

ComSHER in Toronto This Year!

By Avery Holton, Head

For those ComSHER members who are sports fans, what a great time to be visiting Toronto. Fresh off the city's first NBA title, Toronto is abuzz with energy and should offer a nice respite for those of us living through the summer swelter.

ComSHER also has experienced a banner year, drawing a record number of paper submissions (160 submissions; 65 acceptances) and introducing our inaugural Teaching Award, which will be shared amongst five panelists on Wednesday, August 7 from 1:30-3:00 p.m.

We also received a nod from the AEJMC top brass for our continued efforts toward diversifying our panels and our leadership. A very big thanks to Rachel Young, Kajsa Dalrymple, Sara Yeo, and Timothy Fung for their leadership support and service this year. As one of AEJMC's largest divisions, our leadership takes on a great deal of responsibility and work. These four have been instrumental to our growth and success. If you see them or any other members of our terrific leadership group around Toronto, please tell them thanks.

Our Top Papers will be shared on Thursday from 5-6:30 p.m., followed directly by our business meeting where we will recognize all of our Top Paper and Lori Eason Prize winners.

We'll also be selecting and introducing new officers at this time. Our Head, Vice Head/Program Chair, Vice-Head Elect, and Research Chair progress in order per our by-laws. All others interested in serving or progressing should contact me at least two days before the conference begins (averyholton@gmail.com).

All ComSHER members are eligible to serve in appointed leadership positions. However, students may only serve in the capacity of Student Liaison, Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Website Editor, and Social Media Editor.

After our business meeting, in which we'll also share details from our annual report, we'll head over to our off-site social at Boxcar Social (<https://www.boxcarsocial.ca>), which is a short walk from the hotel. We're all set for drinks and light bites from 8:30-11:30 p.m., so please do join us. Feel free to bring partners or perspective members to help us celebrate another successful year!

ComSHER Announces 2019 Article of the Year

By Rachel Young, Vice-Head

We had an excellent group of nominees for this year's ComSHER Article of the Year Award. The best papers published in 2018 were selected after two rounds of peer review. Many thanks to all of the reviewers — three ComSHER officers and our expert panel of journal editors, full professors, and past ComSHER heads — who helped with this year's process. Thanks also to all those who nominated articles from 2018.

This year's first-place article was "Pathways of Influence in Emotional Appeals: Benefits and Tradeoffs of Using Fear or Humor to Promote Climate Change-Related Intentions and Risk Perceptions" by Christofer Skurka, Jeff Niederdeppe, Rainer Romero-Canyas, and David Acup. The experimental study appeared in *Journal of Communication* and found that while both fear and humor appeals influenced climate change activism, only fear appeals directly affected risk perceptions.

This year's runner-up was "A Systematic Review of Frames in News Reporting of Health Risks: Characteristics, Construct Consistency vs. Name Diversity, and the Relationship of Frames to Framing Functions" by Viorela Dan and Juliana Raupp. The paper, which appeared in *Health, Risk, & Society*, reviewed 37 articles and found sizable variation in how frames were named in research as well as opportunities to build theory by increasing nuance and consistency in identifying frames.

Among our other finalists, four papers earned very similar scores from our expert judges and are named as honorable mentions:

"Taking Climate Change Here and Now – Mitigating Ideological Polarization with Psychological Distance" by Haoran Chu and Janet Z. Yang in *Global Environmental Change*

"Online, Offline, or Word-of-Mouth? Complementary Media Usage Patterns and Credibility Perceptions of Nuclear Energy in Southeast Asia" by Shirley S. Ho, Alisius D. Leong, Jiemin Looi, and Agnes S.F. Chuah in *Energy Research & Social Science*

"When Personal Feels Invasive: Foreseeing Challenges in Precision Medicine Communication" by Chelsea L. Ratcliff, Kimberley A. Kaphingst, and Jakob D. Jensen in *Journal of Health Communication*

"Using the CAUSE Model to Understand Public Communication About Water Risks: Perspectives from Texas Groundwater District Officials on Drought and Availability" by Matthew S. VanDyke and Andy J. King in *Risk Analysis*

A Great Year for ComSHER Submissions

By Sara K. Yeo, Research Chair

Before I describe this year's Research Paper Competition, I want to take this opportunity to thank the many of you who reviewed for our Division. On behalf of the leadership of our division, **thank you!** None of this is possible without your contribution; we value your service and are grateful that you continue to be part of our community in this way.

