

PREFACE

Rationale

We agreed to produce the instructor's manual for the seventh edition of *A First Look at Communication Theory* because it's a first-rate book and because we enjoy talking and writing about pedagogy. We've both been avid consumers of the words of *A First Look at Communication Theory* for many editions. In fact, Emily was a student in Em's class when the book was in its first edition.

Yet when we recall the discussions we've had with colleagues about instructor's manuals over the years, two unnerving comments stick with us: "I don't find them much help"; and (even worse) "I never look at them." And, if the truth were told, we were often the people making such points! With these statements in mind, we have done some serious soul-searching about the texts that so many teachers—ourselves included—frequently malign or ignore and are grateful for the many positive comments we've heard about our manual over the years.

As we see it, a central paradox that characterizes the genre: Teaching manuals tend to be distant, mechanical, impersonal, and lifeless, when in fact good teaching is immediate, flexible, personal, and lively. In this manual, therefore, we have attempted to communicate to fellow teachers as directly and vigorously as possible our advice for teaching with *A First Look at Communication Theory*. The best way to talk about teaching, of course, is to do just that—talk. In lieu of such conversation, we offer the manual as a sort of extended letter, or a series of epistles within a larger correspondence about teaching. We've done our best not to be concise, but expansive. Rather than merely hinting at pedagogical possibilities, we've attempted to flesh out classroom discussion and activities. In Chapter 2, Griffin features Glenn Sparks, a social scientist, and Marty Medhurst, a rhetorician whose differing vantage points results in distinct readings of the Peyton Manning advertisements. For this manual, an empiricist (Emily) and a humanist (Glen) are collaborating and our hope is that our combined effort will be useful to you by suggesting novel approaches to complement your existing strengths and proposing ideas for how to approach areas in which you are not as proficient. Combining our experiences and insights with those of the author of the book and other teachers and scholars of communication theory, we've done our best to provide a genuinely helpful resource as you steel yourself to teach this exciting—and extremely challenging—material.

The Contents of This Manual

In order to help you teach the theories in Griffin's book as effectively as possible, we've included a wide variety of material in this manual. After this prefatory essay and the sample course schedules that follow, we move chapter by chapter through the textbook, providing information to help you plan for class discussion and activities, assignments, review, and examinations. In keeping with Griffin's basic approach, we have for the most part treated each chapter as a discrete entity, thus allowing you to alter the sequencing of the theories or omit whole sections as needed.

Each unit of the manual begins with an *Outline*. As closely as possible, these outlines follow the contours of Griffin's prose, and in most cases his principal headings generate the titles of the sections designated by Roman numerals. For the sake of efficiency, we have omitted most of Griffin's examples from life, literature, and the screen. In addition to helping you present the material and lead discussion, the *Outline* may function as a study guide for your students. If your students seem to be having difficulty understanding *A First Look at Communication Theory*, require them to bring their own outlines of the assigned reading to class. Whether you collect and evaluate their work or simply circulate the outline provided here and ask the students to compare the two, this exercise will help them understand the structure of academic prose and the level of detail for which they are responsible. (The concise chapter summaries in *Appendix A* may also serve as study guides and checks on reading comprehension.) Please note that these outlines should never serve as substitutes for the text itself. As basic summaries, they necessarily sacrifice the depth and development of the original.

Next comes *Key Names and Terms*, a concise list of the principal theorists and concepts covered in the chapter. If you are a repeat customer, having used previous editions of *A First Look*, you likely have already noticed one major change in this 7th edition: major terms are now highlighted in the text by providing the definitions in the margins. In this manual, we have chosen to list the same terms and definitions so as not to provide contradictory or interpreted material. In the manual, however, we have also provided the key names of theorists or scholars who are highlighted in given chapters.

The third section, *Principal Changes*, has been included primarily for those instructors who have worked with previous editions of *A First Look at Communication Theory*. Here, we concisely summarize the major differences between the seventh edition and its predecessor. Along with the in-text definitions, another change to each chapter is the interpretive-objective graphic that appears on the starting page of each theory. This illustration should assist students by placing each theory along the continuum. Since these changes occurred in each of the chapters, we choose not mention it each time in the principle changes section. Repeat customers will also notice that in this edition, Em has chosen to fold the ethical reflections into the related chapters as oppose to creating an ancillary sections. We applaud this change. The theories of our discipline have much to say about how life *ought* to be lived, but their voices are not alone. Ethical reflections come from variety sources and perhaps, with them rolled into the chapter, you and your students might wrestle with these more "macro" issues when doing the "micro" level work of each individual theory or theorist.

