Amy Ritchart
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College of Communication & Information Sciences
The University of Alabama
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Student Bio (195 words): Amy Ritchart is a doctoral student at The University of Alabama in the College of Communication & Information Sciences. Her research program is focused on developing a nuanced understanding of how the media shapes and aids in public understanding of discourse and policy on issues related to politics and health. She uses a variety of research methods, including quantitative, qualitative, and computational. In her work, she has examined how mainstream media (both news and social media) unpack disruptions in issues related to disability, vaccines, election reporting, and complex narrative frames in news coverage. In her dissertation, she will analyze how disability is framed in mass-mediated spaces. The goal is to better understand how highly misunderstood disabilities such as Tourette syndrome can be de-stigmatized through algorithmically driven masspersonal prosumer social networks. At UA, Ritchart is an affiliate of the Office of Politics, Communication and Media, the Public Opinion Lab, and is a Graduate Teaching Fellow with the Graduate School. Ritchart pursued her Ph.D. after years of serving as a tenured assistant professor at Austin Peay State University where she taught journalism. Before beginning her full-time work in higher education, Ritchart was a career reporter and editor.

Dr. Rebecca K. Britt
Associate Professor
Faculty Fellow, Alabama Life Research Institute
Department of Journalism and Creative Media
College of Communication & Information Sciences
The University of Alabama

Faculty bio (201 words): Rebecca K. Britt (Ph.D., Purdue University, 2012) is an Associate Professor at The University of Alabama in the Department of Journalism and Creative Media in the College of Communication & Information Sciences. She is also a Faculty Fellow at the Alabama Life Research Institute. Britt's research program is focused on health communication and computational social science. Her work has long focused on health inequities and new media technologies and social networks, with an emphasis on understanding the production and evaluation of knowledge in organizations. Her work often involves the use of natural language processing (NLP), large web data, and online communities; including Twitter and Reddit, which the current project proposes. Her work in this area has included developing, running, and evaluating interventions and campaigns tailored to rural and underserved populations in mass media and social networks. Dr. Britt's research has been published in a number of prestigious academic journals including *Health Communication, Journal of Interactive Advertising, Journal of Communication, Environmental Communication, Mobile Media & Communication, Behavior & Information Technology,* among others. Her research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the Alabama Water Institute, the National Communication Association (NCA), and other organizations.

Abstract (245 words):

The Holocaust represents an exceptionally horrific genocide in world history; more than six million Jewish people were murdered as well as other marginalized groups, including LGBTQ+ people and those with disabilities. In present society, the Holocaust has become a contentious tool for political debate over divisive issues. These debates often involve the use of extreme metaphors, as exemplified by state Sen. Dave Lawson, a Republican from Delaware, who equated laws that limit the purchase of guns in the United States with Nazi policies. Such metaphors reflect tenuous interactions between polarization, emotion, and extreme language, which are used to galvanize individuals in dialogue of public policy issues. As these conversations frequently take place on social media platforms such as Twitter and Reddit, the proposed study recommends a computational qualitative analysis of those platforms, as well as examination of the polarity, cognitive, and affective dimensions of the content to examine how attempts to polarize the electorate through the use of extreme metaphors are integrated into those exchanges. In addition, the study aims to (1) synthesize existing literature at the intersection of emotion, polarization, and extreme metaphor; (2) provide insight regarding the degree of polarity and emotionality within political communication, (3) explicate the role of ethical and political implications through the use of extreme language as well as the complexities of polarization and sentiment, and (4) produce an open-source dataset housed within the Open Science Framework (OSF) for journalists, researchers, and educators could further work in this area.

The Holocaust as a polarizing metaphor for emotion-laden political conversations on social media

Proposal (1499 words)

Scope and Purpose

The historic genocide that included the Nazis' systematic, state-sponsored targeted murder of six million Jewish people (USHMM, 2023), as well as the murder of other minorities such as LGBTQ+ people, Roma, and people with disabilities (Jewish Virtual Library, 2023), represents both history and a moldable framework for political discourse. In the over 75 years since the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps, the Holocaust has morphed from a historical account to an oft-used metaphor applied to the opposition: it has become a trope or frame used in contemporary media content for partisan gain. Artists, intellectuals, and media professionals have all used the Holocaust to activate themes and affect the trajectory of discourse in social commentary and debate (Buettner, 2011). Historically, Holocaust analogies have appeared in political speech during debates about U.S. policy including the Affordable Care Act (Sisk, 2014) and Donald Trump's immigration policy (Kelly, 2019). Current exemplars include political discourse that compares abortion to the Holocaust, the Holocaust as a metaphor in green energy advocacy, comparisons between COVID-19 mask and vaccine mandates to Nazi oppression, and arguments about gun control (ADL, 2022; Gamard, 202).

