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# Celebrating a Centennial: The Design, Implementation and Evaluation of a Multi-Media Public Interest Campaign

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**Celebrating a Centennial:  
The Design, Implementation and Evaluation of a Multi-Media Public Interest  
Campaign**

By

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An Honors Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for Graduation from the  
Western Oregon University Honors Program

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In the year 1912 the men of Oregon voted for the sixth and final time to pass the Woman Suffrage Amendment. Oregon joined eight other states: Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Washington, California, Kansas and Arizona. 100 years ago women and men rallied together to fight for voting equality for women, and in 2012 another group formed, this time to commemorate the actions of the past and to celebrate the current and future victories of women everywhere. The year 2012 marked an important centennial for Oregon, and as part of the centennial celebrations Century of Action, a project of the Oregon Women's History Consortium, (OWHC) launched a website to promote the history of the suffrage movement around the state.

Today we are endlessly bombarded by online marketing campaigns promoting various products, people, and places. There are countless methods one can use when employing online marketing, and finding the right one for a particular project can be challenging. In designing an outreach project for Century of Action a campaign was created in which multiple sashes reading, "Votes for Women" were distributed throughout the states via the six state universities: Western Oregon University, Southern Oregon University, Eastern Oregon University, Portland State University, Oregon State University, and the University of Oregon. Students were encouraged to photograph themselves and their friends wearing the sashes and submit them via e-mail, Facebook or Flickr. For this project a combination of weekly blog posts, Facebook, Twitter and Flickr was used to promote the Sash Project. Throughout the project the question of whether or not an internet based marketing campaign can be used to effectively promote a historical public interest campaign was considered. In order to properly assess this question I will

use Lloyd Bitzer's Rhetorical Situation and the "Critical Theoretical Consideration of Public Relations Messaging Around the Globe: Tools for Creating and Evaluating Campaign Messages" by Mary Anne Moffitt as my framework for analysis. This communication theory coupled with the Bitzer's article will give me a solid base on which to evaluate the outcome of The Sash Project.

This thesis will include an analysis of both Lloyd Bitzer's theory and Mary Anne Moffitt's article, a history of the Oregon Woman Suffrage movement, work samples including blog posts, photographs, and a description of events held in conjunction with this project. Finally, a thoughtful examination of the work done, successes and failures, and possibilities for future projects will be outlined.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT**

This project outlined, developed, and implemented a marketing plan to inform and educate people across the state of Oregon of the historical significance of 2012. The marketing campaign was centered on the Sash Project. Multiple Sash packets were created and distributed to six of the state universities throughout the state. These packets included a sash that read "Votes For Women", a letter describing the project (available on pg 25 in work sample section), and a log sheet for the Sash. Participants were asked to submit photographs of themselves wearing the sashes via Facebook, Twitter, Flickr or e-mail. Along with various events, the sash campaign worked to encourage civic engagement in the centennial celebration.

Each week I posted to a blog housed on the Century of Action website. I often found inspiration for my posts in the photos that I received from around the state and around the

world. The purpose of these blog posts was to provide some historical background and current happenings for readers, and to showcase some of the photos I received. All of these blog posts are available in the work sample section.

One on campus aspect of this project was my participation in the first International Women's Day celebration at Western Oregon University. Working together with fellow students I planned, publicized and implemented a day long educational experience. Originally I had planned a small event for the Sash Project, but when I realized that I could collaborate with others to make an even bigger event I jumped at the opportunity. I took charge of the promotional aspect of the planning, creating posters and writing a press release that was picked up by *The Statesman Journal*. All of these items are available in the work sample section.

The day began at 11 a.m. with some opening remarks from Western Oregon University President Mark Weiss, and his wife Meg. Meg incorporated some inspirational Maya Angelou quotes, and she encouraged all in attendance to find what they love to do in life. At noon we had an international student panel with individuals from a myriad of countries including India, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, and Ghana. The panel was extremely informative and very fun for all who participated. At 2 o'clock we had an open mic where people were invited to recite poems, read essays, or sing songs. The participation was phenomenal. Throughout the day there were booths set up around the room, each focusing on various issues that women in the world face. At the Sash Project booth I had information about the project, and a few sashes so that people could have their pictures taken.

## METHODOLOGY

There are a variety of ways to assess the effectiveness of a media campaign. For the purposes of this project I have decided to focus on the findings and techniques of two communication studies scholars. The first scholar I will focus on is Mary Anne Moffitt. Her article, “Critical Theoretical Consideration of Public Relations Messaging Around the Globe: Tools for Creating and Evaluation Campaign Messages” was published in the *Journal of Promotion Management* and “...employs several critical theories in order to demonstrate their explanatory power in understanding public relations communication...” (Moffitt, 21). The second communication scholar I have chosen to use is Lloyd Bitzer and his Rhetorical Situation. Moffitt and Bitzer are from two different eras; however, both have strategies for evaluating a message that will help in my evaluation of The Sash Project. These two scholars have different approaches that will be valuable in critiquing my campaign.

Mary Anne Moffitt is a scholar and professor of Public Relations at Illinois State University. She discusses the globalization of campaigns, and despite the fact that my campaign was not global her principles still apply. Using Moffitt’s findings on a local project, like the Sash Project, will still allow for deeper understanding of the effectiveness of this campaign. Moffitt focuses on three critical theories: cultural studies, semiotics, and postmodernism. She states that, “The critical theory paradigm in public relations views the organization as a culture or social formation...” (Moffitt, 23). Cultural beliefs and understandings of your audience are important to recognize when crafting a campaign message. She discusses this throughout her article.

