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SPEAKER AND GAVEL

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DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA

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speaker and gavel

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SPEAKER AND GAVEL

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SPEAKER AND GAVEL

**Published by Delta Sigma Rho—Tau Kappa Alpha
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The editorial policy of *Speaker and Gavel* is to publish refereed articles dealing with the theory, practice, or criticism of public argument. Preference is given to topics drawn from the contemporary period, i.e., since 1960. *Speaker and Gavel* will also publish articles about major society projects, including articles on academic forensics. Articles featuring society projects may be commissioned.

Authors should submit three double-spaced, typed copies of a manuscript, documented with endnotes beginning on a separate page at the conclusion of the text. Manuscripts should conform to the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook* and should use nonsexist language. Include a cover letter identifying author(s) and affiliation, but remove all such references in the manuscript in order to facilitate blind reviewing. Manuscripts should normally be in the 1,500–3,500 word range.

Manuscripts and correspondence should be directed to the editor at the above address.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

My term as editor of *Speaker and Gavel* ends with this volume. I gratefully acknowledge the fine work submitted by members of the forensics community. My special thanks go to a fine editorial board: William Benoit, Bernard Brock, Thomas Hollihan, Ronald Lee, and Robert Weiss.

The new editor of *Speaker and Gavel* is Professor Bernard L. Brock, Professor of Speech Communication at Wayne State University. Professor Brock has issued the following call for papers:

Manuscripts to be considered for publication in *Speaker and Gavel*, the official journal of Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha, should be sent to Bernard Brock, Editor, *Speaker and Gavel*, Department of Speech Communication, 542 Manoogian Hall, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202.

Articles on any aspect of forensics are invited. We are also interested in receiving articles dealing with the following subjects: (1) Contemporary rhetorical criticism, (2) Decision making and argument, and (3) Political communication. We welcome submissions from undergraduate students, graduate students, DSR-TKA alumni, as well as from faculty.

Authors should submit three copies of their manuscript. They should be prepared according to the latest *MLA Handbook*. Include a cover letter identifying author(s) and affiliation. Remove all references in the manuscript to the author and affiliation in order to facilitate blind reviewing.

COMPUTER-ASSISTED DEBATE: EXTENSION OR AMPUTATION?

Richard L. Stovall

Professor Jack Kay writes in his "Editor's Foreword" to the Winter 1986 issue of *Speaker and Gavel* that

... the most valuable function served ... is the beginning of a dialogue on the advantages and disadvantages of computers in forensics. ... After reading the essays ... you may conclude as I have that far more problems are raised than are solved.¹

My agreement with Professor Kay leads me to advance our computer considerations beyond computer-assisted instruction, text preparation, program management, research, and evidence filing.² Almost universally Professors Wade, Morello, Porter, Sheve-Sims, and Decker reported positive computer applications for these areas.³ To move forward, let us consider the implications computers would have in the areas of recruitment, instruction, and tournament debating. Because I am considering future application, my analysis is, for the most part, hypothetical. However, this analysis is grounded in over twenty years of forensics experience.

We may assume that the frequent and widespread use of computers in debate will necessitate changing recruitment standards. Once I have identified a talented student, my next consideration must be whether he or she possesses a compatible computer system. If I discover a compatible system, I am pleased. If not, I must determine the degree to which the student has access to departmental or university terminals so that I can assure him or her proper preparation, computer-assisted instruction, and availability of evidence files. I dislike limiting squad size or passing up a talented student, but I cannot afford to recruit more debaters than terminal access allows. Otherwise I would have to devote a portion of my time to fund-raising to insure that new students would receive foundation monies for compatible technology.

Dormitory considerations for our prospective debaters will be critical, because only one of our dormitories is equipped with computers, printers, and the ability to link with the university mainframe. Consequently, I will need to approach the director of admissions and the director of financial

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¹ Jack Kay, "Editor's Foreword," *Speaker and Gavel* 23 (Winter 1986): 51.

² Theodore F. Sheckels, Jr., "Applications of Computer Technology in Intercollegiate Debate," *Speaker and Gavel* 23 (Winter 1986): 52-61.

³ Each of the professors cited responded to the Sheckels article. Those responses constitute the remainder of the Winter 1986 edition, 62-77.

aids to obtain a guarantee that university-funded scholarships do indeed cover the more expensive dormitory and computer amenities.⁴

Ultimately, I might be relegated to a consideration of choosing a less talented student for squad participation. If the less talented debater has a compatible computer, an extensive software collection, evidence files I have not copied, and modem capability, I would be strongly tempted to recruit this person. Here I would save time and money while gaining evidence. Of course, this choice instantly puts computer capability above oral skill and critical thinking. The impact of this priority alteration undermines the pedagogical rationale for locating forensics in a department of speech communication.

A partial solution might be for the American Forensic Association, the National Forensic League, and other forensic organizations to specify a national standard for computer usage. In turn, these organizations might gain advertising support for journals and funding for sponsored research.

Moving from recruitment to initial student instruction, we must consider what computer-assisted instruction materials are available. Locally, Software City is not aware of any national software companies producing instructional programs for argumentation and debate.⁵ Consequently, I will design my computer-assisted instruction (CAI) package to reflect my theoretical prejudices. One problem is the void in generally read and accepted sources of argumentation and debate theory.⁶ During the last ten years, almost as much tournament debating time has been devoted to theory, rules of debate and judging paradigms as has been devoted to issues surrounding the propositions.⁷ If my debaters know only my CAI approach and your debaters know only your CAI approach and the two approaches are different, you can imagine the result. Until this void is filled, I suspect that much of the theoretical argumentation will appear as two ships passing in the night.⁸

⁴ The situation described here is less than hypothetical. I have instructed our director of forensics to make such inquiries, because the dormitory described is under construction.

⁵ My use of *Software City* is, to my knowledge, fictitious.

⁶ This problem is predicated on a situation where departmental offerings in argumentation and debate are directed toward communication in public relations, organizational communication, and general education requirements in critical thinking. The adaptation of argumentation and debate to more "real world" settings negates its value to the intercollegiate debater. Hence, I assume that textual material is not a part of computer-assisted instruction.

⁷ I have mixed reactions to this practice. Certainly some of the theory-oriented argumentation is necessary, but I dislike judging rounds filled with "blurb" quotations from a colleague who is judging two rooms away. Even football referees call a time-out to discuss the rules of the game. Such paradigmatic considerations are becoming important to CEDA debate as well. See, for example, Paul C. Gaske, Drew B. Kugler, and John M. Theobald, "Judging Attitudes and Paradigmatic Preferences in CEDA Debate: A Cumulative and Construct Validity Investigation," *CEDA Yearbook*, 1985, ed. Don Brownlee (Cross Examination Debate Association) 57.

