

Volume 40, 2003 Speaker and Gavel

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Volume 40 / 2003

Race and Civility:

The Problems of Taking it Personally

Michael Janas

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Guest Editor's Essay _____

To Rule or Not to Rule

These are (Just Some of) the Questions

Robb Del Casale

Journal of
DELTA SIGMA RHO—TAU KAPPA ALPHA

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Speaker and Gavel

**Delta Sigma Rho—Tau Kappa Alpha
National Honorary Forensic Society**

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Speaker and Gavel

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Race and Civility The Problems of Taking it Personally

Michael Janas
Michael Edmonds

Abstract

Increasingly, Americans think of civility as a private virtue often tied to issues of personal identity. Here we argue that this conceptualization reflects the confluence of several social trends that generally point toward a decline in the public sphere in favor of an increasingly privatized and balkanized notion of public participation. In this new world, all public discussions hold the potential for personal slight and ultimately silence. This seems especially the case in regard to discussions about race. Here we have identified four ways that the privatization of civility and then race has undercut our ability to maintain a civil discourse on race. Together, these threats point toward the eventual death of civility as a politically or rhetorically useful concept.

Introduction

We have some things in common. We are both named Michael—but we go by Mike. We both hold Ph.D.s and teach at universities. We are both religious. We both profess our appreciation for the sublimity of the spoken word—although we are drawn to examine different aspects of it. We both love the taste of smoked meat and neither of us is likely to be caught in the near future climbing a mountain or camping. On paper we appear very similar—except for one thing: one of us is African-American and the other is White. Ideally, we might be led (based on media reports and descriptions) to think that this does not make a difference—but it really makes all of the difference in the world. From the way that we talk about things and the churches we attend to the politics we espouse, we have been informed and constituted by our race.

This does not prevent us from being friends, although sometimes the differences are trying. Instead, it makes our friendship and our collaboration all the more interesting. Like most friends, there are issues that we discuss freely (politics), issues that we discuss with reserve (our families), and issues that we discuss with only the greatest of care and respect (our attitudes on race). Our reticence in regard to race is odd and awkward because between the two of us, our race is probably the point at which we would have the greatest potential for education, disagreement and discussion (although we differ almost as much on

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issues of politics). Race is also the point at which we probably are the most ignorant about the place of the other.

Paradoxically, while the idea of race is a hard point, it is still an important one to us—more so because we find ourselves outside of our native communities. One of us is from the largely-white North, and now lives in a predominately-black community in the South and the other is from the South and now lives in a predominately-white community in the North. We are both, in short, fish out of water. This liminality, however, is a point at which we can begin an investigation of our relative positions, what we want to know, and what remains unknowable to us. In particular, we are interested in the reasons why we, as most Americans, find it so difficult to conduct frank discussion of race outside of our own race-community? Why do discussions of race so often end in silence and hurt feelings?

The paradigmatic moment of modern America race relations is the civil rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s. Then, the battle necessitated clearly demarcated sides. However, while times have changed, the paradigm remains firmly engrained. One of the implications of this model is that we tend to think or and represent race in binary terms; as a series of oppositions discursively represented in the marches of racist Kluxers and angry black activists or oppressed black victims. Most often, we tend to imagine our opposition in this binary context; “I am not a racist, so they must be a member of the Klan.”

This essay seeks to examine the nexus of race and civility beyond the context of mere appropriateness or politeness, but as a constitutive element of communal participation. Many of the ideas are derived from a conference hosted by Colorado College on issues of race and civility. Our examination happens in three movements. First, we will begin by laying out a working definition of civility. In the second part we will examine how people think about the ideas of race and civility. In a final section we will tease out some implications for the place of civility in public discussions of race and identify some risks to the future of civility.

Defining Civility

Civility has become a popular catch-word in recent days. Legal forums, government hearings, and newspaper columns have all examined a seeming loss of civility or have sought to recover the notion as a means of reinvigorating political culture (Carter 1998, Horowitz, Jamieson 1998, Sapiro, Tannen).

The word, if not the concept, is of Roman origin and points towards the qualities inherent to a good citizen. The Oxford English Dictionary defines civility variously as “the art of civil government”: which derives from a translation of the Latin word *civilitas*; which is a translation of a Greek word, *politike* which is the skill of participating in the affairs of a city or *polis*. As a secondary consideration, the OED also defines civility as “politeness.” In modern use, the word engages both of these meanings. It is either a reference to one’s politeness and good breeding, the state of being civilized,¹ or, it has connotations of citizenship or participatory politics.² In either case, the general feeling seems to be that civility is a type of politeness associated with a place in a democratic or

civil order (Kessler 60-62). It is "the culturally ingrained willingness to tolerate behavior that is in some degree offensive" (Banfield xii).

Academics, who are often more interested in the management of states than with politeness, have used the term in different ways. Political philosopher Burton Zweibach identified civility as "related to a vision of a society in which social conflicts are resolved through a process of non-violent accommodation—a process inconsistent with uncompromisable attachment to passionately-held ideas. . . Civility, in this view, presupposes commitment to lawfulness and to the stability of democratic institutions" (Zwiebach 3; Shils 1-15). Historically, some identify the growth of the idea of civility as a means to supplant, on the one hand, Christian notions of charity (which require a judgment of others) and classical notions of citizenship (where people express themselves vociferously). Civility, as a variety of toleration, represents the middle ground between self-expression and a complete integration of the self with the community (Orwin 90-94). Others have identified the expeditious need for integration of collective and individual wills as the spring from which civility and incivility flow (Freud). Political scientist Hans Eulau has noted that the civil person enjoys a maturity found in "the habitually exercised capacity to respond to others and events without the demand of self constituting the sole criterion according to which to behave or to make judgments." The civil person recognizes that the self and situation outside the self are distinct. Patterns of civility include acts of "persuading, soliciting, consulting, advising, bargaining, compromising, coalition building and so on" and not actions such as "coercing, confronting, deceiving, manipulating," etc (qtd. in Barrett 147).

These meanings aside for a moment, in popular literature, the term usually points toward the need to be polite to others. While Stephen Carter attempts to integrate notions of citizenship into his idea of civility, he ends up speaking of civility as a variety of politeness to which he has attached a religious warrant.³ He builds his case for greater civility around examples that are close to home: people who drive recklessly, a woman that welcomed him to a new neighborhood, a fast food employee. His discussions of politics, the abortion controversy, judicial decorum, and negative campaigning, do not ring as clearly, nor are they as simple to explain. The only exception is his discussion of civility in the context of the civil rights movement, where the forces of civility and incivility are easy to find, even if civil disobedience seems oxymoronic in the context of his discussion of civility.

Studies that link civility and politeness are easy to find. A 1996 *U.S. News and World Report* study found that eighty-nine percent of Americans see incivility as a "serious problem" and seventy-eight percent believed that incivility is more prevalent than a decade ago. More ominously, seventy-six percent of the respondents identified a lack of parental "control" as the culprit—which means, if accurate, that the problem will only continue to get worse (Marks 66). Likewise, examples abound of rude behavior by drivers, waiters, airport passengers. In fact, the calls for more civility are so ubiquitous that George W. Bush's inaugural address called for a "new commitment to live our nation's promise through civility, courage, compassion and character. America, at its best, matches a commitment to principle with a concern for civility."

Here, we are not concerned with civility as a type of politeness or good manners. In fact, we believe that such an equation confuses issues and leads to non-productive notions of civility. Instead, we are more interested in civility only as a political expedience.

One of American's greatest civil weaknesses is our complete inability to talk about problems of race in anything but the most uncivil manner. From Senator Sumter's beating at the hands of a Southern colleague, to the sharp divisions of race encountered at the reading of the O.J. Simpson verdict, race has been one of our culture's greatest sticking points in our attempts to ward off incivility (Boyd vi). While we are bombarded with public images of whites and blacks side-by-side—publicly denying any sense of difference, periodic outbursts point all-too-clearly to differences with and between America's race communities (DeMott B-1). This so-called balkanization (a word that has grown richer in meaning over the last few years) undercuts our sense of common purpose and sets back the causes of civility and race relations.

A Particular Experience

We begin our examination of the nexus of civility and race relations at a college orientation. One of the traditions of Colorado College, a small liberal arts college in Colorado Springs, is that new students engage in one-day forum on a current event. Recent forums have been dedicated to discussing issues as diverse as cloning and the vitality of the American political system. Representatives of different points of view are invited to offer their positions in a forum, students attend discussion groups, and are invited to see speakers talk about various points of view.

On the occasion of Colorado College's 125th anniversary and the orientation of the class of 2002, Colorado College dedicated itself to a discussion of the topic of "Race, Culture, and Civility." While the prospect of a discussion of race seemed simple, the panel participants represented a variety of positions and points of view so that the idea of civility proved more elusive. All seemed to feel that civility had to do with a sense of politeness and the ways that race made itself into public argument. Using the form of the jeremiad, all were concerned with the way that race was discussed, or more often, not discussed. One participant, Patricia Zavella from the University of California at Santa Cruz noted that American culture (and California in particular) seemed to be "at a place where civility had been eroded with regard to racial issues. . . where it had recently become socially acceptable to say things that a few years ago were unheard." Panelist Evelyn Hu-DeHart from the University of Colorado at Boulder defined civility as related to the use of "behavior, language, respect and politeness." She, as did panelist and CBS correspondent Randall Pinkston, noted that civility served as a cultural carrot that foiled, traditionally, for the stick of potential incivility, a strategy that had become part of the effectiveness of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

When students broke out into small groups, they engaged with a subtly different concept of civility. Variouslly, they defined it as being nice, honest, polite, respectful, cultural rules, an attitude of non-condemnation, and as a form

of social chilling where people were not allowed to say what they really meant. The vagaries of these definitions seemed to match the original discussants' lack of clarity regarding the concept. For most, civility had a very personal quality. Rather than related to notions of citizenship and tolerance, civility seemed more appropriately a type of politeness, an attitude of live and let live combined with a sense of "holding one's tongue" when it might be offensive to others (Carter 366-371).

Missing from this was the sense of citizenship and the relation of the individual in a larger cultural circumstance. Others have noted this same privatization of the term. For example, political philosopher Michael Walzer notes:

We expect citizens to obey the law and to maintain a certain decorum of behavior—a decorum that is commonly called civility. That word once had to do more directly with the political virtues of citizenship: one of its obsolescent meanings is "civil righteousness." But it has come increasingly to denote only social virtues; orderliness, politeness, seemingly are the synonyms the dictionary suggests, and these terms, though it is no doubt desirable that they describe our public life, orient us quite decisively toward the private realm. Perhaps this shift in meaning is a sign of our declining dedication to republican values, but it actually occurred some time ago and does not reflect on ourselves and our contemporaries. For some time, we have thought that good behavior is what we could rightly expect from a citizen, and the crucial form of good behavior is everyday law-abidance. Has this expectation been disappointed? Certainly many people write as if it has been. (86)

Walzer continues his argument by referencing Americans' increased commitment to notions of law and order over the course of the last few centuries.

In the instance of race, however, we attend to a different dynamic. The move to privatize civility, to define it as part of the realm of private or voluntary rather than public life, is an ominous move. As one panelist noted, like politics and religion, "talking about race seems rude. . . it violates some American ideal." Former Mississippi governor William Winter noted, similarly, that our "greatest weakness was our tendency to become balkanized on the basis of race." These sentiments are reflected elsewhere. For example, columnist William Raspberry worried that, "Dishonesty, of course, seldom gets us far. But unbridled . . . seems to want could conceivably take us backward. There is something to be said for people who care enough about the issues revolving around race to show up at a public forum and who also care enough about civility to try to express their opinions in ways that aren't needlessly offensive" (Raspberry J-5).

The move to place substantive discussions of race to the margins of public life and civility reflect popular use. The terms "race" and "civility" are often paired. However, their coupling is odd and reflects the desires for social amity and constructive dialogue. The roots of the pairing find themselves in the Civil Rights era where "civil disobedience" was characterized as an extreme form of

incivility. Although the winners write the history, the pairing seems indelible. Now, some African-American leaders (once at the forefront of the civil disobedience movement) call for a new commitment to "civility" on the part of their followers. Julian Bond, upon assuming leadership of the NAACP, noted that the organization needed to return to "integrity and civility"(ctd. in Olesker 1B). *Louisville Courier-Journal* columnist Bob Hill, opposes civility with debate. He writes, "It isn't easy. We're not comfortable talking about race; we don't know how. Strong passions lurk just beneath the surface of our civilities; honest debate requires a difference of opinion. All too often these groups are just preaching to the choir. People who are willing to join them already offer at least the appearance of tolerance" (S-3).

In this context, civility and honesty oppose one another. Honesty, or too much honesty, seems to be a means to breaking down the bonds of civility that ensure common ground. Civility in this instance comes from the outside; it is an imposed series of rules or general principles that come to us often without our consent. One member of the discussion panel noted the opposition, identifying civility as an act of power. For example, Benjamin wrote in the *Nation* that: "when you're in an argument with a thug, there are things much more important than civility" (11). Hu-DeHart noted that the "disproportionate burdens of civility were placed on the shoulders of minorities." Her many examples were well taken. Harvard Law Professor Randall Kennedy, likewise, has warned against "civilitarianism," writing:

[T]he civility movement is deeply at odds with what an invigorated liberalism requires: intellectual clarity; an insistence upon grappling with the substance of controversies; and a willingness to fight loudly, openly, militantly, even rudely for policies and values that will increase freedom, equality, and happiness in America and around the world.

Civility and the Problem of Common Ground

Each of the Colorado College panelists took a progressive view of American race relations. Although they were all quick to point toward a slowing (and sometimes regression) in the rate of inclusion, there still seemed to be some appreciation for the continuing success of the civil rights movement and its general liberation of the nation from oppression. This theme of progress going hand in hand with emancipation and inclusion is a theme common to much American historical representation. Often called the Whig interpretation of history, it represents a vision of the past offered by the eyes of the present and provides a handy rule of thumb for selecting what gets included in our past and what gets excluded (Butterfield 10-11). With liberalism's contemporary dominance, it can be found in our weakness for stories that demonstrate the growing persuasiveness of this ideology (Fukuyama; Burns). Thus, American history can be said to be progressive to the extent that it demonstrates a growing control by citizens at the expense of Monarchic or other Tory considerations.

The ideological embrace of Whiggism, and the agreement that empowerment of more and more people is part of our destiny, does not sit well with the increasing

use of civility to refer to private virtues. In fact, the two would seem to be at odds with one another. The privatization of virtue appears more consistent with a project that would place power in the hands of a few elites than the Whiggish project that would depend on honesty and candor for its benefits (Hariman 160). In this sense we would see civility as a type of civic virtue rather than a personal one—more akin to *logos* than *ethos*. It is here, also, where we must reexamine the critique of civility as a disempowering discourse.

There is ample evidence that the Whig project (although it is an ideal and not a reality) is in jeopardy. Despite inclusion of more people, it is not hard to see a decline in civic activism. Whether we judge by voting behaviors or by people's attempts to segregate their private lives from their ever-growing public lives of work, the promises of civic engagement have come up short (Bellah; Reisman; Meyrowitz).

When we attempt to explain how it is that this has happened, it is probably best to borrow a metaphor. G. Thomas Goodnight has written extensively about the public sphere (214-227). His concern is that the public sphere, a place of public deliberation, has been overwhelmed by what he calls the technical sphere, the realm of expert knowledge. Goodnight argues that increasingly Americans feel less able to speak on matters of public policy and increasingly turn toward experts to tell them what to think or feel. While Goodnight's original work was performed in the context of the Cold War, his ideas seem equally, or perhaps more, true today. The rise of the soundbite, simplistic explanations of public policy, the general cynicism of all political discourse as spin and a general decline in the quality of engaging public deliberation, all point toward a continuing decline in the vitality of the public sphere (Jamieson 1992, 203-236). In its place, however, we find not only increased deference to technical expertise, but also a decline in engaging public discourse. Additionally, we increasingly find retreat to the personal sphere, where personal experience trumps public articulations. When speaking of the decline of civility, we reference the private nature of disclosures and judgments as much as rudeness. In many ways, the public sphere of engagement and cooperation has surrendered to the private sphere of catharsis and experience.

Our experience of civility as a form of rudeness finds kinship with efforts to retreat from the public sphere. Our assumptions that uncivil behavior finds roots in personal conduct or habit fits with our assumption that acts are personal. In this sense, incivility finds the civil portion (the portion that inheres in citizenship) exorcised. In the context of race, the retreat to a sense of personal rather than civil experience endangers our ability to continue an inclusive project.

So What? I'm a Little Uncivil

There are opportunities and dangers inherent in the collapse of the public and private spheres. On the one hand, the feminist cry that the private is the public has opened the way for a variety of laws and norms protecting women from harassment within the context of the family. No longer is it civil (or, civilly protected) for a husband to physically "discipline" his wife. In regards to civility, the positive benefits of our escape has been that even the most recalcitrant racist

or sexist preface, when among friends, their private comments with the phrase, "I don't want to sound racist or sexist. . . .but, . . ." While they generally do proceed to utter their remarks, the caveat at least points toward the intrusion of public standards of civility into private conversations. Overt racista or sexista do not change their mind, but they do have a sense that not everyone wants to hear it—or, at least, hear it in the manner that the speaker finds most comfortable. Progress evidently moves quite slowly.

However, while there are some benefits to the conflation of private and public standards of politeness under the banner of civility, there also lurk dangers. The first danger is very abstract, but real. The concept that civility as politeness begs the question of what standards constitute politeness. If, by civility/politeness, we mean that we do all that we can to spare others' feelings, which is the sense that the Colorado College students used it, then we come up against the liberal project (Kronman 742). For, if our goal is to open the process to a greater number and variety of voices so that the decisions of this inclusive process will be better, more representative, legitimate and informed, then the idea that one should keep their mouth shut would be inimical to our expectations regarding good citizenship and civil virtue. Inherent in this lies the idea of participation. Here, civility would seem at odds with our traditional political goals of maximizing public legitimacy for well-thought out plans. Such a limited notion of civility should be an anathema to a liberal democracy (Schmidt 419-427; Kasson 3⁴).

One side effect of this collapse is that it jeopardizes the political viability of civic discourse. That is, when civility becomes a personal rather than a corporate virtue, it loses much of its governing power. In this sense, calls for more civility do little more than effect a variety of therapeutic discourse that helps maintain the sense of community of a wronged group (one that has been treated uncivilly) but does not increase or magnify their political power or accomplish their political goals (Cloud).

Here the concepts of civil disobedience and incivility part ways. One gains its power by its redefinition of citizenship, while the other gains its power by negating the concept (Carter 20-37). Sociologist Edward Shils attempted to get at this point when he defined civility as "the virtue of civil society. It is the readiness to moderate particular, individual or parochial interests and to give precedence to the common good" (16-17). Moderation within the context of the common good combines the virtues of politeness with notions of citizenship. This move to embrace the common good, or to even propose that such a thing exists, is as rhetorical as anything else. In practicality, it means that civility seeks to create coalitions that are as large, and legitimating as possible. This is a legitimacy that does not discount any potential ally, but seeks their consent. While it does not discount that there are significant differences and alienations between groups of people, it does recognize that these are sectoral, contingent and overdetermined.

A second danger lies with balkanization. On the one hand, the separation of groups into separate tribal entities denies the value of the democratic project while doing damage to the groups themselves. The creation of a tribe is an act of overdetermination. For the sake of membership, individuals supplant their differences in order to create a unified front. This is where concerns for politeness,

such as concerns about airing dirty-laundry before outsiders, becomes a problem. Additionally, differences within the group become problematic. Differences between individuals on the basis of class, for example, get appropriated as a part of difference inherent to the group as a consequence of race. In this instance, one form of difference overwhelms and suppresses all others.

For example, there is not, in any real sense, a unified white race. Several scholars have noted that it is an “uninterrogated space” (Nakayama and Krizek 292). While it is rarely invoked reflexively, it often interpolates a group—there are whites that possess certain qualities. Such a representation is overdetermined—diminishing in the process attempts to gain insights from a variety of viewpoints. Likewise, other race communities also underplay the effects of intersections of race with other dimensions for fear that they may undercut the clarity of the race distinction or that they demonstrate a lack of organization or resolve.

Such overdetermination is part and parcel to identity politics, or any attempt to reduce our infinite complexity. In the context of civility, the use of the term seems clear—do not rock the boat or air dirty laundry because it will reflect back on all of us, or make us look incoherent. In this instance, the use of civility as a means of imposing discipline seems incompatible with generalized notions of citizenship since it depends on predetermined coalitions rather than the rhetorical demands of creating new ones.

Calls for civility often silence real opportunities for interchange. For example, The counter-reformation claims on talk radio and elsewhere that the forces of multiculturalism, diversity and political correctness and, the liberal use of the term “racist”, particularly by white liberals, are both attempts to claim the high ground of victimage at the hands of the uncivil. The popular idea that we are engaged in a culture war, or, that the future will be marked by an inevitable clash of cultures, portends a future where we will have to defend our identities (Gailey D-3; Huntington). At the same time, however, it prevents us from taking seriously any effort to preserve or respect our differences for fear that we will lose something in the meantime.

A third problem with the growth of a private notion of civility is that the application of the concept to every individual and attempts to impose civil discipline to save civic virtue effectively trivialize the very idea. Colorado College panelists noted that civility and incivility work together. The social status that we afford civility gives meaning to the concept of incivility. They work together as a social carrot and stick. Threats of incivility often provoke us to act more inclusively and civilly. If culture-wide incivility threatens to overtake us, there no longer is a reason to cooperate, sacrifice or seek more legitimate coalitions because future action seems improbable. There is no longer a reason to be civil. Especially in the area of race, threats of incivility are a powerful motivation to negotiate. For example, the civil rights movement benefited greatly from first Martin Luther King’s threats of incivility with his work with the SCLC, which promoted large scale public events—usually captured by cameras—and later, he benefited from the explosive rhetoric of Malcolm X and the Black Power

movement. The idea that incivility could break out often promotes a re-evaluation of what counts as civil.

Where incivility rules, there is little motivation to cooperate because there is no hope of some future benefit. The idea that races can not know one another, or that one race is seeking to dominate another, or the claim that all of a group are inherently racist, or the claims of talk radio that in defense of their identity they must make no concessions to "political correctness" (a claim akin to noting that they should be immune to all attempts at civility or symbolic concession), all frustrate cooperative enterprises and entrench contingent and overdetermined identities. In classical argumentation, they represent the fallacy of "ad hominem" where what is said is overwhelmed by an evaluation of who does the saying. This seems to be the problem with race relations.

A fourth problem has to do with the roots of civility. Stephen Carter rightly notes that any act of law is both an act of violence and an act of incivility (223). By this he means that the law, ultimately, has to be backed up by the force of the state. Even simple laws, like traffic tickets, require armed officers to enforce them. Opposed to this threat of violence lies civility. This is why civil rights protesters could use civility as a carrot—using threats of violence or anarchy as their foil. Yet, civility has to do with more than simply lawfulness; although the use of the term is easily confused—because civil disobedience is a variety of lawlessness. Instead, civility relates more with the folk-ways of people that live together. We can say that America as a civil culture that is inclusive in the same way that we can say that we share a civil religion (which respects most religions without regard to a particular one).

