both consumer and producer concerns took considerably more negotiating time. The cooperatives addressed the material interests of the people but too often failed to understand the actual lives of people within the cooperatives. What eventually emerged, in an effort to be profitable, was an increasing reliance on capitalist principles. With consumer or producer cooperatives, there was a reciprocity between persons and the environment. On the other hand, full cooperatives of consumers and producers found themselves often distanced from the reality of local life and problems. Increasingly mired in capitalistic actions, the full cooperative became ideologically extreme, defined by a dogmatic disconnection between locality and the aims of a cooperative effort. Settlements folded from both rigidity of dogma and minimal organic linkage between and among persons in a community. As society fell into increasing specialization, the cooperatives became more technical, managerial, and capitalistic in structural and psychological design.

Ideally, full cooperatives needed connection to local soil and real needs, something other than abstraction and imposition. Organic cooperation, not dogmatic rigidity, was the only hope if utopian socialism was to replace the state with a communal society. Utopian socialism understood that cooperative society requires small communal cells that restructure social life. On the other hand, the Marxist dialectical view of history envisioned a different and renewed social structure with a class-based revolution. Buber contended that state centralism violated a loose federation of fragmented communal arrangements. Marxism opposed a utopianism based upon optimistic assumptions of what people must do together. Cooperative societies were more sectarian and connected to the local. As socialism moved from utopia to a science of historical necessity, it left behind organic and local communal hopes and aspirations, unwanted by the Marxist movement. Marxism refused to coordinate small groups; its task was a singular one: a structural social revolution.

Marxism, as implemented by Lenin, amalgamated around a socialist idea, a colossal reconstruction propelled by historical necessity tied to the inevitable outcome of revolutionary politics. Lenin's increasing centralization lessened freedom. Revolution brought less, not more, freedom. The 1905 Russian Revolution was a wave of social and political unrest. However, it was the revolution of 1917 that overthrew the Russian monarchy. The revolution of 1905 released organs of self-administration in proletariat centers throughout the country that required unity of action. It was Lenin's doctrine of 1917 that pushed toward the abolishment of private ownership. For Lenin, power was not for the people; the party provided the direction. Councils and organs of state power made decisions; Lenin tolerated a federated reality with hopes of gathering more and more central authority. He increasingly understood cooperatives as an expression of bourgeois society. He wanted to nationalize cooperatives and mandate participation. Lenin envisioned the cooperatives moving from dreams to mechanisms of necessity. There was only provisional tolerance of decentralized cooperatives. Old Russia lasted until 1929, but by that time the mechanized bureaucratic central committee propelled all dimensions of social life. The Soviet passage from association and cooperatives to expectation and demand left behind the heart of socialism of human association.

Without such a commitment to one another, the fate of civilization rested with acts of imposition, resulting in death and agony (Buber, 1949/1996). Buber contended that many humans who live in the midst of a crisis abide by the assertion of progress, which legitimizes the imposition of a collective, curtailing individual idiosyncratic behavior. Socialism tied to communes, community, and the social-individual fell prey to increasing centralization, which devoured acts of free association. Genuine community unites collective association and a common purpose, resisting compelled centralization. Community requires an inner disposition that organically unites persons around a common center.

Buber rejected Lenin's imposition of collective ties and contrarily relied upon a collective sense of hope. The advancement of capitalism challenges community, as does compulsory collective action. For Buber, the socialist's task is to renew the vibrancy of community, rejecting individualistic and collective imposition upon others, which strikes at the heart and soul of community. The crisis of this historical moment requires communities to relationally associate without demand. Buber stated that there are two choices, two major experiments: Soviet imposition of community and small Jewish settlements of communal invitation. Village communes evolve in society where social individuals matter; differentiation arises in the midst of integration and cooperative spirit. Jewish settlements attend to locality, solidarity, individuals committed to self and other and united by a common center.

Buber pointed to a sustainable community with an emphasis on free association and the importance of reclaiming the importance of utopian thinking. Sustainable communities require an imagination and a sense of hope that one can learn from the past, the present, and the needs of the future. Buber articulates the importance of a common center in nurturing community. Buber (1923/2004) framed this point succinctly in *Between I and Thou*, stating that communities require an organic common center if they are to thrive and endure:

> The true community does not arise through peoples having feelings for one another (though indeed not without it), but through first, their taking their stand in living mutual relation with a living Centre, and second, their being in living mutual relation with one another. The second has its source in the first, but is not given when the first alone is given. Living mutual relation includes feelings but does not originate with them. The community is built up out of living mutual relation, but the builder is the living effective Centre. (p. 40)

Perhaps the common center in this historical moment is a tri-voiced sustainable community.

A sustainable community requires narrative ground of existential trust. As Buber attests, the struggle is not just for community, but for voluntary association. By collective imposition and commercial gain, community goes underground into places of shattered silence. Emmanuel Levinas (1974/2013) reminded us that in every solidified "Said" there is a "Saying" waiting to emerge at the right moment. The saturated silence of community is a reified "Said" that awaits release into "Saying." It is the voice of invitation and dialogic community that propels a touchstone for free association, a narrow ridge between individual and others, and a search for organic common centers capable of uniting persons. A sustainable community is not dead, just resting in saturated silence, waiting for a calling of genuine association. A sustainable community with an organic common center is a miracle, a wonder of the human condition and our hope for this hour. Our health, welfare, education, and professional and personal lives depend on communities bursting forth from saturated silence, giving us existential trust and a touchstone of reality that counters polarized communication—and reminding us that temporal utopias are communities that arise out of a common center and purpose within local soil. The genuine hope for community rests in free association gathered around a local common center that resists imposition, permitting the revelation of dialogue to counter bureaucratic mandate. A sustainable community is a creative background, a tri-voiced conversation in communication administration.