Extant literature supports the notion that politics is performative and draws on emotion to influence people's beliefs, intentions, and actions (e.g. Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019; Widmann, 2021). Wahl-Jorgensen (2019) asserts that political communication is inherently performative and rooted in emotion. She proposes a sociological framework in which emotions are shaped through interactive discursive processes: they become public and collective memory via naming, articulation, and circulation. Here, mediated emotions hold important value due to their performative construction and emerge as a polarizing resource for politicians, journalists, activists, and the citizenry.

The relationship between polarization, partisanship, and emotion is nuanced and much of this political discussion is taking place on Twitter. Hasell (2021) found that partisan and emotional news tweets are inordinately magnified on social media, while Barbéra et al. (2015) contend in a large-scale data analysis of Twitter that the degree of polarization of users' ideology and echo chamber status fluctuate depending on the issue and duration. Though the growing body of research has addressed the multifaceted role of polarization, partisanship, and Twitter, the Holocaust's use as a polarizing, inciteful metaphor in political discourse has received scant attention. To respond to the need to address this ongoing discourse, it is crucial to analyze the nature of polarizing dialogue that focuses on the use of the Holocaust as an extreme metaphor and to create a database of public opinion data from social media.

Scholars have posited that social media serves as a vital medium to gauge public opinion (Yaqub et al., 2017; Dong & Lian, 2021). Twitter and Reddit are two of the most prominent platforms facilitating political discourse on highly sensitive and complex topics (Pew, 2022). The userbase and content formats of Twitter and Reddit are distinct. Twitter emphasizes short-form messages while Reddit encourages pseudonymous posts of long-form text. Before accessing data from the respective APIs, an investigation of extreme metaphors involving the Holocaust was conducted using the Sprinklr social media monitoring platform, along with preliminary data collection. It is essential to analyze the data available on Twitter and Reddit surrounding polarization and the mechanisms by which emotions are conveyed through extreme metaphors in political discourse and platform affordances. This knowledge can ultimately impact public policy; communication messaging for important prosocial policy issues; and provide organized and critical public data on an important historical and tragic event. The study poses the following research questions and hypotheses:

RQ1: What are the most prevalent Holocaust-related themes that manifest as extreme metaphors on (**1a**) Twitter and (**1b**) Reddit and how do these platforms compare?

RQ2: What is the overarching polarity of the most prevalent Holocaust-related themes that emerge in (**2a**) Twitter and (**2b**) Reddit and how do they vary?

The use of extreme metaphors regarding the Holocaust may result in more polarized reactions on social media, so there is likely to be less room for neutral viewpoints. By testing this across Twitter and Reddit, we can better assess metaphorical discourse and how that shapes the emotion and attitudes among the public. H1 is suggested:

> **H1**: Increased volume of extreme metaphors used in social media (**1a**, Twitter; **1b**, Reddit) leads to more highly polarized content in terms of sentiment whether more extreme positive or extreme negative appraisals and fewer neutral appraisals.

Contributions

This study synthesizes disparate literature at the intersection of emotion, polarization, and extreme metaphor. The study focuses on the use of the Holocaust in political discourse about public policy issues including abortion, gun control, green energy, and pandemic health measures as cases of how extreme metaphor is used to galvanize speech in political discussions. This study will add to literature regarding how attempts to polarize the electorate in political discourse about health policy using extreme metaphors are integrated into messages on social media platforms like Twitter and Reddit.

Methods

Twitter data will be gathered using Sprinklr, a social media monitoring platform[1] and Reddit data will be gathered using the Pushshift API in Python. A random sample of tweets will be gathered in batches of 10,000 using a boolean query to cover a period of time from Jan. 1, 2016, to Dec. 31, 2023. Regarding Reddit data collection, publicly available threads from subreddits will be gathered within the same time period. Preprocessing will use the natural language toolkit (NLTK).

Themes will be analyzed through automatic computational qualitative analysis via Leximancer (Smith & Humphreys, 2006) to identify phenomena that emerge within the data (Burscher et al., 2016). Valence Aware Dictionary and Sentiment Reasoner (VADER), a well-supported Python package for sentiment and opinion mining, will be used to assess polarity in the data. Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) will be used to analyze linguistic domains (affective and cognitive) within the data. H1 will be tested via a linear regression, where extreme metaphors identified are measured against sentiment as the outcome variable.

