Too often intercultural study is confined to a description and awareness of the differences between and or among cultures. Although necessary, this treatment alone is inadequate. Beyond recognizing differences, which is analogous to noticing the tip of the iceberg while the bottom goes unseen, there is the need to understand the reasons for and the nature of the differences. Probing cosmological issues allows one to penetrate deeper, to really begin to understand the nature of culture.

(Pennington, 1985, p. 31)

Introduction

Dorthy L. Pennington, associate professor of African and African-American Studies and Communication Studies at the University of Kansas, is a scholar whose research has helped to illuminate the concept of power in studies of intercultural and interracial communication. Although her early research interests centered on Black rhetoric, she became increasingly interested in the development of intercultural communication theory as a young scholar. Pennington insists that research investigations of power dynamics and perceived privilege are crucial in the development of intercultural/interracial communication theory as well as an appreciation of cultural diversity and improved race relations in the United States. Her interest
in improving the quality of intercultural exchanges between people has made her an important figure in both local and national circles. In 2004, Pennington was awarded a Lawrence, Kansas Sesquicentennial observance public programming grant for a project titled: *African American Churches in Early Lawrence: Citadels of Faith, Hope, and Community*. As project director, Pennington coordinated a panel discussion and ecumenical choir float presentation for the Lawrence Sesquicentennial celebration, designed to promote awareness of the role of African American churches in the history of the Lawrence community.

Pennington has been recognized locally and nationally as an outstanding mentor, teacher, scholar, and community leader. During her illustrious career, she has received numerous awards, honors, and nominations: a teaching award by the Teachers on Teaching series of the National Communication Association, recognition in several biographical listings of distinguished intellectuals, and an award for being a Distinguished Alumnus of a Historically Black Institution (Rust College), given by the National Association of Equal Opportunity in Higher Education. Moreover, on April 20, 2004, Pennington was inducted into the prestigious Kansas University Women's Hall of Fame. She was selected by The Commission on the Status of Women at the University of Kansas for her unique contributions to women of the University of Kansas and Lawrence communities.

Pennington's contributions to the field of communication have also been outstanding. She is a cofounder of the National Communication Association's (NCA) Black Caucus, for which she served as chair from 1974 until 1976, and played a key role in establishing the NCA African American Communication and Culture Division in 2000. She has served on many editorial and advisory boards and on national association governance committees. Pennington is an active participant in the NCA Feminist and Women's Studies Division, which honored her with a spotlight convention program on her life and work in 1995. She is widely recognized as a communication theorist, educator, and mentor.

Pennington's book chapters appear in groundbreaking works concerning intercultural/interracial communication. In particular, her contributions to the development of interracial communication theory are included in Asante, Newmark, and Blake's *Handbook of Intercultural Communication* (Pennington, 1979); Asante and Vandi's *Contemporary Black Thought: Alternative Analyses in Social and Behavioral Science* (Pennington, 1980); and Samovar and Porter's *Intercultural Communication: A Reader* (Pennington, 1985). Pennington also appears in other volumes concerning the nature and processes of communicating across cultural spaces.

Pennington is a highly noted writer, mentor, and community advocate. Although each of these roles could easily be discussed in distinct chapters, the remaining sections of this chapter will highlight her early life, academic experiences, and contributions to communication research.

**Biographical Information**

Dorthy Pennington was born on May 24, 1946, in rural Mississippi. She was born into an extended family of aunts and uncles, including her mother's eight siblings. This sibling support network was unusually tight-knit because Pennington's maternal grandparents died early in their own children's lives. Pennington spent much of her early life on her family's farm with her aunts and uncles, who were cotton and soybean farmers. One of her aunts cared for her during the day while both her parents worked. Her mother worked as a schoolteacher and later became a principal in the Mississippi public school system. Pennington was the only child of her parents for many years, and because neighboring farms were miles apart, she
could see her friends only on weekends. Thus, she spent all of her formative years on the family farm, in which she learned some “very important values” (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004) such as self-determination, self-sufficiency, hard work, community collaboration, and the importance of family cohesion. Year after year, Pennington observed her uncles and other neighboring farmers help each other harvest their crops and noted that “this allowed everyone the opportunity to share in each other’s success.” These family values taught her to be kind and generous to all people. Those who know her well consider her a wonderfully compassionate and giving individual.

