

Curriculum Vitae

ERICH J. SOMMERFELDT, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
Department of Communication
University of Maryland

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Mass Communication, University of Oklahoma, August 2011
Dissertation: *Social capital networks of media NGOs in Peru: A public relations approach to explicating relationships in civil society*

M.A. in Communication, Western Michigan University, August 2007
Thesis: *Activism, public relations, and the Internet: A case study of MoveOn.org*

B.F.A. in Musical Theatre Performance, Western Michigan University, May 2003

**ACADEMIC
APPOINTMENTS**

Assistant Professor, August 2012–present
University of Maryland, Department of Communication

Assistant Professor, August 2011–August 2012
Towson University, Department of Mass Communication and Communication Studies

Doctoral Fellow, August 2008–August 2011
University of Oklahoma, Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication

**JOURNAL
PUBLICATIONS**

Kent, M. L., Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Saffer, A. (in press). Social networks, power, and public relations: *Tertius Iungens* as a co-creational approach to studying relationship networks. *Public Relations Review*. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2015.08.002

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2015). Disasters and information source repertoires: Information seeking and information sufficiency in post-earthquake Haiti. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 43(1), 1–22. doi: 10.1080/00909882.2014.982682

Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Kent, M. L. (2015). Civil society, networks, and relationship management: Beyond the organization–public dyad. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 9(3), 235–252. doi: 10.1080/1553118X.2015.1025405

- Paquette, M., Sommerfeldt, E. J., Kent, M. L. (2015). Do the ends justify the means? Dialogue, development communication, and deontological ethics. *Public Relations Review*, 41(1), 30–39. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2014.10.008
- Kennedy, A. K., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2015). A postmodern turn for social media research: Theory and research directions for public relations scholarship. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 23(1), 31–45. doi: 10.1080/15456870.2015.972406
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2013). The civility of social capital: Public relations in the public sphere, civil society, and democracy. *Public Relations Review*, 39, 280–289. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2012.12.004 (**Best Article of the Year, NCA Public Relations Division PRIDE Committee**)
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2013). Online power resource management: Activist resource mobilization, communication strategy, and organizational structure. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 25, 347–367. doi: 10.1080/1062726X.2013.806871
- Saffer, A., Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Taylor, M. (2013). The effects of organizational Twitter interactivity on organization-public relationships. *Public Relations Review*, 39, 213–215. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.02.005
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2013). Networks of social capital: Extending a public relations model of civil society in Peru. *Public Relations Review*, 39, 1–12. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2012.08.005
- Buehner, T. M., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2013). Visual communication in the public sphere. *American Communication Journal*, 15(3).
- Sommerfeldt, E. J., Kent, M. L., & Taylor, M. (2012). Activist practitioner perspectives of website public relations: Why aren't activist websites fulfilling the dialogic promise? *Public Relations Review*, 38, 303–312. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2012.01.001
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2012). The dynamics of activist power relationships: A structurationist exploration of the segmentation of activist publics. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 6, 269–286. doi: 10.1080/1553118X.2012.686256
- Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Taylor, M. (2011). A social capital approach to improving public relations' efficacy: Diagnosing internal constraints on external communication. *Public Relations Review*, 37(3), 197–206. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.03.007 (**Best Article of the Year, NCA Public Relations Division PRIDE Committee**)
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2011). Activist online resource mobilization: Relationship building features that fulfill resource dependencies. *Public Relations Review*, 37(4), 429–431. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.03.003

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2011). Activist e-mail action alerts and identification: Rhetorical relationship building strategies in collective action. *Public Relations Review*, 37(1), 87–89. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2010.10.003

BOOKS

Kent, M. L., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2011). *Public relations writing: A rhetorical approach. Instructor's Manual*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

**BOOK
CHAPTERS**

Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Xu, S. (2015). Legitimation in activist issues management: Congressional testimony of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP). In R. Waters (Ed.), *Public relations theory and practice in the nonprofit sector* (pp. 185–202). New York: Routledge.

Kennedy, A. K., Xu, S., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (forthcoming). Public relations and development: Ethical perspectives on communication for societal effectiveness. In B. R. Brunner (Ed.), *The moral compass of public relations*. New York: Routledge.

**OTHER
PUBLICATIONS**

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2013). Catalytic issues management (pp. 100–101). In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of public relations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2013). Resource dependency theory (pp. 795–797). In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of public relations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2012). [*Content analysis: Can shared indicators improve monitoring and evaluation?*](#) Washington, D.C.: Center for International Media Assistance, National Endowment for Democracy.

Mandel, J., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2012). [*Closing the loop: Responding to people's information needs from crisis response to recovery to development: A case study of post-earthquake Haiti*](#). Washington, D.C.: Internews Network.

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2011). [*Peruvian media development sector network analysis and factors influencing media development*](#). Washington, D.C.: Internews Network.