Table 1

Timeline and abbreviated work plan[2]

Dates	Activities
May- June 2023	Boolean query development for Twitter data collection in Sprinklr finalized (Already 40k gathered); Query development on subreddits[3] and data collection in Reddit using the Pushshift API

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[1] Twitter Developer closed free access to its API. We have confirmed that Sprinklr, which the College of Communication & Information Sciences has, housed in its Public Opinion Lab, a long-term subscription with, is unaffected, and can continue to gather large batches of data, including random samples of data.

[2] A full plan of work is included with the faculty support letter.

[3] Following prior research on data mining practices (VanDyke et al., 2022), many redditors keep lists of subreddits to contribute towards public discourse. Data will be gathered from these existing lists using a randomizer to identify samples and batches of 10.0k as a similar practice to tweets; an initial search was done and subreddits such as r/worldnews, r/europe, and r/conspiracy as examples. Among these lists include: https://www.reddit.com/r/ChurchOfSuffrage/comments/l5fqcc/full_list_of_political_subreddits/ which is one approach that houses organized subreddits.

July - August 2023	Data preprocessing using NLTK Data analysis in Leximancer (**RQ1**; **1a**, **1b**) Analysis of themes that emerge; frequency data saved for H1
September-October 2023	Write up findings from Leximancer analysis (**RQ1**; **1a**, **1b**) which inform analysis for **RQ2**; **2a**, **2b** Data analysis in VADER and LIWC (**RQ2**; **2a**, **2b**) Test polarity based on theme frequencies using VADER; Data analysis in R (**H1**)
November-December 2023	Complete final manuscript (for AEJMC and journal submission) Upload final open data set to OSF.io Deliver report to AEJMC

Anticipated Outcomes and Impact

      Divisive content can have profound effects on public support for prosocial policies as it can contribute to a lack of support for bipartisan solutions (Levendusky, 2013; Iyengar et al., 2019; Yarchi et al., 2021). This research aims to impact our knowledge of polarized political discourse on social media; analyzes the use of an extreme metaphor for emotional impact on two of the largest social media sites, which serve as public platforms for debate, making them important to study for public policy discussions. This further clarifies the role of ethical and political implications through the use of such language as well as the complexities of polarization and sentiment.

      The findings of this study will inform journalism and mass communication research on the use of big data and emergence of extreme metaphors in social media discourse and degree to which they exhibit both polarization in their sentiment, affect, and cognitive domains.

      Finally, the project will create an open-source database of this large-scale dataset, which will be housed within the Open Science Framework (OSF). This will provide journalists, researchers, and educators with a valuable resource that they could further use to explore a variety of research questions regarding this divisive content, but also make use of through other methods. By making this data openly available, we hope to promote collaboration for other scholars to engage with and advance knowledge in journalism and mass communication.

Potential Publication Venues

- Human Communication Research (HCR)
- Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly (JCMQ)
- Political Communication
- Journal of Communication Technology (JoCTEQ)

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Anticipated Budget

The anticipated budget (Table 2) will cover costs for software licensing, data storage, and a contribution to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to support efforts to digitize historical documents so they are available globally for research purposes and to become part of the public memory. The AEJMC Collaborative Scholars grant will facilitate the success of this project by providing access to software programs and data storage essential to data collection and the computational analysis necessary to investigate the research questions and hypothesis posed in this study. The University of Alabama Public Opinion Lab, housed in the Institute for Communication and Information Research (ICIR), will provide access to Twitter data. Any additional unanticipated costs incurred for the project, for example, a change in software licensing fees, will be covered by The University of Alabama Department of Journalism and Creative Media.

Table 2
Detailed budget

Budget Item	Cost	Explanation
Topic Modeling	$2178.91	Leximancer license for education use
Sentiment Analysis	$141.65	LIWC license for education use
Twitter Data	-	Sprinklr social media data gathering platform provided by The University of Alabama Public Opinion Lab
Polarity Analysis	-	VADER open-source in Python
Reddit Data	-	Pushshift API open-source in Python
Data Storage	$101.51	Toshiba Canvio Basics 4TB Portable External Hard Drive USB 3.0
Donation	$100	USHMM - Donation helps preserve the truth of the Holocaust by making 1,000 documents digitally available to people worldwide.
Total	**$ 2522.07**	

Rebecca K. Britt, Ph.D.
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Faculty Fellow, Alabama Life Research Institute
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To the members of committee for the AEJMC Collaborative Scholar Grant,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Amy Ritchart, a doctoral student in the College of Communication & Information Sciences at the University of Alabama, and her student-faculty application for the AEJMC Collaborative Scholar Grant. Below this letter, please find a copy of the work plan.

