

Celebrating 40 years of Korean American Communication Scholarship

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The Korean American Communication Association (KACA hereafter) will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2018. The KACA was formally created in 1978. Originally called the North American Association of Korean Communication Scholars, its name was changed to the Korean American Communication Association in 1979 (“History, the KACA,” 2017).

The KACA, Then and Now

From its inception, the KACA maintained the dual mission of facilitating scholarship whilst simultaneously encouraging social networking among Korean communication faculty and graduate students in the U.S. and Canada. The KACA has played an important role in advancing communication research and scholarship related to Korea by holding panel sessions dedicated to studies on Korea at annual conferences for the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the National

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Communication Association, and the International Communication Association. The KACA has also served as an important social resource for Korean scholars who are studying or working in North America by facilitating networking and mentoring opportunities at conferences.

Currently, the KACA serves close to 600 Korean faculty and graduate students across North America, a nearly 50% increase compared to 2008, when the KACA celebrated its 30th anniversary. In addition to its growing size, the composition of the KACA constituency is changing significantly. According to internal data, about 79% of the KACA constituency in 2007 was graduate students while only 21% was faculty. Among the faculty, 76% were assistant professors, 10% associate professors, and 14% full professors. A decade later in 2017, data shows a starkly different picture; Only 44% of the current KACA constituency is graduate students, and the proportion of faculty has increased to 45%, with 58% being assistant professors, 29% associate professors, and 13% full professors (J. Cha, personal communication, October 26, 2017).

This change is a reflection of the changing job markets in Korea and North America. In the past 10 years, the academic job market in Korea for those with recent communication doctorates from overseas universities has declined. On the other hand, the expansion of communication technology and increasing popularity of Korean cultural content overseas has contributed to a growing interest in Korea as a topic of communication research for scholars outside of Korea. Together, these changes have led to an increase in Korean communication scholars seeking jobs overseas. Many of these scholars have established stellar careers and obtained great recognition in their respective subfields. A number of Korean faculty are being honored with endowed chair professorships, as well as securing various leadership positions at

their universities and within major academic associations. For example, Kyu Ho Youm, the current Jonathan Marshall First Amendment Chair at the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication, became the first Asian scholar to serve as the President of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication in 2013. Acting as a hub for prolific and active communication scholars, the KACA has become a formidable academic association in its own right.

Celebrating the 40th Anniversary with Book Projects

Currently, Korean communication scholars in North America are planning several important activities to celebrate the KACA's anniversary. Two book projects are currently under way to document and reflect upon 40 years of communication scholarship on Korea. The first book, tentatively entitled *Korea's Communication, Digital Media, and Popular Culture*, will provide a comprehensive overview of the history of scholarship on Korean media and communication that is published in the English language across 19 different subfields. It will be edited by Dal Yong Jin (Simon Fraser University) and Nojin Kwak (University of Michigan). The second book, tentatively entitled *Korean Communication, Media, and Culture: An Annotated Bibliography* and edited by Kyu Ho Youm (University of Oregon) and Nojin Kwak (University of Michigan), will provide annotations of major English books, journal articles, monographs, and dissertations on Korean journalism, communication, culture, and related topics across 10 major subfields. Both books will be published by Lexington Books. The books, which are to be unveiled at the KACA anniversary conference next year, will provide a comprehensive review and documentation of existing English-language publications in communication related to Korea, thus serving as

invaluable resources for those who wish to study any aspects of media, journalism and communication related to Korea.

The KACA 40th Anniversary Conference in Washington D.C.

The anniversary celebration will culminate at the KACA 40th Anniversary, which will be held in Washington D.C. on August 9, 2018 in conjunction with the meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. This will commemorate the fact that the KACA was originally conceived when a few Korea communication scholars got together at the 1977 conference for the Association for Education in Journalism. Plenary sessions with prominent keynote speakers as well as a variety of panel sessions are being organized around the theme, “Renewed Role of the Press in Building, Transforming, and Restoring Democracy: Korea and Beyond.”

In addition, the KACA Anniversary Conference is to provide an important forum to discuss how various communication associations from the Asian region, including the Korean Society for Journalism and Communication Studies, Korean Association for Broadcasting and Telecommunication Studies, Chinese Communication Association, and Japanese Communication Association, can better network and collaborate with one another. Many of the KACA members skillfully work across the Pacific, linking their knowledge of Korean contexts to their research initiatives in North America and elsewhere. The KACA has been working to provide additional opportunities for collaboration at an organizational level as well, and has gained much experience along the way. For instance, in the 80’s, the KACA held a series of joint conferences with the Korean Society for Journalism and

Communication Studies, and has been collaborating closely with the Chinese Communication Association in recent years. The KACA is currently well poised to lead the effort to establish a consortium of Asian Communication Associations, and the Anniversary Conference will serve as an important forum to take that effort to the next level. There is a critical awareness that the field of communication has much to gain through more balanced scholarship that is inclusive of non-Western perspectives. It is high time that communication organizations in the Asian region to work together to advance research of important communication phenomena in Asian contexts and widely disseminate important findings to scholars in other regions of the world.

