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The University of Texas at Tyler
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Pages: [UT Tyler faculty page](#), [ResearchGate](#), [LinkedIn](#)

EDUCATION

Ph.D., University of Nebraska—Lincoln, Communication, 2011

Dissertation: *Secular Salvation: Sacred Rhetorical Invention in the String Theory Movement*

Advisor: Ronald Lee, Committee: Kathleen Krone, Damien Pfister

Sections published in *Journal of Religion & Society* and *The Midwest Quarterly*

M. A., Eastern Illinois University, Communication, 2006

Thesis: *Cinematic Scripture: The Structure and Usage of The Lord of the Rings as Equipment for Living*

Advisor: Shane Miller, Committee: Melanie Mills, Olaf Hoerschelmann

Section published in *Ohio Communication Journal*

B.S., Idaho State University, Speech Communication, 2004

Cert., Cornell University, Executive Leadership, 2015

LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

Department Chair, Communication, The University of Texas at Tyler, July 2022-present

Director of Evening Education, Organizational Leadership Program, Utah Tech University, December 2017-April 2018

University Curriculum Chair, Utah Tech University, August 2017-May 2018

Associate Dean, Division of Communication, Utah Tech University, July 2015-December 2017

Department Chair, Communication and Media, Utah Tech University, May 2011-June 2015

Lead Fundraising Officer, Boy Scouts of America, Lincoln, NE and St. George, UT, September 2009-August 2016

FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

Associate Professor, Communication, The University of Texas at Tyler, Summer 2022-present

Associate Professor, Communication and Media, BYU-Hawaii, Spring 2018-Spring 2022

Associate Professor, Communication Studies, Utah Tech University, July 2016-May 2018

Assistant Professor, Communication Studies, Utah Tech University, 2010-2016

RESEARCH

BOOK

Yergensen, B. (in progress). *Death and rhetoric: Culture as survival and coping mechanism*.

Status summary: 30,000 (37%) of 80,000 planned words written. Current proposal and first two chapters are under review with a university press.

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

UNDER REVISE AND RESUBMIT

Yergensen, B. Resistive reviews and early cancel culture: Delegitimation and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Manuscript submitted to *Atlantic Journal of Communication*.

PUBLISHED AND FORTHCOMING

Yergensen, B. (2023). The devil as doppelganger: Instinctual faith and the exhausted rant of evil in *Last Days in the Desert*. *Journal of Religion, Film & Media* 9(1), 157-171. [Article webpage](#)

Yergensen B. (2023). *The Batman* and the redemption of first responders: The culmination of a rhetoric of rescue during covid, Trump, and protest. *Northern Lights: Film and Media Studies Yearbook (Journal)*. (forthcoming)

Yergensen, B. (2023). The diversified senex of science and the digital turn: *Star Wars*, *The Matrix*, and the wisdom of Neil deGrasse Tyson. Manuscript submitted to *The Northwest Journal of Communication*. (forthcoming)

Yergensen, B. (2023). Competition on the origins of life and the scientific oratory tradition: Polarizing evolution and its instinctual faith in *Prometheus*. *New Explorations: Studies in Culture & Communication*, 6(1). [Article webpage](#)

Yergensen, B., & Church, S. H. (2023). The rhetorical interlude in Alfonso Cuarón's *Gravity*: Suggesting a model for examining rhetorical discourse in film. *Dialogue: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Popular Culture and Pedagogy*, 10(1), 6-20. [Article webpage](#) (Lead article)

Yergensen, B. (2023). Ideological window dressing: Advertising Superman cinema for religious audience in post 9/11 America. *Utah Journal of Communication*, 1(1), 18-27. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7796439> [Article webpage](#)

Yergensen, B. (2022). From sexuality to history: Dracula's means of control in Elizabeth

Kostova's *The Historian*. *Studies in Popular Culture*, 44(1), 87-101. [Journal contents website](#)

Church, S. H., Halverson, A., & Yergensen, B. (2022). Music technologies and AirPods: Adorno as media ecologist. *Explorations in Media Ecology*, 21(2), 251-269. DOI: 10.1386/eme_00132_1 [Article webpage](#)

