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Orality Journal

The Word Became Fresh

**Honor and
Shame
and Oral
Preference
Learners**

**Mischke • Wilson • McFarland • Doll • Hall • Trinh
Patrick • Kabete**

THE 3D GOSPEL

MINISTRY IN GUILT, SHAME, AND FEAR CULTURES



Jayson Georges



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Cover Photo

A royal knight of chivalry kneels in prayer in a chapel of the Tower of London. The Tower is one of the residences of the British monarchy – it was founded in 1066 and houses the crown jewels. This whole complex has witnessed the Bohemian Reformation of the 14th century, the Gutenberg Press revolution of the 15th century, the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century and the English Reformation of the 16th century; now, silently it is witnessing the digital revolution of the 21st century.

Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced.
Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know
I will not be put to shame.

Isaiah 50:7

After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and
be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify
many, and he will bear their iniquities.

Isaiah 53:11

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality
with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature² of a servant, being made in human
likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled
himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!
Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him
the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the
earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to
the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5—11

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Orality Journal is the journal of the International Orality Network. It is published online semi-annually and aims to provide a platform for scholarly discourse on the issues of orality, discoveries of innovations in orality, and praxis of effectiveness across multiple domains in society. This online journal is international and interdisciplinary, serving the interests of the orality movement through research articles, documentation, book reviews, and academic news. Occasionally, print editions will be provisioned. Submission of items that could contribute to the furtherance of the orality movement is welcomed.

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Editorial Email: oralityjournal@gmail.com

Website: www.oralinity.net

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Editor's Note

Samuel E. Chiang

In Sync with the Majority Worldview: Honor and Shame

Our discussions on the “gospel” were lively. The participants at the Houston Baptist University consultation on orality and theological education were fully engaged; this included chancellors, presidents, provosts, academic deans, professors and practitioners. The issue was not the incorrectness of the gospel, but the incompleteness of the gospel presented from a Western evangelical viewpoint. In our modern, reductionist approach to speaking about the gospel, we often neglect the biblical worldview that is included in the Scripture, that of honor and shame.

Ever since the printing press revolution, the reading and understanding of Scripture has helped the spiritual growth of the individual, the understanding of doctrine, and the anchoring of theological moorings. However, in the process we have also privatized our faith; as some would describe it, we have become little popes interpreting the Scripture and expediently transmitting the gospel as we see fit. Often times, I have been reminded on this orality journey, that one of the central objectives is to make available the full counsel of the Word of God to all peoples. Contrary to popular association, orality is not merely storytelling. It is a broad discipline that provides the Church with potential tools from different communication paradigms which can be used so that people of different communication backgrounds can engage the whole Word of God.

Somewhere along the way the Church in the West got side-tracked. We did not teach every book of the Bible. We started to reduce what was to be taught. Combining this trend with the fact that people are engaging with Scripture less robustly, we teach only portions of Scripture—usually the New Testament—often skewed towards certain genre. I was speaking recently with a NT professor who teaches at a famous evangelical university. The professor was lamenting the trend in his NT Survey course: the students cannot even read through the entire New Testament. As a result, the professor was assigning only the book of Luke (not even Luke -- Acts) to be read as a course textbook; the shocking reality is that the students are not even able to finish the book of Luke!

Scripture engagement needs attention, but also understanding of the Scriptural worldview that includes “honor and shame.” The West and the Church in the West are facing the acceleration of societies embracing “honor and shame” so much so that *Christianity Today* devoted major coverage to the topic of “honor and shame” in its 2015 March issue. Incidentally it quoted three of the participant-authors who were at the Houston Baptist University Orality Consultation. (Note their newest books are shown on the inside, outside, and back cover of this issue of the Journal.)

In the West, our literature, reflections, and theological approaches to “honor and shame” have been negligent. On the other hand, the rest of the world, the global south-east, the Majority Church continually to function within an “honor-shame” worldview. A treasury of riches awaits discovery and exploration by the Church. In this publication we intend to invite the richness from the Majority World to speak into this matter so that we can all appreciate better the “fullness” of the gospel.

In this issue, we are well-served by Werner Mischke, who provides an overview of biblical passages covering honor-shame and its implications to oral preference learners. Michael Wilson and Joe Handley disclose from the leadership lab what is succeeding in a highly literate Japan working with a predominantly oral culture. We are grateful to Andrew McFarland for tracing William Carey’s challenges with communication and how he came to embrace oral preference learners. Margaret Doll helps us to look at how the integration of literacy and orality can really work and how important it is to recover orality within the culture so as to be effective. Veteran orality practitioner Annette Hall discusses overcoming the temptations to “over-teach and explain,” which can often short circuit the learning experience for oral preference learners. Paul Trinh’s blog updates us to his own journey in orality and we are grateful to both Susangeline Y. Patrick and Irene Maonei Kabete for their book reviews.