⁸ While preparing this manuscript, I received the pamphlet "Announcing the Academic Courseware Exchange" from Kinko's Academic Courseware Exchange, 4141 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA. This and similar services could likely help fill the CAI void as long as coaches do not consider such software their "secret weapon" for winning.

During the last four years, I have thought considerably about filling the CAI void. It was during this time that Professor Jon Jackson and I began using *Apple Pilot* to develop an introductory screening examination for our high school debate workshop. This approach was a natural outgrowth of Mr. Jackson's thesis.⁹ Extending our efforts beyond the workshop level led me to suggest the development of the ADSAT. With proper funding and advertising, the time is right for the development of a test that would predict success in university forensics. If we were to administer the test in a CAI mode, not only could it predict the students' sophistication in argumentation and debate theory, but the test could also determine the students' ability to work with computers. Then, as with all standardized tests, we could send scores to selected directors to help them make financial award determinations. Old dinosaur that I am, I could not bring myself to place technology above the artistic, regardless of the giant dollar signs.

Having daydreamed enough about the software fortune, I return to the reality of classroom instruction and the use of debate evidence and blocks. This is where I would encounter a very real problem of control. My coaching experience has proven the rule that if a brief or some evidence is available, debaters will utilize the material whether they understand it or not. Frequently I have restricted the use of sophisticated blocks and certain evidence to more advanced teams. I have placed the burden of restriction on the team in possession of the material. Under a system of computer evidence storage and retrieval, there would be no easy method of restricting access. Novice debaters would use the available material even if they weren't ready for it.

Although evidence is frequently traded, I have always had serious reservations about participating in this practice. First, I never was convinced that the process of favor exchange, negotiation, and diplomacy outweighed solid research skills. Second, I lived in fear that evidence would be traded two or three times, with the original material residing in a squad that had few reservations regarding accuracy and authenticity. I suspect that many directors do as I did—establish rules about what will be traded, with whom, and under what conditions. With the capability of electronic transfer, much or all of that control is gone.

Finally, the tournament process must be considered. Here is where the computer application will have, indeed, is having, the greatest impact. For example, I have been aware of computer storage and retrieval of evidence for at least five years. Although the computer was not physically in the debate round, it was there in the spirit of the "card for card" evidentiary standards employed by a significant number of judges. When a debater cannot win an argument without a "card," debaters and their coaches will find a way to get a "card." Of course, the culprit here is the insane standard, not the computer. The computer is the culprit's aide. The continued tendency to speed and spread is the observable result of the card for card standard. The computer makes compliance easier.

I rank the insanity of the card for card standard equal to or greater than

⁹ Jon Laurant Jackson, "A Diagnostic Readiness Test and Programmed Teaching Unit for Entrance Level College Debaters," MA thesis, Southwest Missouri State U, 1979.

the forensics community's mentality regarding time limits. The commonly-used formats 10-5, 8-3-4, and 10-3-5 were established long before we moved into the information age. Now the computer has been harnessed to cope with the information overload. Isn't it time to rethink the debate format? In forensics forums I have gone as far as to advocate doubling the time limits and decreasing the number of rounds to one-half the current number. Instituting these changes would make more sense than asking students to compete in a delivery mode that raises serious questions of educational value in the most liberal and sympathetic of university administrators. Logic dictates that if we teach students to collect and store copious amounts of evidence, we should provide a format that will allow the students to use what they have collected. Computer usage may force the forensics community to address format alterations.

Likewise, using computers may require us to consider how many students constitute a debate team. An excellent case could be built for the three-person team. The third individual would not orally participate in the round. Rather, this person would be the "evidence technician," hereinafter referred to as "ET." ET, probably a red-shirted freshman having not yet learned the amenities of the debate circuit, would be responsible for a team's information control. He or she would be allowed to forward evidence independently to the competing team and would likewise be responsible for the retrieval of requested information. During the late afternoon or evening, ET could literally "phone home" to an awaiting nontraveling team of researchers ready to seek out data to cover trouble spots in the affirmative case or to gather evidence that might be needed for elimination rounds.

I have approached the restructuring of teams and the addition of research teams tongue-in-cheek, but these are very real options that will be used. It is not too early to establish controls on this sort of activity.

The forensics community must start now to consider such issues as tournament divisions, facility requirements, and evidence verification. Soon we will be faced with the problem of computer-aided teams competing against teams that do not have computers. Should we have a Computer-Assisted Division, CAD? It seems a fair thing to do and would preclude listening to a six-minute block on why I should vote for the team that is debating without computer assistance. In any case, judges will probably not escape blocks on variance in data bases, computer capacity, and compatibility.

Facility requirements and time between rounds are important considerations. Electrical power requirements, the climate control system, weather conditions—all could significantly affect such a division. Think of the number of times you have judged in a room that was a closet; think of the number of times you have judged in one hundred (plus) degree heat; think of the number of times you have continued rounds during power outages or trudged through ten inches of snow and subzero temperatures to the next round. Now consider the impact on a CAD. With proper preparation and planning, these problems could be minimized, but they would exist.

"May I see that card?" Is an electronic document a document? Do I as a judge verify what is on the monitor? Evidence verification may be the greatest problem facing computer-assisted debate. Electronic documents are clearly subject to easy alteration. Fortunately, the law courts provide precedents.

David Bender addresses this question in his book *Computer Law: Evidence and Procedure*:

Problems arise when it is desired to introduce information kept on computer related media for the purpose of proving its truth. There are three basic problems.

(1) In many cases, it will not be possible to produce the person who made the writing. In such instances, there will be an attempt to introduce a writing made by an out-of-court declarant to prove the truth of the matter therein asserted; this flies in the face of the hearsay rule.

(2) Even if the person who made the original entry can be presented, and even if he or she remembers and can testify to record-keeping procedures, the record retained will generally not be the original as that term is traditionally defined, inasmuch as the record retained was preceded by either a human readable document . . . or by a machine input device This may pose an issue under the best evidence rule.

(3) If the records retained are not in human-readable form, a translation must be introduced regardless of whether the device itself (e.g., the punch card) is in evidence. In such cases input to the computer, some operation *inside* the computer, and output *from* the computer all stand between the records retained and the writing introduced.¹⁰

In general, the courts frequently view the computer record as hearsay, and only the original human-readable document meets the best evidence standard. Although our computers may allow us to obtain information not readily available in our local library, evidence challenges should send us back to the library for verification. However, the verification problem remains if the human-readable document is not locally available. In this instance, should a tournament director (supposedly a neutral third party) or the district committee independently verify the document electronically? If so, who absorbs the financial responsibility? Electronic evidence verification should already have been an issue of professional forensics association consideration. We cannot delay to establish standards and procedures.