Pennington spent many childhood afternoons reading books, and her memories of the solitude of reading under a tree on sunny afternoons remain clear to this day. Despite her personable nature, Pennington remembers being very shy as a young child. While some kids were out playing and horsing around, she expended many hours fueling her love of learning and “curiosity about how things worked.” Even during these early years, she was gaining an early appreciation for systematic investigation. Her passion for knowledge, thirst for understanding, and curiosity about how things functioned served her well in both her scholarly and community endeavors (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004).

Pennington was quite fond of music as a child. She learned piano as an adolescent, and eventually became proficient enough to play the piano and/or sing for small church programs and school functions. She has always enjoyed singing, particularly gospel music, and has worked to develop her talents as both a singer and musician. Her love of music has remained a stable part of her life. She continues to perform as a musician and is currently a church organist for special occasions. Her personal affinity for music and its innocent emotional effect on all human beings, despite one’s race, perhaps drove her closer to that mode of entertainment.

Racial tensions between Black and White people of the segregated south were very influential on Pennington. She was vividly aware of the oppressive Jim Crow laws that restricted the lives of many African Americans and ultimately left them with no devices to defend themselves against discrimination. She also became aware of the community resistance efforts of the late 1950s throughout the south, which marked the beginning of the civil rights movement. The various marches, protest speeches, and groundbreaking litigation (i.e., Brown v. Topeka Board of Education) awakened the nation to the power of organized resistance and gave people hope for the prospect of change. As a product of this magnificent moment in American history, Pennington has asked (and answered) some very important questions about how we might continue to strive for improved human relations for all people.

**Academic Background and Experience**

Dorthy Pennington began elementary school as one of the youngest students in her class. She excelled in her studies from the very beginning and recalled completing coursework in a single year that took some of her classroom colleagues twice as long to finish. Pennington described the first school she ever attended as “a three room building where the teacher taught the curricula for three or four different grade levels in the same room.” She describes herself during these years as one who was always in search of new understandings and discoveries (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004).

Pennington’s early education emphasized the value of oral delivery skills. She recalled how effective her teachers were at encouraging her to speak out and to share her views with
others. She felt significantly supported by teachers during these early years. Her abilities as a leader, scholar, and musician were all cultivated in a small rural school, in which she could express her ideas and explore her potential. From these early beginnings, Pennington developed a profound sense of self worth and value in achievement. In this way, her early educational experiences served to build her confidence and encourage her to reach her full potential into adulthood.

Pennington was an athlete in middle school. She played basketball and softball and ran track throughout her junior high school years. She believes that her participation in athletics and leadership opportunities helped her to develop a more outgoing personality. Although she left athletics later in high school, she remembers vividly how much her involvement as a student athlete helped her grow socially. Nonetheless, Pennington maintained her focus on academics in high school. She was an honors student, member of the school choir, and was elected to a variety of leadership roles.

Her early educational and religious experiences also shaped her desire to attend Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi—a private Methodist institution established in 1866 by the Freedman's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Rust College is the oldest of the 11 historically Black colleges and universities related to the United Methodist Church, the oldest historically Black college in the state of Mississippi, and one of the remaining five historically Black colleges in the United States founded before 1867 (Rust College, 2005). Pennington decided to attend Rust because many of her teachers were alumni of Rust and encouraged her to go there.

At Rust College, Pennington found a place where her religious and educational priorities were valued and nurtured. Although she initially believed that she would major in music, she won a first-place honor at a statewide high school oratory contest and was subsequently offered a scholarship. Thus, her undergraduate major was English, with a minor degree emphasis in French. The opportunity to earn a cost-free college education was far too valuable for Pennington to decline. This decision proved to serve her well, as she appeared on the dean's academic honor list for most of her undergraduate career.