I have worked closely with Amy for the past two years, during which time I have had her in two classes, collaborated with her on various research projects, am currently funding her on a grant that I lead as PI, on my faculty fellowship, and serving as co-chair on her dissertation committee. Amy's exceptional research skills and dedication to her work are without reservation, and I have no concerns that the plan in place for the project will be completed successfully, yielding findings that synthesize literature. Amy's research program focuses on the intersection of political and health communication, with a particular focus on analyzing the mass media through a variety of lenses, with a special emphasis on framing. Amy has become particularly skilled at employing computational techniques in her research—among other methods, which has enabled her to examine research questions and test hypotheses that would otherwise be unable to be addressed.

This project will use computational analysis to analyze the use of extreme Holocaust metaphors on Twitter and Reddit, with the goal of preserving knowledge and creating an open-source database that will have a significant impact on scholars, educators, and journalists. Amy has already developed and tested Boolean queries for the data sources. While the recent announcement that the Twitter API is no longer free could pose a challenge, we have identified two viable options to obtain the data necessary for the project. First, Amy has already scraped 40,000 tweets for data analysis; and I have reviewed relevant subreddits and posts, following the approach I took in my prior work (e.g., VanDyke et al., 2022 and others); and our college is subscribed to Sprinklr, a social media listening platform that is above the paid tier of Twitter access and is unaffected. Together, we have preparation work complete.

There are two additional important points I would like to mention, which our application mentions, but that is critical to note here: First, I have grant funds available to support a paid version of the Twitter API for Amy to use, if, for any reason, Sprinklr were to become

unavailable, which we do not anticipate. Second, the Department of Journalism and Creative Media (Chair: Dr. Michael Bruce) supports Amy on this project and will match additional funds that Amy needs. We are highly supportive of the project and Amy's work.

The project's emphasis on the role of extreme Holocaust metaphors on social media highlights the need to address polarization, and the resulting open-source database will serve as a valuable resource for those in journalism, research, and mass communication education. As the lead researcher, Amy's work has significant implications for preserving the memory of the Holocaust and understanding public opinion of one of the most tragic events in history. The open data, which includes Python scripts and data in CSV packages, will further encourage collaboration and ensure the project's long-term impact, and bolster Amy's own leadership as an emerging scholar with unique skills and superb research.

I am delighted to recommend Amy for the AEJMC Collaborative Scholar Grant. Amy is one of our best students in the doctoral program in the College of Communication & Information Sciences; she excels in her coursework; is collaborative and a well-liked colleague among her peers and students; and she is making strong progress on her degree as she approaches her final year in the program. This novel project that Amy will lead has longstanding implications and is a true fit to the theme of "*Polarization*" in this year's proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions or require more information. You may reach me either at rkbritt@ua.edu or 440-221-4468.

All the best,

Dr. Rebecca K. Britt

Work Plan detailing activities (also in proposal; details additional tasks by Ritchart and Britt). We anticipate much of our collaboration taking place in the Public Opinion Lab in the Institute for Communication and Information Research, where we have previously collaborated on research.

Dates	Activities
Mid-May-June 2023	Boolean query development for Twitter data collection in Sprinklr finalized (Already 40k gathered by **Ritchart**); Query development on subreddits and data collection in Reddit using the Pushshift API (**Britt**) • Data collection via Twitter API and Pushshift API • Data management (Storage within the Public Opinion Lab located in the Institute for Communication & Information Research in the College of Communication & Information sciences at UA; **Ritchart**--

	Back-up of data on university storage drive and external hard drive; **Britt** backs up on UA Box)
July - August 2023	Data preprocessing using NLTK Data analysis in Leximancer (**RQ1**; **1a**, **1b;** led by **Ritchart** and **Britt** confirms, reviews and meets with **Ritchart** to review analysis and discusses data; iterative process in Leximancer) • Data management continued (preprocessed files in addition to original raw data files; meet to ensure data cleaning is agreed upon) • Analysis of themes that emerge; frequency data saved for H1 (**Britt**, works with **Ritchart**)
September-October 2023	Write up findings from Leximancer analysis (**RQ1**; **1a**, **1b**) which inform analysis for **RQ2**; **2a**, **2b** (led by **Ritchart** and input from **Britt** on meaning of sentiment findings and any additional computational tasks needed) Data analysis in VADER and LIWC (**RQ2**; **2a**, **2b**) • Test polarity based on theme frequencies using VADER (**Ritchart**); Data analysis in R (**H1**) (**Britt**- work with **Ritchart**; frequencies identified from themes, polarization data saved in CSV and run to test for significance) • Test the relationship between the strength and potential direction of relationship of extreme metaphors used (IV) and degree of polarization (DV) (correlation coefficient) followed by multiple regression to test the effects of several IVs including volume of metaphors, the social media platforms, and other covariates against the DV (polarization)
November-December 2023	Complete final manuscript in preparation for AEJMC submission and journal submission (Manuscript led by **Ritchart** in collaboration with **Britt** including all tasks) Upload final open data set to OSF.io Deliver report to AEJMC