Implications for Communication Administration

Investing in a sustainable community is not a norm in a culture that worships at the altar of individualism. A sustainable community requires putting into practice theory-informed action that counters the herd of "now" and the siren song of "meism." Friedman, Arnett, and Buber collectively point to four elements of such a community. First, one must know the limits of both individualism and imposed communities. Second, polarized communication in an era of limited resources invokes the temptation to impose a common center composed of a monologic voice. Third, relational commitments that frame the individual self as a sovereign Self create a struggle over resources, forgetting the importance of others. Fourth, a sustainable community is only sustainable when one understands its temporal and fragile status. One cannot take such a sustainable community for granted.

Doing communication administration from the position of a sustainable community begins with theory and reading about the "why" of a tri-voiced community, not with technique alone. Engaging in communication administration from such a standpoint looks to past (both the good and problematic), future, and present voices (Levinas, 1969). There is no universal template for doing communication administration from a standpoint of sustainable community. The tri-voiced task of a sustainable community is an act of cultural resistance, countering both individualism and imposed standards with attentiveness to voices from the past, future, and present. The past requires knowledge of the history of a place. The future requires imagination about what might assist those "not yet" present. Finally, the present is the place in which all these standpoints interact in hypertextual influence (Eco, 2005). In higher education we cannot forget our history or our obligation to the future as we meet the demands of the present. Three voices nurture a sustainable community. Borrowing from and adding to Chesterton (1908), there is a democracy of the dead (p. 85) and the future that must temper decisions made within the immediacy of the now. Communication administration from a perspective of a sustainable community does not ensure success but cautions one from only doing what *can* be done rather than what *should* be done (Ellul, 1954/1964; Arnett, 2013, p. 61). A sustainable community responds to three voices—past, future, and present—each with an investment in shaping communication administration on a university campus.

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Footnotes

[1] Building on the work of Bakhtin, Barwell (2016) argues that "mathematical meaning emerges through locally produced, situated dialogic relations between multiple discourses, voices and languages" (p. 331).

[2] One disruption in higher education is a decrease in number of students living on campuses. See, for example, Lorin, J. (2020, October 15). New students at U.S. colleges drop, worsening campus crisis. *Bloomberg*. See also Korn, M. (2020, October 15). College enrollment slid this Fall, with first-year populations down 16%. *The Wall Street Journal*.

[3] These camps were located in Campton (New Hampshire), Coleville (California), Gatlinburg (Tennessee), and Smokemont (North Carolina) (Friedman, 2013).

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Mentoring Faculty and Bolstering Students' Emotional and Cognitive Interest: The Impact of Perceived Homophily in the College Classroom

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For this study, expectancy violations theory was used to explore the associations among instructors' inappropriate conversations, perceived homophily (similarity), and college students' emotional and cognitive interest. Results found that students' perceptions of instructor perceived homophily moderated the relationships between students' reports of instructors' enactment of inappropriate conversations and students' emotional and cognitive interest. These results offer further understanding of the ways in which inappropriate conversations and perceived homophily affect perceptual outcomes in the college classroom, which can inform college faculty, administrators, and mentors. Limitations and future research directions are discussed.

Keywords: Communication Administration, Faculty Mentoring, Expectancy Violations Theory, Inappropriate Conversations, Perceived Homophily, Student Interest

Communication administrators know that instructors who possess the ability to connect with their students are more likely to have multiple layers of success in the classroom. At the heart of the instructional purpose of any college classroom is the need and desire to stimulate student interest and foster intellectual growth (Sprague, 2016). Indeed, students' *lack* of interest in their courses is one reason for their disengagement, withdrawal, and failure in school (Skinner et al., 2008). Therefore, to develop student interest, instructor-student(s) communication is crucial in developing positive relationships (Frisby & Martin, 2010), generating affective learning (Sidelinger et al., 2011), and producing satisfactory perceptions (Goodboy & Myers, 2007). With this in mind, in-class conversations serve to facilitate positive perceptions of both the instructor and the course.

Yet, instructors may sometimes stray from appropriate conversations and communicate something that students find inappropriate and distracting (Goodboy et al., 2018; Kearney et al., 1991) ultimately detracting from their interest or intellectual growth. Goodboy and Myers (2015) noted that although inappropriate teaching behaviors do not occur frequently, when they do occur they have robust negative effects in the classroom. As a result, it is imperative for administrators to mentor their faculty members on the importance of analyzing and reflecting on their communication in the classroom. Having conversations about classroom communication is an essential characteristic in the mentoring process especially when administrators evaluate faculty on being competent communicators in the classroom, which ultimately lead to the general evaluation of "being a good teacher" (Pendell, 2012, p. 146).

