

## **2018 ICA FSD Pre-Conference Prague**

### **Promises and Perils of Feminist Theory: Common and Uncommon Ground**

#### **Time, Location, Fee**

Thursday, May 24, 2018

13:00-17:00 Local Time (with 11:30-13:00 offsite lunch, volunteer-basis, location TBD)

In one of the two Conference Hotels (details to come)

Participant registration fee: \$25

#### **Organizers**

Diana Nastasia, Southern Illinois, Edwardsville

Lana Rakow, University of North Dakota

Stine Eckert, Wayne State University

#### **Description**

The pre-conference will be a half-day session for Thursday afternoon, May 24, 2018, 13:00-17:00 local time in one of the two conference hotels in Prague. The session will address the issue of feminist communication theory under the title “Promise and Perils of Feminist Theory: Common and Uncommon Ground.”

The topic is timely. After discussions about feminist theory in communication that peaked over a decade ago, the subject has not received sustained current attention, despite significant work and critiques by transnational feminists. While important feminist work still is being conducted across speech, rhetoric, journalism, mass communication, and digital technologies, it is time to take stock.

What has happened to feminist communication theory? What theories have or have not proven to be useful or heuristic for feminist work in communication? What theories, if any, do we or could we share across our epistemological and ideological differences? Have some theories failed us, or has theory itself failed us? Does or can theory better inform our praxis? Should we pursue the identification of theories – naming names – as a short hand for what we think we know, a foundation for building deeper understanding and potential for change? Or do we need to abandon such efforts because of the peril of essentializing and universalizing?

#### **Schedule**

11.30-13.00 Lunch – Off-Site, on volunteer basis, Location TBD

13:00-14:30 Introduction and Introductions: Lana Rakow, University of North Dakota

*Invited Panelists: “Feminist Communication Theory: Issues and Positions”*

Discussion of key theories used by feminist media and communication scholars and their applicability, or not, across paradigms, politics, identities, countries and cultures;

identification of gaps and absences and failures of our theorizing, as well as promising new directions.

Panelists:

- Diana Nastasia, Southern Illinois, Edwardsville
- Others TBA

14:30-14:45 Break and Networking

14:45-16:00 Concurrent Breakout Sessions (Choose one)

*Breakout Session 1: Recurring Problematics in Doing Feminist Scholarship*

This break-out session will address several major, ongoing problems in and barriers to doing and advancing feminist scholarship. After discussing these, panelists and audience members will offer suggestions for short- and long-term mitigations, solutions, and interventions. Ideas that both provide examples of the problems and that suggest interventions will be actively solicited and collected from audience members. A designated note-taker will summarize at the end the group's findings regarding problems, explanations, and interventions so that these can be presented to the entire pre-conference group.

Sub-themes for group discussions/exercises/recommendations include:

1. What is the role of feminist media/communication journals encyclopedias, anthologies, and journals in advancing, mapping, remapping, and/or burying feminist research and how might these initiatives best be supported by feminist communication communities? (Lisa McLaughlin)
2. How do we intervene to challenge the ongoing privileging of patriarchal ways of doing communication scholarship? (Vicki Mayer)
3. What are the continuing barriers to recognition, reward, and support for feminist research in the academy and how might we challenge them? (Carolyn Byerly)
4. What are the best ways to link media pedagogy, media practice, and theory in order to advance feminist epistemologies? (Cindy Carter)
5. What explains the relative lack of professional recognition and validation of feminist media research by scholarly organizations (such as ICA) and what can we do about it? (Linda Steiner)

Panelists:

- Carolyn M. Byerly, Dept. of Communication, Culture & Media Studies, Howard University, USA
- Cynthia Carter, School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, Cardiff University, UK
- Vicki Mayer, Dept. of Communication, Tulane University, USA
- Lisa McLaughlin, Dept. of Media, Journalism & Film, Miami University-Ohio, USA

- Linda Steiner, Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland, USA

*Break Out Session 2: “Generating Feminist Communication Theory”*

This break-out session will create a space for those currently working on developing new theory or who are working to advance existing theories from a feminist perspective. How can one best go about creating theory or pushing current theories further? Which theories may exist to help develop or advance theories? Panelists will discuss their efforts to theorize using feminist scholarship and the obstacles and opportunities they have encountered. A designated note-taker will summarize at the end the group’s discussion so that these can be presented to the entire pre-conference group.

Panelists:

- Stine Eckert, Dept. of Communication, Wayne State University, organizer and chair
- Participants selected from Call for Position Papers

16:00-16:15 Break and Networking

16:15-17:00 Reports from breakout sessions, further discussion, strategies for next steps