The Anniversary Conference will surely be an interesting forum to reflect upon the 40-year history of Korean communication scholarship in North America and to chart the course for the next 10 years. Many Korean scholars who currently work in Korea may remember attending various KACA events, either academic or social, as graduate students, faculty, or visiting faculty to American universities. I invite all of those scholars to join in the celebration of our collective achievements at the KACA 40th Anniversary Conference next year.

References

History, the Korean American Communication Association.(2017, December 17). Retrieved from <http://www.thekaca.org/about-kaca/history/>



Call for Nominations The 40th Anniversary Celebration Awards

Marking the KACA's milestone anniversary, KACA 40th Anniversary Celebration Awards are established to recognize and honor individuals who have made impactful contributions throughout their careers to advancing the KACA's core mission in three areas of academic duty: research, education, and professional service. The awardees will be recognized at the 40th Anniversary Conference to be held on August 9, 2018 in Washington DC.

The KACA 40th Anniversary Celebration Awards Committee welcomes your nominations in the following three award categories.

Any member of the KACA can nominate. We will accept both nominations and self-nominations and non-KACA members can be nominated. Please send your nomination packet in a single PDF file as an email attachment to the Award Committee Chair, Jisu Huh (jhuh@umn.edu) no later than March 31, 11:59 pm, EST, 2018.

Note: Current KACA officers and Awards Committee members are not eligible for these awards.

1. Outstanding Contribution to Research Concerning Korea and Korean-Americans

This award recognizes an individual who has devoted substantial parts of his/her scholarly career to advancing and promoting research on communication subjects related to Korea and Korean-Americans, made impactful contributions to research development and theory building in this area of communication research, and helped promoting knowledge and interest among scholars in the communication field regarding communication issues related to Korea/Korea Americans. Rather than rewarding a single outstanding research project or individual pieces of publication, this award is designed to recognize a body of significant research over the course of an individual's career.

Research concerning Korea and Korean-Americans is defined as research about any communication-related phenomena and problems that are particularly pertinent to the Korean society, Korean people, or the Korean American population.

Eligibility criteria:

- Scholarship activities and publications should be primarily in English
- Substantial portion of his/her research program should focus on Korea/Korean-American-related communication issues

Nomination packet requirements:

- Nomination letter specifying key reasons this person should receive the award
- Supporting letters (minimum 3)
- Nominee's CV

- Supporting materials containing evidence of outstanding achievements and contributions as specified in the award objective description (e.g., relevant publications, awards or other recognition of an internationally known academic or practitioner organizations)

2. Outstanding Contribution to Communication Education

This award recognizes an individual's career-long dedication to and achievement in the advancement of communication education and exchange of knowledge and partnership between Korea and other countries in educating future generations of communication practitioners and researchers. Those who have made significant contributions to students/knowledge exchange programs between Korea and other countries would be given preference.

Eligibility criteria:

- Has been teaching communication-related courses at academic institutions outside Korea
- Has been teaching at the university level at least for the past 5 years

Nomination packet requirements:

- Nomination letter specifying key reasons this person should receive the award
- Supporting letters (minimum 3)
- Nominee's CV
- Supporting materials containing evidence of outstanding achievements and contributions as specified in the award objective description (e.g., awards or other recognition of an internationally known academic or practitioner organizations, development of new courses or innovative new teaching approaches that made important impact, textbook publication, letters from past students, students/course/professional exchange programs developed and/or managed including Korean academic institutions or professional organizations)
- Nomination of someone who has made significant contributions to students/courses/professional exchange programs between Korea and another country would be given preference.

3. Outstanding Contribution to Professional Service

This award recognizes a KACA member who has been actively engaged within the KACA and built a sustained and significant public-service record that has helped advance the mission of KACA, as specified in the KACA mission statement. The outstanding service contributions do not need to be just to the KACA but any professional service activities at one's unit, university, local communities, and professional organizations that are considered well-aligned with the KACA's mission would be considered.

Eligibility criteria:

- Anyone who has been actively engaged within the KACA and built a sustained and significant public-service record that has helped advance the mission of KACA

Nomination packet requirements:

- Nomination letter specifying key reasons this person should receive the award
- Supporting letters (minimum 3)
- Nominee's CV
- Supporting materials containing evidence of outstanding achievements and contributions as specified in the award objective description (e.g., awards or other recognition of an internationally known academic or practitioner organizations, notable accomplishments in serving the academic and social needs of Korean/Korean American communication scholars and students)



Call for Papers

The 40th Anniversary Conference & AEJMC KACA Research Sessions August 6-9, 2018, Washington, D.C.

Conference Theme:
*Renewed Role of the Press in Building, Transforming,
and Restoring Democracy: Korea and Beyond*

The Korean American Communication Association (KACA) invites paper submissions for its 40th Anniversary Conference on August 9, 2018 and for KACA Research Sessions during the annual meeting of Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), August 6 – 9, 2018. Both KACA's 40th anniversary conference and KACA research sessions will be at Renaissance Washington DC.