The first of the critical theories Moffitt discusses is cultural studies. Cultural studies originated with the work of Raymond Williams who was an English Literature professor. Williams was interested in studying "...the popular art of ordinary people..." (Moffitt, 23) instead of classic literature. Williams suggested that the geographic area in which a person lived would have an impact on their world views and the way they understand messages. Moffitt points out the importance of understanding the ideologies of a cultural group when planning a campaign message. It is important to understand the ideological perspectives of a group before one attempts to design a campaign aimed at a specific group.

The second concept Moffitt outlines is semiotics, or the study of signs. "The field of semiotics," she suggests, "offers more precise applications of ideology and presents valuable ways to understand visuals and copy..."(Moffitt, 24). The study of semiotics offers tools to analyze text and visuals to discover deeper meanings in messages. By creating meaning in a message we allow the audience to find a deeper connection, allowing them to better understand the message. Moffitt outlines two ways a researcher can work when using semiotics. One way is to read the campaign message and then work backwards to "...gain insight into the cultural ideology that produced the message design..." (Moffitt, 26). In other words, the researcher can understand a culture and then design a campaign that mirrors those cultural understandings.

The last critical theory Moffitt outlines is postmodernism. Postmodernism "...views a social formation as comprising individuals who possess multiple, different ideologies" (Moffitt, 26). Postmodernism theorizes that an audience will understand a message as a truth. This theory contends that an audience member will interact with the

text and view it as “...a kind of reality removed from the actual reality that the person is living...” (Moffitt, 26).

After Moffitt identifies the three theories she moves on to discuss the importance of power and audience. The power structure within a society is important to understand, because “...power manifests itself in unseen structures...” (Moffitt, 27) that will influence how an audience receives a message. Additionally, considering the makeup and background of the target audience is vital in designing effective campaign messages.

Moffitt presents many useful points throughout her article. While they will not all be applicable to my evaluation of The Sash Project, I will be able to apply some of her findings to my overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the campaign. Using semiotics will be especially beneficial when evaluating the campaign because the sash itself is a symbol of the project, and the suffrage movement. Looking now at Lloyd Bitzer’s findings we will see a different but useful way of evaluating a campaign like The Sash Project.

Lloyd Bitzer was the first scholar to dedicate his studies to the Rhetorical Situation. He began the discussion in 1968 when he published his article, “The Rhetorical Situation”. Bitzer states that, “We need to understand that a particular discourse comes into existence because of some specific condition or situation which invites utterance” (Bitzer, 4). Bitzer defines the rhetorical situation as, “A complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence” (Bitzer,

6). He outlines three specific constituents that comprise any rhetorical situation. The first constituent is exigence, which he defines as an "...imperfection marked by urgency..." (Bitzer, 6). Bitzer specifies that exigence cannot be considered rhetorical if it cannot be changed by human interaction. "An exigence is rhetorical when it is capable of positive modification and when positive modification requires discourse or can be assisted by discourse" (Bitzer, 7). Bitzer contends that any rhetorical situation will have at least one controlling exigence that serves as the organizing force in the situation, and he claims that it "...specifies the audience to be addressed and the change to be effected" (Bitzer, 7). He goes on to clarify that an exigence may be clearly apparent to the rhetor and others involved, or it may not be apparent depending on a variety of factors such as a person's interest in the exigence.

The second constituent is audience. Bitzer specifies that a rhetorical audience is more than just a group of "hearers and readers" (Bitzer, 8) but must consist of "...only those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change" (Bitzer, 8). The rhetorical audience is unique in that it must be capable of creating the change that the discourse generates. The third and final constituent is constraint. These constraints are made up of "...persons, events, objects and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence"(Bitzer, 8). Bitzer considers factors such as "...beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, motives..." (Bitzer, 8) to all be constraints.

All three of these constituents should be considered when evaluating a rhetorical situation. In order to fully understand the effectiveness of The Sash Project I will use

Bitzer's criteria in conjunction with Moffitt's perspective and assess the various aspects of my campaign. I have picked these two scholars specifically because of the different viewpoints they offer on studying media campaigns. Moffitt looks closely at three specific aspects of communication, while Bitzer offers a broader look at the rhetorical situation. By using both of their research I will be able to evaluate my own work, and have something by which to judge it.

### **Work Samples**

An important element of any marketing or public relations project is community outreach. This outreach can come in a variety of forms including radio and television spots, mass mailings, and via the internet. For this project a blog was formed and included on the Century of Action website. The website includes information on the centennial, photos, essays, event information, and the blog. My goal was to post a new blog weekly using photos I received from people around the state. However, I soon discovered that posting weekly was difficult because sometimes I didn't receive new pictures, and sometimes I did not have a topic to write on.

When I did have something to write on I always found the experience rewarding and educational. I learned more about our state's history, and more women's history as well. Learning to write for a public audience rather than a scholarly audience was a challenge, but in the end I learned a new skill. One of the biggest challenges I faced in trying a new writing style was figuring out how to present historical information in a fun and interesting way. I still have more to learn, but I feel that I have come so far.

