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Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management --Manuscript Draft--

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Abstract:	<p>Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management</p> <p>This book demonstrates how local knowledge and transcultural practices of recognizing, highlighting, and valuing marginalized perspectives during or after a crisis creates an opportunity for tackling social injustices in post-disaster situations. With grounded case studies of the 2015 Nepal Earthquake & 2017 Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico, this book showcases how locals in marginalized and colonized spaces overcome disaster created complexities via coalitional and transnational engagements. Ultimately, this project illustrates how technical communicators can perform transdisciplinary research in disaster management to minimize the impacts of catastrophic disasters affecting the world's most vulnerable populations.</p>

Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management

Abstract:

Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management demonstrates how local knowledge and transcultural practices of recognizing, highlighting, and valuing marginalized perspectives during or after a crisis creates an opportunity for tackling social injustices in post-disaster situations. With grounded case studies of the 2015 Nepal Earthquake & 2017 Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico, this book showcases how locals in marginalized and colonized spaces overcome disaster created complexities via coalitional and transnational engagements. Ultimately, this project illustrates how technical communicators can perform transdisciplinary research in disaster management to minimize the impacts of catastrophic disasters affecting the world's most vulnerable populations. As the world continues to suffer through climate change, environmental and other crises, this book argues that there is an urgency for the field to explore how global technical communications praxis helps to address injustices in the contemporary networked world. The book expands upon ongoing conversation regarding the social justice turn in the field by creating new social justice oriented framework for managing global disasters. This book is valuable for researchers and practitioners in rethinking digitally complex, networked, and varied modes of crisis communications in global disaster management via social justice and transcultural frameworks.

Description of the book:

As the world continues to suffer through climate change, environmental, and other crises, *Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management* contributes to the field of rhetoric, and technical communication by offering a transnational knowledge making and community-based practice to tackle social injustices in the wake of global disasters. This manuscript positions that locals in marginalized and colonized spaces like Nepal and Puerto Rico overcome the complexities created by disasters like the April 25 Nepal Earthquake and Hurricane Maria in 2017 via transnational coalitional engagements. Hence, to develop a deeper understanding of the transnational coalitional practices, I have theorized a newer framework of transnational assemblages. I do so by extending assemblage theory by infusing it with the theories of social justice and intersectionality. To support this framework methodologically, I present results of a mixed methods research approach of narrative inquiry conducted with 30 participants (activists, government representatives, journalists, humanitarian workers) from Nepal and Puerto Rico as well as social network analysis of over 50 million tweets during the April 25 Nepal Earthquake and Hurricane Maria. This book demonstrates that it is important for scholars and practitioners to understand historical, cultural, and transnational contexts before intervening into either study or work during or post-disaster.

Demonstrating case-studies of Nepal and Puerto Rico on how locals in marginalized and colonized spaces overcome disaster created complexities via coalitional and transnational engagements, this manuscript expands the current framework of understanding, researching disasters by incorporating social justice oriented technical communications. The book also highlights strategies on how to explore, analyze, and intervene in the injustices that happen during global disasters via a social justice-oriented approach of communication and advocacy during and after disasters. The book urges scholars, practitioners, and technology enthusiasts to critically think of ethical ways of solving issues faced by marginalized communities during disasters. The world will continue to suffer through various compounding disasters exacerbated by the global climate change. Hence, it is primetime for researchers to think about innovative frameworks that can help in addressing social injustices during disasters. By introducing a social justice-oriented framework for intervening in disaster rhetoric, this book argues for putting the local narratives of resistance and ways of forming knowledge by not implementing western standards in the composition and communication.

This book builds and adds to the conversations in the field of rhetoric, writing, and technical communication by understanding the role of writing and communication during and in a post-disaster situation. Historically, there was a striking growth of technical writing in response to WW II as it required the expertise of technical writers because user manuals were needed to go with new war-related technologies (Connors 12). Scholars have researched various disasters within the U.S. and beyond and have provided the groundwork for responding to various natural disasters, health epidemics, or crises. Additionally, various technical communications scholars have pointed out that technical communicators can play a significant role with their research, writing, and communication skills in the situation of risk and crisis (Grabill and Simmons; Angeli; Potts; Ding). Some scholars have paid attention to the importance of writing, information design, and delivery within large-scale disasters (Sauer). Similarly, TPC scholars have long recognized that uncertainty plays a key role in the deliberation over risks and urges communicators to adopt a consistent rhetorical framework for navigating uncertainty with better

strategies. Meanwhile, there are studies also of transnational grassroots movement and role of such networked communications within those sites that address the issues in natural disasters, bombings, or global pandemics (Ding; Potts; Frost). Ding has contributed significantly in developing a transcultural framework of analysis to understand the global disasters that pay attention to transcultural forces, global flows, power dynamics, knowledge production and negotiations and impacts of local contexts on risk communication practices” (Ding 240).

Scholars in the field have been paying crucial attention to the issues of social justice (Walton et al.; Agboka), of human rights, cultural rights, and significance globally (Parks and Hachelaf; Hesford). The issues that scholars interested in transnational work have investigated various transnational movements, issues of climate change, global grassroots movements, and previous pandemics (Schell; Hesford and Schell; Cushman; Parks and Hachelaf; Ding; Kynard).

For studying transnational contexts and marginalize space, we need a theory that provides justice to these spaces and doesn’t forcefully adapt western theories in understanding non-western spaces. Hence, in this book, I extend the theoretical framework of the Assemblage Theory because the western theoretical framework wouldn’t be applicable to understand transnational contexts. The concept of an assemblage in western philosophy first appeared in the work of theorists Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987) in their book *A Thousand Plateaus*¹. According to Deleuze and Guattari, an assemblage establishes connections among multiplicities, and it is always in the process of becoming. An assemblage has no beginning and end and is in the process of becoming when it establishes its existence by interacting with other beings—both human and non-human. Bringing in the non-western and decolonial perspective will extend the theory to take analytical approaches that are contextual to Nepal and Puerto Rico and will allow looking at inequality, discrimination, exploitation, and global colonial domination with self-reflexivity and without othering the experiences of people of these spaces (Quijano; Wang; Haas; Agboka; Garcia and Baca).

In this book, I conceptualize transnational assemblages which I define in the context of disaster as collectives of people, organizations, or entities, who are connected transnationally via online and offline mediums and who gather to respond to a certain situation of natural or political crisis by challenging the dominant narratives and practices. These transnational assemblages are complex because within these assemblages transcultural and transdisciplinary interactions occur to address the various social inequities and injustices brought by a disaster. Furthermore, transnational assemblages are transcultural in their embodiment. The increasing number of communities of flexible citizens create multiple contact zones and embody hybrid cultures (Ding) forming transcultural communities by moving beyond national, geographical, cultural, or social boundaries. In bringing various elements together, transnational assemblages create a variety of network points that helps in creating networks to perform “transnational collective action which is coordinated international campaigns on the part of networks of activists against international actors, other states, or international institutions” (Schell). To get a rhetorical understanding of transnational activities performed by transnational communities, we need a newer and innovative framework that provides justice to the communities that we are researching. This book introduces such innovative framework in the field.

Drawing from previous scholarship, this book expands the discourse on transnational rhetoric on disaster management by highlighting the experiences and stories of marginalized and

¹ In contrast, the concept of the universe as an ever always becoming, expanding, collapsing, re-evolving as an assemblage was articulated in Eastern Philosophy thousands of years ago by Lord Krishna in ancient Hindu scripture Bhagavad Geeta.

oppressed communities in Nepal and Puerto Rico. This book provides strategies to advocate and create a space for advocacy via research, teaching, and professional practice to intervene in the high-stake complex communication process and tackle marginalization that happens based on race, gender, and ethnicity. Secondly, the book showcases the importance of understanding a) historical contexts of marginalization in the past and b) to what extent such marginalization is operationalized in newer circumstances worsened by a disaster. As such, this book offers a framework and demonstrates how this framework serves as a guide for managing and rethinking the approaches to global disaster management. Some of the questions are:

Research Questions

- What does social justice oriented technical communication look like in global disaster management?
- What is the value of transnational assemblages in understanding and navigating the rhetoric of disaster in globalized context?
- What does transnational grassroots movements (non-western and decolonial) help us understand how to mitigate the challenges of different disasters in marginalized spaces?
- How can larger organizations like governments, media, multinational companies, and INGOs adapt to the social justice-oriented communication to mitigate the challenges of disaster?
- How can scholars in rhetoric, writing, and technical communication be innovative in developing ethical and applied research practices while conducting community-based research in transnational contexts?

Contribution to the field

Royster et al., highlight that feminist rhetorical studies in the US are challenged to demonstrate that our contemporary work is functioning vibrantly and well in transnational, international, and global contexts. While the discourse on transnationality is not new in our field, there is much more needed to be done to continue to push the field forward in exploring transnational rhetorics specifically in studying crisis. Building off this challenge, this book helps in expanding conversations in the field of rhetoric, writing, and technical communication mainly in terms of three elements:

- a) introducing productive research framework of transnational Assemblages to expand transnational research practices in understanding crisis rhetoric
 - b) inviting transdisciplinary actors in rethinking disaster response practice with intersectional and social justice-oriented framework and
 - c) expanding the disciplinary conversations on transnational community-based research applicable to researchers and practitioners
- **Contribution#1: Theoretical Contribution: Expanding crisis rhetoric by Theorizing Transnational Assemblages**

The theoretical contribution of the book is introducing a newer framework of analysis to study transnational context, the methodological contribution is employing ethics and care in conducting transnational community-based research. The book introduces a newer concept of

transnational assemblages (as discussed above) informed by social justice and intersectional frameworks to understand the dynamic and complex nature of communication and network during a disaster. The extension of the assemblage theory in understanding transnational context will add newer framework of researching globally. This framework will also help in identifying and understanding the role of emerging assemblages like transnational assemblages who push the boundaries in the way communication is facilitated during a disaster. In many cases, they help in identifying the gaps in communication by the official disaster response system and standing up for the community. Hence, theorizing transnational assemblages will help us understand the role, work, and contribution of the various transnational actors in disaster response. Additionally, such newer theoretical framework will lead towards the practical contributions are in developing effective tool for tackling the challenges of a disaster.

- **Contribution #2 Developing crisis rhetoric with social justice framework in Transnational Disaster Response**

Likewise, this book advocates for social justice oriented technical communication in disaster response that will help in voicing the experiences of marginalized community as well as in rejecting the systems of oppressions that occur during any disasters. There is a need of intersectional scholarly work and praxis that helps in rethinking disaster response and reformulating practices that replaces the injustices. This will help in launching humanitarian actions in deeply understanding contexts to challenge social injustices in a post-disaster situation. Such social justice-oriented approach in responding to a disaster can help in understanding and exploring the power of transnational coalitional actions as well as recognizing and replacing the exclusionary practices with inclusivity. Ultimately, this book will help various disciplines to rethink about the current practices of global disaster management in terms of methodologies and approaches. Furthermore, this will allow researchers, practitioners, first responders, as well as governmental and non-governmental entities to recognize and reveal systems of injustices and oppressions via a social justice approach (Walton et al.).

- **Contribution#3 Expanding Conversations by providing practical solutions to practitioners, community organizers, and disaster responders**

By bringing transnational spaces and voices of people from two different countries, cultural contexts, and disaster affected areas, this book will help the scholars and practitioners in understanding how people from marginalized spaces respond and adapt to the consequences of disaster and what can researchers and practitioners learn from it. Subsequently, various TPC scholars continue highlighting the partnership of the industry and academia in addressing issues created by disasters with an argument that academic researchers and non-academic practitioners need to work together during times of crisis. During a disaster a better understanding of the communication flows in the formation of the transnational assemblages will be helpful toward anticipating how people and networks will respond to a disaster. In this context, the book provides theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions to scholars, researchers, as well as practitioners. Finally, the book also provides practical solutions to the technical communication practitioners, disaster responders (government and non-governmental organizations) as well as technology experts to respond to disaster with a social justice framework.

Structure of the book

Chapter 1: Introductions: How do local disasters become global?

The book opens with a question of “how do local disasters become global?” I answer this question by sharing my narrative of experiencing and surviving the April 2015 Nepal earthquake as well as my role as a journalist and a communication practitioner for a community-based organization. As a witness of how vulnerability during a disaster exacerbates marginalization, I tell my story of how as a communication practitioner I navigated disaster response via various transnational assemblages by engaging with them via writing, and community organizing. Lived experiences are a larger part of my project, hence starting with my own origin story, I weave my narrative of my experiences of suffering through a disaster and later making disaster larger part of my research and writing. With my own story, I also weave the historical background of the April 2015 Earthquake as well as the 2017 Hurricane Maria and the types of transnational assemblages that came into existence within these two disasters. In this chapter, I argue that technical communicators during a disaster can play a crucial role in deconstructing the complex networks of communication with critical approaches and a social-justice oriented framework by highlighting, recognizing, and valuing the marginalized perspective as disaster response is chaotic and it requires multidisciplinary networks of stakeholders including the local public.