Hickson (2017) articulated the need for administrators' interactions with faculty to go beyond a cathartic act of communication and persuasion and include established trusting relationships that can evolve into mentoring opportunities for successful promotion. Faculty mentoring is a "complex, multidimensional activity" (Sands et al. 1991, p. 189) that includes scholarship, teaching, and service. However, many administrators wrestle with the fact that

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most advanced degrees do not allow for reflection on instructional processes resulting in incompetent classroom communication (Hendrix, 2010). Zellers et al. (2008) stated that "mentoring is a reciprocal learning relationship characterized by trust, respect, and commitment, in which a mentor supports the professional and personal development of another by sharing his or her life experiences, influence, and expertise" (p. 555). Cordie et al. (2020) noted academic mentors need to emphasize successful communication classroom behaviors by co-teaching with junior faculty to establish effective pedagogical practices. While successful communication across the curriculum programs encourage faculty to learn "new kinds of communication" (Dannels, 2010, p. 57) that cultivate a positive classroom climate. The role of an academic administrator and mentor is to establish opportunities to reflect not only on their own communication, but to make faculty members aware of the importance of communication in all areas of higher education (Ruben et al., 2017). However, the focus on communication in the classroom often gets overlooked during the mentoring process even though it is an essential component in the promotion process (Fountain & Newcomer, 2016).

For individuals (e.g., faculty) to be effective communicators they must achieve desired outcomes relative to the constraints of a context, and to be appropriate they must also meet standards of propriety and legitimacy (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2002). However, Generous et al. (2015) said, "The context of any classroom is unique, thus perceptions of appropriateness and effectiveness of certain behaviors vary from classroom to classroom" (p. 129). Therefore, this investigation explored the consequences of perceived inappropriateness of instructor conversations in the college classroom to inform communication administrators, mentors, and instructors about adverse teaching behaviors that may undermine college students learning experiences. In addition, this study also included expectancy violations theory (EVT) as an explanation for how students perceive instructors' inappropriate conversations when they also perceive instructors as similar (i.e., perceived homophily) to them. Perceived homophily represents the likelihood of individuals to associate and bond with similar others and it may moderate the possible negative associations between perceived inappropriateness of instructor conversations in the college classroom and students' emotional and cognitive interest. By examining these variables, administrators have the potential to help faculty reflect on their communication in the classroom.

Inappropriate Conversations

Appropriate communication is context driven and governed by the situational and relational rules that avoid perceptions of violations (Canary & Spitzberg, 1987). Duran (1983) said communicatively competent individuals adapt verbal and nonverbal communication to the constraints of a situation. Canary and Spitzberg noted that "the most competent messages are not just appropriate or simply effective, but both appropriate and effective" (p. 94). In turn, competence impressions are typically assessed through the perception of the other, and the other is often more aware of the speaker's *incompetent* behavior(s) during communication interactions (McCroskey, 1984). These incompetent behaviors can be interpreted as inappropriate. Hullman (2007) included messages that were in bad taste, embarrassing, uncomfortable, and improper as examples of inappropriate conversations.

In the classroom context, students expect instructors to behave appropriately, communicate well, care about their wellbeing, have social contact with them, and be motivating, enthusiastic, and fun (Moore et al., 2008). However, some instructors do communicate inappropriately, and that students are aware its occurrence (Kearney et al., 1991). For example, students reported vulgar language and disparaging comments directed toward

students as inappropriate types of instructor humor (Wanzer et al., 2006), and conveying irrelevant or unsettling personal information (e.g., alcohol abuse) as inappropriate instructor disclosures (Cayanus & Martin, 2009). Additionally, when instructors engage in conversations that students deem as inappropriate, it decreases student communication satisfaction with those instructors (Sidelinger, 2014). Indeed, students distinguish "good" instructors from "bad" instructors based on their verbal communication in the classroom (Sorensen, 1989), which in turn, may negatively affect their emotional and cognitive interest.

Student Interest

Mazer (2012, 2013a) conceptualized student interest to include emotional and cognitive interest. Students who experience emotional interest are excited and energized and look forward to class time while students who experience cognitive interest are organized and able to comprehend course material. Student interest is positively related to course material comprehension (Alexander et al., 1994) and recall (Topias, 1994). Schiefele (1996) found that highly interested students reported course reading material as more meaningful than students with low-levels of interest. Furthermore, effective instruction stimulates student interest. Mazer (2013b) found instructor nonverbal immediacy (e.g., smiling, gesturing, eye contact) and instructor clarity increased students' emotional and cognitive interest in the classroom. When instructors stimulate student interest, students, in turn, are more engaged in the classroom (Mazer, 2013c). Mazer (2013c) reported students who experience emotional and cognitive interest also report greater affective learning, state motivation, and learner empowerment.

Perceived inappropriateness of instructor conversations in the classroom may negatively affect students' emotional and cognitive interest. In general, students negatively evaluate instructors who inappropriately communicate in the classroom. For example, students who perceive instructors as verbally aggressive also perceive them as less competent, less appropriate (Martin et al., 1997), and less credible (Edwards & Myers, 2007; Schrodt, 2003). In turn, consequences of instructors' inappropriate communication include decreases in attendance (Rocca, 2004), liking for instructor and course (Wanzer & McCroskey, 1998), and classroom involvement (Myers et al., 2007). Specially, inappropriate conversations represent interpersonal incompetence (Hullman, 2007) and may erode students' emotional and cognitive interest. Therefore, the following prediction is offered:

H1: Perceptions of perceived inappropriateness of instructors' conversations in the classroom will negatively relate to reports of students' emotional and cognitive interest.

