

## LESLIE R. NELSON

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### EDUCATION

- Ph.D. University of Missouri** **May 2018** (anticipated)  
Department of Communication  
Emphasis: Interpersonal and Family Communication  
Certified Minor: College Teaching  
Committee: Dr. Colleen Colaner (chair), Haley Horstman, Brian Houston, & Clark Peters  
Dissertation Title: *Aged out foster youths' communicative (de)constructions of family identity: An exploration of family ingroups, family outgroups, home, and estrangement*  
*\*Data collected*
- M.A. University of Missouri** **2014**  
Department of Communication  
Emphasis: Interpersonal and Family Communication  
Committee: Dr. Colleen Colaner (chair), Haley Horstman, & Catherine Rymph  
Thesis Title: *Fostering "family:" How communication sustains and functions in foster families*
- B.A. University of Nebraska** **2012**  
Honors, Magna Cum Laude  
Major: Communication Studies  
Honor's Thesis Advisor: Dr. Jordan Soliz  
Honor's Thesis Title: *Family communication, identity, and the socialization of worldviews*

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

Diverse Families • Identity Negotiation • Social Constructionism  
Relational Transitions • Sense-Making • Well-Being

### RESEARCH

#### Publications

**Nelson, L. R.** (2017). The evolving nature and process of foster family communication: An application and adaptation of the Family Adoption Communication Model. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 9(3), 366-381. doi: 10.1111/jftr.12204

**Nelson, L. R.** & Horstman, H. K. (2017). Communicated meaning-making in foster families: Relationships between foster parents' entrance narratives and foster child well-being. *Communication Quarterly*, 65(2), 144-166. doi: 10.1080/01463373.2016.1215337

Gamble, H. & **Nelson, L. R.** (2016). Sex in college relationships: The role television plays in emerging adults' sexual expectations in relationships. *Communication Monographs*, 83(1), 145-161. doi: 10.1080/03637751.2015.1049635

\*Popular press appearances: (1) NCA Newsroom; (2) Taylor & Francis Newsroom; (3) Routledge Communication Facebook Page feature; (4) ScienceDaily.com

Hays, A., Horstman, H.K., Colaner, C. W., & **Nelson, L. R.** (2015). "She chose us to be your parents": Exploring the content and process of adoption entrance narratives told in families formed through open adoption. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 917-937. doi: 10.1177/0265407515611494

\*Popular press appearances: (1) Mizzou New Bureau; (2) ScienceDaily.com

Horstman, H.K., Maliski, R., Hays, A., Cox, J., Enderle, A., & **Nelson, L. R.** (2015). Unfolding narrative meaning over time: The cognitive and communicative components of narrative sense-making and well-being in mother-daughter conversations of difficulty. *Communication Monographs*, 83, 326-348. doi: 10.1080/03637751.2015.1068945

\*Popular press appearances: (1) shared on Mother's Day Weekend (2016) in over 50 outlets including the Washington Post; (2) AAU News website linked thorough Mizzou Newsmakers; (3) NCA Facebook Page feature from Health Medicine Network.

**Nelson, L. R.** (2015). [Book Chapter] Introduction. In N. L. First & C. M. Peters (Eds.), *Growing up fast and slow: Young adults reflect on adulthood in contemporary America* (pp. 1-8) Columbia, MO: Mizzou Publishing.

**Nelson, L. R.** (2015). [Book Chapter] Will's story: Army strong. In N. L. First & C. M. Peters (Eds.), *Growing up fast and slow: Young adults reflect on adulthood in contemporary America* (pp. 21-26) Columbia, MO: Mizzou Publishing.

**Nelson, L. R.** (2015). [Book Chapter] Charles's story: Never never land. In N. L. First & C. M. Peters (Eds.), *Growing up fast and slow: Young adults reflect on adulthood in contemporary America* (pp. 87-91) Columbia, MO: Mizzou Publishing.

**Nelson, L. R.** (2015). [Book Chapter] Tom's story: Living the dream. In N. L. First & C. M. Peters (Eds.), *Growing up fast and slow: Young adults reflect on adulthood in contemporary America* (pp. 92-96) Columbia, MO: Mizzou Publishing.