Chapter 2: Rhetoric of Disaster in a Globalized World: Transnational Assemblages and their Coalitional Actions

In Chapter 2, I present what I call the rhetoric of disaster in a globalized context. I redefine the traditional concept of the rhetoric of disaster by arguing that in the contemporary world the rhetoric of disaster is as an emerging discourse between, within, and among multiple transnational assemblages around the globe. While I do so, I also extend the theory of the concept of transnational assemblages by integrating theories of assemblage, social justice, and intersectionality to rethink how coalitional actions are performed globally while marginalized communities respond to their local disaster. In this chapter I will define in detail the framework of transnational assemblages and how such framework can be used to understand transnational and global events where networked communities are formed as a response to a crisis. Transnational assemblages are collectives of people, organizations, or entities, who are connected via online and offline mediums such as phones, computers, and people who perform coalitional actions to respond to a certain situation of natural or political crisis. With this grounding, I show that such rhetoric is shaped by flows and networks of communications and affective engagements in both online and offline spaces while organizing the disaster reliefs. In the globalized world, disaster multiplies the effect of transnational coalitional actions by causing sudden shifts in the rhetorical situation, breaking boundaries, and allowing the emergence of various transnational assemblages. Hence in this chapter, I highlight and set up a theoretical ground of transnational assemblages and the rhetoric of disaster and how do they address the various social inequities and injustices brought by a disaster. I end this chapter by introducing the methodological approach that I take in this book which is a mixed method approach of narrative inquiry and social network analysis.

Chapter Three: Non-Western Disaster Response During the April 25 Nepal Earthquake 2015

In this chapter, I provide a detailed case-study of the April 25 Nepal Earthquake and provide an overview of how Nepalis and global actors responded to this disaster. This chapter provides a detailed understanding of how Nepalis and various international actors responded to the disaster by using various internet-based technologies and social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and blogs among others. I present an analysis of interviews conducted with 15 individuals (both Nepalis and non-Nepalis) who showcased rhetorical agency in supporting their communities either by forming various transnational assemblages or being part of such transnational assemblages to respond to the disaster. Similarly, I also present the results of social network analysis of millions of Tweets that were tweeted during the first week of the April 2015 Nepal Earthquake to show how digital platforms like Twitter helps in motivating as well as regulating the transnational assemblages to respond to a crisis. With these results, this chapter introduces the non-western ways of disaster response and argues that while larger formal global disaster response happens various local contexts and knowledge gets ignored pushing towards the marginalization of vulnerable communities.

Chapter Four: Decolonial Approaches of Disaster Response During Hurricane Maria 2017

This chapter focusses on Hurricane Maria 2017 in Puerto Rico and provides an overview of decolonial approaches of disaster response. This chapter also provides background and historical overview of the colonialism and how such political situation exacerbated the consequences of Hurricane Maria 2017. Like previous chapter, this case study will highlight how Puerto Ricans resisted against the colonial practices by not relying on the government and forming transnational assemblages. In this chapter, I present results of my narrative inquiry with various 15 Puerto Rican activists, community-based organizers, and journalists to showcase the survival practices of marginalized communities who have navigated the oppressive systems to restore peace and stability in their communities. Like the previous chapter, in this chapter, I also focus on presenting an analysis of millions of Tweets that were tweeted during the first week of Hurricane Maria 2017 to show how people in Puerto Rico and around the globe participated in responding to the disaster. With these results, this chapter introduces the decolonial approaches of disaster response and how did Puerto Ricans use various digital technologies to respond to the crisis their communities were facing.

Chapter Five: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communications in Global Disaster Management

In this chapter, I offer both theoretical and practical contributions to make a case of why social justice oriented technical communication is necessary for global disaster management and how can researchers as well as practitioners take up this call in managing a future disaster. With this demonstration, I argue that there is an urgency for the field to explore how global technical communications praxis helps to address injustices in a contemporary networked world. I further this argument to showcase how technical communicators can perform transdisciplinary research in disaster management to minimize the impacts of catastrophic disasters affecting the world's most vulnerable populations. I conclude that, intersectionality and social justice framework will

help in contextualizing information based on the local context, finding various ways where marginalization may occur. This chapter will also provide ways to identify and work with various transnational assemblages, create strategies to work with the community organizers, and lead disaster response by putting the local knowledge at the center. This chapter ends with “Practitioners Takeaways” where I will suggest some strategies for developing social-justice oriented technical communication for practitioners. In addition to this chapter, I will also create a digital guidebook in the form of a website that helps various practitioners’ various practitioners of technical communication, technology designers, and disaster responders to incorporate the idea of social justice within the work they do. I also help create the ground for future studies and incorporate pedagogical implications of this research in various university courses

Audience for the book

This book is primarily targeted towards researchers, scholars, and student scholars in rhetoric, writing, and technical communication. However, since the topic of disaster spans multiple disciplines, this book will be of interest to interdisciplinary scholars in the field of social sciences and humanities and specially in communications, political science, and sociology, cultural anthropology, women and gender studies, and even in engineering education. Additionally, the book will also be a good source for engineering communications students. Given the transdisciplinary component of the book, at the core of the book, I see this text as becoming part of various departmental endeavors and programs that are seeking to expand their course offerings in science writing, environmental writing, as well as other disaster response, focused pedagogies. Since the book is informed via a contemporary theoretical framework such as intersectionality and social-justice, including an approach of community engagement, I see researchers, teachers, and students finding this book as an exemplary text to include the book on their syllabi as well as take this book as an example of the mixed-methods research approach.

Likewise, the secondary audiences of this book are the practitioners of technical communications as well as practitioners in larger humanitarian organizations who respond to a humanitarian crisis like disasters, issues of displacement, and other political crises. This book will provide a practical framework for the practitioners in thinking about social justice-oriented framework while they respond to the global nature of a disaster.

Disaster studies is a growing area, and this area of studies is growing transnationally as we are presented with various global challenges of disaster. Given the global nature of the book, *Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management* will also have a space in the global academic as well as non-academic markets. Given my academic connections to my home country Nepal as well as Puerto Rico and other various countries, I see the potential for this book to be translated into multiple languages and adapted into the classrooms in global contexts, particularly in the field of writing, communication, and composition as the field of rhetoric and writing continues to grow. Hence, I believe that this book will be a valuable resource for various scholars outside of the US in Nepal, Puerto Rico, and other European and Asian Countries.

Competing Texts in the Market

Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management, aligns with multiple books in the field of rhetoric, writing, and technical communication as well as communications studies that focus on disasters and epidemics. Variety of publishers have published these books including Routledge and various other university presses. While these publications have attended to various issues regarding disasters and epidemics, *Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management* fulfills the gap in research by emphasizing the role of social justice in addressing varied issues that erupts after a catastrophic disaster. This manuscript builds upon the previous project by emphasizing transnational coalitional actions by creating space for marginalized spaces, non-western and decolonial rhetorics, and rethinking disaster management via a social justice perspective. This emphasis allows researchers, scholars, and practitioners to get a unique perspective and actionable recommendations like to ethically organize disaster response, to reveal and reject the oppression that happens in post-disaster situations, and to understand transnational networked practices. In the table below, I summarize the potential competing books and explain how the proposed project extends and builds upon the current conversation in the field of rhetoric, writing, and technical communication and other social sciences.

Book Title	Summary	Connection to the Proposed Project
Sauer, Beverly J. <i>The Rhetoric of Risk: Technical Documentation in Hazardous Environments</i> . LErlbaum Associates, 2003.	The book examines the complexities related to documentation practices during large-scale disaster and explores the ways that technical communicators can help institutions in overcoming the challenges of writing about, discoursing about, and negotiating the consequences of a disaster. Additionally, this book laid the foundation for various scholars to think about technical communication and disaster.	Sauer's book is one of the first technical communication-oriented books on a disaster. The book is more focused on local disaster rather than global disasters. My proposed book is different as it incorporates transnational disasters and the aspect of social justice-oriented communication. The field requires newer ways of approaching the disaster in the digital age which my manuscript does.
Potts, Liza. <i>Social Media in Disaster Response: How Experience Architects Can Build for Participation</i> . Routledge, 2013.	The book examines various disasters: the 2005 Hurricane Katrina, the 2005 London Bombings, and the 2008 Mumbai Attacks. In examining these disasters, Potts demonstrates how various online communities are formed and the roles of such communities in disaster response.	Pott's book is a very good resource for my book as it highlights different disasters and how people responded. My book is different from Potts because of the methodology as well as the way I have approached disaster and the networked communities in my book.
Ding, Huiling. <i>Rhetoric of a Global Epidemic: Transcultural Communication about SARS</i> . Southern Illinois UP, 2014.	The book offers "a new conceptual framework of transcultural professional communication as a robust way to examine intercultural communication practices, tools for studying and contextualizing transcultural communication in the study of an epidemic" (p. 18).	Ding's book has influenced my approach to study the disaster. Building off of the theoretical framework that she presents in her book, I extend the framework theoretically as well as I also extend methodologically as I introduce a robust mixed methods study

	Examining the global epidemic SARS, Ding highlights the importance of transcultural communication in the response to a global epidemic.	to study global disaster and the consequences of it in a digital world.
Papacharissi, Zizi <i>Affective Publics: Sentiment, Technology, and Politics</i> . Oxford University Press, 2015.	The book presents three case studies of Arab Spring movements, and various “Occupy” movements and analyzes how the actors of these movements use digital media (specifically Twitter) and storytelling practices to connect, network, and engage globally. She uses Social Network Analysis in her book to showcase the networks created by the publics.	Papacharissi is a communication scholar and her book allows us to think about how the public engages with the digital media, how do they use it, and what motivates them to use it. While her book is more focused on social movements, mine is focused on specific disasters and how such a disaster influences people to form networked communities. Similarly, my book incorporates actual the stories and narratives of actors of disaster response which makes my manuscript unique.
Walton, Rebecca, et al. <i>Technical Communication after the Social Justice Turn: Building Coalitions for Action</i> . 1st ed., Routledge, 2019.	This groundbreaking monograph has moved our field towards rethinking technical communication from a social justice perspective. This book helps technical communications researchers to understand how multiple marginalization occurs in various spaces and ways to reveal, reject, and replace such marginalization and injustices. This book provides us with a theoretical framework of social justice to understand and explore how technical communication researchers and practitioners can advocate and implement social justice-oriented communications within their own spaces.	My manuscript takes up the call of social justice turn in technical communication as articulated by Walton, Jones, and Moore. This foundational book has helped various technical communication scholars and practitioners to take up the call and imagine social-justice oriented projects. As, suggested by Walton et al., and extends the conversation of social justice oriented technical communication in managing the complexities that arise in post-disaster situations.
Agboka, Godwin and Natalia Matveeva. <i>Citizenship and Advocacy in Technical Communication: Scholarly and Pedagogical Perspectives</i> . Routledge, 2018.	This book presents articles by various scholars and presents them with studies that provide unique theoretical frameworks, empirical research, and teaching approaches. The authors in this collection attend to local and global advocacy as well as citizenship. The authors in the collection present variety of research and studies on global transnational rhetoric and provide a unique perspective on a variety of advocacy work.	This collection has various areas that are similar to what my manuscript is aiming to highlight especially global advocacy, engagement, and transnational rhetoric. While the contributors of this work attend to various global and local issues, my manuscript takes a deeper dive into how social justice oriented global framework is necessary to address the consequences of the disaster.

Manuscript Length Timeline

Each case study chapter ranges from 8000-10,000 words which may include 2-4 black and white images, illustrations, and tables that will be formatted with the style guidelines. The total length of the book will be around 50,000 words. This manuscript builds off on previous publications and my dissertation project, I am confident that I can complete the project on time. I aim to submit a full manuscript by the beginning of Spring 2022.