Expectancy Violations Theory

The basic undergirding tenet of expectancy violations theory (EVT) is individuals have expectations of how things will be and what people will do (Burgoon, 1978). Violations of those expectations are central to the theory. The three core concepts of EVT are: (a) expectancy, (b) violation valence, and (c) communicator reward valence (Burgoon & Hale, 1988). Expectancy refers to what an individual expects or predicts will take place in an interaction. According to Burgoon (1993), our expectations for an interaction are contingent upon context, relationship, and communicator characteristics. Context refers to the location and situation of the interaction. Relationship refers to the relationship that those interacting

have with each other. Communicator characteristics refer to the demographics of the other interactant(s) and characteristics such as her/his/their communication style. These factors are instrumental in the creation of predictive and prescriptive expectancies. Predictive expectancies are what individuals expect in a specific situation as informed by what generally transpires in a specific context. Prescriptive expectancies are what individuals expect as formed by the social norms of what is appropriate (Burgoon et al., 1995).

When something unpredicted occurs, an expectation has been violated (Burgoon, 1993). An expectancy violation triggers a heightened sense of uncertainty that prompts seeking explanation for the violation (Burgoon & Hale, 1988). Violation valence accounts for whether violations are perceived as positive, negative, or neutral. The communicator reward valence determines how the violation is perceived. It weighs the positive and negative qualities of a violator along with his/her ability to reward or punish the violated in the future (Burgoon, 1993). The violator's attributes and ability to reward or punish often depend upon context, relationship, and his/her communicator characteristics.

Conceptually, perceptions of instructors' inappropriate conversations in the classroom are already situated in violation of prescriptive expectancies. At the college level, students will have been part of an education system for the majority of their lives—establishing prescriptive, normative expectancies and specific, predictive expectancies (Burgoon et al., 1995) for appropriate instructor-student communication. Like all other expectancies, it varies based on context, relationship, and the violator's communication characteristics (Burgoon, 1993). Instructor-student relationship and instructor's communication characteristics likely play a role in determining if these violations are positive, neutral, or negative. Attractive relationship and communication characteristics, such as perceived homophily, may result in positive reward valence. It has been characterized as a positive force in instructor-student relationships and student learning outcomes (Rocca & McCroskey, 1999).

EVT and Instructor Homophily

EVT discerns between expectations of what is likely to occur and what should occur and prior research has examined prescriptive expectancies in the contexts of students' communication expectations of college instructors (Houser, 2005). Through the lens of EVT, it follows that communicative characteristics that are perceived positively and interpersonally desired, such as perceived homophily, potentially have neutralizing effects of expectancy violations such as instructors' inappropriate conversations.

Homophily promotes social interactions based on perceived similarities. Similarity connects individuals and structures network ties (Mark, 2003). In general, perceived homophily distinguishes in-group members from out-group members based on attitude homophily and background homophily (Hosek, 2015). It facilitates social cohesion and cooperation (Aksoy, 2015). McPherson et al. (2001) stated that homophily is a powerful and pervasive force that often determines who we interact with and form relationships with over time.

In the classroom context, students are more likely communicate with, understand (Rocca & McCroskey, 1999), and positively evaluate (Harwood, 2006) instructors who are perceived to be similar in attitude and background. Perceived homophily encourages student attendance (Broeckelman-Post & MacArthur, 2017), and participation in traditional face-to-face (Myers et al., 2009) and online classes (Shih et al., 2020). Moreover, instructor humor homophily enhances students' favorability of faculty and increases the likelihood of taking another class with them (West, 2019). Indeed, students who perceive their instructors as

homophilous also perceive them as nonverbally immediate and interpersonally attractive (McCroskey et al., 2014) – indicating perceived homophily is a desirable communicator characteristic. Homophily may be positioned as an attractive characteristic that influences students' perceptions of the instructor's reward value. Therefore, the following predictions are offered:

H2a: Perceived homophily will moderate the negative relationship between perceived inappropriateness of instructors' conversations and students' emotional interest.

H2b: Perceived homophily will moderate the negative relationship between perceived inappropriateness of instructors' conversations and students' cognitive interest.

Method

Participants and Procedures

Participants were 226 female (n = 135, 60%) and male (n = 91, 40%) undergraduate students across academic ranks (n = 38 first years, n = 60 sophomores, n = 63 juniors, n = 65 seniors), enrolled in lower-level communication courses at a Midwestern public university in the United States. The students' mean age was 20.55 (SD = 1.91, range = 18 to 28). Following Institutional Review Board approval, students were surveyed during the 13th week of a 15-week semester to allow them ample opportunity to develop perceptions of their instructors and classroom experiences. Instrument administration took place during normal class time, and students completed the measures in reference to the class that they attended immediately prior to the research session to ensure that they reported on a variety of courses (N = 38) and instructors (116 students reported on a female instructor while 110 reported on a male instructor).

Instrumentation

Instructor inappropriate conversations

For this study, Hullman's (2007) 14-item conversational inappropriateness other-report to assess instructors' communication in the classroom (e.g., "My instructor says things that should not be said") was used. Students assessed their perceptions of instructors on a 7-point, Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 7 (*strongly disagree*). Items were recoded so that a higher score represented inappropriate conversations. Hullman reported the coefficient alpha for the measure at .79. For this study, α = .86 (M = 30.01, SD = 21.62, range = 14 - 98).