Yergensen, B., & Church, S. H. (2022). The rhetorical interlude as foreshadow and strategy: *The 'Burbs* and defeating horror villains at the end of the Cold War. *Popular Culture Studies Journal*, 10(1), 278-294. [Article webpage](#)

Yergensen, B. (2022). Enraptured by nature's fury in *The Day After Tomorrow*: Deleuze's movement-image and the George W. Bush era of global warming denial. *Journal of Visual Political Communication*, 8(1), 67-86. DOI: 10.1386/jvpc_00012_1 [Article webpage](#)

Yergensen, B. (2022). Coronation in physics: String theory and the pursuit of the Theory of Everything. *Journal of Religion & Society*, 24(1), 1-13. [Article webpage](#)

Yergensen, B. (2021). Pursuing a rational religion: Vernacular science rhetoric as the link between humanity and God in Enlightenment Europe. *The Northwest Journal of Communication*, 49(1), 9-34. [Ebsco permalink](#) (**Lead article**)

Yergensen, B. (2021). The Holy Grail of physics: Division and unification in the string theory movement. *The Midwest Quarterly*, 63(1), 24-36. [Gale document](#)

Yergensen, B. (2007). The rhetorical interlude: Examining key film speeches in cultural/historical context. *Journal of the Communication, Speech & Theatre Association of North Dakota*, 20(1), 21-29. [Journal's volume 20 webpage](#)

Yergensen, B. (2006). Cultural interpretations of fantasy film: *The Lord of the Rings* as Christian 'equipment for living.' *Ohio Communication Journal*, 44(1), 151-171. [Ebsco permalink](#)

UNDER REVIEW

Yergensen, B. Rhetorics of employee empowerment in *Ad Astra*: Scientific ambition and the familial costs of emotional labor. Manuscript submitted to *Journal of Science & Popular Culture*.

Yergensen, B. Sovereignty, Brexit, and *Dunkirk*: Winston Churchill's "Fight Them on the Beaches" speech as public memory. Manuscript submitted to *Film & History*.

Yergensen, B. The pragmatic modernism of M. Night Shyamalan: Rhetorical interludes as cinematic structure. Manuscript submitted to *Americana: The Journal of American Popular Culture, 1900-Present*.

Yergensen, B. Theodor Adorno's Negative Dialectics and troubled aesthetic: Unsettling endings as cinema didactics. Manuscript submitted to *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts*.

Yergensen, B. Robin Hood in a casino: Perfected vigilante justice and in *Ocean's* cinematic rhetoric in post 9/11 America. Manuscript submitted to *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture*.

Yergensen, B. Theodor Adorno's negative dialectics in digital theology: The visceral narratology of metaphor and personification. Manuscript submitted to *Journal of Communication and Religion*.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Yergensen, B. (2015). The need for communicative wisdom in an age of workplace democracy. In K. Vaidya (Ed.) *Communication for the curious: Why study communication?* Canberra: Curious Academic Publishing.

Yergensen, B. (2009). Exploring science as salvation in apocalyptic films. In K. Hart, & A. Holba (Eds.), *Media and the apocalypse* (pp. 153-166). New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

(Papers marked with an * were competitively selected)

*Yergensen, B. (2023, April). *Sovereignty, Brexit, and Dunkirk: Winston Churchill's "Fight Them on the Beaches" speech as public memory*. Popular Culture Association Communication & Digital Culture Area, San Antonio.

*Yergensen, B. (2022, April). *Competition on the origins of life and the American scientific oratory tradition: Hypermasculine evolution and instinctual faith in Prometheus*. Popular Culture Association Religion and Culture Area, Virtual.

*Yergensen, B. (2020, February). *Keen on the killer: The 'Burbs and interlude as warning*. Southwest Popular/American Culture Association, Albuquerque.

Yergensen, B. (2020, February). Panelist, *The Shining, on its 40th anniversary*. Southwest Popular/American Culture Association, Albuquerque.

*Church, S. H., Yergensen, B., & Granata, P. (2019, June). *Music and AirPods: Adorno as*

media ecologist. Media Ecology Association, Toronto.