Author Qualification

I currently serve as an Assistant Professor of Rhetoric, Professional and Technical Writing at the Department of English at Virginia Tech. My dissertation work has received the 2021 CCCC Outstanding Dissertation Award in Technical Communication-Honorable Mention. I am also won several awards provided to a graduate student in the field of rhetoric, writing, and technical communications. I am also the recipient of CCCCs Chair Memorial Award 2020, CCCCs Scholars for Dreams Awards 2019, CPTSC and Bedford St. Martin's Diversity Scholarship Award 2019, ATTW Amplification Award 2019, and 2019 Kairos Service Award for Graduate Students and Adjuncts. Currently, I have around 23 publications (single-authored and collaborative) which are published (15), accepted for publication (6), or under review (2). My recent publications in *Enculturation*, highlights the importance of transnational women activists in disaster response. Likewise, my piece in *Journal of Business and Technical Communications* showcases the importance of tackling misinformation during the time of a global pandemic. I have three forthcoming articles in *Technical Communications Quarterly*, *Technical Communications*, and *Reflections Journal* all of which are focused on disasters and issues of the global pandemic. The book chapters are independent of these articles, and I wouldn't be republishing the articles in the form of a book. I teach both graduate and undergraduate courses at Virginia Tech that focusses on rhetorics in the global society, international community engagement, and risk communications. My scholarship is heavily influenced by my work as a communication practitioner and community organizer. My research centers around transnational conversations around disaster response, non-western rhetorical traditions, and feminist rhetorics.

My qualification for this project includes three elements: my background as a researcher and a practitioner, my empirical research that was supported by various grants and awards, and my commitment to the transnationalizing the field of rhetoric, writing, and technical communications. First, I have more than 8 years of working as a journalist, communications practitioner, and a community organizer during the 2015 Nepal Earthquake. I brought all these experiences together while conducting the research in my PhD program. While researching two disasters, I conducted extensive field work and interviewed more than 30 people activists and organizers. My research work was supported by two different grants and fellowships: Center of Intercultural Learning Mentorship, Assessment and Research at Purdue University and Centre for Puerto Rican Studies' 2019 Summer Dissertation Fellowship. Likewise, I my presentations at various rhetoric and writing as well as technical communications conferences have been recognized and awarded. I have slowly carved a space for transnational work about disasters in our field. My commitment towards continuing the community work and transnationalizing the field of rhetoric, writing, and technical communication will be enhanced by the publication of this book. I believe which is ground-breaking in our field.

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Chapter Three: Non-Western Disaster Response During the April 25 Nepal Earthquake 2015

On April 25, 2015, Nepalis experienced one of the biggest disasters in a century. This disaster not only brought devastation to the nation, but it also created a humanitarian crisis. Due to the catastrophic nature of the earthquake, many global actors' attention was drawn to this event, including that of various countries, organizations, and even that of normal people. Nepal is a small landlocked country which is very prone to natural disasters. The nation hadn't experienced such a large earthquake since the 1920s, but it was predicted that a big tremor would eventually strike Nepal once more, though no one knew when. The April 2015 Nepal Earthquake had a 7.5 magnitude, a convulsion that rattled 14 districts, including that of my hometown: Kathmandu. This disaster killed 8856 people and injured 22,309. Recorded as one of the biggest disasters in nearly a century in Nepali history, the earthquake created chaos by bringing life to a standstill and by generating a large humanitarian crisis. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), after the April 2015 earthquake, 4.2 million Nepali people needed urgent health related services (WHO). Fortunately, the earthquake happened at a time when Nepal was adapting to the current digital age. The Nepali people therefore had an active presence on the social web, resulting in a wider engagement with the global actors that were involved in disaster response efforts and in supporting the suffering Nepali communities.

Catastrophic disaster like the Nepal Earthquake requires multisectoral coalitional actions. Karma Chávez suggests that coalition embodies multiple meanings based on various social and political context. In the case of disaster, such coalitions are formed spontaneously as the disaster demands urgency of response to save lives. Similarly, coalitions also can be space where multiple parts can engage and something that requires constant work if it is to endure (Chávez). In the context of disasters, such coalitions are formed instantly similar to what theorists like Gillies Deleuze and Felix Guattarai regard as assemblages. Manuel DeLanda argues that an assemblage is determined by multiplicity and heterogeneity in which various relationships, liaisons are established beyond ages, gender, and communities. As I

describe in chapter two, these transnational assemblages are coalitional networks created among people across the national boundaries and are formed by affective interactions mediated via digital media. Within these transnational assemblages, various actors circulate the information, data, and knowledge across the border by mobilizing cross-cultural power, language, resources, and people (Hesford & Schell; Potts). Likewise, as Rebecca Walton, Kristen Moore, and Natasha Jones argue oppressions cannot be combated alone and hence, require joining coalitions, building genuine allyships, and working toward a sustainable practice of activism is necessary. To understand the transnational contexts, coalitions, and activism in Nepal, I rely on various rhetoric, technical and professional communications, and culture theorists' scholars whose scholarships pay attention to transnational contexts, coalition building, and social justice and disasters (Appadurai; Ding; Dingo; Potts; Walton et al.,). Understanding the transnational coalition building to resist catastrophic disasters will help in understanding how people help themselves and their communities to survive disaster by creating networked connections locally and transnationally. Furthermore, in this chapter, I highlight the ignored survival practices of marginalized communities who have navigated oppressive systems to restore peace and stability in their communities. Highlighting these survival practices that are both local and transnational will help in building/strengthening community resilience and preparing for the future disaster. The results, I present in this chapter is based on 15 interviews conducted with the Nepalis and Non-Nepalis who have contributed to disaster relief during the Nepal Earthquake as well as the Social Network Analysis (SNA) of the Twitter data during the first week of Nepal Earthquake. These narratives and Twitter data suggest that transnational activism and engagement in disaster response mediated via transcultural communities spread across the world leads to unraveling social injustice issues within marginalized spaces.

Within three days of the earthquake, the United Nations (UN), a worldwide humanitarian organization, sent out a flash appeal to raise 422 million USD to meet the needs of countless suffering Nepalis. Out of the total money requested, 48% was related to health, hygiene, and food security ("United Nations Flash Appeal"). This request was publicized using social media channels including the U.N. website. Mark Zuckerberg, the co-founder and chief executive officer of Facebook, also set up a

fundraiser to help people affected by the earthquake. One week after the earthquake, Zuckerberg, via his Facebook page, announced that “more than 750,000 people from around the world gave over \$15 million to the International Medical Corps relief efforts, and Facebook donated an additional \$2 million on top of that to local recovery efforts” (Zuckerberg). With this generous support pouring in from all around the world, the U.N. reported that “103,686 injured people received treatment, including 2,088 who had undergone major surgeries, and 26,160 who had received psychosocial support in 14 districts” (“Nepal Flash Appeal”).

As I mention in my first chapter, I experienced the earthquake and witnessed the devastation that it brought first hand. In addition, I became a part of the disaster response effort in the capacity of a journalist, communications practitioner, and an activist. During 2015, mobile and internet technologies were not new to the Nepali people. Nepalis were familiar with many technologies, including various digital platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and blogging. Immediately following the earthquake, the Nepalis on Twitter mobilized themselves in responding to the disaster by serving their communities. Various scholars have already addressed the role of social media spaces in disaster response, however, a lot of them miss and downplay the role of global interactions via various local, international, and diasporic networks that these spaces provide. Many scholars also lessen the role of the various actors who use social media during the disaster. During the earthquake, Nepalis in Nepal, the Nepali diaspora, and international communities and organizations were interconnected through a complex transnational assemblage. Social media like Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp became a space where global interactions could happen among the Nepalis and where interactions could happen among the international communities who wanted to help and support the Nepalis.

In this chapter, I provide a detailed case-study of the April 2015 Nepal Earthquake and provide an overview of how Nepalis and global actors responded to this disaster within the social media spaces as well as in the actual communities. I specifically focus on articulating how the local actors collaborated, challenged, and resisted the international global response with their own local non-western ways of knowledge-making during the disaster. This chapter provides a detailed understanding of how Nepalis

and various international actors responded to the disaster by using various internet-based technologies and social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and blogs. By presenting the results of my narrative inquiry as well as SNA, chapter introduces the non-western ways of disaster response and argues that while larger formal global disaster response happens, various local contexts and knowledge gets ignored, resulting in the marginalization of vulnerable communities.

Non-Western Disaster Response Strategies

While responding to the Nepal Earthquake, Nepalis created and used their own non-Western methods of disaster response. Based on my participants' narratives, I define the non-Western disaster response in the context of the Nepal Earthquake as an alternative, grassroots level of disaster response performed by individuals unrelated to any official or any international organizations who do not wait for their government to come and help them. This effort is typically more localized, such that it helps in addressing the injustices within the individuals' communities. This alternative way of responding to the disaster helped the Nepalis not rely on government aid, support each other in the crisis, network across the diasporic communities, and decentralize aid. This way of disaster response was a) targeted towards providing immediate relief to the communities, b) reaching out to the communities the government could not reach, c) creating transnational networks and coalitions, and finally d) creating alternative spaces for people to voice their opinions. This sort of disaster response is not influenced by the official organizations' motives. The non-western ways of disaster response are instead localized in the community, where the people less affected by the disaster helped those communities that were severely harmed by the earthquake. The major themes of the non-western disaster response could be expanded with the discussion of the following:

- a) Transnational assemblages in disaster response
- b) Against the Dominant Narratives: Social Media as a platform for Disaster Response
- c) Enacting Crisis Communications with Social Justice During Disaster

Transnational Assemblages in Disaster Response

During the April 25 Nepal Earthquake the transcultural activists' communities from transnational spaces came together and responded to these disasters a) by unveiling the injustices perpetrated by the irresponsible state mechanisms and formal entities and b) by establishing coalitions via networked collaborations supported by digital platforms to conduct disaster response. To unveil the injustices brought by a lack of proper disaster response, the transnational disaster responders and activists within their own spaces, localities and beyond the geographical boundaries created transnational coalitional networks. These networked actions became a communal force that didn't wait for the formal mechanism to respond to the crisis by spontaneously fundraising, gathering resources, and formulating crisis management plans. The participants mentioned that they were spontaneously motivated to join already established networks or to create their networks transnationally to collaborate with activists on the ground. Additionally, participants mentioned that they depended on their networks of friends, family members, or even strangers whom they met online to conduct disaster response (Warner). Likewise, the activists and disaster responders on the ground depended on the transnational coalitions formed via diasporic networks involving people from multiple countries, nationalities, communities, and transcultural contexts. The participants mentioned that after the disaster, they were motivated to perform spontaneous actions in an attempt to save lives, serve communities in need, and reach out to ask for help, creating "coalitional praxis for survival" (Soto Vega). These transnational activists are densely connected such that there is a reduction of personal differences an increased degree of conformity leading towards working collaboratively with a mission of supporting communities in need (Delanda).

The coalitional network of transnational disaster responders and activists that formed during the disaster helped tremendously in responding the earthquake. Eileen Schell argues that global communities form informal networks of activists across the borders to take action and to respond to specific social, economic, and political issues such as "environment, labor, human rights, human trafficking, and global trade policies" (589). In collaborating and participating the activists' network becomes stronger and stabilizes as the actors contribute their content, curate information, and finally mobilize others in their

network to effectively and efficiently disseminate knowledge (Dadas; Potts). One participant mentioned that their friends at home and abroad sent them relief materials like tarpaulins, food, water supplies that they took by using motorbikes to various rural places where the government and other international organizations weren't able to reach. The spontaneous actions of the activists are powered by the speed of the internet in circulating the content, information, issue and also affect (Appadurai). The affective attunement enabled through various digital medium presents a way for diverse publics to be part of as well as emotionally align with the movement and happening (Papacharissi; Yam).

Furthermore, these transnational coalitional communities worked towards revealing unethical practices of the government, media, and the larger humanitarian organizations by raising voice against the irregularities as well as misconducts during disaster response. One of the major issues identified by Nepali participants was that the government and humanitarian organizations were too dependent on their protocols rather than the lives of people and too invested in writing reports rather than organizing relief. There were a lot of discrepancies in disaster response that according to the participants motivated them to launch their responses. Moreover, the participants also mentioned that they fought against revealing injustices in discourse related to disasters. For instance, activists in Nepal via Twitter revealed that the United Nations World Food Program distributed rotten food to marginalized communities which the organization denies ("WFP to Destroy"). Similarly, in Nepal, there was also a hashtag trend launched against the Indian Media who were conducting poor reporting of the Nepal Earthquake. The hashtag #GoHomeIndianMedia was supported by various communities in India, Pakistan, and other countries ("Why is Indian Media").