In conclusion, I must admit to having mixed reactions to the advent of computers in forensics. My positive evaluations stem from pre- and post-tournament usage on the most limited basis and from thinking how great it would have been to have used a computer when I was debating. Negative evaluations stem from placing more importance on the computer than on the individual human effort in argument and from the problems of an instructional void, squad control, tournament management, a plethora of technology blocks, and evidence verification. I doubt whether we will be able to limit computer usage in forensics. The approaching generation of students has grown up with this technology and is well-versed in its application. I hope that my focus on potential problems will generate discussions leading us to realistic solutions. Perhaps the forensics community should consider McLuhan's position on the advancing technology of communication. He noted that each advancement is at the same time an extension and an amputation of ourselves.¹¹ With enough discussion, forethought, and planning, it might be possible to gain an extension without a severe amputation of humans as the prime force in oral argument.

¹⁰ David Bender, *Computer Law: Evidence and Procedure* (New York: Matthew Bender, 1981) 6–12.

¹¹ Marshall McLuhan, *The Medium Is the Message* (New York: Random, 1967) 26–40.

A RHETORICAL BALM: EULOGY FOR THE CHALLENGER

Laurel Klinger Vartabedian

"The essence of tragedy is that humans are the playthings of the gods: that people's lives are vehicles for the expression of cosmic forces, that people's fortunes must often submit to forces beyond their control."¹ Occasionally a tragedy occurs which is of such magnitude that an entire nation experiences the loss, and individually, yet collectively mourns. Because the event is so unsettling, the nation as a whole may have the sense that it is necessary to move through a grieving process and attempt to restore the meaning in life which loss often calls into question. The explosion of the space shuttle Challenger was such an event.

This paper seeks to investigate both the personal and Presidential responses to the Challenger disaster first by looking at the nature and stages of crisis events and losses. Secondly, the speech which the President gave in response to the tragedy will be examined in regard to the necessity for the speech, the content of the speech, and the way in which the speech was framed to meet the psychological needs of the people of this nation.

Responding to Crisis and Loss

In examining the shuttle disaster there are elements of tragedy and loss but also elements of crisis. To better understand the mood of the nation, it is useful to define the stages which typically evolve as a result of loss or crisis. Crisis is appropriate terminology because there was an unexpected "event" which precipitated the distress. A crisis is by definition a short term phenomenon which can be seen as a turning point or a crucial moment. Although a crisis is short term, certainly the process of resolving the emotional states created by a crisis can be long term. Resources must be mustered to move beyond initial stages if there is to be some form of resolution. Sometimes those resources are part of our repertoire and sometimes the resources must be provided externally. There are identifiable stages which people move through at a time of crisis. The initial reaction is one of shock which gives way to defense retreat or a state of disbelief. When retreating is no longer a viable response, people then begin to acknowledge what has happened. This stage may be extremely anxiety-ridden since it is at this point that the reality of what has happened is truly addressed. At this stage the emotions we associate with the grieving process receive expression: guilt, frustration,

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¹ Eric Klinger, *Meaning and Void: Inner Experience and the Incentives in People's Lives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977) 137.

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anger, fear, abandonment and so forth. Finally, assuming that resources have enabled resolution, the last stage is one of adaptation.² The psychological responses of grief and mourning have been categorized in a similar manner. The first phase is invigoration, or a form of heightened awareness and increased energy, followed by aggression which involves both frustration and anger. The third stage is that of depression while the fourth stage is one of recovery.³ Although these stages experienced in crisis and loss are not identical, the similarities are pronounced.

Upon receiving news of the disaster, it was reported that the President's "eyes went wide, his mouth opened in total surprise and shock" and later describing his feelings as he watched replays of the explosion again and again, President Reagan said, "It just was—I say—a very traumatic experience".⁴ This same reaction was mirrored throughout the country: the shock, the disbelief, the futile ritual of watching the footage of the explosion over and over.

As the sense of loss superseded the disbelief, it was decided that for the first time ever the State of the Union Address, which was to be delivered that evening, would be postponed and instead the President would speak on the Challenger disaster. Thus, the President would attempt to begin the healing process by speaking to the nation about the shuttle tragedy.

Although in recent memory there have been other deaths of a national scope which have deeply touched our national consciousness, there are two events which seem particularly parallel to the Challenger disaster, albeit for different reasons: the death of John Kennedy and the deaths of the Apollo astronauts. The assassination of John Kennedy resulted in a similar outpouring of grief although the circumstances of his death provided a clearer target for anger. (In the shuttle disaster the equivalent for the anger would probably be blame placing. Media coverage immediately began "investigating" the probable errors which caused the disaster.) Kennedy was clearly an authorized representative of the country, unlike Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy and others. Like John Kennedy, the Apollo astronauts were sanctioned public figures performing their jobs and dying in the line of duty. The circumstances of their lives and deaths correspond closely enough to those of the Challenger crew to warrant comparison.

Official reaction to the deaths of these public figures in light of the stages of dealing with loss provide an interesting backdrop to the discussion of the Challenger. On the eve of the Kennedy assassination, Lyndon Johnson offered a simple statement of sorrow to the nation:

This is a sad time for all people. We have suffered a loss that cannot be weighed. For me it is a deep personal tragedy. I know the world shares the sorrow that Mrs. Kennedy and her family bear. I will do my best. That is all I can do. I ask for your help—and God's.⁵

² William E. Arnold, *Crisis in Communication* (Dubuque: Gorsuch Scarisbrick, 1980) 16–17.

³ Klinger, *Meaning* 139–170.

⁴ "Reagan Postpones State of Union Speech," *The New York Times*, 29 January 1986: A9.

⁵ Lyndon Johnson, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, "Eulogy to John F. Kennedy," Vol. XXX, 4, 1963: 98.

Johnson's message acknowledges the tragedy, but his brief and melancholy speech reflects that he has not had time to personally move through the tragedy enough to perform rites of healing for the nation. He instead asks the nation for help.

Eulogies delivered the day after the assassination, while retaining the elegiac tone, provide elements of recovery or adaptation as well. These speakers acknowledge the pathos of the moment, eulogize the man and try to make some reaffirming statements for those in mourning. For example, Chief Justice Earl Warren says, "It has been said that the only thing we learn from history is that we do not learn. But surely we can learn if we have the will to do so. Surely there is a lesson to be learned from this tragic event."⁶ John McCormack, then Speaker of the House, concluded his eulogy with these words: "We must have the determination to unite and carry on the spirit of John Fitzgerald Kennedy for a strengthened America and a future world of peace."⁷

When the three Apollo astronauts, Grissom, White, and Chaffee died in a fire during a test on the launch pad in 1967, it was again an occasion of national grief. However, the eulogies were more informal. President Johnson expressed his sorrow with this brief statement: "Three valiant young men have given their lives in the nation's service. We mourn this great loss and our hearts go out to their families."⁸ Additionally, *The New York Times* reported that Defense Secretary Robert McNamara sent the following message to the families of the astronauts:

Our brave men in uniform, whether in Vietnam or seeking the frontiers of the future, mourn with all of us the tragic loss of three gallant and dedicated American airmen. To the families . . . we send our deepest condolence."⁹

His statement captured a theme which was unspoken by the President but probably accounted for the comparatively unemotional response to these astronauts who preceded the shuttle crew in deaths related directly to space exploration. The political reality is that life cannot be as valuable in a time of war. In a time of peace a nation's leaders can afford to mourn the loss of individual lives more publicly.