I am personally delighted that Geoffrey W. Hahn has joined the Editorial Committee and that William Coppedge is agreeing to serve as Associate Editor.

On the journey together,

Samuel E. Chiang
From Hong Kong, SAR, China

Theories of Human Communication

Stephen W. Littlejohn & Karen A. Foss, Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2011. ISBN 978-1-57766-706-3. Original Edition 1983, tenth edition 2011. Pb., pp 487, bibliog., index. \$55

Reviewed by Susangeline Y. Patrick who is currently working on a PhD in Intercultural Studies. Her cross-cultural mission experiences are in Central Asia and the historical theologies of the visual arts on a global scale.

Stephen Littlejohn and Karen Foss' *Theories of Human Communication* provides foundational theories with extensive details and applications for a broad audience who are theorizing the process of communication. The book was originally birthed in 1974, when communication theory was largely borrowed from other fields of information theory and social psychology. Now it has become a well-developed collection of theories and perspectives.

Specializing in communication, Littlejohn has invested in the field for four decades, and Foss makes valuable contributions in rhetoric theory and critical theory. Although their book primarily addresses professors and students in the communication discipline, it can enrich the conversations of orality and indicate significant implications for practitioners of various traditions of communication theories. The authors have made the book accessible to diverse readers. It

is a true delight to discover the complexity of communication.

The thesis of the book is to describe and explain communication theory, offer useful tools, and develop new possibilities for the study of communication. The authors have done an excellent job in guiding the readers to explore the world of communication.

The authors lay out the foundations of communication theory in the first three chapters, discussing multiple flexible definitions, as well as allocating communication theory and scholarship within their historical context and development. The authors do not confine communication to a singular paradigm; instead, they note the differences and similarities of communication theories in a complex of cultural, racial, and regional backgrounds. They discuss seven traditions of communication theory: semiotic, phenomenological, cybernetic, socio-psychological, socio-cultural,

critical, and rhetorical. Each consists of a set of key ideas, values, and variations of meanings.

The authors expand the contexts for communication from chapter four to chapter eleven. They give detailed attention to the communicators, message, conversation, relationships, groups, organizations, media, culture, and society.

The strength of the book is that the authors bring in diverse perspectives from scholars such as Richard Weaver, Judith Butler, and Kenneth Burke. The examples they provide for explaining different theories are highly practical and applicable in diverse cultural contexts. For instance, in defining identity negotiation theory, the authors address the issues of ethnic identity and intercultural competence. These are important and current social interaction discussions. They also adopt anthropologists' ethnographical approach in comprehending the role of communication in culture and society. Another strong point is that the authors evaluate each theory critically. They demonstrate

great analytical skills in interpreting diverse sources and aspects of communication theory.

A major limitation of the book is that it does not implicitly address how the role of religion and communication theory can inform and form each other. The area of the arts can also be studied and add value to the study of communication theory, so it would be helpful if the authors were to construct the contributions of religions and the arts in communication.

Overall, the book provides in-depth studies which can benefit mission practitioners and educators in orality. It covers the disciplines of culture, language, literacy, networks, and media in orality. Insightful principles of understanding communication theory and discourse can be drawn out from the book, and Littlejohn and Foss encourage and inspire readers to theorize their specific situation and context. I highly recommend this book for people who are interested in intercultural communication in theories and in practices.



Theorizing Communication: Readings Across Traditions

Edited by Robert T. Craig and Heidi L. Muller, 2007. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN 978-1-4129-5237-8. Pb., pp 525, bibliog., index. \$82.

Reviewed by Susangeline Y. Patrick who is currently working on a PhD in Intercultural Studies. Her cross-cultural mission experiences are in Central Asia and the historical theologies of the visual arts on a global scale.

Robert Craig and Heidi Muller are both excellent university educators who have specialized in the field of communication. In *Theorizing Communication: Reading Across Traditions*, they advocate the integrative model of communication theory. The purpose of the book is to provide a deeper understanding of communication theory through exposing the readers to a collection of primary source readings. They propose the formulation of communication theory, which is deeply connected with everyday life. The book offers both a philosophical approach and an empirical studies and analysis approach. Craig and Muller categorize different readings under seven interrelated Western traditions: rhetorical, semiotic, phenomenological, cybernetic, sociopsychological, sociocultural, and critical.

The structure and framework of Craig and Muller are clear.