Below are the blog posts that have been posted to the Follow the Sash portion of the Century of Action website.

## **It's Sash Season!**

Posted May 18, 2012

Summer is coming, and along with the sun comes countless celebrations around the state! Get out your calendar, grab your sash, and get ready!

Century of Action has a very exciting events coming soon. May 31st from 6 to 8pm is the Statewide Exhibit Launch at the Oregon Historical Society. Tickets are available at the Century of Action website now! I will be on hand with sashes if you have not had the opportunity to buy yours!

Looking ahead to the next few months there are quite a few fun events happening around the state, and each one of them is sash worthy. Let me tell you about a few of the big ones.

### **Portland Rose Festival**

Late May and early June are packed full of Portland Rose Festival events including the Grand Floral Parade on Saturday June 9th. If you plan on attending be sure to bring your sash and a camera along to capture the moment!

### **Eugene Celebration**

The 30th annual Eugene Celebration will be taking place August 24-26 in downtown Eugene. The three day long celebration has countless sash worthy moments!

### **Pendleton Round-Up**

This year the Pendleton Round-Up is September 12-15 out in Pendleton Oregon. We know the Rodeo Queens will be wearing their sashes, why not wear yours too?

### **Scandinavian Festival**

The 52nd annual Scandinavian Festival in Junction City is August 9-12. Located just North of Eugene, the Scandinavian Festival is packed with cultural foods, music, clothing and dance. If you haven't been, it's worth the drive!

### **Oregon State Fair**

The State Fair is August 24-September 3rd. Celebrate Oregon, and Suffrage!

In addition to all of these great events don't forget about all the 4th of July celebrations. I know Independence and Medford go all out for Independence Day! Also, check out your county fair this summer to have more fun times in your sash!



WOU Student Alyssa Palmer gives summer, and Votes for Women, two thumbs up!

### **100 years later.**

Posted May 10, 2012



100 years after Oregon women won the right to vote and run in elections we are still experiencing political firsts. Today women make up half of the US population but only make up about 17% of the US House and Congress. In the past 100 years Oregon has only had 6 women serve in the US Congress. Washington gained equal suffrage in 1910, and they have only elected 9 women to Congress. Vermont still has not elected a single woman to the US Congress.

Looking around the state of Oregon we can see many firsts. Recently Suzanne Bonamici was elected to the US House, and although she is not the first woman Representative from our state, we have not had a woman in Congress since Representative Elizabeth Furse left the House in 1999.

Here in Polk County we can see another first. Jennifer Wheeler is the first woman Commissioner to serve Polk County. Wheeler served as the Secretary to the Board of Commissioners prior to seeking election after the death of Commissioner Mike Propes in March of 2011. I had the honor to ask Commissioner Wheeler some questions about her life and what it is like being the first woman Polk County Commissioner. Below is a photograph of the Commissioner in her 'Votes for Women' sash.

Commissioner Wheeler had two great role models growing up, her mother and her grandmother. Her mother was a teacher and her grandmother served as the cook in a local

Portland school. Commissioner Wheeler says that these important women “... both encouraged me to be independent and to read.”

When asked about her experiences as the first woman Commissioner in Polk County she said that “Being the only woman Commissioner in Polk County has been an honor. I am proud to be a vital part of a team that is so dedicated to the betterment of the county. When I leave this office upon my retirement, I would like people to remember not only that I was the first woman Commissioner but that I was a good one and that they are glad that I served.”

Commissioner Wheeler sees the importance of this project, and commented on the importance of this sort of project. “I commend Century of Action for The Sash Project. Women fought hard and were often beaten or even ostracized by their families for our right to vote. The Sash Project reminds people, both women and men, and encourages them to cast their votes in honor of these women who fought so hard for our right to do so. Thank you Century of Action.”

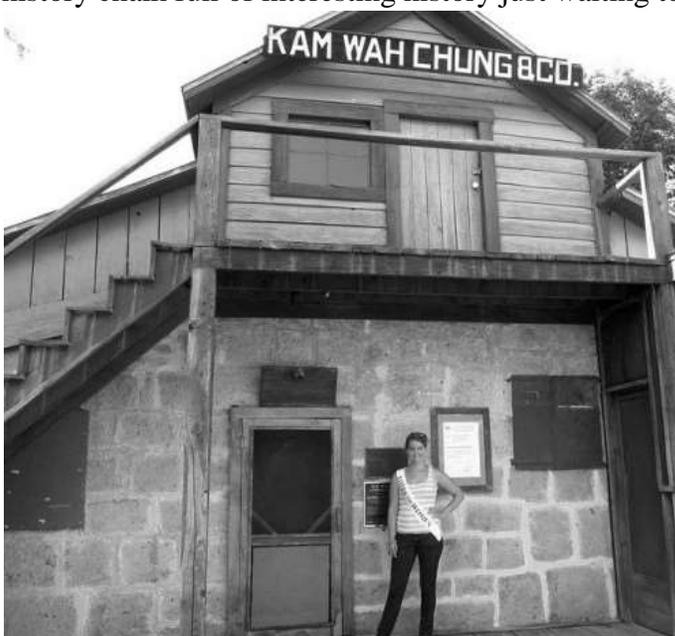
Thank you Commissioner Wheeler for your participation in The Sash Project!

Keep sending in pictures and fighting for more firsts!