While at Rust College, Pennington continued to perform as a musician and accept leadership opportunities. Her exuberance for learning was fed by the supportive environment there and resulted in her early graduation—after only three and a half years. During her senior year, Pennington served as a tutor for her peers in English and French. She viewed her work with fellow students as an opportunity to return Rust's generosity. Rather than leaving her cherished educational community, Pennington decided to remain in residence at Rust during what would have been the final semester of her senior year to prepare for the Graduate Record Exam. Pennington had high hopes of continuing her education. While her peers were preparing to become teachers in the Mississippi school system, Pennington applied to graduate programs and taught English and French courses for Rust College as an instructor.

After applying for entrance into several graduate programs, Pennington chose to attend the University of Kansas. She recalls coming to this decision in part because “they wrote the most cordial and warm letters, welcoming me to most certainly become a part of the University of Kansas.” With her hopes to further her education confirmed, Pennington relocated to Kansas with the intention of leaving the field of English behind and studying in a field focused more on fundamentals of oral communication. She was immediately attracted to the speech communication and human relations program at the University of Kansas (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004).
In hindsight, Pennington believes that her decision to attend the University of Kansas was valuable for several reasons. She found herself in an academic environment in which she was free to explore issues that interested her. She specifically recalled the rare opportunity to take a course called “The Rhetoric of Black Americans.” In the course, Pennington was able to study the strategies of Black speakers, an important focal shift for Pennington because her previous coursework gave her little exposure to Black public address. She recalled being so intrigued by the course and how it “spoke” to her everyday realities that she was motivated to remain in the program and pursue a doctorate in speech communication and human relations, with an emphasis in rhetoric, at the University of Kansas (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004).

After becoming more familiar with the field of classical rhetoric in the doctoral program, Pennington's ideas about communication took her scholarship in a different direction. The social milieu during her time as a graduate student in the late 1960s and early 1970s was both exciting and tumultuous. With the intensity of the civil rights movement came a surging academic interest in the study of culture and race relations. Pennington became interested in a newly emerging field of study: intercultural communication. She enrolled in every course that was available in that area of inquiry on her campus. She utilized her training in classical rhetoric to explore the then-unorthodox fields of Black rhetoric and intercultural communication. Pennington noted the connection she made between her academic study of these fields and her lived experiences: “When I began to study intercultural communication theory I began to see, that in my mind at least, there needed to be a marriage between what I lived and saw and how I could understand theory to help me explain what I'd seen, so I merged intercultural theory in a classic sense with interracial realities.” Her desire to use newly emerging intercultural communication theories to describe her life experiences as a woman of color growing up in the segregated south led to new approaches to the study of the relationship between African American cosmologies and communication patterns between Black and White Americans. She became part of a group of innovators in communication who emphasized the importance of recognizing African American cosmological and epistemological perspectives in contemporary communication scholarship (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004).

Pennington found a great deal of support for her interests at Kansas. She recalled feeling very welcomed and included by both faculty and fellow graduate students. With her strong sense of independence and inclusion into the informal networks of her academic department (which she suggested were very important to her success there), she was able to overcome some of the obstacles of being one of the first African American graduate students to study communication on the campus and receive a graduate degree.

The newly emerging field of interracial communication would have a profound effect on Pennington's future scholarship. Studies in the field helped to provide a theoretical basis for her to understand many of her own life experiences. As a student and developing scholar in the field, she felt very fortunate to have had the opportunity to share her work with other scholars who were equally as interested in exploring issues of race and human relations in the United States.

Despite the many advantages of the supportive environment at Kansas, she distinctly remembered navigating through the experience of usually being the only graduate student of color in her classes. She reported that the biggest transitional turning point for her was “going from a strongly, staunchly segregated society to a strongly Caucasian society” (Pennington, 2003). Over time, she saw more and more diversity at the University of Kansas, primarily
because of newly initiated efforts to diversify predominantly White institutions of higher learning in the United States. However, she still recalled the feeling of being different from others in her cohort on the campus and within the classroom (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004).