Homophily

The Perceived Homophily Scale (McCroskey et al., 1975) measures perceived similarity between source and receiver. The 8-point bipolar scale uses a 7-point Likert-type response format describing a specific instructor (e.g., "thinks like me/doesn't think like me" and "background similar to mine/background different from mine"). Four of the items indicated similarity in attitude, and four indicated similarity in background. Eman Wheeless et al. (2011)

reported the coefficient alpha for the summed measure at .78. For this study, $\alpha = .86$ ($M = 33.94$, $SD = 8.72$, range = 8 - 56).

Student interest

Mazer's (2012) 16-item Student Interest Scale assessed emotional (e.g., "I feel enthused about being in class") and cognitive interest (e.g., "I can remember course material"). Students responded using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Mazer (2013c) reported reliability coefficients of .95 for emotional interest and .88 for cognitive interest. The two subscales were reliable for this study: $\alpha = .85$ ($M = 30.07$, $SD = 10.34$, range = 9 - 45) for emotional interest, and $\alpha = .90$ ($M = 26.24$, $SD = 6.40$, range = 7 - 35) for cognitive interest.

Results

Hypothesis 1 stated students' perceptions of instructors' inappropriate conversations in the classroom will negatively relate to their reports of emotional and cognitive interest. Pearson's correlations supported hypothesis 1. Results showed negative links between inappropriate conversations and emotional ($r = -.287$, $p < .0001$) and cognitive ($r = -.377$, $p < .0001$) interest.

Hypothesis 2a and 2b predicted perceived instructor homophily would moderate the relationships between instructor inappropriate conversations and students' emotional and cognitive interest. To test the hypotheses, a moderation analysis (model one) from the PROCESS macro in SPSS 22 was used (Hayes, 2013). Ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions were used to test for significant two-way interaction effect between inappropriate conversations and perceived homophily, while predicting emotional interest and cognitive interest. The Johnson-Neyman procedure in PROCESS 2.41, a computer program that allows SPSS to calculate mediation effects, was used as a follow-up to probe for significant two-way interaction effects, which specifies regions of significant interaction effects. The Johnson-Neyman procedure solves for values of the moderator (i.e. perceived homophily), which mark the transition between significant and nonsignificant effects of X (i.e. inappropriate conversations) on Y (i.e. student interest).

For emotional interest, the model was significant model, $F(3, 222) = 15.89$, $p < .0001$, $R^2 = .16$. The hypothesis was supported, coefficient = .044, se = .012, $t = 3.59$, $p < .0005$. Results of the Johnson-Newman technique (Table 1) revealed that the moderation was significant when $\theta_{XM} \geq -1.37$ (55.82% of the participants) and when $\theta_{XM} \geq 15.34$ (4.29% of the participants), which indicated that the moderation was significant for 60.11% of the participants. Table 2 is a summary of the conditional effects of instructor's inappropriate conversations on students' emotional interest at different values of instructor perceived homophily.

For cognitive interest, the model was also significant model, $F(3, 222) = 16.54$, $p < .0001$, $R^2 = .16$. The hypothesis was supported, coefficient = .036, se = .017, $t = 2.03$, $p < .05$. Results of the Johnson-Newman technique (Table 3) revealed that the moderation was significant when $\theta_{XM} \geq 3.86$ with 64.72% of the values producing moderation. Table 4 is a summary of the conditional effects of instructor's inappropriate conversations on students' emotional interest at different values of instructor perceived homophily.

Discussion

Guided by the theoretical assumptions of EVT, this study probed the role of homophily in understanding the pathways of the relationship among instructors' inappropriate conversations, students' emotional and cognitive interest in the college classroom with the goal of helping administrators mentor faculty about classroom communication. The major findings of this study were as follows: (a) instructor inappropriate conversations negatively associated with students' emotional and cognitive interest; (b) perceived homophily was found to have positive relationships with students' emotional and cognitive interest; and (c) perceived homophily served as a moderator between students' perceptions of instructors' inappropriate conversations and their reports of emotional and cognitive interest. These findings provide support for our hypotheses and replicate and extend the findings of previous instructional communication research.

This study has important implications for administrators and mentors focusing on communication theory and classroom practice. First, from a student perspective, instructors' engagement in inappropriate conversations in the classroom may curtail their emotional and cognitive interest. Instructors' teaching effectiveness is often evaluated based on how they communicate in the classroom (Rubin & Feezel, 1986), and the results indicate instructors' inappropriate conversations may be perceived as ineffective communication in the classroom. Kendrick and Darling (1990) stated effective instructor-student communication is crucial to the ideal classroom experience. "Communication enables teachers and students to engage in instructional tasks, facilitates social activity, and helps individuals to coordinate actions" (Kendrick & Darling, 1990, p. 15). Faculty need to be aware that what is discussed in the classroom can help or hinder student interest. Resulting in both positive and negative reviews of faculty members.

To maximize student interest, instructors should purposefully use relational teaching behaviors to build interpersonal relationships with their students. To facilitate these relationships, instructors need to be nonverbally immediate (e.g., smile, maintain eye contact, use expressive gestures), clear in instruction (e.g., offer specific, relevant examples to clarify concepts), and utilize appropriate self-disclosure (e.g., share relevant personal stories) (Borzea & Goodboy, 2016; Mazer, 2013a). In addition, displaying positive emotions such as enthusiasm, confidence, and self-assurance also will help promote student interest and engagement (Zhang & Zhang, 2013). Overall, instructors who adopt a relational approach to teaching incorporate homophilous messages into their lectures to enhance students' interest in the course content by relating the material to personal experiences.