### **There are more stories to tell.**

Posted May 7, 2012

Century of Action is working to commemorate and preserve Oregon Women history, but there are countless other stories to be told in Oregon. Our state has a great and long history chalk full of interesting history just waiting to be explored.



We received a photo awhile ago showing Leesa Gratrea wearing the sash at the Kam Wah Chung museum in John Day Oregon. Before seeing this photo I had not heard of Kam Wah Chung, and decided to do a bit of research on the historic site.

Kam Wah Chung is a museum in western Oregon preserving the history of the Chinese workforce in Oregon. The museum houses

artifacts and displays depicting the life of the Chinese worker. The building itself was built as a trading post on The Dalles Military Road in the mid 1800s. It later became the center of the Chinese community as a store and apothecary. Ing Hay, known as Doc Hay, and Lung On ran the store and used traditional Chinese methods of medicine to heal those in their community. The building was abandoned after Ing Hay died, and in his will he left the building to the city of John Day providing that it be turned into a museum.

Today the museum houses one of the most extensive collections of history of Chinese immigrants in the west and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973 and became a National Historic Landmark in 2005. The Oregon State Parks website has information about all of the state parks and museums in Oregon, and has hours of operation for all of the locations.

Oregon is full of fascinating history. From the Oregon Trail up until today Oregonians have been making history and preserving the stories of those who didn't live to tell it. While the Sash Project is shedding light on Oregon Women Suffrage, we don't have to stop there. Throughout this state we have countless historical sites, museums, and natural landmarks. Take the sash with you where ever you go, you never know when a photo opportunity will come up

### **The Sashes are in the mail!**

Posted April 25, 2012

The Sashes are in the mail! Starting soon six universities in Oregon will be participating in the sash project! Eastern Oregon University, Southern Oregon University, Western Oregon University, Portland State University, Oregon State University and The University of Oregon will all have sashes circulating around their campuses. Each student who receives the sash is encouraged to photograph themselves in it, learn a little more about women suffrage, and then pass it on!

At Eastern Oregon University the Sash was sent to a NEW Leadership Oregon Alumna Ashley Cogburn. Ashley is currently student teaching at Stella Mayfield School. When asked about why The Sash Project is important Ashley said that "Votes for Women means so much more than the ability to vote. It means we



are recognized as members of the human race and not just second to man.”

At Portland State University Kari Anne McDonald, who works in the Women’s Resource Center, received the sash. The center will be having their Take Back the Night event on Thursday, and will be sashing those who attend.

The Associated Students of Oregon State University will be passing their sash around, getting their fellow students involved in the Sash Project, and educated about the Oregon Suffrage movement.

The Women’s Resource Centers at Southern Oregon University will also be receiving sashes in the mail any day!

Here at Western Oregon University the sash has already begun its trip around our beautiful campus, and we hope to see pictures soon!

Keep checking back to read about more updates, see more pictures, and learn more about this project. For those of you who do not attend one of the participating schools, sashes are available for purchase here on the Century of Action website.

## **Where in the WORLD is the Centennial Sash?**

Posted April 12, 2012

Woman Suffrage isn’t just an issue here in the United States, but an international issue. Women here in Oregon have been able to vote for 100 years, but in many countries around the world that right was won much later on. The US suffrage movement wasn’t



the only one happening in the early parts of the 20th century. Women in Albania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic all won equal suffrage in 1920. In the following years a multitude of countries including Sweden, Armenia, Azerbaijan, gave women the right to vote, and in some cases the right to run for elected positions.

While the Sash Project is focusing on Oregon and our suffrage movement, it does not have to end here. Women around the globe are still facing discrimination and oppression. In our own country women's rights are being challenged daily. 'Votes for Women' represents more than just the right to cast a ballot; it is a reminder of the constant struggle women face for equality.

Recently Susannah Malool sent us a photo that she took while in Costa Rica. Susannah said that she "...met and sashed Hania Quiros Rojas from Puerto Jimenez, Costa Rica. Hania wanted to support the sash project because voting is important to her. Costa Rican women gained the right to vote in 1948 and just elected their first woman President, Laura Chinchilla, in 2010."

Another photo was sent to us of Margarete Jaeger who is currently a Peace Corp Volunteer in Jordan working with special needs children. This photo is taken in Amman, Jordan. Countries like Egypt, Syria and Lebanon have been in the news over the past couple of years due to political upheaval and women have played important and courageous roles in these demonstrations.

It is important for us to not only celebrate and remember the victories here at home, but to remember the women home and abroad that are still fighting for their rights. A lot has been accomplished, but the battle is nowhere near over.

Continue sharing your pictures, and be sure to check out our Flickr group to check out the newly added photos!

### **Finding a personal connection with the suffrage movement.**

Posted March 21, 2012



Have you ever wondered if you have a connection to the suffrage movement here in Oregon?

Recently, a close friend of mine discovered an exciting link to the past, and has found a new reason to be involved in this project.