In 1974, Pennington completed her doctoral dissertation, titled *Temporality among Black Americans: Implications for Intercultural Communication* (Pennington, 1974). She was offered a faculty position at the University of Kansas that same year and became the first African American faculty member of the communication studies department. Pennington continues to teach there, with a split appointment in both communication studies and African American studies. The past 30 years of her academic career have brought Dorthy Pennington significant opportunities to tie the everyday realities she observed as a young girl in Mississippi to the training she received at the University of Kansas. These opportunities have allowed her to make significant scholarly contributions to the field of communication.

**Contributions to Communication Research**

Dorthy Pennington's scholarship has contributed to the growing body of knowledge in three areas. Focus on theory development in these areas has motivated her to challenge the ways in which key concepts in the field of communication are articulated by other scholars. She identifies both her scholarly and teaching interests as Black rhetoric, Black women's studies, and intercultural/interracial communication. Pennington's efforts to expand the scope of inquiry in these areas have resulted in several collaborative works with other notable communication scholars such as Larry Samovar and Richard Porter (Pennington, 1985), Arthur Smith (aka Molefi Asante; Pennington 1979; 1980; 1989), and William Gudykunst (Pennington, 1989).

**Black Rhetoric**

Although Pennington's doctoral degree emphasis was in classical rhetoric, little of her disciplinary training provided a unique space to write about the strategies of contemporary Black speakers. In her chapter entitled: "Guilt Provocation: A Strategy in Black Rhetoric," which appears in *Contemporary Black Thought: Alternative Analyses in Social and Behavioral Science*, Pennington argued that "representative black speakers, while using the same concept [guilt], employ a basis of application structurally different from traditional notions provided by theorists on guilt" (Pennington, 1980, p. 112). Her objective was to argue for the incongruity of traditional conceptualizations of guilt with the rhetorical practices of notable African American orators. Although the writings of Jaspers (1947) and others advanced theoretical discussions of guilt provocation by identifying different types, these conceptualizations also argued that guilt could only be provoked internally. Pennington asserted the argument that the act of being "guilty" is an individual act that cannot be applied to appeals toward groups or collectives. Pennington found this paradigm for understanding guilt provocation as a rhetorical strategy to be limited and inefficient to describe the ways in which speakers such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Frederick Douglass, and Malcolm X used guilt provocation to indict White America for its transgressions against Blacks. Pennington concluded her analysis of critical discourse by arguing:

> The point of significance is that black speakers are making a judgment about America based upon some criteria. And in the cases where the term "guilty" is used by black speakers, their meaning is clear. This tendency violates the postulates of
Jaspers and suggests that from the point of view of some black speakers, at least, judgments of guilt can be externally imposed upon others. (Pennington, 1980, p. 123)

In this way, Pennington challenged the validity of traditional conceptualizations of guilt provocation in explaining how Black speakers use guilt to “awaken the consciousness” of White America about the burdens of racism and discrimination in their lives (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004). She identified the uniqueness of Blacks’ experiences in the United States (as expressed by Black speakers) as an argumentative base for how social groups can be externally charged with moral and metaphysical guilt. This work implied that the concept of guilt is more expansive and has larger applications and implications for rhetorical studies than previously postulated. Pennington also noted that the act of guilt provocation on the part of Black speakers is best understood contextually because it is linked to the sociopolitical relationships of the time. These ideas paved the way for the development of new theories.

**Black Women's Studies**

Pennington’s interest in theory development and her perceived need for communication scholarship to reflect the experiences of non-White and female communicators led her to write about Black Women's experiences. In the book *Seeing Female: Social Roles and Personal Lives* (Pennington, 1988), edited by Sharon Brehm, Pennington argued that African American women have successfully reconciled the contradictions between traditional conceptions of Caucasian American women as docile, fragile, and sexually innocent in concert with the negative images of them constructed by Caucasian Americans as a result of chattel slavery. She posited that such reconciliation was achieved mainly by Black women's pure resilience to stereotypical messages and images of them as “breeders, concubines, mammies, [and] mules” (Pennington, 1988, p. 33). Pennington also suggested that traditional African worldviews (which place women at the center of most religious, family, political and social affairs) “served as the motivation and principles guiding Afro-American women toward specific strategies of achievement, in spite of their ascribed status of being Afro-American, female, and often, poor” (Pennington, 1980, p. 34).