One of the problems of civil discussions of race deals with the different ways that we come at the problem. Without a unified sense of what is appropriate to the running of our system and what is not, we have difficulty finding common ground. Conflating civic virtue with personal politeness has converse consequences. On the one hand, slights take on a personal quality—reflecting less a sense of civil duty than an attempt at personal insult (rather than reflecting one's ignorance of the facts). On the other hand, conflating private and civil virtues opens civility to codification. We fear that rather than coming to reflect the confluence of personal and civil values that allow our system to work or at least demonstrate one's commitment to the project, that codification, in the form of speech codes, hate speech laws, and other forms of official humiliation, actually undercut the motivation to participate. Just as DeMott's example of civility as something that masters use to keep down their slaves, the use of codified official civility now strikes many conservative Americans as equally limiting. Rather than embracing the sensitivity that multiculturalism promised, the move toward official multiculturalism has sparked a counter-revolution. Bumper stickers and talk shows proclaim their "political incorrectness." In fact, Liberty University, for whom the conservative Reverend Jerry Fallwell serves as President, used to post at its gates a sign proclaiming that it is not a "politically correct" campus. The odd thing about this revolution is that it is so often proclaimed by those frequently espouse a significant Christian commitment—which would seem to embrace catholic virtues of inclusion and sympathy. In fact, if asked, those that

declare their "incorrectness" would also probably claim to be more-civil-than-average and greater-than-average commitment to the goals of the Whig project. Why do the two points of view seem so incommensurable?

The binding glue of civility is a commitment to a project larger than the self and is rooted in the desire for public legitimacy. For many, this binding appears to come at the expense of a commitment to one's own reference groups. The ideas of identity and community seem to be at odds with one another and the concept of pluralism has been rejected as an attempt at assimilation (another silencing term). Many argue that any attempt to commit to a larger community requires a sacrifice of personal history and identity. Therefore, attempts at vigorous civil participation are met with silencing accusation of not being _____ enough, of being a sell-out, of being a liberal, or of assimilating.

This should not be the case. Instead, personal identity is part and parcel the Whig ideology. It requires differences of opinion. The idea that the state is the only validation for an identity, that Southern states need to fly the Confederate Battle flag, or that ethnic studies programs are an essential part of any college campus, obscures the strength of the identity which lies with the contributions of those who subscribe or are interpolated by it (anything that the state needs to sustain will probably not survive anyway). The confluence of personal identity as the sole determiner of political identity corrupts and displaces civility and civil government.

Conclusions

The concept of civility is much used and much abused. Recent theorists seem split on the issue. On the one hand, some argue that civility is in decline. Popular studies note that people appear less and less polite and that this politeness inhibits our ability to return to an ideal sense of American community. On the other hand, some theorists criticize the concept as an act of power that seeks to silence, through a coercive social network of rules—the weight of which is disproportionately borne by minority populations. While seemingly at odds, both contribute to a common notion that civility is a private virtue. When we view civility as a private virtue, not only do many folks find themselves frustrated by what they are unable to say, but they are licensed to feel nearly constantly hurt by the incivility of others.

We have argued that this recent manifestation of the concept of civility reflects the confluence of several social trends that generally point toward a decline in the public sphere in favor of an increasingly privatized and balkanized notion of public participation. In this new world, all public discussions hold the potential for personal slight and ultimately silence (for personalized opinions are thought to defy public reason). Increasingly, discussions of the place of race in public life, and even the idea that race matters, become increasingly difficult because of the binds created by a privatized civility. Here we have identified four ways that the privatization of civility and then race has undercut our ability to maintain a civil government. The privatization of race diminishes the strength of arguments to progress in the Whig tradition, promotes balkanization, undercuts the strength of our commitment to order, promoting chaos as the norm, and weakens our civil

strength by increasingly pointing toward official channels to promote personal conduct. Together, these threats point toward the eventual death of civility as a politically or rhetorically useful concept.

Endnotes

¹ Courteous or politeness #2, *Oxford English Dictionary*, Second Edition, J.A. Simpson and E.S.C Weiner (eds.) vol 2 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989): sv civility

² "senses, connected with citizenship and civil polity; the art of civil government, politics." *Oxford English Dictionary*, Second Edition, J.A. Simpson and E.S.C Weiner (eds.) vol 2 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989): sv civility.

³ In his preface Carter notes: "I do not consider civility synonymous with manners (although I do think manners matter). I have in mind an attitude of respect, even love, for our fellow citizens, an attitude, as we shall see, that has important political and social implications. Moreover, civility is a moral issue, not just a matter of habit or convention: it is morally better to be civil than to be uncivil." (xii).

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Metaphorical Vision in Winston Churchill's "Be Ye Men of Valour"

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Winston Churchill has been described as one of the greatest rhetors in British history, so why was he so effective at inspiring spirit, passion and cause in his audience? By analyzing Churchill's use of metaphor in his first broadcast to the alarmed public of 1940, the critic is able to deduce the effects his rhetoric had on a war-concerned audience; furthermore, those effects had a significant impact by changing people's attitudes and conceptions about their position in the war, the war itself and the vision of victory. As evidenced in this analysis of "Be Ye Men of Valour," Churchill's use of metaphors produced four basic effects in establishing a reality for the British audience, including a unifying, an instilling, a restoring and a legitimizing effect.

Description of the Artifact

John Colville, a close friend and associate of Churchill's, reflected the common sentiment held about Churchill's ability to lead a nation in the midst of serious turmoil by indicating, "At this point in history one of the greatest administrations which has ever governed the United Kingdom was in the process of formation" (124). As Field-Marshal Lord Alanbrooke further recognized, "The wartime dictatorship entrusted by Parliament to Churchill was the answer for which Britain and the free world had been waiting" (Bryant 14).

Following the devastating overrun of Norway by German tanks, the House of Commons acknowledged a parliamentary crisis and thus called for a debate about the state of government leadership in the upcoming war situation. Speakers from both the Conservative and the Labour Parties expressed great concern over whether Prime Minister Chamberlain and his administration had the tenacity, the will and the support to see this war effort to the bitter end. The Opposition Party (the Labour Party) called for a vote of censure. Leo Amery, a parliamentary representative, made the poignant case: "We must get into the Government men who can match our enemies in fighting spirit, in daring, in resolution and in thirst for victory" (Qtd. in Oliver 197). Churchill, described the situation as a house divided in a "...violent manifestation of want of confidence in Mr. Chamberlain and his Administration" (*Gathering* 660).

Friday, May 10, 1940 marked the long-feared blow to the Western Front, as the Germans invaded Holland and Belgium, demanding quick action from Britain's government (*Gathering* 662). The dissatisfaction of the public and Parliament forced Prime Minister Chamberlain to concede his power to the

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stronger leadership of Churchill. "The institutions of political freedom had justified their right to be defended by summoning as their leader a man fit to wrestle victory out of adversity" (Schoenfeld 11). After a conference with Chamberlain, the King of England, Edward VIII, asked Churchill to form a national government, which he resolutely set out to create as the new Prime Minister of England (*Gathering* 665). As Lord Moran acknowledged, "He [Churchill] was indeed made for the hour. In the extraordinary circumstances of 1940, with the hopeless inequality of Germany and Britain, we [Britain] needed an unreasonable man at the top" (Qtd. in Oliver 198). This transition of government was significant in that it marked the first triumph for Britain in the war because she found a leader equal to the gravest of challenges. Churchill was the only choice because the new government depended ultimately on Churchill's positive relationship with the people (Schoenfeld 10). This positive relationship resulted from his honest interaction with the people, always stating the facts of every situation, no matter how unpleasant, and trusting the people, while, at the same time, guiding them with strong, positive leadership ("Churchill's Concept" 80).

Without hesitation, Churchill began creating his national government by securing the opposition Labour Party's support. Along with being Prime Minister, he appointed himself as the Minister of Defense with no definition of scope or power. He exuded confidence in his knowledge of the tactics and strategies of war, convinced that he and Britain would result as victors. Colville confirmed: "He always retained unanswering independence of thought...unusual capacity for affection and intense loyalty...great compassion...combined with personal generosity...[and an] ability to assimilate quickly the main points in a complicated story" (125-6). Churchill accomplished what Chamberlain could not in establishing a united government backed by Parliament and the people because, as Lord Alanbrooke recognized, he possessed "...unbounded genius, unrelenting energy, dogged determination, a refusal to accept defeat in any shape or form, vast personal courage, a deep sense of humour, and an uncanny faculty of inspiring respect, admiration, loyalty and deep affection..." (Bryant 25). He succeeded because he confronted people with the truth about the circumstances they were facing, which led them to entrust him with their future and have confidence in his vision of eventual victory (Thompson 37-8). Churchill governed events not by military or legal force, but by guiding minds and stirring spirits. He did not merely describe the ongoing war, "...he translated it; replacing literal circumstance with metaphorical condition" (Rickert 106).

On May 13, 1940, Churchill addressed an eager House of Commons asking for a vote of confidence in the new, united administration (*Finest* 25). He alerted the House of the "crisis" Britain faced, recognized the long months ahead that would see great struggle, and, finally, he offered the government his tenacious leadership through "...blood, toil, tears and sweat" (*Blood* 276). Churchill designed a vision of victory and a strategy of waging an unrelentous war by sea, land and air, and thus the House unanimously accepted Churchill and his new government (*Finest* 26). Most importantly, the people had great confidence that

Churchill was a leader who understood exactly what risks should be taken and how to enact effective strategies in dealing with the enemy (Panter 56).

While the British people felt much safer with Churchill as their leader, their living conditions slowly declined as the threat of German invasion increased. As Downes Mollie Panter described, "...London itself seemed much the same except that everyone carried a paper and...a gas mask..." (54). The people quickly realized that they were in battle for their lives, their country and to prevent the extinction of the free world.

By May 16th, the Germans invaded French soil at Sedan jeopardizing not only Paris, but also the whole French army, which led many to become skeptical about the famed French army. Even the French government was appalled at the incapability of their "invincible" French army to hold back the German forces (Colville 133). Consequently, Churchill had to make the fateful decision whether British troops would leave their defenses in Belgium in order to form a line of defense in France. Furthermore, Churchill and the Cabinet had to decide whether to send the majority of the British military in the hope of turning defeat to victory on the Western Front or to maintain a strong defense in Britain, on the assumption that even if France was overcome, Britain could carry on defense of the Western Front from home. Churchill hesitantly chose to send ten fighter squadrons to aid the French. This action characterized a huge risk because, if Britain lost these fighters, her defenseless position against a German air raid would lead to her quick destruction.

On the eve of the nineteenth of May, the press published the devastating news that German forces defeated the French army south of the B.E.F., opening a vast gap on the British right (Colville 135). As the British Commander-in-Chief reported, "The picture [is] now no longer that of a line bent or temporarily broken, but of a besieged fortress" (*Finest* 54). In Churchill's first broadcast address, "Be Ye Men of Valour," he attempted to alleviate society's fear of German advancement into Britain because of the defeated French army. General Sir Edmund Ironside described the context leading into Churchill's address: "It seems hard to think we are up against the crashing of the Empire. And yet we are most surely" (316). Churchill's long career in politics had been a grand preparation for his climatic petition to the public in order to "...convert the fear of defeat into an expectation of victory" (Oliver 198). He realized that what was needed most was the preservation and enhancement of the nation's and the free world's morale.

Speaker

Through his position as the Prime Minister of a country in the midst of war, Churchill faced the difficult activity of arousing the wartime fervor and awakening the sentiment of the British people through superior oration. Churchill "...communicated 'his very soul' to the...people 'and they mutually inspired each other'" ("Churchill as Orator" 221). According to Charles Lomas, Churchill reached the highest level of ethical appeal by achieving the complete identification of speaker and listener through his wartime speeches ("Churchill's Concept" 81). The public initially listened to Churchill because he possessed high credibility, following from his position as Prime Minister and the recurring

fulfillment of his prophetic ideas about war, strategies and events. As an editor of *The Historian* describes, "[Churchill was]...one of the most articulate of all statesmen, the spokesman for his age. No public figure since Lincoln has found so invariably the right word for the right occasion" (Qtd. in *Churchill's Rhetoric* 1).

Churchill possessed a special type of oratorical style where he was able to use his voice like an organ with "...the power to touch chords in men's hearts..." (Bryant 12). In "The Scaffolding of Rhetoric," Churchill defined oratory as one of the most precious gifts of humankind, where the orator existed as "...an independent force in the world" (Qtd. in "Churchill as Orator" 218). Churchill further confirmed that the great orator must believe in all he/she says, project the audience's passions, act sincerely with good will, and present a commanding physical presence and a striking voice. As Manfred Weidhorn, a rhetorical critic, recognized, Churchill held to a sophistic view of oratory, where Churchill argued that the orator's task was to "...allay critical faculties by presenting a series of vivid impressions, each of which is replaced before being too closely examined" (Qt. in "Churchill as Orator" 219). Furthermore, Churchill agreed that rhetorical talent was given only to a few and was not attainable through training. However, Churchill's humble spirit led him to continually deny his position as a great orator. He reasoned that he was not of the caliber of great orators of the past because he precomposed and memorized his speeches, as opposed to using the dramatic art of spontaneous words and guiding feelings ("Churchill as Orator" 219, 222).

Description of the Unit of Analysis

Churchill's careful preparation of each address, his sense of history and his ability to inspire an entire country to share a vision of victory justify the use of metaphoric criticism in the examination of his first public broadcast as Prime Minister. Weidhorn emphasized Churchill's careful study in his examination of Churchill's five principle elements of rhetorical proficiency, including correct diction, rhythm and the balance of phrases, the accumulation of arguments, analogy and extravagance and exaggeration ("Churchill as Orator" 219). Churchill defined the use of analogy as a tool to feed the human need to understand the unknown through the known. He often employed analogies by recalling past figures and dates people would recognize, identify with and take pride in remembering ("Churchill as Orator" 221). He used these historical references to either prove a point through a historical parallel or to provide inspiration to his listeners. Churchill sought to apply the lessons of the past to the problems of the present ("Winston Churchill" 155). Fundamentally, Churchill used metaphor "...to move [the audience] and perhaps to alter the world" (*Churchill's Rhetoric* 61).

Churchill possessed an inspired impulse for the right word and was fascinated by the eloquent embodiment of the right ideas, the right words and the right rhythm (Oliver 191). The success of his wartime speeches resulted from his "...deliberate, recurring use of simple, vivid words" in, as Harold Nicholson describes, a "...combination of great flights of oratory with sudden

swoops into the intimate and conversational" (*Churchill's Rhetoric* 32). Churchill's words were not spoken for mere oratorical flowering, but they possessed the gusto of power and resolve of the man speaking them (Oliver 205). His speeches were carefully prepared, formal and stylistically ornate. He spoke *to*, rather than *with*, his audience and saw himself as a father figure, bestowing wisdom, strength and courage on "his" people. Furthermore, Churchill possessed the skill to simplify complex issues so people might understand them in terms of their long-term historical significance (Oliver 191-2).

Finally, Michael Osborn emphasizes the importance of metaphors in a moment of crisis when all other forms of symbolic cultural identity are swept away. It is then the speaker's duty to reassure people that, despite surface commotion, an individual still remains important as an entity unto him/herself (341). Metaphors serve as structuring principles, enlightening people to one reality, while hiding another, granting each metaphor the ability to produce a different perspective on the same reality. Fundamentally, metaphor may be defined as a way of knowing (Foss 359-60). Churchill used the great power of metaphors in "Be Ye Men of Valour" in order to enliven the human heart and penetrate the human will to strive forward with gallant effort. Following interaction theory that holds metaphors are a placing of two terms side by side: a subject or tenor that is viewed through the lens of a frame or vehicle, we now turn to examining the key metaphors of Churchill's speech.

Analysis

Churchill constructed a symbolic reality where the British people took comfort in looking to the future to frame the present, overlooking present obstacles in light of future victory. He acknowledged the "gravity of the hour," but encouraged the audience to not be easily discouraged by the present condition, but to "...look with confidence to the stabilisation of the Front in France" (*Be* 210). Churchill focused on what Britain could and would accomplish through "dogged endurance" (*Be* 210). As language creates reality, Britain would be victorious, and Churchill acknowledged that if she fought to the end, "...it can only be glorious" (*Be* 211).

Churchill presented an abundance of convincing metaphors in "Be Ye Men of Valour." He used descriptive vehicles to frame each tenor in order to enliven the spirit and determination of the British people.

Churchill framed Germany as the evil enemy who had constructed an "intruding wedge" on the Western Front that the British must aid the French in taking out (*Be* 209). His dark description of these foes reinforced Britain's justification to exact total warfare on the enemy. He characterized Germany as the "powerfully armed enemy" with "raiding mechanised vehicles," void of the heart and stamina the British possessed (*Be* 211, 210). Churchill warned Britain to prepare to face this "hideous apparatus of aggression." The British soldiers must protect their families and fellow countrymen from these ravagers of the defenseless (*Be* 209). Finally, every man and woman must rise up to defend mankind against these "soul-destroying," tyrannical barbarians (*Be* 212).

While the Germans acted as evil tyrants exacting punishment on the world, the British and French armies were courageous victors seeking to restore righteous

ruling in Europe. In a more inspirational description, Churchill depicted the French and British armies as the rescuers of mankind from the dark evil of Germany's "soul-destroying" tyranny (*Be* 212). Churchill described the only means to victory as actively fighting, doggedly enduring and clawing down the enemy. The armies were capable of these tasks because they were "well-trained, well-equipped armies" possessing magnificent genius to contribute worthily to the end result (*Be* 210). While the British and French were naturally solid fighting powers, Churchill capitalized on praiseworthy terms to dispel the dark shadow of discouragement at the present condition and color the future with a vision of attainable victory.

While the armies were already engaged and encouraged in battle, the masses feared the bleak present condition of war. Churchill acknowledged the "gravity of the hour," but he maintained, "...it would be foolish to lose heart and courage..." because the magnificent British and French armies could not fail (*Be* 210). However, in order to be victorious, Churchill required a new state of mind from the people. He urged every man and woman to stand as resisters of intimidation, as strong-willed and faithful servants to the war cause, and as pridefully engaged in this moral battle over control of the spirit (*Be* 211).

Yet, the most important task for Churchill was to frame the tremendous battle as one where the British had the chance to emerge victorious. He framed this tenor as a battle against evil to restore righteousness, which replaced people's superficial idea of fighting with the concept of battle as spiritual warfare for the world's soul. Would Britain still stand helpless and uninspired, allowing evil to conquer? Of course not, which was why Churchill employed this metaphor- to invoke godly truths and duty. Churchill encouraged people to perform their God-given duty by acting out against evil and restoring righteousness: "As the Will of God is in Heaven," let men of valor serve Truth and Justice by defending the outrage of the nation against the barbaric forces that seek to "darken and stain the pages of history" (*Be* 212). Not only was this a far-reaching battle to halt world domination, but it was a battle close to home. It was a "...battle for our island- for all that Britain is, and all that Britain means" (*Be* 211). The people could not stand to loose their freedom and history to such a maniacal and materialistic force, so they had to fight this battle to save their ancestry, their heritage, and the life of their country. Thus, Churchill successfully reframed the term battle to mean much more than mere combat; instead, battle embodied the struggle to protect life, honor, rights and freedom (*Be* 211).

Not only did Churchill have to describe the battle, but he had to frame his vision of victory for the people to share. Victory was not a vain conquering, but an uniting bond and a glorious vision of rescuing the world from the domination of evil. In the hope for "a sudden transformation of the scene," Churchill invoked each man and woman's sense of duty to act to bring about the future hope of victory (*Be* 210). In being able to visualize what they were chasing, the people were better equipped to "wage war until victory is won" (*Be* 211). Without a shared concept of what victory stood for, the people would not be inspired to so doggedly endure and fight because they would have no idea what they were exhaustively seeking.

Finally, Churchill employed the use of spiritual metaphors, using vehicles to frame the tenors of God, Altar and Trinity Sunday. Churchill framed this sudden engagement in world war as more than another succession of battles; instead, he relayed that it was each countryman's duty to carry out the will of God on earth and protect His people from the barbaric hand of evil tyranny encroaching on Western Europe. God was calling the British to restore His righteousness on earth and revive the heavenly altar, symbolizing safety, sanctity, and God's graciousness. The altar would stand as the symbol of victory, where Britain was able to overcome its own destruction and prevent the destruction of the heavenly altar. Churchill displayed his great sense of history and identification with the ideals of the British culture by inviting the people to remember that "To-day is Trinity Sunday," the first Sunday after Pentecost honoring the Holy Trinity (*Be* 212). Churchill's allusion enabled the audience to restructure their thinking and align themselves with the reverence of this day, which Churchill used to spur the "faithful servants of Truth and Justice" to be ready to defend the nation (*Be* 212). He encouraged everyone to arm themselves with valor, truth and courage and prepare for the brewing conflict.

What were the consequences of Churchill's use of metaphors on the British audience? We argue that there were four main effects: a unifying effect, an instilling effect, a restoring effect and a legitimizing effect. In order to accomplish such positive effects on the audience, Churchill highlighted the ideas of "we can do it" and "let us move past the present obstacles and march into battle with a shared vision of victory." He recognized that Britain did not need a strategic plan, but an inflamed spirit. She did not need anything to stand in the way of her unharnessed confidence. Churchill's rhetoric worked to unify, instill, restore and legitimize the British people.

Churchill unified the audience in their vision of victory and their willingness to fight against a common, evil enemy to ensure victory. Churchill united all men and women fighting to save democratic ideals in order to show their striking contrast with the German warriors of tyranny and barbarism. By seeing themselves as completely different than the enemy, the British people were more likely to assimilate with each other and take active resistance against those trying to destroy their united front. As Michael Osborn notes, "Churchill utilizes symbolism to strengthen their [British] commitment to this virtue, first by conceptualizing a reward...second by specifying even more vividly a punishment" (342). The reward of following the ideal model for future action, fighting for Britain, was victory, whereas the punishment of apathetic indifference or opposition was servitude and shame. By following the course of action Churchill proposed, "...[we] will never surrender ourselves to servitude and shame, whatever the cost and the agony may be" (*Be* 211). Churchill illustrated this unity by inspiring the people:

Side by side, unaided except by their kith and kin in the great Dominions and by the wide Empires which rest beneath their shield- side by side, the British and French peoples have advanced to rescue not only Europe but

also mankind from the foulest and most soul-destroying tyranny which has ever darkened and stained the pages of history. (*Be* 212)

Second, Churchill instilled in the audience a metaphorical vision of victory in a grave hour. He required confidence in that vision by assuring that nothing other than victory would result from the strong fighting power of the British and French armies. If "...the French retain that genius for recovery and counter-attack for which they have so long been famous; and if the British Army shows the dogged endurance and solid fighting power of which there have been so many examples in the past- then a sudden transformation of the scene might spring into being" (*Be* 210). By examining the trail of past victories and the present magnificence of the armies, Churchill led the audience to believe there was no other alternative except to fight for and secure victory with confidence.