Suggestions for Discussion and *Exercises and Activities* are designed to assist you help students explore and apply the theory introduced in the chapter. This material supplements the *Questions to Sharpen Your Focus* included in the textbook. Some of the exercises and activities are intended as in-class work; others require advanced preparation by the students. Some may be used as graded assignments. Under *Exercises and Activities*, we've related many of Em Griffin's favorite techniques for stimulating student learning. Please note that we include far more suggestions than you'll want or be able to use—pick and choose as you desire. In addition, we would like to confess at the outset that the line between "suggestions for discussion" and "exercises and activities" is often somewhat arbitrary. Between *Suggestions for Discussion* and *Exercises and Activities*, we've included sample *Application Logs*, brief

essays written by Em Griffin's students in response to his application log assignment. (Below, we have included Griffin's description of this popular assignment.) Many of the logs we selected can also be found at Griffin's website (described below), but others are unique to the manual. Please note that these samples have not been chosen for the purpose of advocating particular political, religious, or ideological positions. Selection was based solely on the student writer's ability to respond insightfully to the assignment. Many of these texts may be used to illustrate key points in class.

Supplementary bibliography has been provided under the heading of *Further Resources*. These references are meant to augment, rather than to supplant, those already listed in the *Second Look* sections of *A First Look at Communication Theory*. Many of the books and articles we recommend are well known in the field; others are familiar to much smaller circles of scholars. Every reference, though, is connected to the central theory in ways that can enrich your teaching. As you work through this manual, you'll notice that many of the readings listed as *Further Resources* tend more toward application than development or explication of theory. They have been included to help you create a ready store of examples. It is also our opinion that good discussions of theory lead inevitably to application; and, correspondingly, intriguing applications necessarily raise theoretical questions. You'll find, not surprisingly, that Griffin's textbook moves easily and productively between these two poles. Most of these selections may be assigned as auxiliary reading projects for individuals or groups of students. Incidentally, you'll notice that we have more to suggest for some chapters than for others. This lack of uniformity is due largely to the unevenness of our knowledge, rather than deliberate bias or intentional neglect. It is our hope that you'll help us out in the areas in which we need to expand our reading. If a source is recommended in more than one chapter treatment, all subsequent citations after the first are abbreviated.

The final section of each chapter treatment, entitled *Sample Examination Questions*, contains a series of multiple choice, true-false, and essay questions designed to assess various levels of mastery. We admit at the outset that the multiple choice and true-false questions were particularly difficult for us to write. First, we do not use such assessment strategies in our own teaching, so we are less familiar with these forms than other forms of examination. Second, to write such questions, one must produce—or at least suggest—misinformation. Since potentially credible, yet false or incomplete answers appear in print along with correct ones, the author of such material is indirectly encouraging students to embrace what is untrue. We realize, of course, that instructors who face huge sections must necessarily rely on such questions, and therefore we have provided them. Nonetheless, we are somewhat conflicted about doing so.

In most chapters, *Integrative Essay Questions* have been included to bring together material from two or more chapters. Because instructors tend to assign chapters in the order Griffin presents them, most of the *Integrative Essay Questions* ask students to look back to previous material, rather than forward to theories not yet covered. (Please note that in essay questions the request to "compare" theories or concepts is meant to include the treatment of both similarities and differences.)

To avoid redundancy and potential confusion, we've made an effort not to repeat questions. For this reason, you should feel welcome to use any question or exercise in any

pedagogical context you believe is effective. If a discussion question looks appropriate for an examination, use it that way. If an examination question would make a good study guide, apply it in that manner. Ultimately, the categories we've established are meant simply to suggest possibilities, rather than to restrict your imagination. It's also important to mention that some questions ask students to respond to current events that may lose their relevancy as the semesters roll on. You may wish to substitute new events or figures as is appropriate.

In addition to these full chapter treatments, we have provided briefer accounts of Griffin's general Introduction and each specific section introduction ("Interpersonal Messages," "Gender and Communication," and so forth).

Lecture or Discussion?

In addition to establishing a comfortable and appropriate pace, we urge you to conduct your class primarily as a discussion, rather than a lecture. *A First Look at Communication Theory* ably assumes the lecturer's role, laying out the material in an orderly, engaging manner. In addition, Griffin employs a personal, down-to-earth writing style that can be seriously undermined by an instructor's overly formal presentation. Come to class ready to ask and answer a wide variety of questions, to present and meet diverse challenges, and to offer intriguing exercises and activities that apply, supplement, and test the theoretical material presented in the book, and your course will shine.