In the chapter titled “Afro-American Women: Achievement Through the Reconciliation of Messages and Images” (Pennington, 1980), Pennington identified the important link between articulating religious values in African American communities and teaching Black women compassion and tolerance (in spite of their ascribed social status). She argued that this ongoing struggle has inspired them to fight for the improvement of the lives of African Americans:

> Just as religion served as a basis of hope for Afro-Americans, it also served as a basis for the motivation needed to actively resist oppression. The religious values of Afro-American women caused them to employ strategies that combined compassion with forcefulness in order to reconcile conflicting messages and images, and to advance their cause. (Pennington, 1980, p. 35)

In this way, Black women were encouraged through religion to see themselves as “warriors” waged in a battle to uplift themselves and their communities, regardless of the ascribed inferiority imposed upon them. Thus, according to Pennington, religion serves as a reconciling agent that offers Black women a sense of purpose and positive self-worth (Pennington, 1980).
Pennington described the strategy of becoming trained and educated as important in the lives of Black women. She contended that their sense of purpose and strength, as articulated through religious values, motivated them to become leaders in their communities by becoming knowledgeable about social and political activities, seeking professional proficiency, and organizing themselves to assist other disadvantaged African American women. Hence, the Black Women's Club movement emerged. Pennington posited:

“Love thy neighbor as thyself” was a motivating theme that Cynthia Hope [an African American leader in Atlanta in 1908] and other educated Afro-American women adopted to show their concern for the masses deprived of educational and training opportunities. This legacy inspired much of the effort of Afro-American women in the Club movement. Their motto was “Lifting as We Climb.” The most prominent organization of the Club Movement was the National Association of Colored Women, formed in 1896. (pp. 37)

This agent of reconciliation was undoubtedly the most profound in forging a positive identity for African American women and giving them a voice in society.

The need to balance social, family, and work responsibilities was also a point of reconciliation for Black women. Pennington explained the complex roles of African American women who managed large families (sometimes single-handedly), participated in community activities, and worked as heavy laborers alongside African American men on farms. To resolve the contradictory view of Caucasian American women, who had very few social and work responsibilities, with the view of themselves as “beasts of burden,” African American women “combined this image with their view of themselves as industrious and reconciled the two” (Pennington, 1980, p. 39). She eloquently concluded the chapter with the following statement:

They [African American women] have walked between the highly negative images held of Black women and the highly passive images held of White women to find a vision of women, strong and tender. Under the most difficult of circumstances, Afro-American women have struck a balance for all women. (Pennington, 1980, p. 40)

Pennington's in-depth analysis of Black women's experiences and social adaptation strategies brings to light the need to contextualize Black women's rhetoric as centered in their connection to spirituality, family, and unwavering strength.

Pennington's work in this area includes the book *African American Women Quitting the Workplace* (Pennington, 1999), which provides an analysis of interviews she conducted over two years with African American women who decided to end their careers and leave their places of employment. Pennington identified the significance and consequences of this decision in the lives of the women as she made theoretical links to the idea that the conception of African American women as laborers is alive and well in the American workplace. According to Pennington, many Black women are deciding to “free” themselves from the power of this conception by leaving the workplace and moving elsewhere to find a more conducive atmosphere for growth, to gain respect, and to assert their own agency to define who they are (Pennington, 1999).