Competition was fierce this year! We received 141 valid research paper submissions and were only able to accept 65 papers, partly due to scheduling constraints. Each submission was reviewed by three scholars and those with the highest scores will be presented in our Division's Top Papers Session in Toronto (schedule details below).

Congratulations to our student winners of the Eason Prize this year! The top three student papers were ranked as follows:

- 1st place "Liking and Physical Attraction offer Promising Pathways to Policy Persuasion despite Potentially Negative Narrative Influence" by Julie Cannon, Cornell University
- 2nd place "Fear and Hope, Bitter and Sweet: Emotion Sharing of Cancer Community on Twitter" by Jinping Wang and Lewen Wei, Pennsylvania State University
- 3rd place "Follow the Heart or the Mind? Examining Cognitive and Affective Attitude on HPV Vaccination Intention" by Xizhu Xiao, Washington State University

A total of 20 papers will be presented in paper sessions and 45 more will be presented at scholar-to-scholar sessions at the annual meeting. I've included a schedule of Division sessions below—looking forward to great discussions in Toronto!

And one more THANK YOU to the reviewers who make this possible!

Wednesday, August 7, 2019

- 11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. Emotion and Affect in Science, Health, Environment, and Risk Communication
- 3:15 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. Science and Environmental Communication: From Scientists to Science Fiction

Thursday, August 8, 2019

- 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. ComSHER Division Top Papers Session
- 6:45 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. ComSHER Division Business Meeting followed by social

Friday, August 9, 2019

- 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. AEJMC Poster Session (5 papers from ComSHER Division)
- 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. ComSHER Division Scholar-to-Scholar Session (40 papers)

Saturday, August 10, 2019

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Using Narrative in Communicating Science, Health,
Environment, and Risk

Two Exciting Panels in Toronto Will Feature Teaching Excellence in ComSHER and Science-Religion Debate

By Timothy Fung, Teaching Chair

ComSHER announces its winners of the inaugural ComSHER Teaching Award at the 2019 Annual Conference. The other panel is co-sponsored with the Religion and Media Interest Group to examine how to prepare students to address challenges when reporting issues of conflict between science and religion. The information for these two panels is provided below. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

ComSHER Teaching Award Panel August 7, 2019 (Wednesday), 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

This is the inaugural ComSHER Teaching Award session. The Teaching Award aims to identify innovative and effective pedagogy in the communication of science, health, environment, and risk. This session will feature the 2019 winners of the ComSHER Teaching Award. The session is intended for any scholar or practitioner teaching in the areas of science, health, environment, and risk communication. The competition winners will share their teaching submissions, explaining their innovative approaches and how they apply those inside and beyond their classes. In addition, these winning entries can be found on the ComSHER website, under Teaching Award: <https://aejmc.us/comsher/>

Moderating/Presiding:

Rachel Young, Iowa

Chris Clarke, George Mason

First Place

Cynthia-Lou Coleman, Portland State

Second Place

Shirley Ho, Nanyang Technological

Third Place

Jessica Willoughby, Washington State

Honorable Mention

Mary Beth Deline, Illinois State

Interaction and Conflict of Science and Religion Teaching Panel August 8, 2019 (Thursday), 3:15 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

The debate between science and religion has a long history, and at times it impacts

communication about health. The purpose of this teaching panel is how to prepare students to report issues that spark conflict between science and religion.

Sometimes, the reporting of science and religion is harmonious. Prophetic figures are often seen as healers, and so religious figures may inspire health practitioners and health communities. This perspective manifests itself in religiously-affiliated hospitals, as demonstrated in Missouri with both the Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Christian Hospital in St. Louis.

Other times, religious groups are targeted with misinformation as demonstrated in a story on Russian bots spreading misinformation about vaccines. Some religious groups also make headlines because their beliefs about health issues like breastfeeding, circumcision and birth control may conflict with current scientific practices and norms.

Panelists will share their experience with classroom activities and case studies that will prepare students to address the challenges when reporting issues of conflict between science and religion.