It's far easier, of course, simply to prepare and present detailed notes about the material each day, but unless your charisma level is significantly higher than ours, you'll run the risk of boring your audience and yourself. (The most meaningful moments in teaching, like those in all complex human interactions, transcend the script.) Worse yet, you'll let your students off the educational hook. At least half of the responsibility for what happens each day ought to be theirs, and if you lecture, they'll become passive participants in the process. Paulo Freire is right, after all—the most valuable education treats students not as passive vessels to be filled, but as thinking beings who must learn to ask questions and solve problems relating to issues that truly matter—issues such as how we communicate with one another. (If you're not familiar with Freire, we recommend his classic work, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos [New York: Continuum, 1970].)

We realize, of course, that economic realities of educational institutions may necessitate large, impersonal classes that diminish the likelihood of fruitful discussion (see Ed McDaniel's treatment of teaching theory to the large lecture class, below). Nonetheless, we encourage you to do everything in your power to get your audience involved in the process. Student participation, we'll wager, will be the single best indicator of pedagogical success in this class, and the best way to inspire students to assume their rightful role is to relinquish some of the privilege, power, and predictability of the podium.

It has been said that the best way to learn a subject is to teach it. In this spirit, you may wish to relinquish some of the responsibility of presenting the material and leading discussion to the students themselves. With a little coaching from you and with additional material from the *Second Look* and *Further Resources* sections, students can succeed in this role. When making the assignment, challenge students to teach as they would like to be taught. If the

class size or other considerations prevent the assignment of one student to one chapter, consider assigning chapters as group projects. For the sake of variety, we would encourage you not to place all your student-led classes in a clump in the course schedule. Mix it up.

Supplementary Material

We recommend that you periodically supplement your presentation of communication theory with literary or cinematic examples. Throughout the semester, take time to assign and then discuss feature films, short stories, plays, or novels that illustrate the theories your students have been studying. Appendix B of *A First Look at Communication Theory* provides an excellent list of cinematic choices, organized by theoretical category. For a full treatment of the use of film, see Russell F. Proctor II, *Communication in Film: Teaching Communication Courses Using Feature Films* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1996), and *Communication in Film II: Teaching Communication Courses Using Feature Films* (International Thompson Publishing, 1997). Ronald Adler's "Teaching Communication Theories with *Jungle Fever*," *Communication Education* 44 (April 1995): 157-64 aptly demonstrates how an instructor can elucidate a number of theoretical perspectives with one film. A good stockpile of useful short stories can be found in Beverly Whitaker Long and Charles H. Grant III, "The 'Surprising Range of the Possible': Families Communicating in Fiction," *Communication Education* 41 (1992): 89-106. Most short-story anthologies are filled with excellent tales for illustrating theory. Over the course of this manual, we'll suggest additional options for you to consider.

The advantage to short stories, plays, and movies is that they can be read or watched and then discussed over the course of a few hours, efficiently vivifying a key theoretical point or two. To interweave multiple theories and recreate complex communication contexts, however, it may be more effective to assign full-length novels. Rather than reading and discussing the novel straight through, we recommend dividing it into several sections and interspersing them among chapters of the textbook. Students will find that the movement back and forth between the two different kinds of books breaks monotony and keeps them fresh. Almost any novel that is accessible to students and that features human relationships will do the job. Judith Guest's *Ordinary People*, for example (which was first recommended by Roger Smitter), effectively illustrates many of the theories presented in Chapters 4-15, as does Terry McMillan's *Waiting to Exhale*, which also provides some interesting material for Chapters 33-35. Like *Beloved*, which Griffin uses to exemplify principles of standpoint theory in chapter 34, Morrison's earlier novel *Song of Solomon* includes extraordinary dialog and narrative commentary that are ripe for analysis. *Song of Solomon* has the advantage of featuring more contemporary dialog set in the mid twentieth century. Both novels, of course, are particularly powerful sources of examples concerning issues of gender and power. More challenging and complex than novels such as *Ordinary People* and *Waiting to Exhale*, *Song of Solomon* or *Beloved* should easily hold the attention of your students and provide ample material for careful analysis. Novels with substantial intercultural components such as Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, Ernest J. Gaines's *A Lesson Before Dying*, and Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* are well suited for Chapters 4-15 as well as 30-32. A novel from another century such as Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* provides an intriguing platform for discussing cultural context. Of course any story can be analyzed in the terms of Burke's dramatism (Chapter 22) or Fisher's narrative paradigm (Chapter 23).

A particularly exciting supplementary text to *A First Look* is Arthur Berger’s *Postmortem for a Postmodernist* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 1997). This insightful, accessible, humorous account of postmodernism is a pleasure for students to read. If you devote about a week of class to this text early in the term, you can set up many of the larger theoretical issues that frame Griffin’s account of communication theory. Matters of ethics, feminism, power, meaning, intentionality, and media are especially well treated by Berger. The book’s rather harsh assessment of postmodernism is intriguing to us, and we’re curious to know how your students will respond to it.