Additionally, Churchill restored courage in the British people, convincing them that they could conquer the enemy and halt Hitler's world domination effort. He restored confidence and willingness to engage in unrelentless battle during a critical moment in history. Churchill began his speech as a confident plea for the people to see the importance of their participation in this revival from a solemn hour to an hour of glorious victory: "I speak to you for the first time as Prime Minister in a solemn hour for the life of our country, of our Empire, of our Allies, and, above all, of the cause of Freedom" (*Be* 209). Churchill restored the importance of the moment and the necessity of the "general engagement of the masses" (*Be* 210). Additionally, Churchill convinced the people, "...we are ready to face it [German invasion]; to endure it; and to retaliate against it" (*Be* 211). Lastly, Churchill restored pride in every individual that their involvement was crucial and that they were "...sharing the perils of our lads at the Front" (*Be* 211).

Finally, Churchill legitimized the masses involvement in the battle for Britain and the free world. He recognized that it was God's will that Britain engage in the battle against evil in order to restore the heavenly altar of righteousness. As Field-Marshal Lord Alanbrooke affirmed, Churchill "...believed in a Providence that worked through human instruments and...he made the people he led believe in it too" (12). Ultimately, Churchill sought the masses' involvement in restoring government that holds paramount the sanctity and peace of all people. He acknowledged that "the interests of property, the hours of labour, are nothing compared with the struggle for life and honour, for right and freedom, to which we have vowed ourselves" (*Be* 211). Churchill recognized that it was Britain's God-given duty to restore the "shattered States and bludgeoned races...upon all of whom the long night of barbarism will descend, unbroken even by a star of hope, unless we conquer, as conquer we must; as conquer we shall" (*Be* 212).

In conclusion, Churchill's rhetoric has always been regarded as powerful and persuasive, and, in analyzing his use of metaphor in "Be Ye Men of Valour," it is evident how his rhetorical techniques interacted to ensure certain effects on the audience. Since this was his first public address to a national audience in a desperate time of war and confusion, his speech necessitated the performance of many tasks. Through his careful construction of metaphors, Churchill was able

to unify the audience in accordance with an identifiable enemy and a vision of victory, instill confidence in that vision of victory, restore courage and conviction in Britain's attempt to halt German domination, and legitimize the total engagement of the masses in the war effort. Churchill's effective use of metaphors to reinvigorate a nation in a time of world crisis is an example to all others who face a discouraged audience and a hopeless situation. Churchill reconstructed reality to fit his optimistic vision, and he secured the audience's acceptance of that reality, which initiated his dominance as a rhetorical giant in England during the war.

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Clinton's Address to the Nation: A Case Study of Apologetic Goals

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Abstract

The main argument of this case study is that apologetic discourse can be both *aretaic* (character oriented) and *teleological* (purpose oriented). Recognition of these goals as part of the "speech set" provides insight into contemporary *apologia*. Clinton's August 17, 1998 *apologia* was seemingly more "purpose" than "character" oriented. Moreover, the paradoxical reception of this speech indicates that an examination of underlying speech goals is an essential component in determining the relative effectiveness of *apologia*.

Introduction

When President William Jefferson Clinton stood before the world on August 17, 1998, he was a man caught in the clutches of his private actions and public denials. Given these circumstances, many political observers expected him to somehow re-affirm his moral authority and figuratively to throw himself at the mercy of the American people. For various reasons, Clinton chose otherwise. A systematic analysis of the speech revealed a paucity of the expected *aretaic* (character oriented) rhetoric designed to affirm virtue, nobility of character, and integrity (see Pojman, 1995). In light of this observation, this essay will examine Clinton's political and rhetorical exigencies, his rhetorical choices, the reception of his speech, and the subsequent apologetic implications.

Political Exigencies

On January 18, 1998, a gossip column on the Internet, the Drudge Report, provided the first public account of the Monica Lewinsky scandal (Abse & Crites, 1998, p. A19). This was initially uncovered as a result of the deposition of the Paula Jones sexual harassment suit—which was later dismissed. Secretly tape-recorded conversations between Linda Tripp and Monica Lewinsky indicated sexual involvement between the young former White House intern and President Clinton.

Despite repeated public denials by Clinton, a media frenzy ensued. The cover of *U.S. News & World Report* asked: "Is He [Clinton] Finished?" (1998, cover). Similarly, *Newsweek's* cover declared: "Clinton in Crisis" (1998, cover). The cover of *Time* magazine referred to the Lewinsky case as the "Sordid Tale That Imperils the President" (1998, cover). In assessing the "history of addiction"

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in the Clinton family, David Maraniss of the *Washington Post* suggested that Clinton suffered from “sexual addiction” (1998a, p. A21). The line between mainstream news and tabloid fodder was increasingly blurred.

Historian Stephen Ambrose described the media circus as “Washington agog. Reporters in a feeding frenzy. The White House besieged” (1998, p. 20). *Time* magazine assessed the immediate broadcast media reaction to the Lewinsky scandal as an almost surreal spectacle:

Within the hour they [Clinton’s staff] faced a parade of hyperventilating talk-show hosts clutching the Constitution and handicapping the prospect of impeachment proceedings; of psychologists explaining how to tell children that the President might be a liar and a serial philanderer; of network anchors jetting back from Havana. (Gibbs, 1998, p. 22)

Strong immediate media reaction notwithstanding, the Lewinsky scandal seemed to be fading away until July 28th—when independent counsel, Kenneth Starr, granted her “full immunity in exchange for testimony” (“Caught in the web,” 1998, p. 35). After Lewinsky’s immunity deal was struck, it appeared to be a matter of time before Clinton was cornered into testifying before the grand jury and subsequently addressing the American people. Moreover, Starr’s possession of Lewinsky’s stained, “infamous blue dress may have helped freshen Clinton’s memory” (Duffy & Weisskopf, 1998, p. 32).

On August 17, 1998, in the midst of steadily high job approval ratings (approximately 60%), Clinton testified before Starr’s grand jury and later that evening delivered a nationally televised address (“Clinton’s ups and downs,” 1998, p. 23). The *New York Times* aptly described Clinton’s political exigency as “hemmed in by prosecutors and reaching for political forgiveness” (Bennet, 1998, p. 1A).

Rhetorical Options

Given the preceding events, Clinton’s rhetorical options were not so much “if” he should address the American people, but “when” and “how.” At this juncture, Clinton appeared to be beyond the point of rhetorical avoidance or reliance on surrogate apologists. While such strategies had sustained him through most of the Paula Jones sexual harassment lawsuit (see Vartabedian & Knight, 1998), his credibility was now in immediate peril. Additionally, his blanket denials with regard to having a sexual relationship with Ms. Lewinsky were appearing to be more and more insupportable in light of the physical evidence provided by the dress.

On the evening of August 17, President Clinton faced an ominous yet not insurmountable apologetic task. His rhetorical task was aptly described by Ware and Linkugel (1973) as a “custom of Occidental culture firmly established by Socrates, Martin Luther, Robert Emmet, and thousands of lesser men” (p. 273). Ware and Linkugel defined *apologia* as, “a personalized defense by an individual of his morality, motives, and reputation” (1973, p. 274). Moreover, their often

cited factors or strategies of the apologetic form were divided into the categories of denial, bolstering, differentiation, and transcendence (p. 275).

Other scholars—particularly given the aftermath of the 1973-74 Watergate scandal—have also addressed the strategic urgency of effective *apologia*. Kruse (1977) stressed that a prominent person must effectively “repair his character if it has been directly or indirectly damaged by overt charges or rumors and allegations, which negatively value his behavior and/or his judgment” (p. 13). Crable (1978) pointed out that the essence of accountability through *apologia* is the fact that the actor/politician has exercised his own moral choice in his conduct, and that such conduct may at any time become the subject of ethical challenge (pp. 25-26). Gold’s (1978) assessment of post-Watergate America was that politicians “can literally be made or broken on their ability to practice the ritual of self-defense” (p. 316).

Similarly, scholars in the 1980s and 1990s have continued to acknowledge the strategic significance of political *apologia*. Kruse (1981) concluded that apologists present their “character” as they wish their audience to perceive them—and “logos and pathos function principally to support ethos” (p. 290). Ryan (1982) elaborated on accusation and apology (or the accuser and the apologist) as an important “speech set” (p. 254). Downey (1993) explored the “symbolic” importance of *apologia* and arrived at five subgenres: self-exoneration, self-absolution, self-sacrifice, self-service, and self-deception (p. 42). More recently, Benoit (1995) provided five broad categories in his typology of image restoration strategies: denial, evading responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification (pp. 74-82).

With regard to Clinton’s possible rhetorical options, previous contemporary research on *apologia* has yielded a number of findings. *Apologia* results from moral choices that have been subjected to ethical challenges and unless character repair is made, there can be negative future consequences. Therefore, *apologia* often involves focusing the audience on how the apologist wants them to perceive his/her character. The apology is seemingly context (or accusation) bound. Finally, there have been numerous theories on the possible subgenres and strategies inherent in the apologetic form.

As such, the contemporary study of *apologia* has provided a number of theoretical findings upon which apologists may draw. However, the general form of the apology has not significantly deviated from its ancient use. Specifically, the four following rhetorical tasks are often undertaken by the ancient as well as the contemporary apologist: (1) A statement of the case at hand is given; (2) Then, a refutation of the charges and often a counterattack are advanced; (3) The self-defense explanation unfolds, particularly stressing the rhetor’s fine character; and (4) Finally, a summation/conclusion is given reasserting the apologist’s own moral integrity (see Kennedy, 1963, p. 151).

When viewed from the vantage point of the preceding findings, the rhetorical options available to Bill Clinton were limited. Few would question that he needed to address the country. From an ethical, historical, and perceptual perspective, at the very least, his moral authority was in jeopardy. In addition, the accusations and the accuser, Kenneth Starr, were relentless.

However, any explanation by Clinton had at least three apologetic complications: (1) He had publicly and repeatedly told less than the total truth to the American people; (2) The highly sexual nature of the allegations of the Lewinsky case severely limited a detailed explanation and reduced the issues to one primary allegation of lying about the relationship; and (3) This was a part of a fairly long “history” of such sexual allegations against Clinton. Since the self-defense rhetor attempts to extricate himself/herself from wrongdoing by somehow elucidating or re-defining the situation, Clinton’s options were limited.

Clearly, he could not go into great detail about the charges at hand; he could not defend his actions; and, he could not easily reassert his own moral integrity. He could, however, launch a counterattack and/or simply throw himself at the mercy of the American people. As we will see, he resorted to a comparatively disproportionate use of these strategies.

Applying a Critical Method

President Clinton chose to deliver a very brief speech—particularly by Clinton standards: 543 words were used in an approximately four-minute time span.¹ There were a number of different ways in which a critic could analyze this brief address. As discussed previously, critical systems or methods developed by Ware and Linkugel (1973), Ryan (1982), Downey (1993), and Benoit (1995) all offered methods which could have been applied to Clinton’s speech. However, many critics have argued that there is merit in looking at a specific speech and devising alternative approaches to speech criticism.

Edwin Black’s pioneering book, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (1965) lamented the lack of variety in rhetorical method. Similarly, Fisher (1969) posed the following challenge to the traditional methods of rhetorical criticism: “Any method adopted in rhetorical criticism should not be selected before the act of discerning what is remarkable about a speech” (p. 105). Campbell (1972) argued for “organic or situational criticism in contrast to formulary or prescriptive criticism” (p. 13).

Brock, Scott, and Chesebro (1989) commented that “diversity will continue to mark rhetorical criticism as *criticism*, that is, as practice continually being turned to fresh ends and adapting means” (p. 8). Hart (1990) stated that “the exceptionally judicious critic is one who gives fair attention to the many alternative standards by which persuasion may be evaluated” (p. 52). Moreover, after reviewing various “alternative standards,” Hart concluded that, with appropriate justification, “each critic can, and should, freely supplement the list” (1990, p. 53). Hart (1997) noted that the critic should be imaginative and search for “the story behind the taxonomies” and recognize that what is “not there” may hold more interesting revelations than what is present. Furthermore, Hart stated that the generic critic operates on several assumptions, one of which is that generic patterns reveal societal truths (p. 122). “Thus the ‘odd case,’ the text that breaks the pattern, will be of particular interest because it highlights the rationale behind the generic formula thereby exposed” (p. 122).

Clinton’s August 17 speech is a particularly salient example of the type of speech analysis which benefited from a creative critical approach. Rhetorical

critics were polarized about the effectiveness of the speech. For example, both Gronbeck (1999) and Vartabedian (1999) suggested that Clinton's speech violated the generic expectation leading to what *Time* dubbed as Clinton's "world apology tour" (Carlson, 1998, p. 44).² These apologies culminated at the September 11 Prayer Breakfast where Clinton stated, "I was not contrite enough. I don't think there is a fancy way to say, I have sinned" (Gorman, 1998, p. 2). On the other hand, Benoit (1999) evaluated the speech as "fairly effective" and both Hogan (1999) and Benoit (1999) noted that polling data supported the notion that the speech was effective. Hogan declared, "The speech of August 17 may not have been much of an apology, but it succeeded nevertheless" (1999, p. 1).

Speech critics had no clear consensus of the effectiveness of this speech. The speech is "an odd case," because the speech had recognizable elements of *apologia*, yet as a whole it did not conform readily to existent critical systems. Primarily, classic *aretaic*-based appeals were missing. There was no mention of virtue, there were no references to nobility of character, and there was no profile of previous personal behavior as a gauge of present credibility.

Rhetorical Choices

What had been a "he said, she said" standoff suddenly shifted with the evidence provided by Ms. Lewinsky's semen-stained dress. Given the nature of the accusations, Clinton's August 17 address was destined to be unusual. His often quoted January 26, 1998 protestation: "I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky" (Gibbs & Duffy, 1998, p. 27) was now subject to verifiable standards. Particularly challenging was how he could maintain his credibility rhetorically in the face of such specific and provable accusations. While the diverse audience of Clinton's speech obviously had various opinions about the severity of his transgressions, few would question the fact that he had made a definitive statement. If that statement were revealed as false, logic demanded that he knowingly and unethically had labeled Ms. Lewinsky as a liar while deceiving his national audience. By acknowledging the relationship, Clinton would have to address classic apologetic issues of character, responsibility, and blame.

Applying established approaches proved helpful in describing this speech. However, the political and rhetorical exigencies seemed so unique, that Campbell's notion that sometimes it is helpful to "invent a creative critical approach adapted to the discourse" seemed applicable (1972, pp. 13-14). As such, the authors decided to analyze the speech in accordance to its three prominent themes: (1) enhancing ethos, (2) accepting blame, and (3) attacking the accuser. This method had the potential to be "the most appropriate means of making the critical moment convincing" (Fisher, 1969, p. 105). These three themes or strategies accounted for nearly the entire apologetic message (see Table 1).

In this brief speech, among the various strategies, some interesting quantitative language data surfaced.³ There were at least seven instances of attempts to enhance overall ethos and eleven examples of accepting blame. However, there were approximately twenty-nine references reflecting an attack on the accuser. "Attacking the accuser" is a sub-category of "reduce offensiveness"

which is one of five primary strategies for image restoration according to Benoit (1995). A division into themes allowed a perspective which might have been overlooked if the critic merely attempted to fit the speech into a previously determined critical framework.

Table 1: Strategic Comparison

Ethos

- answered grand jury questions truthfully
- did not ask anyone to lie
- did not ask anyone to hide evidence
- did not ask anyone to destroy evidence
- did not ask anyone to take any other unlawful action
- must put it right
- prepared to do whatever it takes

Accept Blame

- must take complete responsibility for own actions
- did not volunteer information
- Lewinsky relationship was wrong
- relationship was a personal failure
- am solely and completely responsible
- public comments gave a false impression
- public comments misled people
- deeply regret misleading
- motivated by desire to protect self from embarrassment of own conduct
- take responsibility for part in all of this

Attack Accuser*

- answered questions no other American citizen would want to
- previous testimony was legally accurate

Was motivated to mislead because...

- of concern to protect family
- it involved a politically motivated (& dismissed) lawsuit
- had concerns about independent Counsel (IC) investigation
- IC investigation began with a probe of 20 year old private business dealing
- IC investigation moved on to staff and friends
- IC investigation moved on to my private life
- IC investigation itself is under investigation

Need to move on because...

- this investigation has gone on too long
- this investigation has cost too much
- this investigation has hurt too many innocent people

- these issues are between me and family (and God)
- these issues are private
- intend to to reclaim family
- these issues are nobody's business
- even presidents have private lives
- it is a personal distraction
- it is prying into private lives
- we need to get on with our national life
- it is a lengthy distraction
- it is past time to move on
- there is important work
- we have real opportunities to seize
- we have problems to solve
- of real security matters we face
- we need to turn away from this seven-month spectacle
- we need to repair the fabric of our national discourse
- we must return attention to the challenges and promise of the next American century

* The category of attacking the accuser is used because both directly and indirectly in his statements Clinton implies that the investigation is inappropriate, intrusive, unfair, unnecessary, and an impediment to future goals.

Content analysis provided an overview which revealed the sub-category of "attack the accuser" as a predominant tactic. Moreover, there was minimal use of the typical approach of appealing to credibility or character. The usual ethos enhancement strategies such as bolstering, transcendence, mortification, and differentiation were few. Rather, Clinton used the strategy of acceptance of blame as the second most prominent theme next to attacking the accuser.

The Use of Ethos

The use of so few direct appeals to credibility or ethos in the Clinton speech was surprising within the framework of traditional *apologia*. The centrality of ethos to rhetoric, and particularly, to *apologia* has been a given. In Aristotle's *Rhetoric* we see that "the character (ethos) of the speaker is a cause of persuasion when the speech is so uttered as to make him worthy of belief; for as a rule we trust men of probity more, and more quickly, about things in general" (in Cooper, 1932, p. 8).⁴ Quintilian's entire concept of rhetoric was ethos-centered: "*vir bonus dicendi peritus*—the good man speaking well" (in Murphy, 1965, p. xi). Isocrates placed character or reputation in a central role, as well: "The man who wishes to persuade people will not be negligent as to the matter of character...for who does not know that words carry a greater conviction when spoken by men of good repute than when spoken by men who live under a cloud..." (p. 278).

Contemporary theorists have continued to focus on the centrality of ethos. Berlo (1963) referred to the communicator's ethos as "the single most important variable in persuasion" (cited in Golden, Berquist, and Coleman, 1978, p. 225).

Ryan (1992) noted that Aristotle's notion of ethos (as well as pathos and logos) has "not been refuted and it stands today....: a speaker's good sense, good moral character, and good will" (p. 15). According to Benoit (1995) the theory of image restoration strategies rested upon two key assumptions, one of which was that "maintaining a positive reputation is one of the central goals of communication" (p.63). Hinck's (1993) book on presidential debates, invoked Aristotle's notion of leadership ability and moral excellence (*arete*) and the prudence to rule (*phronesis*). He concluded, "The concept of leadership presumes that the candidates' actions are symbolic of their capacity to lead" (p. 4).

Both classical and contemporary views of ethos reflect its highly influential role in persuasion. Accordingly, how did Clinton attempt to enhance or build ethos in his address? In other words, what did he say to make him "worthy of belief"? As noted previously, given the discrepancy between Clinton's private actions and public denials, his rhetorical task was not a simple one.

Numerically, there are approximately seven or eight statements that could be classified in the category of general attempts to enhance his overall ethos (see the Appendix.) Clinton did not wait long before providing such a statement. Specifically, in his second complete sentence, he declared—regarding his grand jury testimony that day: "I answered their questions truthfully" (line 3). To further establish his general credibility, he later specified: "at no time did I ask anyone to lie, to hide or destroy evidence or to take any other unlawful action" (line 11). Finally, towards the end of his speech, Clinton provided the audience with the following apologetic covenants: "I must put it right, and I am prepared to do whatever it takes to do so" (line 24). "That is all I can do" (line 31).

As a result of these ethos enhancing apologetic strategies, was the audience more inclined to believe and/or trust Clinton? He admitted to a relationship but not to lying about the relationship when he maintained that his previous testimony was "legally accurate." While this exonerated his position, it was a semantic shifting of ground designed to protect himself with regard to perjury charges rather than to build character. Most audience members probably expected a straightforward acknowledgment of his actions with Ms. Lewinsky, but the threat of impeachment and indictment made this impossible. Thus, neither denial nor mortification was a totally workable option. While there was a confession of the relationship, this was not news to most of the audience with the well-publicized implication of the physical evidence. The larger issue was how he would explain his vehement denial of the relationship.

If ethos or reputation is fundamental to effective *apologia*, what then would he choose to say? How would he convince his audience that he was, and had been all along, a man with good sense, with prudence to rule, with moral excellence, and with good will? Uncharacteristically, in his *apologia* Clinton made no generalizations about reputation (see Table 1). Clinton stated that he was "technically" truthful, that he was lawful both in terms of answering grand jury questions and by not asking others to be unlawful. Furthermore, he recognized that he "must put it right."

When compared to his apologies in the following month, these statements were abstract and clinical. Nonetheless, these strategies in another circumstance

might have been adequate. This, however, was not an isolated event in the Clinton presidency since allegations and stories about womanizing had plagued him from the earliest days of his campaign. Accusations by Gennifer Flowers, Paula Jones, Kathleen Wiley, and even the loosely biographical book *Primary Colors*, all affected Clinton's persona. His personal history, when combined with the contradictory public facts, made vindication impossible and ethos enhancement difficult. As such, he did not approach his task from the standpoint of an *aretaic* framework.

Accepting Blame

Clinton accepted personal blame or responsibility—at least to some extent. There were approximately eleven instances of his acceptance of blame, or what also might be classified as mortification, in this address. In the fourth sentence of his speech Clinton averred: “I must take complete responsibility for all of my actions, both public and private” (line 4). This is an initial step in the expected apologetic direction. Yet, unexpected rhetorical choices were forthcoming.

A certain amount of acceptance of blame or contrition was also apparent in his description of his relationship with Miss Lewinsky as “not appropriate,” “wrong,” “a critical lapse in judgment,” and a “personal failure” (lines 8-10). In reference to his previous public statements denying a sexual involvement with Miss Lewinsky, Clinton confessed that he gave “a false impression,” and “misled people”—which he “deeply regrets” (lines 12-14). In the subsequent section which dealt with motivations, he performed the ritual of *apologia* as might be anticipated when he cited protecting himself from the “embarrassment” of his own conduct as his first explanation for previously misleading Americans (line 16).

In assessing Clinton's acceptance of blame, two observations were warranted. First, his language seemed too antiseptic and lawyerly to be totally convincing *apologia*. The key phrase of the speech was, “While my answers were legally accurate, I did not volunteer information” (line 7). His mortification or confession stops short of accepting responsibility on the pivotal issue—he did not admit to being dishonest, rather he is disingenuous. Since the audience was aware that he was not forthright about his relationship, they must wonder at this juncture whether he would be candid with other remarks. In classic and popular terms—he had a credibility gap. He not only “weaseled” on this response but phrases such as, “It constituted a critical lapse in judgment and a personal failure” (line 10) seemed overly complicated and the terms “false impression” (line 12) and “misled people” (line 13) seemed to be carefully chosen to obfuscate actions with words. While no doubt his choices were limited by pending legal problems, this seemed to reduce the apology more to the *ritual of apologia* than a sincere effort at absolution.⁵ On three separate occasions, Clinton assumed complete “responsibility” for his deeds (lines 4, 10, and 30). However, the inordinate amount of “attacking the accuser” later in his speech communicated otherwise.