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Education
Doctor of Philosophy in Communication & Information Sciences, The University of   2024
Alabama, Tuscaloosa
Major Area: Political and Health Communication
Secondary Area: Literary Journalism
Committee: Drs. Rebecca K. Britt, Kaitlin Miller (Co-Chairs), Jessica Maddox, A. J.
Bauer, Cynthia Peacock

Master of Fine Arts in Creative Nonfiction, Murray State University   2019
Committee: Allen Wier (Chair), Drs. Carrie Jerrell, Josh Adair

Master of Arts in Mass Communication, Bowling Green State University   1994

Bachelor of Science in Journalism, Bowling Green State University   1992

Academic Appointments
Graduate Teaching Assistant, *The University of Alabama*   2021-present
Communication and Information Sciences, Dept. of Journalism and Creative Media

Assistant Professor with Tenure, Austin Peay State University   2014 -2021
College of Arts & Letters, Department of Communication

Select Fellowships and Funded Appointments
1. **Graduate Teaching Fellow**, The University of Alabama Graduate School (2021-2023)
   a. Co-created and co-taught workshops at annual UA Graduate School graduate teaching
      assistant training day. Co-created and co-taught workshops for graduate teaching assistants
      during 2021-2023 academic years. Co-led graduate teaching assistant Spring 2023 book club.
2. **Phifer Fellow Fund**, funded research assistant from Reese Phifer Fellow Professorship with Dr.
   Rebecca K. Britt.
   a. Conducts research examining vaccine coverage in rural areas using social media data and
      sentiment analysis.
3. **Funded Graduate Research Assistant**, Department of Journalism and Creative Media, College of
   Communication & Information Sciences (2023).
   a. Britt, R. K., VanDyke, M. S., & Terry, L. (2023). Addressing water contamination threats
      using entropy and network theory via capacity building: Utilizing big data to develop an
      architecture for engineering and the social sciences. Alabama Water Institute. Innovation
      Grant. Total funds: $23,089. [**Ritchart, A. A.** as funded GRA].[1]

Publications
Hicks-Goldston, C., & **Ritchart, A. A.** (2019). The new digital divide: Disinformation and media literacy
     in the U.S. Media Literacy and Academic Research, 2(1), 49-60.
Ritchart, A. A. (2019). Reform Judaism in the digital age. In religion online: How the internet, social
     networks, and mobile devices are changing the way we worship and pray (pp. 160-169). Santa
     Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC.

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[1] Sole student funded for project.

Ritchart, A. A. (Summer 2018). [Review of book How Stevie nearly lost the war and other postwar stories]. New Madrid, XIII(2), 126-128.

Manuscripts in Progress

Kanthawala, S., Cotter, K., **Ritchart, A. A.,** De., A., McAtee, H., Yun, C., & DeCook, J. (2022). *Algorithmic conspirituality: Explicating its emergence, dimensions, and persuasibility*. [Manuscript preparation].

Ritchart, A. A., (2022). *Characterizing the COVID-19 vaccine through framing: An examination of Instagram posts by U.S. broadcast media.* [Manuscript preparation].

Britt, R. K., VanDyke, M. S., Boman, C. D., & **Ritchart, A. A.** (2023). *Regional and international disparities in water sanitation on Twitter and the implications for environmental risk communication*. [Manuscript preparation].

Ritchart, A. A., Britt, R., K., Khadiza, J., Kanthawala, S., & Jones, N. (2023). *Media attention and news framing during the COVID-19 pandemic newspaper coverage: A comparison with influenza*. [Manuscript preparation].

Ritchart, A. A. (2023). *Gaming the midterms: Exploring national frames in 2022 midterm election news horse-race reporting.* [Manuscript preparation].

Britt, R. K., & **Ritchart, A. A.** (2023). *Investigating how psychological wellbeing emerges on social media: A big data analysis of mental health activity on Twitter*. [Manuscript preparation].

Ritchart, A. A. (2023). *Complex frames and notable narratives in conservative online news coverage of COVID-19 in the first pandemic year*. [Manuscript preparation].

Ritchart, A. A. & Martin, K. (2023). *It's giving credibility: Reliability of credibility scales for health information consumption on prosumer video platforms.* [Manuscript preparation].

Ritchart, A. A. (2023). *Modern epistolary exchange and key news coverage in #metoo and #timesup.* [Manuscript preparation].

