

# COMMUNICATION STUDIES I

**Section Moderator: Dr. Suzanne Lindsey**

**Room: Wheeler Humanities Building 309**

**Time: 7:00 – 9:00 PM**

**7:00 – 7:30**

**“Making Cents of Sympathy: Adapting Aristotle’s Advice on Pity to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nonprofit Fundraising”**

Sara N. Grove

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Suzanne E. Lindsey

Over 2000 years ago, Aristotle named pity one of the most powerful emotional appeals a speaker could make (Rees 4). Along with defining the nature of pity, he instructed speakers on how to elicit pity from an audience, naming several constraints necessary for a functional appeal. Two nonprofit organizations, World Vision and Invisible Children, will be used to test the longevity of Aristotle’s observations. These two case studies reveal that while much of the classical perspective remains current, the Greek assumption that the audience must feel vulnerable to a similar threat may be obsolete. If true, this may provide evidence of a positive evolution in the emotive capacity of human beings to feel compassion.

**7:30 – 8:00**

**“How I Lost My Feminist Roots: A Fantasy-Theme Analysis of *Cosmopolitan*’s Relationship Advice”**

Meg Tully

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Suzanne E. Lindsey

After a substantial makeover in 1965, *Cosmopolitan* became one of the most successful magazines in the country. Its massive success has inspired numerous copycat publications. Elle Woods famously refers to it as “The Bible” in the movie *Legally Blonde*. *Cosmopolitan*, or *Cosmo* for short, has long-been hailed as a feminist icon. In 1965, Helen Gurley Brown retooled the focus of the magazine to cater to the modern woman. Gurley Brown and *Cosmo* broke new ground by boldly revealing that nice, single women have and enjoy sex, introducing the g-spot and the female orgasm to the general public, and featuring Burt Reynolds as a nude male centerfold.

Unfortunately, *Cosmo* has lost some of its feminist roots. These changes are especially evident in the magazine’s relationship advice. Though the editors hold that *Cosmo*’s emphasis is on “how to be happier, healthier, and more fulfilled,” the latest issues seem to be geared towards landing a man and eventually making him an exclusive boyfriend. By using fantasy-theme analysis to evaluate the twelve 2008 issues, particularly the Man Manual and

Love & Lust sections, it is clear that *Cosmopolitan*'s relationship advice is actually anti-feminist in nature by encouraging manipulation, elevating the male ego, and reinforcing stereotypical female behavior.

**8:00 – 8:30**

**“Evaluation of Franklin High School’s Crisis Communication Plans”**

Amanda Michelle Hargis

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Diane Monahan

This paper evaluates the strength of the existing crisis communication plans being used by Franklin High School. First the organizational culture of Franklin High School is evaluated and pertinent background information about the Williamson County School System is reviewed. The current crisis plans are reviewed, and personal interviews are cited with both high school Vice Principals as well as head of the Williamson County Schools central office Communications Director. Finally, suggestions are made to improve the plan in certain areas that could be stronger suited for the school to manage a crisis situation.

**8:30 – 9:00**

**“Don’t Mind Him, Jesus; He’s Jewish: A Fantasy-Theme Analysis of *South Park* and Religion”**

Meg Tully

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Suzanne E. Lindsey

*South Park* is one of the most polarizing television shows on the air. It holds the Guinness World Record for “Most Swearing in an Animated Series.” Russia has labeled it “extremist” and subsequently banned it from their country. However, it has also been nominated for eight primetime Emmy awards and won three. *South Park* is one of the most poignant sources of satire on television and has been a major reflection of pop culture for over twelve years.

The first episode of *South Park* depicted a stereotypical Jewish boy in the background fully decked out in a yamulkah and tallit complaining about his “bad, bad gas” in a nasally voice. From that moment on, *South Park* has regularly lampooned every religion, much to the chagrin of the devout. In fact, the episode that prompted Russia to label *South Park* as extremist was a Christmas special from 1999 called *Mr. Hankey’s Christmas Classics*, a compilation of several short skits about the various winter holidays hosted by a talking piece of poo. Many people on both sides of the religious spectrum have described the show as disrespectful and faith-beating. However, just as many people, if not more, find merit in the show’s values. By using fantasy-theme analysis to evaluate how various religions are presented, as well as religious staples like God, Heaven, Satan, and Hell, we can see that *South Park* actually appeals to most Americans’ values and denounces extremism in all forms of religion.