Attacking the Accuser

In his introductory comments to the *Rhetoric of Aristotle*, Cooper (1932) explored the notions of praise and blame: "A speech of accusation or defence can hardly proceed without praise or blame, nor a speech of blame without advice, and so on" (p. xxx). In his (1932) assessment of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, he commended Lincoln for "a good ethical quality to the speech. And still more is this ethical quality impressed upon the speech by manly self-denial of the speaker, and by his suppression of blame, the absence of any condemnation of the enemy" (p. xxxv). Cooper's requisite qualities, which he identified as instrumental to Lincoln's success, were not evident in Clinton's rhetorical choices.

There was no praise in this speech, but there was much blame in the form of attacking the accuser. Clinton's address was a case study in attack in the last two-thirds of his speech. The tabulation indicated approximately twenty-nine references which were direct or indirect attacks on the investigation. Although, not foreign to *apologia*, the use of attack as the predominant strategy was noteworthy. Again, it represented the "odd" case.

In the opening, he foreshadowed this subsequent theme of attack. Clinton stated that "no American citizen would ever want to answer" the private questions he was asked (line 3). He stressed that his previous testimony (in January) was "legally accurate" (line 6). These statements early in the speech set up the dichotomy of public versus private accountability, and victim versus assailant.

Clinton spent a significant portion of his speech elaborating on the statement, "I was motivated by many factors" (line 15). In quantity, tone, and content this was the heart of the speech. Specifically, he began by assuming the sympathetic role of protector of his family (line 17), dealing with a "politically inspired, and dismissed, lawsuit (line 18)." While this could also be viewed as enhancing ethos, the implication was that an outside force "attacked" and he responded by protecting those he loved. Clinton then elaborated on issues of privacy, length of the investigation, cost of the investigation, hurting innocent people, reclaiming his family life, overcoming this distracting spectacle, and, ultimately, moving on to the more important problems facing our country.

Concerns about the independent counsel investigation arose directly in lines 18-22, and indirectly in a request for privacy (or seeking escape from this outside intruder) in lines 23, and 26-30. Again, the implication was that this intrusion prevented meaningful and "real" political processes (lines 32-34). The final two lines were ritual leave-taking.

Additionally, looking at the placement of rhetorical themes and strategies was revealing. Glinert (1999) concluded, "the absence of any expression of contrition at the climax of Clinton's address counteracts the strongly apologetic force of the third and fifth paragraphs and renders this text a non-apology" (p. 2). Glinert was correct in suggesting that contrition was barely evident in the last two-thirds of the speech. However, Clinton did accept responsibility again toward the end of the speech (line 30). Overall, though, the climax of the speech was an attack on the investigation. In tone, the aggressive ending of this speech had certain parallels with Nixon's "Checkers" speech. However, Clinton's much-

televised remark about “that woman” prevented him from using Nixon’s more abstract defense of being an honest man who was falsely accused.⁶

Privacy as a Sub-Textual Theme

The accuser’s disregard for privacy became the abstract issue which propelled the sub-text of this speech. Many would argue that this theme was well-received. Hogan (1999) reported that a week into the controversy the Gallup poll found that 73% of all Americans felt increased attention on the private lives of public officials and candidates was not a good thing for government in this country” (p. 2).

Perhaps the most quoted line from this speech was Clinton’s reference to the restoration of his family life: “It’s nobody’s business but ours” (line 27). Yet, no line in this speech more clearly reflected how Clinton veered from the traditionally defined apologetic task. Indeed, you do not meet the established exigencies of *apologia* if your explanation is somehow viewed as none of your audience’s business. Direct and indirect references to privacy permeated the speech. Early in the speech, Clinton invoked the terms, “private life” and “public and private” (lines 3, 4) and established the dominant theme for the “attack” portion of the speech (lines 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33).

Finally, there was a direct attack on the investigation itself as both unnecessary (line 19), and overly zealous (lines 3, 19, 20, 21, 22, 29, 30, 32). The implication that the investigation was an assault on personal privacy was present, directly or indirectly, in nearly every statement starting with line 17. In sum, the sheer quantity and ferocity of Clinton’s attack revealed a not-so-apologetic address.

Apologizing for the Apology

Clinton built ethos by implying truthfulness, lawfulness, and willingness to change. He then accepted blame or responsibility for an inappropriate relationship and misleading statements about that relationship. Finally, he attacked by submitting that he was previously “legally” accurate, but had compelling reasons for appearing otherwise in light of the relentless and pointless pursuit of the independent counsel.

Clinton’s heavy reliance on attack strategies was counter-intuitive to his apologetic task. One can only speculate as to why Clinton so excessively digressed in such a direction. Perhaps, as Hogan (1999) suggested Clinton’s speech was built around polling data and was a non-speech, because the public, as the polls showed, did not like Ken Starr and had heard all it cared to hear about Monica Lewinsky (p.1).

While Clinton’s approval rating was not significantly affected by his speech, it certainly did not achieve the sense of closure being sought (Gibbs & Duffy, 1998, p. 35). *Newsweek*’s “Conventional Wisdom Watch” dismissed this speech as an “utter disaster: too angry, too lawyerly, and he never apologized” (1998, p. 4). *Time* magazine’s “Winners and Losers” section observed: “The master of disaster finally lost his touch. Failing to be either sympathetic or apologetic” (1998, p. 17). Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman, Republican Orrin Hatch, expressed outrage at the president’s attacks on Starr within this speech: “Wasn’t

that pathetic. I tell you, what a jerk. That's the biggest mistake he's ever made." ("Clinton admits relationship," 1998, p. 1). Even political supporter (and former Governor of New York) Mario Cuomo lamented: "The speech failed. He was apparently tired and allowed himself to project anger instead of contrition" ("What did you think?" 1998, p. 46).

In *The Clinton Enigma* (published late in 1998), Pulitzer Prize winning author, David Maraniss, focused almost exclusively on Clinton's August 17 speech. He concluded that this address sadly disappointed both friend and foe:

No one in the political world liked Clinton's speech. Dee Dee Myers, his former press secretary, watching from the set of CNN's Larry King show in Washington, said it was 'mostly downhill' from the moment her old boss said his introductory 'Good evening'—and that about summed up the general attitude. His words had failed him. (1998b, p. 107)

However, Benoit (1999) suggested that public polls showed a public that was either satisfied or apathetic; mainly, pundits and the media seemed to demand more contrition. For whatever reason, more contrition was forthcoming and a contrasting style of *apologia* emerged after the August 17 speech. A character-centered apology with traditional use of transcendence, bolstering, differentiation, and particularly mortification was evident in Clinton's subsequent speeches: "I've tried to do a good job taking care of this country, even when I hadn't taken such good care of myself and my family, my obligations. I hope that you and others I have injured will forgive me for the mistakes I've made" (Gorman, p. 2). Two days later he grew more philosophical and deeply personal in his *apologia*:

I have been on quite a journey these last few weeks to get to the end of this to the rock bottom truth of where I am and where we all are. I agree with those who have said that in my first statement after I testified, I was not contrite enough. I don't think there is a fancy way to say that I have sinned...for leaves, birds and animals, turning comes instinctively. But for us, turning does not come so easily. It takes an act of will for us to make a turn. It means breaking old habits. It means admitting that we have been wrong, and this is never easy. It means losing face. It means starting all over again. And this is always painful. It means saying, I am sorry. (Gorman, p. 9)⁷

The Presidential address of August 17 was an unexpected response to an unusually personal accusation. Subsequently, a more typical, and deeply personal response emerged. The initial speech, coupled with the use of a noticeably different strategy in his follow-up speeches, provided unique circumstances for critical analysis.

Apologetic Implications and Goals

Without question, practitioners and theorists of the contemporary art of *apologia* can learn from the rhetorical anomalies of the August 17 address. First,

apologists need to clearly understand their available “means of persuasion.” Clinton’s rhetorical options were severely limited. If he had relied merely on ethical appeals and acceptance of blame, and limited the attack, perhaps he would have received the closure he needed and mitigated the need for subsequent apologies. And yet, as mentioned previously, there were those rhetorical critics who felt the speech was successful in terms of subsequent polling data. Additionally, some critics felt the speech further congealed public attitudes that the independent counsel had overstepped its boundaries. Can we as critics, have it both ways? Possibly.

The diametrically opposed interpretations of the effectiveness of this speech point to the issue of speech goals. Most critics and scholars agree that speech acts are goal-directed. As Benoit (1995) posited, “the first assumption made by this theory (of image restoration) is that communication is a goal-directed activity” (p. 63). Perhaps, the goal of apologia must be viewed as part of a speech-set.

Ryan (1982) identified the need to treat the specific attack (*kategoria*) and the defense (*apologia*) as a “speech set.” But, in some instances image restoration is not a feasible goal. If everyone knows lying has taken place and moral character can never meet a particularly high standard, other options may be needed. If the goal cannot be attained in terms of “character” why not opt for an approach which is more “event” oriented? Clinton could not hope that the public would suddenly see him as a saint, but he could hope that he would retain his office. His unorthodox attack, whether through calculation or anger, served to provide a practical outlet for dealing with public opinion.

There were obvious stylistic differences apparent by September 11, but additionally, diametrically opposed strategies can be seen within Clinton’s own rhetoric on this same accusation. Clinton’s first approach to the accusation was driven by purpose oriented or *teleological* ethics, while subsequent apologies satisfied more traditional “character” restoration needs, or *aretaic* ethics. These thematic approaches might well be seen as two distinct ethical options which drive the goals of *apologia*. Character has been viewed as *the* fundamental element of the apologetic framework. Yet, Clinton was reasonably successful with a speech which did not center on character restoration in a traditional sense but rather used a fairly minor sub-strategy of “attack” for two-thirds of his speech.

Critics might do well to determine whether the rhetor sees his or her goal as *teleological* or *aretaic*. Most rhetorical critics, as noted previously, have approached *apologia* with the belief that it is guided by a need to restore face, ethos, or character. They ascribe to the principles of *aretaic* ethics.

Virtue (agent) ethics emphasize *being*, being a certain type of person who will no doubt manifest his or her being in actions or nonactions...For virtue ethics the question is: What sort of person should I become? Virtue ethics seeks to produce excellent persons, who act well out of spontaneous goodness and serve as examples to inspire others. (Pojman, 1995, p. 161)

The critic should perhaps ask if a speech is character oriented or outcome oriented? Is the speech maker concerned with ethos as it is manifested in the

past, present, and future or is the concern more toward future oriented ideas and events, i.e., what will the outcome be? Will I retain my office, stay out of jail, continue to be a viable candidate...or achieve whatever the immediate goal might be?

The word *teleology* is derived from the Greek *teleos* meaning "having reached one's end" or "finished." In this belief system, "the locus of value is the outcome or consequences of the act" (Pojman 1995, p. 108). Clinton's speech, largely devoid of eloquent language and references to his past credibility, pointed the audience to the future. This was a goal-driven speech which sought to discredit his accusers, draw an explicit demarcation between public and private information, and ask the audience to move on to more important goals within the public domain.

The lessons which could be drawn from this brief address are many and deserving of further contemplation and examination. Admittedly, various statements could be described by categories already defined in the literature of *apologia*. While it was possible to apply previously established classification systems to some of Clinton's statements, the approach used here provided a simplified method which revealed both the limited number of general strategies used and the extent to which the strategy of attack was employed.

It would be revealing to see how frequently other addresses deemed to be successful have used the three categories so predominant in Clinton's address. Particularly of interest is the extent to which other rhetors have used such a direct attack in the ritual of *apologia*. Examining how this speech compares with other well-known contemporary apologetic addresses, such as Nixon's "Checkers" and "Watergate" addresses, Truman's "TV Address on Harry Dexter White," and Edward Kennedy's "Chappaquiddick Address" would be of value.

Conclusions

The fact that Clinton needed to give an explanation/apology was evident. His *teleological* approach, de-emphasizing character and the past and re-emphasizing goals and the future, may have appealed to an audience which adheres to a similar, albeit unnamed, value system. However, his apparent success with the public opinion polls, also, might suggest that any apology would have sufficed in this situation. Simply performing the ritual and the recognition of that imperative may have been enough. Whatever the reason, Clinton's initial speech provided at least a satisfactory outcome with the general public.

Clinton's subsequent choice to engage in more traditional apology created an unusual rhetorical situation in which two distinct styles were used to address the same accusation. The awareness of the still dissatisfied and important audience of pundits and media, may have fueled the sudden return to character as a central dynamic. These apologies may have been unnecessary in the eyes of a disinterested or satisfied public.

Still, the absence of character appeals in the first speech and the reliance on character in subsequent apologies provide fertile ground for additional investigation. Quantitative research which attempts to assess the audience members' value systems and then determine how they judge the efficacy of various

types of apologetic strategies might reveal a shift from a more character-based apologia to a more "purpose oriented" approach. Clinton's diverse apologies provide a strong basis for exploring this idea quantitatively. In Clinton's situation, and in an age when the "evidence" may be nearly incontrovertible, (taped statements, DNA, etc.) a *teleological* approach to *apologia* may be advantageous in some situations.

By examining the goal of the rhetor, speech writers and speech makers might emphasize different strategies. When one's reputation is questionable, or damaging evidence exists, perhaps a *teleological* approach is most effective. That approach may rely heavily on attacking the accuser since it is not possible to indulge in self-praise. When credibility is intact, or no clear evidence to the contrary is available, perhaps an *aertaic* approach works best. It may be possible that using these approaches in conjunction, as Clinton probably did more by accident than design, may be highly effective.

President William Jefferson Clinton was impeached but not convicted and removed from office. The House impeachment hearings and the trial in the Senate have now faded into memory. However, President Clinton's August 17 speech will continue to confound critics. What can be drawn from this "odd case?" The paradoxical reception of this speech indicates that an examination of underlying speech goals is an essential component in determining the relative effectiveness of *apologia*. There is still much to be learned about the interaction of audiences, apologies, and apologists.

Appendix

Clinton's Aug. 17 Address

(1) Good evening. (2) This afternoon, in this room, from this chair, I testified before the Office of Independent Counsel and the grand jury. (3) I answered their questions truthfully, including questions about my private life, questions no American citizen would ever want to answer. (4) Still, I must take complete responsibility for all my actions, both public and private. (5) And that is why I am speaking to you tonight. (6) As you know, in a deposition in January, I was asked questions about my relationship with Monica Lewinsky. (7) While my answers were legally accurate, I did not volunteer information. (8) Indeed, I did have a relationship with Miss Lewinsky that was not appropriate. (9) In fact, it was wrong. (10) It constituted a critical lapse in judgment and a personal failure on my part for which I am solely and completely responsible. (11) But I told the grand jury today and I say to you now that at no time did I ask anyone to lie, to hide or destroy evidence or to take any other unlawful action. (12) I know that my public comments and my silence about this matter gave a false impression. (13) I misled people, including even my wife. (14) I deeply regret that. (15) I can only tell you I was motivated by many factors. (16) First by a desire to protect myself from the embarrassment of my own conduct. (17) I was also very concerned about protecting my family. (18) The fact that these questions were being asked in a politically inspired lawsuit, which has since been dismissed was a consideration, too. (19) In addition, I had real and serious concerns about

an independent counsel investigation that began with private business dealings 20 years ago, dealings, I might add, about which an independent federal agency found no evidence of any wrongdoing by me or my wife over two years ago. (20) The independent counsel investigation moved on to my staff and friends, then into my private life. (21) And now the investigation itself is under investigation. (22) This has gone on too long, cost too much and hurt too many innocent people. (23) Now, this matter is between me, the two people I love most— my wife and our daughter — and our God. (24) I must put it right, and I am prepared to do whatever it takes to do so. (25) Nothing is more important to me personally. (26) But it is private, and I intend to reclaim my family life for my family. (27) It's nobody's business but ours. (28) Even presidents have private lives. (29) It is time to stop the pursuit of personal destruction and the prying into private lives and get on with our national life. (30) Our country has been distracted by this matter for too long, and I take my responsibility for my part in all of this. (31) That is all I can do. (32) Now it is time—in fact, it is past time—to move on. (33) We have important work to do—real opportunities to seize, real problems to solve, real security matters to face. (34) And so tonight, I ask you to turn away from the spectacle of the past seven months, to repair the fabric of our national discourse, and to return our attention to all the challenges and all the promise of the next American century. (35) Thank you for watching. (36) And good night.

Endnotes

¹ The average length of Clinton's speeches to the nation is fifty minutes. Also, the viewing audience for Clinton's apology was estimated by *Time* as a sizable 45.9 million households (see "Numbers," 1998, p. 22).

² *Newsweek* concurred with this assessment in an article which stated that after Clinton's August 17 address he gave "nearly a month of halfhearted apologies" until "unburdening himself" at a September 11 prayer breakfast (see Fineman, 1998, pp. 25 and 29).

³ The direct quotes from Clinton's speech that will follow are all taken from the complete text of the address as printed in *U.S.A. Today* (see "Clinton's address," 1998, p. 2A or see the Appendix). The sentence number(s) from the text of the speech will be noted parenthetically.

⁴ In his introduction to the *Rhetoric of Aristotle*, Cooper (1932) discussed the concept of ethos in both the *Poetics* and the *Rhetoric*. Referring to the *Poetics*, he noted: "The ethos of Achilles is his habit of choice, his disposition to act in one way, to refrain from acting in another" (p. xxii). In reference to the *Rhetoric*, Cooper stated: "In the *Rhetoric* we commonly find ethos is the sense of good disposition or habit of choice. The ethos of the speaker as shown in his speech ought to be good, for the audience will not trust a speaker if they think him bad" (p. xxiii). Given Clinton's "choices" and apparent "Achilles' heel," Cooper's introductory comments are well taken.

⁵ This is not to mention Clinton's actual delivery technique which reflected a certain amount of anger and defiance. The various nonverbal elements of Clinton's speech were not particularly apologetic.

⁶ Hart noted, "There are many interesting features of Nixon's 'Checkers Speech.' Mr. Nixon saw rhetorical opportunities with television that nobody had seen before. A master strategist, Nixon understood that the best defense was a good offense...Mr. Nixon succeeds because he denies his rhetorical essence, framing his speech as a response to an attack on an honest man who only incidentally happens to be a politician...If his audience had remembered his timid introduction rather than his fire-breathing conclusion, he never would have regained the momentum the fund scandal cost him. His speech-act provided just such momentum" (1997, p. 81).

⁷ According to Hart, a number of scholars agree that "the most distinctive thing about American rhetoric is its curious combination of transcendental and pragmatic themes" (1997, p. 240). The contrast between Clinton's two styles in his August 17th speech and his Sept. 11, Prayer Breakfast Speech is of interest because, the first approach seems to be pragmatic, while the subsequent apologies are transcendental in nature. Viewed another way, the first seems to adhere to a *teleological* approach, while the second approach acknowledges an *aretic* ethic.

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Risk Communication as Argument Analyzing Student Perceptions of Responsible Drinking

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Abstract

This essay examines the risk communication campaign of a midwestern university to reduce risk drinking by its students. The critical incident technique is used to develop a profile of student perceptions of model and anti-model drinking behavior. The students' profile was generally consistent with the advice given by the university. However, students admitted they still engage in a variety of high-risk behaviors while drinking. This incongruence is explained as a failure by students to internalize the probability of personal problems related to alcohol consumption. Ultimately, the study reveals the essential function of the warrant in risk communication arguments.

Introduction

Alcohol on college campuses is a factor in 40 percent of all academic problems and 28 percent of all dropouts. On campuses where more than 70% of the student body binge drinks, 87% of the students report experiencing problems such as physical assault, sexual harassment and impaired sleep and study time. Statistics show that 90 percent of all campus violence is alcohol-related and that 80 percent of males who commit "date rape" have been drinking prior to the incident. Each year, college students spend \$5.5 billion on alcohol (mostly beer). This is more than they spend on books, soda, coffee, juice and milk combined. On a typical campus, the average amount a student spends on alcohol is \$466 a year (Wechsler, Dowdall, Maener, Gledhill-Hoyt, and Lee, 1998).

These figures, along with problems on its own campus, inspired midwestern university to conduct a risk communication study. The 10,000-student university gathered information indicating that from 1996 to 1999, more than 1,400 of its students were arrested for alcohol-related incidents. Students were roughly 59% more likely to be arrested on alcohol charges than non-students over the age of 18. First and second year students accounted for almost 80% of all alcohol-related student arrests during that four year period. Males, Greeks, athletes, and students who had not yet declared a major were more likely than their counterparts to be arrested for alcohol-related offenses (Office of Orientation and Student Success, Personal Communication, March, 2001).

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Because the issue is complex, many universities and colleges in the United States confront problems related to student alcohol consumption by establishing programs designed to specifically target high-risk drinking behaviors (Haines & Spear, 1996; DeJong & Linkenbach, 1999). This study focused on one university's efforts to reduce high-risk alcohol consumption and underage drinking. The university had already developed measures such as Residence Life Alcohol Education, initiatives such as the Vice President for Student Affairs' Commission on Alcohol and Other Drugs, and the ongoing efforts of offices such as Orientation and Student Success. This essay provides an evaluation of student perceptions based on the university's efforts to curb high-risk drinking.

By collecting a range of data from undergraduate students through focus groups, thematic trends emerged. These themes revealed the extent to which students have internalized existing risk communication programs regarding alcohol. In this essay, we first provide an overview of the risks associated with college drinking. Next, we establish the theoretical and procedural framework for our analysis. Specifically, we view the university's risk communication efforts from an argumentation perspective. We then offer discussion and conclusions based on our case study. Ultimately, we provide a series of implications for using the perspective of advocacy in assessing risk communication.

College campuses have cultural traditions that revolve around drinking. Fraternities and sororities continue to be culturally centered around alcohol where 4 of 5 members are binge drinkers (Wechsler et al., 1998). Wechsler et al. explain that, "although Greek society members are only a small minority of the national college population, their influence is far greater. They serve as a center for social activities on many campuses; on some campuses, their number are relatively high." In addition, athletes represent a culture that has its own drinking traditions. Meilman, Leichliter, and Presley (1999) conducted a study with the college population broken into four categories: Greek athlete, Greek non- athlete, Non-Greek athlete, and Non-Greek non-athlete. It was found that in general, students who participated in both Greek life and athletics consume the most alcohol and engaged in the most binge drinking. Alcohol consumption declined respectively among those groups listed.

Young adults are a difficult age group to influence when it comes to altering drinking behaviors through the use of anti-drinking messages. As a result, alcohol advertising has been investigated in relation to the effects it has had on this age group. Snyder and Blood (1992) examined whether warnings increased the perception of risk in the presence of advertisements for alcohol products. They found that viewing ads caused higher benefit ratings and lower risk ratings. Students' perceptions of problematic alcohol use are based on the students' own drinking behaviors in addition to the level of drinking on their campus (Wechsler & Kuo, 2000). Concerns of this nature prompted the university in this study to make a concerted effort to reduce high risk drinking. We turn now to the framework used to assess the university's risk communication.