Upcoming and Recent Conference Presentations

Kanthawala, S., Cotter, K., **Ritchart, A. A.,** De., A., McAtee, H., Yun, C., & DeCook, J. (2023, May 25-27). *Algorithmic conspirituality: Explicating its emergence, dimensions, and persuasibility*. [Paper presentation[2]]. ICA 2023: Reclaiming Authenticity in Communication, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Ritchart, A. A. (2023, March 2-4). *Gaming the midterms: Exploring 2022 midterm election news game schema.* [Paper presentation]. AEJMC Southeast Colloquium in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, United States.

Ritchart, A. A., Bernhardt, J., Morris, J.R., & Nichols, T. S. (2022, November). *Critical conversations: Exploring the legacy and impact of communication and disability issues.* [Panel presentation]. National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA.

Ritchart, A. A., Jones, J.J., Nichols, T.S., & Morris, J. R. (2022, October). *Critical conversations: A snapshot of public memory, political communication, polarization, and social media.* [Roundtable presentation]. Popular Culture Association of the South, New Orleans, LA.

Ritchart, A. A. (2022, March). *Framing the COVID-19 vaccine: A content analysis of U.S. broadcast Media's Instagram posts.* [Paper presentation]. Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Midwinter, Norman, OK.

Ritchart, A. A., Nichols, T.S., & Morris, J. R. (2021, April). *Teaching diversity: Media literacy in the undergraduate core.* [Paper presentation]. Media Education Summit 2020, Leeds, England, (virtual).

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[2] Top paper Communication & Technology Division

Ritchart, A. A. (2020, August). *Women in podcasting: Making our space*. [Panel presentation]. Association of Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA, (virtual).

Hicks-Goldston, C., & **Ritchart, A. A.** (2019, July). *Disinformation, fake news, and the new Knowledge Gap*. [Paper presentation]. The International Organization of Social Sciences and Behavioral Research, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada.

Ritchart, A. A. (2019, March). *Modern epistolary exchange and key news coverage in #metoo and #timesup.* [Paper presentation]. The International Organization of Social Sciences and Behavioral Research, New Orleans, LA.

Select Awards and Honors

1. APSU Department of Communication Innovative Professor Award (2018)
2. *Leaf-Chronicle* Readers' Choice: Favorite Professor (2018)
3. Tennessee Press Association, first place investigative reporting (2007)
4. HOPE Award for Diversity Reporting (2007)
5. Tennessee Press Association, first place education reporting (2007)
6. Tennessee Press Association, first place Edward J. Meeman Foundation for Public Service Journalism (2006)

Recent Courses Taught

University of Alabama: Journalism Principles and Practice | *APSU*: News Reporting; Copy Editing; Feature Writing; Investigative Reporting; Media Ethics; Election Reporting; Media and Social Institutions; Mass Media and Women; Data Analysis and Mass Communication Research; Multimedia News Reporting; Magazine Production; Public Speaking; and, Transition to University.

Technical Skills

1. **Computational skills**: Python and R — specifically working with sentiment analysis, VADER, working with APIs, writing scripts to scrape and analyze data (e.g., TikTok); data cleaning and preprocessing (e.g., NLTK)
2. **Platform experience**: Sprinklr, CrowdTangle, Leximancer (automated computational qualitative analysis) & LIWC (sentiment analysis), NodeXL (network analysis)
3. **Social media data analysis**: Collecting large amounts of natural language data and newspaper data on the web; collecting Facebook & Instagram data, collecting and analyzing network data, computational qualitative analysis, computational textual analysis, sentiment analysis

Lab Affiliations and Research Groups

1. The Office of Politics, Communication and Media (OPCaM) at the University of Alabama
2. The Public Opinion Lab at The University of Alabama
3. Environmental and Health Research Group, The University of Alabama

Professional Journalism Experience

Freelance Journalist   2007-2014
Author/Editor/Blogger/Columnist

The Leaf-Chronicle   2002-2007
Morning Editor, Investigative Reporter

Enterprise Ledger   1993-1994
Assistant News Editor, City Reporter, County Reporter

Rebecca Katherine Britt, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Department of Journalism and Creative Media
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NCBI Bibliography: ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/myncbi/rebecca%20katherine.britt.1/bibliography/public/

Education

Doctor of Philosophy in Communication, Purdue University	2009 - 2012

Major Area: Health Communication; **Secondary Area**: Research Methods (Network Analysis, Multiple Methods)
Committee: Drs. Sorin A. Matei, (Advisor, Brian Lamb School of Communication), James L. Mohler, Stacey Connaughton, W. Bart Collins

Master of Arts in Communication, Purdue University, 2009	2007 - 2009
Bachelor of Arts in Communication, Purdue University, 2007	2004-2007