**REFEREED
CONFERENCE
PAPERS**

Yang, A., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2015, November). *Embracing political opportunity in issues management: Exploring the impact of opportunity structures on strategic network building*. Presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Las Vegas, NV

- Brown, K., Fowler, B., Guo, S., Tills, C., Xu, S., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2015, August). *Public relations as development communication? Conceptual overlaps and prospects for a societal paradigm of public relations*. Presented at the annual conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, San Francisco, CA.
- Kent, M. L., Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Saffer, A. (2015, May). *Social network analysis and public relations: Tertius Iungens as a path to organizational trust and relationship building*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Yang, A., Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Taylor, M. (2015, May). *Toward the conceptualization of the engagement process in public relations: Evidence from six nations*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Paquette, M., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2014, November). *Do the ends justify the means? Dialogue, development communication, and deontological ethics*. Presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Yang, A. (2014, August). *Relationships as strategic issue management: An activist network strategy model*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Montreal, Canada.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2014, May). *Disasters and information source repertoires: Information seeking and information sufficiency in post-earthquake Haiti*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, Seattle, WA.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Mandel, J. (2013, August). *Media credibility and disaster: The moderating role of information satisfaction in post-earthquake Haiti*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Washington, D.C.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J., Paquette, M., Janoske, M., Saffer, A., & Ma, L. (2013, August). *Identifying communities in public relations theory networks: The structure of research paradigms*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Washington, D.C.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2013, June). *The civility of social capital: Public relations in the public sphere, civil society, and democracy*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, London.

- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2012, November). *Networks of social capital: Extending a public relations model of civil society*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Orlando, FL.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Kent, M. L. (2012, May). *A network approach to measuring organization–public relationships. Research directions for public relations using social network analysis*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, Phoenix, AZ. (**Top five faculty papers panel, public relations**).
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2011, November). *The dynamics of activist power relationships: A structurationist exploration of the segmentation of activist publics*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Klyueva, A., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2011, November). *Voices from across the Atlantic: Reflections on U.S. and European public relations scholarship*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J., Kent, M. L., & Taylor, M. (2011, May). *Why aren't activist websites fulfilling the dialogic promise? Activist practitioner perspectives of website public relations*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, Boston, MA.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2010, November). *Rethinking activism in public relations: An introduction to resource mobilization theory*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA. (**Top three student papers panel, public relations**).
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2010, November). *Building bridges between public relations and the public sphere: Understanding public relations as rhetorical advocacy and agency*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA. (**Top four student papers panel, rhetoric and communication theory**).
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2010, August). *The role of social capital in public relations' efficacy: How internal networks influence external practice*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), Denver, CO.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2010, August). *Legitimation in activist issues management: Congressional testimony of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP)*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), Denver, CO.

- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2010, June). *Activist public relations: Activist practitioners' perceptions of publics, the Internet, and media*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, Singapore.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J., Wolfe, K., & Johnson, C. (2010, June). *Activist online resource mobilization and tactics: Relationships between resource-dependencies and tactical behavior*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, Singapore.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2010, March). *Legitimation in issues management: Activist congressional testimony on issues of AIDS policy*. Paper presented at the Mid-Winter Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Norman, OK.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2009, November). *Activism, information subsidies, and the Internet: A case study of MoveOn.org*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2009, August). *Beyond activist publics: Toward a public relations typology of activist groups*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Boston, MA.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2008, November). *Activism, relationship building, and the Internet: A case study of MoveOn.org*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, San Diego, CA.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2008, May). *Money and people change the world: Internet resource mobilization in activist public relations*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, Montreal, Canada.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2007, November). *Workgroups, diversity, and homosexuality: (Dis)connections in the conflict management literature*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2007, May). *Building a social movement through public relations: An analysis of Christian Right efforts to foster constituent identification via e-mail*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, San Francisco, CA.
- Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2006, April). *Politics and the pulpit: Correlations between Christian media consumption and dissemination of political ideology by ecclesiastics*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Central States Communication Association, Indianapolis, IN.

**CONFERENCE
PANEL
PRESENTATIONS**

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2014, November). *Public relations or development communication? Cultural interpreters as social capital advisors in community building*. Presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL.

Abbott, S., Taylor, M., & Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2013, October). *Challenges and opportunities for monitoring and evaluating 21st century media development*. Presented at the annual conference of the American Evaluation Association, Washington, D.C.

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2012, November). *Network COMMunities of public relations scholarship: The evolving structure of public relations theory*. Presented on competitive paper panel: *Understanding COMMunity ties that bind: Applications of network theory and analysis for public relations*. Presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Orlando, FL. **(Panel organizer)**.

Saffer, A., Sommerfeldt, E. J., & Taylor, M. (2011, November). *Social media as a relationship-building function: What does the evidence tell us?* Presented on competitive paper panel: *The current status of social media research and practice in public relations*. Presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA.

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2011, March). *What do we really know about building relationships through the Web and social media?* Discussant on panel: *The promise and realities of social media in journalism and strategic communication*. Presented at the Mid-Winter Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), Norman, OK.

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2010, November). *Teaching specialized public relations courses: A graduate student perspective*. Competitive paper panel: *Public relations education: Do we teach what we practice?* Presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA.

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2010, November). *Building bridges between public relations and the public sphere*. Competitively chosen panel discussion presented at the 2010 meeting of the National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA. **(Panel organizer, chosen as NCA theme panel)**.