**Intercultural/Interracial Communication**

One of Pennington's’ first published works was a coauthored project with Jon A. Blubaugh.
The book, *Crossing Difference: Interracial Communication* (Blubaugh & Pennington, 1976), had a tremendous impact on the way race, a social construct, was discussed in communication literature during the late 1970s. Additionally, in her chapter “Intercultural Communication” in the Samovar and Porter book, *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*, Pennington postulated:

Real intercultural communication is not so much the idea of cultural entities coming together and merely alternating in their influence upon one another; it is, rather, the transactions that occur at the point of intersect. Each culture is in some way different as a result of the interaction. (Pennington, 1985, p. 31)

Pennington described her approach to rhetorical and intercultural communication as “phenomenological” (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004). She contended that all communication practice is informed by cosmological, axiological, and epistemological factors that shape how communicators view the world. Thus, the notion of “difference,” as it relates to the practice of communication with others is rooted in differences along these dimensions. This approach to understanding intercultural exchanges was distinct from other scholarly discussions of race, culture, and communication of the time in significant ways. Pennington took issue with earlier discussions because, in her view, they ignored the multiplicity of ways in which cultural standpoints are informed, understood, and negotiated in interpersonal contexts:

Too often intercultural study is confined to a description and awareness of the differences between or among cultures. Although necessary, this treatment alone is inadequate. Beyond recognizing differences, which is analogous to noticing the tip of the iceberg while the bottom goes unseen, there is the need to understand the reasons for and the nature of the differences. Probing cosmological issues allows one to penetrate deeper, to really begin to understand the nature of culture. (Pennington, 1985, p. 31)

In the chapter (Pennington, 1985), Pennington identified several “significant cultural components” that she used to develop a model of culture. At the center of this model lies the “essence of cosmology and worldview,” which she argued informs all existential behavior. Pennington argued that existential worldview, ontology, and cosmology “permeate” all other ways of informing and being informed by the social world. According to Pennington, this component influences the language, schemas, beliefs/attitudes/values, temporality, proxemics, expressive forms, social relationships, and interpolation patterns of all people. Thus, differences in these components are the rudimentary differences that require acknowledgment and extensive study in intercultural transactions. In this way, Pennington called for the extension of traditional intercultural theories to communication contexts that are marked by fundamental differences in cosmological approaches to life, rather than differences in nationality alone. Her work encourages a “prescriptive” approach to intercultural communication, based on the assumption that the *quality* of intercultural transactions between people could be improved with acknowledgment and acceptance of cultural differences.

In addition to her interest in intercultural communication, Pennington saw the potential applications of her model of culture to interracial communication contexts marked by a shared social history and heavily influenced by racism and volatile sociopolitical relationships. However, she made clear in much of her writing that the two forms of communication are not synonymous. Pennington distinguished intercultural and interracial forms of human
communication in her article, “Mainstreaming Interracial Communication,” in Speech Communication Teacher with the following statement:

Some of the research on interracial communication in recent years has been subsumed under the general rubric of intercultural communication. In so doing, scholars have highlighted issues as identity, assimilation, diversity, and multiculturalism. Yet, none of these concepts seems to have had a serious impact on what is a growing reality in US America: the racial bigotry that leads to ethnoviolence and intimidation. (Pennington, 1997, p. 13)

Pennington’s work and that of others (for example, Orbe & Harris, 2001), argued that the most significant difference between intercultural and interracial communication is “the difference of power” (Blubaugh & Pennington, 1976; Pennington, 2003). Pennington contended that her biggest objection to using intercultural theory to explain interracial communication realities is that intercultural theory “presumes that we enter such communication contexts as equals, that there is a reciprocal and egalitarian relationship between participants,” which does not characterize many interracial communication contexts in the United States (Pennington, 2003). Another important distinction is a greater sensitivity to the historic legacy of race relations in America than to that of intercultural relations. This sensitivity, Pennington suggested, is because of a heightened awareness of the importance of race in shaping most aspects of American life. For Pennington, interracial communication is a “microset” of the intercultural communication experience (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004).