Moderating/Presiding:

Jeanine Guidry, Virginia Commonwealth

Panelists:

Paul Glader, The King's College

Matthew VanDyke, Alabama

Michelle Frazer, Princeton

Professional Freedom & Responsibility (PF&R) Panels in Toronto

By Leona Yi-Fan Su, PF&R Chair

We are featuring two PF&R panels at the 2019 AEJMC Annual Conference. The information is provided below. Mark your calendar!

Session 1

Strategic Use of Social Media and Social Media Data for Science and Health Communication

11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., Thursday, August 8

Communicating Science, Health, Environment and Risk and Communication Theory and Methodology Divisions

This panel will focus on the analysis and strategic use of social media for science and health communication. It will include discussion about real-world conduct and methodological challenges related to collecting and analyzing social media data.

Moderating/Presiding:

Jason T. Peifer, Indiana University

Panelists:

Paige Brown Jarreau, LifeOmic

Itai Himelboim, University of Georgia

Jill Hopke, DePaul University

Nicole Lee, NC State University

Pat Rich, Health Quality Ontario

Session 2

Health and Science Misinformation on Social Media

1:15 to 2:45 p.m., Friday, August 9

Mass Communication and Society and Communicating Science, Health, Environment and Risks Divisions

Health and science misinformation may influence people's attitudes and behaviors, diverting individuals from what they would have thought and behaved if correctly informed, and even pose them to life-threatening risks in certain situations. The problem is rooted in a multifaceted environment, in which budget cuts in news production, barriers to public engagement in science communication, and competing interests and agendas may all play a role. Many forces have joined in the battle against health and science misinformation. This panel will help understand how health and science misinformation may shape the society and what strategies may be effective to fight misinformation in real-life situations.

Moderating/Presiding:

Laura Sheble, Wayne State University

Panelists:

Leticia Bode, Georgetown University

Genna Buck, Post Media

Aniruddho Chokroborty-Hoque, Science Writers and Communicators of Canada

Bruno Takahashi, Michigan State University

Emily Vraga, George Mason University

A Day of Fun Adventure at the Royal Ontario Museum with ComSHER members!

By Sojung Kim, Secretary

Please join the Communicating Science, Health, Environment, and Risk Division for a trip to the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), the largest science museum of its kind in Canada. This museum offers a lot of interesting exhibitions and galleries, featuring nature, science, history, and art. We may be able to meet its staff members to learn more about upcoming collections, curation choices, and/or community projects. The field trip will occur on August 8, 2019, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. There will be a \$15 fee toward admission. Here is the museum's website if you want to check out current exhibits, shows, and activities: <https://www.ontariosciencecentre.ca/>. For more information about the trip, please contact the division membership chair, Dr. Tsung-Jen Shih, at tjshih@nccu.edu.

NEWS FROM SCIENCE COMMUNICATION: LINKING THEORY AND PRACTICE

By Susanna Priest, *Science Communication* Editor-in-Chief

Look for our August 2019 theme issue on “Communication and Persuasion on Energy, Environment, and Climate.” Five researchers (and their team members) plus a scientist poet make some new suggestions. Each offers clues as to dimensions deserving more attention. Some people might argue that persuasion is not our goal. I address this question briefly in the introduction to this theme issue, because I think that in the end we usually do want to encourage people to make choices consistent with available scientific evidence – especially in today’s difficult political context and under the looming shadow of potential global catastrophe.

Watch for more work along these (and many other) lines of inquiry in future issues. And, as always, some of these papers should be published and available through Sage’s Online First feature even before the theme issue actually appears. Access these through our website at scx.sagepub.com (this should redirect to <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/scx>).

To submit your own work, head to <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/sc>.

PEOPLE NEWS

An Associate SC Editor since 2010, Cynthia Coleman has received a Fulbright Research Chair at Vancouver Island University in British Columbia for the fall. She is also finalizing her forthcoming book examining discourse surrounding conflicts between Native American communities and both policy-makers and scientists, to be published by Palgrave-Macmillan. With all this on her plate, she is (alas) stepping back from her SC AE role. Cindy will return to her professorship in communication at Portland State early in 2020, where she will still remain actively involved with the journal.

Marilee Long, professor in the Department of Journalism and Technical Communication and also the Department of Community and Behavioral Health at Colorado State, has also been involved with SC for many years. She has now accepted the new title of Senior Associate Editor at SC. Her role has been shifting lately from that of an AE managing the review process for an assigned share of submissions to more of a consultant weighing in under special circumstances (often where another editor needs a second opinion). This division of labor should work well for the journal and take full advantage of Marilee’s deep expertise.