Because every writer has unique strengths and limitations, we also recommend consulting other communication theory textbooks. James Neuliep’s (unfortunately out of print) *Human Communication Theory: Applications and Case Studies* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1996), for example, has extensive examples and does an outstanding job of covering rhetorical theory, particularly its complicated history. John Cragan and Donald Shields’s *Understanding Communication Theory: The Communicative Forces for Human Action* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997) provides aggressive defenses of its six key or “general” theories (these defenses are entitled “Withstanding the Critics”). In contrast with Griffin, who critiques each theory rather objectively, Cragan and Shields assume the role of advocates, vigorously refuting the criticisms one by one. Although we prefer Griffin’s more circumspect approach, we enjoy—and have learned from—Cragan and Shields’s spirited advocacy. Stephen Littlejohn’s *Theories of Human Communication*, 9th ed. (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2007), the senior textbook in the field, may be more appropriate for beginning graduate students than the undergraduates we teach, but it is an excellent resource. James Anderson’s *Communication Theory: Epistemological Foundations* (New York: Guilford, 1996), which is deliberately pitched to graduate students and their professors, is also a good place to go for sophisticated supplements. Julia Wood’s *Communication Theories in Action: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2003) is particularly good on relational and gender issues. Richard L. West and Lynn H. Turner offer their take in *Introducing Communication Theory: Analysis and Application*, 3rd ed. (New York: WCB/McGraw-Hill, 2006). And so it goes.

The Website and Other Electronic Resources

In addition to consulting other communication theory textbooks, we would like to encourage you to check out Griffin’s user-friendly website for *A First Look at Communication Theory*.

www.afirstlook.com

The site has been designed primarily as a companion to the textbook and this instructor’s manual. On the left side of the site are links to resource materials for the texts: a description of *Conversations with Communication Theorists*, (introduced below), film clips illustrating key components of the theories, primary resources, application logs (see below), thorough comparisons to other communication theory textbooks (including those we mention above), the publisher’s website, and information about the authors of the textbook and the manual,

including e-mail addresses. At the top of the site are links to the theories featured in the book, as well as links to complete chapters from earlier editions that covered theories not included in the current text. If you want your students to read about Bandura's social learning theory, Weick's information systems theory, or a dozen other theories no longer featured in *A First Look*, the resources are available on line. The search at the top left of the site is an easy way to find information in the current edition, instructor's manual, archives, and the FAQ.

In the spirit of full disclosure, we want to make it clear that at the present time, with the exception of all testing questions (multiple choice, true/false, and essays), the rest of the instructor's manual is available online and is accessible to all. In other words, your students—particularly the more enthusiastic ones—may access the outlines, terms and discussion ideas. Communication theory is a tough subject. The course is often the hardest one in a department's curriculum. It is our conviction is that anything we can do to make it more interesting and facilitate learning, the better. Whenever a student comes in and discusses struggling with the course's rigor, we always encourage the students to read the manual online. Others instructors actually assign it. Students need to work hard in this course and even modest success requires lots of cognitive work. We don't think it's the surprise element of the class activities but the quality of the discussion, assignments made ahead of time, video clips shown, demonstration and mini-lectures that make the difference. For many teachers, helping students feel like insiders in the process is better pedagogy than having them be consumers.

Under McGraw-Hill's sponsorship, Griffin produced *Conversations with Communication Theorists*, a video/CD comprised of interviews with 15 of the theorists featured in *A First Look*. This resource gives you a chance to personalize the theorists you introduce to your students. Its value, though, goes beyond helping students put faces and voices to names. Griffin asks provocative questions that frequently illuminate—or problematize—key theoretical issues raised in the book. In addition, the questions we wrote for the "User's Guide" that accompanies the interviews encourage syntheses, applications, and extrapolations that complement—and, we hope, stretch—what goes on when one reads the book itself. In effect, "Conversations with Communication Theorists" should be seen not as peripheral to, but as an extension of, *A First Look at Communication Theory*.

Another intriguing resource is the NCA-sponsored listserv, CRTNET, the Communication Research and Theory Network. Lively, free-ranging discussions on a wide variety of topics are featured, and all readers are invited to join the conversations. Instructions for a complimentary subscription are available at the following address:

<http://lists1.cac.psu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=crtnet&A=1>

One of the simplest, yet most powerful ways to supplement the text is to take a cue from its author and bring your own cartoons to class. These additional pedagogical artifacts are terrific for illustrating concepts that may seem otherwise abstract or irrelevant to students. Furthermore, you'll find that if you make it a practice to enliven discussion with pieces you've discovered, students will begin to bring in their own. It is a delight to see them taking

responsibility for their own educations. “Dilbert” is a particularly popular choice for communication instructors. No doubt you’ll develop your own favorites.