The social forces were such that when the shuttle disaster occurred the astronauts became symbols of a loss in much the same way as Kennedy had. In the post-Vietnam era social critics charged that we were a nation without heroes, but on January 28th, 1986 that ceased to be true, at least for many. The deaths of the shuttle crew sent tremors of grief across the country and coalesced its people in a tragic bond. Most people felt a sense of common fate with those who had died, as if somehow we who were earthbound had sent a small part of ourselves on this odyssey. For some the astronauts were

⁶ Earl Warren, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, "Eulogy to John F. Kennedy," Vol. XXX 4, 1963: 99.

⁷ John McCormack, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, "Eulogy to John F. Kennedy," Vol. XXX, 4, 1963: 98-99.

⁸ "Johnson Voices Sorrow at Loss of 'Three Valiant Young Men,'" *The New York Times*, 28 January 1967: A10.

⁹ *Ibid.*

symbols of intangible qualities, for some they were representative of us as a nation, and for some they seemed like close friends even though the friendship was forged through the media. *The New York Times* interviewed several persons including religious leaders, writers, students, educators, and scientists concerning their perspectives on the disaster. One said, "I cannot help but note that for me this flight somehow symbolized America as we are trying to make it, an America with a black, an Asian, a woman, and with white men. . . ." Another remarked, "I have a terrible feeling of sadness, I want to weep." Still another said, "It's not something that happened to someone else. It happened here in this country and I'm in this country."

Yet, there was another response to the shuttle explosion. For some the explosion was viewed in human terms, others were more detached, more clinical. Some concentrated on "failed technology" and were quick to note "they knew the risks." Two of the respondents in the *New York Times* interviews barely alluded to the loss of the crew but instead spoke in terms of unraveling the causes and assessing the accident's impact on the space program: "We assume they'll pin down the cause of the accident and fix it. The only real question is how much of a pause there will be in this year's ambitious space program; 1986 was going to be a banner year for the space program" and another remarked, "(I see a need) . . . to find out what caused the accident and take corrective action and then press on. It's already happened, so there's nothing you can do about it." For some perhaps "they knew the risks" was a form of denial or defense retreat. As social scientists we are aware of the tendency for people to blame victims for their own misfortunes in an effort to suggest that we have control over our own fates. For others it seems that technology is significant and worthy of sacrifice and people are transitory, just a mechanism in the works.

Words of Recovery and Adaptation

While individual reactions differed, the President's role was shaped by the demands of the office. As one journalist wrote:

He must identify with the ensuing national grief—lead the mourning, in a sense—but he must also confine it and direct it, lest it evolve into a sense of national despair and futility . . . if possible (he must) transform it eventually from a negative into a positive force¹⁰

Reagan, by virtue of his position, was capable of administering the therapeutic words to an ailing constituency. It was in fact, his mandate to assist people in moving forward toward resolution of this crisis.¹¹

To accomplish this directive the President decided to make a speech, to give a eulogy for the space shuttle Challenger and its crew. Subsequently,

¹⁰ R. W. Apple, "The President As Healer," *The New York Times*, 28 January 1986: A18.

¹¹ In his article "The President as Healer," Apple suggests that de Gaulle and Churchill met similar "national crises" with their defiant and celebrated rhetoric of World War II. He goes on to say that failure to meet the need of the people in crises ruined Hoover's Presidency in the Depression, Johnson's after the Tet offensive, and Carter's after the hostage crisis.

the form of his speech will be analyzed in terms of the expectation of epideictic oratory and the use of deliberative oratory.

Eulogy is categorized as epideictic oratory. It is concerned with the present and is closest in style and function to poetry. The usual structure of a eulogy involves praise, lament, and consolation.¹² In ancient Greece this praise often took the form of first honoring the ancestors of the dead, and in so doing, praising the greatness of the country. Secondly, those who had died were praised.

To a great extent Reagan's speech follows the formulaic expectations of the genre. Although his introduction expresses his pain and grief, his subsequent words invoke the memory of the Apollo astronauts. He then offers praise for the Challenger crew saying, "And perhaps we've forgotten the courage it took for the crew of the shuttle . . . We mourn seven heroes."¹³ He appeals to our collective consciousness of the great journeys of our ancestors when he speaks of the astronauts as pioneers. He states, "We're still pioneers. They, the members of the Challenger crew, were pioneers." Finally, he once again calls up the positive imagery of explorers and pioneers in his final paragraph when he speaks of the life and death of Sir Francis Drake.

In the course of the speech he offers a lament for the astronauts as well as for their families. He says "we cannot bear, as you do, the full impact of this tragedy, but we feel the loss and we're thinking about you so very much." He provides consolation when he says, "the Challenger crew was pulling us into the future and we'll continue to follow them." He offers the consolation of a continuation of their spirit and bravery and then concludes by saying:

We will never forget them nor the last time we saw them this morning as they prepared for their journey and waved goodbye and "slipped the surly bonds of earth to touch the face of God."¹⁴

In Western culture it is suggested that a eulogy serves several functions. The eulogy acknowledges the death, transforms the relationship between the living and the dead from present to past tense, eases the mourners' terror at confronting their own mortality by assuring that the deceased live on, and reknits the community.¹⁵ Certainly Reagan's speech met all of the criteria for epideictic oratory in both form and function.

President Reagan's speech, while acknowledging the tragedy also was an exercise in reaffirming the idea that, in his words "We'll continue our quest in space . . . nothing ends here." The dichotomy in reaction to the space shuttle disaster may in fact reflect a duality within the American character. Remarks made by a Truman biographer provide an insightful observation. It is noted that Americans are often seen as lacking a sense, shared by many

¹² George Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963) 153.

¹³ "President Expresses His Sorrow at the Astronauts' Deaths," *The New York Times*, 29 January 1986: A9. Text of speech.

¹⁴ This paraphrase from the sonnet "High Flight," by John Magee Jr. serves a poetic function, but also comforts the audience with an affirmation of immortality.

¹⁵ Kathleen M. Jamieson, *Critical Anthology of Public Speeches* (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1978) 40-42.

Europeans, that life is essentially tragic. "When something, be it the plumbing or the government, breaks down, Americans typically do not say, 'Well, that's life.' Instead they try to fix the trouble . . ." ¹⁶ There is an element in his speech which does not seek to soothe mourners and explain existing conditions but rather is a statement of what will be done. This type of oratory is classified as deliberative. Jamieson and Campbell identified these "infusions" of form as "rhetorical hybrids." ¹⁷ Rhetorical hybrids are a blend of genres. For example, a speaker might perform deliberative oratory while engaging in a seemingly epideictic form. The thinly veiled differentiation of U.S. and Soviet society is such a departure from the expected. The President says, "We don't hide our space program, we don't keep secrets and cover things up. We do it all up front and in public. That's the way freedom is. . . ." Reagan's words to the people of NASA and his assurances regarding the future of the space program throughout the speech contain this intermingling of policy with poetry.