*Yergensen, B. (2017, April). Evil's desire: Dracula, Lacan, and rationality in postmodern culture. *Popular Culture Association Vampire in Literature, Culture, and Film Division*. San Diego, CA.

*Yergensen, B. (2016, November). Negative dialectics, the currant bush, and mediated theology as non-representation. *Mormon Media Studies Symposium*, Laie, HI.

*Yergensen, B. (2016, March). Complicating the hero's quest: Father's absence and aid in the supernatural television drama. *Popular Culture Association Men and Men's Studies Division*, Seattle, WA.

*Yergensen, B. (2014, April). Understanding vernacular science through the Plato-Aristotle debate: The case of invention and translation. *Northwest Communication Association Rhetorical Theory and Criticism Division*, Coeur d'Alene, ID.

*Yergensen, B. (2014, April). Creating the political conscience: Extending Murray Edelman's ideas on the nature of political news. *Northwest Communication Association Media Studies Division*, Coeur d'Alene, ID.

Yergensen, B. (2013, February). Adorno's Negative Dialectics: His purpose and method. *Western States Communication Association Communication Theory and Research Division*. Reno, NV.

*Yergensen, B. (2011, November). The holy grail of physics: String theory and the pursuit of unification. *National Communication Association Association for the Rhetoric of Science and Technology*, New Orleans, LA.

Top Paper

*Yergensen, B. (2011, February). Emphasizing division, establishing guilt: Creating the symptom in the string theory movement. *Western States Communication Association Rhetoric and Public Address Interest Group*. Monterey, CA.

*Yergensen, B. (2009, November). Popularization of science and the string theory movement. *National Communication Association Research in Progress Round Table*. Chicago, IL.

*Yergensen, B. (2009, April). Environmental rapture: Deleuze's movement-image amidst environmentalism's prophesied catastrophe. *Central States Communication Association Graduate Caucus*. St. Louis, MO.

- *Yergensen, B. (2009, April). “The question of Burke’s ethics” revisited: Burkean Marxism and the critique of materiality. *Central States Communication Association Kenneth Burke Society*, St. Louis, MO.
- *Yergensen, B. (2009, April). The international council for science [union]: A case study of the organizational communication of globalizing science *Central States Communication Association Organizational and Professional Communication Division*, St. Louis, MO.
- *Yergensen, B. (2008, November). Scientizing criticism: The “abuse of casuistry” and contradictory organizational discourses of the childcare action project. *Association for the Rhetoric of Science and Technology*, San Diego, CA.
- *Yergensen, B. (2008, November). “Rational religion”: Popular science literature as the cognitive link between mankind and God in enlightenment Europe. *American Society for the History of Rhetoric Symposium*. San Diego, CA.
- *Yergensen, B. (2008, January). The Hero is But Welcome on Troubled [Minds]’: Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Philosophy and the Challenge of Mental Transformation. *University of Nebraska—Lincoln Martin Luther King Essay Contest*. Lincoln, NE.
- *Yergensen, B. (2007, November). I have an epiphany! The sexist structure of problem solving heroes in Shyamalan's plot twisting supernatural thrillers. *National Communication Association Semiotics Division*, Chicago, IL.
- Yergensen, B. (2007, November). Cinematic scripture: Ethical crisis in using fantasy as equipment for militant ideology. *National Communication Association Kenneth Burke Society*, Chicago, IL.
- Yergensen, B. (2007, November). Christian window dressing: Advertising secular movies for the religious audience. *National Communication Association American Studies Division*, Chicago, IL.
- *Yergensen, B. (2006, November). The wise old man: Diversifying the archetype in science fiction. *National Communication Association Association for Psychoanalysis*. San Antonio, TX.
- *Yergensen, B. (2006, April). The holistic hero: The new rhetoric of heroism found in *Spider-Man 2*. *Central States Communication Association Media Studies Competitive Paper Division*, Indianapolis, IN.