Second, the study empirically highlights the importance of homophily as an attractive communicator characteristic that enhances students' perceptions of instructors—even when they communicate inappropriately in the classroom. Following the framework of EVT, there are socially accepted norms for communication in the classroom. Therefore, inappropriate conversations in the classroom risk violation of prescribed expectations. In turn, EVT predicts that perceiving positive communicator characteristics, such as perceived homophily, from a violator will positively influence the violation valence (Burgoon & Hale, 1988). As a desirable communicator characteristic, perceived homophily may allow instructors to recover when they violate expectations and communicate in ways that students consider rude, embarrassing, or improper.

In turn, perceived homophily moderated the negative links between instructors' inappropriate conversations and students' emotional and cognitive interest. Several explanations are possible for these results. First, students may make relational ties with

instructors who are similar to themselves than those who are not, and in turn, feel more comfortable interacting with them (Centola, González-Avella, Eguiluz, & San Miguel, 2007). These relational ties may enhance perceptions of instructor-student rapport and facilitate instructor liking and student engagement (Wilson & Ryan, 2013). Based on the findings, homophilous instructors may reduce the relational distance between them and their students in the classroom, and in turn, manage negative events such as inappropriate conversations more effectively than nonhomophilous instructors. Students' perceptions of instructor homophily may affect students' perceptions of communication appropriateness in the classroom. Communication may become more open and expressive in the classrooms with homophilous instructors.

Second, homophilous relations survive challenges. Galaskiewicz and Shatin (1981) said that homophily serves to maintain strong relational ties even during times of crisis or trouble. Following the framework of EVT, there are socially accepted norms for communication in the classroom. The theory is based upon the behavior or outcome expected from someone, and when that person displays an unexpected behavior, they violate the previous expectations put in place (Burgoon & Hale, 1988). Therefore, inappropriate conversations risk violation of prescribed expectations and decrease students' emotional and cognitive interest. Perceived homophily, as desirable communicator characteristic that strengthens relationships, may neutralize instructor violations and maintain students' emotional and cognitive interest.

Third, perceived homophily may be established prior to students enrolling in a course. Based on prior class experiences with an instructor or an instructor's known reputation, students may be aware of an instructor's communication behaviors. Students may seek out instructors who are similar in behavior and attitude. Kandel (1978) said that both positive and negative behaviors were homophilous because of selection into relationships with similar others rather than because of behavioral influence within social groups. Individuals seek or are otherwise attracted to others who are similar to them. Therefore, students who are comfortable with inappropriate conversations in the classroom may be more likely to enroll in a course with an instructor who engages in such conversations. In support, Gross et al. (2015) found students who matched with instructors (or positively rated them) after watching teaching demonstration videos responded positively to those specific instructors' live lectures later on in the semester. Likewise, Generous et al. (2015) found that students differ in their responses to instructor swearing in the classroom. Some students find swearing instructors more approachable while others perceive them as unprofessional and inappropriate. Therefore, the inappropriate conversations may be part of perceived homophily for some students. In these instances it might be useful to adopt Gross et al.'s (2015) proposal to develop online systems that allow students to watch and evaluate teaching demonstrations in order to match and then enroll in courses with instructors they positively evaluate.

Implications

Instructor effectiveness requires expertise in course content and classroom communication (Mottet et al., 2006), and mentors have the opportunity to introduce faculty to best practices in instructional communication. Through successful mentorship faculty can improve their current classroom communication practices, adopt new classroom communication approaches, and benefit from learning emerging trends. Research has shown that mentoring enhances teaching effectiveness (Williams, 1991) and increases faculty retention, recruitment satisfaction and productivity (Corcoran & Clark, 1984; Melicher, 2000). Boyle and Boice (1998) found that when administrators formalize the mentoring process it is

was deemed more effective than informal or self-selecting mentors. Moreover, mentoring networks have proven especially important in traditionally underrepresented faculty (Patton, 2009). When administration is cognizant of establishing mentoring relationships overall teaching effectiveness has the potential to improve (Pfund et al., 2006) especially when instructional communication skills are a foundation part of classroom mentoring.

Given the outcomes of this study, it is beneficial for instructors to establish perceptions of homophily between them and their students. Although students do not necessarily use the term *friendship* to describe their relationships with their instructors (Garko et al., 1994), the ways that students characterize ideal instructor-student relationships bear a striking resemblance to friendship in interpersonal communication research. Students believe relationships should be caring, mutually responsive, and have opportunities for one-on-one engagement (Chen, 2000). Therefore, like other interpersonal relationships, it may be beneficial for instructors to establish common ground and in turn develop perceptions of similarity. This is not to say instructors should mask differences when teaching. Instead, instructors should reinforce students' own thinking and values and demonstrate common backgrounds to facilitate perceived homophily when possible and appropriate (Hosek, 2015).