Coincidentally she found out at exactly the right time, and was able to see her relative in an exhibit while it was still open. Here is what Heidi had to say about her experience:

"Finding out that I have a family connection to the suffrage movement in Oregon was amazing. Working on the centennial documents project with Dr. Jensen left me wishing I had a much more personal connection to the movement — the ladies

involved seem so strong and so fearless. Once my dad's cousin informed us that my great-great-great-grandmother was actually Mary Ramp, suffragist and prohibitionist, my interest in the movement grew. Ironically, I gave a presentation at the Willamette Heritage Center without even knowing that there was an exhibit about Mary just in the next building. I didn't even know she existed! Finding out about Mary has sparked my interest in several areas, including the suffrage movement, the temperance movement, and my own family heritage." — Heidi Ramp

Those of us whose families have been in Oregon for a few generations have a chance of finding a connection like Heidi did. In the process of working on the Documents Project last year one of my classmates came across a woman with the same last name as me. Helen Gillespie worked on the campaign in 1912. She was part of the 'Flying Squadron', a group that traveled in a 70 mile circle around Portland campaigning for suffrage. I have not yet determined if I am related to her, but knowing that my family may have been involved in the final campaign only increases my interest in this movement, and my passion for the wonderful work that Century of Action is doing.

Use the documents projects to search for your family names! All of the newspaper articles that were used have been transcribed so that you can search them, making your investigation even easier! Let us know if you find any connections, and if you know any stories of women or men during the campaign, feel free to share them with us! And keep taking pictures in your sashes and posting them or sharing them with us.

### **“What does a sash have to do with suffrage?”**

Posted March 15, 2012

People have been asking, “What does a sash have to do with suffrage?” and the answer is surprising, and inspiring at the same time. In her book *Selling Suffrage: Consumer Culture & Votes for Women* Margaret Finnegan not only does a fabulous job of describing and evaluating the suffrage movement in the United States, but she also discusses the tactics and strategies used by the new wave of suffragists. After several failed attempts to have the suffrage amendment passed many of the new suffragists of the early 20th century began looking at new ways to further their cause.

One of these new tactics was using window fronts in stores to display suffrage. Women in California successfully used this method in their 1911 campaign. Women in New York City used store fronts to advertise their cause, and catch the attention of passersby. Suffragists also began to purchase billboards and other large scale advertising in many of the big cities.

In addition to these means of advertising suffragists planned parades, speeches, and other social events. They were no longer working behind closed doors, but taking this issue to the streets and placing it in front of the public. Wearing sashes was part of this new effort. Using propaganda, such as a sash, gained a lot of attention, and got people talking.

This is why we are using these sashes. We don't need to get an amendment passed, luckily that hard work has already been done, but we do have a mission to raise awareness so that women's history is preserved. Gaining attention is the first step in getting people involved, and interested in this centennial celebration. We can't sit behind closed doors and hope that people will take an interest; we must reach out to people and educate them on why 2012 is such an important year in Oregon. If you wear a sash in a public location you will be asked questions, it has happened to me countless times. Wear them with pride, and tell those curious people about the sashes, tell them why you are wearing yours today.



A hallmark of the twentieth century campaigns for woman suffrage was activists' successful use of popular culture and the mass media. Here members of the Portland Woman's Club Suffrage Campaign Committee, led by Esther Pohl Lovejoy (holding the umbrella) and supporter W. M. "Pike" Davis (at left), sold sandwiches and suffrage to Portland crowds during the June 1912 Rose Festival. (Courtesy Amy Khedouri)

## **International Women's Day 2012**

Posted March 12, 2012

International Women's Day is celebrated around the world on March 8th. On this day women are recognized for their achievements, regardless of their differences; whether they be national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic, or political. March 8th is a day to look back on the past struggles of women, all they have accomplished, and to look

towards the future for the next generations of women. In 1977 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace to be observed. This was in an effort to recognize the important role of women, and to discourage discrimination against women. This day is observed in many different ways around the world, and each celebration is special and unique.



Here at Western Oregon University we decided to make International Women's Day a day to remember. I had been planning a small event for the Sash Project, but when I realized that three of my co-workers at the Associated Students of Western Oregon University (ASWOU) were also interested in the day, my small event suddenly became so much bigger. The day kicked off at 11 am with some opening remarks from Western Oregon University President Mark Weiss, and his wife Meg. Meg pulled from some inspirational Maya Angelou quotes, and encouraged all in attendance to find what they love to do in life. At noon we had an international student panel with individuals from a myriad of countries including India, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, and Ghana. The panel was extremely informative, and very fun for all who participated. At 2 o'clock we had an open

mic where people were invited to recite poems, read essays, or sing songs. The participation was phenomenal.

Throughout the day people were "sashed" and those photos will soon be available on Flickr. Meg Weiss really enjoyed the sashes and the Sash Project, and proudly sported her sash throughout the day.

The event itself was a huge success, but it was not something I would have been able to accomplish on my own. Through partnerships and collaboration something small and seemingly insignificant can take on a whole new meaning and blossom into something extraordinary. I saw this happen when planning our International Women's Day event, and looking back to the suffrage campaign evidence of that is everywhere. In the final push here in Oregon, many groups came together to work collectively and make their campaign stronger. It wasn't always easy, and at times there was conflict between the groups. For example, the Portland Woman's Club was instrumental in the suffrage campaign, but they did not agree with some of the practices of the other suffrage groups. Despite minor disagreements, multiple individuals or groups working towards the same



cause will always gain more attention and more support than an individual ever could. The win in 1912 is often attributed to cooperation amongst the women and men of the various organizations, and their use of mass media and public relations methods.

International Women's Day 2012 was a great success, but don't stop celebrating now!

Keep sashing and sharing information about this centennial, and let's see how working together can change the world!