Arguments that Structure Reality in Risk Communication

The university's effort to move from a prescriptive, hierarchical, and rule-oriented perspective to a more inclusive, student-centered approach to alcohol awareness reflects a shift from traditional forms of risk communication to a dialectical focus. Juanillo and Sherber (1995) depict two paradigms of risk communication. The traditional approach is linear in its structure. Classical risk communication is directed at "easing the tension" between popular culture, the demosphere, and the culture of experts, the technosphere" (Juanillo and Sherber, 1995, p. 287). Success in the classical risk communication sense was based on the degree to which popular behaviors and attitudes "harmonize with scientific-technocratic values and principles" (p. 287). While this objective is reasonable, Juanillo and Sherber see several problematic assumptions with it. First, scientists are seen as the only "accurate," "objective," and "value-free" source of information (p. 287). Second, classical risk communication models assume that technical rationality is superior to other forms of reasoning. Third, the public is relegated to the role of passive receiver.

Juanillo and Sherber (1995) prefer a dialectical view of risk communication. They contend that, contrary to the views inherent in classical risk communication, scientific evidence is not "neutral, objective, and free of social interests" (p. 290). Instead, objectivity is merely an aspiration of science that may never be fully attained. Like everyone else, scientists must make choices among perceived alternatives. These choices reflect some degree of bias on the part of the scientist. Juanillo and Sherber see scientists as "extenders" of risk based evidence, rather than as the only source of such information. They also cite a "precipitous decline of public confidence in the ability of government and industry to generate objectivity in risk assessment and plurality in risk management decisions" (p. 292). The dialectical view of risk communication features an emphasis on multiple perspectives based on a free flow of information, and open access to communication channels and resources. In this manner, the relevant stakeholders participate in the interpretation of risk and in the development of policies. Additional research in risk communication has emphasized a dialectical approach. This body of work suggests that the social process of creating meaning must be co-generative. Fiorino (1989) explains that the technical response to risk situations predominantly focuses on the hazard itself. The democratic (public) response often centers on fairness and justice. The problem is that both perspectives generate one-sided analysis and rules for communicating. Sandman (1993) insists that those individuals from the technical sphere accept the public as a partner in the process of creating understanding (and vice versa). Both parties are obligated to listen and inform, not persuade. Rowan (1991) warns that neither side should attempt to impose solutions, but rather, both should work toward mutually satisfying ends.

Important to this co-generative process is the fact that risk is based on perception. This perception is derived from many factors, but can generally be explained as an interaction between dread and control (Slovic, 1987). A risk is dreadful if the consequences are high (such as a meltdown at a nuclear power plant, or international tensions escalating to war). Control can be understood in

terms of the level of predictability (a plane crash is unpredictable) and the degree of choice inherent in the risk (smoking is a choice, but second-hand smoke is not). The perception of risk, even when based on objective data, is always subjective. Shared meaning can only be established if both the public and scientists are engaged in a dialogue where each party sees the other as an equal contributor.

When multiple actors are engaged in deliberation, narratives feed the cogenerative process. This deliberation is based on multiple perspectives, all related to the perception of risk. The dialectic process of inquiry is identified by Aristotle as one means by which individuals discover truth "by way of affirmation and denial" (Warnick, 1989). Testing of ideas is a "social enterprise in which actors compare their constructions with others" (Willard, 1979). Parties in the cogenerative process are asked to accept facts, values, or prescriptions that they would not accept without some influence.

Arguments in this deliberative process are initially based on an existing structure of reality. Specifically, arguments focused on expert or scientific knowledge establish a framework for the deliberation. In the case of risk communication, there is an initial structure of reality for a given risk topic. Arguments based on this existing structure of reality rely on a generally accepted series of causal links (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). Argument related to an established understanding of risk, then, would seek to reinforce these causal links. Evidence for such support is often based on appeals to expert authority. Typically arguments from authority and claims of causality dominate the existing structure of reality.

In times of deliberation, arguments can serve to establish a new structure of reality. Such arguments may be based on specific examples from which generalizations may be drawn. Similarly, a specific case may serve as an illustration of an "already established regularity; as a model, it encourages imitation" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 350). Specifically, actors may develop arguments that extend specific examples to the point of establishing norms for model behavior or thresholds for anti-model behavior. Thus, the arguments related to the structure of reality demand the active participation of the actor in generating reasons to support or reject particular claims.

Once new ideas are accepted, the system, or culture, must in some way be changed to accept the new information. During these times, the integrity of the system is in jeopardy. Willard (1979) explains that the question that actors are faced with is "how much can the system be changed without destroying it" (p. 179). To answer this vital question, the actors evaluate the likelihood that a cause leads to an effect and the connection between premises and conclusions. Assessments of probability act as warrants for the arguments posited.

The Role of Model and Anti-Model Arguments in Establishing the Structure of Reality

One way of interpreting dialogue when behavior associated with risk is debated is by observing the content of model and anti-model arguments. As competing interpretations of risk clash, opposing parties make use of examples and illustrations to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

Much like the standards used to evaluate individual actions, Heath (1997) explains that “standards of corporate responsibility are the product of advocacy, a debate that addresses the standards by which key organizations are judged” (p. 127). Ultimately, organizations have aspirations of “structuring the information environment in ways that privilege certain [perspectives],” whether they are questions of fact, value, or policy (Gandy, 1992, p. 135). With regard to risk communication, organizations are inclined to develop standards fitting with their need to maintain social legitimacy (Seeger, 1997).

In the case of risk drinking, a university is likely to develop standards and encourage behavior that enhances its credibility. Conversely, students are likely to support standards that are fitting with their university’s culture. If a gap exists in the assessment of risks and benefits between the university’s standards and the students’ perceptions, a debate is likely to occur. Such debates may seek to structure the reality related to the risks associated with alcohol consumption. Such debates are fitting with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s (1969) notion of model and anti-model argument. They explain that “imitation of behavior is not always spontaneous. One person may seek to induce it in another. Argument can be based either on the rule of justice or on a model that one will be asked to follow” (p. 363). In the case of the university, model standards are easily traced; one need only evaluate existing policy manuals and explore previous enforcement records. Assessing students’ perceptions is more complex. Based on Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s (1969) work with the structuring of reality, such tacit perceptions can be discovered through a systematic examination of the examples cited, and the generalizations made by students in their arguments.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s (1969) notion of model and anti-model argument has received limited attention in the communication literature. Warnick and Kline (1992) elucidate Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s definition as follows: Argument from model and anti-model presents a person or group as a model to be imitated or avoided. Attraction for the model (antipathy for the anti-model) is converted into favorable or unfavorable orientation towards the model’s behavior. The argument’s aim is to encourage imitation. (p. 9).

Measell (1985) offers several considerations for identifying and analyzing model and anti-model arguments. He indicates that model and anti-model arguments, as well as all argument forms that establish the structure of reality, are characterized by the fact that they begin with a known case or example, imply some sort of general rule of regularity, and are typically ambiguous. Sellnow and Brand (in press) explain that model and anti-model arguments can move from standards for a single organization to establish standards for an entire industry.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) explain that “one does not imitate just anybody; the person chosen as model must enjoy some measure of prestige” (p. 363). One indication of such prestige is the degree of imitation fostered by the model. An entity cannot serve as a model without imitation. Ordinarily a model “shows what behavior to follow, and also serves as a guarantee for an adopted behavior” (p. 364). That is why models “must keep careful watch on [their] behavior” (p. 365). Ironically, nonconformists can also be models if the

individualism they advocate is seen as a “capacity to avoid temptations of imitation” (p. 364). In general:

the attribution of good qualities to superior beings makes it possible, if it is accepted, to argue from the model, and, if it is challenged, to enhance the value of the quality as being at least worthy of the attribution to the model. (p. 365)

Namely, an individual who enacts socially responsible standards and/or avoids unacceptable practices can serve as a model for her or his peers.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) describe anti-model arguments as the inverse of model arguments. They explain, “whereas reference to a model makes it possible to encourage a particular kind of behavior, reference to an anti-model or foil serves to deter people from it” (p. 366). Because anti-model arguments seek to influence others to “be different from someone,” it is not always possible to “infer precise positive behavior” (p. 367). Positive behavior is advanced through “an implicit reference to a model” (p. 367). In short, the model and anti-model framework is one means for interpreting arguments associated with the public deliberation of risk issues. Model and anti-model arguments have the potential to develop socially responsible standards related to a risk issue.

Our study was designed to interpret a series of examples and explanations related to risk drinking that were generated by students. These examples were collected as part of a midwestern university’s initiative to establish standards for responsible drinking by its student population. In our analysis, we first, seek to identify those arguments from the existing structure of reality that have fidelity and coherence with the messages communicated by the university’s administration. Second, we seek to identify those examples and norms that students use to support their assumptions for what constitutes responsible or model drinking behavior, and what constitutes irresponsible or anti-model drinking behavior. Ultimately, the question becomes, do the examples and proposed standards have sufficient support to satisfy the tests of evidence held by the multiple audiences.

Procedure and Database

For this study, the authors employed the critical incident technique (CIT) for gathering narratives related to student perceptions of high risk drinking. Query and Kreps (1993) explain that CIT is “especially effective at gathering narrative data from individuals to assess the quality of organizational practices and life” (p. 64). CIT has been used previously in field research to develop nutrition materials for adults with low literacy levels (Betts, 1993) and to evaluate the development of student teachers (Knodle, 1992). Specifically, the CIT approach involves asking “probing questions to elicit detailed accounts of subjects’ experiences of effective and ineffective behavior” (p. 64). This process is completed by asking a series of open-ended questions designed to elicit both “richness in detail and depth of personal experience” (p. 64). Query and Kreps recommend that the CIT be completed in five steps: establishing a clear goal, setting explicit standards for data collection and inclusion, data collection, classification of the data, and data interpretation.

For our study, we engaged in field research using three groups of 15-20 students (52 respondents total) who were invited to participate in an electronic survey and focus group format using group decision support system (GDSS) software. We employed a form of quota sampling in an attempt to obtain representation in the following areas: first-and second-year students, upper-level students, varsity athletes, fraternity and sorority members, off-campus students, students working part-time, as well as a gender balance and a variety of majors. Students from two classes, one freshman/sophomore level and one junior/senior level, were invited to participate in the survey. These classes were selected because they provided a variety of age levels and backgrounds/majors. The third group included students from relevant categories such as those listed above. Students were given modest financial compensation for their participation. Previous research indicates that GDSS technology can enhance a group's ability to exchange information, process complex information, and coordinate group activity (Poole & Holmes, 1995; Poole & DeSanctis, 1992). For our purposes, only the individual survey and the discussion modes were used. Participants completed a survey that asked them to provide background data and to describe the negative experiences with alcohol they had either seen or experienced first-hand. Using the discussion mode of the software, students were able to see and comment on each other's reactions to questions related to what they believed was model and anti-model behavior in the following categories related to alcohol consumption: age, amount, frequency, rate of consumption, location, transportation, and with whom they drink. The data from the GDSS survey and discussion was completely transcribed. Categories for classifying the data were developed by two research associates after careful examination of the transcripts (Query & Kreps, 1993). Operational definitions were developed for each category. Next, two coders read the transcripts and assigned the students' statements in the transcript to the various categories. The unit of analysis used in the coding was the specific mention of the category. Hence, one sentence could be coded in more than one category if multiple topics were mentioned. Conversely, an extended comment of several sentences could be coded in only one category if the student focused on only one topic. In cases where the coders did not agree, a conversation occurred and consensus was reached.

Discussion

In this section, we first, summarize the student responses for each model and anti-model category. Second, we compare these findings to student responses regarding the negative experiences they have had with alcohol. To clarify our discussion we offer examples of students' comments. We have not altered the syntax of these remarks. Hence, they are not always grammatically correct.

Age

Model Behavior: When asked to identify the minimum age at which they felt students should begin drinking, as Table 1 indicates, the clear majority of students said that drinking should not occur prior to college. One respondent wrote, "High school and junior high kids don't need to be drinking." This majority of students was split evenly between drinking at age 18 and drinking when of a legal age. Only a small minority of students advocated drinking prior to age 18.

Table 1: Model Age

Response Categories	Total
21	16
18	16
16	6
When Mature	4
Under 16	2
17	1
Not Drinking	1

Anti-Model Behavior: As Table 2 indicates, the responses regarding unacceptable or anti-model behavior related to minimum age for drinking were inconsistent. Nearly half of the respondents indicated that drinking while in high school is unacceptable. A nearly equal number of respondents identified the years prior to high school as inappropriate for drinking. Only two respondents indicated that there is no unacceptable age to begin drinking.

Table 2: Anti-Model Age

Response Categories	Total
High School	13
Junior High	11
Not legal	2
No limit	2
When Immature	1

Amount

Model Behavior: Students were asked to describe model behavior for the amount of alcohol consumed in one episode. The two categories mentioned most frequently in Table 3 were to drink in moderation and to observe personal limits. For example, one student wrote, "It depends on your tolerance, but I don't think you need to get to the point where you can't take care of yourself or control your own bodily functions."

Table 3: Model Amount

Response Categories	Total
Moderation	14
Personal limits	13
Socially	5
One or two	4
No drinking and driving	2
No limit	2
If someone baby-sits you, then more	2

Anti-Model Behavior: When asked to identify anti-model behavior related to amount of alcohol consumed, the students were clear in their preference. As Table 4 indicates, the clear majority of students said that drinking to point of

being drunk or experiencing other negative affects is inappropriate. Some examples of anti-model behavior shared by students include, “to where you pass out,” “to the point at which you don’t know what you’re doing,” and “the point where you are being really stupid and won’t remember the things you’ve done.” These responses are consistent with student responses indicating that, when drinking, individuals should consume in moderation and follow their own personal limits.

Table 4: Anti-Model Amount

Response Categories	Total
When drunk/Affected	15
When negative consequences result	4
2+ per hour	3
Depends on tolerance	2
6+ per hour	1
Never	1
7+ per hour	1

Frequency

Model Behavior: Students were asked to describe model behavior related to how often a person should consume alcohol. As Table 5 indicates, students believe that it is acceptable to drink occasionally, particularly on weekends, as long as there is no negative impact. One student clarified this point by writing, “Drinking doesn’t need to happen very often. It can be used as a celebration activity for special occasions.” Another student wrote, “use your best judgment, i.e. don’t get drunk the night before a big test. It’s important to have a balanced lifestyle. Too much of anything can be bad.” Beyond these points, there is a diversity of opinions.

Table 5: Model Frequency

Response Categories	Total
Now and then	10
Weekends	9
Once or twice a week	6
Depends on the person	5
If drinking does not interfere	4
Special occasions	3
Three times a week	2
If there is no negative impact	1
As long as drinking is not a need	1
The less the better	1
Every other day	1

Anti-Model Behavior: When asked to identify anti-model behavior related to frequency of drinking, the most common response indicated that drinking more than two or three times per week is excessive (see Table 6). The results also show

that drinking constantly or with a habitual pattern is problematic. For example, one student wrote, "Some would say every weekend, but I wouldn't recommend that." Another student wrote, "every night, every weekend, every month . . . if it's reoccurring it's a sign of loss of control."

Table 6: Anti-Model Frequency

Response Categories	Total
More than 2 or 3 times per week	12
More than casually	5
Everyday	5
Every weekend	4
Other	2
Binging more than once per week	1
When alcohol is entertainment	1

Rate of Consumption

Model Behavior: Students were asked to identify model behavior for the rate at which alcohol should be consumed during a single episode. As Table 7 indicates, two categories emerged as central to the students' thinking. Primarily, students indicated the rate of consumption should be slow. For example, several students mentioned "sipping" or "drinking one beverage over a one-hour period." Secondly, students maintained that the drinker needs to know her or his own limits and abide by them. For example, one student asserted that, "I think everyone knows their limits and should drink accordingly."

Table 7: Model Rate

Response Categories	Total
Sip/Slow	16
Own limit	10
Depends on the situation	5
One per hour	2
Depends on mood	2
Whatever	1
One or two per day	1

Anti-Model Behavior: When asked to identify anti-model behavior related to rate of consumption, students were clear and consistent in their response. As Table 8 indicates, the overwhelming majority of students said the rate of consumption should not be "super fast." Several students specified that the use of drinking paraphernalia such as "funnels" or "beer bong" was particularly inappropriate. One put it simply, "Too much, too fast is unacceptable."

Table 8: Anti-Model Rate

Response Categories	Total
Fast	21
Drinking paraphernalia	3
3+ per hour	2
Out of control/Binging	2
A lot of shots	1
6+ per hour	1
Traditions (21 on 21)	1

Location

Model Behavior: Students indicated that the ideal location for drinking was either a bar or other social setting. As Table 9 shows, this was clearly the dominant category. The data also reveal that, regardless of location, alcohol should be consumed in a legal and safe environment. For example, one response given was “somewhere safe, like at home. Somewhere you can stay the night or get a ride.” These findings were surprising in that many students revealed in their explanation of negative experiences that, especially during their first two years of college, they drink illegally in their residence halls.

Table 9: Model Location

Response Categories	Total
Bar/Social setting	18
No driving involved	11
Safe location	9
Legal location	8
Home	6
Anywhere	5
Dinner	2

Anti-Model Behavior: When asked to identify inappropriate locations for drinking, students offered a variety of responses, however, they generally discouraged drinking in risky environments. As Table 10 reveals, students considered drinking in risky settings, such as an unfamiliar place or a distant location where driving is necessary, as inappropriate. Two typical responses were, “somewhere where you do not feel safe and comfortable,” and “places where you put others in danger, especially on the road.”

Table 10: Anti-Model Location

Response Categories	Total
Driving is involved	8
In the open	6
Dangerous environment	5
Anywhere	3
Put others in danger	2
In front of respectable people	1

Transportation

Model behavior: Students were relatively unified in their response to model behavior related to transportation. As Table 11 indicates, an overwhelming majority of students indicated that using a “designated driver,” a “cab,” or any other form of “safe” transportation was model behavior. The primary concern expressed by the students was that steps should be taken to avoid drinking and driving. One student recommended the use of “a taxi, d.d. [designated driver], or stay at the party.”

Table 11: Model Transportation

Response Categories	Total
Use a designated driver	23
Do not drink and drive	20
Cab	17
Do not walk	2
Walk	2
Bus	2

Anti-model behavior: Students’ depictions of anti-model behavior paralleled their view of model behavior. By far, students rated drinking and driving as the most reprehensible behavior related to alcohol consumption (see Table 12). One response urged students to “never drive after drinking or allow anyone who has been drinking to get behind the wheel.” Students also identified such transportation safety options as riding with strangers and walking alone as anti-model behavior.

Table 12: Anti-Model Transportation

Response Categories	Total
Drinking and driving	23
Ride with strangers	2
Do not walk alone	1

With Whom

Model behavior: Students were asked to identify, in an ideal situation, individuals with whom they should drink. Table 13 indicates students preferred drinking in a social environment with friends and family. One student explained that drinking should occur with “good friends . . . have someone you know will take care of you if things get out of hand.” With the exceptions of “attractive people” and “whomever,” the categories that were mentioned involved pre-existing relationships.

Table 13: Model Companions

Response Categories	Total
Friends	32
Family	16
Attractive people	8
Whomever	5
Co-workers	2
Classmates	1
Teammates	1

Anti-model behavior: Similarly, students mentioned that anti-model behavior involved drinking with individuals they do not know or trust. Table 14 shows the dominant category is people the students do not know. Several examples include “people you don’t know very well,” “people who will not take care of you,” and “never at a place that you know no one.” Also of interest in the findings was that students are concerned that they not drink with individuals they respect because they fear embarrassing themselves. “It is tough to get a drunken first impression of yourself out of someone’s head,” stated one student.

Table 14: Model Companions

Response Categories	Total
People you do not know	14
Respectable people	4
People you do not trust	4
Everyone	3
Minor	2
Alone	1
Other	1

Negative Experiences

The students’ depiction of model and anti-model behavior indicates they generally have an understanding of responsible drinking behavior similar to what campus authorities recommend. Although exceptions in the areas of age and perhaps amount contradict campus authorities’ recommendations and policies, the clear majority of student responses fall within the university-suggested guidelines. Despite this fact, students listed a myriad of examples when asked to describe negative experiences they had endured or witnessed while enrolled at the university. Table 15 highlights the fact that students had experienced problems in nearly all areas of concern.

Table 15: Negative Consequences

Response Categories	Total
Arrested or fined	20
Health or psychological problems	14
Driving drunk/DUI	9
None	9
Blacking out/Passing out	9
Risky sex/STD	8
Drinking in the halls	7
School problems	6
Violate own standards	6
Losing control	6
Staying in an unsafe place	5
Fighting	4
Vandalism	4
Abandoned	2
Other	2

The most common negative experience noted was related to the legal ramifications of drinking. Being arrested or fined for possession or consumption of alcohol appears to be a common consequence on the midwestern campus studied. Despite the students’ dominant portrayal of drinking and driving as anti-model behavior, a notable number of students mentioned a negative experience with drinking and driving. One student admitted, “there have been times that when I leave the bar, I think I’m fine to drive, and then, once I get home, I think, I was in no condition to drive at all.”

Health and psychological problems associated with drinking were also mentioned frequently. Being sick, passing out, and blacking out were identified repeatedly in the students’ examples. Some typical comments in this area were “drank too much, puked, passed out,” “friend threw up in my bed,” and “not knowing what you did last night is scary.”

Also contrary to students’ identified model behavior, safety issues were commonly reported as negative experiences. For example, fighting, risky sex, and staying in an unsafe environment were each reported by multiple students. One student wrote, “I have seen people who have ended up in bad situations or situation in which they regretted—situations that involved sexual activity with people they did not know.” Other students mentioned they have “stayed at someone’s house I didn’t know” or “the majority of time, the bigger fights happen at the bigger parties. . . people try to act tough and cool in front of others—especially when drinking.”

Several students also revealed that their academic performance was negatively impacted by their drinking behavior. One student offered this compelling summary, “Bad grades = lotsa drinking.”

Conclusions

The results of the students' discussion of model and anti-model behavior revealed a good deal of consistency with messages communicated by the school's administration. For example, students were soundly against drinking and driving, drinking in unsafe locations, and drinking to the point of losing control. All of these factors are emphasized in the university's messages related to alcohol. There was inconsistency between the students and administration regarding the discussion of drinking age and, to a lesser degree, rate of consumption. However, most of the administration's key messages appeared in the students' portrayal of model and anti-model behavior. While this concordance is encouraging, an alarming contradiction remains.

Although students are able to recite and even condone the messages related to responsible drinking behavior, the majority of respondents continue to witness and experience negative behavior. A convincing majority of the respondents listed negative experiences with alcohol, encompassing a wide range of risk areas. In fact, many of the examples listed could constitute life-threatening circumstances. Moreover, there remains a persistent rise in drinking-related arrests, fines, and complaints related alcohol. This incoherence between knowledge and behavior invites further analysis.

In terms of risk communication, students acknowledged the key messages offered by the technosphere. Experts in the area of high-risk drinking have identified a variety of unsafe practices, and students have interpreted them as anti-model behavior. Moreover the students can generate responsible alternatives to these unacceptable actions with appropriate model behavior. Simply put, there is little disagreement between students and administration regarding the structure of reality associated with responsible drinking. Thus, the key stasis point is not between what the students and administration perceive as appropriate behavior. Instead, an incongruence or stasis point emerges, at least occasionally, for the majority of respondents between what the students advocate and the action they take regarding alcohol use. Even though these violations between action and personal standards may be rare for most students, the stories they share reveal even these minor contradictions pose potentially dangerous outcomes.