- *Yergensen, B. (2006, April). 'Ringing' America, Iraq, and terrorists: Using Burke to discover equipment for (argu)ing. *Central States Communication Association Kenneth Burke Society Competitive Paper Division*, Indianapolis, IN.
- *Yergensen, B. (2006, April). New mediums in researching the sublime and the fascination of horror film. *Central States Communication Association Rhetorical Theory and Criticism Division*, Indianapolis, IN.
- *Yergensen, B. (2005, April). Samwise Gamgee's structure and word choice in *the two towers*. *Central States Communication Association Media Studies Division*, Kansas City, MO.
Top 3 Student Paper
- *Yergensen, B. (2005, April). *A Beautiful Mmind*, dramatism, and relationships. *Central States Communication Association Kenneth Burke Division*, Kansas City, MO.
- *Yergensen, B. (2005, April). Effective lecturing in the communication classroom. *Central States Communication Association Communication Education Division*, Kansas City, MO.
- *Yergensen, B. Jesuit education and the rhetorical tradition. Paper accepted at the 2004 *American Society for the History of Rhetoric Conference*, Chicago, IL.
- *Yergensen, B. (2004, April). A look at the rhetoric of Adolf Hitler through the lens of Ciceronian style. *Northwest Communication Association Rhetorical Theory and Criticism Division*, Coeur D' Alene, ID.
- *Yergensen, B. (2004, April). To be or not to be? That is America's question. *Northwest Communication Association Rhetorical Theory and Criticism Division*, Coeur D' Alene, ID.
- *Yergensen, B. (2003, April). The Jesuits and their contribution to rhetorical theory. *Northwest Communication Association Rhetorical Theory and Criticism Division*, Coeur D' Alene, ID.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

(UTT=UT-Tyler, BYUH=BYU-Hawaii, UTU=Utah Tech University, UNL=University of Nebraska-Lincoln, EIU=Eastern Illinois University)

COMMUNICATION PRAXIS COURSES

- *COMM 100: Public Speaking* (UTU, EIU)
Practice in speech analysis, planning, and delivery techniques.
- *COMM 286: Business and Professional Communication* (UNL)
Practice speaking in business settings with focus on negotiation, interaction, and public presentation skills.
- *COMM 4010 Persuasion* (UTU)
Practice using classical and contemporary persuasion techniques for professional presentations.
- *COMM 101 Fundamentals of Human Communication* (UNL)
Practice communicating clearly and professionally in business, public, and interpersonal settings.
- *COMM 1270 Critical Thinking and Communication* (UTU)
Application and analysis of debate and argumentation techniques.
- *COMM 2700 Voice and Civility in Public Discourse* (UTU)
Practice advocating in an ethical and effective manner on social issues.
- *COMM 2710 Communication Principles of Mentorship* (UTU)
Study and practice of interpersonal leadership, coaching, and decision-making techniques.
- *COMM 4050 Leadership and High Performance Teams* (UTU)
Practice directing organizations with focus on collaborative planning and personnel motivation techniques.
- *COMM 4500 Communication and Conflict* (BYUH, UTU)
Exercise in mediating, brainstorming, and applying resolution techniques in conflicting situations.
- *COMM 353 Organizational Communication* (BYUH)
Exercises in navigating organizational dynamics, problem solving, and representing organizations.
- *COMM 2110: Interpersonal Communication* (UTU)
Practice applying effective interpersonal sensitivity and listening skills.
- *COMM 2120: Small Group Communication* (UTU)
Practice participating in group development, team culture, and professional problem solving.

COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE COURSES

- *COMM 4315/5335 Organizational Communication* (UTT)
Graduate level survey of Organizational Communication theory and research.
- *COMM 5308 Communication Research Methods* (UTT)
Graduate level exploration of social scientific and interpretive research methods.
- *COMM 326 Issues in Global Communication* (BYUH)
Exploration of global media, and economic and cultural conflicts.