Furthermore, the disaster responders in Nepal not only used the digital platforms for communicate and coordinate relief efforts but also, worked in creating innovative technologies for gathering data for disaster response. One participant from Nepal shared that they engaged in curating a web-based information platform for the government which later became the national disaster-based information website for Nepal. Likewise, another participant from Nepal shared that due to the volume of volunteers as well as the need for disaster relief they created their web-based platform to match volunteers

and the communities in need. Additionally, there were also tech-savvy activists in Nepal who were creating interactive maps by gathering data and information from the communities on the ground helping hundreds of volunteers to organize disaster response. In addition to sharing, curating information, crowdfunding, volunteering, and organizing the disaster response, the disaster responders and the activists also found new and innovative technological solutions to manage disaster response via proper data collection and management (Potts).

Additionally, the Nepali diaspora played a significant role in conducting transnational disaster response by connecting to the local communities and by engaging and involving their newer communities abroad. Participants from Nepal recounted that social media provided ease to connect back home which allowed the diasporic communities to organize their activism. The diasporic communities weren't only connecting to their loved ones but also connecting to various other communities in need by establishing partnerships with local disaster responders. Moreover, the Nepali communities around the globe established their counter-public enclaves by sharing various embodiment such as oratorical, material, visual, or performative which Chávez points out as the center of social movement and in this case the transnational activism. These coalitional networks existed in contrast to the formal bodies like the government or national and international humanitarian organizations and they reached the communities that were ignored by the formal disaster responders. This disaster response showcases the rhetorical practice of these diasporic communities who were engaged in creating, curating, and circulating materials and discourses online as well as assembling disaster responders on the ground (Wang).

Disaster creates feelings of urgency and immediacy, leading to affective interactions among the people who are suffering and the people who are observing that suffering online. Humans use their senses, feelings, and emotions to react to worldwide calamities through non-human objects such as phones, computers, and buildings because they all coexist and are networked within the assemblage itself. The affective reactions, the sense of community in the people experiencing a crisis, whether physically or emotionally, motivate them to connect to others via various digital means, further helping to create transnational coalitional actions during a disaster via spontaneous reactions (Papacharissi; Yam). The

affective response in a disaster is spontaneous, as participants have noted in their narratives, because a post-crisis situation is the perfect time to act and help the community that needs instant support.

Participants noted that their actions were oriented towards immediate relief and rescue to help in saving the lives of the people who were suffering.

During the April 2015 Nepal Earthquake, people affected by the catastrophe depended on the transnational coalitional communities or assemblages. The narratives of all the participants suggested that the transnational networked connection and communications were inevitable during the disaster and that the social web helped them create and maintain those connections. The formation of social networks in a post-disaster situation has already been articulated by previous researchers (Alipour et al.; Chang et al.; Patil and Purkayastha; Potts; Ding; Frost). All 15 participants revealed their dependencies on interpersonal networks, professional networks, and networks created via the social web. Collectively, the participants stated that they a) reached out to their family, friends, and friends of friends, b) instituted a professional networked participation through the organizations that they were a part of, c) established stronger networks through the use of social media like Facebook or Twitter, d) reached out to their respective diaspora network, and e) expanded networks by joining or leaving the various disaster relief groups. The formation of the diverse kinds of networks helped Nepal respond to the disaster in a quicker and in a more efficient manner as displayed in Figure 3.1.

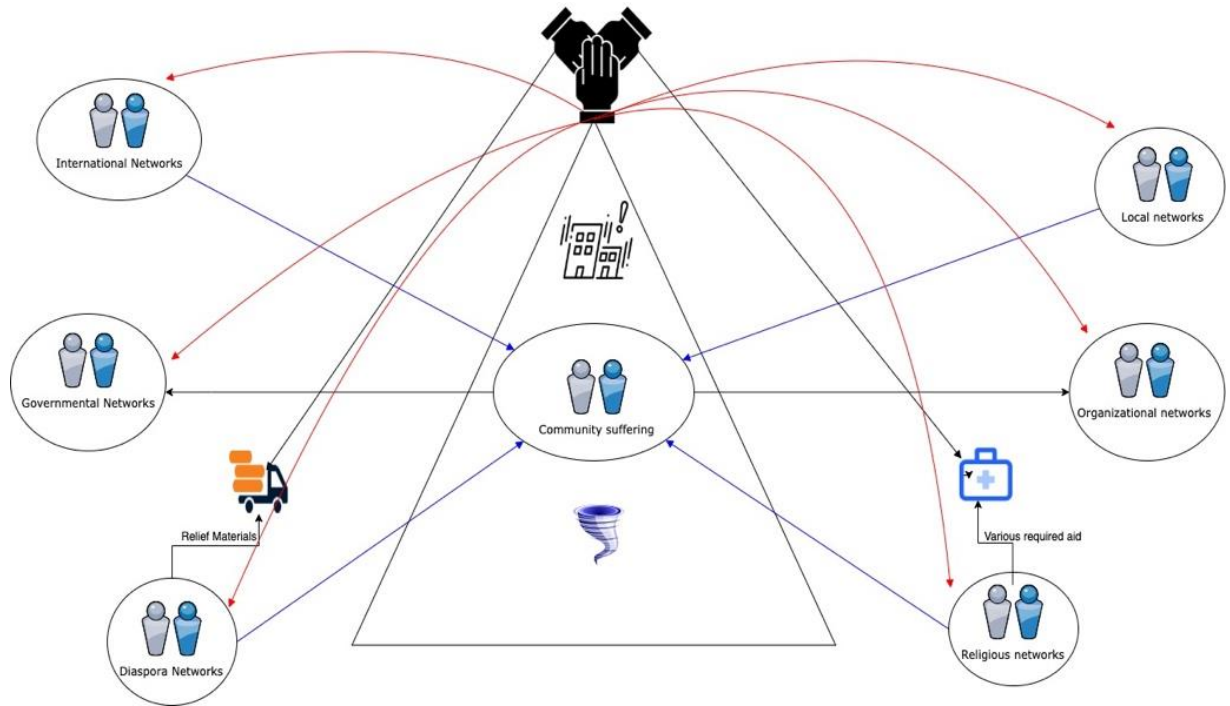


Figure 3.1: Networks during the Nepal Earthquake

All the participants went through a similar (but not same) experience during the disaster by either being physically present or by being far away yet experiencing the disaster via the social web. This caused the actors to experience a common sentiment of fear as well as a desire and a drive to be involved in spontaneous actions. By allowing actors to spontaneously respond to a disaster, the social web provides a platform for the people to organize their actions. In the chaos and panic of a disaster, actors employ social web tools to communicate and validate information, using the available apparatus to make connections in new ways (Potts). A participant shared:

It was because that was very immediate at that time. Like, you would post one thing on the internet, on Facebook, and they would reach out to me. And then we would carry it from there. So, that was very instant. If you had a tarp at home, you would go, just take it and bring it. (Participant from Nepal)

Similarly, another participant noted:

For example, if a man is trapped in the nearby, people did not wait for the government, they immediately went there and pulled him out to save his life whether they were experts or not. (Participant from Nepal)

In these narratives, we see three common themes: urgency, using available means of communication, and not waiting for the government. This led participants to use their Facebook accounts to bring attention to the dire situation, to request help, and to act instantly, thus motivating others who read the status to become involved. The spontaneous actions that led to the affective response were mediated via Facebook, which resulted in a networked and collective response. The desire to act immediately further helped in the formation of smaller assemblages that responded to the disaster.

All the participants also demonstrated a sense of commitment towards their community that led them to create transnational connections and coalitions. This sense of commitment towards the community is affective as it helps to create “flows” that aid the establishment of the assemblage. Manuel DeLanda states that “when a community is densely connected, we can expect a reduction of personal differences and an increased degree of conformity,” (p. 22) which helps in territorializing the assemblage. Nepal was devastated by the earthquake. The Nepali government could not be relied upon in this situation, as shared by the participants. Many people knew this, and the sense of commitment towards the community helped the participants and other Nepali people connect with those who felt similarly, working together to respond to the crisis without waiting for government aid that would never come. As a result, the Nepali people were motivated to serve and help themselves, which led to territorializing acts in which new “articulations were being forged” regarding disaster response efforts, thus “constituting a new assemblage or territory” (Slack and Wise 158). In the context of disaster, new articulations during the Nepal Earthquake were also formed, including hashtags such as #NepalRises or popular slogans shared by Nepali participants, including “kehi garou” translated in English as “let’s do something.”

There were various official transnational organizational networks during the Nepal Earthquake that helped in organizing larger-scale disaster response efforts. These already established networks or organizations included both governmental as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The

Nepali government organized a conference called a “donor conference,” where leaders from various countries around the world pledged monetary assistance to Nepal to respond to the earthquake. Similarly, networks of international non-governmental/humanitarian organizations like the United Nations, the European Union, and the Red Cross also helped in the disaster response efforts. Nine participants noted that they had been a part of official networks that allowed them to become involved in disaster response. A participant who represents a network of international humanitarian organizations working in Nepal shared that, soon after the earthquake, there was an upsurge in international organizations who came to Nepal to support Nepali communities. She recounts the following:

I think it was from 36 countries altogether. There are a lot of members in our country too. Some are from America and other places. Everybody from all over the world has done at least something from their side. Everybody helped and we, also had collected some amount of money from members (Participant from Nepal)

As the participant noted, many organizations from around the world came to Nepal to provide support. During the crisis, the Nepal government eased governmental policies and welcomed everyone around the world to provide aid and support to Nepalis. Hence, smaller as well as larger organizations were coming from everywhere around the world to support the Nepali community.

As participants were involved in relief efforts, they mentioned that they either created informal transnational networks or that they joined already existing informal networks for disaster response. This joining or forming of informal networks during the disaster was supported by the use of technology. Bruno Latour suggests that both human and non-human elements are actors that assist in the formation of networks. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram became a means through which people could instantly form or join a network of volunteer workers who would devote their time and energy to providing aid to the affected Nepali communities. A participant recounted:

We posted on Facebook to say about the time of meeting at ‘Yellow House’ for whoever was interested...It just grew rapidly and became a huge success. Hundreds of people started showing up on any given day. There was a massive

crowd. It was to extend that for one day we could not control the crowd anymore.

We also started to fundraise through two different friends. One friend was based in New York (USA) and the other friend was based in Belgium. They set up two funding raising platform. (Participant from Nepal).

In this narrative, we can see how the participant decided to post that their organization would be meeting at “X House” and that they invited people to join their disaster relief initiative. Later on, due to the large amount of people who joined this initiative, the organization decided to form a formal Facebook group called “Himalayan Disaster Relief Volunteer Group.” This act of self-organizing a network is a form of territorializing as mentioned by scholars like DeLanda; Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari) . As the participant shared, while this assemblage came into existence and kept on growing, there were some who would join the network but who would later decide to leave the network. Sometimes, the people who left the network would form their own separate disaster relief groups. For instance, another participant recounted that they first went to the Yellow House as a volunteer to offer their support, but since there was a massive turnout and a lot of people were already involved, they decided to create their own relief group that focused specifically on helping the communities in Rasuwa, one of the worst-hit districts. This demonstrates how, like a rhizome, the informal disaster relief networks started to grow laterally and organically. 12 participants mentioned that they were involved in creating or participating in transnational networks and using their diasporic networks. These participants mentioned that they each connected to at least one person, an organization, or groups outside their country to seek support. Much of this support also came in the form of fundraising, tweeting, sharing of messages, working via Google Docs, and more. Transnational connections were vital to the Nepal Earthquake response as people from around the world reached out to help. A participant shared:

We realized in less than one day that, the issue was not money at that time because the Nepali people from abroad, and also foreigners who loved Nepal, were raising funds within two or three days. (Participant from Nepal)

This narrative suggests that people in Nepal were not networking exclusively among each other within the vicinity of their own country or region, but they were actually creating connections beyond their country's borders. Those connections were like the rhizomes described by Deleuze and Guattari. The rhizomes are always evolving and each one grows by creating connections and flows that help in territorializing.

In examining the transnational networks, I also used SNA, which helped me produce graphs and charts to track those networks and their relationships to each other. In Figure 3.2 the larger nodes represent Asia, Africa, South America, Oceania, North America, and Europe. The smaller nodes represent the countries within these continents. The thickness of the lines connecting the nodes represents the strength in relationships among the nodes, meaning the reply and retweet relationship were higher among those countries and continents. The thicker the lines, the stronger the ties and relationships among users residing in these countries.

