

ACTIVISM & SOCIAL JUSTICE DIVISION
2025 RESEARCH-IN-PROGRESS ROUNDTABLE PANEL

PROGRAM PLANNER & PANEL CHAIR: Dr. Leandra H. Hernandez (she/her/ella)
Associate Professor & Director of Graduate Studies
Department of Communication
University of Utah
leandrahernandez11@gmail.com; leandra.hernandez@utah.edu

PANEL CO-CHAIR: Dr. Alex Rister
Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Communication
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Alex.Rister@erau.edu

Note: Only primary presenters are listed below. If you have co-authors, please include them in your correspondence with your research mentor.

Panel Overview: For the Research-in-Progress Panel, all accepted research-in-progress submissions are grouped together (thematically, theoretically, methodologically, or topically), and each grouping is partnered with one senior scholar who will serve as the group's mentor. Presenters, by the end of October (earlier is encouraged!), please send your manuscript draft to your mentor. At the panel, each presenter will have 4 to 5 minutes to present their essay, and then your research mentor and fellow presenters will have time to offer feedback on your essay with an eye to its current state and future directions.

Group 1: Activism, Human Rights, and Storytelling for Change

Group 1 Mentor: Dr. Vincent Russell (he/him/his), Western Carolina University,
vrussell@wcu.edu

Group 1 Essays:

1. Zainab Gidado, *Breaking the Silence: The Center for Genocide and Human Rights in Africa and the Diaspora (GHRAD) and the Fight to Recognize the 1972 Burundi Massacre*
2. Yaw Akowuah, *From Exposure to Action: Assessing the Transformative Impact of Storytelling for Social Change on Prison Reforms in Ghana*
3. Austin Harrington, *Anti-Immigrant Narratives in A Nation of Immigrants: Investigating Power Structures Through Acts of Resistance*
4. Luis Contreras, *Spray, Stream, Share: How Graffiti Artists Communicate to Elevate Across Platforms*

Group 2: Gender Violence, Advocacy, and Activism

Group 2 Mentor: Dr. Amanda Brand (she/her), St. Mary's College,
abrand@saintmarys.edu

Group 2 Essays:

1. Oghenetega Ologbo, *Domestic Violence: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of its Impact on the Self-esteem and Behavioral Patterns of Women in Nigeria and the U.S*
2. Kaylee Mulholland, *Woven in Red Thread: Delinking from Western Discourses of Gender Violence in Indigenous Art Activism*
3. Sonali Jha, *Comprehensive Care Model for Human Trafficking Survivors: A Qualitative Inquiry with Ecological and Social Justice Framework*
4. Sonali Jha, *Framing Awareness: Assessing the Effectiveness of Anti-Trafficking Intervention Programs in India*
5. Sonali Jha, “I’m tired of sitting on committees while people die”: *Designing Trust to Find Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and People Effectively*
6. Irene Angme, *The Role of Media Representation in Shaping Perceptions of Sexual Violence*

Group 3: DEI, Advocacy, and Engagement

Group 3 Mentor: Dr. Debbie Sellnow-Richmond (she/her), Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, d.sellnow@gmail.com

Group 3 Papers:

1. Alexis Denham, *Framing Resistance: Intersectional Identity and Activism in the Trump Era*
2. Judith Owoicho, *Dirty Work: Female Domestic Workers' Narrative Construction of Self, Value and Inclusion*
3. Victoria Adjetey, *Advertising for Social Change: Examining Nike's Campaign as Catalyst for Reducing Racial Inequalities in USA*
4. Victoria Kyriakopoulos, *Tactical Production Choices and the Hidden Labor of Legitimacy: PR Professionals, Production Culture, and DEI Rollback Communication*
5. Li Zuonian, *Gendered Technomateriality in Esports: Virtual Body Politics and Consumer Exploitation*

Group 4: Race, Culture, Academia, and Qualitative Methods

Group 4 Mentor: Dr. Joe Izaguirre (he/him/his), University of Colorado Boulder, joe.izaguirre@colorado.edu

Group 5 Papers:

1. Liliana Herakova, *Breaking Open to Elevate Awareness and Action: A Collaborative Autoethnography on Whiteness as Disciplinary Containment*
2. Julie Fernandez, *Navigating Familial Expectations: Communication and Identity among First-Generation Latina College Students*
3. Julie Fernandez, *Latina Students' Sense of Belonging, Academic Performance, and Experiences of Loneliness at PWIs and HSIs*

Group 5: Culture, Digital Media, and Activism

Group 5 Mentor: Dr. Joshua Jordan, He/Him/His, xjorx@pm.me

Group 5 Papers:

1. Hao Cao, *Hashtag activism without hashtags: Using “boys help boys” to advance under-the-radar digital resistance*
2. Fardin Ayar, *Afghan Women Amplifying Their Voices: Digital Activism in Authoritarian Regimes*
3. John Acquaful, *Reimagining Black Activism: Afro-Pessimism, Black Optimism, and the Role of Social Media*
4. Tasnim Jannat, *A Cross-Cultural Examination of the #MeToo Movement: Perspectives from the U.S. and Bangladesh*
5. Nishtha Yadav, *Click to Action: How Emotional Engagement in Digital Activism Predicts Offline Participation*
6. Angelina Mason, *Putting the Pink in Propaganda: “I’m Just a Girl” and the Hegemonic Language of TikTok*

Group 6: Health and Activism

Group 6 Mentor: Dr. Lana McDonnell (she/her), Dodge City Community College, Lanatex7@gmail.com

Group 6 Papers:

1. Julie Sisler, *Not So Obvious: Implicit Assumptions and the Dissonance Between Sexual Consent Knowledge and Practice Among College Students*
2. Ashia Aubrey, *Choosing Joy”: Black Motherhood Influencer Culture on Instagram*
3. Hannah Luz, *Reimagining Reproductive Justice Organizing: Lessons from Mutual Aid and Nonprofit Activism in the South*
4. Tomeka Robinson, *Shifting Landscapes: Reproductive Justice and the New Realities of Abortion Care in a Post-Dobbs World*
5. Madalena Robertson, *Stigmatized Advocacy: Youth Activists and the Fight for Menstrual Equity*

Group 7: Journalism, Media, and Activism

Group 7 Mentor: Dr. Nancy Molina-Rogers (She/her/hers), University of California, Santa Barbara, nancymolina-rogers@ucsb.edu

Group 7 Essays:

- 1) Rana Elhendi, *Instagramming War: Social Media Influencers Shaping Discourse*
- 2) Yena Kang, *Politicizing Instagram: Connective witnessing in visual social media*
- 3) Honghao Li, *From "Big-Character Posters" to "A4 Paper": Knowledge Production, Consensus Mobilization, and Risk Management in Chinese Meme Activism*
- 4) Menghan Yin, *From Silence to Outcry: A Social Network and BERTopic Analysis of Feminist Discursive Activism in China’s Menstrual Product Safety Debate*
- 5) Sunah Lee, *Precarious Workers Fight Back: The Case of South Korean TV Newsrooms*

Group 8: Politics, Civic Engagement, and Protest

Group 8 Mentor: Dr. Joshua Guitar (he/him/his), Kean University, Jguitar@kean.edu

Group 8 Essays:

- 1) Divine Aboagye, *Is the Bird Still Thinking Itself a Butterfly? Exploring the Lingering Consequences and Rhetorics of Colonialism Amidst Decolonial Advocacy Ontologies*
- 2) Julia Longo, *Political Participation: Youth claim a seat at the table*
- 3) Henry Njiru, *Examining Tax Protests, Epistemic Activism and Elevated Multimodal Communication for Justice and Sustainability in Kenya*
- 4) Eva Rubens Celem, *Feminism in the Americas: From the Grammar of Rights to the Quest for Alternative Democratic Futures*
- 5) Erica Pulley, *No Place Like Home: A Critical Theoretical Analysis of Housing and Ecological Crises*

Group 9: Identity, Resistance, and Activism

Group 9 Mentor: Dr. Suzanne Enck (she/ her), University of North Texas, suzanne.enck@unt.edu

Group 9 Essays:

1. Vanessa Amoah Amoah, *Forget what it means, what does it do?: A Study on Epistemologies of Resistance*
2. Amber Alston, “*Can I Have a Cup of Coffee? Extra Liberation, Please!:* Mid-South Black Owned Coffee Shops as Rhetorical Sites of Liberation and Resistance
3. Yuan Xu, *Visual Resistance and Collective Identity: Poster Politics in Philadelphia’s No Arena Movement*
4. Melissa Williams, *From Mobilization to Ventilation: The Rhetorical Shift in Contemporary Black Protest Music (2013-2022)*
5. Keturah Green, *Let the Church Say Amen: A Rhetorical Analysis of Dr. Jamal Bryant’s Pulpit as Protest, Performance, and Preaching*

Group 10: Social Media, Platforms, and Activism

Group 10 Mentor: Huixin Deng, Ph.D. (She/Her/Hers) Stockton University, drhuixindeng@gmail.com

Group 10 Essays:

- 1) BERNA GORGULU, *Silencing Through Spin: Disinformation as a Tool of Digital Repression Against Feminist Movements*
- 2) Janifar Nova, *Examination of Negative Approaches of Waj Mahfils via Social Media Platforms in terms of Delivering Hate Speech: Bangladesh Perspective*
- 3) Dakota Sandras, *Meta-Political: Exploring the Im/Possibilities of A/Political Discourse*

- 4) Abby Cole, *The Digital Turn: Journalism's Technocultural Entanglement with Cyberspace and Mobile Tech*
- 5) Septime Emmanuel Sessou, *Deepfakes as new frontiers of decolonization discourses in the recently formed Alliance of Sahel States.*