### **Put a Sash On It**

Posted February 28, 2012

While wearing a sash around and taking pictures of all of your friends can be fun, don't let the fun stop there! While we do recommend staying dressed while sashing, you don't need to take the fun out of it! Sure, keep sashing everyone you know and taking pictures



galore, but start thinking outside the box. Is there a historical or beloved statue in your town? Sash it! Next time you see your school mascot or team mascot, sash it! Happen to see a funny mannequin? Throw a sash on it and take a picture! We encourage you to have fun with your sash, and help increase its visibility around the state! Those suffragists we admire so much certainly had to keep their sense of humor after seeing the suffrage amendment defeated five times before finally reaching success in their sixth and final attempt in 1912. Their tenacious spirit and determination got them through years of defeat, and all of their hard work paid off when they were finally able to cast a vote and run for public office.

While searching the state for a proper statue or landmark to sash, this oldie but goodie from Portland was brought to my attention. Portland's Mayor Bud Clark (1985-1992), the long-time owner of the Goose Hollow Inn Tavern is known as one of Portland's most colorful politicians Like our suffragists, Bud was willing to go to great lengths for the

things he believed in. The famous picture of Mayor Clark flashing the “Kvinneakt” statue was taken to call attention to the importance of art education.

Now it’s time to call attention to a cause you believe in! Grab your sash and get out there in your community! Sash whatever you can to call attention to the work and accomplishments of all those hard working women 100 years ago!

Don’t be afraid to do some crazy things! Remember, pictures say a thousand words, and a picture of a sash on a famous statue in your town will tell a wonderful story!

### **Sashes for all!**

Posted on February 17, 2012



Believe it or not, people of all ages love sashes! Sashes, along with all of the information available on the Century of Action website are great educational tools for the young, and the young at heart! For you teachers out there, or for those of you who know young Oregonians, we encourage you to teach them about this historical moment in time! 2012 will only come around this once, so use this opportunity to educate those around you! After years of defeats, Oregonian women were finally able to vote, and now 100 years later we get to celebrate their hard work and commemorate the victory of 1912.

Bring sashes as show and tell, wear them with pride, and share this incredible story with your friends and family!

Now is the time to celebrate and remember all that was done so that women today can vote and shape the world around them through their involvement with politics.

Is there a young woman in your life who’d like to join Kate Stuckart (pictured above) and have her “sash photo” featured on our Facebook page?

## Have You Been Sashed Yet?

Posted February 9, 2012



Have you been sashed yet? Oregon Secretary of State Kate Brown was sashed last week at the Century of Action exhibit opening, and the sash has been spotted all over the Capitol building! Oregon Senators Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland) and Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day) are both proud sash owners, as well as supporters of Senate Concurrent Resolution 204, which passed the Oregon Senate with a unanimous vote in favor of the

resolution this past Tuesday.

But state officials aren't the only ones sporting the sash! Western Oregon University Students are getting in on the action!



Sophomore Zach Jones (far left) was sashed at the Capitol after testifying in favor of SCR 204.

Sophomore David Cervantes (left) was sashed and excited about it!

Are you still waiting to be sashed?

Order your sash today!

If you are a student and you want to get your school involved, e-mail any questions to [sash@centuryofaction.org](mailto:sash@centuryofaction.org)!

Once you get sashed, make sure to share your pictures with us on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, or via e-mail!

What a sashtastic week it has been!

## Lets get Sashing!

Posted January 31, 2012

In 1912 people from all corners of Oregon came together for one final push to get the suffrage amendment passed allowing women to vote in Oregon 8 years before the National Suffrage Amendment was passed in 1920. Looking back 100 years we can see all the changes that have been made in this state and across the country, but one of the most noticeable changes is the development of social media. 100 years ago Oregonians didn't have blogs or Facebook, they didn't Tweet or share photos of exciting events with their families and friends. But times have changed, and now we can use these channels to involve people across the state and around the country in this centennial.

Today we celebrate this exciting centennial by taking a page out of the suffragist's book. Through using one of their marketing tools, the Votes for Women sash, we will raise visibility across the state while engaging Oregonians in this historic moment.



Dr. Kimberly Jensen (pictured left) launches the project with a picture in her Oregon Centennial Sash at the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia.

Beginning in February sashes will be sent to the six state universities, Eastern Oregon University, Oregon State University, Portland State University, Southern Oregon University, University of Oregon, and Western Oregon University. From there students across the state can photograph themselves and their friends in the sash and submit them to us.

Below are the myriad ways you can participate:

1. Like us on Facebook: Century of Action Century of Action: Oregon Women Vote and post your photo to our wall or tag us in your own photo status update
2. Tweet your photo with a mention of @centuryofaction with the hashtag #sashed
3. Join our Flickr Group, "Where in Oregon is the Centennial Sash" and add your photos there

Or if you aren't into social media, email your photo to [sash@centuryofaction.org](mailto:sash@centuryofaction.org) and we will be sure to share it!

But you don't have to be a student to "get sashed." If you have a sash already, take a picture in it and send it along by email at [sash@centuryofaction.org](mailto:sash@centuryofaction.org) or one of the above social media tools. Sashes are on sale now at the Century of Action website so you can

take part. Sashes make perfect gifts and just in time to celebrate the upcoming Women's History Month.

We want the sash to make it all the way around this fair state. To help you be a part of history, we want to share as many pictures as possible.