Constructing Quizzes and Examinations

As mentioned above, each chapter treatment in this manual concludes with *Sample Examination Questions*. The easiest require only a basic understanding of the material; the most difficult demand careful critical thinking and sophisticated synthesis. Beyond these questions, there are several other fruitful ways to test your students' comprehension. Information listed under *Key Names and Terms* can form the basis of short answer or matching-type examination questions. Every multiple-choice question can be altered to form a true-false question. When using true-false questions, consider requiring students to explain why any false statement is false—or to correct the statement so that it is true. Many of the *Questions to Sharpen Your Focus* included in the text make excellent quiz or examination questions. Assigning these questions for quizzes has the added benefit of encouraging students to prepare them in advance of class discussion. You may also wish to consider integrating the cartoons and other visuals featured in the text into your examinations. Because this book is so tightly packed with provocative ideas, we recommend scheduling at least three exams over the course of the term. Even with three exams, students may request additional tests in order to decrease the amount of material they’re responsible for on a given day.

Student Reports and Papers

Students' responses to exams are easy to quantify, and they provide useful measures of some kinds of learning, but most exams bear little resemblance to the professional activities our students will perform once they complete their formal education. Furthermore, the chapter-by-chapter mastery of material that examinations foster is crucial, but other kinds of understanding come only when one looks past the boundaries of such artificial units to the broad scope of knowledge. In many educational settings, thus, a course such as the one developed around *A First Look at Communication Theory* would include student oral reports and/or papers, assignments that would transcend the scope of the *Sample Examination Questions* and the *Questions to Sharpen Your Focus* provided in the manual and the text, respectively. Although such assignments are difficult to assign and evaluate within the structure of some departments and institutions, we highly recommend them because—as we have suggested—they require students to synthesize and apply theories in complex ways. Furthermore, such assignments help students to improve the very public speaking and writing skills or competencies that communication programs claim to promote.

One of the best ways to approach oral reports and papers is to assign individualized readings from the *Second Look* sections. Ask students to summarize the key material presented in the source, place it within the context of the course, and critique its value. Of course, Griffin's chapters provide excellent models for each step in the process. Many of the texts listed in the *Further Resources* sections of the manual will also serve this purpose. You can also encourage students to search out relevant articles in our profession’s scholarly

journals—*Quarterly Journal of Speech, Communication Monographs, Communication Quarterly, Communication Studies, Communication Theory, Southern Communication Journal, Western Journal of Communication, Rhetoric Society Quarterly, Critical Studies in Mass Communication, Media, Culture & Society, Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, Women's Studies in Communication, Human Communication Research, Rhetoric and Public Affairs, Cultural Studies*, and so forth.

Another approach is to ask students to evaluate the theoretical significance of movies from *Appendix B* of the text or of movies, short stories, plays, or novels mentioned in this manual. (Students may also generate their own candidates for analysis.) Once again, *A First Look at Communication Theory* provides fine sample analyses of literary and cinematic texts. This kind of assignment is particularly useful for the more creative or applied student.

A third strategy is to have students investigate theories, theoretical topics, and general approaches to communication not explicitly featured in the text. Theories that fall in this category include Plato's dialectic (particularly as presented in the *Phaedrus*); Richard Weaver's ethical rhetoric; Robert Scott's epistemic rhetoric; Stephen Toulmin's model of argument; Wayne Booth's rhetoric of assent; Albert Mehrabian's immediacy theory; Dolf Zillman's mood management theory; Eric Berne's transactional analysis, performance theory, and conversation analysis; Peter Anderson's cognitive valence theory of intimate communication; Howard Giles's communication accommodation theory; Wayne Brockreide's notion of arguer as lover (which resembles, but is not identical to, Griffin's topology of false lovers on page 242); Jacques Derrida's deconstruction; John Stewart and Milt Jackson's dialogic listening; John Bowlby's attachment theory; Mary Ann Fitzpatrick's theory of relationships; Caryl Rusbult's equity theory; Mikhail Bakhtin's *heteroglossia*; Carl Rogers's empathic arguer; Mark Knapp's theory of relational stages; Jack Webb's theory of defensive communication; John Fiske's consumer-oriented approach to media, uses and gratifications theory, and diffusion of innovation theory; Frank Dance's inner speech theory; Donald Cushman's rules theory; Robert Sommer's environmental approach; Susan B. Shimanoff's rules theory; Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics; Joshua Meyrowitz's theory of mediated place; William Stephenson's play theory; Steven McCornack's information manipulation theory; James Grunig's situational theory of publics; Young Yun Kim's cross-cultural adaptation theory; Jurgen Habermas's theory of the public sphere; and Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham's Johari Window. Each is worthy of investigation by the right student or group of students.