Academic Appointments

Associate Professor with Tenure, *The University of Alabama* Communication and Information Sciences, Dept. of Journalism and Creative Media	2018 – present
Reese Phifer Fellow, Dept. of Journalism and Creative Media, The University of Alabama (Research fund with 3-year appointment)	2023-2025
Faculty Fellow, *Alabama Life Research Institute*	2022 - present
Assistant Professor, *South Dakota State University* College of Arts and Sciences, School of Communication and Journalism	2014-2018
Assistant Professor, *The University of Akron* Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences, School of Communication	2012-2014

Select Grants and Contracts (out of 18)

1. **Britt, R. K.**, VanDyke, M. S., & Terry, L. (2023). Addressing water contamination threats using entropy and network theory via capacity building: Utilizing big data to develop an architecture for engineering and the social sciences. Alabama Water Institute,Innovation Grant. Total funds: $23,089. **Role: Lead PI**.
2. **Britt, R. K.**, & Holiday, S. J. (2022). Promoting health communication and biometrics research through cross-university partnerships. Strategic Fund, University of Alabama. Total funds: $3519.50. **Role: PI**.
3. **Britt, R. K.**, & Lee, J.-Y. (Co-PI) (2021). Augment and virtual reality technology (AR/VR) to support health challenges research. Strategic Fund, University of Alabama. Total funds: $2216. **Role: PI**.
4. Lee, J., & **Britt, R. K.** (2021-2022). Testing eHealth literacy interventions on reducing misinformation sharing intention.Institute for Communication & Information Research. Total fund: $4808. **Role: Co-PI**.
5. **Britt, R. K.**, & Musaev (Co-PI), A. (2019-20). Addressing oral health disparities in Alabama through pilot research: Pairing qualitative inquiry with data mining organizational conversations on social networking sites. Research and Grants Committee Seed Funding, The University of Alabama. Total amount: $3930. Funded. **Role: PI**.
6. **Britt, R. K.** (2018-2019). Faculty Fellowship Award, Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility at The University of Alabama. Funding supports service learning course development, community engagement partnerships. $1500 Service Learning Grant. **Role: PI**.

7. Britt, B. C., **Britt, R. K.**, & Anderson, J. (2016-2018). Sharing hope and healing: Evaluating and promoting living kidney donation via a social media campaign. Collaborative research center for American Indian health. National Institutes of Health, #U54MD008164 National Institutes of Health. Total amount: $99,935. Funded. **Role: Co-PI**.

Select Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals and Proceedings (out of 53)

1. **Britt, R. K.**, Franco, C. L., & Jones, N. (2023; in press). Trends and challenges within Reddit and health communication research: A systematic review. *Communication and the Public*. CS: 1.700. SJR: 0.425. h-5 index: 15. h-5 median: 21.
2. **Britt, R. K.** (2023; in press). Qualitative inquiry reveals Native Americans' response to multimodal organ donation campaign messages through health anecdotes. Manuscript submitted to *The Qualitative Report*. IF: 1.075. CS: 0.381. h-index: 43.
3. Price, S. F., & **Britt, R. K.** (2023; in press). "Look for positive people: Construction of counternarratives within r/transgender_surgeries." *Women & Language*.
4. **Britt, R. K.,** Chou, S., Omah, O., & Chakraborty, A. (2023). The state of eHealth studies across information technology and communication: An analysis of published studies to guide future scholarship. *Proceedings of the Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences 2023*. Track: *Information Technology in Healthcare, IT Adoption, Diffusion, and Evaluation in Healthcare*. (ISSN): 2572-6862. h-index: 92. SJR: 0.316.
5. **Britt, R. K.**, Doss, E. F., & Hayes, M. (2023). Infrastructural and network support in the illness experience: The role of community crowdsourcing in self-care. *Proceedings of the Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences 2023*. Track: *Information Technology in Healthcare, Social Media and Healthcare Technology*. (ISSN): 2572-6862. h-index: 92. SJR: 0.316.
6. **Britt, R. K.**, Britt, B. C., Panek, E., & Lee, J. (2023; in press). Communication expressed on the COVID-19 subreddit in the midst of a global pandemic. *Health Communication.* Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2021.1994190. IF: 3.434. CS: 4.10. SJR: 1.026. SNIP: 1.594.
7. VanDyke, M. S., Britt, B. C., **Britt, R. K.**, & Franco, C. L. (2022). How environment-focused communities discuss COVID-19 online: An analysis of (risk) information amplification on Reddit. *Environmental Communication.* https://doi.org/10.1080/17524032.2022.205622
8. Lee, J., Choi, J., & **Britt, R. K.** (2022). Social media as risk-attenuation and misinformation-amplification station: How social media interaction affects misperceptions about COVID-19. *Health Communication.* Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2021.1996920. IF: 3.434. CS: 4.10. SJR: 1.026. SNIP: 1.594.