The argumentation framework established earlier in this essay offers some degree of explanation for how this incongruence functions. For individuals to accept and act upon risk communication, they typically must accept some claim or claims related to cause and effect. A perceived risk is described as producing or failing to produce certain effects. In this case, the students establish model and anti-model standards that clearly reveal an understanding of the role alcohol plays in such negative effects as death, arrests, unwanted sexual activity, embarrassment, and a general loss of control. Still, at least occasionally, most of the respondents experience or witness drinking behaviors that result in high risk.

From an advocacy perspective, one reasonable explanation for this incongruent behavior regarding cause and effect rests with probability. As we discussed earlier, when system change is due to risk, members' perception of probability is based on an assessment of cause and effect. These assessments of

probability act as warrants for the arguments posited. Toulmin et al. (1984) state "the assertor's task is normally to convince us not just that it was legitimate for him [sic] to adopt the initial claim for himself, but also that we should share it and so rely on it ourselves" (p. 46). Thus, warrants inspire listeners to make the connection between the claims of the assertor and their personal lives. In cases of risk communication, we assert that the listener must see sufficient probability between her or his actions and the admonitions of the technosphere or administration.

With regard to risk drinking at the university in this study, the students do not appear to challenge the structure of reality. They accept the data and the claims that link alcohol with negative consequences. However, there appears to be an added interpretation related to probability. At several points in the profile students created through their discussion of model and anti-model behavior, they contend that alcohol intake must be monitored and based on the individual tolerance or experience level. In so doing, the students reject firm or consistent standards for intake and replace them with personal standards. In this manner, the warrant is compromised by a set of loose standards related to individual tolerance. As such, individual tolerance emerges as the gauge for determining the probability of negative experiences.

Interestingly, the students' description of model and anti-model behavior related to amount of alcohol consumed was imprecise. The students insisted that responsible drinking involved drinking in moderation and that students should know their personal limits. Anti-model behavior was described as drinking to the point of being drunk or being negatively affected. While these descriptions are thematically positive, they provide little clarification as to the breaking point at which drinking moves from a social activity to a potentially dangerous one. The standards described by the students suggest that each individual, while drinking, should understand how much alcohol her or his body can absorb safely and without consequence. The problems with this line of reasoning are immediately evident. Few would disagree that drinking alcohol has the potential to impair judgment. Moreover, the delayed impact of alcohol makes efforts to determine when to stop before reaching the level of intoxication imprecise. For these reasons, entering a drinking episode with personal limits as the only standard for determining the probability of risk, is, at best, flawed.

A student's assessment of probability, based on her or his unique physical capacity, is a likely cause of occasional mishaps, even though she or he is attempting to follow model behavior. More generalizable standards such as the number of drinks per hour an individual can sustain, based on weight and gender, would be less likely to yield negative consequences. Despite the fact that students embrace drinking in moderation as model behavior, they have not accepted generalizable standards as credible.

This study suggests that, if the university wishes to reduce the number of negative experiences related to alcohol consumption, it would do well to focus on the warrant of their arguments. Simply put, students have difficulty seeing the probability of the negative consequences in their own drinking experiences. Their emphasis on personal limits gives them no generalizable measure for

establishing predetermined limits. Thus these limits must be learned by trial and error. Since a single risk-drinking episode can lead to dangerous or deadly consequences, experiencing error, in the eyes of the university, is undesirable. Thus, understanding the function of the warrant in this risk drinking study provides insight into a less obvious stasis point between the recommendations of the administration and the perceptions of the students. Drinking in moderation and avoiding negative consequences are, on the face of it, fitting with the advice given by the university. Using trial and error to determine personal limits, however, is inherently more risky than basing decisions on generalizable standards, because error must occur for standards to be established.

The university may benefit from moving to a dialogue with students that explores two critical areas. First, on a smaller scale, a discussion related to entering drinking episodes with some form of generalizable limits or standards would be advisable. This dialogue would be most effective if it focused on the warrant of the university's claims by encouraging students to understand the difficulties associated with determining personal limits based on trial and error. Second, on a broader scale, the university's dialogue could encourage students to see the potential relevance of the risks they already acknowledge to their own lives. Ultimately, this relevance would take the form of encouraging students to make choices that acknowledge the probability of negative outcomes at every stage of every drinking episode. This focus on generalizable standards and making conscious choices at all stages has the potential to create congruence between the students' model and anti-model standards and their behavior.

Implications

We can draw several implications for risk communication from this study. First, this study suggests that using the critical incident method to generate a profile of an audience's perception of model and anti-model behavior is one means for gauging the effectiveness of and planning for risk communication. This approach is particularly effective for determining the degree to which certain messages have been accepted in the minds of a given audience. Once these standards are known, the assessor and the relevant audiences can begin an informed dialogue to reach a level of agreement that benefits both parties.

Second, focusing on the warrant of the claims related to risk communication is of particular relevance to parties who are attempting to alter a given audience's reaction to risk. Simply accepting the claims of an expert source as credible does not ensure arguments will result in action. Particular attention should be given to the means by which the audience assesses the probability of the claims affecting their lives. If the audience fails to see the probability of the negative consequences in their lives, they are extremely unlikely to change their behavior based on the risk communication.

Third, this study offers further support for the need to engage in dialogue related to risk communication. An audience may fully recognize and even endorse the arguments provided by an expert or authoritative audience. If, however, the audience fails to internalize the probability of negative consequences, they are unlikely to change their behavior—regardless of the amount or quality of expert

testimony they receive. Engaging in a dialogue that allows experts and potential victims to share in developing standards upon which they can both agree appears to be one potential means for minimizing risk.

This study explored the way structures of reality function in risk communication. Further insight could be gained in future research that focuses on risk communication over time. This study was limited to a single period. Following arguments as they unfold in public communication and dialogues of all kinds would enhance our understanding of how arguments function in risk communication campaigns over time. Further study of how an audience shares or builds its structure of reality would also be of interest. For instance, how are examples and illustrations shared among individuals who enter a region, neighborhood, or corporate structure? How is risk and probability of personal impact determined informally within a given audience?

High-risk behavior associated with alcohol has a long history with college students in the United States. Increases in fatalities and other negative consequences suggest the problem should not be ignored. It is hoped studies such as this will contribute to a dialogue that will ultimately help reduce negative consequences.

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Fetching Good out of Evil George W. Bush's Post 9/11 Rhetoric

Shane M. Semmler

Describing the events of September 11, Thomas Friedman wrote, "Those suicide hijackings were such an evil act that they shattered our faith in human beings and in the wall of civilization that was supposed to constrain the worst in human behavior." (2002b). Watching thousands murdered on television left many with more questions than answers. President George W. Bush (2001) in his *Freedom at War with Fear* speech gave voice to the dazzled many: "Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking: Who attacked our country? ... Why do they hate us? ... How will we fight and win this war? ... [and] ... What is expected of us?" (pp.2-4). At times of national crisis Americans require an explanation and an expedition that both reaffirms a sense of who they are and how they may conjure meaning from the ashes of disaster. After the 9/11 attacks, this nation was psychologically ripe to receive a rhetorical fantasy. Peter J. Sokero (2001) of Cheektowaga, New York articulated America's collective despair and its collective hope. In an editorial to *The Buffalo News*, he wrote: "I hurt for all those people and the anguish they experienced. For a while, it seemed this wasn't going to go away. Then our President buoyed us with his brilliant address, and terrorists, beware!" (p.H1).

Five of President George W. Bush's post 9/11 speeches provided a positive rhetorical vision upon which America could move forward. The *Freedom at War with Fear* (Bush, 2001) speech was the President's first formal post 9/11 address to the nation. The *State of the Union Address* (Bush, 2002a) has traditionally been seen as forum for the President to make pronouncements and to delineate an agenda. The *Graduation at West Point* (Bush, 2002b) commencement address, although not traditionally significant, was used by the President to fully articulate his doctrine of preemption also known as the Bush Doctrine. The *9/11 Memorial* (Bush, 2002c) and the *Remarks to the United Nations* (Bush, 2002d) have particular significance as Bush's first opportunity to make the case to both America and to the world for implementing applying his post 9/11 rhetoric to a preemptive war against Iraq.

An oft-quoted phrase in the post 9/11 world was that September 11th changed America. In fact, September 11th did not change America so much as it clarified what it holds sacred, how it sees its role in a post Cold War world, and how an American President may still move her to action through words. This paper applies Ernest G. Bormann's understanding of Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) to the five above mentioned post 9/11 Presidential addresses. According to Sonja K. Foss, SCT has two major assumptions: first, rhetoric creates reality

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and that second, “individual’s meanings can converge to create a shared reality for participants” (Foss, 1996, p.122). Paralleling these assumptions, this paper answers two questions. 1) How does President George W. Bush construct fantasy themes to create a post 9/11 rhetorical vision? 2) How have the meanings contained within President George W. Bush’s post 9/11 rhetorical vision converged to create a shared consciousness among its audiences?

Fantasy Theme Analysis—Fetching Good Out Of Evil

Bush’s post 9/11 rhetorical vision is necessarily biased in favor of a particular interpretation of the September 11th events. The literature regarding fantasy theme analysis agrees that fantasy themes, “are organized and artistic. When people dramatize an event, they must select certain characters to be the focus of the story and present them in a favorable light while selecting others to be portrayed in a more negative fashion” (Bormann, 1985, p.9). In fact, Bush’s post 9/11 rhetorical vision created the ground from which questions of United States foreign policy were discussed in the post 9/11 era. Foss (1996) highlighted this central feature of SCT when she wrote, “They [fantasy themes] provide the ground for arguments or establish the assumptive system that is the basis for arguments” (p.124).

A tradition of scholarship applying fantasy theme analysis to public address has been well established. Bormann, Cragan, and Shields (1996) provided a comprehensive application of the consciousness creating, raising, and sustaining elements of SCT when they applied its principles to the rise and fall of America’s Cold War foreign policy (p.1). In pursuit of their thesis, the authors used SCT to criticize Churchill’s “Iron Curtain” speech, George Keenan’s “Long Telegram”, and President Harry Truman’s speech on “Aid to Greece and Turkey” to name a only a few.

While searching for recurring rhetorical forms or fantasy types, Bormann (1977) applied fantasy theme analysis to Puritan rhetoric of the seventeenth century. From that study, he discovered the fantasy type, *Fetching Good out of Evil* (p.131). Citing Perry Miller’s book *The New England Mind: from Colony to Province*, Bormann (1977) noted that seventeenth century Puritan “fast day proclamations contained a basic formula for the explanation of and uses of evil” (p.131). The stock scenario or fantasy type that he articulated is referred to as *Fetching Good out of Evil*, and its central features, simply stated, are as follows. Evil is visited upon the community. That evil is the result of God’s anger over some committed sin. The community is commanded to discover and root out the sin—action is a seminal feature of the successful redemption. If the community’s efforts succeed, they are redeemed, and from their redemption, a glorious and happy future is anticipated (Bormann, 1977, pp.131-132). With reference to Richard Weaver, Kurt Ritter defined a dramatic fantasy as, “a confrontation that people come to perceive as a struggle between the ‘god terms’ and the ‘devil terms’ of their culture” (Ritter, 1977, p.115). The *Fetching Good out of Evil* fantasy type is fundamentally conservative in that it delineates existing devil and god terms. Bormann applied this saga to the wartime rhetoric of the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and the Civil War. His “argument is

that the discovery of the fantasy as important in the three wars makes the 'Fetching Good Out of Evil' type a significant and recurring rhetorical form in the history of American public address" (Bormann, 1977, p.132).

Foss noted the connection between fantasy types and rhetorical visions. "When similar scenarios involving the same scenes, characters, and settings have been shared by members of a community, they form a rhetorical vision known as a fantasy type" (Foss, 1996, p. 124). As long as American rhetoricians continue to use the *Fetching Good out of Evil* fantasy type, SCT can reveal the fundamental values of their period's rhetorical vision.

SCT and the lens provided by the *Fetching Good out of Evil* fantasy type are excellent tools for the critic who wishes to define Bush's post 9/11 rhetorical vision at the crossroads of America's foreign policy goals (deterrence vs. preemption); furthermore, fantasy theme analysis' emphasis upon making sense out of confusing events makes it particularly well suited to this inquiry of President Bush's post 9/11 speeches. September 11th was like no other day in recent American history; any President would have had an excellent opportunity to construct a post 9/11 reality, in effect, to *Fetch Good out of Evil*. "A fantasy theme is a way for people to present or show to the group mind, to make visible (understandable) a common experience and shape it into social knowledge" (Bormann, 1982b, p.52). Moreover, well-constructed fantasy themes have enormous real world consequences. "For example, Ronald Reagan's depiction of the former Soviet Union as 'the evil empire' contributed to the shared fantasy of the enemy, thus allowing Reagan to continue SDI research and development" (Robertson, 1999, p.34). If the critic lacks a thematic understanding of these speeches, homeland security, foreign military action, Bush's astonishing approval ratings, and the outstanding 2002 mid term election results cannot be fully understood. Within the context of the *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision an individual, social group or political party can effectively understand, shape, or oppose the Bush administration's domestic and international policy agenda.

The Devil Inside and Outside: The Sin and the Evil

The post 9/11 *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision depicted a dynamic struggle between the forces of "good" and the forces "evil". In defining a global scene, Bush explicated where the struggle against "evil" occurred, but not what the "evil" in a post 9/11 world was or what it represented. Someone or something was responsible for the September 11th attacks, and Bush made it very clear who/what that was. While keeping within the rhetorical vision of *Fetching Good out of Evil*, Bush defined both an external and an internal "evil". The former was the "evil" that had descended upon America on September 11th, but perhaps more significantly, the latter was the sin that America and the civilized world must exculpate before final victory, understood as security, could be achieved.

The External Evil

The President's rhetoric constructed a global scene in which the "enemies of freedom" threatened every civilized nation. Bush (2001) observed that the World

Trade Center (WTC) attacks did not kill only Americans. *Freedom at War with Fear* gave its listeners/readers a mournful account of the devastation's breadth. "Nor will we forget the citizens of 80 other nations who died with our own: dozens of Pakistanis; more than 130 Israelis; more than 250 citizens of India; men and women from El Salvador, Iran, Mexico, and Japan; and hundreds of British citizens" (p.2). Bush (2001) added that, "an attack against one is an attack against all ... the civilized world is rallying to America's side. They [civilized world] understand that if this terror goes unpunished, their own cities, their own citizens may be next" (p.4). *Freedom at War with Fear* sowed the seeds of a global scene and the first specific arena of exigent action was the "failing nation state" of Afghanistan.

President Bush's post 9/11 speeches initially designated a specific enemy but ended with one that was much more broadly defined. The initial external enemies in the Bush post 9/11 rhetorical vision were Al-Qaeda and the nation-state(s) that harbored its terrorist networks; however, the list of external enemies later came to include unstable nation-states that had or were attempting to acquire weapons of mass destruction or that denied their peoples' "human dignity". Bush incrementally depicted the "evil" as less human and ultimately associated it with a kind of transcendental chaotic force.

In *Freedom at War with Fear*, Bush (2001) explained that those who perpetrated the 9/11 terrorist attacks hated "our freedoms, our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other" (p.3). He further defined the "evil" forces when he associated them with the failed ideologies of the twentieth century. "By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions—by abandoning every value except the will to power—they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism" (Bush, 2001, p.3).

Freedom at War with Fear identified the first scene in which the post 9/11 struggle between "good" and "evil" occurred. "This group [Al Qaeda] and its leader—a person named Osama bin Laden are linked to many other organizations in different countries" (Bush, 2001, p.2). Although Bush (2001) noted that the terrorist network claimed "a fringe from of Islamic extremism" (p.2), he quickly distinguished them from "our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical group of terrorists, and every government that supports them" (p.2). The action within Bush's rhetorical vision required that the latter enemy—terrorist friendly nation-states—be the target of a hostile American foreign policy. Just as the Truman Doctrine used Turkey and Greece as case studies for the Cold War strategy of containment, Bush designated Afghanistan and its then existing leadership—the Taliban. In *Freedom at War with Fear*, Bush (2001) said that by, "aiding and abetting murder, the Taliban regime is committing murder" (p.2).

By the time Bush delivered his *State of the Union Address*, America had successfully replaced the Taliban with an interim government led by Hamid Karzai, but Bush's rhetoric implicated further threats to security and to civilization itself. "What we have found in Afghanistan confirms that, far from ending there, our war against terror is only beginning" (Bush, 2002a, p.2). Bush (2002a) contended that the enemies to America and to civilization still existed and that

they “view the entire world as a battlefield ... so long as nation’s harbor terrorist, freedom is at risk” (p.2). Expanding the list of potential enemies, Bush added “regimes who seek chemical, biological or nuclear weapons ... They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred.” (p.2). In spite of this additional classification however, the *State of the Union Address* demonstrated a subtlety in the development of this rhetorical vision.

Unlike in *Freedom at War with Fear*, Bush no longer characterized the enemies as actors pursuing reasonable, albeit radical aims. He portrayed them as the mad forces of destruction who laughed at the loss of innocent life, as dangerous killers, as ticking time bombs, and of course as an “axis of evil arming to threaten the peace of the world” (Bush, 2002a, p.2). In the *Graduation Speech at West Point*, Bush (2002b) associated the enemy with darkness, unbalanced dictators, and hypocrites who premeditatedly break non-proliferation treaties; he said they desired “power with no place for human dignity” and that they were “evil” enforcers of “joyless conformity, lawless, and ultimately (p.3). In the *9/11 Memorial*, Bush described the enemy in even more vague but no less ominous terms: they value power over their own lives, defile the true Islamic faith, and are darkness personified (Bush, 2002c, pp.1-2). By taking away their religion, reason, and empathy, Bush defined the enemy as something less than human.

In the President’s *Remarks to the United Nations*, he represented the enemy as a single actor – Iraq and more specifically, Saddam Hussein. Not since the *Freedom at War with Fear* speech did the President use such specific language when he referenced the external “evil”; nevertheless, what Iraq represented was not substantively different from Bush’s characterization of the enemy in his *State of the Union Address*, *Graduation at West Point*, or *9/11 Memorial*. By the time Bush referenced the “evil” Saddam Hussein, “evil” had become an almost otherworldly and demonic force. That Saddam Hussein embodied all of the characterizations of “evil”, only made him the enemy; it did not make him the “evil”; he was but one manifestation of the “evil” in Bush’s post 9/11 *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision.

The “evil” valued nothing. It was unprincipled—the worse that moral relativism had to offer. Rather than aspire to a set of principles above itself, it sought only to satisfy its appetitive meanderings. Perhaps no other single passage from any of the five speeches demonstrated this better than did one from the *Remarks to the United Nations*:

He [Saddam Hussein] blames the suffering of Iraq’s people on the United Nations, even as he uses his oil wealth to build lavish palaces for himself and to buy arms for his country. He bears full guilt for the hunger and misery of innocent Iraqi citizens. To assume this regime’s good faith is to bet the lives of millions and the peace of the world in a reckless gamble. (Bush, 2002c, p.3)

The Internal Evil

Bush’s first speech, *Freedom at War with Fear*, did not explicitly reference the internal “evil”. In Bush’s (2002a) *State of the Union Address*, however, the

President articulated the internal “evil” with these words: “Our enemies believed America was weak and materialistic, that we would splinter in fear and selfishness” (p.5). Bush’s intimation was clear: American materialism and selfishness invited the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In the same speech, Bush (2002a) continued his volley against America’s pre 9/11 character:

Yet after America was attacked, it was as if our entire country looked into a mirror and saw our better selves. We were reminded that we are citizens, with obligations to each other, to our country, and to our history. We began to think less of the goods we can accumulate, and more about the good we can do (p.6).

Lurking beneath this statement’s surface is the implication that, prior to the 9/11 attacks, Americans had no sense of their obligations as citizens or understanding of their shared history; in fact, they were more concerned about accumulating goods than about the good they could do. Bush’s (2002a) explication of the internal “evil” continued: “For too long our culture has said, ‘If it feels good, do it’” (p.6). Bush’s suggestion was that Americans had been devoted to a morally relative, idiosyncratic, and self-indulgent standard of right and wrong.

Bush’s indictment of the American character offered a subtlety in the development of his post 9/11 rhetoric. By associating a common criticism of American culture (e.g. intense individualism and acquisitiveness) with the terrorist attacks, Bush pursued America’s guilty conscience; furthermore, he employed America’s chagrin or dissonance to direct the post 9/11 response. To overcome their lack of moral fiber, Americans only needed to oppose an absolutist definition of “evil”. Anthony Pratkanis and Elliot Aronson (1991), in their book *Age of Propaganda*, articulated guilt’s persuasive power: “When we feel guilty we typically pay little attention to the cogency of an argument, to the merits of a suggested course of action. Instead our thoughts and actions are directed toward removing the feeling of guilt—to somehow making things right or doing the right thing” (p.178). Near the end of his *State of the Union*, Bush (2002a) explicitly offered the restitution that his rhetoric implied: “We’ve come to know truths that we will never question: evil is real and its must be opposed” (p.7). Propitiation of the guilt within Bush’s rhetoric required the belief that the world was divided between “good” and “evil” forces; moreover, to be counted among the “good” forces required that one accept this lens of moral absolutism. This passage from George W. Bush’s (2002b) *Graduation at West Point* speech further clarified his position:

Some worry that it is somehow undiplomatic or impolite to speak the language of right and wrong. I disagree. Different circumstances require different methods but not different moralities. Moral truth is the same in every culture, in every time, and in every place. Brutality against women is always and everywhere wrong. There can be no neutrality between justice and cruelty, between the innocent and the guilty. We are in a conflict between good and evil, and America will call evil by its name. By confronting evil and lawless

regimes, we do not create a problem, we reveal a *problem* [italics added]. (p.3)

The *problem*, within the context of this rhetorical vision, was the failure to recognize the difference between “good” and “evil” and worse yet, failing to act on that recognition. Bush (2002c) further impacted the distinction between the “good” and the “evil” in his *9/11 Memorial*: “There is a line in our time, and in every time, between those who believe that all men are created equal, and those who believe that some men and women and children are expendable in the pursuit of power” (p.1).

Bush articulated the internal “evil” in terms of ideas, namely self-indulgence and moral relativism. On three levels, Bush’s rhetoric intimated that this sin—the sin of idiosyncratic morality—was responsible for the terrorist attacks. Firstly, by making America appear weak, idiosyncratic indulgence invited the terrorist attacks. Secondly, America’s and perhaps the civilized world’s unwillingness to “call evil by its name” (Bush, 2002b, p. 3) allowed the malignant tumor of terrorism to spread until it was too late to prevent the September 11th attacks. Thirdly and only symbolically, Bush’s indictment of America as indulgent without reference to a higher good connected the internal “evil” to the external “evil”. When, in his *State of the Union Address*, Bush (2002a) argued that Americans cared more about the goods they could accumulate than the good they could do (p.6), he paralleled their sin to Saddam Hussein’s sin: “...while his people starved, he built himself lavish palaces...” (Bush, 2002d, p.3).