Colaner, C. W., Soliz, J., & **Nelson, L. R.** (2014). Communicatively managing religious identity difference in parent-child relationships: The role of accommodative and non-accommodative communication. *Journal of Family Communication*, 14(4), 310-327. doi: 10.1080/15267431.2014.945700

Colaner, C. W., Poynter, D. L., & **Nelson, L. R.** (2014). [Encyclopedia Entry] Second parent adoption (stepparents). In M. Coleman & L. Ganong (Eds.), *The Social History of the American Family Encyclopedia*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

## Manuscripts Under Review

**Nelson, L. R.** & Colaner, C. W. (revise and resubmit). Fostering “family:” Communication orientations in the foster parent-child relationship.

**Nelson, L. R.**, & Colaner, C. W. (revise and resubmit). Becoming a transracial family: Communicatively negotiating divergent racial and cultural identities in families formed through transracial adoption.

Horstman, H. K., Colaner, C. W., **Nelson, L. R.**, Bish, A., & Hays, A. (under review). Naming practices and contact types in open adoptive families: Strategies and outcomes for communicating with birth parents.

## Research in Progress

**Nelson, L. R.** (preparing for submission). Eliciting a thousand words: A case for photo elicitation in family communication research.

Colaner, C. W., **Nelson, L. R.**, Horstman, H. K., & Hays, A. (preparing for submission). Relational maintenance and role negotiation in the adoptive/birth parent relationship.

Colaner, C. W., Bish, A., Butauski, M., Hays, A., Horstman, H., & **Nelson, L. R.** (preparing for submission). Communication privacy management in open adoption relationships: Negotiating co-ownership across in-person and mediated communication.

Butauski, M., Horstman, H. K., **Nelson, L. R.**, & Colaner, C. W. (data analysis). Rituals in open adoption triads.

**Nelson, L. R.** (data collection). Exploring the healing powers of expressive writing during the transition out of foster care: Aged out foster youths’ health, resiliency, and adjustment.

**Nelson, L. R.** (data collection). “Losing You:” Exploring foster parents’ sense-making during foster children’s transition out of the home.

## Research Appointments

**Research Associate**, Institute of Family Diversity & Communication, (2014–current). Directed by Dr. Colleen Colaner and Dr. Haley Horstman, Department of Communication, University of Missouri. Responsibilities include: producing and evaluating research, contributing recent and relevant blog posts, and disseminating knowledge to the community pertaining to diverse families and communication.

**Research Assistant**, Department of Communication Studies, (2011-2012). Directed by Dr. Jordan Soliz, Department of Communication Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Responsibilities included: reviewing literature, conducting interviews, proofreading manuscripts, and performing qualitative analyses. Sponsored by the University of Nebraska Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experiences (U.C.A.R.E.) program.

## Research Grants & Awards

**Nelson, L. R.** (2017). Gamma Alpha Gamma Dissertation Year Fellowship Nominee.  
\*\$9,000 grant awarded to two doctoral students at the University of Missouri to support their dissertation work. Nominated by the Department of Communication faculty.

**Nelson, L. R.** (2017). Raymond White Dissertation Year Fellowship Nominee.  
\*\$9,000 grant awarded to one doctoral student at the University of Missouri to support their dissertation work. Nominated by the Department of Communication faculty.

**Nelson, L. R.** (2017). University of Missouri Graduate Professional Council Travel Grant.  
“*Becoming a transracial family: Communicatively negotiating divergent racial identities in families formed through transracial adoption,*” **\$600.**

**Nelson, L. R.** (2017). Graduate Student Association Travel Grant. “*Becoming a transracial family: Communicatively negotiating divergent racial identities in families formed through transracial adoption,*” **\$200.**

**Nelson, L. R.** (2017). International Communication Association Travel Grant. “*Becoming a transracial family: Communicatively negotiating divergent racial identities in families formed through transracial adoption,*” **\$200.**

**Nelson, L. R.** (2016). Rebecca Verser & Alumni Graduate Student Support Grant. “*Aged foster youths’ communicative (de)constructions of family identity: An exploration of family ingroups, family outgroups, home, and estrangement,*” **\$600.**

\*Annual research funding given to a limited number of graduate students in the Department of Communication. This award provides financial support for my dissertation work.