Upcoming and Recent Conference Presentations (out of 82)

1. **Britt, R. K.**, Carmack, H. C., & Amangalieva, G. (2023). Addressing the conceptual nature of trends in health communication scholarship through an analysis of published studies. Manuscript to be presented at the bi-annual *DC Health Communication Conference.*
2. Carmack, H. C., & **Britt, R. K.** (2023). Patient sociodemographic and care-seeking factors as antecedents of clinician trust in primary care. Manuscript to be presented at the bi-annual *DC Health Communication Conference.*
3. Amangalieva, G., **Britt, R. K.**, & Carmack, H. C. (2023). Shame resilience, social support, and humor in an online community of patients with anorectal disorders. Manuscript to be presented at the bi-annual *DC Health Communication Conference.*
4. Park, H., Britt, B. C., Hayes, J. A., & **Britt, R. K.** (2023). A cross-cultural study of consumer brand engagement through social media influencers on Twitter: A computational comparison of American and South Korean influencers. Manuscript to be presented at the annual conference of the American Academy of Advertising.
5. **Britt, R. K.,** Chou, S., Omah, O., & Chakraborty, A. (2023). The state of eHealth studies across information technology and communication:An analysis of published studies to guide future scholarship. Manuscript presented at the annual *Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences 2023.*

6. **Britt, R. K.**, Doss, E. F., & Hayes, M. (2023). Infrastructural and network support in the illness experience: The role of community crowdsourcing in self-care. Manuscript presented at the annual *Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences 2023*.
7. Carmack, H. J., **Britt, R. K.**, Franco, C. L., & Montgomery, J. A. (2022). Creation and validation of the doorknob disclosure measure. Manuscript presented at the annual convention of the National Communication Association, Health Communication Division.

Recent Awards and Honors
1. **Reese Phifer Fellow, Department of Journalism and Creative Media, The University of Alabama** ($37,500 over 3 years). Selected as a Reese Phifer Fellow, an honor which enables a tenured faculty member funds to conduct an extensive research project and funding for a 3-year term
2. **2022- Special Collection on Health Promotion Practice with and From Indigenous/Native American/American Indian Communities, 2011-2021**. Article in a Featured Collection in *Health Promotion Practice* by the Editor of the journal for "Sharing Hope and Healing': A culturally tailored social media campaign to promote living kidney donation and transplantation among Native Americans" funded out of a NIH/NIMH grant
3. **2021 - Most Influential Articles, Ongoing Collection, American Academy of Advertising Journals.** Article selected in a Collection by the editors of the American Academy of Advertising as one of the most influential of the year for, "Too big to sell? A computational analysis of network and content characteristics among mega and micro beauty and fashion social media influencers"

Recent Courses Taught
Health Communication & Social Influence (*PhD course*); Mediated Health (*PhD course*); Research Methods; Health and Organizational Communication (*PhD course*); Communication Theory; Rhetoric and Health; Health Communication (*PhD course*); Seminar in Communication Theory, Video Games and Media; Media Effects; News Design and Data Visualization

Graduate Student Committees
Ph.D. Students In Progress (Additional committee service)
Khadiza Tul Jannat (Doctoral Advisor) - Graduating Summer 2023
Courtny L. Franco (Doctoral Advisor)- Graduating Summer 2023 (*Provided letter of support for her successfully awarded UA Dissertation Fellowship for 2022-2023 Academic Year*)
Amy Ritchart (Doctoral Co-Chair with Dr. Kaitlin Miller)- Graduating Spring 2024
Andrew Morris (Doctoral Advisor) - Graduating 2025 (*Provided letter of support for his successfully awarded UA NAA License Tag Fellowship for 2022-2023 Academic Year*)

Editorial Boards
Editorial Board Member, *Health Communication*, 2020-present
Editorial Board Member, *Communication Research Reports*, 2020-present
Editorial Board Member, *Frontiers in Communication: Health Communication*, 2020-present
Editorial Board Member, *Communication Reports*, 2019-present
Editorial Board Member, *Health Promotion Practice*, 2019-present
Guest Editorial Board Member, Special Issue for *Technology, Mind and Behavior* (The Psychology of Live-Streaming)
- Journal reviewer for 11 additional journals

Technical Skills
Programming and statistics: Python (Specifically data mining and using APIs, processing data and testing models in reproducible formats, numerical computation (numpy), latent Dirichlet allocation, scikit-image; R (basic); large scale data analysis