The SNA of the Nepal Earthquake in Figure 3.2 represents the network formation on Twitter among the users from various countries and continents. As the figure demonstrates, there were three prominent network clusters during the Nepal Earthquake: Europe-Asia-North America, North America-Asia-Oceania, and Oceania-Europe-Asia. As shown in the figure, the strongest of these three networks was Europe-Asia-North America. This means that there was a higher frequency of replies and retweets among this network. The other two major networks (North America-Asia-Oceania and Oceania-Europe-Asia) also revealed stronger relationships based on reply and retweet. Meanwhile, ties among various African and Latin American countries were weaker that may be because of less migration from Nepal to these parts of the world. Regardless, we can see that people tweeted, retweeted, or replied from all around the world during the Nepal Earthquake. The formation of strong networks was likely the result of three main factors: a) the European, Australian, and U.S. governments as well as NGOs' investment in Nepal, b) the presence of Nepali populations in these continents, and c) various trade and economic relationships within the countries.

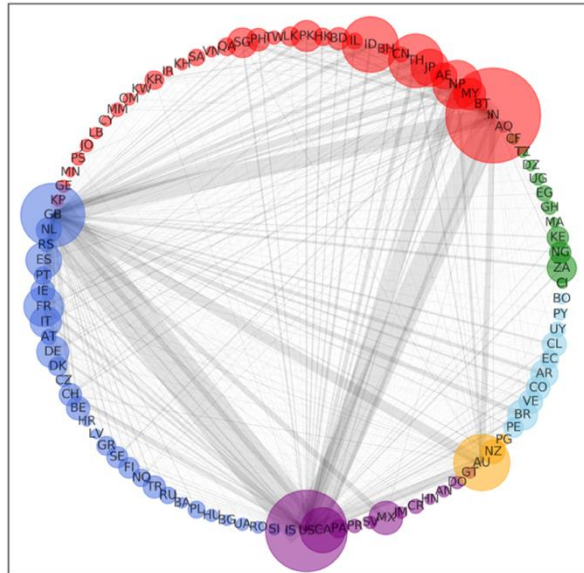


Figure 3.2 : SNA among the users residing in various countries in the world during the Nepal Earthquake. In the figure Red = Asia, Green = Africa, Light Blue =South America, Yellow = Oceania, Purple = North America, Dark Blue = Europe.

By creating larger transnational networks, the participants in my study regularly stated that responding to the Nepal Earthquake challenged them to communicate beyond language and cultural barriers. In going beyond those barriers, the participants' flexibility, as well as social media, made the communications easier and more accessible, especially since most of them used the English language. Because the assemblages were comprised of people in different locations and time zones, the work distribution was adjusted according to those diverse conditions. People on the ground were supported by people who could curate information online, make connections, and support the relief work happening on the ground. Hence, transnational assemblages during a disaster operate across the time zones, locations, and nationalities by creating their own smaller workspaces and territories.

Against the Dominant Narratives: Social Media as a space for coalitional building

Social media during the Nepal Earthquake became a multi-faceted platform for digital activism by various actors. Activists used these platforms against the dominant narratives that have worked to suppress minority voices. These kinds of activism were not only limited to the use of social media but

they also led toward innovations that resulted in web-based and phone-based applications, Geographic Information System (GIS) maps, and a supply chain management apparatus for volunteers and relief supplies. Various activists during and after the disaster emerged as a rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari) that connected with other activists who were a part of an existing assemblage or who came together to create new assemblages. While creating or joining these assemblages on Twitter, actors employed several processes such as a) retweeting or replying, b) creating hashtags and using them to express stories, opinions, data, and solidarity; and c) creating direct message chat groups. Similarly, on a social media platform like Facebook, actors a) liked, commented, or shared posts, b) created groups or pages that people could join or like, and c) created message groups. The Facebook groups and pages became a space where actions such as relief, volunteering, networking, and decision making for relief and rescue happened. These groups helped in territorializing the assemblage by bringing people from various countries, time zones, and disciplines together and they responded to the earthquake's aftermath by going against the dominant narratives and practices of disaster response. These practices were mostly led by the volunteers who launched their disaster response efforts by mainly using social media and by forming coalitions.

The participants I interviewed shared that they have used technology to share, seek, validate and curate information and resources, to organize relief-oriented actions, and to stand up to the authorities. The mobile phone network in Nepal was not working properly immediately following the earthquake, however, via 3G technology, the Internet was available on mobile phones. Thus, many people who had accessible mobile phones were actively tweeting, forming connections and groups, and organizing disaster response efforts. The participants mentioned that they had used a variety of digital media technologies. One of the participants was directly involved with the Nepali government. They were tasked with curating the governmental information website immediately after the disaster. Another participant mentioned that since they noticed a gap in relief supply, they created a web-based platform to provide supply chain management for relief necessities. Likewise, two Nepali diasporas who had established a non-governmental, volunteer-based organization were using web-based platforms including Google Docs,

Facebook, and Twitter to organize relief, conduct surveys, as well as prepare data visualizations. In her article titled “3 Ways Nepalis Are Using Crowdsourcing to Aid in Quake Relief,” Shreeya Sinha, a reporter for *The New York Times*, shares the following:

In the wake of the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that hit their country over the weekend, many Nepalis at home and abroad have found a new way to help—as digital volunteers, spending hours hunched over their laptops, using crowdsourcing technologies and social platforms to participate in the relief effort.

(Sinha, para 1)

Nepalis at home and abroad were maximizing the use of social media and responding to the disaster by going against the traditional practice of waiting for the government or other organizations to come and support the affected communities. In addition to crowdfunding and volunteering, Nepalis also used storytelling practices of the calamity’s aftermath on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Participants shared that they used multiple different platforms, choosing the appropriate platform according to the purposes they intended to fulfill. The most mentioned purpose for using social media, for example, was for connecting with numerous people who could volunteer and organize relief efforts. Social media was also used to network fundraising efforts. Additionally, some participants mentioned that they were continuously tweeting pictures and information, disproving fake news, and curating reports in their blog sites. Twitter has played a critical role in disaster management and has been ranked as the fourth most popular source for accessing emergency information (Lindsay). Various studies conducted on the role of Twitter during disasters (Cho et al.; Crooks et al.; Potts) have argued that the role of social media during a disaster should be acknowledged because it delivers information to people in a quick and highly efficient way. A journalist participant mentioned that she was contacted by media outlets all around the world in response to her blog posts, tweets, and pictures. She shared that a blogpost that she wrote on the day of the earthquake was picked up by BBC news and went viral. The journalist’s blog was therefore used to raise awareness about the earthquake’s devastation. Other participants mentioned how various Nepalis around the world employed Google Docs to coordinate relief-oriented actions. The

volunteers achieved this by searching for the communities that the government or other larger organizations had yet to reach.

After the disasters, people created their own innovative solutions that allowed them to properly curate, manage, and validate information, and that aided them in organizing disaster response in an equitable manner. The Nepali government also started its own disaster portal within a few hours of the earthquake. One participant who volunteered in creating the government website explained that within two to three hours of work, they had set up a website for curating official information directly from the government. While they relied on various governmental sources, the participant also used social media platforms to collect and verify the data. After curating this data, the participant would develop governmental responses for supporting earthquake survivors in need. An organization named Kathmandu Living Labs was also helping by creating Humanitarian Open Street Maps (HOT), a service which creates maps of high vulnerability areas where data is scarce (Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team). Facebook and Google responded to the Nepal Earthquake by activating new features during the earthquake. Google activated a technology called “People Finder” that helped relatives and friends locate their loved ones, and Facebook launched its Safety Check feature used to determine whether people in the disaster-affected area are safe. The people on the ground were using all of these available technologies by contextualizing their usage to focus on equitable disaster response. One Nepali participant was contacted by Facebook before the Safety Check was launched:

Google also created its crisis mark, likewise, Facebook does as a safety check. So that time, I talked to one of the V.P.s of Facebook and asked if we could set up the safety checks through Facebook. I do not think things did work much. They got to know about the disaster in Nepal and I think they did care about that. (Participant from Nepal)

Other large technology enterprises were also creatively thinking about the best possible ways to support disaster-affected areas, reaching out to affected community members to see what the logical course of

action for them to take would be. The people on the ground who had contextual knowledge were also using these global technologies on their own.

With the help of government data, Code for Nepal, a non-profit established by a diaspora of young Nepalis in the U.S., was curating information in the form of an interactive map. Code for Nepal was also working on a common Google Doc that crowdsourced information about volunteers, relief supplies, emergency services, and communities in need. Such crowdsourced data helped numerous relief organizations as well as volunteers to accurately locate specific requests for help and to gather accurate data on what was happening in real time (Gao et al.). Similar to other big disasters in the world, before the public fully recognized the serious damage caused by the earthquake, social media users were already posting their experiences of what was going on in their locality in the digital space (Cho et al.). Curating personal experiences in the form of a tweet or a picture and sharing them online also transformed those experiences into data that could be used by volunteers to better understand the current state of affairs. This resulted in the government and other entities relying on social media platforms to assess the situation so to accurately deploy the necessary relief supplies to help affected communities.

Enacting Crisis Communications with Social Justice During Disaster

Communication during the crisis can be enhanced through digital technology and social media because it allows quicker delivery of information to a larger public. The rhetorical situation of each disaster is different, presenting unique challenges in communication. In the crisis situations created by the Nepal Earthquake, communications were mediated by official organizations as well as self-organized transnational assemblages on the Internet. The organizational crisis communication often clashed with the community organizers' grassroots level communication. The formation of the transnational assemblages in the digital web facilitated communications by building "a series of locality-based activities and organizations around a key function in the network"(Castells). Pamela Walaski defines crisis communications as, "those messages that are given to audiences during an emergency event that threatens them either immediately or at some foreseeable point in the near future" (9). These kinds of urgent messages help audiences stay informed, become aware of the situation surrounding the crisis, and create

precautionary measures. In informing the public, the role of transnational assemblages became greater than that of dominant practices as they challenged the governmental messages, demanded transparency in information, and enacted their own forms of communications.

The international networks of various humanitarian organizations like the United Nations, the European Union, and others that have a historical presence in Nepal assisted the Nepali government in disaster response and crisis communication. These organizations coordinated with the government, media, and other community-based organizations in Nepal to gather information and share it via their websites and their social media profiles. However, the United Nations, which was a leader of the disaster response effort in Nepal, was criticized for its “situational reports” because their accounts targeted donors and not the community. While the situation reports were one of the communication mechanisms, they did not represent community voices. A participant stated:

There was always a daily number of coordination meetings, and I went there. At this point, there’s nobody there except the U.N. and a couple of big organizations. So, I felt that, okay, there was a lot of space for me to inject the communication components. The U.N. would be thinking, and, you know, there’s this situation reports of how to bring those together. But I was like, okay, I’m not talking about putting a situation report. I am talking about talking to the community. So how are we going to do that quickly, and how can we ensure that it’s a quick and meaningful process? (Participant from Nepal)

The participant later mentioned that, in an effort to give the local community a voice, she mobilized her team to reach out to the public and gather data as well as stories from the local people. “After gathering the information, that same participant’s organization aired a show, which had 6.6 million subscribers and viewers, on Facebook where she told the people’s stories and relayed important information that would keep everyone safe. Hence, the participant’s organization was the first to conduct a need-based survey from that population online and distribute that data to other organizations like the U.N. to aid in disaster response efforts. Later, the participant’s organization also created a very short narrative-based radio

program which discussed disaster response efforts. This program was created under the communications protocol adopted by the participant's organization, which allowed community members to tell their stories as well as provide information on how to respond to disaster-related issues like the water crisis and problems related to open defecation after the earthquake. This community-based program became immensely popular in Nepal during the earthquake as the community could share their knowledge of how to respond to the earthquake. Disaster responders who were in organizational capacities, like my participant, needed to be innovative because the users to whom they were providing information were not only passive listeners but also active responders. These organizations also depended on the retweets, responses, shares, and likes of users to whom they were communicating the information. They therefore had to be innovative in the uses of various social media platforms while communicating their message to various users.