Sommerfeldt, E. J. (2009, May). *Activist group relationships and power: Toward a typology of activist publics*. Competitive paper panel: *Keywords in communication: Reconceptualizing publics in public relations*. Presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Chicago, IL. **(Panel organizer, chosen as ICA theme panel)**.

**INVITED
LECTURES**

“Social network analysis as a tool for monitoring and evaluation” (2014, September). Internews Network, Washington, D.C.

“An introduction to monitoring and evaluation techniques” (2012, April). Earth Journalism Network, Washington, D.C.

“Research in public affairs: A framework for effective communication planning and assessment” (Senior guest lecturer, invited more than 20 times since 2012). United States Defense Information School (DINFOS), Ft. Meade, MD.

“Applications of social network analysis for international development programs” (2011, December). QED Group, Washington, D.C.

“An introduction to social network analysis as a tool for monitoring and evaluation” (2011, October). Internews Network, Washington, D.C.

“Content analysis” (2011, October). Research Methods in Mass Communication, Professor Amy Becker, Towson University, Towson, MD.

“Economics of the media,” (2009, March). Introduction to Mass Communication, Professor Ramon Chavez, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK.

“Media conglomerates,” (2008, October). Introduction to Mass Communication, Professor Maureen Taylor, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK.

**COURSES
TAUGHT**

University of Maryland

Introduction to Public Relations (COMM201): Fall 2015

Public Relations Theory (COMM 350): Spring 2013, Spring 2014

Public Relations Techniques (COMM 351): Fall 2012, Fall 2013, Fall 2014

Global Public Relations (COMM 633): Spring 2013, Spring 2015

Seminar in Public Relations Publics (COMM 631): Fall 2013, Fall 2015

PR Design & Publications (COMM398D): Fall 2014, Spring 2015

Towson University

Public Relations Writing (MCOM 357): Fall 2011, Spring 2012

Practice of Public Relations (MCOM 606): Spring 2012

Mass Media Graphics (MCOM 415): Spring 2012

University of Oklahoma

Public Relations Publications (JMC 3433): Fall 2009, Spring 2010, Fall 2010

Public Relations Writing (JMC 3423): Spring 2010, Fall 2010

Typography & Design (JMC 3813): Mini-semester 2010

Advertising Copy & Layout (JMC 3353): Fall 2010

**UNIVERSITY
SERVICE**

University of Maryland-College Park

Faculty Advisory Committee, Department of Communication, September 2014–May 2015

University Senate Representative, Department of Communication, May 2013–present

IRB Coordinator, Department of Communication, May 2013–present

Chair, Department of Communication Colloquium Committee, August 2012–May 2014

Department of Communication undergraduate curriculum revision task force, August 2012–present

Department of Communication graduate recruiting subcommittee, January 2013–present

Towson University

Faculty resources committee, August 2011–May 2012

Department library liaison, August 2011–May 2012

Core course coordinator for Public Relations Writing (MCOM 357), August 2011–May 2012

**AD-HOC
MANUSCRIPT
REVIEWER**

Public Relations Review: 14 manuscripts

Human Communication Research: 3 manuscripts

International Journal of Strategic Communication: 4 manuscripts

Public Relations Inquiry: 1 manuscript

Journal of Public Relations Research: 1 manuscript

Journal of Applied Communication Research: 2 manuscripts

Health Communication: 1 manuscript

New Media & Society: 2 manuscripts

Asian Journal of Communication: 1 manuscript

Computers in Human Behavior: 1 manuscript

**SERVICE FOR
PROFESSIONAL
ASSOCIATIONS**

NCA public relations division Vice-Chair Elect, 2014

NCA public relations division PRIDE committee member, 2011–2012

NCA public relations division subcommittee on reviewing guidelines, 2011

Paper reviewer, ICA 2009–present, public relations division

Paper reviewer, NCA 2009–present, public relations division

Paper reviewer, AEJMC 2013–present, public relations division

**HONORS AND
AWARDS**

2014: NCA Public Relations Division PRIDE Committee Award for Best Article of the Year

2014: Tier 1 Grant, Division of Research, University of Maryland, “Emergent approaches to communication strategy for development agents in authoritarian environments,” \$10,000

2012: James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award, public relations division of the International Communication Association

2012: Top five faculty paper panel, public relations division, ICA conference

2011: NCA Public Relations Division PRIDE Committee Award for Best Article of the Year

2011: Robberson Research & Creative Endeavors Grant, University of Oklahoma, \$800

2010: First place for visual presentation in a refereed poster session, AEJMC public relations division

2009–11: Foundation Fellow, University of Oklahoma

2010: Top student papers, public relations (top three) and rhetoric and communication theory (top four) divisions, NCA conference

2010: Gaylord Family Scholarship. Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, \$500

2010: Recipient of the T. H. Lee Williams International Travel Scholarship, University of Oklahoma, \$1,500

2007: Recipient of the Western Michigan University-All University Graduate Research and Creative Scholar Award

2007: Recipient of the Western Michigan University-School of Communication Graduate Research and Creative Scholar Award