You may also consider assigning theories that were covered in the earlier editions of *A First Look at Communication Theory*, but not in the current version—William Schutz's FIRO theory; John O. Greene's action assembly theory; Charles Osgood's mediational theory of meaning; Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs; Fritz Heider's attribution theory; Aubrey Fisher's interact system model of decision emergence; Albert Bandura's social learning theory; Irving Janis's groupthink; Byron Reeves and Clifford Nass's media equation; Judee Burgoon and David Buller's interpersonal deception theory; Karl Weick's information systems theory; or William Gudykunst's anxiety/uncertainty management theory. This strategy gives you an easy method for suggesting avenues of research.

One way to approach the assignment is to ask students to write their reports as potential chapters for inclusion in an eighth edition of *A First Look at Communication Theory*.

Require them to include *Critique*, *Second Look*, *Questions to Sharpen Your Focus* sections, as well as comics that bring to life key theoretical issues. Encourage them to keep in mind the principal virtues of Griffin's text—a down-to-earth prose style, extended examples, careful organization, concision, and humor—as they write. This assignment works particularly well with students who are concurrently enrolled in other communication courses.

Finally, you may wish to have students investigate their own communicative practice or the practices of people they know. Some of the finest student papers we've read have been analyses of communication that the author had either participated in or directly observed. Such papers are typically vivid and specific, and they have the extra advantage of encouraging students to think critically about their own lives and the quality of the communication in which they participate. One way to help students develop material for such papers is to encourage or require them to keep weekly journals in which they record the ways in which the theories they are studying apply to their lives or the lives of people they know. You can collect and grade this journal periodically or have students share their insights orally in class. If you are more concerned with process than formal writing and final product, these journals will serve as an end in themselves. To encourage this self-disclosure process, you may wish to keep your own journal and share selected entries with your class. One word of warning—you may encourage but should never *require* students to write formal papers about their personal experiences. Some students consider such assignments invasions of privacy and professorial voyeurism. To protect your students and yourself, always make this genre of essay optional, rather than compulsory.

You may be interested to know that Griffin requires each student to write a paragraph of application for each theory. He collects a random sample of these writings each week. Over the course of the term, he grades five submissions from each student. Here is how he describes the "application log" assignment:

Consistent with Kurt Lewin's famous maxim that there is nothing as practical as a good theory, I ask students to apply each theory to their own lives. I collect a random sample of the logs each week and with the permission of the writer (obtained privately beforehand) read some of the best at the start of the next class session. I find that the entries increase the interest level of the course and provide a mini review of some parts of each theory.

Even if you don't make a similar assignment, you might consider using some of the entries available to validate Lewin's claim. They are actual student entries responding to the following instructions:

After you read a chapter on a theory in the *First Look* text, you are to write a paragraph making a specific application of the theory to your own life. Please type or write *very* clearly. Keep these applications bound together in a secure way and bring them to class each Thursday. I will collect a random sample of the logs each week and return them the following Tuesday. You will be asked to submit your log five different times during the semester. The logs will provide you with an opportunity to show that you understand the theories and see their practical implication for your communication interpretation and behavior.

Teaching Theory to the Large Lecture Class*

Teaching an introductory theory class can be a somewhat daunting task. Teaching theory as a required course to a classroom with as many as 180 students, drawn from a variety of communication majors (e.g., advertising, journalism, public affairs, intercultural communication, etc.), offers even greater challenges.

Each semester, San Diego State University School of Communication offers two sections of communication theory at the upper-division level. The course is required for all communication majors, and each section normally ranges from 120 to 180 students. This number of students more or less mandates a lecture format. However, lectures can be infused with a variety of demonstrative activities and contextual relevance, which will help elicit and sustain student interest while furthering understanding.

Theory, by nature, is abstract and often difficult for some to grasp. This difficulty can be exacerbated by equally abstract presentations offered to an audience with an inherently short attention span and an expectation that they should be amused. However, one way to kindle interest and promote understanding is by presenting the information in a context relevant to the audience's interests and personal experiences. This will, of course, require a degree of familiarization with the life style of students in your locale (i.e., where and how do they spend their leisure time, how many are employed, what are the student body social norms, what is on MTV, what are the current age-relevant movies, and so forth). This information, gained through reading the university paper, casual conversations with students, channel surfing, and simply being observant, can then be used to construct a context for the various theories taught. For example, local social events and frequented nightspots can be used to enliven your illustrations. The trials and tribulations normally encountered in dating will help exemplify interpersonal relations theories. The local newspaper is often a source of examples for various theories, which can then be shown in the classroom (but don't expect the students to have read the paper!).