**Nelson, L. R.** (2014-2017). Research Travel Grant. Department of Communication, University of Missouri, **\$500/yr.**

Colaner, C. W., Horstman, H. K., **Nelson, L. R.**, & Hays, A. (2012-current). University of Missouri Richard Wallace Alumni Grant. “*Communication in Open Adoption Relationships,*” **\$3,000.**

**Nelson, L. R.** (2011-2012). University of Nebraska Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experiences (U.C.A.R.E.) Grant. “*Family Communication, Identity, and Socialization of Worldviews,*” **\$2,400.**

## Conference Presentations

**Nelson, L. R.** (November, 2017). The evolving nature and process of foster family communication: An application and adaptation of the Family Adoption Communication Model. Paper accepted to the National Communication Association annual meeting in the Family Communication Division, Dallas, TX.

Colaner, C. W., Bish, A., Butauski, M., Hays, A., Horstman, H., & **Nelson, L. R.** Communication privacy management in open adoption relationships: Negotiating co-ownership across in-person and mediated communication. **Top 4 paper to be presented at the National Communication Association annual meeting in the Family Communication Division, Dallas, TX.**

**Nelson, L. R.** & Colaner, C. W. (May, 2017). Becoming a transracial family: Communicatively negotiating divergent racial identities in families formed through transracial adoption. Paper presented at the International Communication Association annual meeting in the Interpersonal Communication Division, San Diego, CA.

**Nelson, L. R.** & Colaner, C. W. (November, 2016). Fostering “family:” How communication sustains and functions in foster families. Paper presented at the National Communication Association annual meeting in the Family Communication Division, Philadelphia, PA.

Colaner, C. W., **Nelson, L. R.**, Horstman, H. K., & Hays, A. (November, 2016). An intergroup perspective on relational maintenance and role negotiation in the adoptive/birth parent relationship. Paper presented at the National Communication Association annual meeting in the Group Communication Division, Philadelphia, PA.

Horstman, H. K., Colaner, C. W., **Nelson, L. R.**, Bish, A. L., & Hays, A. (November, 2016). Naming practices and contact types in open adoptive families: Strategies and outcomes for communicating with birth parents. Paper presented at the National Communication Association annual meeting in the Family Communication Division, Philadelphia, PA.

**Nelson, L. R.** & Horstman, H. K. (June, 2016). Communicated meaning-making in foster families: Relationships between foster parents’ entrance narratives and foster child well-being. Paper presented at the International Communication Association annual meeting in the Interpersonal Communication Division, Fukuoka, Japan.

**Nelson, L. R.** & Horstman, H. K. (November, 2015). Making meaning in a complex family structure: A content analysis of entrance narratives in foster families. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association in the Family Communication Division, Las Vegas, NV.

Hays, A., Horstman, H. K., Colaner, C. W., & **Nelson, L. R.** (May, 2015). Exploring the nature and outcomes of adoption entrance narratives told in open adoptive families. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association in the Interpersonal Communication Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Horstman, H. K., Maliski, R., Hays, A., Cox, J., Enderle, A. & **Nelson, L. R.** (November, 2014). The cognitive and communicative components of narrative sense-making and well-being in mother-daughter conversations of difficulty. **Top 4 paper presented at annual meeting of the National Communication Association in the Interpersonal Communication Division, Chicago, IL.**

Gamble, H. & **Nelson, L. R.** (May, 2014) Sex in college relationships: The role television plays in emerging adults' sexual expectations in relationships. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association in the Children, Adolescents, and the Media Division, Seattle, WA.

**Nelson, L. R.** (April, 2014). "Shaping" foster family communication: An application of the Family Adoption Communication Model. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Central States Communication Association in the Interpersonal and Small Group Communication Division, Minneapolis, MN.

**Nelson, L. R.** (October, 2013). Blending cultures: How adoptive families negotiate divergent ethnic identities to create a unique family ethnicity. Poster presented at the meeting of the International Association of Relationship Research, Louisville, KY.