- *COMM 305 Communication and Popular Culture* (BYUH)
Study of social and critical theories applied to popular culture.
- *COMM 3190: Intercultural Communication* (UTU)
Study of cultural traditions, communication styles, and histories.
- *COMM 2010: Media and Society* (BYUH, UTU)
Overview of media history, technological developments, and effects on society.
- *COMM 220: Public Discourse* (UNL)
Study of key figures and events in oratorical history.
- *COMM 3130 Rhetoric and Public Communication* (UTU)
Exploration of the history, theories, and role of rhetoric in culture.
- *COMM 3460 Rhetorical Analysis* (UTU)
The study and application of rhetorical analysis theories in contemporary media.
- *COMM 4490 Communication and Contemporary Public Discourse* (UTU)
Study of contemporary issues focusing on journalistic and narrative styles of media coverage.
- *COMM 490 Senior Seminar* (BYUH, UTU)
Student-chosen capstone projects in applied and research contexts.
- *COMM 4450 Communication Research* (UTU)
Study of the paradigms and theorists in the history of the Communication discipline.
- *COMM 4890 Directed Study: Social Theory* (UTU)
Study of European philosophy in historical and contemporary communication contexts, with particular focus on the Frankfurt and Birmingham schools, and postmodernism.

RECENT SERVICE

- Reviewer, *Journal of Religion, Film, and Media*, Summer 2023-Present.
- Journal Editorial Board, *New Explorations: Studies in Communication & Culture*, March 2023-Present.
- Journal Editorial Board, *Utah Journal of Communication*, March 2023-Present.
- UT-Tyler Rank and Promotion Process Evaluation Taskforce (consolidation and migration of evaluation systems into Interfolio software), January 2023-Present.
- UT-Tyler Chairs' Council, August 2022-Present.
- UT-Tyler University Council, August 2022-Present.
- UT-Tyler College of Arts and Sciences Tenure and Promotion Review Committee, August 2022-Present.
- UT-Tyler Quality Enhancement Plan College of Arts and Sciences Evaluation Committee, Fall 2023-Spring 2024.
- Communication Department Assessment Committee, Fall 2022-Present.
- Recorded Presenter, First Generation Student Media Campaign, UT Tyler, November 2022.

- Presenter, UT-Tyler Department of Communication Research Colloquium, “Theodor Adorno's Negative Dialectics and Horror Aesthetic: Unsettling Endings as Cinematic Quality,” September 8, 2022.
- UT-Tyler College of Arts and Sciences Tenure and Promotion Review Committee, August 2022-Present.
- Reviewer, *Northwest Journal of Communication*, June 2018-present.
- UT-Tyler College of Arts and Sciences Freshmen Orientation Presenter, July 22, 2029.
- UT-Tyler College of Arts and Sciences Freshmen Orientation Presenter, July 22, 2022.
- Trainer for BYU-Hawaii Center for Learning and Teaching, “Reactive Simulation Learning: Turing Your Classroom into a Courtroom, and the Case of Propaganda in Simpleville,” March 2022.
- BYU-Hawaii Undergraduate Research Proposal Arts & Letters Reviewer, Winter 2022.
- BYU-Hawaii Undergraduate Research Conference Moderator, “Representing Culture: Narrative Depictions of Cultural Identity,” March 31, 2022.
- Internship Coordinator, Communication, Media and Culture Program, May 2018-June 2022.
- Panelist, National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowships Media & Technology Area, May-June 2020. Evaluation and designation of \$4.6 million in research grants.
- Faculty of Arts and Letters Representative, Asia Pacific Conference Committee, Fall 2018-Spring 2020.
- Library Faculty Search Committee, Spring-Winter 2021.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- Faculty Recognition Award for Faculty of Arts & Letters, Brigham Young University-Hawaii, May 2020.
- Distinguished Service Award, Utah Tech University, 2018 (awarded to only one faculty member per year, campus-wide).
- Teacher of the Year, Division of Communication, Utah Tech University, 2015-16.
- Second Miler Award, Boy Scouts of America, 2013.
- Teacher of the Year Finalist, Utah Tech Univ. Annual Campus Wide Awards Ceremony, 2010-11.
- Top Paper, NCA Association for the Rhetoric of Science and Technology, 2011.
- Certificate of Recognition for Contributions to Students, University of Nebraska—Lincoln from UNL Teaching Counsel and UNL Parents Association, 2009.
- 2nd Place, University of Nebraska Martin Luther King Jr. Day Essay Contest, 2008.
- Top 3 Student Paper, Media Studies Division, Central States Communication Association Conference, 2005.
- The Distinguished Graduate Student Award for Communication Studies, Eastern Illinois University Graduate School, 2005.

- The Outstanding Graduate Student Award, Department of Communication Studies, Eastern Illinois University, 2005.