Help us "follow the sash" throughout this centennial year.

### **Sash Packet Letter**

A copy of this letter was included in the packets that were sent to the participating universities.

Welcome to The Sash Project!

2012 marks the 100 year anniversary of Oregon women winning equal suffrage; the right to vote and run in elections. The Sash Project is an effort to educate and involve Oregonians from all corners of the state in the centennial celebration. Currently six universities; Eastern Oregon University, Southern Oregon University, Western Oregon University, Portland State University, Oregon State University, and the University of Oregon are participating in the project.



You may be wondering what your role is in all of this? We ask that you, as our key contact on your campus, photograph yourself in sash, place your name on the sign-up sheet, and then pass the packet around to your friends, co-workers, class-mates, etc. We want to reach as many people as possible, and in order to accomplish that goal the packet must keep moving!

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at [sash@centuryofaction.org](mailto:sash@centuryofaction.org). Thank you for your participation in this important project!

Sincerely,

Tayleranne Gillespie

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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*Associated Students of Western Oregon University | aswoupr@wou.edu | 503-838-8683  
Western Oregon University International Woman's Day 2012*

March 5, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE

RELEASE

Contact: Tayleranne Gillespie  
503-838-8683

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION TO BE HELD AT WOU

The Associated Students of Western Oregon University will host an International Women's Day event March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012 from 10am to 3pm in the Werner University Center New Willamette Room. This daylong event will include many educational and informative booths, an International Student panel, and appearances by school officials and elected officials. This event is the first of its kind at WOU.

International Women's Day is celebrated worldwide on March 8<sup>th</sup> to encourage and work towards equal rights, celebrate the accomplishments of women, and protect the political and economic rights of women. The United Nations commemorates the day yearly, and women around the world celebrate the day through different celebrations and demonstrations. The first US celebration took place February 28, 1909 as was declared by the Socialist Party of the United States.

ASWOU and Western Oregon University are proud to take part in the celebration and honor women both here and afar on March 8, 2012. This event is open and free to the public.



On March 8<sup>th</sup> millions of women and men from around the world will come together to celebrate one thing. Women. On International Women's Day we celebrate the accomplishments, remember the struggles, and work towards a better for women around the world.

**March 8<sup>th</sup> 2012 | 10am-3pm | The New Willamette Room**

Free and open to the public.

## **Evaluation and Conclusion**

Looking back on this project I can see many areas that were done well, and just as many areas could have been done differently. Before I discuss areas for improvement I will use the tools outlined by Mary Anne Moffitt and Lloyd Bitzer to evaluate the campaign.

Moffitt's findings focus on cultural studies, semiotics and post modernism. Bitzer focuses on the Rhetorical Situation, specifically the exigence, audience, and constraint.

I will begin my evaluation with Mary Anne Moffitt. She discusses the importance of understanding the culture of your audience before you begin a campaign. In this case the culture of my audience was very familiar to me, and easy to understand. Because so many college students today are avid users of social media I knew that using a site like Facebook would garner attention from my desired audience. At the same time I needed to keep other age groups in mind and therefore could not only rely on social media. I was lucky in that I did not have a cultural boundary holding me back; there were no language barriers or cultural ideals that I needed to overcome. I do, however, understand that having a general knowledge of the culture one aims a campaign towards is essential to the success of the campaign.

Moffitt also focuses on semiotics, or the study of signs. In this case the biggest sign was the sash itself. The sash represented this project, but it also stood for years of history and the struggle of countless women to earn the right to vote. By using one consistent visual throughout the project, and consistently using the same language I worked to make the sash a symbol. Generally sashes stand for something, and in this case the "Votes for Women" sash symbolized a movement. The goal with the sash was to give people a physical representation of the project, something that they themselves could hold and share with others, making them an integral part of the centennial celebration.

The final concept Moffitt addresses is postmodernism. Moffitt views postmodernism “as a complement to the perspectives of cultural studies and semiotics. Postmodernism,” she suggests, “encourages an analysis of multiple, fragmented social positions as a possible message” (Moffitt, 27). Audience members, depending on their backgrounds, will view images and messages differently. Therefore, when constructing a campaign we must remember that one approach will not necessarily capture all the facets of an audience. Using varied language, different types of images, and many different media will allow a larger, more diverse audience to engage in the campaign. In this case, I approached The Sash Project mainly on the internet. I did, however, use an assortment of social media options, and traditional means such as e-mail. In addition to the internet based approach, I sent out information in the mail, and held International Women’s Day to engage participants personally. Using more than one approach is always a good idea as it allows people from many walks of life to participate.

Lloyd Bitzer provides a way to take a step back and look at the project as a whole. I will now use his three constituents, exigence, audience, and constraint, to evaluate my campaign. The exigence that led to the development of this project was a general lack of knowledge amongst Oregonians. This was an urgent issue because of the timing; 2012 marked 100 years since Oregon women won the right to vote, and people needed to be educated about the centennial. Not many people knew of the significance of the year 2012, or the history of woman suffrage in this state. I was one of those people, until I had my eyes opened to the amazing history of the suffrage movement. I knew that the centennial was something that deserved attention, and I was lucky enough to be in a position where I could educate people about votes for women.