Limitations and Future Research Directions

In light of the results of this study, limitations and future research directions are worth noting. First, surveys were administered near the end of the semester to ensure students had ample opportunity to develop perceptions about the particular course and instructor that they assessed. The time of data collection may have influenced students' perceptions of instructor inappropriate conversations and perceived homophily. Induced homophily develops from interaction dynamics that may make interactants more similar over time (McPherson et al., 2001). The classroom may create social ties that generate perceived homophily through a connected classroom climate. Therefore, an adaptive phenomenon may occur in the classroom. Instructors and students may exert socialization influences on one another, becoming more similar over time. Researchers may consider students' perceptions of perceived instructor homophily over the course of a semester.

It was also not determined if students enrolled in a particular class with prior knowledge or experience with their assessed instructor. Prescriptive versus predictive expectancies could vary widely by how well the student knows the instructor, how many times the student has had a class with the instructor, and at what point in the semester the "inappropriate conversation" occurs. McPherson et al. (2001) stated, "Homophily limits people's social worlds in a way that has powerful implications for the information they receive, the attitudes they form, and the interactions they experience" (p. 415). Future research should determine the benefits and consequences of this occurrence.

Lastly, the underlying assumption that instructors have control over the degree of homophily that students experience with them in the classroom and that homophily is always a good thing since it is associated with positive student outcomes is worth further inquiry. A growing body of research suggests that there are strong biases in the ways that student evaluate certain demographics of instructors, with negative biases often found in evaluations of female, black, and gay instructors (e.g., Calafell, 2010; Mckenna-Buchanan et al., 2015). Are there unique patterns *in* which instructors are perceived to have lower levels of attitude and background homophily? Is that perception related primarily to the instructor's communication with students, or is it instead related to demographic factors such as race, ethnicity, national heritage, religion, and sexuality? For example, faculty of color experience myriad of challenges

in the classroom at predominantly white campuses (Stanley, 2006). How does perceived instructor homophily affect classroom experiences at a diverse campus where students and instructors come from a wide range of racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural backgrounds where we might expect to have lower levels of homophily?

Perceptions of difference might influence students to evaluate instructors and their own learning experience in ways that reflect underlying biases. Addressing how students and instructors can overcome perceived differences in background and attitude so that learning can be enhanced through diversity in the classroom is worth consideration. Given the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education, mentors and faculty need to acknowledge the risks and benefits related to perceptions of difference in the classroom. For example, Cooper et al. (2019) interviewed LGQTQ+ faculty and found that costs of coming out of classroom included receiving negative student evaluations, while benefits included a more authentic classroom experience for faculty and greater representation of the LGBTQ+ community in higher education. Administrators need to be cognizant of having diverse faculty that can connect with diverse student populations.

Conclusion

Communication education literature and instructional communication scholars have continued to articulate the need for a "reflective teaching" style that emphasizes the importance of effectively communicating with students (Hendrix, 2010 p. 85). Kerssen-Griep (2012) argued that the administrative mentoring process needs to include many of the education and instructional communication theories that we take for granted in the teaching process. As noted by Hendrix, (2010) "we are capable of advancing our profession by enhancing the quality of our teaching" (p. 98). Moreover, Frisby et al. (2015) argued that by investigating instructor-student(s) communication scholars (and administrators) can better understand the reasons that faculty members persist or leave higher education. This requires a mentoring process where administrators emphasize the importance of effective communication in the classroom.

This paper adds to the administrative literature by arguing that instructional communication theory needs to be at the forefront of mentoring faculty. A successful faculty mentoring program should not only revolve around classroom teaching and giving insightful feedback from observations on classroom teaching skills (Kerssen-Griep, 2012) but it should also include helping faculty recognize many of the principles found in instructional communication theory (Hendrix, 2010). Instructors need be aware that their communication not only provides students with course content but also affects students' perceptions about the course. Instructors' inappropriate conversations can undermine students' emotional and cognitive interest. Therefore, administrators need to mentor instructors to help them cultivate relationally-oriented teaching methods that strive to develop and maintain perceptions of homophily. In line with the tenets of EVT, perceived homophily was positioned as a positive communicator characteristic, which in turn determined how students perceived an instructor's inappropriate conversations or negative expectancy violation. Overall, homphilous instructors better recover from in-class transgressions (i.e., inappropriate conversations). In the mentoring process, administrators need to remind instructors to consider the role perceived homophily plays in neutralizing the negative associations between inappropriate conversations and student emotional and cognitive interest.

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Table 1

Johnson-Neyman Technique for Identifying Regions of Significant Moderation: The Conditional Effect of Inappropriate Conversations on Emotional Interest at Values of Perceived Homophily