Crisis Based Eulogy: Evolution and Intent

Genres are useful because they have predictive value. They have predictive value because they are framed by such repetitive human occurrences as celebrations, rituals of state and church, death and other transitions. Circumstances, situations and audience needs shape the content of the rhetor's message. Consequently, it can be expected that there are special demands placed upon the speaker in a "crisis based eulogy" that are not present in less extraordinary times.

Coming to terms with a sudden tragedy involves an evolution through predictable stages of shock, disbelief, acknowledgement and recovery or adaptation. Therefore, it follows that a "crisis based eulogy" would adhere to those predictable stages. Since the healing process actually begins with acknowledgement the bulk of the speech should appeal to the audience at the levels of acknowledgement and adaptation. In this case, the President becomes the external force necessary to help the nation recognize its own resources in moving toward resolution of the tragedy. He provides "outside intervention" in much the same manner that a counselor, a minister or a friend might offer support.

His rhetorical strategy must respond to the complexity of the grieving process. The hybrid form allows the President the ability to respond with more complexity but even more important, it can be seen as an expected outgrowth of the demands of the situation.

Additionally, this genre is rule governed and therefore will follow certain prescriptions. Jamieson and Campbell caution that inappropriate or excessive use of one genre in a situation which mandates the use of a different genre renders the speaker ineffectual and his/her motives suspect:

¹⁶ David S. Thomson, *A Pictorial Biography HST* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, Inc., 1973) 9.

¹⁷ Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Rhetorical Hybrids: Fusions of Generic Elements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 68 (1982): 146-157.

We would argue that the functional hybrid will occur when deliberative appeals are subordinate to the eulogy, when they can be viewed as a memorial to the life of the deceased, when they are compatible with positions advocated by the eulogist, whose motives must not appear self-serving, and when advocacy will not divide the audience or community.¹⁸

The President is expected to concentrate on the recovery stage in the aftermath of national grief and, therefore, can make stronger deliberative appeals without being judged self-serving or divisive. This is illustrated by his "criticism" of Soviet secrecy which is not particularly appropriate in the context of memorializing the astronauts. Again, there is an expectation that he will emphasize "what will be done," that he will unify the people by praising our values, that he will help us recover by bonding the community. If the President were giving a "non-crisis" eulogy one could predict a lower level of deliberative discourse would be deemed acceptable. Crisis discourse demands a high level of future orientation.

This orientation toward recovery or re-knitting the community was absent in Johnson's eulogy immediately after John Kennedy's assassination but was integral in the mediated address he gave before a Joint Session of the Congress the following week.¹⁹ While a major crisis event can be expected to engender a predictive form of "crisis based eulogy" there are still contextual constraints. This accounts for the absence of official eulogy in the deaths of the Apollo astronauts. While the nation was shocked and saddened, societal demand for healing through rhetoric was probably not as great because the continuing loss of life in Vietnam precluded any closure of the grief process. And as mentioned previously, it would be difficult to honor the astronauts as heroes with so many dying so anonymously.

Conclusions

In examining precedents for "crisis eulogy" the complexity of the form is evident. The complexity evolves because the speaker must respond to the psychologically complex process of resolving loss. People have different responses to loss or crisis which are largely individual; yet, the events which make martyrs and heroes are subject to the social milieu. Ultimately, the President's role is dictated by the needs of the nation which typically require that he take an active role in the grieving process through the healing power of words.

In the Challenger eulogy Reagan effectively integrates the speech content with the psychological needs of the audience. He provides an outlet for lament and acknowledgement but then channels that grief. His many allusions to the idea that these astronauts' lives were vehicles for human progress help the listeners make sense out of the tragedy, assure them that they are not merely playthings of the gods, and move them toward adaptation and recovery. Finally, the speech taps into the two most prominent phases of loss, and it could be argued, the two different vantage points held by the American people immediately after the accident: there are those who must grieve and those who simply press on.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 149.

¹⁹ President Johnson's Thanksgiving Day Address to the Nation Urging 'New Dedication' *The New York Times*, 29 November 1963: A20.

ANALOGIC ANALYSIS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES' ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES AT THE 1980 NATIONAL NOMINATING CONVENTIONS

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The quadrennial conventions held by this nation's two major political parties are among the most visible aspects of the presidential selection process. They are the focus of intense interest by the news media and, to a lesser extent, by the public at large. One reason why the conventions receive so much attention, even in years when the choice of presidential nominee is a foregone conclusion, is that the conventions serve a ceremonial function. They confer an aura of legitimacy upon the candidates chosen to run for the two highest offices in the land.¹

And if the political convention functions as a legitimization ritual, then one of the most important aspects of that ritual is the acceptance address given by the party's presidential nominee. It may be argued that the entire convention builds to a point of climax, and that the acceptance address is both the end of that buildup and the beginning of the next phase of the campaign. The acceptance speech is a response to the exigence which has been created by the convention itself.² Nordvold suggests that this discourse serves three functions:

First, the acceptance address represents the public assumption by the nominee of the leadership of the party. Second, it elicits from the assembled delegates concerted, vocal response, indicating their support for the nominee and loyalty to the party. Third, it presents to the wider audience, the viewing, listening, and reading public a demonstration of political solidarity and ideological unity.³

In 1980, candidates Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan addressed their respective conventions with the same general goals as discussed above. But each faced a different set of specific concerns.

An earlier version of this essay was presented at the Eastern Communication Association's Fall Conference on Rhetoric and Public Address, October 1981.

¹ Thomas B. Farrell, "Political Conventions as Legitimation Ritual," *Communication Monographs*, 45 (1978): 293.

² Robert G. Nordvold, "Rhetoric as Ritual: Hubert H. Humphrey's Acceptance Address at the 1968 Democratic National Convention," *Today's Speech*, 18 (1970): 34.

³ Nordvold 34.

Jimmy Carter enjoyed the significant advantages of being an incumbent president running for re-election: the ability to claim experience as Chief Executive; easy access to the media; and the assumption of the mantle of the presidency. But he also faced a number of serious challenges. Some of these derived from the blame which incumbents receive when things go wrong during their tenure in office. The nation was experiencing double-digit inflation and a rising unemployment rate. Americans had been taken hostage by Iran, and Carter's efforts to secure their release had proved futile. Just prior to the Democratic National Convention, all opinion polls showed Carter trailing Republican Candidate Ronald Reagan; Reagan's lead varied from thirteen to twenty-eight percent.⁴

But the biggest obstacle to Carter's re-nomination came from Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy. The Senator's challenge to the President had proven formidable. In the last eight state primaries preceding the convention, Kennedy had beaten Carter in five, including California.⁵ Kennedy's followers had demanded an "open" convention, and Carter's success in imposing more restrictive rules on the nomination process made him seem like a despot. Kennedy had conceded defeat only the day before the President's acceptance speech was scheduled, and the Senator's partisans were not disposed to be forgiving. Carter was, thus, not only addressing a nation divided over whether he should serve four more years; he was also facing a convention which contained many bitter enemies.