Colaner, C. W., & **Nelson, L. R.** (April, 2011). Communicatively managing religious identity difference in parent-child relationships: The role of accommodative and non-accommodative communication. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Central States Communication Association in the Interpersonal and Small Group Communication Division, Cleveland, OH.

## TEACHING

### Courses Taught

University of Missouri (2012-present)

- **COMM4520: Family Communication**
  - Fall 2017
  - Instructor; Class Size: 25
  - This upper-level course investigates how family communication functions to develop, maintain, enrich, or limit family relationships. This course expands students' understanding of family diversity by examining family interaction through diverse theoretical lenses and critiquing societal assumptions of family.
  
- **COMM3561: Relational Communication**
  - Spring 2017
  - Instructor; Class Size: 25
  - This upper-level course is designed to develop students' ability to critically analyze and apply issues of interpersonal communication to their personal and professional relationships. The course examines the influence of interpersonal communication

through course readings, lectures, class activities, class discussions, personal reflections, and service-learning opportunities.

- **COMM4701: Children's Communication**
  - Fall 2015
  - Co-Instructor; Class size: 25
  - This upper-level course examines the communicative abilities, practices, and behaviors of children ranging from preschool to school age years. The goal of this course is to increase students' communication thinking abilities via creative, interpretive, analytic, and critical thinking skills they apply to the study of children's communication.
  
- **INTDSC1001: Contemporary Families and Social Issues**
  - Fall 2014; Fall 2015
  - Co-Faculty; Class size: 20.
  - This course is designed to give students a baseline understanding of the diversity of and social issues facing contemporary families. Students provide weekly journal reflections, engage in class discussions and activities, and prepare and deliver a final group presentation on a family type and social issue of their choosing.
  
- **COMM1200(H): (Honor's) Public Speaking**
  - Fall 2012; Spring 2013; Summer 2013; Fall 2013; Spring 2014; Fall 2014; Spring 2015; Fall 2015; Spring 2016; Fall 2016; Spring 2017
  - Instructor; Class Size: 25 (20 sections over 11 semesters; 1 honor's section)
  - This is the basic course for all University of Missouri undergraduates. This course examines the vital role of public speaking in diverse contexts. Students develop and present three speeches, complete self-critiques, and offer peer-critiques.

## Pedagogical Training & Development

**Minor in College Teaching** (2014-2016). Office of Graduate Studies, University of Missouri.

*\*The minor in College Teaching, available to all MU graduate degree-seeking students, helps prepare students to be effective educators.*

**The Professorate** (Spring 2015). Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis, University of Missouri. 3 credit hours.

**College Teaching** (Fall 2014). Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis, University of Missouri. 3 credit hours.

**Teaching Practicum** (Spring, 2015). Children's Communication. Department of Communication, University of Missouri. Director: Dr. Colleen Colaner. 3 credit hours.

## Teaching Awards & Honors

**Loren Reid Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award (2017).** Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

*\*This award, voted on by the Department of Communication faculty, is presented to an outstanding graduate student who demonstrates excellence in teaching, inspires learning, practices creative thinking, and shows a generous spirit toward students.*

**Teaching Commendations** (Fall 2012; Spring 2013; Summer 2013; Fall 2013; Spring 2014; Fall 2014; Spring 2015; Fall 2015; Spring 2016; Fall 2016; Spring 2017). Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

*\*Recognized every semester by the Chair of the Department of Communication for exceeding departmental averages in overall teaching effectiveness.*

**Cooper Award Nominee** (2015). Annual meeting of the Central States Communication Association in Madison, WI. Nominated by Department of Communication faculty at the University of Missouri.

*\*This award recognizes one doctoral and one master's level teaching assistant for their teaching excellence.*

**Loren Reid Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award (2014).** Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

*\*This award, voted on by the Department of Communication faculty, is presented to an outstanding graduate student who demonstrates excellence in teaching, inspires learning, practices creative thinking, and shows a generous spirit toward students.*

**Top Graduating Senior** (2012). Department of Communication Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

**University Honors Program** (2008-2012). University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

**Honor Societies:** Phi Beta Kappa; Lambda Pi Eta

## **Mentoring & Leadership**

**Graduate Student Teaching Mentor** (2016-current). Department of Communication, University of Missouri. I currently serve as a teaching mentor for incoming doctoral students. We engage in bi-weekly chats about course materials, pedagogy, and teaching methods. I also conduct classroom observations.