In conducting such crisis communications, participants organized data collection by mobilizing volunteers on the ground, by translating data, and by curating information on websites in multimodal form while also putting the major agenda of communicating for social justice at the heart of their efforts (Walton et al.). Huiling Ding in *Rhetoric of a Global Epidemic* "Ding in Rhetoric of a Global Epidemic argues that technical communicators have a civic responsibility in these kinds of crises to ensure that communication carried out through the necessary outlets is conveyed effectively so that the largest amount of people can benefit from such communication. The participants revealed that they shared information via Twitter, curated reports on blogs or in Facebook groups, organized relief and constructed various data visualizations to provide statistics of Nepal on Google Docs,. As articulated by the participants, even though the government was trying to disseminate information, their efforts were not enough because people needed quick answers and relief to save their lives. Hence, to avoid rumors, to organize relief and rescue efforts, and to reach out to the communities who were ignored by larger organizations, the participants conducted their own crisis communications. Participants shared that since the Nepali government had limited human resources and communication mechanisms to handle the catastrophic disaster, it was slower than local efforts and required a lot of volunteers to enhance such

communication. Therefore, Nepali activists relied on social media as well as on the grapevine informational network to access information from the community. One participant shared:

I was answering these questions for one hour, staying up, and feeling like a crazy thing. I was trying to figure out information, trying to share information, trying to locate people and help people feel better, and in some cases trying to share the unfortunate news. (Participant from Nepal)

The participant during the time of the earthquake created his own relief work and was not affiliated with any organization. He served as a communication point for many other people in his network. Even though there were official mechanisms for people finding, people outside of Nepal needed the information about their loved ones immediately. The participant shared that Nepal is a close-knit society, and information travels from family, friends, and friends of friends, so it was easier to locate information about people from the people without waiting for official mechanisms to intervene. Another participant mentioned that she was involved in translating governmental information from Nepali to English in order to make information accessible to non-Nepali speakers who were trying to locate information about their loved ones. Yet another participant collected various reports from sites that were sharing misinformation and addressed those falsities in his blog so that people could get accurate information. Activists in Nepal conducted crisis communication by mobilizing their resources to get accurate and valid information about the ignored and marginalized communities within the country. Activists also curated such information on social media to conduct relief and rescue activities and to hold the government and other disaster responding organizations accountable.

Crisis communications within the transnational assemblage can facilitate disaster response by conveying messages and sharing information through a variety of communications mediums, such as mobile phones, SMS, emails, tweets, Facebook messages, and WhatsApp messages. These messages included information on the need for relief materials, calls for volunteers, and requests for funding, which can all be regarded as the “flows in an assemblage” (DeLanda). The assemblages formed during the Nepal Earthquake provided a public voice for communities who were being ignored. Such

communications within the assemblages were flexible, adaptive, and did not have any official protocols. While repurposing such messages with social media functions like sharing, retweeting, liking, or replying, and sometimes rewriting, the crisis communication practices during the Nepal Earthquake blurred the boundaries between the official and unofficial networks. Crisis communications are mostly employed in an organizational context (Walaski); however, my data suggests that, because the context of the world is continually transforming during a crisis, crisis communication is also always transforming. In this context, catastrophic disasters invite multiple stakeholders and organizations, as well as various evolving assemblages, to communicate about the crisis and aid in the disaster response effort. To manage a successful disaster response, stronger crisis communication mechanisms that involve and highlight the role of the community and the people who are involved in disaster response are required (Coombs and Holladay; Horsley and Barker; Walaski).

A multitude of actors representing government, NGOs, private organizations, as well as media houses and local people performed crisis communications. The actors within various transnational assemblages who were engaged in seeking, interpreting, and distributing messages, are regarded as crisis publics by various crisis communication scholars (Coombs and Holladay; Frandsen and Johansen; Walaski). These crisis publics engage in the communications about a disaster. In doing so, they become a part of various assemblages that are either affected by the crisis or are working to respond to the crisis. In this process, crisis publics territorialize the assemblage with the flows created via crisis communication. Crisis communication has changed over the past 40 years and it is mostly responding to crises that are becoming increasingly global as their causes and consequences transcend national and cultural boundaries (Schwarz et al.). The actors or the crisis publics of the Nepal Earthquake are such examples. The crisis attracted the attention of people around the globe and brought them together, thus territorializing these transnational assemblages.

In the case of Nepal, Rajib Subba and Tung Bui found that media engagement not only helped to provide services to marginalized communities but it also helped hold the Nepal Police accountable and transparent. These crisis publics, a major part of an assemblage, play the role of an active audience who

can talk back to the dominant narratives shared by the government and highlight any discrepancies during a disaster while also sharing their voices via social media platforms. This act of raising awareness via social media platforms displays the autonomous characteristics of an assemblage (Delanda). Social media platforms create the possibility for understanding the public reaction to a disaster in real-time, including the possibility to recognize an emergent crisis public for disaster management (Murthy and Gross). The participants were communicating and performing various kinds of communication practices such as gathering data and information, taking pictures and posting them, curating videos and sharing them, or creating webpages for donations. These kinds of practices not only helped in responding to the disaster but also helped in creating a transnational environment where discourse about the disaster was made possible. Hence, the crisis communications in a transnational environment created various flows, helping to create the transnational assemblages.

Social media became an important platform where crisis publics could seek, share, interpret, and disperse information to their networks. In seeking and gathering the information, crisis publics become part of various transnational assemblages. Social media also allowed crisis publics to perform crisis communications within their assemblages, as suggested by Finn Frandsen and Winni Johansen, by a) communicating to each other, b) communicating with each other, c) communicating against each other or the official narratives shared by the government, d) communicating past each other, and e) communicating about each other. These variety of flows of crisis communications played an important part in territorializing the assemblage. In performing these various ways of communicating during the crisis with their assemblages and beyond, the actors responded to the disaster. As articulated by the participants who did not represent any organizations, their communication was not moderated by any organizational protocol. However, crisis communications within their own assemblages were oriented towards gathering truthful information, verifying that information with the community, and using it to work towards providing disaster relief to the community.

During the first weeks after the disaster events, the Nepal Earthquake changed the dynamics and the rhetorical nature of crisis communication. The public became not only passive receivers of the crisis

communication but they also became active responders, interpreters, and transmitters of information (Coombs and Holladay). These active roles, as my analysis of the actors' narratives suggest, allowed the actors to take on prominent roles, either by initiating their own assemblages or by becoming part of already established assemblages. Even though there were major actors who performed crisis communication immediately following these events, such as the government and media sources, the active crisis publics who posted information on social media platforms became the most critical actors in the crisis communications that emerged. Social media allowed crisis publics to share their affective reactions immediately and join conversations by becoming part of various assemblages via hashtags or using functions like replying or retweeting. "The decentralized communications structure in most social media means that these platforms provide different communicative affordances during disasters" (Murthy and Gross) such as interpretations of messages, individual expressions, and criticisms of official organizations. During the time of crisis, digital tools empower people to express themselves and perform crisis communication. Erin Frost, in her analysis of risk communication during the Deepwater Horizon crisis, found that the role of local communicators in writing persuasive messages was often more helpful than the messages from professional communicators at major media outlets.

Conclusion

The people in Nepal managed the disaster and conducted crisis communication with social justice by relying on their own non-Western ways. These unique ways of communicating during the disaster led to the formation of assemblages that took into account the community's needs. Some of the common themes of non-Western disaster response included a) contextualizing the information based on the audience of the messages, b) involving the community and their local knowledge of resisting against disaster and curating that information on social media, c) reusing the information created by the official channels and simplifying it by visualizing the data and information, and d) questioning the authorities to provide accurate information. Nepal's non-Western ways of communication had one purpose: to achieve social justice for the marginalized population who was suffering and ignored in the process of disaster relief. The transnational assemblages that operated via non-Western methods defined their boundaries on

the basis of social justice and also maintained it throughout the disaster response (DeLanda). They were raising their voices against the governmental and international humanitarian organization's rhetoric. The management of crisis as showcased by the actors in Nepal shows that crisis management should be understood from a perspective that focuses on the receiver, not the donor, actively representing the various voices of marginalized populations. Communications in any circumstances should not privilege one single voice, and during the aftermath of a calamity, the disaster managers should work towards not privileging one voice. Disaster managers should involve the community when it comes to managing the crisis and performing crisis communication because doing so helps in making the communication effective and relevant. The aftermath of a disaster requires very sensitive and effective communication because a crisis changes the dynamics, needs, and reactions of the community that is suffering. Crisis communications should incorporate the idea of social justice (Walton et al.) that can support the marginalized and the vulnerable communities in the disasters.

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Academic Appointment

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- 2017-2020 **Polytechnic Institute, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN**
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Education

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- 2014 **Master of Philosophy in English**, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal
 - **Thesis:** Nepali Songs During Rana Regime: Rhetoric of Eros towards Attainment of Wisdom
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 - **Thesis:** Undercurrents of Sexuality in Nepali Songs During Rana Regime

Book

Baniya, S. *Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management*. *Under Review*

With case studies of the 2015 Nepal Earthquake & 2017 Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico, this book provides strategies for researchers and practitioners in rethinking digitally complex, varied modes of risk and crisis communications in global disaster management via social justice and transcultural frameworks.

Peer Reviewed Publications

Baniya, S. (2020). Managing Environmental Risks: Rhetorical Agency and Ecological Literacies of Women During the Nepal Earthquake. *Enculturation* (32) Special Issue: Rhetorics and Literacies of Climate Change.
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- Baniya, S., & Potts, L.,** (2020). Valuing Expertise During the Pandemic. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*. Online first <https://doi.org/10.1177/1050651920958503>
- Baniya, S.,** (2021). The Implication of Transnational Activism and Disaster Response for Global Social Justice. *Spark: A 4C4Equality Journal*. **URL: <https://tinyurl.com/87rwnecw>**
- Baniya, S.** (2021) Transnational Assemblages in Disaster Response: Networked Communities, Technologies, and Knowledge Making During Global Disasters. **Revised and Resubmit.**
- Baniya, S., Brien, A., Call, K., Kumar, R.,** (2021) Serving Internationally: Enhancing Digital Literacy in Rural Nepal amid a Pandemic. **Revise and Resubmit**
- Sherman, D., Mentzer, N., **Baniya, S.,** Bartholomew, S., & Laux, D. (2021). Across the Disciplines: Our Gained Knowledge in Assessing a First-Year Integrated Experience. *International Journal of Technology and Design Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10798-020-09650-6>
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Forthcoming Publications

- Baniya, S., & Chen, C.** (2021). Experiencing a Global Pandemic: The Power of Public Storytelling as Counternarrative in Crisis Communication. *Special Issue of Technical Communication on “The Work of Storytelling in Technical Communication*. **Revise and Resubmit**
- Baniya, S.,** Kumari, A, Johnson, GP., Doan, S., Schwarz, VM., (2021). Building an International Coalitional Listserv for and by Graduate Students: The Critical Digital Literacies of nextGEN. *Computers and Composition*. **Revise and Resubmit.**
- Baniya, S.,** Edwards, J, Sano-Franchini, J, & Walwema, J. (2022) Revisiting Service Learning in Technical and Professional Communication through Social Justice and Intercultural Frameworks: Findings from Survey Research. **Under Review**
- Baniya, S.,** Brien, A., Call, K., Rethinking Service Learning in Technical Communication via Global Engagement in the Post-Pandemic Context. *Programmatic Perspective 2021 Special Issue, Administering TPC Programs in Times of Crisis*. **Accepted**

Ongoing Research Projects

Exploring Risk and Crisis Communication Practices of Transnational Feminists in Ensuring Social Justice During/Post COVID 19

- Supported by SIGDOC Career Advancement Grant, this project focuses on the role of women's coalitional networks in creating networks, planning actions, and managing risks about the issues related with women during disasters and epidemics like COVID-19. Interviewing grassroots feminist activists from four different countries: Nepal, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago and St. Lucia who are leading risk/crisis communications, disaster management, response, this project aims to understand how feminist leaders performed risk and crisis communication during the COVID-19 crisis

Service Learning in Technical and Professional Communication through Social Justice and Intercultural Frameworks: A Multisite Study

- Supported by the CPTSC Grant, this project seeks to understand how programmatic actions in TPC clarify issues of social justice and intercultural communication in service-learning programs. In this project, we are conducting survey and focus group discussions with different kinds of postsecondary institutions with the U.S. and beyond, including land grant universities, SLACs, community colleges, tribal colleges, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and HBCUs. Project in collaboration with Dr. Jessica Edwards, Dr. Jennifer Sano-Franchini, Dr. Josephine Walwema

Citation Project with Studies in Writing and Rhetoric

- The Citation Matters project via *Studies in Writing and Rhetoric Board* about whether its own publishing record adequately met such critiques. The project aims at creating a database which would document how the field was currently engaging with scholars of color and, additionally, international scholars of color. Project in collaboration with Ellen Cushman, Khirsten Scott, Laura Gonzales, Haivan Hoang, Paula Mathieu, Steve Parks, Staci Perryman-Clark, Jacqueline Rhodes, Tiffany Rousculp, Kevin Smith, Bo Wang

Referred Book Chapters

Baniya, S. (2020). Rhetorical Comparison of Hindu God Krishna and Plato: An Exploration of Non-Western Hindu Rhetoric. In K. Lloyd. (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion of Comparative and World Rhetorics*, pp. 164-172. Routledge.

Baniya, S. (2023). Community Engagement. In J. Tham (Eds), *Keywords in Design Thinking: A Primer For Makers, Designers, & Technical Communicators*. Parlor Press.