Ronald Reagan, in contrast, saw a convention which was united, enthusiastic, and unmarred by serious controversy. As *Newsweek* noted at the time, "... Reagan's victory was ... complete, uniting his contentious party for the first time in a generation around the colors of conservatism and the sudden, heady scent of victory."⁶ Reagan's nomination was assured by the time he reached the convention, and his strongest opponent for the nomination, George Bush, had long since adopted a conciliatory stance.⁷ In his acceptance address, Reagan had three goals he wanted to achieve: to continue the high level of support among conservatives which he currently had; to attract moderate elements among the Republican party; and to appeal to urban working-class voters, whom he hoped to tempt away from the Democratic Party.⁸

This essay employs analog criticism to analyze the convention acceptance addresses given in 1980 by Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. The analog approach involves a comparison between two specimens of rhetoric which possess external similarities (such as speeches given on similar occasions or essays written to accomplish similar goals). The result of such a comparison

⁴ Michael J. Malbin, "The Conventions, Platforms, and Issue Activists," in Austin Ranney, ed., *The American Elections of 1980* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1981): 117.

⁵ Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Packaging the Presidency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984): 388.

⁶ Peter Goldman, et al., "Reagan's 'Crusade' Begins," *Newsweek*, 96 (July 28, 1980): 14.

⁷ Jamieson 396.

⁸ Malbin 100.

allows each speech to serve “as a reference standard for the other.”⁹ In the past, analog criticism has been used to illuminate such rhetorical forms as speeches of self-defense,¹⁰ concession speeches,¹¹ and presidential inaugurals.¹²

The Acceptance Speeches

These addresses were subjected to categorical content analysis using the word as the unit of analysis, and then the relative proportion of these themes was determined.¹³ Both authors read each speech several times, discussed each at length, and achieved 100 percent exact agreement on the coding. Only minor sections of each speech were considered unclassifiable.

Table 1 displays the data generated by this method. In the discussion that follows, each theme will be illustrated with excerpts from the speeches.

The themes are grouped by topic and discussed in order of importance (“importance” was determined by the amount of words the speakers devoted to each theme).

The first theme is praise of the candidate, his record and his policies. For instance, Reagan presents this claim:

It is the responsibility of the President of the United States, in working for peace, to insure that the safety of our people cannot successfully be threatened by a hostile foreign power. As President, fulfilling that responsibility will be my number one priority.¹⁴

Later in the address, Reagan indirectly addresses the issue of his age by saying:

Now this evening marks the last step, save one, of a campaign that has taken Nancy and me from one end of this great nation to the other, over many months and thousands and thousands of miles. There are those who question the way we choose a president, who say that our process imposes difficult and exhausting burdens on those who seek the office. I have not found it so.¹⁵

This passage seems intended to defuse worries about his age, stamina, and, consequently, his fitness for office. Carter defends his record on national defense in this excerpt:

⁹ Lawrence W. Rosenfield, “A Case Study in Speech Criticism: The Nixon-Truman Analog,” in Bernard L. Brock and Robert L. Scott, eds., *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth-Century Perspective* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1980, Second Edition), 175.

¹⁰ Rosenfield 1, 174–196.

¹¹ James W. Chesebro and Caroline D. Hamsher, “The Concession Speech: The MacArthur-Agnew Analog,” *Speaker and Gavel*, 11 (1974): 39–51.

¹² Bert E. Bradley, “Jefferson and Reagan: The Rhetoric of Two Inaugurals,” *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 48 (1983): 119–136.

¹³ The published texts of the speeches were taken from *Vital Speeches of the Day*. The Reagan address appeared in the August 15, 1980 issue, 642–646; the Carter address was published in the September 15, 1980 issue, 706–710. To ensure textual accuracy, both speeches were checked against audio recordings made from television.

¹⁴ Reagan 645.

¹⁵ Reagan 646.

Table 1. Republican and Democratic Acceptance Speeches, 1980

Theme	Speaker			
	Reagan		Carter	
Praise of His Party/Candidacy				
1. Defense of Candidate/Record/Policies	943	19.9%	1,324	28.8%
2. Promise of Benefits if Elected	632	13.3%	731	15.9%
3. Praise of Party	55	1.2%	434	9.4%
4. Appeals for Unity	269	5.6%	170	3.7%
Attack on the Opposition				
5. Attacks on the Candidate	1,399	29.5%	250	5.4%
6. Attack on the Party	469	9.9%	459	9.9%
7. Prediction of Disaster if Elected	31	0.7%	710	15.4%
8. Praise of America	664	14.0%	461	10.0%
9. Praise/invocation of God	137	2.9%		
10. Prediction of Victory	66	1.4%	63	1.4%
Total Words (coded and uncoded)	4,741		4,599	

Every year since I've been President, we've had real increases in our commitment to a stronger nation, increases which are prudent and rational.

Our modernized strategic forces, a re-vitalized NATO, the Trident submarine, the cruise missile, Rapid Deployment Force—all these guarantee we will never be second to any nation.¹⁶

While both candidates devote considerable time to defense of themselves, their record and their policies, Carter spends almost half again as much as Reagan (28.8 percent to 19.9 percent). This could be because, as was suggested in the first section of this analysis, Carter is more vulnerable to criticism than Reagan because of his incumbency, and consequently requires more defense. The fact that Reagan's earlier speech contained such an extensive attack on the Democratic nominee, as will be discussed below, may also have been a contributing factor.

The next theme consists of the candidates' promises or predictions of the benefits which will result if each is elected. Reagan's efforts in this regard include this example.

As your nominee, I pledge to you to restore to the Federal Government the capacity to do the people's work without dominating their lives. I pledge to you a government that will not only work well but wisely, its ability to act tempered by prudence, and its willingness to do good balanced by the knowledge that government is never more dangerous than when our desire to have it help us blinds us to its great power to harm us.¹⁷

Carter posits two futures for America, each flowing from the election of one of the candidates. Carter's view of the future he would bring to America is described in the following terms.

¹⁶ Carter 708.

¹⁷ Reagan 643.

In one of the futures we can choose—the future that you and I have been building together—I see security and justice and peace.

I see a future of economic security, security that will come from tapping our own great resources of oil and gas, coal and sunlight, and from building the tools and technology and factories for a revitalized economy based on jobs and stable prices for everyone.