**Graduate Student Peer Mentor** (2015-current). Department of Communication, University of Missouri. I currently serve as a peer mentor to incoming doctoral students. We engage in regular conversations about teaching, research, and service.



**Coder Trainer** (2015-2016). Department of Communication, University of Missouri. Trained graduate students on latent and manifest coding procedures for two separate studies that utilized open-ended qualitative data.

**Lathrop Hall Stakeholder** (2014-current). University of Missouri. Engaged in regular discussions with Residence Hall staff to ensure they are working to promote student learning and success.

**Tutor/Mentor** (2014-2015). Total Person Program, University of Missouri. Tutored and mentored undergraduate student-athletes in Communication courses.

**Teaching Orientation Leader** (Fall 2014). Department of Communication, University of Missouri. Trained, mentored, and advised incoming public speaking instructors.

**Academic Advisor** (Summer 2014). Arts and Sciences Academic Advising, University of Missouri. Served as an academic advisor to incoming undergraduate students who intended to major in Communication as part of Summer Welcome.

## Invited Presentations

**Nelson, L. R.** (October, 2016). *Family Diversity: A Permanent Whitewater*. Guest lecturer for Family Communication course, Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Nelson, L. R.** (October, 2016). *Is Graduate School for You?* Invited presentation for the Lambda Pi Eta Honor's Society, Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Nelson, L. R.** (October, 2015). *Delivering a Successful Group Presentation*. Invited presentation for an undergraduate biology class, Life Sciences Building, University of Missouri.

**Nelson, L. R.** (March, 2015). *How Communication Sustains and Functions in Foster Families*. Invited research presentation for the Institute of Family Communication and Diversity colloquium series, Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Nelson, L. R.** (November, 2014). *Rocking Final Examinations*. Invited presentation for Freshman Interest Group students, Lathrop Hall, University of Missouri.

**Nelson, L. R.** (September, 2014). *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations on College Campuses*. Invited presentation for Social Work undergraduate students, Arts & Sciences Building, University of Missouri.

**Nelson, L. R.** (September, 2014). *Succeeding in College*. Invited presentation for undergraduate freshman students, Lathrop Hall, University of Missouri.

**Nelson, L. R.** (August, 2014). *Teaching Public Speaking*. Invited presentation for incoming PhD students in the Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

## SERVICE

## Discipline

**Paper Reviewer** (2017). Interpersonal Communication Division, National Communication Association.

**Invited Reviewer** (2016-2017). *Journal of Family Communication*.

**Paper Reviewer** (2016). Interpersonal Communication Division, International Communication Association.

**Panel Chair** (November, 2016). Annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Interpersonal Communication Division, Philadelphia, PA.

**Panel Chair** (May, 2015). Annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Interpersonal Communication Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

**Panel Chair** (November, 2014). Annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Family Communication Division, Chicago, IL.

**Paper Reviewer** (2014). Student Division, National Communication Association.

**Panel Chair** (April, 2014). Console-ing Passions Communication Conference, Columbia, MO.

## Department

**Awards Committee** (2017-2018). Association of Communication Graduate Students, Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Communication Week Volunteer** (2017). Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Great Ideas for Teaching (GIFT) Contributor** (2016-2017). Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Awards Committee** (2016-2017). Association of Communication Graduate Students, Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Social Committee** (2016-2017). Association of Communication Graduate Students, Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Fundraising Committee** (2014-2015). Association of Communication Graduate Students, Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Treasurer** (2013-2015). Association of Communication Graduate Students, Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Fundraising Chair** (2013-2014). Association of Communication Graduate Students, Department of Communication, University of Missouri.

**Communication Representative** (2012-2013). Graduate Professional Council, University of Missouri.

### **Professional Memberships**

International Communication Association (ICA)

National Communication Association (NCA)

Central States Communication Association (CSCA)

International Association for Relationships Research (IARR)