When teaching theory to a large audience, it is tempting to adhere to a regimented lecture format. That procedure is also a sure way to lose your students' attention and dampen their enthusiasm. Lecture materials can, and should be, enhanced through what I consider performance activities. These activities will involve only a few (volunteer) students and, frequently, the instructor. Although large lecture sections generally preclude small group interactions, there are activities (e.g., the elevator exercise discussed in Chapter 6 on expectancy violations theory, as well as others noted in this manual) that can be used to demonstrate a theory. In these instances, try to select only those students who will provide the greatest level of expression, yet not become personally embarrassed or defensive. It is important to remember that each class is different and has a personality of its own. What works for Monday's class may not succeed with Tuesday's section and vice versa.

* The following remarks were graciously provided by Ed McDaniel, who previously taught communication theory at San Diego State University.

The administrative aspects of teaching a large lecture section are as important as pedagogical considerations. Managing a classroom with over 120 students requires considerable structure and drastically reduces the flexibility normally enjoyed with 25-30 students. The syllabus should clearly define what is to be covered on each class date and deviations must be kept to the absolute minimum. Test dates should be established at the beginning of the semester and strictly observed. Once you have announced a policy, stick to it and avoid making exceptions except in the case of verifiable emergencies.

Dealing with almost 300 students each semester, I have encountered a wide variety of personal difficulties, including deaths, rape, and life-threatening disease. Sensitivity to these situations is mandatory, yet I find little need to provide an early or makeup exam because someone has, without prior consultation, purchased a cheap airline ticket home, is scheduled to go to Cancun for a family reunion, or simply overslept. Administering makeup exams can become a serious time drain. Accordingly, I only give makeup exams in the event of a verifiable emergency. To introduce some level of flexibility into the experience, though, I offer five exams during the semester, and the lowest score is dropped.

Distribution of exams must also be considered. After two years, I finally acknowledged that returning individual Scantrons was too time intensive, and I now post grades. Going over the exam in class can also be a challenging endeavor. With such a large number of students, there will inevitably be points of contention. Unless handled correctly, the class can easily turn into a feeding frenzy as students try to gain that one additional point that will boost their score to the next letter grade. I now require students to come to my office to review exams. This has also reduced the number of lost (i.e., compromised) exam copies.

There is also the question of student attendance—should attendance be mandatory or not? If required, then a method must be devised to rapidly assess who is present and who is absent, but taking role in a class of 180 students requires considerable time. From my experience, not requiring attendance is the best course of action. This helps eliminate those students who would come if required but would not be attentive and would probably create distractions for other students, as well as yourself.

With large lecture sections, your class presentations must have a very discernable, easy-to-follow structure. This helps students, many of whom have probably not yet read the chapter, to better organize their notes. I use a document projector to display a lecture outline and ensure that students know when I move from topic to topic. Remember, not only is the material abstract, but each theory contains its own vocabulary marked by contextualized definitions. Often, students will find these situated definitions as confusing as the theory itself.

Peer pressure and concern over self-embarrassment tend to inhibit many students in large classes from asking questions. To overcome these impediments, I normally conclude class about 10 minutes early and indicate I am available for questions. This provides the students an opportunity to ask questions, clarify their notes, or even discuss personal matters that would otherwise require an office visit.

If structured and executed correctly, stepping in front of 180 students to explain a communication theory can be an exciting and rewarding experience. One only needs to tailor

the environment to their style and maintain control of the situation. Personally, I have encountered considerable success by infusing lectures with humorous examples and offering frequent self-deprecating illustrations related to the theory. Not only does this approach help explain the concepts; it can serve to reduce the professor-student intimidation barrier.

Large enrollment classes tend to dictate the use of objective examinations, which heighten students' concerns about how tests are scored and the treatment of seemingly ambiguous questions or confusing answers. I have found much of this anxiety is reduced or eliminated by using Parscore software to grade the exams and by thoroughly explaining in class how the system works.

Parscore is a software system that optically scans answer sheets (Scantrons) and statistically analyzes each test question. The statistics provided allow identification of a host of testing shortfalls, such as bad or misleading questions, poor answer choices, insufficiently covered materials, and so forth. Once identified, the exam answer key can then be adjusted as desired before the grades are printed and posted.

Additionally, test questions need to be presented in a syntax and style similar to that used in the classroom. Accordingly, if questions are drawn from the test bank in this instructors' manual, they might need rephrasing to ensure congruence with your lecture presentation style and vocabulary.

If your institution has an online course delivery and management system (San Diego State University uses BlackBoard), you can ease your administrative burden and concomitantly save the department money by reducing copy costs. I use the BlackBoard system to post the course syllabus, class schedule, study tips, and, about a week before each exam, study guides. Lecture outlines and notes can also be uploaded.