I see a future of justice, the justice of good jobs, decent health care, quality education, and the full opportunity for all people, regardless of color or language or religion; the simple human justice of equal rights for all men—and for all women; guaranteed equal rights at last—under the Constitution of the United States of America.

And I see a future of peace, a peace born of wisdom and based on the fairness toward all countries of the world, a peace guaranteed both by American military strength and by American moral strength as well.¹⁸

Both candidates, not unexpectedly, paint rosy pictures of America which will be realized if they are elected. They spend a sizable portion of their speeches on this topic, but it is not the largest theme in either. They spend roughly the same amount of time on this issue: Reagan used 13.3 percent of his speech to promise benefits, while Carter used 15.9 percent.

The third most important theme which we identified was praise of party. Reagan addresses this topic early in his acceptance speech:

I'm very proud of our party tonight. This convention has America a party united, with positive programs for solving the nation's problems; a party ready to build a new consensus with all those across the land who share a community of values embodied in these words: family, work, neighborhood, peace, and freedom.¹⁹

Carter also hit this topic early on:

We'll win because we are the party of a great President who knew how to get re-elected—Franklin D. Roosevelt. And we're the party of a courageous fighter who knew how to 'give 'em hell'—Harry Truman. . . .

And we're the party of a gallant man of spirit—John Fitzgerald Kennedy. And we're the party of a great leader of compassion—Lyndon Baines Johnson.

And the party of a great man who should have been President and would have been one of the great Presidents in history—Hubert Horatio Hornblower—Humphrey . . . and I would also like to say that we're also the party of Governor Jerry Brown and Senator Edward Kennedy.²⁰

It is interesting to note that Carter spends almost eight times as many words on this theme as did Reagan (9.4 percent to 1.2 percent). As has been suggested elsewhere, the Democratic speaker may have been worried about discontent in the party. In addition to his praise of former leaders, Carter spent over 150 words on Senator Kennedy alone:

¹⁸ Carter 707.

¹⁹ Reagan 642.

²⁰ Carter 706.

Ted, you're a tough competitor and a superb campaigner, and I can attest to that. Your speech before this convention was a magnificent statement of what the Democratic party is and what it means to the people of this country—and why a Democratic victory is so important this year. I reach out to you tonight and I reach out to all those who have supported you in your valiant and passionate campaign.²¹

Carter is clearly "reaching out" to Kennedy *and*, explicitly, to those who supported Kennedy, to support Carter in the coming campaign and general election. Thus, the remarks classified here indirectly support Carter's unity appeals, which are discussed next.

The fourth theme identified here consists of appeals for unity. Near the beginning of his discourse, Reagan stresses this point:

More than anything else, I want my candidacy to unify our country; to renew the American spirit and sense of purpose. I want to carry our message to every American, regardless of party affiliation, who is a member of this community of shared values.²²

Carter's speech also contains unification appeals:

Ted, your party needs—and I need—you and your idealism and dedication working for us. There is no doubt that even greater service lies ahead of you, and we are grateful to you and to your strong partnership now in the larger course to which your life has been dedicated.

I thank you for your support. We'll make great partners this Fall in whipping the Republicans.²³

Note that the passage selected here to illustrate this theme reveals how Carter considers Kennedy's support important to his effort.

Consideration of the figures provided in Table 1 reveals that Reagan devoted more than 1½ as much material to this topic than did Carter (269 to 170 words). In light of their respective situations—Reagan's relatively unified party and Carter's potentially divided one—it may seem odd that Reagan emphasizes this theme more than does Carter. However, when we recall that the previous theme, praise of party, served indirectly to contribute to Carter's unification strategy, it seems a mystery no longer.

The distribution of material across these categories is a reasonable one. Both candidates spend most of their material in the first grouping on themselves, on their records, and on their policies. Second in importance are their promises of good things to come if elected. The party is accorded lesser importance (though it is important to Carter as a vehicle to party unity). Both candidates, however, spent a respectable amount of time on the important matter of unity.

The second grouping, containing three themes, is "Attacks on the Proposition." The initial theme considered here, the fifth, consists of attacks on the opposition candidate, including, of course, his record and policies. An example of Reagan's use of this topic is:

²¹ Carter 706.

²² Reagan 642.

²³ Carter 706.

But back in 1976, Mr. Carter said "Trust me." And a lot of people did. And now, many of those people are out of work. Many have seen their savings eaten away by inflation. Many others on the cruel tax of inflation wasted away their purchasing power. And, today, a great many who trusted Mr. Carter wonder if we can survive the Carter policies of national defense.²⁴

Reagan also criticizes Carter's foreign policy in a more direct fashion:

Who was not embarrassed when the Administration handed a major propaganda victory in the United Nations to the enemies of Israel, our staunch Middle East ally for three decades, and then claimed that the American vote was a "mistake," the result of a "failure of communication between the President, his Secretary of State and his U.N. Ambassador."²⁵

After mentioning three actions he took following the Russian invasion of Afghanistan—the grain embargo, draft registration and the Olympic boycott—did Carter depict Reagan's stand in the following fashion:

The Republican nominee opposed two of these forceful but peaceful actions and he waffled on the third. But when we asked him what he would do about aggression in Southwest Asia, he suggested blockading Cuba. Even his running mate wouldn't go along with that.

He doesn't seem to know what to do with the Russians. He's not sure if he wants to feed them or play with them or fight them them.²⁶

Thus, both candidates provide sharp attacks against their major competition. Reagan employs this theme of attacking the opposition over five times as much as does Carter (29.5 percent v. 5.4 percent). As has been suggested earlier, this may be explained by Carter's incumbance, which provides a wide range of targets for attack, especially given the myriad of economic, foreign policy, and other difficulties facing the U.S. today (which may or may not be Carter's fault.)

These sharp attacks, made almost a month before Carter's speech, may be responsible for the amount of time Carter devoted to defense of his record, as discussed earlier.

The sixth theme overall (which is second in this grouping) is "Attacks on the Opposing Party." For example, Reagan laments the present situation facing America in these words:

Never before in our history have Americans been called upon to face these grave threats to our very existence, any one of which could destroy us. We face a disintegrating economy, a weakened defense and an energy policy based on the sharing of scarcity. The major issue of this campaign is the direct, political, personal and moral responsibility of the Democratic party leadership—in the White House and in the Congress—for this unprecedented calamity which has befallen us.²⁷

Carter attacks the Republicans as well, by saying "The Republicans talk about military strength, but they were in office for eight out of the last eleven years, and, in the fact of a growing Soviet threat, they steadily cut real defense spending—by more than a third."²⁸

²⁴ Reagan 643.

²⁵ Reagan 645.

²⁶ Carter 708.

²⁷ Reagan 642.

²⁸ Carter 708.

Both candidates spend about the same amount of time on this topic (both devote 9.9 percent of the speeches to it), an appropriate one for the rhetoric of a national nominating convention.