Baniya, S., (Forthcoming) #RageAgainstRape: Nepali Women's Assemblage and Networked Performances Against Rape. In Lisa Phillips, Sarah Warren-Riley, and Julie Bates (Eds.), *Grassroots Activisms: Public Rhetorics in Localized Contexts*. *Book Under Review*

Baniya, S. (2015). Performance of Rituals in Shaping Nepalese Woman's Sexuality. Discourses on Folklore Kathmandu International Folklore Congress. Nepali Folklore Society, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Peer Reviewed Conference Proceedings

Baniya, S., Hutchinson, L, Kumari, A, Larson, K, Lindgren, C. (2019). Representing Diversity in Digital Research: Digital Feminist Ethics and Resisting Dominant Normatives. Computers and Writing 2018 Conference Proceedings. URL: <https://tinyurl.com/y27btt29>

Baniya, S (2019). Comparative Study of Networked Communities, Crisis Communication, and Technology: Rhetoric of Disaster in Nepal Earthquake and Hurricane Maria. In proceedings of SIGDOC Conference, Portland, OR Sigdoc 2019. DOI: [10.1145/3328020.3353913](https://doi.org/10.1145/3328020.3353913)

Baniya, S., Mentzer, N., Sherman, D., Laux, D., Farrington, S., Holtan, A., Eden, C., & Zhang, L. Creating Interdisciplinary Collaborative Teaching/learning Praxis with Design Thinking, Communication, and Composition. In proceedings of SIGDOC Conference, Portland, OR. DOI: 10.1145/3328020.3353930

Chesley, A., Parupudi, T., **Baniya, S.,** Farrington, S., Holtan, A., Eden, C., Laux, D., & Mentzer, N. (2018) Interdisciplinary Pedagogy, Integrated Curriculum, and Professional Development. In ASEE IL/IN Regional Conference Proceedings. 10.5703/1288284316848

Publications by Undergraduate Mentees

Chaube, P. (2020). Importance and Challenges of International Service-learning. *Purdue Journal of Service-Learning and International Engagement.*, 7, (1), 19-27. DOI: 10.5703/1288284317230

Auckley D., & Harber, J. (2019). Caregiver Companion: A Service-Learning Initiative in Tippecanoe County. *Purdue Journal of Service-Learning and International Engagement*, 6, (1), 4–10. <https://doi.org/10.5703/1288284316978>

Yee, M., (2019). From Mugshots to Masterpieces: Identities Revealed Through Immigration Portraits of the Chinese Exclusion Era. *Young Scholars in Writing*, 17, 127-136.

Peer Reviewed Publications in Progress

Baniya, S., Decolonizing Disaster Response: Puerto Ricans Response to Hurricane Maria. Journal of Puerto Rican Studies. *In Progress*

Baniya, S. Rhetorical Agency of Women in Ancient Nepali Mythological Narrative: A Feminist Historiography of Svasthani Barta Katha. *In progress.*

Baniya, S., Mentzer, N., Farrington., Mohandas, L., Technology Students' views on their academic un (success). *In progress.*

Multimodal Productions

Exhibition:

- Baniya, S., Fralin, S., & Gautier, L., (2021). Ut Prosim Beyond Boundaries: Global Outreach During the Pandemic. <https://exhibits.lib.vt.edu/nepal-service-learning/>

Audio/ Podcast:

- Baniya, S. (2019). Sue Wells Interview in Eric Detweiler's RSA Oral History Initiative, Retrieved from <http://rheteric.org/oralhistory/items/show/19>
- Baniya, S. (2019). Roundtable on Inaugural RSA Institute in Eric Detweiler's RSA Oral History Initiative, Retrieved from <http://rheteric.org/oralhistory/items/show/9>
- Baniya, S. (2017). Reminiscing 20 years of #FemRhet with Dr. Jennifer Bay," in CWSHRC blogpost for Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference 2017, Dayton, OH. <https://tinyurl.com/yxjqzg24>

Blogposts:

- Baniya, S & Chapman, R. FemRhet2017 Recap Day One. Retrieved from: <https://tinyurl.com/y3gnb9e9>
- Baniya, S. (2016). Enhancing construction skills to help Nepali earthquake victims build back better. Retrieved From <https://tinyurl.com/yxvnhb5> (400,000 hits record on the European Union website and 26.000 likes EU Facebook)

Pictorial Book:

- Baniya, S. (2016). Nepal Earthquake Recovery Project: Pictorial Book [PDF}. Retrieved From <https://tinyurl.com/y2au4xta>

Documentary:

- Baniya, S. (2016). Nepal: Building Back Better. Retrieved From <https://tinyurl.com/y392tohy>
- Baniya, S. (2016). Nepal: One year of Bringing Relief. Retrieved From <https://tinyurl.com/y3xg2z4a>
- Baniya, S. (2015). Changing Self-Changing Community. Retrieved From <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wMymoSrUYY>

Conference Presentations

- Baniya, S., et al., (March 2021). Best Practices for Teaching and Research about Environmental and Disaster Rhetorics: An Engaged Learning Experience. CCCCs 2021.
- Baniya, S., et al., (March 2021). Community Writing Mentorship Workshop. CCCCs 2021. *Cancelled*
- Baniya, S., et al., (March 2021). The Role of Academic Publishing Today: Studies in Writing and Rhetoric. CCCCs 2021.
- Baniya, S., et. al., (2021). Tweet like the wind, friends!?: Building a Theory and Praxis of Conference Live-Tweeting. Computers and Writing 2020. Greenville, NC. (*Canceled due to Covid 19*)
- Baniya, S., (May 2020). Dealing with Disaster Digitally: Networked Public Actions during Nepal Earthquake 2015 and Hurricane Maria 2017. Computers and Writing 2020. Greenville, NC. (*Canceled due to Covid 19*)
- Baniya, S., (March 2020). Using Transnational Risk Communication Methods: Language, Power, and Access During Disasters. ATTW Conference 2020. Milwaukee, WI. (*Canceled due to Covid 19*)
- Baniya, S., (March 2020). Decolonial Rhetorical Agency of Transnational Women Entrepreneurs During the Nepal Earthquake and Hurricane Maria. Conference on College Composition and Communication 2020. Milwaukee, WI. (*Canceled due to Covid-19*)
- Baniya, S. (October 2019). Comparative Study of Networked Communities, Crisis Communication, and Technology: Rhetoric of Disaster in Nepal Earthquake and Hurricane Maria. SIGDOC Conference 2019. Portland, OR.
- Baniya, S., Mentzer, N., Sherman, D., Laux, D., Farrington, S., Holtan, A., Eden, C., Zhang, L., (October 2019). Creating Interdisciplinary Collaborative Teaching/learning Praxis with Design Thinking, Communication, and Composition. SIGDOC Conference 2019. Portland, OR.
- Baniya, S., (June 2019). Reconsidering the Digital in Community Engagement Projects: Producing Knowledge Ethically with Big Data. Roundtable. Computers and Writing Conference 2019. Lansing, MI.
- Baniya, S., (March 2019). #RageAgainstRape: Nepali Women's Performance of Local Digital Actions Against the National Silence on Rape. Conference on College Composition and Communication 2019, Pittsburgh, PA.
- Baniya, S., (March 2019). Exploring Rhetorical Ways of Addressing Public Health During Emergency. Association of Teachers of Technical Writing 2019, Pittsburgh, PA.
- Baniya, S., Auckely, D., Harber, J., (March 2019). Engaging with Community via Digital Communication Practices: A Reflection on Service-Learning Oriented Business Writing Class. Engagement Summit 2019, Lafayette, IN.
- Baniya, S., (June 2018). Rhetorical Comparison of Hindu God Krishna and Plato: An Exploration of Non-Western Hindu Rhetoric. Rhetoric Society of America Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

- Baniya, S., Hutchinson, L., Kumari, A., Larson, K., Lindgren, C. (May 2018). Representing Diversity in Digital Research: Digital Feminist Ethics and Resisting Dominant Normatives. Roundtable. Computers and Writing Conference 2018, Fairfax, VA.
- Baniya, S., & Chesley, A., (May 2019). Retracing Blogging Experience as Digital Phronesis: Two Multicultural Microhistories. Computers and Writing Conference, Fairfax, VA.
- Baniya, S., (November 2018) Nepal Earthquake 2015's Initial Digital Narratives: Creation of Knowledge and Cultural Rhetoric. Cultural Rhetorics Conference 2018, Lansing, MI.
- Baniya, S., Shrestha, P., (2018) Nepal's Ceremonial Feminine Rhetorical Tradition: Performance of Coming of Age of Indigenous Newari Girls. Cultural Rhetorics Conference 2018, Lansing, MI.
- Baniya, S., Chesley, A., Mentzer, N., Bartholomew, S., Moon, C., & Sherman, D. (October 2018). Assessing Writing from Interdisciplinary Perspective via Adaptive Comparative Judging. Crow Symposium: Writing Research Without Walls 2018, Lafayette, IN.
- Chesley, A., Parupudi, T., Baniya, S., Farrington, S., Holtan, A., Eden, C., Laux, D., & Mentzer, N. (April 2018) Interdisciplinary Pedagogy, Integrated Curriculum, and Professional Development. ASEE IL/IN Regional Conference, Lafayette, IN.
- Baniya, S., (October 2017). Pioneer Nepali Female Singers of Nepal: Rhetoric of Body, Sexuality, and Libidinal Economy. Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference 2017, Dayton, OH.
- Baniya, S., (February 2015). Undercurrents of Sexuality in Nepali Songs During Rana Regime. International Louisville Conference on Arts and Literature 2015, Louisville, KY.
- Baniya, S., (February 2015). "Secret Sacred Silence" (Fiction). International Louisville Conference on Arts and Literature. Louisville 2015, KY.

Teaching Experience

Graduate Seminar: Rhetoric in Society (*Spring 2021*)

- Study of the relationship of language and human action, with emphasis on how rhetoric reflects and shapes social practices and how literate activity operates in a complex society; emphasis on written communication.

Professional Writing with Risk Communication (*Summer 2019, Fall 2020, Spring 2021*)

- Undergraduate course that introduces students to the theory and practice of professional writing and its functions in workplace settings with focus on Multicultural contexts, Risk Communication and Global Social Justice

Creating User Documentation with International Service Learning

- Undergraduate course that introduces user documentation with focus on--procedures, processes, and narrative—to develop an understanding of the variety of technical tools and best practices for creating user documentation. Current Partnership with Code for Nepal where students are producing post-pandemic digital literacy materials.

Graduate Seminar: Teaching First-Year Composition (*Assistant Mentor Fall 2019, Spring 2020*)

- This course prepares first year graduate students at Purdue to teach composition at the university level according to the outcomes of the Introductory Composition at Purdue.

Business Writing with Local and International Service Learning, (Fall 2018, Spring 2019)

- Undergraduate courses Partnered with local organization Caregiver Companion (Fall) and international organization Code for Nepal (Spring). Students learned grant writing and secured **\$3400**

grant in Fall 2018 and \$1500 in Spring to support community partner granted via Purdue's Office of Engagement.

First Year English Composition (Including [EPICS Learning Community](#))

- Undergraduate English course is the standard 4-credit hour composition course for students at Purdue University.