Bitzer's second constituent is audience. Similar to Moffitt's findings, audience is an important piece of a campaign. College students around the state comprised most of the audience. I was hoping to engage students and empower them to educate their peers about the history of the woman suffrage movement in Oregon. Bitzer specifies that audience is not just a passive group, but a group that can be influenced by the message and make a change. I chose to aim this campaign at college students for exactly that reason; I knew that people could be engaged in this history and tell others about it. Through reaching out to multiple universities I hoped to reach a very large audience so that more people would hear about the suffrage centennial. Instead of focusing all of my attention on Western Oregon University I expanded my audience to include students around the state. As it turned out university students were not the only people interested in this project. In fact people of all ages took notice of the Sash Project and submitted pictures of themselves in sashes. I was disappointed with the level of engagement from the students I reached out to. Western Oregon University students were very involved and participated in the project, but other universities did not have high rates of participation. Despite my disappointment in the level of participation I do know that those who were involved learned about Oregon Woman Suffrage and the importance of celebrating that victory.

Bitzer's final constituent is constraint. It is always important to acknowledge your constraints in any campaign. In this case there were numerous constraints. There was no way to guarantee participation by other universities, which turned out to be a problem. Despite my efforts to find key individuals on other campuses to receive the sash and get others involved, it was extremely difficult to find others who were willing to commit. I

worked around that constraint by ensuring participation at Western Oregon University and Portland State University through my own involvement. Although I did not get the level of participation I had hoped for from all of the Universities, I did get a good amount from WOU and PSU, and some from the general public.

Another constraint was apathy. Not everyone will be interested in this type of historically significant project, and this attitude is fairly common. Any campaign will find people who simply do not care about whatever message or project it is trying to sell. A campaign can work to change those attitudes by making the subject more interesting, which was one of my main goals in creating The Sash Project. Telling someone the history of Oregon Woman Suffrage may not be exciting, but handing them a sash and asking them to actively participate in a state-wide project might hold a little more appeal. Apathy will likely always be a constraint, but working to make a campaign message fresh and exciting may dispel some of that attitude.

The final piece of Bitzer's rhetorical puzzle is the question of a fitting response. Bitzer said that a rhetorical situation "...invites a fitting response, a response that fits the situation" (Bitzer, 10). Was The Sash Project a fitting response? Did it serve to heighten knowledge of the Oregon Woman Suffrage movement? I believe that I can safely say that The Sash Project was a fitting response to the general lack of awareness of the suffrage movement.

When I look back on The Sash Project I am proud of what was accomplished, but I do wish more could have been done. There were many issues that arose that prevented this campaign from being as successful as it might have been. One of the biggest problems I faced was timing. Because of the fact that I began planning the project in

January of 2012 my timeline was greatly limited. Beginning in January meant I had fewer months left in the academic year to make an impact at the other universities. If I had the opportunity to do a project like this again I would first make sure that there was enough time to accomplish the goals of the project.

Luckily my project was only a part of a greater whole, and Century of Action was able to educate countless Oregonians about the historical significance of 2012. I am honored to have been able to play a part in such an important project, and I hope that people were inspired by the story of the Oregon Woman Suffrage movement. I know that because of the work I and others did children are able to learn more about suffrage than I ever learned. More people know that women before them fought a long battle so that they could vote today.

Throughout my time spent working on this project I was consistently reminded of the importance of rhetoric. In her book *Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice* Sonja K. Foss explores the power of communication and the meaning of rhetoric. She defines rhetoric as "...the use of symbols to influence thoughts and action" (Foss, 4). Rhetoric is not only written or spoken word, but symbols as well. Foss suggests using rhetorical criticism to determine the power in symbols and how they affect an audience. "Rhetorical criticism," Foss explains, "is the investigation and evaluation of rhetorical acts and artifacts for the purpose of understanding rhetorical processes" (Foss, 5). A rhetorical act is something done in the presence of the intended audience, like a speech. A rhetorical artifact is evidence of a rhetorical act, such as the text of a speech. Analyzing rhetorical acts and artifacts allows a critic to better understand the power of the message. Through better understanding a rhetorical artifact we can "...use that artifact to help

others appreciate it...” (Foss, 6). I worked to understand the significance of the Oregon Woman Suffrage movement so that I could inspire and involve others in the centennial celebration. I used rhetorical artifacts to understand the movement that happened over 100 years ago and applied them The Sash project. The sash itself was established as a symbol years ago, I only chose to revive it for this project. This project is now a rhetorical artifact, something that will live on and serve to inspire and educate people in the years to come.

The Sash Project, therefore, falls under the broad umbrella of rhetoric. I set out with the intention to educate people; to persuade people to care about Oregon Woman Suffrage. Using my knowledge of rhetoric and persuasion I attempted to craft a campaign that would interest, inspire, and engage my audience. I do not know the exact impact this project had on my audience, but I do hope that at least one person was intrigued and touched by the work that I did. Foss explains this so elegantly when she says that “Rhetoric functions as an invitation for us to change our lives in some way.” (Foss, 4) I gladly accepted that invitation when I took on The Sash Project, and I can only hope that I continue to change my life and the lives of others using the power of communication.

## Bibliography

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Foss, Sonja K. *Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration & Practice*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1989.

Moffitt, Mary Anne. "Critical Theoretical Considerations of Public Relations Messages Around the Globe: Tools for Creating and Evaluating Campaign Messages." *Journal of Promotion Management* 17 (2011): 21-41.