"Predictions of disaster" if the speaker's opponent is elected constitute the next theme. Reagan only touches on this topic briefly, as in this statement: "The Administration which has brought us to this state of affairs is seeking your endorsement for four more years of weakness, indecision, mediocrity and incompetence."²⁹

In contrast, Carter spends a great deal of time developing this theme. In one place he argues that:

The Republican nominee advocates abandoning arms control policies which have been important and supported by every Democratic President since Harry Truman and also by every Republican President since Dwight D. Eisenhower. This radical and irresponsible course would threaten our security—and could put the whole world in peril.³⁰

Carter also provides a comparison between the future he predicted would follow from his re-election and the future he sees if Reagan is elected:

But there's another possible future.

In that future, I see despair—the despair of millions who would struggle for equal opportunity and a better life—and struggle alone.

And I see surrender, the surrender of our energy future to the merchants of oil; the surrender of our economic future to a bizarre program of massive tax cuts for the rich, service cuts for the poor, and massive inflation for everyone.

And I see risk, the risk of international confrontation; the risk of an uncontrollable, unaffordable and unwinnable nuclear arms race.³¹

Carter spends a great deal of time on this topic, while Reagan barely mentions it—Carter devoting over 15 percent of his speech to this theme, while Reagan spends less than one percent on it.

Carter, faced with an opponent who is not in office, levels most of his criticism at future disadvantages and spends relatively little time on direct attacks on the opposing candidate. Reagan, on the other hand, can advance attacks on Carter based on present problems. These are much more concrete and hence, Reagan need not rely on speculative predictions of disaster—he can cite actual disaster and blame it on Carter.

The distribution of the two candidates' remarks within this second grouping is easily accounted for. Both attack the opposing party for about ten percent of their speeches. Reagan blasts the incumbent Carter on the basis of present problems, spending by far the largest single part of his speech on this theme. Carter spends but five percent of his speech on this theme. Not facing an incumbent, Carter must predict disaster if Reagan is elected. Reagan barely employs this theme, preferring to confine his attention to current and past disaster.

The eighth theme is "Praise of America," and both speakers spend a certain

²⁹ Reagan 645.

³⁰ Carter 708.

³¹ Carter 707.

amount of time developing it. Reagan discusses the American spirit in this fashion:

I ask you to trust that American spirit which knows no ethnic, religious, social, political, regional, or economic boundaries; the spirit that burned with zeal in the hearts of millions of immigrants from every corner of the earth who came here in search of freedom.

Some say that spirit no longer exists. But I've seen it—I've felt it—all across the land, in the big cities, the small towns and in rural America. It's still there, ready to blaze into life . . .³²

Carter, in turn, tries to tie the Founding Fathers into his campaign: "Above all, I want us to be what the founders of our nation meant us to become—the land of freedom, the land of peace, and the land of hope."³³

The ninth theme involves "Praise or Invocation of God." Reagan, for instance, concludes his speech with a strong religious reference:

I'll confess that I've been a little afraid to suggest what I'm going to suggest. I'm more afraid not to. Can we begin our crusade joined together in a moment of silent prayer?

God bless America.³⁴

It is not clear why Carter, who had stressed his born-again Christian faith on many prior occasions, failed to make any religious reference (apart from a passing reference to scripture) in his acceptance address.

The final theme consists of "Predictions of Victory." Reagan does this with a typically dramatic flair:

Can anyone look at the record of this Administration and say, "Well done?" Can anyone compare the state of our economy when the Carter administration took office with where we are today and say "Keep up the good work?" Can anyone look at our reduced standing in the world today and say "Let's have four more years of this?"

I believe the American people are going to answer these questions, as you've answered them, in the first week of November and their answer will be, "No—we've had enough."³⁵

Carter also makes use of this topic:

Fritz and I will mount a campaign that defines the real issues, a campaign that responds to the intelligence of the American people, a campaign that talks sense, and we're going to whip the Republicans in November.³⁶

There does not appear to be a significant difference between the candidates in this regard, since both develop this theme for only 1.4 percent of their time.

³² Reagan 646.

³³ Carter 710.

³⁴ Reagan 646.

³⁵ Reagan 646.

³⁶ Carter 706.

Summary

A good summary of the themes developed in these speeches can be found in Table 1. The acceptance speeches of Reagan and Carter have the following elements in common:

- defense of candidate
- promise of benefits if elected
- (at least some) praise of party
- appeals for unity
- attack on the opposition candidate
- attack on the opposing party
- (at least one) prediction of disaster if the opposition wins
- praise of America
- (at least some) prediction of victory

These elements are likely to be characteristic of the genre of acceptance speeches, but, since the present analysis concerns only two speeches, this conclusion does not merit a great deal of confidence.

In contrasting the two speeches, we find that Reagan tends to attack Carter directly on the basis of America's current problems, both domestic and foreign. Carter, on the other hand, tends to attack Reagan by predicting disaster if he is elected. He also defends himself, his policies and his record to a greater extent than does Reagan. Carter includes more praise of party, probably in an attempt to unify the party. These differences stem from the circumstances in which these candidates find themselves. Carter, as the incumbent, is more susceptible to direct attack. This accounts for Reagan's attacks as well as Carter's defenses. Since Reagan is not currently in office, he is not as susceptible to direct attack. Carter must, therefore, use speculative predictions of problems if Reagan is elected. Carter faces a potentially divided party, or, at least, lukewarm support from some quarters. He must, therefore, praise the party generally—and the dissident quarters specifically—in order to facilitate unity and enthusiasm in the party.

Reagan's greater use of the eighth strategy, praise of America, may be an attempt to broaden the Republican Party's base of support. However, there are few corroborating details, and so the possibility is far from certain. It is also unclear why Carter chose not to praise or invoke God. These differences, however, are not as important as others explained earlier.

This paper was designed to compare the two 1980 Presidential candidate acceptance speeches against each other in the manner of analog criticism. We believe that a number of interesting (and potentially important) conclusions have been drawn from the analysis. It is hoped that this paper is a step in the determination of a genre of Presidential candidate acceptance speeches at national nominating conventions. We have also attempted to shed some light on the two individual discourses analyzed here.

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All requests for authority to initiate and for emblems should be sent to the National Secretary and should be accompanied by check or money order. Inasmuch as all checks and money orders are forwarded by the Secretary to the National Treasurer, please make them to: "The Treasurer of Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha."

The membership fee is \$15.00. The official key (size shown in cut on this page) is \$15.00, or the official key-pin is \$17.00.

Prices include Federal Tax. The names of new members, those elected between September of one year and September of the following year, appear in the Fall issue of *Speaker and Gavel*. According to present regulations of the society, new members receive *Speaker and Gavel* for two years following their initiation if they return the record form supplied them at the time their application is approved by the Executive Secretary and certified to the sponsor. Following this time all members who wish to receive *Speaker and Gavel* may subscribe at the standard rate of \$5.00 per year.



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