For the 40th anniversary conference, papers that address the conference theme are particularly welcome, but submissions in any areas of communication research on Korea-related topics are encouraged as well. For AEJMC's KACA sessions, any communications research on Korea-related topics is welcome.

The theme of the 40th Anniversary Conference, "Renewed Role of the Press in Building, Transforming, and Restoring Democracy: Korea and Beyond" aims to facilitate our scholarly discussions on renewed role of the press in changing media and political environments in Korea and elsewhere. Though compromised from time to time, freedom of the press has become an essential part of Korean politics. Nonetheless, the contribution of the press to Korean democracy continues to be the subject of intense debate among scholars, political elites, and average citizens. Particularly, the recent turmoil in Korean politics presents need to reassess the role of the press not only in building but in transforming and restoring democracy. Also, the wide availability of digital platforms for social networking has fundamentally changed the way citizens become politically engaged, redefining the notion of democratic citizenship. Any potential mismatch between new democratic citizenship and current journalism further justifies need to investigate renewed role of the press in Korea and in other democracies.

As the media have power to influence national political discourse, the notion of free and open media is essential to a healthy democracy. KACA seeks to bring together regional and international media scholars to discuss issues relating to media and democracy and to propose solutions to problems (if any) identified in Korea and in Asian and other countries. Our emphasis on democracy is intended to link up with various communication theories and research approaches that take on the interplay of democracy and media as presented through any forms of data or perspectives. Any topics linking the media to democracy are welcome, including but not limited to:

- Whether/how free media serve or harm democracy once they have been established.
- How to conceptualize and operationalize media's contribution to democracy. What are potential indicators?

- How traditional and/or emerging media have (re)shaped democratic citizenship, particularly the way citizens obtain and share information and the way they participate in democratic decision making.
- How to (re)conceptualize freedom, democracy, and justice in the 21st century media and political environment.
- How to (re)conceptualize the watchdog, guard dog, and lapdog role of the press in the 21st century media and political environment.
- How new technology affects the principles of democratic journalism and the notion of freedom of the press.
- How market principles and competitions affect journalistic practices.
- The relationship between the media and the government and its potential consequences.
- How new democratic citizenship and changing media environment affect political campaigns and elections.
- The relationship between the media, political activism, and social movement.
- How to preserve freedom of expression and the public sphere in the new media environment.
- Private and public ownership of media organizations and implications for democracy.
- Unintended outcomes of new technologies (e.g., digital divide, fake news, data journalism, Virtual Reality, Artificial Reality, Mixed Reality) and implications for democracy.
- How social and mobile media have changed political communication and how traditional media can complement or compete with the newer forms of technology.
- The role of alternative and independent media outlets as they relate to democratic processes.
- Histories of media reform movements
- Media policies and regulations designed to arrange for democratic communication.

Submission Guidelines

1. **Deadline:** All submissions must be made no later than **Friday, April 13, 11:59 pm, EST, 2018**.
2. **Categories of Submissions:** Two categories of submissions will be accepted: full papers (20 pages plus tables, figures, and references) or extended abstracts (4-5 pages plus references, tables, and figures), though full papers are preferred. Extended abstracts should contain literature review, research questions/hypothesis, method section, and findings. Abstracts only with literature review or research questions/hypotheses will not be considered.
3. **Author Identification:** Names and other information that may identify the author(s) should not appear anywhere in the paper other than on the cover page.
4. **Cover page:** The cover page should include the following information: Title, names of the authors, affiliations, mailing addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers.
5. **Submission Method:** All submissions should be in either MS Word or PDF format and sent by email to Seok Kang (seok.kang@utsa.edu).
6. Selected papers will be assigned to either the 40th Anniversary Session (August 9) or the KACA-AEJMC Session (date TBD) for presentation. Papers that received the best reviews will be recognized in the sessions (for both the Anniversary Conference and AEJMC KACA Research Sessions).

Additional information about the KACA and the conference can be found at KACA website:

<http://www.thekaca.org/about-kaca/>. For inquiries about this call, please contact the Program Committee: Seok Kang (seok.kang@utsa.edu), Seihill Kim (KIM96@mailbox.sc.edu), or Gi Woong Yun (gyun@unr.edu).



Korean American Communication Association

The 40th Anniversary Conference & Gala Reception

Conference Theme:

*Renewed Role of the Press in Building,
Transforming, and Restoring Democracy:
Korea and Beyond*

August 9, 2018

Renaissance Washington DC

**Please visit the KACA website (www.theKACA.org)
for Call for Papers, Call for Nominations for the 40th
Anniversary Celebration Awards, and other
information about the conference.**

**Follow us for up-to-date information about the
conference on Facebook (KACA: the Korean
American Communication Association)**

한미커뮤니케이션학회