Of the numerous books and journals containing her work, several of Pennington’s key contributions have received attention within the field of communication, including her essay, “Intercultural Communication,” in the fourth edition of Intercultural Communication: A Reader (Pennington, 1985). After its first printing, the essay was adapted as part of an instructional manual for the U.S. Department of Defense Race Relations Institute.

Until recently, scholarship on interracial communication was limited to the few books published almost 30 years ago. Pennington’s work shifted toward larger pedagogical concerns in the 1990s. Not only is her scholarship instrumental to understanding the process of interracial communication but it is also significant in its encouragement of a multicultural curriculum in all learning institutions. In fact, Pennington believes that the invisibility of interracial communication scholarship hurts teachers of interracial communication and students of communication and culture who are forced to rely on dated materials to discuss contemporary social struggles. She recommends that all students of communication receive some formal training in intercultural and/or interracial communication. Pennington described the ability to communicate in diverse environments as a “life skill” similar to learning reading and writing skills (D. L. Pennington, personal communication, July 12, 2004).

Because Pennington views culture as central to communication, she advanced the notion of its centrality to her research interest in public address. Her article, “A Culture Based Approach to Teaching African American Public Address” (Pennington, 1998), emphasized the necessity of studying the “I Have a Dream” speech by Martin Luther King, Jr., within the context of the assumptions of an oral culture to understand the speech’s influence during the time of its delivery. The article showed how King appealed to particular assumptions held by members of his audience and how they, in turn, connected with him through spontaneous interplay and rhythm.
Dorthy Pennington has contributed to communication research through her conceptual and analytic research concerning Black women and interracial/intercultural communication. She has been a forerunner in the study of interracial communication, which is perhaps her most significant and heuristic contribution to the field.

Conclusion

Over her career, Dorthy Pennington has served the academy, her discipline, and her community in significant ways. She has been honored on several occasions for her efforts to offer insights into the process of intercultural/interracial communication as well as to provide prescriptions for effectiveness in interracial relationships. Pennington has also received numerous national and international awards for her pedagogical contributions. By challenging the applicability of several contemporary communication theories to African American and interracial communication contexts, Pennington's work has not only helped to advance communication theory but has also encouraged scholars to seek explanations for communication phenomena that are consistent with their everyday realities. Dorthy Pennington continues to be a significant contributor to the advancement of the communication discipline.

References

Further Reading
Press.

Dorthy L. Pennington

Photo Courtesy of the University of Kansas Departments of Communication Studies and African and African-American Studies

Born in rural Mississippi on May 24.

Graduated from Rust College with a bachelor's degree in English.
Graduated from the University of Kansas with a master's degree in speech communication and human relations.

Earned a doctorate from the University of Kansas in speech communication and human relations. Her dissertation topic, “Temporality Among Black Americans: Implications for Intercultural Communication” was probably the first in-depth scholarly study completed on Black chronemics.

Appointed assistant professor at the University of Kansas in African and African-American Studies and Communication Studies (still on the faculty as a tenured associate professor).


Published *Crossing Difference: Interracial Communication* with Jon A. Blubaugh.

Became educational Consultant to the Department of Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute.

Nominated for the Outstanding Young Teacher award of the Central States Speech Association.


Listed in the *World's Who's Who of Women*.

Listed in *The International Who's Who of Intellectuals*.


Published “Intercultural Communication” essay in *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*.

Served as visiting faculty member, Texas Tech University.

Nominated for the University of Kansas Women's Hall of Fame.
Honored as teacher, mentor, and intercultural scholar by the Speech Communication Association's Feminist and Women's Studies Division.

Received award from the Teachers on Teaching Series of the National Communication Association. A convention program was held in her honor.

Published *African American Women Quitting the Workplace*.

Invited to present at the Loccum Academy, Loccum, Germany. Received Highest Service award from the Consortium of Women Doctors.

Received a teaching excellence award from the University of Kansas Center for Teaching Excellence.

Contracted with Sage to publish *Interracial Communication: Cases and Critical Incidents*.

- interracial communication
- intercultural communication
- women in black
- Kansas
- African Americans
- intercultural communication theories
- guilt

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