Graduate Dissertation Committee

Luana Shafer, *Dissertation Committee Member*

Olayemi Awotayo, *Dissertation Committee Member*

Margaret Fernandez, *Dissertation Committee Member*

Fai Inthajak, *Dissertation Committee Member*

Non-Academic (Industry) Experience

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 2008-2016 | English News Reader and Editor, Radio Nepal (National Radio of Nepal) <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Prepared, edited, translated, and broadcasted English news daily○ Trained new news readers on editing, translating, and reading○ Managed coordinated the morning shift of English News Desk. |
| 2015-2016 | Communications Learning and Documentation Officer, Danish Church Aid <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Overall communications of European Union funded project○ Prepared blogposts, short documentaries, pictorial book, newsletters, press handling and designed various merchandise,○ Organized various training programs and workshops on the issues related communications during disaster. |
| 2014-2015 | Communications Officer, Teach for Nepal <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Overall communications of the organization, curating Social Media, media/press, and conduct outreach activities.○ Collecting Narratives of the Fellow and curate them on the website○ Organizing “Digital Literacy” Campaign for school children in rural areas. |
| 2013-2014 | Communications Associate, United Nations Human Settlement Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Overseeing and responsibility for the implementation of the Communications strategy for UN-Habitat○ Engage the press and social media; coordinate and organize events○ Coordinate curation of website, produce outreach materials, publications |
| 2010-2012 | Local Correspondent, Xinhua News Agency <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Reporting the issues in Nepal that is of international importance with focus on politics, social cultural, climate changes, and gender issues. Prepare audio-visual, and written reports on the recent issues ongoing in Nepal. |

Invited Workshops, Lectures (National and Intl)

- Baniya, S (2021). Invited Speaker at Virginia Tech Center for Humanities' *Conversation with Dr. Sylvester Johnson*
- Baniya, S (2021). Invited Speaker at Virginia Tech APIDA Caucus' InspireAsian Series.
- Baniya, S (2020). Invited Speaker at Coalition of Community Writers' *Academic Job Market Workshop*.
- Baniya, S (2020). Invited Facilitator at Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication Diversity Committee in their pre-conference Zoom session on *Mentoring Session for International Students of Color in Technical Communication*
- Baniya, S (2021). Invited Speaker at Critical and Transformative Practices in Educational Leadership' being organized by the Educational Leadership **Kathmandu University School of Education**
- Baniya, S (2021). Invited Speaker for Kent University's Promise Scholar Series.
- Baniya, S (2021). Invited as Leadership Speaker during Society of Technical Communication Rochester's Spectrum Conference Leadership Day, March 2020
- Baniya, S (2021). Invited as Speaker for Risk and Health Communication in and beyond Asia. Sam Huston State University.
- Baniya, S (2021). Invited as Speaker at Professional Writing Pedagogy Workshop Series. Purdue University.
- Baniya, S (2020). Invited Speaker at Rom 42's *Seminar on Role of Woman in Technical Communications for non-academic Audience*. Organized by Single Sourcing Solutions INC.
- Baniya, S (2020). Guest Lecture in Dr. Christine Tulley's class Graduate Seminar: Introduction to the Discipline of Rhetoric and Writing course at the University of Findlay, Ohio
- Baniya, S (2020). Guest Lecture in Dr. Jim Dubinsky's class English 6315 on Civic Engagement at Virginia Tech University, Blacksburg
- Baniya, S (2019). Resume and Cover Letter Writing Workshop for Masters of Business Administration Students. Apex College, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Baniya, S (2019). Professional Portfolio Workshop for Bachelors of Business Administration Students. King's College, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Baniya, S (2019). Intercultural Communication Workshop for Bachelors of Business Administration Students. King's College, Kathmandu, Nepal
- Baniya, S (2019). Teachers Training on Service Learning /Community Engagement. King's College, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Baniya, S (2019). Writing Thesis Proposal Workshop for Masters of Philosophy Students. IACER, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Baniya, S (2018). Academic Writing Workshop for Bachelors of Business Administration students. King's College, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Awards

- 2021 Conference on College Composition and Communication 2021
- 2021 CCCC Outstanding Dissertation Award in Technical Communication-Honorable Mention
- 2020 Conference on College Composition and Communication 2020
- 2020 Chairs' Memorial Scholarship (\$750)
- 2019 Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC)
- 2019 CPTSC and Bedford St. Martin's Diversity Scholarship Award (750)

Computers and Writing Conference 2019

- 2019 Kairos Service Award for Graduate Students and Adjuncts

Purdue University Graduate Pedagogy Showcase Award 2019

- Best of the Graduate Pedagogy Showcase Award (\$200)

Special Interest Group for the Design of Communication Conference 2019

- Graduate Student Travel Award (\$500)

Conference on College Composition and Communication 2019

- 2019 CCCCs Scholars for Dreams Award (\$1000)

Association of Teachers of Technical Writing Conference 2019

- ATTW Amplification Award (\$500)

2018 Literary Awards, College of Liberal Arts, Purdue University

- Kneale Award for Best Rhetoric and Composition Paper 2018 (\$200)

Computers and Writing Conference 2018

- Graduate Student Travel Award (\$135)

2017 Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference 2017

- Nan Johnson Outstanding Graduate Student Travel Award (\$200)

2010 Purbanchal University, Biratnagar, Nepal

- Dhurba Narayan Lal Gold Medal for securing top position in university in Bachelor of Arts program

Grants

2021 Niles Grant, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Virginia Tech

- Research Grant **(\$6000)** awarded for summer research

2021 Center for Coastal Studies, Virginia Tech

- Research Grant **(\$14598)** for the project: Creating an Inventory of Interdisciplinary Research in Virginia's Coastal Zone with Dr. Liesel Ritchie

2020 Special Interest Group on Design of Communication

- Research Grant (\$1200) awarded for conducting research for the project: Exploring Risk and Crisis Communication Practices of Transnational Feminists in Ensuring Equity and Justice During COVID 19.

2020 Spencer Grant

- Research Grant **(\$50,000)** with Dr. Jessica Edwards, Dr. Jennifer Sano-Franchini, Dr. Josephine Walwema. The Impact of Service-learning Based University Courses: Exploring the Effectiveness of Community-University Partnerships for Social Justice. **Not Funded**

2020 Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC)

- Research Grant awarded **(\$2000)** with Dr. Jessica Edwards, Dr. Jennifer Sano-Franchini, Dr. Josephine Walwema for the project: "Service Learning in Technical and Professional Communication through Social Justice and Intercultural Frameworks: A Multisite Study"

- 2020 International Initiative Grants, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Virginia Tech
- Grant **(\$750)** provided to organize an international public Webinar on “How women across the world are coping, managing, and resisting COVID-19”
- 2020 Faculty Undergraduate Research Fund, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences
- Research Grant **(\$2000)** for hiring two undergraduate students for conducting research on the project: “Rethinking Service Learning During Pandemic”
- 2020 Faculty Mentoring Grant, Virginia Tech Provost Office
- Mentoring Grant (\$1500) for Book Workshop
- 2019 Center of Intercultural Learning Mentorship, Assessment and Research, Purdue University
- Mini grant **(\$2000)** for Data gathering for dissertation project
- 2018-
2019 College of Liberal Arts, Purdue University
- Graduate School Scholarship for (2018-2019) (\$2000)
 - Purdue Research Fund -Summer Research Grant (2018) (\$3,597)
 - Promise Award (2017) (\$650), Promise Award (2018) (\$750)
 - Digital Humanities Travel Award (\$600)
 - Department of English Rider Grant (\$250)
- 2018-
2019 Office of Engagement, Purdue University
- Service-Learning Grant for Business Writing Class. Fall 2018 (\$3400)
 - Service-Learning Grant for Rhetorics of Service-Learning. Fall 2018 (\$1850)
 - Service-Learning Grant for Business Writing Class. Spring 2019(\$1500)
 - Service-Learning Grant. Fall 2020 (\$1500)
- 2014-
2015 University Grants Commissions, Kathmandu Nepal
- International Travel Grant (\$250)
 - Master of Philosophy Thesis Writing Grant (\$250)
 - Master of Arts Thesis Writing Grant (\$250)

Fellowships

- 2019 Centro for Puerto Rican Studies (Centro)
- Centro 2019 Summer Dissertation Fellowship (\$2574)
- CCCCs Studies in Writing and Rhetoric Series
- Studies in Writing and Rhetoric, Editorial Fellowship
- Association of Technical Communications Conference 2019
- Research Methods Workshop Participation Fellowship (\$200)
- 2014 United States Department of State
- Study of the US Institutes: Contemporary American Literature. Summer 2014, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY
- 2011 Government of China
- Training Course on Radio Broadcasting Techniques for Developing Countries. Summer 2011. China Radio and TV Corporation, Beijing, China

Editorial Experience

- 2020-present [National Council of Teachers of English](#)
- Studies in Rhetoric and Writing Editorial Board
- 2019-present [Young Writers in Rhetoric and Writing](#)
- Editorial Board Member
- 2019-2020 [Purdue Journal of Service learning](#)
- Board Member and the editorial team

National and International Engagement

- 2019 [Helping Hands for Puerto Rico & Puerto Rico Somos Gente](#)
- Worked together with a mentee the organization to produce various communication materials
 - Office of Engagement at Purdue University provided us with the grant to support these two organizations in Puerto Rico. The grant supported the organizations in creating merchandise that helped in creating organizational branding.
- 2019-present [Code for Nepal](#)
- Students at Virginia Tech are working on creating post-pandemic digital literacy user documentation, web-interface, mobile application prototypes
 - Office of Engagement at Purdue University provided us with the grant of \$1500 to support Code for Nepal. With this money the students were able to purchase SSL certificate, Facebook Ads, and various merchandise for Code for Nepal.
 - Student purchased Facebook Ads reached to over 300,000 people
- 2018 [Caregiver Companion](#)
- Within this course, students engaged directly with the Caregiver Companion by applying their knowledge of rhetoric, writing, and community service for social justice.
 - Office of Engagement at Purdue University provided us with \$3400 grant to support Caregiver Companion. With this money, the students were able to purchase Tshirts, print brochures, buttons, and organize an event to recruit volunteers for Caregiver Companion.
- 2018 [Food Finders Food Bank](#)
- Service-Learning within Graduate Seminar Rhetoric and Civic Engagement under supervision of Dr. Jennifer Bay. Office of Engagement at Purdue University provided us with \$1850 grant to support FFFB to buy a mobile food pantry to support community in rural and vulnerable Montgomery county in Indiana.

National and International Service

University

- Affiliate Faculty Coastal@VT, Virginia Tech University
- Community of Practices, Virginia Tech University
- Reviewer, Carolyn Rude Research Award, Virginia Tech University
- Reviewer, Professional and Technical Writing Awards Committee, Virginia Tech University

- PhD Committee, Virginia Tech University
- PhD Applications Review Committee, Virginia Tech University
- Anti-Racist Professional and Technical Writing Group, Virginia Tech University
- Assessment committee, Member, Introductory Composition Purdue, Purdue University
- Introductory Writing Committee, Member, Introductory Composition Purdue, Purdue University
- Global Ambassador, Purdue University Graduate School
- Rhetorical Theory Member, Rhetoric Society of America Purdue- University Chapter

National

- Advisory Board Member, Coalition for Community Writing
- Digital Media & Outreach Director, Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric
- Alternative Interactions Planning Committee, Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric
- Reviewer, Conference on College Composition and Communication 2021
- Reviewer of Journal Technical Communications Quarterly
- Reviewer of Grant, Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication
- Reviewer of Journal International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction
- Reviewer of Journal, Purdue Journal of Service Learning
- Reviewer of Journal, Reflections
- Member, nextGEN Special Committee for CCCC
- Member, CCCC Wikipedia Initiative Committee
- Member, Coalition for Community Writing's Engaged Graduate Student Initiative
- Digital Content Creator and Awards Taskforce, Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric 2019
- Graduate Student Representative and Online Content Creator, CCCCs Transnational Standing Committee 2018-2020
- Founding Member and Moderator, International Rhetoric and Writing Graduate Student Listserv (#nextGEN)
- Social Media Curator, Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference 2017, Dayton, OH

International

- Researcher, Himalayan Research Institute
- Founding Member and Tutor, Tribhuvan University Writing Center
- Founding Member, #RageAgainstRape
- Advisor, Code for Nepal

Professional Affiliations

- ACM: Association for Computing Machinery
- ATTW: Association for Teachers of Technical Writing
- CCCC: College Conference on Composition and Communication
- CFSHRC: Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition
- NCTE: National Council of Teachers of English
- CCW: Coalition of Community Writing
- RSA: Rhetoric Society of America
- #womeninTC: Women in Technical Communication

References

Dr. Richard Johnson-Sheehan
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Phone: (765) 49-43324

Dr. Jennifer Sano-Franchini
Associate Professor, Virginia Tech University
181 Turner Street NW (0112), Blacksburg, VA 24061
Email: sanojenn@vt.edu
Phone: 540-231-6918

Dr. Steve Parks
Associate Professor, University of Virginia
Bryan Hall 219, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4121
Email: sjp3st@virginia.edu
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05/26/2021

To,

Dr. Steve Parks
Editor
Studies in Writing and Rhetoric

Subject: Submission of a Book Proposal

Dear Dr. Parks,

I would like to submit a proposal of my book, “*Transnational Assemblages: Social Justice Oriented Technical Communication in Global Disaster Management*” for your review.

With grounded case studies of the 2015 Nepal Earthquake & 2017 Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico, this book showcases how locals in marginalized and colonized spaces overcome disaster created complexities via coalitional and transnational engagements.

I believe that my book contributes to the current conversations on disaster as well as technical communications, and issues of transnationalizing the field of rhetoric and writing.

I look forward in hearing from you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sweta Baniya'.

.....
Sweta Baniya, PhD; baniya@vt.edu

Assistant Professor of Rhetoric, Professional and Technical Writing