Bush powerfully juxtaposed his exposition of an absolute moral truth against the external “evil’s” motivation and its ideological girding. Indeed, within Bush’s rhetoric, the external “evil” had no moral or reasonably consistent purpose for its terrible actions. The “evil” simply pursued power for its own sake and for the sake of its appetites. In the worst and most dire sense of the word, it was chaotic. Linguist Geoff Nunberg (2002), on National Public Radio’s *Fresh Air*, observed that “we tend to reserve the word ‘evil’ for people who seem to have no rational motive for what they do, apart from the malign pleasure in causing pain...”. Ultimately, Bush’s post 9/11 *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision characterized both the internal and the external “evil” as a pernicious brand of nihilistic post-modernism, understood as moral/cultural relativism.

The Evil and Symbolic Convergence

Substantial evidence suggests that Bush’s characterization of both the external and internal evil created a social reality through which Americans framed their understanding of the post 9/11 world. Many opinion leaders and ordinary Americans supported Bush’s characterization of the “evil” and used it as a platform for discussion. They repeated Bush’s intimations and implicated them both within and outside the context of the 9/11 attacks.

In a speech before the United Nations, former New York City mayor, Rudolph Giuliani (2001), agreed with President George W. Bush’s characterization of a global struggle. “It [9/11] was an attack on the very idea of a free, inclusive, and civil society. It was a direct assault on the founding principles of the United

Nations itself. ... You're either with civilization or with the terrorists." Even before the President's *Freedom at War with Fear* speech, liberal columnist Thomas Friedman (2001a) adopted the language of a divided world. "The real clash today is ... between those Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, and Jews with a modern and progressive outlook and those with a medieval one" (p.A27).

Extending President Bush's (2001) characterization of the external evil as associated with the "failed ideologies of the twentieth century" (p.3), Friedman (2002a) wrote that, "We're not fighting to eradicate 'terrorism.' Terrorism is just a tool. We're fighting to defeat an ideology: religious totalitarianism ... That's Bin Laudenism. But unlike Nazism, religious totalitarianism can't be fought by armies alone" (p.A39). Two weeks after the President's *State of the Union Address*, Thomas Friedman (2002a) defended Bush's "simplistic and absolutist" characterization of the "axis of evil" and ostensibly agreed with his intimation that America's lack of moral resolve invited the attacks:

...I'm glad President Bush said what he said. Because the critics are missing the larger point, which is this: Sept. 11 happened because America had lost its deterrent capability. We lost it because for 20 years we never retaliated against, or brought to **justice** [emphasis added], those who murdered Americans. ... So our enemies took us less and less seriously and became more and more emboldened. ... The terrorists and the states that harbor them thought we were soft, and they were right. ... America's enemies smelled weakness all over us, and we paid a huge price for that." (p.31A)

Nearly one year later, both television and newspaper journalists had adopted the "axis of evil" rhetoric as a matter of course. Much of America's foreign affairs news coverage focused on Iraq, Iran, and North Korea, but in the early days of December, 2002, *New York Times* writer David Sanger (2002) shared a general observation when he noted that, "...last week the two other members of the **axis of evil**, North Korea and **Iran**, suddenly created nuclear-sized distractions..." (p.6).

President Bush's obsession with moral absolutism correlated with a general assault against both cultural and moral relativity. Republican strategist Ed Gillespie, on the television show *Nightline*, said, "...I think moral relativism has come into question". An editorialist in *The Columbus Dispatch* noted the same phenomena but argued that moral absolutism, "...has become disturbingly popular since Sept. 11" ("People, cultures," 2002, p.09A). Conservative columnist George Will (2002a) on *This Week with Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts* expressed the following view:

I think, Sam, [9/11] was a great teaching moment for the American people. I don't just mean about the dangers of the world, but about certain ideas that had gotten loose in our society, call them postmodernism, if you will, the ideas of moral and cultural relativism. Who is to say one culture is better than another? Well, we are. We saw the evidence that some are just barbaric, and the civilized have to fight them.

Further proving Americans shared in the President's rhetorical vision, both opinion leaders and ordinary people employed the rhetoric of moral absolutism to issues outside the formal scope of 9/11. When referring to the Catholic Church's sex abuse scandal, Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum wrote, "It is startling that those in the media and academia appear most disturbed by this aberrant behavior, since they have zealously promoted moral relativism by sanctioning 'private' moral matters such as alternative lifestyles'" (Falter, 2002, p. A09). An editorialist to the *Saint Louis Dispatch* (2002) argued that the post 9/11 recession was due to America's moral turpitude: "The prevailing attitude of moral relativism in the 1990's contributed to these corporate scandals. We should not be surprised by the actions of some corporate executives when the nefarious behavior of government officials was routinely brushed off with a wink and a nod" ("Letters to," p. 32). Perhaps, George Will (2002b) best summarized moral absolutism's relationship to the President's new ethic. "The postmodern plague of quotation marks—the punctuation of disparagement that labels as superstitions 'virtue' and 'heroism'—was erased by men running into burning buildings. The quotation marks remaining after the Great Refutation surround two words: 'Let's roll!'" (p.35).

"Let's Roll": Action and Atonement

Bush (2002a) used the *State of the Union Address* to inaugurate "Let's roll" as the symbolic cue for civilization's struggle against the internal and external "evil". "Now America is embracing a new ethic and a new creed: 'Let's roll.' ... We want to be a nation that serves goals higher than self" (p.6). To illustrate America's new ethic, Bush used the story of Todd Beamer. "We have seen it [the strength of the Union] in the courage of passengers, who rushed terrorists to save others on the ground – passengers like an exceptional man named Todd Beamer" (Bush, 09/20/02, p. 1). In fact, Beamer's counter offensive against Flight 93's hijackers encapsulates much of America's new ethic as understood through Bush's rhetoric: love of god, family, and country: "After the prayer [The Lord's Prayer] was finished and the promise was made to call his wife, Todd Beamer dropped the phone, leaving the line open. It was then that the operator heard Beamer's words: 'Let's Roll'" (Loviglio, 2002).

President Bush's post 9/11 *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision articulated a myriad of particular actions that would have redeemed America and delivered her from the "evil" revealed by the September 11th attacks. The recommended action was to take place within two contexts—the internal or domestic context and the external or international context. To gird these prescriptions, Bush invoked a god persona. "Wartime rhetoric often attempts to use a god persona as the ultimate legitimizer for the cause. Men participating in a rhetorical vision which dramatizes a god persona as sanctioning their efforts fight with great zeal" (Bormann, 1977, p.156).

Action and Atonement for the Internal Evil

In the *Freedom at War with Fear* speech, Bush lauded the courage of the passengers of Flight 93 and of those who made sacrifices on the ground by "giving blood", "saying prayers", or "working past endurance"(Bush 09/20/01,

p.1). In both *Freedom at War with Fear* and the *State of the Union Address*, the President offered prescriptions for how America might have rid itself of its sin. In *Freedom at War with Fear*, President Bush (2001) imposed this question upon the American people: “What is expected of us” (p.4)? Bush’s answer was a laundry list of actions that Americans could have taken to maintain a sense of national community and of national strength. Specifically, Bush (2002a) prescribed the following actions: uphold American ideals, tolerate Muslims within our own communities, support the victims with contributions, cooperate with the FBI and security agents, participate in the U.S. economy, and finally, pray for the victims of terror (pp.4-5). In more general terms, the President asked the American people to justify the deaths of those who perished on September 11th: “I ask you to uphold the values of America, and remember why so many have come here. We are in a fight for our principles and our first responsibility is to live by them” (Bush, 2001 p.4). The *State of the Union Address* continued in a similar vein:

This time of adversity offers a unique moment of opportunity—a moment we must seize to change our culture. Through the gathering momentum of millions of acts of service and decency and kindness, *I know we can overcome evil with greater good* [emphasis added]. And we have a great opportunity in this time of war to lead the world in values that will bring lasting peace. (Bush, 2002a, p.6)

Perhaps, none of the other five speeches provided more formal opportunities for internal redemption than did Bush’s *State of the Union Address*. The President asked “every American to commit at least two years – 4000 hours over the rest of their life time – to the service of your neighbors and your nation” (p.6). The USA Freedom Corps, the Americorps, the Senior Corps, and the Peace Corps were among the possible organizations through which Americans could participate in the President’s rhetoric (Bush, 2002a, p.6).

The *9/11 Memorial* continued the President’s references to and prescriptions for the internal redemption. Bush (2002c) again invoked the deaths of those who perished on September 11th: “The loss of so many lives left us to examine our own ... these counted days should be filled with things that last and matter: love for our families, love for our neighbors, and for our country; gratitude for life and to the giver of life” (p.1). The last point in the aforementioned quotation highlights a significant feature of the internal redemption—its emphasis upon and references to a god persona. Bush commanded Americans to abandon their self-indulgent moral relativism and to accept the active role of a god persona into their daily social and political affairs.

Throughout the five speeches religion legitimately motivated the forces of “good”; simultaneously, “evil” lacked legitimacy because its “faith” was a perversion of true religion. Bush’s rhetoric, while emphasizing a god persona, did not invoke any religion’s particular deity. In the *9/11 Memorial*, for example, Bush (2002c) referred to the god persona as “the Giver of Life”, “a Creator” and simply as “God” (pp.1-2). What was important for the participant in Bush’s

rhetoric was that those among the “good”, especially Americans, recognized and serve a power or standard higher than themselves.

Bush’s rhetoric did not accept the motivations of the external “evil” as a legitimate expression of religious faith. In *Freedom at War with Fear*, Bush (2001) argued that the “terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself” (p.3). Further distancing the “evil” from a legitimizing god persona, Bush (2001) contrasted the terrorist’s perversion of Islam with its legitimate counterpart: “We respect your faith [Muslim] ... Its teachings are good and peaceful and those who commit evil in the name of Allah, blaspheme the name of Allah” (p.3).

According to Bush, the “good” recognized a god persona and the “good” were Its agents. In *Freedom at War with Fear*, Bush (2001) made his most explicit reference to God’s sanction, “Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them” (p.6). The god persona was depicted as freedom’s particular ally and perhaps, more importantly, America’s particular ally. In the *State of the Union Address*, Bush (2002a) associated a god persona with the American character: “there is honor, and it is stronger than cynicism. And we may have discovered again that even in tragedy—especially in tragedy—God is near” (p.7).

Bush’s invocation of the god persona as defender of freedom and of America highlights the *Fetching Good out of Evil Fantasy* type’s assumption of American exceptionalism. When the Christian God intentionally befalls evil upon America to promote its redemption, an exceptional kind of love and purpose for “His” chosen people is implied. Bormann (1985) also observed this facet of the American character: “The fantasy of America as the model and leader of the world was as old as the settlement of Massachusetts Bay. Its continued saliency through the years testifies to this power as an archetypal fantasy type...” (p.236). The theme of America as a *City upon a Hill* or as a model for the world to follow has been explicitly employed as recently as President Ronald Reagan’s *Farewell Address to the Nation*: “...I’ve thought a bit of the ‘shining city upon a hill’. That phrase comes from John Winthrop, who wrote it to describe the America he imagined” (Reagan, 1989, p.6).

Action and Atonement for the External Evil

George W. Bush’s five speeches defined America’s external redemption in terms of extending the values of liberal democratic capitalism to any nation or region in which it might have been threatened or unwelcome. *Fetching Good out of Evil*, in this context, meant that America would eliminate threats to its security by eliminating all differences among governmental and cultural institutions around the globe.

Bush’s desire to remake the world in America’s image was not unique to his time. American history is replete with incidents of American exceptionalism taking on crusade like proportions. For example, Thomas Jefferson’s early nineteenth century hope for the Louisiana Purchase was that it would become an “Empire of Liberty” extending across the American continent. Analogously and in the 1840’s, John L. O’Sullivan, a New York newspaper reporter, used the term

manifest destiny to describe America's inevitable expansion to the Pacific Ocean. Ernest Bormann in *The Force of Fantasy* highlighted a few more incidents of extreme American exceptionalism:

Despite the unifying virtues of the vision [City on a Hill] and its promotion of a good self-image for the community, it contained within it the potential for motives of jingoism and superpatriotism which surfaced, periodically, in the nineteenth century ... super patriots like Albert Beveredge ... fantasized that the American Flag should march to the islands of the Pacific, that it was 'manifest destiny' that the flag should eventually fly over an empire as great as that of Great Britain. America's destiny and duty was to spread free institutions around the world. Again in the time of the First World War, the motives to go out and remake the world became salient for many adherents, and in both instances, the fervor stemming from the religious roots came to fruition in moral crusades such as the one led by President Woodrow Wilson to make the 'world safe for democracy' (1985, p. 237).

This paper now turns its attention to Bush's crusade against the external "evil" and his plan to redeem America's sin by spreading its virtues and eliminating threats to its security.

On the level of external redemption, Bush's post 9/11 *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision became a kind of super patriotic jingoistic argument for an American crusade to impose the ideals of "human dignity" upon the "darkest" corners of the globe. In fact, "human dignity" became the symbolic cue that contained everything that the forces of civilization—America and her allies—represented and considered sacred. "Human dignity" was strongly contrasted against the shadowy ideology of the "evil" forces—terrorists, nation-states that support or tolerate terror, unstable dictators pursuing weapons of mass destruction, and eventually the list was to include any nation that contradicted America's *Declaration of Independence* or the United Nation's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR). Ultimately, Bush's rhetoric claimed that the civilized world's mission and the path to its security lay in rejecting the reactive strategy of containment and deterrence in favor of preemption—a proactive approach to obviating threats by imposing the values of "human dignity" around the world. The proactive imposition of "human dignity" would relieve civilization and America from both the internal and external "evil". Imposing an absolute standard of good and evil ("human dignity") through America's foreign policy would have reinforced the internal redemption with regard to abandoning self-indulgence and moral relativism. More practically, toppling regimes that even remotely threatened the civilized world's security would free civilization from the threat of future terror attacks and not incidentally, eliminate those governments who stood opposed to the ideals of "human dignity".

President Bush's (2001) *Freedom at War with Fear* speech noted that the struggle between freedom and fear was in fact a struggle between two ways of living. "These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life" (p.3). On one hand, radical terrorists endeavored to impose tyranny

upon a freedom loving people; on the other hand, civilization fought to resist the terrorists and to uphold freedom understood as pluralism and progress: "This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom." (Bush, 2001, p.3). In *Freedom at War with Fear*, Bush did not complete his characterization of the civilized world's mission; in fact, the *State of the Union Address* demonstrated that it was much broader.

Bush used the symbolic cue of "human dignity" as the edifice upon which to construct this broader understanding of America's and the civilized world's external action. Bush (2002a), in his *State of the Union Address*, claimed that, "we have a great opportunity during this time of war to lead the world to lasting values of peace" (p.6). With those words, Bush's vision of the civilized way of life became something more than simple pluralism and progress. In the next few lines of this speech, Bush (2002a) invoked the transformation: "All fathers and mothers, in all societies, want their children to be educated, and live free from poverty and violence" (p.6). Civilization's characteristics had expanded; suddenly, civilization implied the values of education and economic growth. Particular cultural prescriptions replaced pluralism and progress as the hallmarks of civilized life.

With that precedent set, Bush's rhetoric exploded the definition of civilization's cause and for the first time, it employed the symbolic cue of "human dignity". He said: "But America will always stand firm for the non-negotiable demands of "human dignity": the rule of law; limits on the power of the state; respect for women; private property; free speech; equal justice; and religious tolerance" (Bush, 2002a, p.7). As the symbolic cue of "human dignity" came into focus, its relationship to American and Western European constitutional principles materialized.

Near the conclusion of his *State of the Union Address*, the President summarized the way of life that America was fighting for: "We stand for a different choice, made long ago, on the day of our founding. ... We choose freedom and the dignity of every life" (Bush, 2002a, p.7). The link between "human dignity" and the unique political institutions of America and Western Europe was further embellished in the *Graduation at West Point* speech. Bush (2002b) noted that, "America has no empire to extend or utopia to establish. We wish for others only what we wish for ourselves – safety from violence [life], the rewards of liberty [liberty], and the hope for a better life [pursuit of happiness]" (p.2). Each component of America's "wish for others" directly translated into the values of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (note brackets within the quotation). Those ideas remain to be the central organizing principles of the American government as elucidated in the *Declaration of Independence*. Moreover, their particular manifestation in the aforementioned quotation directly linked them to the UDHR and therefore, to what the governments of Western Europe had manifestly held sacred since 1948.

The connection between Bush's rhetoric and the UDHR is manifested in that document's preamble. "Safety from violence" parallels the preamble's second paragraph. It observes that, "disregard for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind..." (Universal Declaration

of Human Rights [UDHR], 1948, p.1). The “rewards of liberty” parallels another line in the second paragraph of the preamble. It observes that, “human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief in freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed the highest aspiration of the common people” (UDHR, 1948, p.1). Finally, “the hope for a better life” is paralleled in the preamble’s fourth paragraph:

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom (UDHR, 1948, p.1).

Further defining “human dignity” in his *Graduation at West Point* speech, Bush included several seminal elements of the UDHR under the aegis of America’s crusade and the symbolic cue of “human dignity”. Please observe each of the elements within the following quotation as they correspond to the UDHR as noted within the brackets:

The 20th century ended with a single surviving model of human progress, based on non-negotiable demands of human dignity [preamble, articles 1, 22, & 24], the rule of law [preamble, articles 6-12 & 29], limits on the power of the state [preamble, articles 1-30], respect for women [preamble, articles 2, 16, & 25], and private property [article 17], and free speech [preamble, articles 12, 15, 18, 19, 21, & 27], and equal justice [preamble, articles 1, 2, 6-12, & 21], and religious tolerance [preamble, articles 2, 18, & 19]” (Bush, 2002b, p.4) & (UDHR, 1948, pp.1-6).

After defining America’s and civilization’s struggle as an imposition of the *Declaration of Independence* and the UDHR, President Bush used his conclusion in the *Graduation at West Point* speech to inaugurate the United States’ military into his post 9/11 *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision: “The bicentennial class of West Point now enters this **drama** [emphasis added]. With the United States Army, you will stand between your fellow citizens and grave danger” (Bush, 06/20/02, p.5).

In the *Graduation at West Point*, speech George W. Bush announced that America’s post 9/11 foreign policy would take a dramatic turn. Giving meaning to America’s resolute stand against absolute evil and in favor of absolute good, Bush announced that his administration was abandoning the reactive Cold War strategy of containment and deterrence in favor of preemption. Bush (2002b) argued that:

...new threats require new thinking. Deterrence – the promise of massive retaliation against nations – means nothing against shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend. Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies. ... We

must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge. In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path of action. And this nation will act (p.3).

With this rhetoric, Bush gave full form to his doctrine—The Bush Doctrine. The United States would preemptively act to aggressively obviate any threats to its security. Perhaps even more significant was Bush's (2002b) subtle extension of this policy to the enforcement of "human dignity": "America has a greater objective than controlling threats and containing resentment. We will work for a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror" (p.5). Addressing West Point's 2002 graduating class, Bush defined the American military's role in the post September 11th and necessarily, the post Cold War world. He said, "You will help establish a peace that allows millions around the world to live in liberty and to grow in prosperity" (Bush, 2002b, p.5).

Within Bush's rhetoric, American foreign policy was no longer on the defensive, tentatively prodding the world for worse and better options. America was to cleanse itself of the moral relativism that made the 9/11 attacks possible. She was poised to act on her rediscovered understanding of good and evil and she would vigorously do so. After the *Graduation at West Point* speech, the defining content of America's action had been fully edified. All that remained was to apply this new understanding of civilization's crusade to a test case.

Iraq and Saddam Hussein provided Bush with fecund opportunity. In his *9/11 Memorial and Remarks to the United Nations*, Bush needed only to reference the symbolic cue of "human dignity"—at that time rich with meaning. Bush (2002c) concluded the *9/11 Memorial* speech with the following statement: "Ours is the cause of human dignity; freedom guarded by conscience and guarded by peace" (p.2). Early in his *Remarks to the United Nations*, Bush (2002d) united America's struggle for global "human dignity" to his case against Iraq: "After generations of deceitful dictators and broken treaties and squandered lives, we dedicate ourselves to standards of human dignity shared by all, and to a system of security defended by all" (p.1). Throughout the remainder of his *Remarks to the United Nations*, Bush's indictment of Iraq's regime was both directly and indirectly tied to his rhetoric's definition of "human dignity". Iraq, under Saddam Hussein's regime, was depicted both as a danger to international security and as a superlative violator of the principles embodied within the values of "human dignity".

President Bush's speech to the United Nations was purposely related to the rhetoric he used to make his case before the American people and by extension, to his application of the post 9/11 *Fetching Good out Evil* rhetorical vision. Although "human dignity" is a significant symbolic cue for both rhetorical situations, Bush employed those words with two subtly different connotations relative to their particular contexts. For the American people, the crusade to impose "human dignity" throughout the world was an extension of American exceptionalism, the Declaration of Independence, and the *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision. For the United Nations, however, Bush placed "human

dignity” within the context of a different struggle and one that was unique to the United Nations’ sense of the sacred—The UDHR.

Bush (2002d) noted that, “the United Nations Commission on Human Rights found that Iraq continues to commit extremely grave violations of human rights, and that the regime’s repression is all pervasive” (p.2). Resonating with the UDHR’s respect for women and the family, Bush (2002d) further noted that, “Wives are tortured in front of their husbands, children in the presence of their parents – and all of these horrors concealed from the world by the apparatus of a totalitarian state” (p.2). Bush further observed his hope for a compliant Iraq within the context of the UDHR’s preamble and several of its specific articles (UDHR, 1948. pp.1-6). He mused that if Iraq were to support the values of “human dignity” it “could open the prospect of the United Nations helping to build a government that represents all Iraqis – a government based on respect for human rights, economic liberty, and internationally supervised elections” (Bush, 2002d, p.4). When Bush made the case for action against Iraq in front of the United Nations General Assembly, he was asking the United Nations to live up to the goals of its constitution understood here as the UDHR.

The President’s *Remarks to the United Nations* contained no less than six references to Saddam’s broken promises. In fact, Bush’s (2002d) repeated references to Saddam Hussein’s failure to keep UN Security Council resolutions, parallels the President’s indictment of the United Nations:

All the world now faces a test, and the United Nations faces a difficult and defining moment. Are Security Council resolutions to be honored and enforced, or cast aside without consequence? Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant (p.4)?

In resolute language, the President gave the United Nations an ultimatum. Bush argued that force against Iraq was a defining moment for the United Nation’s legitimacy. Similarly, Bush noted that Iraq’s continued unwillingness to fully implement the international communities’ will, as expressed through the United Nation’s Security Council resolutions and the standard of “human dignity”, would cost Saddam Hussein his position of power. In both the case of the United Nation’s taking a strong stand in support of its resolutions and in the case of Saddam Hussein’s compliance, Bush predicted dire consequences for those agents who failed to match their words with decisive action. Bush’s (2002d) rhetoric gave the United Nation’s two options:

Neither of these outcomes is certain. Both have been set before us, We must choose between a world of fear and world of progress. We cannot stand by and do nothing while dangers gather. We must stand up for our security, and for the permanent rights and hopes of mankind. By heritage and by choice, the United States of America will make that stand. And, delegates to the United Nations, you have the power to make that stand as well (p.5).