homophily	Coefficient	*SE*	*t*	*p*	LLCI	ULCI
-25.70	**-1.3306**	**.31**	**-4.2488**	**.00**	**-1.94**	**-.71**
-23.30	**-1.2236**	**.28**	**-4.2774**	**.00**	**-1.78**	**-.66**
-20.90	**-1.1165**	**.25**	**-4.3022**	**.00**	**-1.62**	**-.60**
-18.50	**-1.0095**	**.23**	**-4.3180**	**.00**	**-1.46**	**-.54**
-16.10	**-.9025**	**.20**	**-4.3154**	**.00**	**-1.31**	**-.49**
-13.70	**-.7954**	**.18**	**-4.2771**	**.00**	**-1.16**	**-.42**
-11.30	**-.6884**	**.16**	**-4.1729**	**.00**	**-1.01**	**-.36**
-8.90	**-.5813**	**.14**	**-3.9540**	**.00**	**-.87**	**-.29**
-6.50	**-.4743**	**.13**	**-3.5554**	**.00**	**-.73**	**-.21**
-4.10	**-.3673**	**.12**	**-2.9264**	**.00**	**-.61**	**-.12**
-1.70	**-.2602**	**.12**	**-2.0915**	**.03**	**-.50**	**-.01**
-1.37	**-.2456**	**.12**	**-1.9674**	**.05**	**-.49**	**.00**
.69	-.1532	.13	-1.1753	.24	-.40	.10
3.09	-.0461	.14	-.3240	.74	-.32	.23
5.49	.0609	.15	.3828	.70	-.25	.37
7.89	.1680	.17	.9367	.34	-.18	.52
10.29	.2750	.20	1.3621	.17	-.12	.67
12.69	.3820	.22	1.6893	.09	-.06	.82
15.09	**.4891**	**.25**	**1.9439**	**.05**	**-.00**	**.98**
15.34	**.5004**	**.25**	**1.9674**	**.05**	**.00**	**1.00**
17.49	**.5961**	**.27**	**2.1450**	**.03**	**.04**	**1.14**
19.89	**.7032**	**.30**	**2.3065**	**.02**	**.10**	**1.30**
22.29	**.8102**	**.33**	**2.4381**	**.01**	**.15**	**1.46**

Note. The region of significant moderation is bolded. Moderator value defining the region of significance moderation when $\theta_{XM} \geq -1.37$ (55.82% of the participants) and when $\theta_{XM} \geq 15.34$ (4.29% of the participants), which indicated that the moderation was significant for 60.11% of the participants.

Table 2

Conditional Effects of Inappropriate Conversations on Emotional Interest

					95% CI	
Homophily	Coefficient	*SE*	*t*	*p*	LLCI	ULCI
-9.44	-.60	.15	-4.01	<.0001	-.8017	-.3088
.00	-.18	.13	-1.44	=.15	-.4358	.0675
9.44	.24	.20	1.22	=.22	-.1440	.6179

Note. The conditional effects are estimated using ± SD of the moderator. Estimates were calculated using the PROCESS macro developed by Hayes (2013). CI = confidence interval. CIs are based on the bootstrapping of 5,000 samples.

Table 3

Johnson-Neyman Technique for Identifying Regions of Significant Moderation: The Conditional Effect of Inappropriate Conversations on Cognitive Interest at Values of Perceived Homophily

homophily	Coefficient	*SE*	*t*	*p*	LLCI	ULCI
-25.70	**-1.6257**	**.45**	**-3.57**	**.00**	**-2.52**	**-.72**
-23.30	**-1.5388**	**.41**	**-3.66**	**.00**	**-2.36**	**-.71**
-20.90	**-1.4519**	**.38**	**-3.76**	**.00**	**-2.21**	**-.69**
-18.50	**-1.3650**	**.35**	**-3.85**	**.00**	**-2.06**	**-.66**
-16.10	**-1.2781**	**.32**	**-3.94**	**.00**	**-1.91**	**-.64**
-13.70	**-1.1913**	**.29**	**-3.99**	**.00**	**-1.77**	**-.60**
-11.30	**-1.1044**	**.27**	**-4.00**	**.00**	**-1.64**	**-.56**
-8.90	**-1.0175**	**.25**	**-3.93**	**.00**	**-1.52**	**-.50**
-6.50	**-.9306**	**.24**	**-3.75**	**.00**	**-1.41**	**-.44**
-4.10	**-.8437**	**.24**	**-3.45**	**.00**	**-1.32**	**-.36**
-1.70	**-.7568**	**.24**	**-3.05**	**.00**	**-1.24**	**-.26**
.69	**-.6700**	**.25**	**-2.59**	**.01**	**-1.17**	**-.16**
3.09	**-.5831**	**.27**	**-2.11**	**.03**	**-1.12**	**-.04**
3.86	**-.5553**	**.28**	**-1.96**	**.05**	**-1.11**	**.00**
5.49	-.4962	.29	-1.66	.09	-1.08	.08
7.89	-.4093	.32	-1.26	.20	-1.04	.22
10.29	-.3224	.35	-.91	.36	-1.01	.37
12.69	-.2356	.38	-.61	.54	-.99	.52
15.09	-.1487	.42	-.35	.72	-.97	.67
17.49	-.0618	.45	-.13	.89	-.95	.83
19.89	.0251	.49	.05	.95	-.94	.99
22.29	.1120	.52	.21	.83	-.92	1.15

Note. The region of significant moderation is bolded. Moderator value defining the region of significance = 3.86 with 64.72% of the values producing moderation.

Table 4

Conditional Effects of Inappropriate Conversations on Cognitive Interest

					95% CI	
Homophily	Coefficient	*SE*	*t*	*p*	LLCI	ULCI
-9.44	-1.03	.26	-3.96	<.0001	-1.552	-.5218
.00	-.69	.25	-2.72	<.01	-1.196	-.1940
9.44	-.35	.34	-1.02	=.30	-1.028	.3216

Note. The conditional effects are estimated using ± SD of the moderator. Estimates were calculated using the PROCESS macro developed by Hayes (2013). CI = confidence interval. CIs are based on the bootstrapping of 5,000 samples.

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