Their evaluations of each of the seven traditions are helpful in reexamining and critiquing communication theory. In each of the discussions, they guide readers to reflect on the potential problems and major findings of communication theory. They also offer additional readings and contemporary critical evaluations which provide opportunities for readers to apply communication concepts in their own sociohistorical context.

Craig argues that communication theory can and should exist as a field. He states, "I argue that all communication theories are relevant to a common practical life-world in which communication is already a richly meaningful term. Communication theory, in this view, is a coherent field of metadiscursive practice, a field of discourse about discourse with implications for the practice of communication" (64).

He engages major principles—the constitutive model of communication as metamodel and communication theory as metadiscourse—to achieve his goal of recreating dialogical-dialectical coherence. Craig's practical concern is insightful for students in communication studies. His thesis is comprehensible.

From Plato to German ideologists, the authors draw primary resources from a historical line of important communication theorists. The authors' analysis of the seven traditions of communication theory supports the purpose of their book. It is a significant strength that the book opens up opportunities for social practical projects in helping students and practitioners to further develop key concepts. Another main approach is that the authors view communication theory as an ongoing process and therefore leave space for emerging traditions and new dialogues.

This book demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of communication studies as a field. The authors are aware of the non-Western traditions in theorizing communication, and this is a foundational book for students and educators in communication theory; however, they are not experts in the historical development of communication in non-Western contexts. Thus, other books are needed for education on understanding oral cultures and oral learners' communication processes.

Practitioners and leaders of church and mission may benefit from reading the book in forming theoretical frameworks in communicating the gospel. However, they will have to examine their specific social-cultural contexts with critical eyes because the book does not primarily address the major disciplines of orality. Without a doubt, further development of orality will challenge and encourage the foundational paradigms of Western communication theory.





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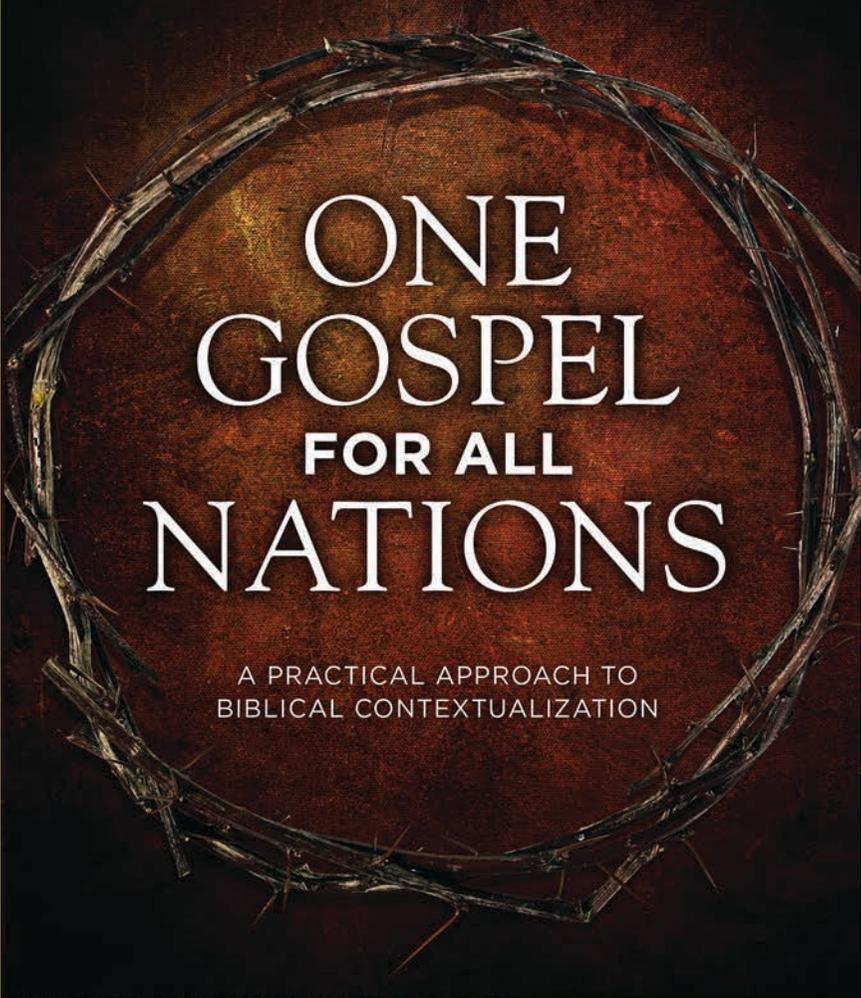


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FOREWORDS BY
SAMUEL CHIANG & STEVEN HAWTHORNE



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A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO
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