I am particularly fond of this system because it instills in the students a degree of self-reliance. They become responsible for the contents of material placed on the web, which tends to eliminate excuses such as "I never got a syllabus," "I didn't know an exam was scheduled for that date," or "I was absent when the study guide was handed out."

A Pitch for Pluralism

As you construct your syllabus and prepare for the first day of the course, we want to encourage you to think as pluralistically as possible about communication theory. All of us come to such teaching assignments with our professional biases, developed over years of specialized graduate training, specific research programs, and pedagogical practice. The goal of *A First Look at Communication Theory*, however, is to reveal the full spectrum of theoretical possibilities, a goal that can only be achieved if the instructor facilitates open-minded investigation of all perspectives. Glen, for example, comes to this material with years of work in the field of rhetoric. He's extremely comfortable talking about Richards, Aristotle, and Burke, but must work especially hard to present the more scientific theories of Burgoon, Berger, and Gerbner with proper care and consideration. Emily, whose background is in interpersonal and nonverbal communication, approaches this material as an empiricist. While she is at ease teaching the chapters on Burgoon, Baxter and Montgomery, and Petty and Cacioppo, she must

be more vigilant on Barthes, Hall, and Philipsen. Griffin, whose graduate training was more empirical than rhetorical, reports to us that he has become much more pluralistic over the course of writing and revising *A First Look at Communication Theory*. We believe that the text reflects his growing commitment to multiple perspectives.

Writing about the intellectual foment of the late nineteenth century in his famous essay, “The Will to Believe,” William James described rules of engagement for a proper “intellectual republic” that still serve as appropriate guidelines for classroom practice: “No one of us ought to issue vetoes to the other, nor should we bandy words of abuse. We ought, on the contrary, delicately and profoundly to respect one another's mental freedom” (*The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy* [New York: Dover, 1956], 30).

What we've learned about pluralism, of course, is that it's not just a matter of fairness, etiquette, or of being a good sport—it facilitates a greater understanding of truth. Glen is reminded of an analogy a professor of his once marshaled in a graduate course, to explain how a multiplicity of diverse critical readings of a complex work of literature promotes, rather than confuses, our overall understanding of the text. Place a coin under a piece of paper and draw a pencil over it. Then do this again, and again, and again. Each stroke creates a limited picture of the coin below, but after many lines are drawn, a reproduction of the hidden image begins to emerge. After considering many critical perspectives, even James Joyce's *Ulysses* begins to come into focus.

Communication theory, as well, resembles this child's diversion. Any one theory, bound by its inherent limitations, reveals only a slice or stroke of overall reality. The more theories we know and can apply, however, the clearer and broader our perspective becomes. Your students—like you and we—will not find each theory equally illuminating, but taken as a whole the approaches presented in the book provide a richer view of human communication than any subset offers. We're sufficiently postmodern to believe that an entirely objective, complete understanding of reality is beyond our comprehension, but—like that coin beneath the paper—its rough image gradually takes shape if we work our critical pencils dutifully. The goal of achieving the best picture possible of the human condition, it seems to me, lies at the very heart of *A First Look at Communication Theory*.

Closely related to pluralism is the value of partial theoretical applicability. Many students will be tempted to reject a theoretical construct if it does not fit perfectly with their perception of reality. Others become suspicious when they see well-known theories rigorously questioned in the *Critique* sections of this book. Em Griffin himself once shared with us the classic student lamentation: “Well, if every theory has something wrong with it, why bother studying the stuff?” Just as pluralism helps students see that many different theoretical paths lead to truth, the willingness to accept some aspects of a theory while reserving judgment on—or even rejecting—others allows us to avoid simple either/or judgments, judgments that may cause us to throw the theoretical baby out with the bathwater. The notion of partial theoretical applicability may be another way of getting at the issue addressed by Karl Weick's Clock-Face Model, featured in the “communication theory” section of the textbook.

Good Luck, Take Heart, and Go to It!

Having taken care of the preliminaries, there's not much more for me to say here except “good luck” and “go to it.” We know the assignment seems overwhelming at times, but remember that as you face the task of teaching this daunting course, no one on earth is really qualified for the job. No one has the breadth of knowledge necessary to fully understand every theory covered in the field. The president of the NCA, Em Griffin, you, and we are ultimately all in the same boat. So take heart. If you prepare carefully, are willing to admit that you don't know everything, and are able to make frequent trips to the library and the Internet to track down answers to the questions that you and your students will inevitably raise, you'll do fine. Remember, as well, that our opening comments about desiring dialogue are genuine. This manual—or set of letters, or whatever we choose to call it—can't really talk or write back to you, but we can, even if we're temporarily buried in work and need some time to dig out. If you want to communicate with us about anything we've presented here, e-mail us. We look forward to hearing from you.

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