George W. Bush's argument, with reference to the United Nation's legitimacy, concludes this paper's exposition of redemption through external action. Acting from a morally static posture based upon the ideals of "human dignity" contained within both the UDHR and the American Declaration of Independence, Bush's rhetoric remained within the rhetorical vision of *Fetching Good out of Evil*. America's support of toppling Saddam Hussein's government would have fulfilled both the internal redemption relative to moral absolutism as well as the external propitiation relative to obviating threats to American security.

The Action and Symbolic Convergence

Bush's affirmative post 9/11 rhetorical vision, presented in terms of the *Fetching Good out of Evil* fantasy type, dominated the post 9/11 public discussion. "Let's roll" came to symbolize seminal elements of action within both the internal and external scenes. "Human dignity" and its assumptions of Western democratic capitalist ideals also became a significant feature in the sharing of Bush's post 9/11 rhetoric. Ultimately, those who shared the President's post 9/11 vision helped his administration to achieve its incredible successes in the 2002 mid term elections and at the United Nations.

"When participants have shared a fantasy theme, they have charged their emotional and mental memory banks with meanings and emotions that can be set off by a commonly agreed upon symbolic cue" (Bormann, 1986, p.227). A search of the Lexis/Nexis database, from September 11th, 2001 to December 1st, 2002, revealed over one thousand newspaper articles in which "Let's roll" appeared within the full text. Limiting the search to headlines/lead paragraphs within the same set of major newspapers revealed the still impressive but more manageable result of 260 articles. From best selling books to sporting events, "Let's roll" has achieved coveted status in the post 9/11 culture.

Even before Bush broadcast it to a national audience in the *State of the Union Address*, Americans had identified Bush's rhetorical vision with the symbolic cue, "Let's roll". In a *Scripps Howard News Service* article, Jay Ambrose (2001) argued that: "President Bush reminded us that the stakes are high: advancing civilization and defeating those who want to kill for the sake of hate. If we find the spirit of Beamer ... we will prevail. If? There should be no 'if' here. Let's just do it. Let's roll". Michael Rubinkam (2002), an associated press writer, wrote, "'Let's roll' has since become a national catch phrase. President Bush has repeatedly invoked Beamer's words to rally Americans in the war on terrorism..."

Commenting on his Air National Guard unit's use of "Let's roll" on a star spangled nose decal, Staff Sergeant James Green argued that the phrase "kind of kick started our whole mission in the war on terrorism" ("National guard," 2002). "President Bush repeatedly invoked the 'Let's Roll!' rallying cry during the bombing of Afghanistan" (Contreras, 2002). *The United Press International* dramatically observed Bush's successful application of his rhetorical vision to Iraq; it reported that an aircraft carrier bound for the Iraqi theatre flew a "banner reading, 'Okay, Let's Roll'" (Anderson, 2002). After the *9/11 Memorial* and *Remarks to the United Nations*, it became common for Americans to discuss

Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden in the same context. Thomas Friedman (2002c) noted that "...terrorists like Osama and rogues like Saddam can unleash lethal threats against us..." (p.15).

In several ways, the world of sports also adopted the phrase to express their participation in Bush's rhetorical vision. Organizers of the Boston Marathon employed the phrase to reassure its participants and fans. "With a discourse on patriotism and a defiant 'Let's roll' Boston Marathon organizers ... promised a safe day for runners and spectators..." (Golen, 2002). Highlighting the phrases deified status, Florida State's football coach, Bobby Bowdin, use of "Let's roll" as his team's slogan drew severe criticism. Critics argued that applying the "sacred phrase" to a mere sports team, trivialized it. Douglas McMillan, CEO of the Todd Beamer foundation, legitimized Bowdin's use of the phrase with these words: "'Let's roll' for them is a way of really attaching themselves to the patriotic feeling that this nation has adopted since Sept. 11..." (Kallestad, 2002). "Baseball and football wrapped themselves in the flag, and fans went to the ballparks and watched on TV. The idea was to show that no terrorists could change their way of life, and the mere act of watching a game became, in some eyes, almost a patriotic endeavor" (Pells, 2002).

An astute maneuver of President George W. Bush's post 9/11 rhetoric was its designation of mundane activity as an act of defiance against terrorism and more importantly, as an act of participation in his rhetorical vision. These initial and oftentimes, inevitable acts arguably led many Americans to accept Bush's rhetorical vision in total. Pratkanis and Aronson's (1991) called this persuasion technique a *foot in the door rationalization trap*. "Thus, when individuals commit themselves in a small way, the likelihood that they will commit themselves further in that direction is increased. ...in effect, we comply with the larger request to be consistent with our earlier commitments" (p.185). In those terrifying and confusing days following September 11th, how many Americans appeared to obey their President's command to continue their normal lives, pray for the victims of terror, contribute to 9/11 charities, cooperate with, at best, inconvenient and, at worst, humiliating levels of airport security, or demonstrate their "patriotism" by buying a flag or even by signing a no interest loan for a brand new American made vehicle? One year after the 9/11 attacks and on *This Week with Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts*, Roberts (2002) answered Donaldson's claim that post 9/11 patriotism had dissipated:

I actually think its still there. The flags are flying. I'm amazed at how true that is. Here we are a year later, and the flags are still everywhere. And you heard Mrs. Bush talking about people rushing to join the Peace Corps. The children's fund for Afghanistan has raised something like \$10 million for school children, for Afghani children. I think that more important, however, is that you now have a whole generation that understands war. ...you have a generation that says, my country counts, and I think it will, I think it will serve this generation going for the rest of their lives".

While “Let’s Roll” symbolized much of Bush’s post 9/11 rhetorical vision, this application of the *Fetching Good out of Evil* fantasy type also enacted redemption through America’s enforcement of the internationally relevant and absolutist ideals of “human dignity”. Thomas Friedman has frequently operated within Bush’s rhetoric to both praise and blame the administration’s advancement of “human dignity”. Extending the President’s rhetoric, Friedman (2002b) wrote the following:

After the deluge of 9/11 we have two choices: We can numb ourselves to the world, and plug our ears, or we can try to repair that jagged hole in the wall of civilization by insisting, more firmly and loudly than ever, on rules and norms – both for ourselves and for others. ... It [imposing rule and norms] gives us credibility to demand the rule of law, religious tolerance, consensual government, self-criticism, pluralism, women’s rights and respect for the notion that my grievance, however deep, does not entitle me to do anything to anyone anywhere. ... Visibly imposing them [norms and values] on ourselves, and loudly demanding them from others, is the only viable survival strategy for our shrinking planet (p.33A).

At the same time and using the very symbolic ground established by Bush, Thomas Friedman (2002d) criticized the President for not placing “human dignity” at the center stage of the administration’s Iraqi policy. He argued that Bush should tell “all Arabs that America has one purpose in Iraq, once it is disarmed of dangerous weapons: to help Iraqis implement the U.N. **Arab Human Development** Report, which states that the failing Arab world can only catch up if it embraces freedom, modern education and women’s empowerment” (p.15).

Conclusions

The United Nation Security Council’s unanimous affirmation of resolution number 1441, the President’s historically unique approval ratings, and the widespread Republican victories in the 2002 election, provide good platforms from which to argue that President George W. Bush’s post 9/11 *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision had substantial consequences for both its global and domestic audiences.

Two months after the President delivered his *Remarks to the United Nations*, the Security Council affirmed its participation in Bush’s post 9/11 rhetoric; it adopted resolution number 1441. Resolution number 1441 “aligns the world behind the Bush administration’s campaign and should help ensure that any U.S. military action wins broad international support” (“A firm,” 2002, p.A24). Elizabeth Neuffer (2002), of *The Boston Globe*, argued the following: “The compromise resolution [1441] underscored how seriously UN diplomats took Bush’s challenge on Sept. 12, when he told the UN it must act on Iraq or become irrelevant” (p.A1). Peter Worthington (2002) of *The Toronto Sun* added that “In order to safe face and what waning influence it has, UN members toed the line and said ‘me too’ ... Of course, The Republicans’ unprecedented triumph in the

U.S. mid-term elections, confounded the predictions (and hopes) of rudderless Democrats, [and] may have contributed to the UN's Iraq resolution" (p.32).

An analysis of the President's eighty-two percent approval rating on March 11, 2002 revealed that his "overall ratings in this crisis have endured far beyond the usual, brief 'rally-round' effect that occurs at times of national crisis" (Langer, 2002a, p.1). "Indeed Bush's approval ratings in 16 ABCNEWS and ABCNEWS/Washington Post polls the last year [09/11/01-09/10/02] have averaged 81 percent..." (Langer, 2002b, p.2). A consensus of polls conducted immediately prior to the November 5th, 2002 mid-term elections placed George W. Bush's approval rating at over sixty percent (Polling report.com, 2002). Using this popularity to good effect, "Bush became the first President in 50 years to win both House and Senate seats in a mid-term vote" (Walker 2002, p.A10).

The President's approval ratings and the historically unprecedented Republican victories in the 2002 mid-term elections are powerfully correlated with Bush's rhetoric. The President's indictment of and command to overcome tolerance for moral/cultural relativity directly attacked the ideals of modern liberalism and by extension, the Democratic Party. Perhaps former President Bill Clinton's 1993 attempt to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military, best demonstrates the Democratic Party's tendencies toward inclusiveness. Reporting the consequences of this gross oversimplification, Will Hutton (2001), writer for *The Observer*, noted that liberalism "feeds the moral relativity that sustains the pernicious argument that in some way America deserved the horrors of 11 September. It refuses to distinguish between good and evil. Liberalism be damned" (p.30). In fact, President Bush's rhetorical vision offered an alternative to the Democratic Party's "ostensible" moral relativity and cultural inclusiveness. Suggesting that American voters shared this assessment, Sally Quin (2002) of *The Washington Post* reported the following:

Ann Richards, former governor of Texas, agrees, 'We had no message, no message at all.' The challenge the Democrats now face, as they try to regain strength and influence before the 2004 elections, is to get past the **moral relativism** [emphasis added] that came to typify the Clinton era. That's because what really happened on November 5th was that Bush (and all he stands for) beat Clinton (and all that he doesn't stand for). ... 'Bush conveys the sense that he believes in something,' says author and journalist William Greider. ... Marty Kaplan, former Mondale speech writer and now associate dean of the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communication says 'By rejecting Clinton, the voters are not just rejecting his personal life, they're rejecting the unprincipled position.' (p.B03)

Perhaps no advocate better summarize President George W. Bush's post 9/11 *Fetching Good out of Evil* rhetorical vision than does Bush (2002a) himself: "America is embracing a new ethic and a new creed: 'Let's roll'" (p.6).

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To Rule or Not to Rule These are (Just Some of) the Questions

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I vowed to myself a few years back not to engage in discussion on the IE-L because e-mail may be wildly misinterpreted, I broke my own "rule" early this summer responding to a post by the esteemed Liesel Reinhart. Reinhart wrote:

In fact here's to far fewer rules and even fewer hard and fast opinions about events—and to an open and creative environment in which our unique art form can evolve and grow into directions we never even imagined"

I responded I agreed with this sentiment but moreover, what was more important was to look at what actually are rules and what people are starting to assume are rules because certain formats, styles, structures, and conventions have become the most common manner in which events are done. By looking at both, then, I was—am? hopeful perhaps we could then revisit the rules so we might determine what the rules actually are, follow the rules and learn what are not rules so we don't use "assumed rules" in our adjudication of rounds.

I could not possibly have foreseen the amount of debate that transpired on this topic following my post. Even more surprising is the number of questions and sidelights regarding the "rules" issue that have proliferated from these posts.

Therefore, in order to attempt to discuss in a somewhat organized fashion what can only be described as an unwieldy topic, I have decided to first, give you the gist of my arguments which initiated the responses; second, discuss the various questions that have arisen from the debate, along with some answers (mine and others'), so we may finally, attempt to draw some conclusions and perhaps move forward with a more informed view of "playing by the rules."

Wow, a three-point structure. There's a rule I have to do it that way, right?

Quite simply, my stance is there are very definite written rules which we can all reference and follow. For example, there is a written rule in Duo Interpretation requiring an offstage focus, and there are definite conventions that need to be followed in order to establish offstage as opposed to onstage (as if watching an actual scene in a play "on stage") focus. If someone is in violation of a written rule (e.g. offstage focus, going overtime) judges have the discretion of how to judge this particular person in light of the violation.

However, confusion is sure to abound (and conflicts arise) when ballots literally tell a student they are doing an event—such as Impromptu or Extemporaneous Speaking—"wrong" because they are using a three-point

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structure or a two-point structure; or they are wrong if doing anything but a monologue in Dramatic Interpretation (DI). The written rules neither prescribe or proscribe two-point or three-point or multi- or single-character DI as "rules."

Aside from a ballot or a judging philosophy denouncing a particular structure or style as "wrong" being inherently unfair, the dangers of following such a philosophy are limitless, with the first and foremost reason not to follow such a course being that educationally, we are sending out the wrong message.

Certainly, I have my own preferences for all events, BUT, what is most important is I (as all judges should) enter a round with a clean slate in mind, accepting whatever a student does within the "written rules" as legitimate, and judging them on the merits of their presentation relative to the merits of the other presentations in the round.

In a nutshell, that was the focus of my first post.

Perhaps not surprisingly, what seemed to me to be as straightforward as possible elicited responses from every "angle" possible. The best way to summarize them, I think, is to answer a few of the old standard questions: Who, When What, and Why.

So, who are the culprits here? Well, clearly, without a doubt, it's us, the judges and coaches, including the curmudgeons who have been around for 10 or 20-some years who believe the "old" way is the only way; the relative neophytes in graduate school who have four years of experience championing the "that's the way we did it at...." philosophy, or "well, if you want to win, you have to do it that way" philosophy.

Well, guess what? We're all wrong. Any style, structure or custom that falls within the written rules is acceptable even if it's not "the way we used to do it" or "not the way the people at _____ do it, and they always win" or not "the way we were taught."

Matt Conrad seems to agree with this sentiment when he wrote "I think the most frustrating thing for me about competing in forensics was in seeing, nakedly, how the activity actually punishes innovation Do we really need those rules, those entrenched prejudices, or couldn't we all be free just to try ideas and see whether or not they work?"

Conrad brings up several interesting points which bear investigation. First and foremost he believes innovation is not something welcomed with open arms in forensics competition. Truly, those whom espouse the only-way-to-do-it-is-the-way-that-we-do/did-it philosophy would certainly be stifling innovation. However, in the very next passage, Conrad seems to confuse and interchange two very discrete terms. He equates "rules" with "prejudices," he actually brings us to the next "question." WHEN is this occurring?

Specifically, it's occurring when people equate "conventions," as I call them, "customs" as J.G. Harrington refers to them, or "paradigms" as Conrad terms them, with the actual rules of an event. Years ago, believe it or not, teasers in interpretation events were considered innovative. There were judges who blasted you for having one and would write something like "by definition, an introduction 'introduces' your presentation, so begin with the intro!" There was and still is no rule for having or not having a teaser. Try starting an interpretation without one

today and see what happens. Actually, nothing *should* happen negatively on a ballot to you, whether you have one or not, but many times it does. And it happens if you try a non-problem/solution ADS, and if you try a third-person prose, and if you do a three-point Impromptu structure, and ... I could go on.

The mindset that trying something new or innovative or different is somehow a “violation” that seems to “frustrate” Conrad, and rightfully so.

All of the things mentioned above and so many more can and should be employed to continue to let the activity evolve, without worry of being judged negatively for trying them.

However, equally frustrating for some is when the written rules are clearly violated. In the most basic instance, competitors are often frustrated when a fellow competitor goes overtime and then is not penalized at all for it. They feel, and again, rightfully so, that if they performed within their allotted ten minutes and the rules dictate that as the time limit, then if someone is in excess of it, there should be “some” reflection of that in the rankings.

Additionally, there are other written rules (and not as many as some think) that require that certain parameters be followed (e.g., “manuscript is required” in for interpretation events; “focus should be off stage” for Dramatic Duo; contestants in Impromptu should speak for at least three minutes (see National Forensic Association national rules), which basically provide guidelines for competitors, new and old, to follow. Very simply, if I’m a judge and an interpretation competitor decides to not have a manuscript in use at all, or to perform his duo with his partner with an onstage focus, well, it’s my obligation to the other competitors and to these students to alert them to their violation of the rules on their ballots and to have their scores reflect that violation. Clearly, that is not a “prejudice” on my part; it is a rule, written and clearly outlined for all to follow.

So to answer the first part of Conrad’s question, “Do we really need those rules,” the answer is most definitely *yes*. First and foremost, we are an educational activity. We are responsible for teaching new coaches and new competitors how “to do” things and basically saying “anything goes” is not doing them or the activity anything but a disservice. The written rules are there not to keep us constrained but to give us a framework within which to educate our students and to adjudicate the rounds. Thus, in answering the second half of Conrad’s question, “couldn’t we all be free just to try ideas and see whether or not they work,” I’d have to answer no and yes. No, if the “trying” of those ideas (e.g., interpreting without a book) would be in violation of the “manuscript is required” written rule; but, yes, most definitely if the “ideas” being “tried” were just a new way of pushing the envelope within the written rules.

My feeling really is we certainly need to push the envelope; however, shredding it completely no longer makes it an envelope. And while I would be the first person to argue for a variety of sizes, shapes and colors of envelopes, shredding it altogether would make any envelope incapable of functioning as an envelope at all.

There are some who perhaps would disagree here, and therein would lie our next question: WHAT are the basic disagreements? Reinhart writes, “the field

[of oral interpretation] has evolved dramatically in the past 20 years while forensics has not kept up ... and that many ... find our rules to be extremely oppressive and against the art of performance.”

I agree the evolution of an activity must take place and the rules need to be revisited in order to recognize and foster such evolution (e.g., multiple characters allowed in duo).

However, what distinctions need to be drawn and what I’m not sure Conrad and Reinhart are addressing are the following: Very simply, this is a competitive activity, which therefore inherently requires that we actually have “rules” within which to adjudicate, and, second, though I know this opens a Pandora’s box, there are differences between oral interpretation, acting and performance art.

Regarding the competitive aspect, clearly, there is somewhat of an artificial stricture put on the art form of oral interpretation when the elements of competition are brought into play. It is those students who overcome those strictures and transport us in a round, making us forget we are even in a round, that make up those memorable performances. Reinhart is one such person who achieved that transformation both as competitor and, through her students, as coach. Ultimately, though, we are brought back to the reality “performance” is not just appreciated for its merit and artistry, but—because it is what we do and who we are—it is given a score, one which takes into account the transformation, the artistry, the talent and ability, but one which also is determined by the more mundane elements of whether or not the performance also existed with the written rules.

We cannot ignore the fact, even part of the time, we are engaged in a competitive activity and as such, the scoring system needs to have rules which make adjudication an even playing field for everyone.

The second distinction I mention above is that between oral interpretation and acting and performance art. As an actor, I have benefited greatly from my “training” in forensics, specifically being able to discern nuance in a script; however, I would be the first person to stand up and tell you that forensics is not “acting,” per se. Surely, it employs many of the same elements and preparation, but the similarities stop there. Forget the element of time limits, manuscript requirements, the competitive aspect, the venue and a plethora of other artificial constraints on the presentation and you have, by necessity, an entirely different animal.

Reinhart writes, “I have a book from the 1960s which says that both off and on-stage focus can be effective in oral interp [sic] ... yet judges born after the 1960s tell me that if students look at one another in duo, it is ‘by definition’ not oral interp.” Respectfully, what I think Reinhart is missing here is a crucial distinction. Certainly onstage and offstage focus can be and are equally effective in interpretation; however, the rules say “focus should be offstage.” So the basic answer here is simple: Follow the rules and you don’t have any problems *or* work to change the rules.

AFA and NFA over the years have provided us with terrific forums for discussing ways of changing these rules. Moreover, every year there are innovative ideas from all parts of the country as to ways of improving the events, shaking up the structure, and introducing experimental events, all of which have helped us

see potential new ways of doing things, but certainly when those new ways are espoused, experimented with or in some cases even adopted, with them are guidelines within which to operate.

For my part, I've always felt that having the book in hand and having to have offstage focus in duo provided a greater challenge to the competitors and to me as a coach to have to try to make it look real and make the audience forget about all the restrictions. To be able to "effect" two people touching in a scene without having them actually touch is so much more difficult than actually having the students just stand there and touch each other (not to mention the fact that there is then no distinction between their being in front of us as two actors in an on-stage focus setting).

Former multiple national champion Ryan Knowles, echoes this sentiment when he writes, "actually, I've always felt that rules helped to foster creativity. When forced to perform within the confines of rules, you are challenged to try harder to make an idea work. Sure, some gems of ingenuity ... must be left by the wayside ... but that occasional disturbance is nothing compared to the chaos that results in no confines at all." Certainly Knowles speaks from experience and proved that one can succeed by being creative within the confines of the written rules.

So if success can come by being creative and staying within the rules then WHY is there a problem, which brings us to our last question, and probably the most difficult one to answer because of the number of answers there are.

Unfortunately, while Knowles proved one can succeed by playing within the rules, there are others who I believe attempt to gain competitive advantage for their students either by trying to "break the rules" or worse, as judges, using what Conrad described as "prejudices" about the way things should be done and judging other students based on those prejudices.

Certainly, the reasons for doing something differently or the reasons for staunchly sticking to our guns when we judge are varied. If the purpose of doing either is to foster creativity and education, then we need to encourage the innovativeness or to criticize constructively that something appears to be in violation. If the purpose is simply to gain the competitive advantage, then I would venture to say if we coach in a way that promotes violation of any written rule or judge in a way that disqualifies a student based on a personal style preference that is not a written rule, then our actions are then inherently unfair and I would say almost offensive to do so.

Harrington in recalling a post he read suggested in responses to this particular subject that many times "name" competitors can get away with violating custom more than others. But he also follows up by saying "I think one reason for that is that—surprise—the 'name' competitors usually do a better job when they break customs than other people." He concludes by saying, "As I see it, customs are meant to be challenged, but there's no guarantee that a challenge will succeed, and there shouldn't be. In the end, I think you should have all the rules you really need, but none that you don't."

Which sounds to me like the best summary of what many talented people have responded. I would think Knowles would agree with Harrington about having

all the rules you really need to avoid the “chaos” that he fears if you didn’t and Reinhart and Conrad would agree we should not have rules simply for rules’ sake.

So what answers did we gain from all these questions? Well, first and foremost, perhaps I should never post to the IE-L again. Actually, of course, I jest, because the number of responses and the amount of time and thought coaches, judges, and students put into their responses is a source of encouragement that our activity is alive and well in the minds of forensic competitors and coaches from various generations, and thankfully so.

To rule or not to rule? Well, I’ve given you my thoughts, exposed many of the questions and opinions that arose from the initial post and concluded there are varying degrees of both satisfaction and disgruntlement with the current rules in effect.

In any “event” (pun intended) Forensics is a forum for education and for welcoming new ideas. Fortunately or unfortunately, the very fact we have to “judge” (I dislike that word) these events dictates we have some rubric under which to judge them. The rules are our rubric, but luckily they’re not so stringent there is no room for experimentation.

What is important is we all know what the rules really are and the difference between a preference, a style, a convention, a custom or a paradigm ... and an actual “rule.”

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