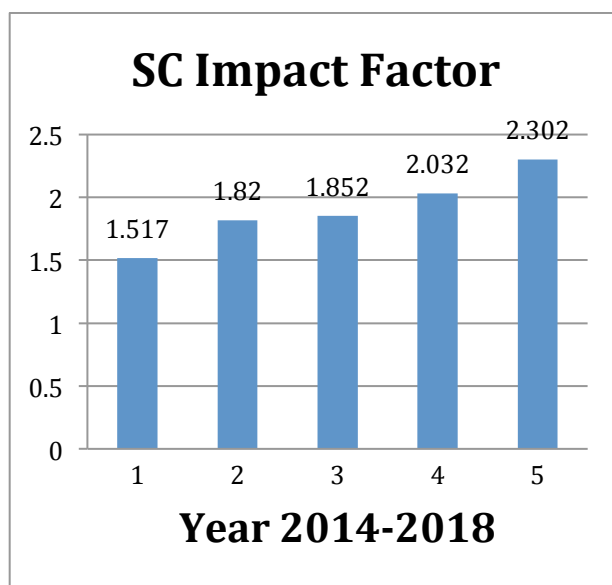
Jessica Myrick has been doing an absolutely awesome job as our newest Associate Editor. She brings enthusiasm, smarts, good judgment, and strong editorial experience to this role. Meanwhile, however, we are once again in a position where we could use an additional Associate Editor (or even two) to keep up with the workflow. For more information on what this volunteer service role entails, feel free to write me directly. You’ll be helping a worthy cause – the success and visibility of our field!

Linda Billings continues to deftly manage almost all of the Commentary submissions, providing insightful suggestions and recommendations to both the authors and to myself.

NUMBERS NEWS

Our acceptance rate for 2018 for full-length research submissions has been hovering around the same figure as for 2017 at 15%. We'll be able to confirm the exact figure very shortly, once a handful of remaining revisions from 2018 receive a final decision. We received a grand total of 218 submissions (total for all types, including notes and commentary) in 2018. As of June 28, 2019, we had received 105 total 2019 submissions, so we are about on the same track in terms of quantity as last year. In terms of quality, what we publish remains highly competitive (as reflected in the acceptance rate), as well as highly cited, reflected in our rising impact factor.

Meanwhile, very good news on that last front! Our impact factor continues on its steady climb, as measured by the latest JCR data provided by Sage below. The chart below reflects an increase of over 50% in our journal impact factor over the past five years.



This represents the number of citations in 2018 to research we published in 2016 and 2017. (Our five-year impact factor is 2.955 – this is also good, suggesting much of our work has lasting value to other scholars.) This success is directly due to the hard work of our authors, associate editors, board members, and many dozens of other dedicated reviewers.

A SMALL REQUEST FROM THE EDITOR

I receive a lot of inquiries these days from authors who worry the system continues to show “awaiting administrative processing” in Manuscript Central for what seems like too long after submission. This does not mean your paper has been lost or forgotten. An initial evaluation (prior to peer review) takes up to six weeks or so, primarily because there is a

queue but also because a lot goes into this. Everything is processed in order of submission, with few exceptions. So long as you have received a confirmation email, we have your submission. (Psst! Pass this along!!)

Almost everyone still receives an initial decision within three months or less, occasionally four. Please be patient. After about three months, we'll likely know more. We are still faster than many (if not most) journals, in terms of both decisions and actual publication.

WHO WE ARE

New to ComSHER and *Science Communication*? We are effectively the only JCR-ranked communication journal in the world specializing in this particular subject matter; we are interdisciplinary and publish rigorous, theory-driven empirical papers growing primarily out of various social science traditions, including qualitative and quantitative ones, and occasional humanities projects with an empirical dimension. (*Public Understanding of Science* is probably our closest competition and worth keeping up with, but has a slightly different focus as suggested by its title.) We also publish shorter Research Notes and occasional Commentaries, not peer reviewed, related to policy, programs, ideas, and scholarly controversies in science communication. We define science communication broadly to include work on health and environment that closely aligns with our core mission. We are not formally affiliated with any academic society but many of our authors and reviewers are ComSHER or PCST Network members. Check us out!

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